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Departament de Traducció i d'Interpretació i  
d'Estudis de l'Àsia Oriental  
Programa de Doctorat en Traducció i Estudis Interculturals

Tesi Doctoral

**The Ainu Ethnicity in Contemporary Japan:  
Museums, Parks and Reconstructed Villages**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research focuses on the representation of Ainu traditional culture in open museums, cultural parks, and reconstructed villages in contemporary Japan. Its main objective is to explore how these places are contributing to the redefinition of Ainu culture through touristification and commodification practices. The thesis contends that, beyond the negative connotations associated to these practices, open museums, cultural parks, and reconstructed villages can operate as complex vehicles in which Ainu identity is continuously negotiated through the recreation and representation of its traditional culture. In this sense, the thesis reviews the historical accounts on the Ainu, the modern political awareness and cultural revitalization of their communities, and the reception of their culture in Europe, specifically, in Italy, through the historical consideration of its influence on art collecting, and its contemporary representation in the works of the Italian intellectual Fosco Maraini and his important role in the dissemination of Ainu culture beyond Japan. Musealization and touristification may indeed be part of a process of commodification of Ainu cultural traditions, one which can come across as problematic and quintessentially negative. However, this thesis argues that there is also a constructive side to this process by means of which, while unquestionably implying a form of compromise, traditional culture can be combined with more easily accessible contemporary elements and transformed into marketable goods for touristic purposes that preserve its existence. At the methodological level, the thesis applies the research tools of historical analysis and cultural studies, integrating the documentary analysis with some research techniques of social analysis, especially the interview.



# INTRODUCTION

## *- Introduction*

At the end of the 19th century the traditional territory of the Ainu, the ancient Ezo region, was annexed to the Japanese state in the form of Hokkaidō prefecture. The Ainu people, who historically had lived by hunting and fishing, were deprived of their territorial rights. During the Muromachi period (1338-1573), the Ainu had maintained relations with the Japanese by trading salmon, seaweed, animal skins and eagle feathers, among other objects, south of the ports of Ezo, in Obama and Tsuruga. When the Japanese presence increased exponentially, especially in the region between Shiokubisaki (east) and Atsusabu Kawa (west), the first conflicts and revolts arose (1456, 1644) caused by the loss of resources, the exploitation of its inhabitants and the prohibition of their being instructed in the language and Japanese culture<sup>1</sup>. In 1669 the most important revolt took place when the chief of Shakushain (near the Shibuchari River), killed Onibishi (near the Saru River) following a territorial dispute over hunting and fishing resources. In 1792, the daimyō of Matsumae and later the forces Tokugawa, occupied the northern territories with their garrisons, forcing the Ainu in their settlements<sup>2</sup>.

After the Meiji Restoration (1868) the colonization of the territory began of Hokkaidō (“Circuit of the North Sea”, named in 1869), in a process in which urbanized its prefecture with Japanese cities and place names, and the Ainu were forced to abandon your traditional culture. Thus, Japanese expansionism condemned the Ainu to a century of extreme repression. In March 1899, the “Law for the Protection of Natives” was approved which advocated the relocation of the Ainu and the annexation of their lands to the Japanese state, in a process of colonization in which the work in the field, the

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<sup>1</sup> *Shinsen Hokkaidō shi* (1936-1937). (Revised History of Hokkaidō). Sapporo: Hokkaidō cho, Vol. I, pp. 15-17.

<sup>2</sup> Regarding the relation between Japan and Russia: Lensen, G.A., (1950). “Early Russo-Japanese Relations”, *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, n. 10; Lensen, G.A., (1959). *The Russian Push toward Japan: Russo-Japanese Relations 1697-1875*, Princeton University Press; Z. Schäßlerová-Vasiljevová, (1962). “New Soviet Works on early Russo-Japanese Relations”, *Archiv Orientální*, n. 4; Takano, A. (1971). *Nihon to Roshia*. Tōkyō: Kinokuniya Shoten; Stephan, J.J. (1975). *The Kuril Islands: Russo- Japanese Frontiers in the Pacific*, New York: Oxford University Press.

medical control, the national instruction and the prohibition of their own language and culture constituted the physical means for their assimilation Japanese<sup>3</sup>.

At the end of the Second World War, Japan was occupied militarily and placed under U.S. administration. Japan became a parliamentary democracy in which the emperor remained a symbol of the state and unity of the nation. The new Constitution entered into force in May 1947 and with the postwar land reform (1946-1950), the lands assigned to many Ainu (Native Protection Law, 1899), were then confiscated. Some Ainu leaders decided to make their voices heard. The first effort, the result exclusively of Ainu activists, concerns the creation of a space that would periodically disseminate ideas around the theme of resistance, so in March 1946, the *Ainu Shinbun* was born. In 1957, the leaders again made their voices heard, exerting constant pressure on the excessive poverty of the Ainu. Meanwhile, the participation of the Ainu in International Forums gave new meaning and new stimuli to their struggle. Between the years 1960-1970, it began to spread among the Ainu activists the term *Ainu Moshiri* (“Land of the Ainu”) as a way of building a new political identity, and in May 1973, activist Sunazawa Bikky designed the Ainu flag to celebrate “Sapporo Day”. That same year the first newspaper in the Ainu language, the *Anutari Ainu* (“We are human beings”) appeared<sup>4</sup>. Six years later, Japan joined the International Compact of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), an agreement that obliged the signatory states to recognize and respect the fundamental rights of each person who is in their territory and prohibited any type of discrimination against them<sup>5</sup>. In 1983, Shigeru Kayano<sup>6</sup>, founded the first center for the teaching of the Ainu language, and in 1988, the *Utari* Association Kyōkai introduced a bill under the title *Ainu minzoku ni kansuru hōritsu*, in whose articles the history of their people was reviewed from an indigenous perspective. A few years later, on December 12, 1992, activist and lawyer Nomura Giichi, spoke in United Nations as representative

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<sup>3</sup> Siddle, R. (1996). *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*. London: Routledge, p. 71.

<sup>4</sup> Siddle, R. (1997). “Ainu: Japan’s Indigenous People”, in Weiner, M. (ed.), *Japan’s Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*, Londra, Routledge, p. 37.

<sup>5</sup> The article 27: “In those states in which ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language”.

<sup>6</sup> Shigeru Kayano (1926-2006), was one of the last Ainu native speakers. Beginning in 1952, he undertook a passionate study of Ainu culture. His activism helped found the Nibutani Museum of Ainu Culture in 1972. First Ainu politician to figure in the Japanese Diet. In 1996, he published a dictionary of the Ainu Language. His effort led to the enactment of the Ainu Culture Promotion Act in 1997. Retrieved from FRPAC official site <http://www.frpac.or.jp>

of the Ainu nation, defending the importance of recognition of its people for all indigenous people, states and organizations international, as a way to achieve: “the development and implementation of a society in which all people can live with dignity”<sup>7</sup>.

As a result of these actions, in May 1997, the Japanese government approved the Law for the Promotion of Ainu Culture and the Dissemination and Defense of Their Cultural Traditions, which abolished the centennial law of 1899<sup>8</sup>. In June of the same year, the FRPAC (Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture) and, with the turn of the millennium, the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination supported the recognition of the Ainu as indigenous peoples as a key step towards eradicating their discrimination. In the spring of 2008, the Society for Threatened Peoples (STP) signed an agreement with the Rights Council Human Rights of the United Nations in which he harshly criticized the discrimination suffered by the Ainu<sup>9</sup>.

Finally, on June 6, 2008, the Japanese Parliament recognized the Ainu as “indigenous people” of Japan. Another important step forward was taken on 19th April 2019. Ainu acknowledges that the government would establish an office for the promotion of the Ainu policy and formulate basic guidelines on which local municipalities will develop their own plans to promote the culture, industry, and tourism of the Ainu<sup>10</sup>. The central government is therefore committed to providing subsidies for the various projects in addition to the important project of the first museum entirely dedicated to the Ainu in the city of Shiraoi, in Hokkaidō, the National Ainu Museum and Upopoy Park, whose opening scheduled for 24th April 2020, then postponed to 29 May of the same year, was inaugurated, due to Covid-19, on 12 July 2020<sup>11</sup>.

The focus of my research concerns specifically the reconstructed villages that can be considered very important places for the transmission of ancient knowledge and practices transformed in a modern key. My main research point is that, beyond their

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<sup>7</sup> Inaugural Speech. Appendix B, (1993). In “No longer forgotten: The Ainu”, *AMPO- Japan-Asia Quarterly Review*, XXIV, n. 3, pp. 2- 34.

<sup>8</sup> Bunkachō (Agency for Cultural Affairs). Official site. Retrieved from [www.bunka.go.jp](http://www.bunka.go.jp).

<sup>9</sup> FRPAC, Projects. Official site. Retrieved from [www.frpac.or.jp](http://www.frpac.or.jp), agg. 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Pieranni, S. (11.12.2019). “In crisi demografica, il Giappone si affida agli immigrati”, in *Il Manifesto*. Retrieved from <https://ilmanifesto.it/giappone-in-crisi-demografica-Tōkyō-si-affida-agli-immigrati/>.

<sup>11</sup> See: <https://ainu-upopoy.jp/en/facility/museum/>

negative connotations, reconstructed villages can also be interpreted in the light of a process that avoids cultural extinction, in order to gradually recover and communicate forms closer to Ainu traditional culture.

### **- Research motivation**

I started researching the Ainu of Hokkaidō in 2006 when writing up my master's degree thesis, titled *The Ainu of Japan. Genesis, History, Culture, Religion*, at the University of Naples "L'Orientale". I focused on the study of the Ainu people placing special emphasis on the development and genesis of its cultural history. I continued my research during my MPhil in Oriental and Comparative Philosophy, at the Institute of Human Sciences in Rimini, producing a thesis titled *The Religious Tradition of the Ainu of Japan*, where I dealt with the philosophical-religious point of view, including the separation between *Ainu Moshiri* (The land of men) and *Kamui Moshiri* (The land of the gods), religious ceremonies and aspects of the material and immaterial culture of the Ainu.

During this time, I have published three articles on the journal *Il Giappone* and on the Proceedings of AISTUGIA, (Italian Association for the Japanese Studies) conferences. Specifically, in the first article, "The Ainu towards the recognition as 'indigenous population'" (Volume XLIX [2009] 2011), I analyzed the legal framework of the nineteenth century, when the former territory of Ezo was annexed by the Japanese state in March 1899 and became Hokkaidō prefecture. In this context, the promulgation of the Law for the Protection of the Ainu established in its thirteen articles the relocation and economic transformation of the Ainu into farmers. In my argument, this historical-legal contextualization gives way to the consideration of the Ainu activist movement of Mother Earth in the 1970s, and its political articulation closely related to the claim of the rights of the Indian Americans. Two decades later, in May 1997, the Japanese government passed the Law for the Promotion of Ainu culture and the dissemination and defense of their cultural traditions. This law abolished the legislation of 1899 and remained in force until the resolution adopted by the Japanese parliament on 6th June 2008, when the Ainu were recognized as an indigenous people of Japan. In the second article, "The approach of Russia to Ezo and Japan according to the historiography based on Russian sources" (Volume L [2010], 2013), I analyzed the period from the beginning of the 17th century, with the first Russian incursions on the coast of the Pacific, the

expeditions to the Kuril Islands, the encounter with the Ainu in the framework of Russian-Japanese relations and navigation around Sakhalin, until the early 19th century, with the death of the military man and statesman Nicolaj Rezanov, in 1807. Finally, in the third article, “The division of the Ainu territories between Russia and Japan in the first Russo-Japanese treaties of the late 19th century” (Volume LI [2011], 2013), I delve into the issues addressed in my second work on interactions between Russians and Ainu, and the subsequent actions to divide the territory of the Ainu between Russia and Japan. In this third article I also explore subsequent agreements such as the Russian Treaty Japanese signed at Shimoda in 1855, and the Treaty of Saint Petersburg signed in Tōkyō in 1875, that, however, left the dispute on the territorial question open.

During the years as a PhD candidate, I continued writing articles and attending conferences for discussing my research results. I delivered a paper at three conferences: the first one during the 9th International Symposium of Young Researchers in Translation, Interpretation and Intercultural Studies in East Asia, with the paper “The Ainu Ethnicity in Contemporary Japan: Museums and Reconstructed Villages”, on 29th June, at the UAB, 2018; a second one during the IV Congreso Internacional: Coleccionismo, Mecenazgo y Mercado Artístico: “Orbis Terrarum”, with the paper “The Ainu of Japan. Museums, Collections and Exhibition Fairs”, in Seville, 27-28-29 May 2019, and a third one during the XLIV AISTUGIA Conference, with the paper “The socio-cultural transformation of a people of northern Japan” (19, 25, 26 September 2020). In addition, I wrote the article titled “The image of the Ainu between past and present. From Ainu-e paintings to Manga illustrations”, that will be published in *Manga Academica. Journal of studies on comics and Japanese animation cinema*, and I have submitted another article titled “The Ainu in contemporary Japan. Issues of identity through ethno-tourism”, to an academic journal and it is now under review. Moreover, I am currently working on a new article on the representation of Ainu culture in the manga *Golden Kamui*, on the celebration of Ainu traditional food in *Golden Kamui*, and the *Koropokkuru* (in ainu language it means “little people under butterbur leaves”) in *Shaman King*. In addition, research on the *Shaman King* manga allows me to analyze the legends of the *Koropokkuru* linked to the oral literature of the Ainu.

Finally, during these years as a PhD candidate, I have also organized the Ainu participation at the Festival of Indigenous Peoples for the Association Lo Spirito del

Pianeta, in Bergamo in 2017. It was the first time that the Ainu as an indigenous group visited Italy, and I am also collaborating with the same organization for future cultural events.

### **- *Hypothesis and research objectives***

With this thesis, I hope to contribute to the debate on the role of traditional Ainu culture in contemporary Japan. We must remember that after the Meiji Restoration (1868), the forceful assimilation of the Ainu in Japan changed the state in which they lived. Gradually, the denial of speaking their own language, of continuing to practice traditional rituals and the imposed change slowly brought the Ainu into a situation of despair, and alcoholism and poverty made their appearance. In the postwar, in the social context of the Japanese economic development, Ainu activists made their voices heard in the name of a revival of their identity. In this way, little by little associations that promoted the Ainu culture through workshops such as wood carving arouse, embroidery, the creation of musical instruments, or the transmission of legends of the oral tradition. Subsequently, the production of artifacts was encouraged, both of wooden objects for daily use (such as plates and trays), and in the textile field. The production of objects representing animals such as bear, salmon, owl, especially important in the Ainu symbology, became the subjects of many artifacts.

In the consideration of these objects, the notion of “authenticity” is frequently used in order to characterize them as mere copies created for touristic purposes. However, from my point of view, these objects are as authentic as their ancient counterparts. In this sense, I reject the idea of applying the term “authenticity” only to handicrafts created in the past. The concept of “authentic” is equally applicable to objects produced today. The creation of an object reflects the historical, social context in the past as today, and the same reasons must be added to recover one's identity. All this can be translated as a long process of externalizing an identity claim that results in the creation of objects in a process that does not only affect the Ainu's identity affirmation within Japan but must also be extended beyond Japan itself, as I will do in this thesis through the consideration of the works by the Italian scholar Fosco Maraini. Fosco Maraini, who passed away in 2004, was an orientalist, ethnologist, mountaineer, and photographer, the disciple of the Italian orientalist Giuseppe Tucci with whom he took part in different missions in Tibet, before turning to Japan. In his monographic work *The Iku-bashui of the Ainu* (Tōkyō,

1942), he gathered a formidable collection of libation sticks, now kept at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology of Florence, accompanied by important information on manufacturing and symbology of these ceremonial objects.

The symbological representations that Maraini noticed on the *iku-bashui* and to which he attached importance, marked a strong change in the Ainu studies at large. Those same symbols have been reported on wooden objects, but also on clothes and hair bands, and nowadays are depicted in adorned souvenirs, such as bags, towels, bandanas, wallets, available in tourist villages and sold to tourists. In this way, the Ainu are negotiating their own culture in a complex manner, through practices of touristification and commodification within theme parks and reconstructed villages that are contributing to the redefinition and survival of their indigenous culture. In this sense, I my main hypothesis is that, beyond their negative connotations, open museums, reconstructed villages, theme parks, and their ongoing process of cultural commodification and touristification constitute extraordinarily complex vehicles to negotiate contemporary Ainu identity.

Taking into account the works of other specialists who are dealing with material culture, I have noticed a strong criticism regarding the reconstructed villages, as part of the (negative) commodification of Ainu culture, but there seems to be little debate on the positive aspects resulting from that commodification, such as the development of microeconomics. Their texts turn out to be “academic” and the Ainu themselves do not appreciate it, as on one side they see their history tied to the Japanese and on the other to the scholars. In this sense, in this research, I distance myself from such a negative connotation, and aim to show how these reconstructed villages are perhaps the only way for the Ainu to recover their authentic tradition and for their survival.

There are few exceptions, such as the Nibutani Ainu Culture Museum in Biratori, which displays contemporary craftworks made by Nibutani craftspeople, and the Ainu Museum in Shiraoi, Poroto Kotan, which has provided the chance to display Ainu history and include contemporary Ainu culture in the exhibitions. The curators of these museums are aware that their permanent exhibitions only rely on the past of the Ainu. It is through dance and music performances, but also through food and the embroidery workshop, that cultural revival begins and brings to life past practices forcibly removed and now handed back. The complexity within this process of redelivery leads to calling

into question the expression “sense of belonging” in connection with the concept of “modernity”. Tourism centers have gained further importance, becoming most likely the main access points to a universe still unveiled. And it is not uncommon to find there anthropologists conducting ethnographic research on the crucial role of ethno-tourism, which passes through the conservation of ancient knowledge and the development of contemporary cultural practices. Indeed, these places promote the careful research of traditional rituals and objects, assisting their revitalization and supporting the formulation of identity claims.

Furthermore, participation in international forums with people from all over the world has greatly increased the pride of Ainu identity as well as efforts towards ethno-tourism, now perceived as a serious possibility of recognition. Merchanting a culture (traditions, rituals, handcrafts) for tourist purposes brings economic revenue. These activities are of vital importance for the Ainu. As a matter of fact, the impetus of local economies can considerably improve the quality of life of those affected and prevent extinction by creating a dense network of jobs. In this sense, tourism plays an indispensable role in the affirmation of contemporary Ainu ethnicity, which gradually has established itself through ethno-tourism strategies, as a place for personal expression and identity redefinition. In short, the tourism economy with the Ainu as protagonists, even if the tourism industry is managed by *wajin*, transforms the Ainu social sphere, turning the Ainu people(s), for the first time in history, from passive into active actors of their own story.

In order to deal with all these issues, I will analyze the following research objectives:

1. The historical development of Ainu traditional culture, with a special emphasis on its political awareness and cultural revitalization in contemporary Japan, to show to what extent contemporary processes of commodification and touristification are used to negotiate Ainu identity. In this endeavor, I will consider concepts like reconstruction, revival, divulgation, and the role that the commercialization of Ainu culture plays in different initiatives.
2. The historical representations of Japanese culture in Italy through the consideration of the artistic reflection, with a special focus on the biography and the works on Ainu culture by the scholar Fosco Maraini, an Italian



ethnologist, orientalist, and photographer. Specifically, I will explore the important role played by the Maraini in the circulation and representation of Ainu culture within Europe through objectives, texts, and images.

3. The touristic uses of traditional culture in Ainu open museums, reconstructed villages, and theme parks, with a particular emphasis on the issue of commoditization and touristification of Ainu culture. In this sense, I will analyze how material culture is placed in museums for temporary or permanent collections, as well as in parks and thematic villages, in order to understand how those practices are contributing to the survival of Ainu culture in complex ways.

At this point of my exposition, it is already clear that the Ainu are not extinct people, but we must not neglect that their contemporary situation is intimately connected with the political strategy used during the years of forced assimilation. The recognition of the Ainu as an ethnic minority in Japan is very recent and has led to the consideration of its culture as a susceptible good for promotion and tourist dissemination. The touristic centers and reconstructed villages have become the gateway to the world for the most visible part of the Ainu people(s), traversed by the aura of mystery that follows embracing their stereotypical image in Japanese society. The Ainu presence has mainly been limited to rebuilt villages, entirely devoted to tourism. In these centers, the Ainu express their identity, emphasizing the distinctive aspects of their cultural and religious heritage, while inviting tourists and the general public not only to buy the handicraft products, but also to see and participate, to experience their realization through different activities focused on mythology, history, ritual, gastronomy and the way of supposedly traditional life of their culture. Although the economic benefits of the development of tourism are not negligible, these centers have sparked numerous debates in the political, economic, and social spheres of the Ainu community around the adulteration of their own culture through the reconstruction of supposedly traditional practices, lacking any historical and ethnological rigor. In the more controversial cases, these activities are part of theme parks, that reconstruct the image of a life that no longer exists, in fragmentation between past and present that expresses nostalgia for an original and authentic world, together with the need of the Ainu themselves to get in touch with the culture of their ancestors. In this sense, tourist marketing of traditional folklore has been both a threat

and an opportunity in the ongoing struggle for the cultural survival of Ainu identity in a globalized world.

In recent years, the visibility of the Ainu on the local and international scenes has increased noticeably and the number of exhibitions on Ainu culture for tourists has grown significantly. Mass tourism in Hokkaidō has increased significantly in villages and open-air venues selling handicraft products and holding traditional music and dance performances. In these centers, the Ainu express their identity by emphasizing the distinctive aspects of their culture and religious heritage, inviting tourists to buy their handcrafted products. Ethno-tourism has thus provided formidable support to the economic and social promotion of the Ainu community, as an engine for the development of local economies that considerably improves the quality of life of some communities hitherto endangered, but at the same time has posed the challenge of commoditization of their traditional culture. This results in complex processes of commodification that has stirred a lively debate both in the economic and social spheres because whether, on the one hand, commodification can bring economic and social benefits, on the other hand, it involves a high “cultural” price to pay on the part of the Ainu.

The development of these three research objectives will allow me to explore the processes of commodification and representation of traditional Ainu culture in museums, villages, and outdoor exhibits, with the ultimate purpose of understanding their place in the negotiation of Ainu ethnicity in contemporary Japan. In this sense, the present doctoral thesis hopes to contribute to the understanding of the historical processes that led to the rising of the phenomenon of the reconstructed villages, affirming the importance that ethno-tourism and commoditization practices such as the ones mentioned can not only have a negative connotation, but ought to be seen as a tool for the survival of the Ainu culture, a way to recover ancient knowledge, albeit in a “transformed” form.

#### ***- State of the art***

Combining literary, historical and religious studies, and museum studies, the present research aims to address a variety of aspects, including the development of activism and

social movements, human rights, and cultural heritage preservation related to Ainu communities.

Starting from historical studies, the Ainu research field was developed by John Batchelor, an Anglican English missionary who lived among the Ainu for more than fifty years, in his book *The Ainu and their folklore* (1901) and *Ainu life & lore* (1939), he mainly focused on the Ainu life, on the daily practices and how they were performed in those years when the theme of ethno-tourism was still distant. Another scholar was Neil Gordon Munro, a Scottish physician, and anthropologist, resident in Japan for almost fifty years, in his book *Ainu creed & cult* (1962), he focused on Ainu cults and how they were performed shortly before the arrival of the Americans in Japan and the beginning of the production of tourist souvenirs for the Americans themselves. These two authors are essential guides to understand the life and the traditional customs and rites before the transformation of their practices began and therefore very important works to understand the difference between these practices and those of today.

From the post-war period onwards and especially since the 1970s, some Ainu activists have made their voices heard due to the situation of poverty and alcoholism in which the Ainu lived. This issue was developed by a South American scholar, Yolanda Muñoz González, whose interest is focused on the resistance movement against cultural assimilation and in particular on the role of women in the movement. In *La literatura de resistencia de las mujeres Ainu* (2008), Muñoz traces the Ainu history, analyzing the colonization of the land of the Ainu, the struggles between Ainu and the Japanese, the years of forced assimilation following the Meiji Restoration, the laws for the protection of the aborigines (1899), the years of activism and the role of women in the collection of oral tradition.

The same theme of resistance was developed by the scholar Richard Siddle, in his book *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan* (1996), where he explores the way in which different versions of Ainu identity have been articulated and re-articulated over the years, and how these identities have served to shape the relations between the Ainu and the Japanese. This is an important work since it clarifies the Ainu position within Japan and how the Ainu were introduced to the modern period of Japanese history as “barbarians”. The current struggle of the Ainu for their identity highlights the social and cultural diversity of Japan, undermining the myth of homogeneity, and reflects a recent

past in which the Ainu people have played an active role, by resisting and reacting to the circumstances.

The theme of ethnic identity is also addressed by the American scholar Ann-Elise Lewallen in her book *The Fabric of Indigeneity. Ainu Identity, Gender, and Settler Colonialism in Japan* (2016). In this book Lewallen reflects on how identity is being reconfigured in the present, and deals with the “Ainu situation”, focusing on the concepts of “being Ainu” and “becoming Ainu”, thus redesigning one's identity starting from practices. If we consider that most contemporary Ainu have no direct experience of traditional practices, indigenous modernity necessarily incorporates the concept of flexibility to allow the passage of ancient knowledge to future generations.

The themes of the reappropriation of one's own identity also pass through the recovery of traditional practices, therefore the material culture, but also the intangible heritage. Nana-Sato Rossberg has also conducted research on the translation of Ainu oral literature, specifically the translation of oral narratives, the translations of Ainu chanted-myths, and the translation from Ainu oral narratives into the Japanese language. Recovering the traditional legends, the songs that accompanied traditional dances, the prayers that were recited on daily occasions or in particular moments in the life of the aborigines, becomes an act of rewriting one's own history.

The concepts of reappropriation of traditional practices and of one's own identity are also linked to the rethinking of religious traditions. The scholar who deals with this topic is Katarina Sjoberg in her book *The Return of the Ainu. Cultural Mobilization and the Practice of Ethnicity in Japan* (1993). The author focuses on the redefinition of the past, the responsibility of the present, the reappropriation of the future. Her interest concerns religious practices and the evaluation of the active participation of today's Ainu. Over time, attention has been directed to the surrounding context, which has influenced the model of Ainu cultural and religious heritage. This can be seen and interpreted as a construction/transformation work. Sjoberg analyzes Ainu negotiations of the current “authentic” context of its cultural and religious heritage, as well as the sum of factors affecting the way in which such heritage is perceived by the majority group. Her work casts a light on the hidden motivations behind the Ainu strategy of survival.

The Italian scholar Fosco Maraini is also an important source when it comes to issues related to Ainu material culture and the recovery of the Ainu identity. His book *Gli ikubashi degli Ainu* (1942), while old, is still relevant in certain respects, for it stands as a fine example of the postwar approach to material culture and its use of symbolism.

The Ainu image and the way it changed over the centuries is a crucial theme of research, brilliantly carried out by Prof. Josef Kreiner, an Austrian ethnologist and a pioneer of ethnological Japanese research, especially as regards Okinawa and the Ainu. In his book *European Studies on Ainu Languages and Culture* (1993), Kreiner explores the first Ainu descriptions by travelers and missionaries, the interests of Japanese painters, and the creation of *Ainu-e* paintings. It is an important project involving the mapping of Ainu material culture collections in museums throughout Europe, the United States, and Canada. The data have been used as a basis for the 2020 project on the new museum in Hokkaidō, in order to understand the situation outside of Japan, both in museums and private collections.

The theme of Ainu material culture has also been dealt with by the French scholar Lucien Clercq in his article “Expressions culturelles et identitaires des Ainu de Hokkaidō à travers l’aire sociale et politique de l’ethno-tourism” (2013), where he focuses on the touristification of identity, the reconstructed villages and the creation of new expressive forms. Clercq analyzes the contemporary situation, stressing how the material culture of the Ainu is used for touristic purposes within the frame of ethno-tourism. This French scholar highlights how traditional ritual practices have changed over the years and are now created for the pleasure of tourists. He focuses on how the Ainu culture has become instrumental, how ritual practices have turned into opportunities for tourist enjoyment inside and outside Japan. For him, ethno-tourism holds a generating power, as it stimulates the careful search for rituals and traditional objects, assisting their revitalization and supporting the formulation of identity claims. Participation in international forums with peoples from all over the world has also increased the sense of pride in Ainu's identity and has encouraged efforts towards ethno-tourism, now perceived as a serious possibility of recognition.

Although the practices involved in this phenomenon are new, the processes that they describe arose more than a century ago, in the celebration context of universal exhibitions and international fairs of a proud new modern world. At that time, the

International Exhibitions were regarded as media events. The scholar Kirsten Ziomek, in his article “The 1903 Human Pavilion: Colonial Realities and Subaltern Subjectivities in Twentieth-century Japan” (2014), discusses the 1903 Human Pavilion’s Ainu Fushine Kōzō. Ziomek considers how the interest shown towards the Ainu in Europe resulted in a use of ethnographic material that was not always anthropologically correct. An example is given to us by the first international exhibition, in which the modern Japanese government took part, the Universal Exhibition in Vienna in 1873. After this, others followed, such as that of Missouri in 1904, or that of London in 1910, and others that followed. Ziomek compares these events to exposures of human beings, thus attributing a completely negative connotation.

Focusing on the more recent remaking of “new traditions” such as the Marimo festival, the scholar Irimoto Takeshi, in his article “Creation of the Marimo Festival: Ainu Identity and Ethnic Symbiosis” (2004), discusses to what extent the Marimo Festival is not only a tourist event since 1949 but also a cultural manifestation that has a broad symbiotic value between nature and man. This new value is revealingly expressed in the “welcome ceremony” of the aegagropilas that are taken by the lake, then kept in a *chise* (“house”) in *Ainu Kotan* and return to the lake the next day. This precisely denotes the reciprocity between nature (divinity) and human beings, based on the traditional Ainu culture, on a dualistic view of the world. As a symbol of natural blessing, the aegagropila plays a similar role to the one plaid by the bears, fish, or plants in other rituals such as the *Iyomante* (“sacred sending of the bear”). The festival thus becomes an event that connects the world of the gods and the world of men, through which this link is described, stated, and reproduced. The festival is not only organized by the Ainu, but also by other locals, who live around Lake Akan, including the *wajin* residents.

For most people, the concept of tourism is closely related to the wood carvings of bears and other items that travelers buy when visiting Hokkaidō. These figurines have become a trademark of the Ainu, showing their economic and cultural engagement in Japanese society. Ōtsuka Kazuyoshi, in his article “Tourism, Assimilation, and Ainu Survival Today” (1999), emphasizes the importance, unknown to tourists, that the carving of these sculptures means, in a religious dimension, for the Ainu. Over time, the commercialization of these objects has conditioned the creation of tourist areas called *Kotan* (“villages”), where the tourist can witness a section of their daily life. With the

growth of worldwide interest in the survival of indigenous cultures, the transmission of traditional culture through ethno-tourism has become an effective means for fostering the preservation of ethnic identities in a globalized world. In this sense, nowadays, the study of aspects related to ethno-tourism are essential elements to understand how the Ainu are facing the issue of extinction in contemporary Japan. From a similar approach, the scholar Chisato O. Dubreuil in her article “Ainu Journey: From Tourist Art to Fine Arts” (1999) discusses precisely the issue of the production of Ainu handicrafts. She points out how the carving techniques applied have been refined and in the village of Nibutani in Biratori various artists have started workshops open to the visitors as an entrepreneurial activity.

Finally, this overview would not be complete without mentioning the work by the Swiss scholar Philippe Dallais, the most renowned specialist on the Ainu in Europe. His researches have studied in depth the tangible and intangible heritage of the Ainu both in Japan and in the West, and since 2004, he is responsible for ethnohistoric photographic collections (department of visual anthropology), at the Museum of Ethnography of the University of Zurich (Völkerkundemuseum). My research is also in debt with his scholarly contributions to the study of the Ainu culture and its representation in Western museums and collections.

### ***- Methodology***

At the methodological level, the thesis applies the research tools of historical analysis, cultural studies, integrating the documentary analysis with some of the main research techniques of social analysis, specifically the interview made on the field. The latter was made up of visits to the reconstructed villages, museums, and Ainu research centers in Hokkaidō. The interviews conducted were addressed both to the Ainu themselves, but also curators of the Japanese collections in various museums, such as those in Italy, where the vast collection of the scholar Fosco Maraini is located (Florence), in the Netherlands (Leiden), where there is the oldest Ainu collection in Europe, and in Hokkaidō.

In recent years I have conducted several interviews with curators of oriental collections in different museums. In Italy, there are two collections: one at the L. Pigorini Museum in Rome, where I met the Curator of Asia collection, Mrs. Loretta Paderni (unfortunately the collection is not on public display), and the other at the National Museum of

Anthropology and Ethnology in Florence, where I had the pleasure of meeting the curator of the Japanese collection, Mrs. Maria Gloria Roselli and the widow of Fosco Maraini, Mieko Namiki. This collection is extremely important because it consists of about 500 objects, all collected in the same period, making it the richest and largest collection in Europe. In the Netherlands, I met the curator of the Japanese and Korean collection, Daan Kok, at the Volkenkunde Museum in Leiden. This visit was extremely important because the collection, despite counting only 36 pieces, is the oldest in Europe. Another interesting interview was the one I conducted at the Kushiro City Museum in Hokkaidō, where I met Rina Shiroishi, curator and Ainu expert from the Hokkaidō University Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies. She explained to me how this museum keeps objects of the Ainu material culture different from the ones preserved in other museums in Japan. Finally, during the research process, I have been also in contact with Prof. Josef Kreiner (CAIS - The Hokkaidō University Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies), a pioneer of ethnological Japanese research and a specialist of Okinawa and Ainu peoples. Thanks to him I received important information regarding the new project, the Ainu National Museum in Shiraoi in 2020.

In this sense, part of my methodological approach included the conduction of interviews and observation in four reconstructed villages (Pirka Kotan in Sapporo, Poroto Kotan in Shiraoi, where the New Museum opened in 2020, Nibutani Kotan in Biratori, Akan Kotan in Kushiro) and in the eight following museums: Pirka Museum and Hokkaidō Museum, both in Sapporo; Ainu Culture Museum, Historical Museum of Saru River, Kayano Shigeru Museum, all in Biratori; Kushiro City Museum, Kawamura Kaneto Museum in Asahikawa and Shakushain Memorial Museum in Shizunai.

### ***- Mapping the research***

The thesis is divided into three parts that correspond to the three research objectives pointed out above. In the first part, which is formed of four chapters, I outline the historical approach to the Ainu culture and tradition, starting from the first descriptions, through the first conflicts and up to the modern annexation to Japan, and the conflicts with Russia in the Sakhalin and the Kurils islands. The consequence of these historical facts was a series of treaties concluded between the Russians and the Japanese intending to divide the islands, an issue still unsolved today. The second chapter deals with the formation of an activist movement, which aimed to recover Ainu identity through the



formulation of the notion of “indigenous people” as a global category. In the third chapter, the difference between the Ainu world (*Ainu Moshiri*) and the god's world (*Kamui Moshiri*) is presented. Ainu religious tradition is then presented, focusing on ceremonial objects belonging to a variety of religious ceremonies. Finally, the fourth chapter deals with issues related to ethnic consciousness, identity, cultural heritage, and Ainu participation in their cultural tradition. In this part, I explore the historical development of Ainu traditional culture, with a special emphasis on Ainu sociopolitical awareness and its cultural revitalization in contemporary Japan.

The second part of the thesis focuses on the important role played by the Italian scholar Fosco Maraini in the dissemination of Ainu culture within Europe. The first chapter deals with the discovery of Japan in Italy. The second chapter is about the appearance of Japanese art there, from the formation of Japanese artistic heritage to art exhibitions in Italy, also hinting at the first promoters of Japanese in that country. The third chapter is dedicated to Fosco Maraini's biography and his eventful life. The focus on Maraini serves the purpose of showing how the image of the Ainu traveled outside Japan, stimulating a growing interest on the part of the Europeans, and the “West” at large, concerning Ainu history and cultural practices. A multi-faceted scholar, a great traveler, photographer, alpinist, Maraini initiated the modern studies on Ainu material culture outside Japan and attempted to apply a new research approach to its cultural study. Publicly well-known in Italy and recognized in specialized academic circles, the intellectual figure of Fosco Maraini has often been overlooked in neighboring scholarly cultures, and in this sense, this second part of the thesis aims to make a contribution to the scholarly dissemination of his works.

The third and final part of the thesis deals with historical Ainu material culture. After a brief introduction in the first chapter, the second chapter focuses on the topic of the reconstruction of Ainu villages and open museums, and the recovery of traditional rituals and the creation of new expressive forms that they develop. The focus of the chapter is on Ainu artisans, their evolution, and the creation of works in some cases closer to art than craftsmanship. I conclude this chapter focusing on the tourism economy through the consideration of two examples of touristification. The first one is the Akan village, that rises on the shores of the lake bearing the same name, with over 40 souvenir shops with Ainu symbols, and restaurants and hotels with Ainu themes. The

second example developed is the Marimo Festival, an event in which the Ainu bring the algae back to the shore to return it gain to the sea, has given rise to the creation of a museum that stands on an island accessible only by boat. In addition, there are numerous *marimo* algae-shaped gadgets that we can find everywhere in stores and supermarkets. In this part I analyze the representational uses of traditional culture (material culture and permanent exhibitions), with a particular emphasis on the issue related to the touristification of cultural identity.

These three parts, corresponding to the three research objectives that I explore in the thesis, are developed in the subsequent chapters in order to show to what extent, beyond their negative connotations, open museums, reconstructed villages and theme parks are contributing to the redefinition of Ainu tradition as complex vehicles to negotiate Ainu cultural identity in contemporary Japan.

# PART I

# CHAPTER I

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### Introduction

The word “Ainu” means “human being” in Ainu language, and it was used to distinguish entities that belonged neither to the world of gods nor to the world of animals. The Japanese referred to the Ainu especially using the name of Emishi.

In this chapter, I analyze the historical development starting from the first time the term Ainu came into use with the first Europeans who approached the Ainu people. It was in 1618 when the Italian Jesuit Girolamo De Angelis set foot in Ezo (today’s Hokkaidō). He is believed to have been the first European to visit it. The first descriptions were of people who go dressed in animal skins, with hair throughout all over the body, have long mustaches, and a long beard. During the Heian period (794-1192), the central government began to crumble. Ezo remained in the hands of the Abe family, who suspended tributes to Kyōto. In the following years, famine and dangers in Honshū pushed a large number of immigrants to move to the island. Trade was developing. At the beginning of the Kamakura period (1192-1333), the Japanese traded with the Ezo across the Tsugaru Strait. During the Muromachi period (1338-1573), the trade was of salmon, algae, animal skins, eagle feathers, which took place from ports south of Ezo to Obama and Tsuruga, three times a year. The dramatic increase of immigrants, especially in the region between Shiokubisaki in the east and Atsusabu Kawa in the west, led to a higher demand for larger fishing grounds. This request hurt the work of the Ainu, giving rise to historical rebellions, like those that happened in the years 1456, 1644, 1699.

In 1806, the Tokugawa government sent troops to Ezo, the Kuril Islands, and Sakhalin. It occupied the northern territories with its garrisons. In 1855 the government established control over the entire area, implementing a policy of assimilation of Ainu people. The Meiji Restoration of 1868 followed and with the colonization of the Hokkaidō (1869), the balance of its indigenous microcosm became upset. The entire Hokkaidō was mapped, divided into selected plots or places for mines or new inhabited

areas. It was renamed in Japanese and transcribed in kanji. Sapporo (from the Ainu language *Sat-poro-pet* “big dry river”), was chosen as the administrative capital. The Ainu were registered in the lists of the registry as *nihonjin*, or Japanese, while official documents used the name *kyuezojin* (ex-barbarians), *komin* (ancient people), *dojin* (native), or *kyūdojin* (former natives) as standardized formulae from 1878.

In this chapter I will consider how the situation of the historical Ezo changed, analyzing the first descriptions of the Ainu and how the Japanese government decided to govern the island, passing through the years of conflict in relations between the Japanese and Ainu and forced assimilation. In the following chapters, I will deal with the contemporary birth of the Ainu resistance movement, the recovery of its cultural tradition, and the identity pride of being Ainu against the discriminatory acts by the majority group.

## **1.1. Early representations of the Ainu**

### **1.1.1. The first descriptions**

The term Ainu came into use with the first Europeans who approached the Ainu people. It was in 1618 when the Italian Jesuit Girolamo De Angelis set foot in Ezo. He is believed to have been the first European to visit Ezo. Two years later it was a Portuguese, Diogo Carvalho, who touched that land. In 1621 De Angelis returned there again. The missionaries were able to report on that territory and its people, the Ainu. However, between 1548-49, the Jesuit Nicola Lancillotto, who at that time was in Malacca, had already received some basic information about that land from a Japanese named Yajirō. In future years, Ezo’s classification as an island or a continental territory would have been the subject of a long debate<sup>12</sup>. Lancillotto reported the following news:

Below China and Japan to the northeast is a country much larger than that called Gsoo, whose inhabitants come to fight against the Japanese in ships large and small [...] they have very short bows and arrows and swords [...] they are a white population, they have

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<sup>12</sup> Tamburello, A. (2003). “La cartografia italiana e l’insularità dell’Hokkaidō. Le prime conoscenze europee degli Ainu attraverso l’opera di Girolamo De Angelis”. *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, pp. 33-34.

long beards, and their hair is cut and they are tall [...] they fight valiantly and do not fear death<sup>13</sup>.

Identical news on their body and warrior nature were found in a report of 1564 by the Portuguese Jesuit Manuel Teixeira<sup>14</sup>. The following year, Father Ludovico Frois wrote from Miyako (today's Kyōto) other more detailed and accurate news from the point of view of topographical positions:

North of Japan is a great kingdom of barbarians who go dressed in animal skins. They are hairy all over the body, they have long mustaches and a long beard. When they drink, they hold their mustaches up with a rod. They are dedicated to wine, they are brave in battle. When they are wounded, they use salt water to wash their wounds [...] These people have no religion and out of heaven, it does not worship anyone. Many of these barbarians come to the territory of Akita, which is a large city in the kingdom of Dewa, for trade purposes<sup>15</sup>.

Another indirect report comes from Father Gasparo Vilela, who in 1571 wrote:

Besides this great country of Japan, there are two other kingdoms of which is called Yezu. The journey by sea from Japan to this kingdom is 150 miles. The inhabitants of that country speak a language other than Japanese and are very different people ... Personally, I have never seen them, but the Japanese who trade with these people say they are just as I describe them. They are strong and courageous ... The extent of this kingdom is very large and extends, as far as I have heard, until the new Spain, which is subject to the crown of Castile. These people have no notion of God. They are said to worship the sun<sup>16</sup>.

De Angelis reported the first direct news:

The reason that led me to say that Yezo was not an island was what the natives told me [...] The first: Yezo by figaxi (east) is surrounded by the sea and similarly by the Minami side (south). Also, in the part of nixi (west) in the land of Texxoi, which is the extreme tip of Yezo, there are very strong currents [...] So there is no other reason for these currents, that there is also sea from the part of the north that runs from figaxi (east)

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<sup>13</sup> Shilling, D.O.F.M. (1943). "Il contributo dei missionari cattolici nei secoli XVI e XVII alla conoscenza dell'isola di Ezo e degli Ainu". In AA.VV. *Le missioni cattoliche e la cultura dell'oriente*. Conferenze "Massimo Piccinini". Roma: ISMEO, p. 144.

<sup>14</sup> Shilling, D.O.F.M. (1943). op. cit., p. 145.

<sup>15</sup> Shilling, D.O.F.M. (1943). op. cit., p. 147.

<sup>16</sup> Shilling, D.O.F.M. (1943). op. cit., pp. 147-148.

to nixi (west). And another from nixi to figaxi causes the aforementioned currents with their ebb and flow<sup>17</sup>.

During his journey, De Angelis noticed an immensely powerful sea current in the west, which bent and dragged large rods like the bamboo canes growing in fresh underwater. This observation led De Angelis to believe Ezo was separated from the mainland by a river. The idea of Ezo's insularity was consequently reinforced. Analyzing the words: "... In Yezo, everyone is lord of their own house ... without having other lords ..." he refers to the lack of knowledge of a "Tartar" ruler on the Ezo, stating that the island does not border with Tartary, as he had previously stated.

Further reports give us a better understanding of the people:

I say that they are robust and of good stature and are usually taller than the Japanese [...] they have very long beards that sometimes reach half of the belly. They have no ugly face, they are well proportioned in the body, and of good appearance. Half of the head is shaved so that there are no "bingami" (side hair strands) and the other half keeps the hair<sup>18</sup>.

He adds: "They have pierced ears and in the holes hang big silver rings [...] and those that do not have silver rings pieces of silk hang from the ears [...] both men and women."

The following report provides us with some information about their clothes:

Men and women wore trousers and long robes closed at the front and, if open, fastened with a belt; in Winter they wore furs with the hairy side inward. The robes, of silk and cotton, were adorned with bits of cloth in the form of crosses [...] The shape of these clothes is like that of the dalmatic of deacons and subdeacons, with many embroideries and decorations [...] I asked why there were so many crosses on the clothes. They said it was a sign that all of them were majestic people [...] The women around the neck instead of gold chains, hang glass beads in different colors. Women's hair[...] is just like "caburos" (short hair cut and kept loose) of Japan. Women dye their lips blue, and five or six circles are painted in the same color" [...] There is news on polygamy: They have a real wife.

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<sup>17</sup> De Angelis, G. (1987). "Relazioni del Regno di Yezo del 1618 e del 1621 di Girolamo De Angelis". *Il Beato Girolamo De Angelis. Relazioni e mappa del regno di Yezo*. Arezzo: Amministrazione Comunale di Enna, pp. 73-74.

<sup>18</sup> De Angelis, G. (1987). op. cit. p. 77.

When the husband dies, the wife remains in the house of her father-in-law or relatives of her husband, without being able to leave the house, without being able to re-marry. If a married woman commits adultery, as punishment for her sin all her hair is torn from her head, so that she is recognized by all as an adulteress". The Jesuit also adds news on their creed: "They indeed have some beliefs towards the sun and the moon because they protect men", finally: "... And none of them knows how to read or write <sup>19</sup>. The dwellings consisted of huts made of reed and pole mats, easily removable and transportable [...] The main food consisted of the products of hunting and fishing, in addition to the rice seasoned with the oil extracted from the sea lion. [...] Bear ham was a delicacy [...] they were fearless and quarrelsome, but in their guerrillas, there were rarely dead people. They use bows, arrows, spears, small scimitars as weapons[...] They put poison in the arrows and therefore their wounds are mortal. On the land, horses were the main means of transport. The Ainu knew how to use them well. At sea, the transport was carried out by large ships, such as those of the Japanese (72 sq. M).

These boats were made up of boards tied together with strings resembling coconut fibers with sails in rush. The main items of trade in the cold season were salmon and dried herring, which they stored in the open air. Other items were whale and sea lion products (especially oils and skins), otter skins, eagle feathers, live or dried birds, fabrics, and rice from the Japanese. Barter was the normal trading method<sup>20</sup>.

Other descriptions came from Ignacio Morera from Virigue, who met an Ainu, at the court of Hideyoshi, in Ōsaka in 1591. Subsequently, the Dutch cartographer and explorer, Maarten Gerritszoon Vries, reached the eastern Asian coasts<sup>21</sup>. Centuries later, Russian sailors<sup>22</sup> radically changed the image of Japan. Not only did we witness the discovery of Sakhalin as an island and no longer as a peninsula, as of then, then followed the vicissitudes related to the territorial divisions between Japan and the then Soviet Union of both Sakhalin and Curili, as well as Urup, Iturup, Shikotan, Habomai, a topic

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<sup>19</sup> De Angelis, G. (1987). op. cit. pp. 77-78.

<sup>20</sup> Dibilio, E. (1987). "La vita, i viaggi, le missioni, il martirio". AA.VV. *Il Beato Girolamo De Angelis. Relazioni e mappa del regno di Yezo*. Arezzo: Amministrazione Comunale di Enna, pp. 32-34.

<sup>21</sup> Kreiner, J. (1999). "European Images of the Ainu as reflected in Museum Collections". In *Ainu Spirit of a Northern People*, edited by William W. Fitzhugh and Dubreuil Chisato O. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, p.125.

<sup>22</sup> See the following chapter.



still open. Talking about Japan also meant including the Ryukyu and Ainu. The image of the Ainu gradually spread throughout the world.

It is important to mention here the figure of Philipp Franz von Siebold (Würzburg, 17 February 1796 - Munich, 18 October 1866), a German physician, botanist, and traveler credited with the introduction of vaccination and pathological anatomy for the first time in Japan<sup>23</sup>. He was sent to Dejima, the artificial island next to Nagasaki, on 28 June 1823, where he arrived on 11 August 1823 as a new doctor and resident scientist, remaining there until 1829. Afterward, he asserted the Ainu had a long history behind them, which dated back thousands of years on the Eurasian continent. He also maintained that their culture represented a very ancient stage of human civilization. His second son, Heinrich, remained in Japan between 1869 and 1896 (Boppard, 1852 - Freudenstein Castle, 11 August 1908). He was a German anthropologist and translator serving the Austrian embassy in Tōkyō. He discovered and excavated an orimori mound in 1877 simultaneously with his most famous competitor, Edward S. Morse. He opposed his theory to Morse, asserting that the prehistoric remains were Ainu settlements. According to Heinrich, the Ainu were the first inhabitants of Japan, but the situation remains an open question. Between 1880 and 1881, Wilhelm Joest (15 March 1852, Köln - 25 November 1897), a German ethnographer and traveler, visited the Ainu of Tsuishikari and the Valle del Saru. He noted that the songs reminded him of Norwegian folk music, and he was impressed, in 1882, on how they used knives, in the same way as Europeans. The descriptions of the Ainu were of cheerful, communicative, honest, and open-hearted people<sup>24</sup>.

### **1.1.2. Ezo cartography**

The first news on the Japanese archipelago arrived in Europe through *Il Milione* by Marco Polo (1254-1324). The book described a place that exported metals and minerals, rich in gold and silver. However, Marco Polo had not been there in person. These were all rumors he had gathered in China the time. Japan was represented for the first time, in medieval European cosmography, in the world map of the Camaldolese Fra' Mauro,

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<sup>23</sup> Odagiri, H. (1996). *Technology and Industrial Development in Japan*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 236.

<sup>24</sup> Kreiner, J. (1999). op. cit. 126-127.

as “Ixola de Cimpagu” (Cipangu or Zipagu, from the Chinese “Jih-pen-kuo” or “the land of the Rising Sun”), partly realized before 1453. Between the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century, the Portuguese navigators contributed to the renewal of the old European cosmography. In his treatise, Antonio Galvao (circa 1490-1557) mentions the landing of the first Europeans on the Japanese islands in 1542: “... an island on the 32nd that is called Japoës ...”. It was not until 1561 that Hokkaidō appeared on Bartolomeu Velho’s “Planisphere”. He portrayed it as a large island in the north of Japan. Similarly, Millo’s “planisphere” of 1582, displayed “Kita no shima” before, and “insula de Spiriti” later. As it has been said, the existence of this large island was recorded by a map of 1585 preserved in the State archives of Florence. The map indicates the Japanese “Yehogaxima” (Ezogashima) that is “island” or “islands of Ezo”. In reality, it appeared with the south higher, located more to the north-east, and moved far to the east.

In 1589 a paper entitled “Maris Pacifici” (quod vulgo Mar del Zur) by Ortelio refers to the island as “Isla de Plata” (silver island) with a caption that reads “Argyra hoc forte antiquorum” as to confirm that the presence of this mineral dates back to ancient times. This data takes us back to the many fantasies about the golden and silver islands, which have stimulated travelers from all over the world since the fifteenth century<sup>25</sup>. An important contribution is also due to another Jesuit, Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), who succeeded in outlining an exact profile of the Japanese archipelago, from Ezo to Kyūshū including the smaller islands. A step forward was made with the commitment of the Italian Jesuit cartographer, Martino Martini (1614-1661). His work, which is dated 1655, is entitled *Novus Atlas Sinensis* and is part of the “Corpus del Theatrum Orbis Terrarum Sive Atlas Novus”. In the general paper entitled “Imperii Sinarum Nova Descriptio”, the name of Japan (in this case in the “Iapan” form, given that the card was completed by the Dutch publisher Blaeu) only refers to Honshū. Kyūshū and Shikoku do not bear nomenclature and Hokkaidō is called Ieso. One merit of Martini's cartographic work on the Japanese archipelago is having attributed an insular

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<sup>25</sup> Maiorana, S. (1990). “La ricerca delle isole d’oro e d’argento nella prima cartografia europea”. *Asia Orientale*, n. IX, pp. 61-82.

conformation to Ezo, at a time when Europe still believe it represented a continental extension of the “Tartary”<sup>26</sup>.

The last card of Martini’s “Atlas” is entitled “Iaponia Regnum”. In this work, Ezo is not considered part of the “Iaponia Regnum”, but rather as a continental land north of Japan itself<sup>27</sup>. In the preface of the “Atlas” Martini states:

Many argue whether this land of Jesso (I call it like the Europeans, abandoning the Chinese name Yeço) is an island or land, but if we want to believe the Chinese, Jesso is entirely part of the uncultivated Tartary: continental land ... But here I do not oblige you to follow my opinion, which I would not like to give precedence to since it is an unsafe topic. I refer the reader to the map in the outline of which I have expressed Chinese persuasion<sup>28</sup>.

Considering the first lines of the preface, one wonders what Martini meant by “Jesso”. In the subsequent cartography, Ezo appears as an island located in an “equivocal” position, with unclear borders. De Angelis’ paper was useful to the studies more than three centuries later. In Italy, Doroteo Shilling, who in 1936 had already found De Angelis's report on a trip to the British Museum in London in 1618<sup>29</sup>.

### **1.1.3. The historiographical debate**

In general, the theory that the Ainu were the distant descendants of aboriginal populations of the Japanese archipelago has been affirmed until recently. In this sense, 19th-century science has defined the Ainu as an anthropological “island” of the “white race” in the Far East<sup>30</sup>. The presence of this human type in a Mongolian population area has for centuries been interested in the features of its “isolated” cultural tradition. Many travelers in the Far East insisted on the similarities that the Ainu presented with white

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<sup>26</sup> Tamburello, A. (1983). “Il Giappone nell’opera di Martino Martini”. In *Martino Martini Geografo cartografo storico teologo*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale, curated by G.Melis, Trento, Provincia Autonoma di Trento Museo Tridentino di Scienze Naturali, pp. 155-163.

<sup>27</sup> Maiorana, S. (1991). “La Cartografia Europea di Ezo (l’odierno Hokkaidō) nei secoli XVI-XIX”. *La Cartografia geografica nel progresso delle conoscenze sull’Oriente nell’Europa dei secoli XV-XIX*. Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, p. 192.

<sup>28</sup> Martini, M. (1655). *Novus Atlas Sinensis ad Lectorem Praefatio*. Amsterdam: Joannes and Willem Blaeu, p. 21.

<sup>29</sup> Shilling, D.O.F.M. (1943). *op. cit.* p. 152.

<sup>30</sup> Tamburello, A. (1990). “Il contributo dell’antropologia al problema dell’etnogenesi giapponese”, *Il Giappone*, X, Roma, pp. 5-16.

peoples. In La Perouse's "Voyage au tour du Monde" of 1797, the author emphasized the somatic features of the Ainu of Hokkaidō, of the Curili and Sakhalin, hypothesizing they represented a population "perhaps even foreign to Asia". In 1868, Bickmore found that the examination of facial features, such as the distance of the eyes, the low prominence of the cheekbones, and the abundant hairiness, distinguished the Ainu from other northern populations, placing them near Europeans and Russians. Starting from these considerations, Bickmore advanced the theory that the Ainu constituted a branch of the "Aryan" family divided from the original trunk at the time of the first immigration. From Central Asia, the "Europid" breed would have split into various branches, one of which would have moved westward through Iran; another in the south towards India; a third to the east reaching the Japanese archipelago. Bickmore's hypothesis represented an important work base for the leaders of the Eurasian diffusion of the paleo-European populations.

In 1870, Bernhard J. Davis examined Ainu skeletons, observing they did not differ from those in Europe. He noted that the weights of Ainu brains were much greater than those of all other Asian races<sup>31</sup>. Between 1890 and 1894, Koganei claimed that the physical traits of the Ainu and their physical characteristics were on the whole as far from those of the Europeans as they were from the Mongols. The premises were formed to classify the Ainu among the "southern" races. This was done in the wake of Vivien de Saint-Martin, who already in 1872 had considered them as a northern branch of an "oceanic race" spread from Indochina to Polynesia. Matsumoto proposed the "pan-Ainu" theory. According to this theory, the Ainu populations, together with the Caucasians and Australis, were part of a single racial group, originally located in Central Asia, where it is thought the Mongolians pushed them towards the areas peripherals of the Asian continent. During the Neolithic, the Ainu who settled in the archipelago differed in regional types<sup>32</sup>. In particular, the regional types were those of the Aoshima type, represented by the Ainu of Sakhalin and Kurils, and those of Hokkaidō, who were a fusion of the Aoshima and Miyato types. It is interesting to note the Miyato spread in the last Jōmon period throughout Japan. According to Baelz (1883), the Ainu were part of a Caucasus race that populated the whole of Northeast Asia in ancient times. Baelz

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<sup>31</sup> Kreiner, J. (1999). *op. cit.* p. 127.

<sup>32</sup> Tamburello, A. (1970). "Il contributo dell'antropologia al problema dell'etnogenesi giapponese". *Il Giappone*, X, Rome, pp. 5-16.

believed this race split into two branches due to the movement of Mongolian and Turkish populations. Between 1907-1912, in the new climate of the “southern” hypotheses, he observed similarities with the populations of the Ryūkyū and the South Sea islands. He deemed them to be the consequence of migratory phenomena. He also traced their descent from an ancient European population of Asia Oriental, which formed the basis of the European race. Shrenk associated them with a Mongolian type and a European or Caucasian type, the latter linked to a group of “paleo-Siberian” populations whose original headquarters in the continent.

Between 1906-1912 Biasutti also wrote about the Ainu as “archaic” or “paleomorphic” populations. He classified them as a race belonging to the pre-European lineage of the Europoid branch. Between 1927-1937, Montandon - as well as Wilhelm Koppers in 1938 – identified “proto-Nordic” racial elements in the European features of the Ainu. From whom descended the North Europeans, the Ainu, and the so-called “paleo-Siberian” race. Giuffrida-Ruggeri agreed with this thesis. In 1913 he spoke of “Homo Oceanicus” and in 1921 he described it as a variety of the “Homo Meridionalis”. In 1933, Shternberg placed the Ainu in western Indonesia<sup>33</sup>, asserting that their belonging to the south could be inferred from material culture, as well as from the matrilineal social organization. However, he also observed that by adapting to the northern “climate”, they preserved elements of their original culture, such as poisonous arrows, yuta yarns, and fabrics, the cult of an animal that in a cold climate has turned into a sacrificial rite. For his part, Tamburello linked the “southern” peculiarities to some “euro-Australian” aspects which were common to the pre-Europeans since both the Europoids and the Australids derived from them. In 1952, Lundman placed the Ainu in an indo-oceanic group of archaic races, and in 1963 Levin leaned towards a genetic relationship with the equatorial races. Biasutti classified the Ainu in a class of pre-European populations connected to the boreal races<sup>34</sup>. In 1951, following on from Matsumoto’s pan-ainu theory, Groot revealed the Mesolithic character of the Jōmon culture. He established

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<sup>33</sup> Tamburello, A. op. cit. pp. 5-16.

<sup>34</sup> Cfr. Biasutti, R. (1967). “Il popolamento dell’Asia e lo sviluppo delle sue culture”. In Biasutti, R. *Le Razze e i Popoli della Terra*, Turin, vol. II, p. 388. R. Biasutti, “Il popolamento dell’Asia e lo sviluppo delle sue culture”, in: R. Biasutti, *Le Razze e i Popoli della Terra*, Turin, 1967, vol. II, p. 388. For the anthropological studies on Ainu see: Groot, G.J. (1951). *The Prehistory of Japan*, New York: LLC; Kidder, J.E. (1960). *Il Giappone prima del buddhismo*. Milan: Il Saggiatore; Levin, M.G. (1963). *Ethnic Origins of the Peoples of Northeastern Asia*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

that under the pressure of the Neolithic populations (Austronesians, Chinese and Tungus), Mesolithic groups, not only of Ainu-Caucasoid lineage but of various “physical types,” were pushed towards the periphery of the continent bringing in the archipelago the Jōmon culture. In this sense, it was concluded that the Jōmons were, therefore, the ancestors of the Ainu and a key factor in the formation of the modern Japanese racial type<sup>35</sup>.

According to Haguenaer, the Ainu presented themselves as a group of clans that underwent strong influences from heterogeneous human groups over the centuries. Anthropology indicates the Ainu are not among Mongolian types nor do they have common features. Nevertheless, the Ainu of Sakhalin were more closely connected to the Gilyaki (Nivkhi) and the Ainu of Hokkaidō were connected to the Japanese type. He argues that these are forms of hybridism. The anthropological remains of ancient Japanese Jōmon have been documented by miscegenation phenomena, which now lend themselves to classifying or “Ainu” or “Japanese”<sup>36</sup>.

## **1.2. Pre-modern period**

### **1.2.1. Early Times**

Interestingly, the Japanese never referred to the Ainu using their name, but later this name was used under European influence. The word Ainu is translated as “human being”. It was used to distinguish entities that belonged neither to the world of gods nor to the world of animals. The Japanese referred to the Ainu especially using the name of Emishi. The first relations between the Japanese and Emishi were reported in *Nihongi*’s “Saimei-ki” (Annals of Empress Saimei, 654-661). The term “Watarishima” (“island beyond the waters”) was used precisely to indicate Ezo. The barbarian populations of the North of Honshū represented a long-lasting problem. Until the seventh century, the territory of Honshū annexed into the Yamato stretched to the south of the 38th parallel. In the North, the “terra incognita” of the Michi no oku survived, populated by the Emishi

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<sup>35</sup> Cfr. Groot, G.J. (1951). *The Prehistory of Japan*. New York: LLC.

<sup>36</sup> For the anthropological study on Ainu and archaeological research see: Groot, G.J. (1951). *The Prehistory of Japan*, New York: LLC; Kidder, J.E. (1960). *Il Giappone prima del buddhismo*, Milan: Il Saggiatore; Fairservis W.A. Jr., (1961). *Le Origini della Civiltà nell’Estremo Oriente*, Florence; Levin, M.G. (1963). *Ethnic Origins of the Peoples of Northeastern Asia*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

or Kai (the “barbarians of the prawns”), also referred to as Ebisu and Ezo and perhaps predecessors of the Ainu<sup>37</sup>.

For centuries they had progressively been ousted from their most southern lands or absorbed and converted to agriculture as they advanced towards the North. They were recruited in large numbers as border guards for their warrior qualities, at least from 648. Later on, they were recruited for military colonies and decorated with titles and ranks, as was already the case from 655 and 689 for 213 Emishi. Between 658-660, naval and land war actions repelled Ezo to the Shiribeshi line. The expeditions remained tied to the name of Abe no Hirafu, of true or alleged Emishi descent, who was taken to the northern lands with a fleet of 180 ships. Fights were also conducted against groups of barbarians known as Mishihase or Shukushin<sup>38</sup>. Prisoners (*fushū*), especially Emishi, entered the service of the imperial army or monasteries and sanctuaries. many, as laborers, were employed in the imperial rice fields scattered among the provinces. The Emishi who surrendered or joined the Japanese side, enabling the so-called “pacification of the Ezo” (*Ezo seibatsu*), suffered a similar fate. Yamato's attempts to absorb the Emishi and their lands began from at least the second half of the seventh century, after the founding of the *ritsuryō* (the state based on penal and administrative codes modeled on the empire of the Tang). In 714, for the agrarian valorization of the Dewa no kuni, incorporated in 708 in the province of Echigo two hundred households were “moved” from various localities.

In 716, hundred householders were moved, a hundred in 717 and another two hundred in 719. In 734, the northern frontier of the Dewa was carried to Akita, which became the seat of a stronghold. During those years, Mutsu no kuni, a new province in the North, welcomed over a thousand Japanese. Dewa and Mutsu were then the new frontier areas of northern Japan. Both had thousands of Emishi on their way to Japan, but many groups on either side of the palisade did riots, bite the brake by breaking out riots or making raids and looting in settlers' lands. In one of their bloody revolts of 709, two expeditions were placed under the command of Kose Maro and Saeki Sekitō with weapons supplied

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<sup>37</sup> Ōbayashi, T. (curated by) (1986). “Emishi”. Tōkyō, 1979; K. Hanihara & T. Ōbayashi, “Kitani sūnda gen- nihonjin – Emishi”, K. Hanihara (curated by), “Nihonjin tanjō”. Tōkyō, pp. 199-222.

<sup>38</sup> Sakushin was the term used to refer to the tungus tribes that lived in the area between the Sungari River and the Sea of Japan.

by the various provinces. In 720, with a new uprising, Tajihi Agatamori was sent with others. He was followed in 724 by Fujiwara Umakai and Takahashi Yasumaro. Umakai and Yasumaro had an army of thirty thousand men whom they had recruited in the north-eastern provinces as they returned victorious from a campaign. In the same year, Ōno Azumando built the castle of Taga (Taga-jō) in Mutsu, at present-day Sendai, where a headquarters (*chinjufu*) was established the following year. In *Shoku Nihongi* we read: “They invade our borders and ignore the provisions of the State ... send the army to break down and destroy on time<sup>39</sup>.”

In 770, the chief Emishi Ukanume Ukutsunamio disappeared with his followers, after his declared intention of forming a coalition to attack the outposts of the Yamato. Two days after the state declared war, the Emishi in Mutsu attacked Momono and proceeded to “burn bridges, obstruct roads ... crush everything”<sup>40</sup>. Since the beginning of hostilities, the Emishi fought the Japanese stationed at the borders, capturing a good number and transferring them to their rear areas. It was then up to the imperial troops to unearth them. This had already happened in 725 to a group of over seven hundred, who had been expelled from the border regions and settled in the South, even in Shikoku and Kyūshū, to prevent further possible collusion with the other Emishis. An Emishi raid in the Mutsu was recorded in 774; the peaceful Omotomo Surugamaro, while, after the destruction of the Taga castle in 780 by the Emishi always, it suffered a defeat in 789 Ki Kosami, which was replaced by Ōtomo Otomaro. He divided his forces of 52,800 men between cavalry and infantry, into three armies deployed south of the Koromo River. In May of that year, 2,000 of these men were posted to attack the home of Emishi chief Taibo no Aterui, where they encountered resistance from 300 of his followers.

After a first attack, 800 Emishi houses were burned in 14 villages. The advance continued in the village of Subuse. The armed forces did not arrive, triggering a feeling of revenge in the native community. This caused the imperial troops to retreat, causing the death of 5 officers and 25 soldiers, 245 wounded, 1,036 drowned men, and another 1,250 dead beyond the river. In all, only 800 Emishi warriors attacked a vastly superior number of Japanese with impetus<sup>41</sup>. In 794, 75 Emishi villages burned, 457 dead, 150

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<sup>39</sup> “Shoku-Nihongi”, Karl F. (1997). “Pushing beyond the pale: The Yamato conquest of the Emishi and northern Japan”. *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 23:1, p. 10.

<sup>40</sup> “Shoku-Nihongi”. op. cit. p. 11.

<sup>41</sup> “Shoku-Nihongi”. op. cit. p. 20.



prisoners, 85 horses. In 796, 9000 nine thousand Japanese were stationed in the province, while the defenses at the border were strengthened by sending troops under the command of Sakanoue no Tamuramaro. He was first awarded the rank of *sei-i-tai-shōgun*. Between 797-801, he inflicted other hard blows to the Emishi, capturing some tribal chieftains with their retinue of over five hundred men. An umpteenth rebellion of the Emishi took place in 811 in the Fun'ya Watamaro office. A year later, the rebellion defeated a bloody revolt. As a result, the government officially declared the Emishi “appeased”. A new era of peace had begun in the north-east<sup>42</sup>. During the reign of the emperor Seiwa, in 875, the natives of the island, in command of eighty boats, plundered and massacred the peasants of the districts of Akita and Akiumi. In 878, during the reign of Emperor Yōzei, an Emishi revolt broke out in the Dewa needed of three thousand men. Another riot broke out in 939, while another in Mutsu broke out in 1057. Meanwhile, many Emishis began to take to the sea, leaving Honshu behind on the island. From then on, the island became the “Ezo” par excellence and the largest habitat of the populations that would be known in the modern age as the Ainu<sup>43</sup>.

### **1.2.2. The years of conflict**

During the Heian period (794-1192), the central government began to crumble. Ezo remained in the hands of the Abe family, who suspended tributes to Kyōto. In the following years, famine and dangers in Honshū pushed a large number of immigrants to move to the island. They took the name of “Watari Tō” (“group of Watari”), with a social organization similar to that of the aborigines of Ezo. Another migratory wave occurred following the campaigns between the imperial and military families that extended to the region of Ōu (in Honshū). Continuous wars between families were the prerequisites for migrations to a new world. In a short time, the most powerful families built fortresses, ruled the inhabitants of their territories, and later were subjugated under the control of the Andō of Tsugaru, who succeeded the Abe. Trade was developing. At the beginning of the Kamakura period (1192-1333), the Japanese traded with the Ezo across the Tsugaru Strait, transporting goods from Aomori to the ports of Tsuruga and

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<sup>42</sup> “Shoku-Nihongi”. op. cit. p. 21.

<sup>43</sup> De Palma, D. (1997). “Ricerche sulla cartografia di Ezo”. *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*. Supplement n° 1 to Vol. LXXI, Rome.

Obama, in the north of Lake Biwa<sup>44</sup>. During the Muromachi period (1338-1573), the traffic was managed by the Ashikaga. The transport of salmon, algae, animal skins, eagle feathers, took place from ports south of Ezo to Obama and Tsuruga, three times a year. The dramatic increase of immigrants, especially in the region between Shiokubisaki in the east and Atsusabu Kawa in the west, led to a higher demand for larger fishing grounds. This request affected the work of the indigenous population, giving rise to historical episodes, such as when a blacksmith from Kajimura (now Hakodate) was killed by a clan leader in 1456.

The following year the Kosamaynu clan leader attempted the assault on Fukuyama. Colony after colony fell into the hands of the native inhabitants, while the refugees found shelter near Matsumae and Kaminokuni. The years 1471 and 1501 marked further attacks by the native community. The base of Kakizaki was the only one that managed to resist. The other front reacted by bringing together all the Japanese, including those of Ezo, and by launching a decisive attack. In 1504, repeated raids slowed the flow of goods<sup>45</sup>. With the subsequent resumption of trade at the end of the Muromachi period, the Japanese built thirteen new ports to export products, such as Chinese brocade silk and blue glass beads, through the Tsugaru<sup>46</sup>. According to Mogami Tokunai<sup>47</sup>, silk was used to produce wallets, while beads were used as decoration for scrolls and paintings. Consumer goods purchased in Ezo were directed to Ōtsu, the distribution center for merchants in Omi, north of Kyōto, on the Tokaidō. According to Jeffrey<sup>48</sup>, trade took place from Esashi, Hakodate, and Fukuyama – the three main ports of southern Ezo – to the urban centers of Honshū. Ships heading west (*nishi mawari*) first stopped at Shimonoseki, in the southern Honshū, then across the inland sea towards saka, Hyōgo and along the northern coast of Kyūshū to Nagasaki. Ships heading east (*higashi mawari*) transported goods directly from southern Ezo ports to Edo or in Kantō<sup>49</sup>. Many

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<sup>44</sup> *Shinsen Hokkaidō shi* (1936-1937). (Revised History of Hokkaidō). Sapporo: Hokkaidō cho, Vol. I, pp. 15-17.

<sup>45</sup> Takakura, S. (1972). *Shinpan ainu seisaku shi* (Revised History of Ainu Policy). Tōkyō: Sanichi shobo, p. 27.

<sup>46</sup> *Shinsen Hokkaidō shi* (1936-1937). op. cit. pp. 16-17.

<sup>47</sup> Tokunai, M. (1994). *Ezo soshi* (Miscellaneous Writings on Ezo). Tōkyō: Ed. Suto Juro MBC 21, p.131.

<sup>48</sup> Hanes, J. E. (1993). “From Megalopoli sto Megaroporisu”. *Journal of Urban History*. vol. XIX, 1993, p. 60.

<sup>49</sup> *Shinsen Hokkaidō shi* (1936-1937). op. cit. p. 26.

of these ships were called benzai and were of different tonnage. The largest was called *kitamaebune* and had a capacity of 1,000 koku<sup>50</sup>.

In 1512 the Ezo assaulted the three castles of Ushieshi, Shinoru, and Yokuramae, and three samurai committed *seppuku*, as well as after the assault on the castle of Odate. In 1514, as the Kakizakis moved to Fukuyama they were entrusted with the management of the island by the Andō. In 1515 Tokuyama castle was attacked. Clashes followed in the years 1525, 1529, 1531, 1536. In all of these clashes, the Japanese came out as winners. Pozdnieiev described their relationships with a single word “*istreblenie*”, which stands for “extermination<sup>51</sup>“. In the late sixteenth century, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, for national unification<sup>52</sup>, gathered almost all of its most trusted generals in central Japan, that is, in the provinces around the capital. He also sent the daimyō who could cause discomfort to the more distant provinces<sup>53</sup>.

In 1582 Toyotomi Hideyoshi received Kakizaki Yoshihiro and recognized the Kakizaki family as independent of the Andō. It remained such until 1799 when the eastern Ezo fell under the total dominion of the Bakufu. In 1590 Kakizaki Yoshihiro went to Kyōto, where he swore allegiance to the regent in exchange for the investiture of the feud and the title of Shima no kami (“Lord of the islands”)<sup>54</sup>. In 1599 Yoshihiro changed his name to Matsumae<sup>55</sup>. Takakura Shinichiro remodels this event to 1514 when Yoshihiro's great-grandfather Mitsushiro moved to Fukuyama and became governor of Ezo<sup>56</sup>. On the second day of the first month of 1593, Yoshihiro headed to Nagoya, the headquarters of the countryside, following the call for military mobilization. It was then that

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<sup>50</sup> Flershem, Robert G. (1964). “Some Aspects of Japan Sea Trade in the Tokugawa Period”. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. III, p. 407.

<sup>51</sup> Kosarev, V.D. (n.d.). “The Initiates: Foundation of Early Japanese State as a Polyethnic Process”. Retrieved from <http://kosarev.press.md/Ain-Jap-1.html>

<sup>52</sup> From the beginning of the struggles for national hegemony, the forces that had fought for control of Japan were constituted by coalitions of daimyo that, in the imminence of a danger or an eventual conquest, gravitated around the most powerful daimyo, or for relations of vassalage or by voluntary alliance.

<sup>53</sup> The most dramatic move was that of Tokugawa Ieyasu, who was transferred from the provinces of origin, Mikawa and Totomi, to the distant Kantō.

<sup>54</sup> Harrison, J.H. (1953). *Japan's Northern Frontier: A preliminary study in colonization and expansion with special reference to the relations of Japan and Russia*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, p. 7.

<sup>55</sup> According to Batchelor, the term Matsumae derives from Aido Madomai, indicating the part of Ezo south of the Ishikari river.

<sup>56</sup> Takakura, S. (1960). *The Ainu of Northern Japan*. Philadelphia: *The American Philosophical Society*, vol. 50, IV, p. 10.

Hideyoshi offered him a fiefdom of 3000 koku<sup>57</sup> of income in the province of Ōmi. However, Yoshihiro asked for the right of control over Ezo instead. Shortly afterward he was invested Lord of Matsumae and a red seal certificate prescribed:

Like ordinary citizens (Japanese inhabitants of Matsumae), sailors and merchants who come from other parts must not treat the Ezo in Matsumae unfairly. Furthermore, duties on maritime traffic must be imposed as before. Should someone disobey these instructions, you must notify us immediately, and offenders will be punished immediately.

In Kakizaki, Shima no kami<sup>58</sup>

Hideyoshi thus granted Kakizaki trade monopoly on the Ezo. In 1596 he issued a red seal certificate to Morihiro, son of Kakizaki Yoshihiro, where he prohibited any kind of mistreatment and trade, as well as any travel directly to the island. In 1600 the construction of a castle began at Matsumae, Fukuyama, completed in 1606. In 1603, Tokugawa Ieyasu was named shogūn. The following year he was granted a destination known as *kakuinjo*, certified by the black seal, confirming Hideyoshi's political decisions<sup>59</sup>.

It is illegal for those who come to Matsumae from other provinces to do business directly with the Ezo without asking permission from the Lord of the Islands. Those who make the crossing to Ezo to engage in the purchase and sale without the permission of the Lord of the Islands must be reported without fail. As for the Ezo, they must be allowed to travel wherever they wish. It is strictly prohibited to treat Ezo unfairly. Those who violate the previous provisions must be severely punished. These are the provisions.

To Matsumae, Shima no kami

### 1.2.3. The development of trade

The Matsumae made decisive changes to Ezo's future by dividing the island into two sections: the Japanese settlement area of *Wajinchi* and that of the native Ezochi. The

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<sup>57</sup> Standard capacity measure based on which the rice production was estimated and therefore the incomes of the feudal lords and the salaries of the officials. The lords of the feuds who produced over 10,000 kokus had the rank of daimyo.

<sup>58</sup> Kamiya, N. (1994). "Japanese Control of Ezochi and the Role of Northern Koryo". *Acta Asiatica*, n. 67, p. 57.

<sup>59</sup> Kamiya, N. (1990). *Bakuhansei kokka no Ryūkyū shihai* (State control of Ryūkyū under the bakufu and han system). Tōkyō: Azekura Shobo, p. 81.

border was marked by guard posts called *banshō*. This intervention gave them a double advantage. Keeping the Ainu away from *Wajinchi* meant having a solid base to exploit Ezochi from. On the other hand, keeping the Japanese away from Ezochi<sup>60</sup> meant commercial monopolies could be established to be divided in turn among the vassals. Furthermore, limiting immigration firstly encouraged the promotion of defense against the Ezo, later they instituted a system of taxes and tributes for those who went fishing and trading in the area. The causes of this policy were economic. Agriculture was not enough and a large part of Matsumae's economy was based on fishing, fish processing, and trading with the Ezo. According to the Lord of Matsumae, it was impossible to pay his vassals in rice. Consequently, in the second half of the 600, the basho system was introduced.

According to Mogami<sup>61</sup>, Soya, Akkeshi, and Kunashiri (in the Kuril archipelago), Japanese merchants traded sake, rice, and other products with sea otter skins, hawk feathers, and eagle tails. According to Inagaki<sup>62</sup>, trade was preceded by two types of ritual ceremonies. In the version of the native communities of the *uimam* (*uimamu*) and the *umsa* (*omusha*), the participants exchanged a handshake, a pat on the shoulder, and some gifts. Then the goods were exchanged and drank sake, making arrangements as per protocol. According to the Japanese, the term “uimam” derives from the word “audience”. On the contrary, the Ezo believe the word derives from “trade”<sup>63</sup> instead, considering the “umsa”, an opportunity to obtain “treasures” they could not have had otherwise. Sakakura<sup>64</sup> states that the handshake became customary among the aborigines who lived next to the Japanese colonies. Every spring, during the hearing, the Ezo did not wear the *atsushi*, but “feminine clothes,” *haori* coats from Japan, and *jittoku* (Chinese silks) worn by the Ul'chi merchants.

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<sup>60</sup> Edmonds, R.L. (1985). *Northern Frontiers of Qing China and Tokugawa Japan*. Chicago: The University of Chicago, p. 8.

<sup>61</sup> Tokunai, M. (1994). op. cit. p. 30.

<sup>62</sup> Reiko, I. (1985). “Kinsei Ezochi ni okeru girei shihai no tokushitsu: uimamu, omusha no hensen o tossite (Characteristics of Ritual Domination in Early Modern Ezo: As Seen Through the Changes in the Uimam and Umsa)”. *Minshu seikatsu to shinko, shiso* (Popular Culture, Religion, Thought). Tōkyō: Minshushi kenkyukai, pp. 111-113.

<sup>63</sup> Howell, David L. (1994). “Ainu Ethnicity and the Boundaries of the Early Modern Japanese State”. *Past and Present*, 142, pp. 81-83.

<sup>64</sup> Genjiro, S. (1969). “Hokkai zuihitsu (Miscellaneous Accounts of the Northern Seas). *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shusei* (Collected Sources on the History of the Daily Lives of Common Japanese People), ed. Takakura Shinichiro, Tōkyō: Sanichi shobo, Vol. IV, p. 409.

Only after the ceremony, the Japanese honored the native inhabitants with rice and sake. According to Kikuchi Isao<sup>65</sup>, the *jittoku* garment manufacturer emphasized their subordination to the Matsumae. An alternative was the massive number of estates in Ezochi under the direct control of the Matsumae, and another 85 holdings of vassals, which dealt with trades such as timber. When the vassals contracted their *basho* to the highest bidder, a large quantity was assigned to merchants from Ōmi who received special rights in the area, as well as monopolizing relations with the indigenous population and the related administration. A disrespectful attitude towards the Ezo, with exploitation, falsification of weights and measures, the prohibition to them to learn Japanese language and culture. They inhabited the Ōshima peninsula, while the native communities inhabited the interior of Ezo, abandoned to itself among merchants and revolts<sup>66</sup>. The discontent spread rapidly, culminating in 1644 when Chief Henauke incited a revolt. The revolt was later sedated. The situation is described by Haukase, who stated:

Matsumae has his Lord, but I am the leader of the Hinuikari Ainu. Your threat that prohibits my rights to trade is unfair. We have allowed you to come and trade at your leisure, but if you choose not to come, we accept it. We have always lived according to our traditions. If in the future Japanese ships will arrive from us, nobody will come back alive. Be prepared<sup>67</sup>.

The most important Ezo rebellion occurred in 1669, when Shakushain (also known as Sakusain, Sakusyain, Syamusyain, Syakusen, Syuusen), leader of the Ezo settled to the east of the island near the Shibuchari river, killed Onibishi, leader of the Ainu settled west of Ezo. The murder happened near the river Saru, following a dispute over some hunting and fishing areas. The following year the Ezo attacked the Japanese vessels and incited the remaining Ezo to revolt. Fearing the gravity of the rebellion, the Matsumae asked for reinforcements in Edo. The revolt known as “Ezo ran” continued, extending to the other tribes, until 1672. The story destabilized Edo. In the east, 11 ships were attacked and 120 people killed. In the west, 8 of the ships attacked and 153 people lost their lives. The situation recalled the Shimabara uprising of 1637, so much to induce the

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<sup>65</sup> Kikuchi, I. (1991). *Hopposhi no naka no kinsei Nihon* (Early Modern Japan in Northern History). Tōkyō : Kokura shobo, p. 23.

<sup>66</sup> De Palma, D. (1997). *op. cit.* pp. 18-20.

<sup>67</sup> Kitamura, K. (1731). “Tsugaru Ittoshi” (Hand-written document submitted to Tsugaru feudal domain).

shogūnate to pay more attention to Ezo and the Matsumae to intensify control over the whole territory. In an attempt to seek a compromise with the Japanese, Shakushain organized a banquet. His younger brothers Tsintekai and Siravesi, all three heads of the Khahuka, Katenku, and Makanoske tribes, also took part in the banquet. During the banquet, silent reinforcements arrived. They killed Shakushain, destroying everything. Meanwhile, outside the camp 25 Ezo leaders awaited the outcome of the pact. Only Shakushain's brother Siravesi managed to survive. In Nosyappu, the westernmost tip of Hokkaidō, a monument to Japanese soldiers was raised in this battle<sup>68</sup>.

#### 1.2.4. The annexation

In 1792 the daimyō of Matsumae was largely dispossessed of its territories. This happened under the pretext of the growing strategic importance of his han and the transactions. The transactions had already occurred with the Russians despite the laws in force and with the complacency and negligence of the Han authorities. An Ezo bugyō took over the control of the Ezo. He was based in Hakodate, reporting directly to the bakufu. He was in charge of the defense and colonization of the northern border<sup>69</sup>. In 1806, the Tokugawa government sent troops to Ezo, the Kuril Islands, and Sakhalin. It occupied the northern territories with its garrisons. In 1855 the government established control over the entire area, implementing a policy of assimilation of the native population. The Meiji Restoration of 1868 followed and the colonization of the Hokkaidō (“Circuit of the North Sea”), the new name of Ezo given to him since 1869, was promptly initiated.

The consequences of these changes were dramatic. From 1868, the new name of Edo the “Kaitakushi”<sup>70</sup> arose in Tōkyō as the was an organ for the supervision of the development of Hokkaidō. It aimed to civilize the “barbarian” Ainu through a policy

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<sup>68</sup> Kosarev, V.D. (n.d.). “The Initiates: Foundation of Early Japanese State as a Polyethnic Process”. Retrieved from <http://kosarev.press.md./Ain-Jap-1.html>

<sup>69</sup> On the first relations between Japan and Russia: Lensen, G.A. (1959). “Early Russo-Japanese Relations”. *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, 10, 1950-51. *The Russian Push toward Japan: Russo-Japanese Relations 1697-1875*. Princeton University Press; Schäfflerová-Vasiljevová Z. (1962). “New Soviet Works on early Russo-Japanese Relations”. *Archiv Orientální*, 4; Takano, A. (1971). *Nihon to Roshia*. Tōkyō: Kinokuniya Shoten; Stephan, J.J. (1975). *The Kuril Islands: Russo-Japanese Frontiers in the Pacific*. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>70</sup> Kaitakushi (Office for the development of the territory), was the name of the main administrative institution for the conquest of Hokkaidō. De Palma, D. (1997). op. cit. p. 60.

aimed at transforming those individuals into productive Japanese subjects. On August 14, 1876, the Sapporo Agricultural Institute offered to prepare young students for modern technologies, theoretical and practical agricultural knowledge for land development. The school was founded in Tōkyō in 1872, with a division of science and technology. It also included a division between women and Ainu<sup>71</sup>. In 1875 it was transferred to Sapporo, taking the name of Sapporo Gakkō (Sapporo Institute), in order to defend the northern border and its expansion towards Kamchatka and Sakhalin. In 1907 the Sapporo Gakko was renamed “Imperial Agricultural University of Tōhoku”. In 1918 it became the “Imperial University of Hokkaidō”, with the addition of the faculties of Art, Law, and Medicine. The entire Hokkaidō was mapped, divided into selected plots or places for mines or new inhabited areas. It was renamed in Japanese and transcribed in kanji. Sapporo was chosen as the administrative capital. Work began on deforestation and construction of communication routes to make the most of natural resources. The Ainu were registered as *nihonjin*, or Japanese, while official documents used the name *kyūdojin* (former natives) as standardized formulae from 1878, and they were forced to abandon their native culture<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>71</sup> The Kaitakushi sent students of both sexes abroad to prepare them. In fact, between 1872 and 1874, 44 students were sent abroad. In 1872 a school for women was included and a division for Ainu. 35 Ainu were selected from Hokkaido to study in Tōkyō between 1872 and 1874. In April 1876, these divisions were abolished, in Willcock, H. (2000). “Traditional Learning, Western Thought, and the Sapporo Agricultural College: A Case Study of Acculturation in Early Meiji Japan”. *Modern Asian Studies*, 34,4. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, pp. 977-1017.

<sup>72</sup> Calzolari, S. (1995). “Un popolo che vuole rinascere”. *POGROM*, Vol. 1 - N. 2-3 (9-14). Retrieved from <https://silviocalzolari.org/un-popolo-che-vuole-rinascere>



## CHAPTER II

### SOCIAL AND POLITICAL AWARENESS AMONG THE AINU

#### **Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is the Ainu resistance movement and the Ainu awareness of their cultural roots until the law in 2019 when they were recognized as “indigenous people” of Japan.

At the end of the Second World War, Japan was occupied militarily by the U.S forces. Japan became a parliamentary democracy in which the emperor remained a symbol of the state and unity of the nation. The new constitution entered into force in May 1947. With the postwar land reform (1946-1950), the lands of the many Ainu were unfairly confiscated. Consequently, some Ainu leaders decided to make their voices heard. The economic and social situation was difficult. Practically, all efforts were equal to mere survival. This situation remained stable until the sixties when the movement gained new strength in the voice of the new generations of Ainu activists. Young activists tried to recover their ancestral cosmology, intending to recreate positive referents to unite the Ainu community. In this context, Yamamoto Tasuke inspired the activists of the sixties and seventies to revive the cultural manifestations of the Ainu people, through the art of embroidery, dances, and the celebration of ancestral rituals to reinvigorate the symbols of ethnicity in a frame of resistance, and not as a spectacle for tourists. This was an opportunity to create and consolidate a feeling of belonging to a community that shared the same ideals and cultural past.

It was at this time that the Japanese state declared itself as “a monoethnic nation”, confirming the importance of race as an indisputable factor of Japanese ethnicity. The concept of racial and cultural homogeneity became a hallmark of Japanese identity. Therefore, the Ainu ethnicity was redefined as a space of struggle and resistance. In 1992 the Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities was proposed as a reference tool for the protection of rights. At the inaugural speech, on 12 December 1992, Nomura Giichi, representative of the Ainu nation, underlined the importance of recognition for all indigenous peoples by states and international organizations as a way to achieve “The development and

realization of a society in which all people can live together with dignity”<sup>73</sup>. The following chapters will consider the different legal changes that have taken place in the last three decades, such as the approval in May 1997, by the Japanese government, of the LPN, *Law for the promotion of the Ainu culture, and for the dissemination and advocacy for the traditions of the Ainu and the Ainu culture*, the law that promoted the dissemination and advocacy of the Ainu and their traditions, and the legal recognition of the Ainu as an “indigenous people” in June 2008. The pushes of the G8 on the one hand and the UN on the other were fundamental for this resolution adopted by the Japanese parliament. This was an important provision, but to be accepted with caution, since minorities were not recognized from a constitutional point of view. A few days before the G8 (held on Lake Tōya, in Hokkaidō, from 7 to 9 July 2008) another significant summit took place, from 1 to 4 July 2008, in Sapporo e Biratori. After a few years another important event in Japan, the Tōkyō 2020 Olympic Games (they have been moved to 2021 due to Covid-19), created the conditions for the new law promulgated on 26th April 2019, that recognizes the Ainu as “indigenous people” and includes new subsidies to promote tourism on the island of Hokkaidō at the same time that protects its natural territory and its use for traditional rituals<sup>74</sup>.

## **2.1. The birth of the Ainu resistance movement**

At the end of the Second World War, Japan was occupied militarily and placed under American protection. General Douglas MacArthur, commander of US Pacific forces, was put in charge, with full powers, of occupation forces and 150,000 men. His task was to create all the conditions favorable for a democratic Japan and promote a new Constitution that entered into force in May 1947. Japan became a parliamentary democracy in which the emperor remained a symbol of the state and unity of the nation. The emperor derived its function from popular sovereignty and had no part in the appointment of the government. Article 9 of the Constitution contained Japan’s declaration to renounce war and having armed forces. The U.S. administration imposed

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<sup>73</sup> Inaugural speech. “Appendix B”, (1993). In *No longer forgotten: The Ainu, AMPO Japan Asia Quarterly Review*, XXIV, n. 3, pp. 2- 34.

<sup>74</sup> “Tōkyō, per la prima volta legge per riconoscere gli Ainu”, (15th February 2019). Retrieved from <http://www.asianews.it/notizie-it/Tōkyō,-per-la-prima-volta-legge-per-riconoscere-gli-Ainu-46263.html>

a drastic agrarian reform that destroyed the class of landowners and redistributed large estates among farmers. The land was leased, for a total of more than one-third of the cultivated area<sup>75</sup>.

The reform has as a consequence that many of the lands assigned to the Ainu by the 1899 Native Protection Law were confiscated<sup>76</sup>. Consequently, some Ainu leaders decided to make their voices heard. Mukai Yamao, president of the Hokkaidō Association of Ainu, asked for the return of the lands assigned to them in the past. The Minister of Agriculture issued an exemption of those lands from the land reform. However, in 1947 the land was sold, and the elimination of Article 2, approved in 1937, involved the sale of the Ainu lands equal to 26%, including individual ones and those of mutual assistance<sup>77</sup>. Of these lands, 34% were cultivable. All were paid with a much lower price in a time of great inflation. Moreover, the reform became retroactive to November 23, 1945. As a result, recovering the lands became complicated<sup>78</sup>. Articles 4, 5, and 6, which guaranteed the poorest Ainu a kit of agricultural and seeding tools, as well as medical assistance and a financial contribution, were suppressed. The beginning of this new era in Japanese history was marked by the misery of most of the Ainu. The differences in living conditions between them and the rest of the Japanese were further accentuated<sup>79</sup>.

The first effort, which was exclusively made by the Ainu activists, concerns the creation of a space that would periodically spread ideas around the theme of resistance. Therefore, in March 1946 the *Ainu Shinbun* was established, with a publication every fifteen years. It was a small journal born from the enthusiasm of a young man, Takahashi

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<sup>75</sup> Scipione, G. (2004). *Storia degli ultimi sessant'anni. Dalla guerra mondiale al conflitto globale*. Milan: Bruno Mondadori, pp. 67-68.

<sup>76</sup> Battipaglia, S. (2009). "Gli Ainu verso il riconoscimento come 'popolazione indigena'". *Il Giappone*. Volume XLIX, Rome-Naples 2011, p. 162. The LPN (Law for the Protection of Natives), entered into force in March 1899, drawn up in 13 articles, proposed economic relocation and transformation of the Ainu in peasants, education and education, assistance and medical care, in addition to the possibility of giving the Ainu five hectares of land and tools to cultivate it, a concession that can be revoked if the land had not been cultivated for 15 years.

<sup>77</sup> Tokusaburō, T. *Ainu Monogatari*. Reprinted in Ogawa, M. & Yamada S. (1998). *Ainu minzoku kindai no kiroku*. Tōkyō: Sōhūkan, p. 366

<sup>78</sup> Sanders, D. (1977). "The formation of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples". In *IWGIA Documents*, n. 29, pp. 130-131; Cornell, J.B. (1964). "Ainu assimilation and cultural extinction: Acculturation policy in Hokkaidō". *Ethnology*, n. 3, pp. 287-304.

<sup>79</sup> González, Y.M. (2008). *La literatura de resistencia de las mujeres Ainu*. México: El Colegio de México, pp. 128-129.

Makoto, a journalist who worked for Hokkai Tamuzu, in the Kushiro section. Takahashi also founded the Ainu Mondai Kenkyūzyo (“Study Center on the Ainu problem”). As part of the activities of the center, he launched his *Ainu Shinbun*. The center aimed to create an iron unity among all the Utari<sup>80</sup> of Hokkaidō. Amidst the confusion of the post-war climate, these *utari* sought the support of General McArthur to promote the return of lands that had been taken from the Ainu people. The first issue of the *Ainu Shinbun* contained a profound expression of gratitude towards Commander Eddie Bruce. It also contained a plea that the “dishonest *wajin* peasants” who had enriched themselves with the exploitation of *ekashi* (“chiefs”) Ainu must be expelled from Hokkaidō<sup>81</sup>. An example of the deep resentment towards the *wajin* can be found in a column that flaunts the sinister name of Guenshi Bakudan (“Bomber Atomica”). The column briefly referred to McArthur, claiming he would have launched no less than an atomic bomb on Hokkaidō. The goal was to eliminate the “permanence of war criminals” who still lived in Hokkaidō, as well as *wajin* “to defend Japan from extinction”<sup>82</sup>. This attitude was symptomatic of the strong anti *wajin* sentiment that moved these publishers, who in turn not only lacked McArthur’s support but were also subject to censorship. This way, the *Ainu Shinbun* was censored. Copies of this publication can be found in archives in Washington, together with all the other documents confiscated by the occupation government<sup>83</sup>.

Times were changing for the first time, the occupation government had created a favorable climate to speak of the *wajin* people as an enemy of the Ainu. There were high hopes in the power of reclaiming the Ainu cause and placing it in the hands of the “enemies of their enemies”. For the first time, someone in power valued the Ainu culture. This gave hope to all the activists of that period<sup>84</sup>. On several occasions,

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<sup>80</sup> The term “utari” means the harmony that reigns among the Ainu people.

<sup>81</sup> “Jusei wajin wo tsuijō se yoo”, (“Expulsion of unjust *wajin*”). (1946). *Ainu Shinbun*, number 1, March 1.

<sup>82</sup> *Ainu Shinbun*, (1946, March 11). “Ghenshi Bakudan” (Atomic Bomb), n. 2.

<sup>83</sup> For an exhaustive analysis of press censorship and the news of the atomic bomb launched on Hiroshima. González, S.L. (2003). *La bomba atomica: censura, propaganda y manipulación informativa*. PhD thesis in Asian and African Cultures. México: El Colegio de México.

<sup>84</sup> *Ainu Shinbun*, (1946, August 1). “Suingu Shōshō Ikkō. Shiraoi buraku wo shiatsu su” (The troop of Commander Swing. They inspect the villa in Shiraoi), n. 8. In this note it is mentioned that Swing's impressions in front of the dances and oral tradition represented on the occasion of his inspection in Shiraoi, were very positive: “The Ainu possess a spiritual wealth. Today was a very interesting day”.

McArthur was referred to as a hero, asking for his release from the *wajin*<sup>85</sup>. In addition to the issue of the abolition of the Law of Protection in force, there were suggestions of joining forces with the Hinukaidō Association of Ainu and of forming a common front that would have effectively offered a space of solid resistance against the oppression *wajin*<sup>86</sup>.

The *Ainu Shinbun* disappeared soon, with its last publication taking place on May 25, 1947. The economic and social situation was difficult. Practically, all efforts were equal to mere survival. This situation remained stable until the sixties when the movement gained new strength in the voice of the new generations of Ainu activists. After the Occupation Period (1946-1952), the foundations for converting the Japanese nation into a major world economic power were laid. By 1950, almost all the bombed cities had been rebuilt and the political apparatus had been reorganized in the manner of the democratic state of the United States. For the first time, in 1955 Japan saw an improvement from a trade point of view thanks to a strategy aimed at increasing independence and competitiveness with the United States. The strategy caused a new impulse to the internal market, which was motivated by an increase in population. Between 1955 and 1960, the increase was 8.5%; between 1961 and 1965, the increase grew to 10%; between 1966 and 1970, it rose to 12.1%<sup>87</sup>. However, most of the Ainu remained confined to the margins of this new society. In 1962, local authorities conducted a census on the socio-economic conditions of the Hidaka Ainu. The census revealed most of them were poor workers or farmers. Racial discrimination continually took place in the context of getting a job, school assistance, etc. The mistreatment of students, combined with poverty, caused a situation of subordination within a highly competitive scheme. The census shows how many young Ainu left that situation by seeking refuge in cities such as Tōkyō and Ōsaka. Among them, those whose features resembled more to the Japanese made an effort to “dissolve” themselves in urban society, denying their Ainu descent<sup>88</sup>.

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<sup>85</sup> *Ainu Shinbun*, (1946, October 15).

<sup>86</sup> Tasuke Y., “Zendō utari yo. Kekki se yo” (*Utari* from all Hokkaidō, we build the new with decision). (1946 April 1). *Ainu Shinbun*, Tōkyō, n. 3.

<sup>87</sup> Lozoya, J.A. & Kerber, V. (1991). “El Japón contemporáneo: de la devastación a la opulencia”. In M.Tanaka et al., *Japón: su tierra y su historia*. México: El Colegio de México-Centro de Estudios de Asia y África, pp. 269-277.

<sup>88</sup> (1965) “Hokkaidō Hidaka shichō ni okeru ainu kei zyūmin no seikatsu zittai to sono mondaiten” (The socioeconomic conditions of descendants ainu residing in the Hidaka region

The situation was indeed nebulous. The authorities who conducted the census defined the population as “descendant residents of the Ainu”, identifying them based on family descent and physical appearance. This however was not the only criterion. It was fundamentally important to recognize oneself and be recognized by the local society as Ainu<sup>89</sup>. Paradoxically, the Ainu suffered racial discrimination, while their existence was denied under the belief that everything in Japan formed part of a single person. In 1964, Cornell affirmed the post-war agrarian reform was the end of a process of extinction and assimilation of the Ainu culture within Japanese culture. He believed the Ainu had become a sort of “frontier people” and the debate over the cultural difference was irrelevant. The important thing was to remove from poverty the people who lived in the areas once inhabited by the Ainu. However, poverty could not be eliminated in a context where social exclusion predominated. The commitment of the next generation of Ainu was in the name of a revival of the Ainu self-awareness of being culturally different and of the recovery of dignity as an indispensable condition for the fight against marginalization, both material and moral<sup>90</sup>.

## 2.2. Ainu post-war activism

The Constitution of 1946 offered the Ainu the promise of respect and cultural equality. Commander Swing, of the Occupation Forces, asked a group of representatives of the Ainu people if they wished to be independent. They replied they were not interested in being independent “because we have been Japanese in the past and will continue to be Japanese in the future”<sup>91</sup>. The conservative idea of the definitive assimilation of the Ainu people into the Japanese nation was expressed by representatives of the Ainu Association of Hokkaidō, whose members were “solemn, serious men, proud of their integration into the dominant society”<sup>92</sup>. The association was very active between 1946

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and relational issues). “Urakawa”, Hidaka Shichō, in Siddle, R. (1996). *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*. London: Routledge, pp. 154-155.

<sup>89</sup> Siddle, R. (1996). p. 154.

<sup>90</sup> Cornell, J.B. (1964). op. cit. p. 302.

<sup>91</sup> Baba, Y. (1984). “A study in Minority-Majority Relations: The Ainu and Japanese in Hokkaidō”. *Japan Interpreter*, n. 1, p. 78.

<sup>92</sup> Yoshida, K. (1958). *Ainu Bunka Shi* (History of Ainu culture). Makubetsu, Hokkaidō Ainu Bunka Hozon Kyōkai, in Siddle, R. (1996). op. cit., p. 151. The author documents the efforts of leaders such as Yoshida, who published, in 1958, a pamphlet with photos of “modern Ainu”, elegantly dressed.

and 1948. It was encouraged by the idea of defending its lands from the agrarian reform - and perhaps for the 100,000 yen Commander Swing assigned for the association's operation costs<sup>93</sup>. However, after the efforts to obtain his land from the agrarian reform failed, his activity ceased almost completely. In 1948, the only activities were the publication of a single issue of *Kita no hikari* (Northern Light) and the construction of a health home adjacent to the thermal waters of Noribetsu. Subsequent activities were recorded until the sixties<sup>94</sup>. During this period, some members of the *Ainu Kyōkai* joined the democratic wave of the Government of Occupation. They requested to occupy a seat in the House of Representatives, in the Legislative Assembly of the Prefecture, to govern Hokkaidō.

In 1957, the Ainu leaders again made their voices heard, exerting continuous pressure for the excessive poverty of the Ainu. In 1960 a reorganization of the association was called and in 1961 the name was changed to the *Utari Association of Hokkaidō* (*Hokkaidō Utari Kyōkai*). The *Utari* invoked a feeling of solidarity between equals. In 1961 the Association began to receive small funds for social approval also thanks to money from the Government of the Prefecture. At the same time, the *Utari* made sure the issue of poverty was appropriately addressed. He promoted the study of the situation and encouraged the authorities to visit the areas most at risk. The goal was to promote assimilation as a strategy to improve one's living conditions. The association became especially important, not only as an agent on the relations of subordination between the two peoples. The relationship between discrimination and poverty remained outside the debate.

The sixties were characterized by a sense of pride in one's identity. Young activists tried to recover the ancestral cosmology, intending to create a positive reference to unite the Ainu community. Being physically dispersed, one's feeling of belonging depended on the vigor of certain values and the ability to achieve that feeling on the part of all the Ainu. During the early years, these young people were aware that this "feeling the community" could not impose itself but had to be an expression of the plurality of the group and had to be formulated starting from an inclusive position. The point of confluence took shape from the search for a new reading of the tradition and history of

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<sup>93</sup> Sanders, D. (1977). op. cit. pp. 134-135.

<sup>94</sup> Siddle, R. (1996). op. cit., p. 151

the Ainu people as a source of indisputable symbols of identity. They had migrated to cities such as Tōkyō and Sapporo, they had integrated into university life and made friends with Japanese who sympathized with the Ainu cause.

In 1963, the Ainu Mondai Kenkyūkai (Association for Research on the Ainu problem) was established with the presence of young Ainu and Japanese. In the Winter of 1964, a group of young people from Tōkyō visited Lake Akan, to investigate the living conditions of the Ainu in Hokkaidō. The result was a long and lasting friendship between them. They established *Peure Utari no Kai* (Association of Young Utari)<sup>95</sup> in Tōkyō and Kushiro, to deal with the social aspect of their people's situation. As an association, they set out to create a space for reflection on the historical processes that occurred over the years. As friends, they expressly communicated the need to build a more harmonious society, in which all forms of racial prejudice would be eliminated. In November of the same year, the association published its first activity report, with the name of *Peure Utari*. This was only the beginning of a series of publications that were recorded over time, becoming an example of an important effort by the resistance. The first issue contains the words of the President Aoki Toshio and, number after number, the ideas, fears, questions of young people on the Ainu culture on the current situation, updated from time to time. The association did the “investigation trips”, reported in the number 4 - July 1965, where the investigation focuses on the houses of the kotan (“village” in the Ainu language) of Chitose, asking the people questions on topics such as the economic conditions, the activities carried out in daily life, regional distribution of products, the impressions of the Ainu towards the Japanese and vice versa, tourism<sup>96</sup>.

The first trip seemed more of a chronicle of three inexperienced travelers than an investigation<sup>97</sup>. Nevertheless, from then on, every exploration was managed with more details: friendly conversations with local young people, visits to public facilities, visits to primary and secondary school students. Besides, the program included visits to the communities of Toyura, Date, Noribetsu, Shiraoi, Biratori, Nibutani, Jidaka, and

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<sup>95</sup> The term *Peure* is a word ainu and means “young”, *Utari* instead, indicates the harmony that reigns among the Ainu people.

<sup>96</sup> “Tokushu. Chōsa Ryokō (bassui)” (Special. Investigation trip. [Extract]). (1965, October 5th). *Peure Utari*, n. 5. Reprinted in the Collection Committee of the *Peure Utari* Association (ed.), 1998, p. 199.

<sup>97</sup> Masao, U. & Osao N. “Kotan Jōmon – Chitose – Rankoshi wo Tasunete”. (1965, July). *Peure Utari*, n. 4. Reprinted in the Collection Committee of the *Peure Utari* Association (ed.), 1998, pp. 188-198.



Obihiro. The investigations also welcomed the various opinions of tourists, who claimed they were there to learn about the Ainu's daily life and not that of the "Ainu tourist". For this reason, they were disappointed to encounter only such a situation during their journey. *Peure Utari's* reply spoke of misunderstandings and prejudices<sup>98</sup>. The compilers of publications number 13 and 14, corresponding to October 1967 and January 1968, included a fragment of a chronicle rather than a journey, narrated like a diary. In this period, the tensions within the association intensified. Most likely they did not reach the goal the association had set for the elimination of the barriers that offended the minds of the two peoples. Perhaps it was the prejudice against the Ainu or the resentment of the latter towards the Japanese. The association's activity ceased almost entirely between 1969 and 1975. In 1975 it was reconstituted, according to the initial principles, under the name of Tōkyō Utari Kai (Tōkyō Utari Association), which is currently practiced under the name of Kantō Utari Kai (Utari Association of Kantō). The publications of the *Peure Utari* bulletin resumed but started again from number 1. The association's direction was entrusted to Kitahara Kiyoko, who expressed the intention to expand the importance of the association. This would occur employing a mutual understanding policy that passed through a deepening of the Ainu culture, of the richness of their oral tradition<sup>99</sup>.

In 1968, discontent spread due to the elimination of the economic benefits contained in articles 7 and 8 of the Law for the Protection of Natives. The Ministry of Health and Social Wellbeing specified that the economic contribution for education and housing, included in the two articles, remained. The abolition of the LPN became an important topic of debate. While the young and more radical Ainu pushed for the repeal of this discriminatory law, Utari Kyōkai adopted a conservative attitude in voting against its abolition on June 17th, 1970<sup>100</sup>. This caused a strong split within the Ainu opinion. As a result, a whole series of organizations were established overtime to deal with the subordination schemes imposed by the Japanese. Among the most renowned activities, Ainu Kaihō Dōmei (Ainu Liberation League) from Yūki Shōji and Yai Yukara

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<sup>98</sup> "Tokushū. Chōsa Ryokō (bassui)" (Special investigation). (1965, October 5th). *Peure Utari*, n.5. Reprinted in the Collection Committee of the *Peure Utari* Association (ed.), 1998, p. 220.

<sup>99</sup> Kitahara, K. (1975). "Hajime ni - Kaichō ni natte" (Presentation as president of the association), *Peure Utari*, (II), n. 4, September. Reprinted in Association Collection Committee *Peure Utari* (ed.), 1998, pp. 240-241.

<sup>100</sup> Siddle, R. (1996). op. cit., p. 164.

Kenkyūkai (Aso Association for the Yai *Yukara* recovery) from Narita Tokuhei. At the same time, a series of violent actions, such as the one in August 1972, took place when a group of Ainu and non-Ainu broke into a sociology and anthropology conference concerning Sapporo in Ainu. In September of the same year, an inscription on the statue of the Ainu chief Shakushain was removed. In October two bombs simultaneously exploded: one during an ethnological exhibition at the University of Hokkaidō; the other under a statue commemorating the founding of the city of Asahikawa. The scholar Sanders points out that thirty incidents related to violent demonstrations took place between 1973-1974. for the liberation of the Ainu. They included a bomb at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in Tōkyō, where 8 people died and 364 were wounded. Also, the mayor of Shiraoi was stabbed and witnessed the arson of a commercial tourism office in Shiraoi. Furthermore, a was bomb installed in the Sapporo prefecture office<sup>101</sup>. However, not all the participants of the Ainu claiming movement supported this violence. Some leaders, such as Yūki Shōji, were arrested in 1974 for allegedly committing terrorist acts. Only later did it become known that the terrorist group behind these attacks was the section “Wolf” of Higashi Ajia Han-nichi Busō Sensen (“Anti-Japanese Armed Front of East Asia”). Some of these members were arrested in 1975 along with the alleged leader Daidōji Masashi<sup>102</sup>.

During this period, a series of protests linked to the misuse of negative stereotypes about the Ainu people took place. They were mainly directed at academics. Yūki Shōji was particularly active in the struggle for the elimination of the racist discourse among the scholars of the University of Hokkaidō. In 1978 one of them, Professor Hayashi Yoshishige was publicly obliged to say “sorry” for his discriminatory comments<sup>103</sup>. Even Ainu Kaihō Dōmei denounced the publication of a racist story published in the journal *Pureboi* in 1978. Thanks to this operation, 6,300 copies of the comic strip were confiscated and a public apology was issued<sup>104</sup>.

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<sup>101</sup> Sanders, D. (1977). op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>102</sup> Sala, G. (1976). “Protest and the Ainu” and “Terrorism and ainu people of Hokkaidō”. *Mainichi Daily News*, May 8. In Siddle, R. (1996), op. cit., p. 166.

<sup>103</sup> “Ainu minzoku ni kansuru jinken keihatsu shashin paneru ten”, (1993). (Display panel of illustrative photography on human rights in relation to the Ainu people), (1° ed., 1991), Sapporo, Sapporo-dō Shoten: Organizing Committee, p. 23.

<sup>104</sup> Siddle, R. (1996). op. cit., p. 167.

During this decade, *Utari* Kyōkai continued its research task to improve the material conditions of the Ainu. In the early years, it proposed the creation of a fund of 300 million yen for Ainu self-sufficiency and obtained from the Department of Social Wellbeing a section to accommodate the needs of the association. In 1973, the association announced its first seven-year plan. 5,440,800,000 yen were allocated to the plan. They relied on the support of the Liberal Democratic Party and opposition parties<sup>105</sup>. At the UNESCO Cultural Festival in Paris of 1976, a group of young Ainu artists presented a theatrical version of some of the most famous passages of Ainu oral literature. In 1979, when the 7-year plan was coming to an end, an evaluation study on the improvement of the Ainu's living conditions was carried out. The study showed there had been progressed in that regard, but a lot still had to be done to equate the living conditions of the two groups. 43% of the Ainu worked in the primary sector and those who worked in the secondary sector worked on a seasonal basis. At the same time, the study showed the number of young people who had received preparatory education had increased by up to 65%. At that time 9% of the Ainu students completed their studies at university.

These data led to the approval of a new seven-year plan (1980-1987). During this plan, 27.39,160 yen were needed to continue improving the Ainu living conditions Ainu. The money would have also gone towards a special loan fund and a project to write the story of the Ainu people in four volumes. The latter would have cost 70 million yen<sup>106</sup>. This government's response was coherent with the idea that Hokkaidō had to be “developed” and not “colonized”. If the goal was to achieve the “development” of the island, the wellbeing policies aimed at improving the conditions of the Ainu, not as an indigenous people but as a group of “disadvantaged Japanese”; a group that was penalized for “not being Japanese” in racial terms. Both moderate and radical leaders agreed the Ainu were not Japanese. The Ainu's own identity could not be achieved through denial. “One of the main motivations for the construction of a counter-narrative of the Ainu nationality was the denial of the Ainu's existence, which the historical amnesia and the narrative teacher of homogeneity have created”. Among the *ekashi* that contributed to the

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<sup>105</sup> In 1973, the price of the yen against the dollar went from 301.79 to 261.90. “Japanese yen to one U.S dollar. Exchange rate”. (n.d.). Retrieved from [www.economagic.com/emcgi/data.exe/fedstl/exjpus](http://www.economagic.com/emcgi/data.exe/fedstl/exjpus)

<sup>106</sup> Sanders, D. (1977). op. cit., p. 140.

formulation of this new expression of Ainu ethnicity, the figure of Yamamoto Tasuke stands out. He had participated as a collaborator in the *Ainu Shinbun*. In moments of heated debate on how to conquer ethnicity, he was an *ekashi* who inspired the struggle of the most combative activists of the sixties and seventies. Among them, the belligerent Sunazawa Bikki, who established himself as leader of the young Ainu trying to create a plural forum through the Zenkoku Ainu no Kataru Kai in 1973. In a national confrontation held in Sapporo, representatives of the government and the minority population for the first time discussed the “Ainu problem” together. Moreover, Yamamoto Tasuke was Yūki Shōji’s spiritual guide. The latter was a young Ainu with leftist tendencies in frank opposition to the conservative faction of Nomura Giichi and another elderly Ainu. Therefore in 1974, motivated by the *yakashi* Yamamoto Tasuke, Yūki Shōji started the tradition of celebrating an annual *icharpa*, or funeral ritual, in Nokkamapu, in honor of the 37 Ainu rebels who were executed in this place in 1789<sup>107</sup>.

Yamamoto Tasuke inspired the activists of the sixties and seventies to revive the cultural manifestations of the Ainu people. This was to be done through the art of embroidery, dances, and the celebration of ancestral rituals to reinvigorate the symbols of ethnicity in a frame of resistance, and not as a spectacle for tourists. Like *ekashi*, he was the depository of ancestral wisdom and saw the renewal of ancient traditions as a good omen against a background of political resistance. Although more conservative *ekashi* considered these ceremonies as a farce and an offense to the gods, some supported these celebrations. They saw them as an opportunity to create and consolidate a feeling of belonging to a community that shared the same ideals and cultural past. Unlike those who were born during the Meiji era, he never abandoned the pride of his own culture. He belonged to the small group of men and women who decided not to be assimilated into Japanese society. They remained faithful to the Ainu pride, giving dignifying the resistance to assimilation while spreading the maxim “The Ainu who do not let themselves be deceived are alive”<sup>108</sup>. Women took up the art of embroidery following their ancestors’ design. Ainu clothing, worn by Ainu men and women in meetings and debates, became the symbol of the Ainu identity. Embroidery, similarly to other manual arts, was the materialization of a part of one’s research. They were proof that the Ainu

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<sup>107</sup> Siddle, R. (1996). *op. cit.*, pp. 170-175.

<sup>108</sup> *Mainichi Shinbun*, (1993, February 16). “Makoto no *ekashi* Yuku” (A real *ekashi* dies). Edition Hokkaidō.

were not a people without cultural wealth, bound to become extinct. While young Ainu women embroidered, they reflected on the meaning of being Ainu and were eager to learn more and more about their past and the pride of being Ainu. They wanted to understand their reality and build a more just and harmonious society. It was this eagerness that led the young people of Akan to take part in *Peure Utari no Kai*, the Association of Young Utari.

Times were changing. For the young utari, it was time to build their present ethnicity around a concrete and everyday struggle, and not just a nostalgic vision of the past. An example is a group of young artisans of Akan who began to experiment with the production of contemporary Ainu art, starting from traditional ornamental motifs<sup>109</sup>. Much of the inspiration was encountered in the work of the sculptor and activist Sunazawa Bikki (1931-1989). Bikki was and continues to be a key figure to understand the cultural development and political ideology that dominated the landscape of the sixties and seventies. The artist was the son of Sunazawa Ichitarō, one of the most aggressive activists in the struggle for the recovery of the lands of Chikabumi. His mother, Peramonkor, was one of the most celebrated *yukar*<sup>110</sup> storytellers and other genres of oral tradition. Like her husband Ichitarō, she inculcated in Bikki profound respect for the Ainu culture. At the age of 16, he began to study agriculture, but his career as an artist took off in Kamakura when in 1952, he made friends with some young people who devoted themselves to art. From 1955, he was able to count several exhibitions, remaining active throughout his life, inspiring, through his creativity and courage, women, men, and young people of his time<sup>111</sup>. Bikki's fighting spirit was reflected in the style used in the resistance periodical *Anutari Ainu* ("We are human beings") a bimonthly publication, founded by a group of young Ainu of Hidaka. Publications followed between June 1973 and March 1976. In the periodical's pages, it is possible to perceive the vigorous fighting spirit of those who were laying the ideological foundations for the Ainu resistance movement. Bikki participated in the publication by drawing the ornaments that had characterized the inlaid wooden clothes and objects. In the new context, however, it acquired an original mutability. Playful and

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<sup>109</sup> Sugawara, K. (1966). *Guendai no Ainu: Minzoku Idō no Roman* (The Modern Ainu: Drama of a People in Motion). Tōkyō: Genbunsha, pp. 182-189.

<sup>110</sup> The term *yukar* is in the Ainu or Ainu itak language, while *yukara* is in the Japanese language.

<sup>111</sup> Asakawa, Y., Echizen T. & Taira T. (1994). (Contemporary Museum of Hokkaidō) (comps.), *Tentakuru* (Tentacle). Sapporo: Hokkaidō Bijutsukan Kyōryōkai, pp. 84-85.

free, the Bikki drawings used in the *Anutari Ainu* could be seen on the first and only Ainu flag, proclaiming that the time had come to implement “... *utari* pride, struggle, and passion”<sup>112</sup>.

The Ainu ethnicity was redefined as a space of struggle in the present. The Ainu resistance supported it. The past gained new life through the creativity and political consciousness of the young men and women who had fought for their own cultural pride. Sunazawa Bikki, along with other young people of his time, such as Narita Tokuhei, established a clear position of political resistance which included the outcasts of the Ainu vindication movement. Opposing the conservative current of the Hinukaidō Association of Ainu (which meanwhile had changed its name to the Harikaidō *Utari* Association), these young people tried not to compromise their project through the Japanese government’s funding. They aimed to control the mechanisms that had led the Ainu people to become an oppressed minority of Japanese society, meaning “to be Ainu” as a condition:

What we are now facing is not “Ainu” as a race (*zinshu*) or “Ainu” as a people (*minzoku*), but “Ainu” as a condition, as a conjunction of circumstances (*jōkyō*). By this, I mean the meaning hidden behind the word when people call us “Ainu”, which is a force that makes our lives oppressive. It is precisely this “Ainu” as a condition and the oppression that accompanies it, our problem<sup>113</sup>.

For the first time, the theme of ecology was receiving attention. It called for collaboration to avoid contamination of Hokkaidō waters and the disproportionate exploitation of resources. To recover the *Ainu Moshiri*, it was first of all necessary to feel it as something of its own, as something that had to be defended. The *Anutari Ainu* tried to offer a new reading on the history of the Ainu people, which is why collaborators came across the search for their roots, through the testimonies of elderly Ainu. Organized as a column entitled “*ekashi*, juichi wo tazunete” (“Visiting the *ekashi* and the *juchi*”), the *Anutari Ainu* proposed extensive interviews with those who had

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<sup>112</sup> Bikki S., (1973, June). “Shinboru Maaku Nitsuite” (The symbol). *Anutari Ainu*, n.1, p. 2. This flag was first presented during the May 10, 1973 parade in Sapporo. Characterized by blue and green colors, evoking the sea, the sky and the land of the Ainu, with a stylized arrow. The arrow, which evokes the tradition of hunting, is painted white, the color of snow and red, symbolizing the fire goddess *Ape Kamui*.

<sup>113</sup> *Anutari Ainu*. (1973, June). n.1, p.8. My translation from Spanish, in González, Y.M. (2008). op. cit., pp. 317-318.

experienced the intense transition of the Meiji and Taishō eras. These young people were fascinated by their wisdom. Meeting after meeting, they asked to learn about the story that could not be found in specialized books, which was not yet ethnography. They wanted to receive those teachings directly and pass those teachings onto future generations.

Urgent issues were, among others: the abolition of the Protection Law, the fight against racial discrimination, and the investigation and documentation of one's own history, as heirs and continuators of the Ainu people<sup>114</sup>. The *Anutari Ainu* is the reflection of a world that is becoming smaller and smaller as a result of the information media. Television, journals, and periodicals made it possible to gather knowledge of the reality of the other indigenous peoples of the world. This allowed them to understand their situation as part of a wider postcolonial phenomenon. The *Anutari Ainu* tried to create controversies and indeed succeeded to do so. It tried to offer a critical view of the events and the situation of its people. The time had come to use the power of speech to express their loyalty and combativeness. The participation of utari women in the publication was wide and complex. Poems, reports, interviews, and articles signed by them appeared in all the numbers of the publication. These women's words were an expression of a belligerent spirituality, in search of a goal that would give direction to their concerns. One of the most committed collaborators was Hiramura Akemi, who expressed these concerns in an article entitled "Our Destination". She reports how rare it is to ask what the "destination" is. She notes how following conversations with people who manifest their pain because of discrimination, one wonders why the Ainu people are subject to this social dynamic. Hiramura Akemi contributed, through various articles, to the promotion of an image of the fierce and positive woman. One of *Anutari Ainu's* most enthusiastic collaborators was Ishihara Etsuko. Her first collaboration consisted of a small note in which she harshly criticized the attitude of the leaders of the Hokkaidō *Utari* Association during the General Assembly, which she attended in 1973. During the Assembly, the organization's tasks were discussed. In her article, she mentioned the great expectations and new proposals to solve the Ainu problem. She also talked about the 5,440,800,000 yen assigned to the activities put forward by the association and

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<sup>114</sup> Arai, G. (1974, July 10). "Hokkaidō Kyūdojin Hogohō ni taisuru kōsatsu", (Considerations on the Hokkaidō Ancient Aboriginal Protection Law), *Anutari Ainu*, n. 11, pp. 3-4.

discussed the profound discontent of the Ainu activists towards the attitude of the conservative faction of the Association of the *Utari* of Hokkaidō, in this way the *Autari Ainu*, became the space in which these themes could be debated freely. She was appointed editor of the journal, starting with issue 9 of the publication. Another young man, Hiramura Yoshimi, took part in the editorial committee. He collaborated from the first issue through interviews and important articles that reflected on the situation of the Ainu.

A special mention goes to one of his essays on the minorities, which took place in Kyōto. Koreans, Australians, Native Americans, and African Americans took part in the meeting. He held a radical position against colonialism. Given the oppression of black men by the United States, his question was whether or not they had participated, in Indian history, in the transition from violence to the right to life<sup>115</sup>. The African American representative was astonished. The African population did not reach North America due to colonization but was forced to work in slavery. It is important to note the women took part in *Anutari Ainu* from number 11 onwards. Sunazawa Bikki was the only one who participated in the edition with the drawing, contributing in an important way to enriching the publication. On March 30, 1976, the *Anutari Ainu*, published the numbers 19 and 20, which corresponded to the last of this important editorial effort. In this context, extensive articles on Chiri Yukie, Kannari Matsu, and Yaeko Batchelor emphasized the value of their works as inspiration for generations of young Ainu women. Furthermore, Ishihara Etsuko wrote an interesting article on the image of Ainu women, comparing it with the image presented in the book *Hokkaidō no onna* (“The women of Hokkaidō”). In this book, the authors emphasized the excessive hairiness of the hair, in which the image of a woman is accompanied by alcoholic and indolent men. This image supported the Ainu people’s inferiority. Ishihara Etsuko reflected on the lack of humanity of those who committed discriminatory acts against the Ainu. The *Anutari Ainu* forged the ideal of being Ainu, in a context of struggle and political resistance. Being Ainu was no longer a cause for shame, but the ability to demonstrate value in the face of adversity through a critical and valid position on racial discrimination. It was clear the goal was to gain recognition for the right to cultural

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<sup>115</sup> Yoshimi, H. “Mainoritii Mondai wo kangaeru. ‘Gogatsu kokusai kaigi’ ni shusseki shite” (Thinking about the problem of minorities. Attending the ‘May International Conference’). *Anutari Ainu*, n. 11, p. 2.



diversity in Japan. The group of young people, women, and men, guided by the conviction that it was necessary to write their history and no longer deny their existence, ended the systematic denial of their existence. Being Ainu was not a distant matter of the distant times. The new generations would give continuity to the chronicle of their people. Always fighting. Always in resistance<sup>116</sup>.

In the 1980s, *Utari Kyōkai* (“association of the brothers”) erected itself to defend all the Ainu people. It reached 15,500 members. According to a census conducted in 1988<sup>117</sup>, the Ainu in Hokkaidō amounted to 24,381 inhabitants. The figure was questioned by the Association which estimated between 50,000 and 60,000 people of Ainu descent, but who had changed names and identities<sup>118</sup>. Some members even claimed that if people with descendants of Ainu were included, the figure could have ranged from 250,000 to 300,000 people<sup>119</sup>. The exact number was not clear. Shortly after, an Ainu not affiliated with the association declared the association failed to do what was necessary for most Ainu, namely the abolition of the LPN (Law for the Protection of the Natives). The association's program was thus endangered. The reaction was to insist on the abolition of the law and give a new impetus to the social assistance campaign<sup>120</sup>. In 1981, the focus was on the development of a new Ainu law, which was completed on May 27, 1984, with a document that included all the revision work of its history and the power mechanisms that had been used to subdue the Ainu. This revision took a series of useful Ainu identity symbols into consideration, starting from the activism of the seventies. One of these was the *Ainu Moshiri* (“The land of the Ainu”). The first reflection was related to the disappearance of this land, which once welcomed its ancestors who lived free and in peace until the arrival of the Japanese and their colonization. Historically, the Japanese colonization began in the Tokugawa Period (1603-1867) and it was consolidated with the modernization project of the Meiji Restoration (1868). The text denounces the injustices committed against the Ainu people, deprived of their cultural tradition. Given this situation, the proposal requested respect for the human rights of the

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<sup>116</sup> González, Y.M. (2008). *op. cit.*, pp. 295-324.

<sup>117</sup> Sjöberg, K. (1993). *The return of the Ainu. Cultural mobilization and the practice of ethnicity in Japan*. London: Harwood Academic Publishers, p. 131; Midzuno, T. (1987). “Ainu, the invisible minority”. *Japan Quarterly*, April-June, p. 146.

<sup>118</sup> Davis, G. (1987). “Japan’s indigenous indians: The Ainu”. *Tōkyō Journal*, October, pp. 7-13, 18-19, in Sjöberg, K. (1993). *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>119</sup> Sjöberg, K. (1993), *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>120</sup> Siddle, R. (1996), *op. cit.*, p. 181.

Ainu people, systematically discriminated against based on their alleged inferiority. The second point stressed the importance of a political representation in the Diet, thus ensuring a seat for the members of the people. The third point focused on the recovery of key elements of cultural tradition, such as language, through the educational system. The introduction of Ainu children into the system was meant to ensure and help eliminate negative stereotypes, by revising school textbooks which only marginally dealt with the history of the Ainu people. Social wellbeing was added to these proposals. The fourth point indicated the need to abolish the restrictions on land established by the LPN, as they were an obstacle for the Ainu's social and economic development. At this point, the proposal signaled the urgency of creating policies parallel to the abolition of the LPN, which would have favored the improvement of the Ainu's economy by promoting fishing, employment, and industrial activities<sup>121</sup>.

In recent years, some Ainu leaders became interested in the processes of indigenous resistance taking place in the rest of the world. The ideals of autonomy began to be embraced by Nomura Giichi<sup>122</sup> and other leaders of *Utari Kyōkai* in 1973 when some leaders carried out the first official visit to a foreign country. Invited by the ambassador, they visited China to learn about the coexistence of different languages and customs used by the same nation. The astonishment in front of the information leaflets printed in various languages prompted to also include the Ainu language in the cultural map of Japan<sup>123</sup>. Nomura visited Alaska in 1978 at the invitation of the Inuit who had visited Hokkaidō the previous year and he noticed their use the mass media in this endeavor. In May 1979, Japan joined the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). This convention binds the member states to the recognition and respect of fundamental rights towards every person present on their territory and prohibits discriminatory behavior, even in the presence of linguistic differences<sup>124</sup>. On May 27, 1984, the *Utari Kyōkai* proposed an example of the proposal for a new Ainu

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<sup>121</sup> González, Y.M. (2008). op.cit., pp. 127-141.

<sup>122</sup> Nomura Giichi (1914-2008) was a lawyer and activist, born in Shiraoi (Hokkaidō), of Ainu descent. In 1960 he joined *Utari Kyōkai* (*Utari Association*), for which he was executive director from 1964-1996.

<sup>123</sup> Siddle, R. (1996), op. cit., p. 177.

<sup>124</sup> Battipaglia, S. (2009). op. cit., p. 165. Art. 27: "In those states in which ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language".

law, the *Ainu minzoku ni kan suru hōritsu* (“Law concerning the Ainu people”), in October of the same year the *Utari Mondai Konwakai* (“Friendly Meeting on the Problem of the *Utari*”) was created, in which also Ainu people took part. In March 1988, after carefully analyzing the project, it put pressure on the Hokkaidō government to adopt the new legislation. The prefecture approved the project and in July of the same year referred the document to the authorities of the nation. Despite this, several years passed before the law was formally adopted by the Diet, in May 1997. During this period, the law became an element of cohesion for many Ainu who agreed with the proposal and with the need to defend their rights to proudly exercise their ethnic identity. Other groups, however, said they opposed the adoption of this law, fearing it would become a new segregation tool due to the emphasis on cultural differences<sup>125</sup>. This decade was characterized by intense contact with the ethnicity discourse of indigenous groups from the rest of the world, mainly countries like Australia, Canada, and the United States. The Ainu leaders were, therefore, part of a world trend to review the negative effects of colonialism and development, participating in conferences, meetings, and debates on the problem of indigenous peoples.

Furthermore, the implications with other indigenous peoples earned them the sympathy and support of the international community, drawing the attention of the United Nations towards its case. Most likely, all the work done up to that time by Hokkaidō *Utari Kyōkai* and other activists was enough to raise awareness among the *wajin* people and the spokesmen of the official speech on the existence of the Ainu people, starting from the understanding of Japanese society culturally and ethnically different. However, in 1986, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone gave a speech during which he defined Japan as “a homogeneous nation”, where there was no discrimination simply because there were no minorities<sup>126</sup>. His statements revolved around the assumption that the “low level of intelligence” in the United States was due to the presence of black people, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans. Given the multi-ethnicity especially in the United States, it was very difficult to provide educational programs for everyone. Japan, on the other hand, a mono-ethnic country, did not present this difficulty<sup>127</sup>. The international public opinion

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<sup>125</sup> Siddle, R. (1996), *op.cit.*, p. 185.

<sup>126</sup> Battipaglia, S. (2009).*op. cit.*, p. 165.

<sup>127</sup> The statements were collected in the *Asahi Shinbun*, September-October 1986, in Mizuno, T. (1987), *op.cit.*, p. 143.

was outraged at the arrogance of this statement, which suggested a relationship between “race” and “intelligence”, inferring that ethnic and cultural homogeneity was a sign of superiority over heterogeneous societies<sup>128</sup>. *Utari* Kyōkai protested against this statement. Consequently, director Nomura Giichi, on the *Asahi Shinbun*, expressed his opinion on Nakasone’s statement. He asked the Prime Minister to recognize the existence of a minority group in Japan and pleaded for the abolition of the fallacious notion of a mono-ethnic country that had persisted until then<sup>129</sup>. Furthermore, in an art. was specified that in states where ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities exist, people belonging to such minorities will not be denied their and their group’s right to hold their own cultural life, to profess and practice their beliefs and use their language<sup>130</sup>.

When the UN Human Rights Commission turned to the Japanese representative of the Ainu, the answer was that from the Meiji Restoration, the stabilization of a rapid communication system increased the existential gap. The *utari* were nationals of Japan and treated fairly concerning the other Japanese. Shortly after, in the frame of the Diet, the Minister of Foreign Relations declared the Ainu were not considered a minority because they were applied the same socio-political system applied to the rest of the population<sup>131</sup>. The insistent denial of the existence of the Ainu people by Japanese officials turned into one of the most important points on the Ainu political agenda. The law for recognizing their existence was a matter that combined wills around the conscience to share the same story of oppression and discrimination. In 1991, under increasing international pressure, the Japanese government drafted a report at the United Nations, declaring the Ainu people constituted a minority within the Japanese society. However, this recognition was not accompanied by clear policies concerning the quality of the indigenous group. Government officials considered that assigning rights to a minority could constitute a violation of the constitutional guarantee of equality of all

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<sup>128</sup> Bowen, E. (1986). “Nakasone’s world-class blunder. Japan’s leader stirs a tempest by linking race to intellect”. *Time Journal*, October 6.

<sup>129</sup> Mizuno, T. (1987). *op. cit.*, p. 144.

<sup>130</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Adopted and ratified by the General Assembly in Resolution 2200 A (XXI), of 16 December 1966. It entered into force on 23 March 1976, in accordance with Article 49. Documents of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The text is available at [www.unhchr.ch](http://www.unhchr.ch). To admit that Japan has been a signatory to this pact since 1979.

<sup>131</sup> Mizuno, T. (1987), *op. cit.*, pp. 145-146.

citizens<sup>132</sup>. In these years an ambitious plan started to bring water to a Hokkaidō development area.

This example is the first reference to understand the situation of the time. The construction of the Nibutani dam, which damaged the Saru River<sup>133</sup>, began in 1987. Various farmers were offered economic compensation. They were also offered a job within the dam construction project. At the same time, the lands bordering the river, which belonged to two important Ainu leaders: Kaizawa Tadashi and Kayano Shigeru, were expropriated. Both tried to negotiate the expropriation from their land in 1993. Following his father's death, Kaizawa Tadashi felt more responsible for the situation. Kayano Shigeru<sup>134</sup> argued the expropriation of his land went against the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ratified by Japan. The Court acknowledged the Ainu people were a minority of Japan, appealing to international definitions. This recognition marked an important step: for the first time Japanese jurisprudence had relied on an international instrument. Following the pact, the rights of the Ainu people were guaranteed by art. 27 of the ICCPR, which recognizes them as a minority<sup>135</sup>, even if any reference to recognition as an indigenous population is eluded.

Kaizawa and Kayano claimed the mountains surrounding the Saru river were of sacred importance. The Chip-sanke ceremony was held there annually. It entailed launching a traditional boat - which guaranteed the continuation of Ainu culture with future

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<sup>132</sup> “Panel urges gov’t to recognize Ainu as indigenous people”. (1996, March 30). In *Mainichi*. Daily News.

<sup>133</sup> “Ainu protest flooding of sacred land”. (1996, April 3). In *Mainichi*. Daily News. A group of protesters, led by Kayano Shigeru, protested over the construction of the Nibutani dam.

<sup>134</sup> Shigeru Kayano (15 June 1926 - 6 May 2006), was born in Nibutani (Biratori, Hokkaidō). Beginning in 1952, he dedicated himself to collecting and recording the folk tales and objects used daily by the Ainu, which took him in 1972 to the foundation of the Nibutani Museum on the Ainu culture (Nibutani Ainu Culture Museum). In 1983, he founded the first Hokkaidō language school with his own means. Since then, he has tried to pass on and spread the Ainu language, for this reason he has received numerous awards over the years. Meanwhile, he worked as a member of Biratori Town Assembly and subsequently contributed to the promulgation of the “New Ainu Law” as a member of the Chamber of Councilors. In 1996, he published the “Dictionary of the Ainu language of Shigeru Kayano”, a comprehensive survey on the Ainu language used in the Saru river basin. He has written numerous books related to the Ainu culture, contributing greatly to his promotion. “Winner of the 7th Ainu Cultural Award (Individual). Shigeru Kayano”. Retrieved from <https://www.ff-ainu.or.jp/web/english/details/winner-of-the-7th-ainu-cultural-award-individual-shigeru-kayano.html>

<sup>135</sup> Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?*. Mahwah, N.Y./ London: Lawrence Erlbaum, p. 491.

generations. In pursuit of the concept of “common good”, the government balanced the contribution the construction of the dam would have brought about and the impact this project would have had on the Ainu people. He declared that the expropriation was legal and that the Nibutani dam would become operational in the spring of 1998<sup>136</sup>. Meanwhile, the participation of leaders in the forums for human rights of the indigenous peoples of the world became increasingly intense. It managed to gain great influence internationally. Thus, on December 10, 1992, Nomura Giichi, president of the Hokkaidō *Utari* Association, delivered a speech at the inaugural ceremony of the United Nations General Assembly<sup>137</sup>. The speech commemorated Human Rights Day and the beginning of the International Year of Indigenous Peoples. In his speech, Nomura highlighted the importance of the date for the Ainu, as their existence was about to be known internationally.

Nomura's statements confirmed the political position of the association in the name of the Ainu people. At the same time, the other associations took on the task of establishing cultural exchange contacts and strengthening the symbols of ethnicity. This was done, for example, by organizing meetings, forums, exhibitions on the material of the Ainu culture in the field of dance, music, and embroidery. These events fueled international interest in indigenous peoples and the Ainu activists' increasing work of criticism and awareness. Many Japanese said they were sympathizers of the Ainu cause, to offer their support. Gradually the issue of the new law gained importance and acquired new strength. The pressure from activists and society was increasing. Since 1994, the presence of Shigeru Kayano as a member of the Diet was strategic to ensure that the project could be realized. The *Utari* Kondankai or Committee of the Assistant Councilors was formed. Nomura Giichi, Kayano Shigeru, and the activist Chikkap Mieko participated. They had previously proposed the exhibitions on the Ainu culture that took place in the Ethnology Museum of Senri, Ōsaka, in 1993. The issue of the new law attracted the attention of a large number of discussion forums. In March 1996, for example, meeting the emeritus professor at the University of Tōkyō, Masami Ito,

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<sup>136</sup> Sonohara, T. (1997, June). “Toward a genuine redress for an unjust past: The Nibutani dam case”. Rupert Murdoch: University Electronic Journal of Law, vol. 4, n. 2. Retrieved from [www.austlii.edu.au/au/Journals/MurUEJL/1997/16.html](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/Journals/MurUEJL/1997/16.html).

<sup>137</sup> Nomura, G. (1992, December 10). Inaugural Speech U.N. General Assembly. Retrieved from [www.ainu-assn.or.jp](http://www.ainu-assn.or.jp).

organized a meeting which was attended by Nomura Giichi, president of Hokkaidō *Utari Kyōkai*, and Aku Sawai, leader of the Ainu Minzoku Kaigui. The symposium expressed the urgency to replace the LPN (Law for the Protection of Natives) with another law that excluded discriminatory practices towards the Ainu. Several academics interested in Ainu culture, such as Professor Kazuyoshi Otsuka, of the Senri Ethnology Museum, Ōsaka, attended the discussion sessions on the new law.

Otsuka argued: “as a society, the only thing that can be done is to ensure there are educational demands to recover one's identity”<sup>138</sup>. In this historical moment, the new law was about to be approved, and the various proposals regarding the recognition, the promotion of the Ainu culture, the elimination of discrimination, were widely considered. However, the resolution of the Ainu issue and the participation of the Ainu in decisions of political origin continued to be the subject of debate in various circles.

In May 1997, the Japanese government approved the law that abolished the provisions of the law of 1899 that were still in force<sup>139</sup>. The law promoted the dissemination and advocacy of the Ainu and their traditions. Many activists expressed little enthusiasm towards the new law. During the 1997 International Labor Meeting, for example, Oki Kano, in front of a group of Japanese government officials and UN experts, pointed out that the law was a way for a government to co-opt an indigenous culture. Not only did he cite the limits of the definition of culture contained in the New Law, but he also mentioned the tasks assigned to the Prime Minister's Office, the Hokkaidō Development Agency, and the Ministry of Education to decide the sum and the fate of the funds<sup>140</sup>. Unlike the 1984 proposal, where the colonial process of the *wajin* was largely clear, the New Law simply hinted that the Ainu people had been annexed territorially and culturally to Japan in a sort of “natural process”, without the mediation of political and social forces of subordination. In the text, the Ainu people are not explicitly defined as indigenous group of Japan, even though the Hokkaidō Court had openly defined the status of indigenous people in the judgment on the expropriation of land for the construction of the Nibutani dam. Many leaders exerted significant pressure to modify

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<sup>138</sup> The interview with Professor Kazuyoshi Otsuka, was carried out in the Senri Museum, Ōsaka, in March 1997. In González, Y.M. (2008). op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>139</sup> Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkachō). Retrieved from [www.bunka.go.jp](http://www.bunka.go.jp)

<sup>140</sup> Dietz, K. (1999). “The Ainu in the International arena”. In W.Fitzhugh and Ch. Dubreuil, (eds.), *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern people*. Arctic Studies Center. National Museum of Natural History of the Smithsonian Institution. Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 363-364.

the New Law before it was approved by the Diet. However, rights as an indigenous people remained outside that debate.

In its place, the controversy revolved around the possibility of legally recognizing the Ainu's own "indigenous" nature. The text was finally approved without any amendments, but in an additional resolution, the members of the Diet unanimously declared that the Ainu were indigenous people of Japan. This resolution, however, had no legal value<sup>141</sup>. The Japanese government defended its position before international organizations. In its fourth report (1997) to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Japan stated that the Ainu people had inhabited the Hokkaidō before the Japanese and that the territory was "indissolubly" Japanese. Consequently, the law recognized the indigenous "nature" of the Ainu people, but not their rights as an indigenous population<sup>142</sup>. As a result, the issue of human rights and discrimination remained outside the text of the new law. The new law also excluded the Ainu's political participation by not guaranteeing them any seat in the Diet. Instead, it focused more on promoting Ainu education and culture. For example, article 8 referred to teaching Ainu culture, its diffusion, to the social communication of Ainu traditions. However, educational policies did not address the issue of eliminating discrimination within the education system. To promote these operations, in June 1997, Ainu Bunka Shinkō, Kenkyū Suishin Kikō ("Ainu Foundation for Investigation and Culture") was founded. It relied on government funds.

The Foundation, known as the Culture Center, offered Ainu language services and courses. Its operational headquarters were in Sapporo, although a branch was also established in Tōkyō. By 2004, the foundation had succeeded in placing 303 Ainu people within different educational centers that had requested them. At the same time, it supported research and publication of texts on the subject. There were also numerous projects to support the production of handicrafts and the continuation of the tradition of dance and oral tradition. The foundation, following existing legislation, was the only organization in Japan with the authority to provide the services guaranteed by the

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<sup>141</sup> Teruki, T. "The Ainu Shinpo: A new beginning". (1999). In W. Fitzhugh and Ch. Dubreuil, (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 368.

<sup>142</sup> Bodganowicz, T. (2004). "A feast of culture on Hokkaidō menu". *The Japan Times Online*, 27 June. Retrieved from [www.japantimes.com/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?fl20040627a1.html](http://www.japantimes.com/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?fl20040627a1.html)



Law<sup>143</sup>. In the same month, the FRPAC was established (The Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture). It was recognized as the core of the people's ethnic identity. Under the direction of the Hokkaidō government and the Ministry of Education, with offices in Tōkyō and Sapporo, it aimed to promote Ainu culture<sup>144</sup>. The New Law also retained positive sides. The first was the abolition of the Law of Protection of the Ancient Aborigines of Hokkaidō and the Law for the Disposal of the Territorial Reserve of the Ancient Aboriginal of Asahikawa. This meant the communal land under the Hokkaidō government's control was returned to the Ainu co-owners who had demanded it within one year from the date the law came into force<sup>145</sup>. The abolition of these laws had a more ideological than practical impact. According to data provided by *Utari Mondai Konwakai*, "only 1,360 hectares of land under the Protection Law were used by the Ainu in March 1987 and the total municipal property of the Ainu, guarded by the Hokkaidō government, amounted to 991.438 yen (January 1988)"<sup>146</sup>. A controversial aspect was the very purpose of the law. Article 1 stated that the law's purpose was not only to develop a society that respected the pride of being Ainu but "[...] to contribute to the development of the country's cultural diversity".

Although the struggle around Japan's homogeneity won an important battle, the very definition of culture adopted by the law left little room for a full exercise of the Ainu ethnicity. "For this law, "Ainu culture" meant the inherited music, dances, crafts, and other inherited cultural goods". This definition excluded forms of social organization and the possibility of elected authorities. These two factors were the basis of the autonomy of the indigenous peoples of the world, which the Ainu activists took as an example. According to the activist and musician Oki Kano, for example, "The Ainu do not exist only to dance and to carve wood [...]. Without the right to solve the Ainu

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<sup>143</sup> "History of the Foundation's Establishment". (2004, September 15th). Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu culture. Retrieved from [www.frpac.or.jp/english/zaidan/e\\_setsuritsu\\_f.html](http://www.frpac.or.jp/english/zaidan/e_setsuritsu_f.html)

<sup>144</sup> FRPAC, Projects. Official site. Retrieved from [www.frpac.or.jp](http://www.frpac.or.jp).

<sup>145</sup> These lands will be determined by the Ministry of Social Approval in accordance with the regulation contained in art. 10, third paragraph of the Protection Law. The unclaimed land will be handed over to the morally authorized person for the execution of the policies established by the Law, as part of the activists necessary for the purpose of the operation.

<sup>146</sup> "Ainu Minzoku ni Kansuru Shinpō Mondai nit suite" (On the problem of the promulgation of the new law in relation to the ainu people). (1988 March). *Utari Mondai Konwakai*, p .2. In Siddle, R. (1996), op.cit., p 185.

problem and the re-appropriation of our own land that once belonged to our ancestors, we cannot restore our culture”<sup>147</sup>.

According to Tessa Morris-Suzuki, the tendency in Japan was to build a “plural” society, or rather a “cosmetic multiculturalism”<sup>148</sup>. Another important criticism was that the New Law did not consider the issue of self-sufficiency, human right, and racial discrimination. Shigeru Kayano expressed himself in this way in an interview of May 1997, a few days before the New Law’s promulgation. Concerning Ainu’s case, he emphasized the worldwide tendency to assign to the indigenous peoples the right to use their territories. He observed this could be a first step to relate within Japanese society in terms of equity <sup>149</sup>. A year after the approval of the New Law, some activists expressed their opinion. One of them was Abe Yupo, who described the new law as “a law to introduce the Japanese to the Ainu culture”, given the noticeable increase in the number of Japanese people interested in Ainu culture. Sawai Aku also noticed that many Ainu did not participate directly in cultural activities. According to him, this prevented them from benefiting from the law, given that the material living conditions had not improved since July 1997, when the law came into force. Finally, Uemura Hideaki, leader of the Civic Diplomatic Center for Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples, declared that “It is a law for culture (Ainu), not for the people (Ainu)”<sup>150</sup>.

### **2.3. “Indigenous people” as a global category**

The approval of the New Law did not mark the end of the Ainu leaders’ struggle. Identification with the other peoples’ struggle led activists to choose whether or not to align with the variety of themes proposed by Hokkaidō Ainu Kyōkai, concerning the consequences of colonialism and the imposition of global capitalism. On 25 July 1999,

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<sup>147</sup> Oshima, S. (1998). “Law fails to address the needs of Ainu. Everyday issues neglected”. *The Japan Times*, June 2, p. 3.

<sup>148</sup> Mika, K. (2004). “The break-up of the national body: Cosmetic multiculturalism and films of Miike Takashi”. *New Cinemas*, vol. 2, n.1. Intellect Ltd.

Ko Mika, “The break-up of the national body: Cosmetic multiculturalism and films of Miike Takashi”, *New Cinemas*, vol. 2, n.1. Intellect Ltd. Article, 2004, cfr. Morris-Suzuki, T. (2001). “Posutokoroniarizmu no imi wo megutte” (Discussion on the meaning of 'postcolonialism'). *Gendai Shiso* (Contemporary Thought), July 29, n. 9, pp. 183-187.

<sup>149</sup> The interview with Mr. Shigeru Kayano, was carried out by the scholar Yolanda Muñoz González, on May 14<sup>th</sup> of 1997.

<sup>150</sup> Sawai Aku, Abe Yupo e Uemura Jideaki, in Oshima, S. (1998). op. cit. p. 3.

for example, Oki Kano, two leaders of the Ryūkyū and various representatives of support groups for the indigenous people of Japan, signed a declaration against the initiatives presented by the World Trade Organization. During the meeting that took place in Geneva, indigenous groups expressed rejected the possibility of patenting the use of medicinal plants, which traditional doctors have used since time immemorial to treat illness<sup>151</sup>. This manifesto formed part of the protests presented by the indigenous peoples during the World Trade Organization meeting, celebrated in Seattle from November 30th to December 3rd, 1999. The event resulted in a declaration condemning how the World Organization was destroying “Mother Earth”, as well as the cultural and biological diversity that indigenous communities respect as part of the primordial ethics inculcated by their ancestors<sup>152</sup>.

The representatives of the Ainu people joined the international struggle to end racial discrimination by taking part in numerous conferences<sup>153</sup>. The Japanese government insists on the non-existence of an official and internationally accepted “objective definition” of the term “indigenous people”, which means that the Ainu people cannot be defined as such. Despite international pressure, the reluctance towards recognition has economic and social reasons: “[...] we run the risk of allowing the Ainu to fish salmon in the Hokkaidō rivers, allowing history to be taught in public schools, the language and culture of the Ainu people, as well as allowing greater decision-making power in their affairs”<sup>154</sup>. Dr. Rodolfo Stavenhagen's visit gained a certain relevance. He was the rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Indigenous Peoples of the United Nations. The visit took place from 24 to 27 November 2002 and was organized by the Hinukaidō Association of Ainu, in collaboration with the Tōkyō office of the International Movement against Discrimination and Racism (IMADR). In his report, Stavenhagen stated that the New

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<sup>151</sup> “No Patenting of Life! Indigenous Peoples’ Statement on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) of the WTO Agreement”. (1999, July 25). United Nation. Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved from [www.alpacdc.com/ien/intellectual\\_property.html](http://www.alpacdc.com/ien/intellectual_property.html)

<sup>152</sup> “World Trade Organization and Indigenous Peoples”. (1999, November 29- December 3). WTO Meeting in Seattle, Washington. Retrieved from [www.puebloindio.org/Seattle\\_decl199.html](http://www.puebloindio.org/Seattle_decl199.html)

<sup>153</sup> United Nations General Assembly, 52<sup>o</sup> sessione. “Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination. Measures to Combat Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. The Role of Media in Inciting Racial Violence: Contributions to the Debate on the Theme ‘Internet, Racism and Racial Discrimination’”. Asamblea General Doc. A/52/471. Point n. 110, on 16th October 1997.

<sup>154</sup> Dietz, K. (1999). op. cit., p. 362.

Law did not fully meet Ainu's expectations, as it did not formally recognize social and cultural rights as an indigenous population, but that it could be improved by including specific references relevant to the human rights of indigenous peoples<sup>155</sup>. Stavenhagen's visit went as far as to familiarise with the situation of Ainu women. He conducted several interviews with some of them, such as the one with Keira Tomoko, president of the *Yai Yukara no Mori* Association. She told him about her commitment to the defense of feminine traditions and her desire to live as an Ainu woman. He also conversed with Yasuko Uetake, assistant to the executive director and first Ainu woman to take on a more active role to raise awareness of her culture and traditions, highlighting the importance women had in handing down these practices. Other women confessed their difficulty in being able to speak freely or feeling proud of being Ainu<sup>156</sup>. The last few years have seen the increasing participation of women in international meetings on issues of common interest for all indigenous peoples and on the specific problem of indigenous women<sup>157</sup>.

Chikkap Mieko, one of the most active Ainu women activists, has written a large number of articles, books, and articles in which she gives a clear position as an Ainu indigenous woman. Following the line taken by African American women and indigenous women of the world, she offers a critical perspective on feminism, questioning the image of a supposed "brotherhood" among the women of the world. From her point of view, it is unthinkable to focus on the fight against sexual discrimination, if first the people that define themselves as indigenous do not unite to eliminate the racial discrimination they are subjected to. Her critical attitude, as well as that of other women of India, Africa, and African American women, played a pivotal role in enriching the post-colonial perspective in recent years<sup>158</sup>. Despite the lack of reliable data concerning the Ainu population<sup>159</sup>, there has been talk of an increase in the number of people who speak

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<sup>155</sup> Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, 2003, p. 11.

<sup>156</sup> Stevens, G. (2003). "UN Expert, R. Stavenhagen, Meets with Ainu indigenous people". In *IMADR Newsletters Online*. Retrieved from [www.imadr.org/pub/web/r.stavenhagen-ainu.html](http://www.imadr.org/pub/web/r.stavenhagen-ainu.html).

<sup>157</sup> "Rural and Indigenous Women Speak Out Against Globalization". (1998, May 22-24). Asia Pacific Forum of Women, Law & Development, Chiangmai, Thailandia. Retrieved from <http://www.wloe.org/WLOE-en/information/globalization/indigenous.html>

<sup>158</sup> Hooks, B. (1997). "Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Women". In A. McClintock, A. Muftý & E. Shohat (eds.) *Dangerous Liaisons. Gender, Nation & Postcolonial Perspectives*. Mineápolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 396-411.

<sup>159</sup> A census carried out in 1980, indicates a figure that is around 24,000 inhabitants of Hokkaidō, who claimed to have descended from Ainu.

proudly of their being Ainu. Currently, more and more young people are taking part in the revitalization of costumes and the running of language courses organized throughout Hokkaidō. This generation is committed to developing a new interpretation of Japanese history through the experience of its people. The struggle to eliminate the term “race in extinction” and gain space in society as an indigenous population has enormously enriched Japan. A few days before the G8 was held in a fascinating setting on Lake Tōya, in Hokkaidō, from 7 to 9 July 2008, another summit took place. The latter was less visible but much more significant, without frills but with great participation. It was held from 1 to 4 July 2008 and represented a sort of “civil society counter-statement”. Hundreds of representatives from all over the world came to Hokkaidō to discuss the human rights of minorities, but above all to propose an “indigenous way” to sustainability<sup>160</sup>. On this occasion, Tōkyō avoided a powerful international embarrassment. At the behest of the G8 on the one hand and the UN on the other, it came to an important provision, namely the resolution of 6 June 2008, in which the Ainu people were recognized as an ethnic minority. The fact that the status of minorities such as the Ainu and the Okinawa group was recognized for the first time on an international stage, was crucial to recover the necessary impulse to listen to internal needs. Furthermore, the encounter with individuals who shared the same experience of colonization and discrimination led them to understand their responsibility with a wider global project. The brotherhood among indigenous communities invites reflection on the need to listen to the wisdom of the ancients. Among these is the voice of Ainu wisdom, which has found new life and meaning in uniting with the other indigenous peoples of the world. Their words can be heartbreaking, but they contain the foundation of a world in which respect for human diversity and Mother Earth are sovereign<sup>161</sup>.

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<sup>160</sup> Battipaglia, S. (2009), *op.cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>161</sup> González, Y.M. (2008). *op. cit.*, pp. 127-160.

## CHAPTER III

### AINU COSMOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS CULTURE

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Ainu cosmology and their religious tradition. In its pages, I will consider the formal annexation in 1868 of the territory of Ezo in the Japanese frontier. At that historical moment, the Ainu had already developed a culture of their own, starting based on a strong relationship with the surrounding natural environment. The colonizing program imposed on them, the prohibition of hunting and fishing, had consequences at several levels and led them to the abandonment of their language and customs.

The chapter looks at the cosmological world of Ainu and its oral tradition, which includes the existence of a complex relationship between the world of gods *Kamui Moshiri* and the world of men *Ainu Moshiri*, with constant interaction, so much so that through dreams it is possible to connect with one's ancestors and receive information on everyday events. Learning the history of oral tradition is a lengthy process. It is not just about remembering the plot or the characters: the rhythm and wisdom that each narrative contains must be internalized as a part of a complex cosmology.

In the Ainu cosmology, there are three key concepts: *Ramat*, *Kamui*, and *Inau*. Everything that exists is equipped with *Ramat*, it is the essence of all things. The term *Kamui* means “god”, and the Ainu believed that every deity lived in the land of gods, with human features and a lifestyle similar to their own. *Inau* are the ritual sticks carved in the wood of the sacred willow, used for religious proposes. With the Japanese annexation, the *wajin* assimilation policies dramatically changed the physical and cosmological world of the Ainu subduing their culture in several ways.

#### 3.1. Ainu Cosmology

##### 3.1.1. The *Ainu Moshiri*

The formal annexation in 1868 of the territory of Ezo (now Hokkaidō) in the Japanese frontier gave rise to numerous social changes in the Ainu people. By then, they had

developed a culture of their own, starting from the strong relationship with the surrounding natural environment. The civilization program imposed on them, the obligation to farm, the prohibition of hunting and fishing, had consequences on an educational level. It led to the abandonment of their language and customs. Also, the migration of Japanese people to the island, mainly samurai and poor peasants, triggered discrimination against the Ainu, especially when addressing the issue of territorial division. Many Ainu converted to Japanese culture, becoming subjects of Tennò. The Japanese not only forced them to adopt the imperial culture but banned important practices such as the bear ritual *Iyomante* and the hymns *Yukar*, the practice of tattooing. The preservation of the Ainu identity was reduced to a personal issue. Many years later, the rituals were recreated only in the memory of some elderly people, eager to remember and pass on oral tradition to their descendants. From the examination of the available studies (carried out in different moments and places) it was possible to see a segmentation of the group, which is reflected in the multitude of versions recompiled on the religious cosmogony. However, significant information has allowed us to reconstruct most of their daily habits and their relationship with the surrounding world. Investigations abound on the subject of religion and are dealt with from different points of view<sup>162</sup>. An important consideration concerns Shigeru Kayano's commitment as an activist first and politician later<sup>163</sup>. Until him, there were no documents on the Ainu oral tradition compiled by the Ainu themselves and translated into other languages. Other figures are those of Chiri Mashō and his sister Yukie<sup>164</sup> who have accurately arranged the Ainu oral tradition, translating it into Japanese. There is also a collection by Yamamoto Tasuke, who compiled *Yukar* and other works, preserved in the Hoppō-Minzoku Shiryokan library (Documentation Center of Northern Cultures) of the

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<sup>162</sup> Tierney, E.O. (1977). "An octopus headache? A lamprey boil? Multisensory perception of the 'habitual illness and world view of the Ainu". *Journal of Anthropological Research*, vol. 33, pp. 245-257.

<sup>163</sup> Shigeru Kayano, currently a member of the Japanese Government and actively participated in the formulation and approval of the New Law approved in May 1997. In addition, he produced numerous materials, not yet translated into Western languages, and several documentaries on Ainu culture. Currently you can visit his personal collection of Ainu objects at Nibutani, in the Biratori Chō museum. Not to underestimate his commitment as an activist in favor of his people's rights and the recovery of traditional culture. Sjoberg, K. (1993). *The return of the Ainu. Cultural mobilization and the practice of ethnicity in Japan*. London: Harwood Academic Publishers, p. 178.

<sup>164</sup> Chiri Mashō and Yukie Mashō, like Shigeru Kayano, are committed to defending the Ainu culture, collaborating with the linguist Kindaichi Kyosuke, whose work will be entitled "Ainu Life & Legends".

University of Hokkaidō or the library of the National Museum of Ethnology in Japan, in Ōsaka.

### 3.1.2. The two communicating worlds

If we closely examine the cosmogonic world of Ainu, we come across with the observations of the traveler Isabella Bird. After her journey in Hokkaidō in 1878, she underlines the existence of a complex relationship between the world of gods *Kamui Moshiri* and the world of men *Ainu Moshiri*. She describes it as a constant interaction, so much so that through dreams it is possible to connect with one's ancestors and receive information on everyday events. The sun, the sea, the wind, the trees, the rivers, the fire, all animals, and even diseases are endowed with a spirit that visits the Ainu Moshiri. When human beings are visited by a *Kamui*, they must welcome him through an appropriate ceremony. The Ainu oral tradition is imbued with stories of the blessings that human beings receive after having correctly performed it<sup>165</sup>. Prayers and other formulas try to honor the deities and obtain their favors. The ritual itself has strong energy manipulation powers. The interaction between individuals stems from oral culture and unites people in groups. This community organization has fostered continuity over the centuries. If it fails, the narrative cannot repeat itself in a context that ensures the power of the word<sup>166</sup>. Learning the history of oral tradition is a lengthy process. It is not just about remembering the plot or the characters: the rhythm and wisdom that each narrative contains must be internalized<sup>167</sup>.

### 3.1.3. The *Kamui Moshiri*

In the Ainu cosmology, there are three key concepts: *Ramat*, *Kamui*, *Inau*. Everything that exists is equipped with *Ramat*. It is the essence of all things. It is the soul of men, the vital principle of animals and plants, the force that moves the wind, stirs the sea, draws the rivers, the substratum of household objects, or those useful for hunting. Only

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<sup>165</sup> Muñoz, Y. (1998). "Ainu Moshir y Kamui Moshir: la cosmovisión religiosa del pueblo Ainu". *Estudios de Asia y Africa*, n. 105, January-April. México: El Colegio de México, pp. 103-107.

<sup>166</sup> Muñoz, Y. (2008). op. cit. pp. 204- 206.

<sup>167</sup> Walter, J. (1996). *Ong, Orality & Literacy. The technologizing of the word*. London: Routledge, (1° ed., Methuen, 1982), p. 60.



dead organisms, broken objects, all that must decompose to put their matter back into circulation, does not have *Ramat*<sup>168</sup>. This animistic perception of the world makes them attribute sacred power to objects such as the amulets offered to the gods to receive favors<sup>169</sup>. According to Peng and Geiser, there are several stories about the relationship between *Ramat* and *Kamui*, where the former appears as a mask of the *Kamui* who manifest themselves in this world. A *Ramat* just waits to rise and convert into *Kamui*. However, some *Ramats* remain *Ramats* without relating to the *Kamui*. According to Sjoberg and Munro, the Ainu believe that everything and everyone has a *Ramat*, but that not everything and everyone is *Kamui*.

Batchelor<sup>170</sup>, attributes to the term *Kamui*, the meanings of “god” and “bear”, defining it: “a title applicable to any great thing, good, important, venerable, bad, ferocious, terrible; it is used talking about animals and men, gods and demons”. When used as a prefix it is considered an adjective (eg: *Kamui*-grandfather – “a beautiful flower”), but when used as a suffix it is considered a noun (eg *Rep-un-Kamui* - “god of the sea”). Translating *Kamui* with “divine” if adjective and “god” if a noun, can be a reasonable solution. He adds *ka* (“above”) *mu* (“extended”) *I* (a suffix that gives the value of a noun to what precedes it). In Japanese *kami* can be translated as “the top, the head, the upper part”, or as “god, supreme being” or even “Lord” in a feudal sense. The Ainu believed that every deity lived in the land of gods, with human features and a lifestyle similar to their own<sup>171</sup>. Even evil spirits, are venerated or better, appeased, persuaded, through rites of liberation<sup>172</sup>. For the Ainu, it is important not to offend the gods. Everyone must be treated equally. When an individual or community is involved in some misfortune, misfortune is attributed to an offense caused to a *Kamui*<sup>173</sup>. It was possible to clear oneself by rituals and offering them *Inau* (carved wooden sticks)<sup>174</sup>. One of the most

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<sup>168</sup> Maraini, F. (1942). *Gli Iku-bashi degli Ainu*. Tōkyō : I. C. I., Vol. I, p. 4.

<sup>169</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962). *Ainu creed & cult*. London: Routledge & Kegan, Columbia. In Muñoz, Y. (1998). op. cit p. 107.

<sup>170</sup> Batchelor, J. (1889). *An Ainu english-japanese dictionary and grammar*. Tōkyō: Iwanami.

<sup>171</sup> Chiri, M. (1953). *Bunrui Ainu Go Jiten, Dai-1-Kan Shokubutsu Hen* (A Classificatory Ainu Dictionary). Tōkyō: Nihon Jomin Bunka Kenkyusho. Hokkaidō Kyoiku Inkai (Hokkaidō Board of Education), Vol. 1: Plants, p. 13.

<sup>172</sup> Hastings, J. (1980). *Encyclopedia of religion and ethics*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark New York, vol. I, pp. 239-252.

<sup>173</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962). op. cit pp. 9-10.

<sup>174</sup> According to Munro, some *ekashi* (chiefs) practiced magic as a remedy to appease the gods, but the use of magic to cause harm was most likely introduced during the assimilation begun during the Tokugawa period and consolidated during the Meiji Restoration.

important practices by the *ekashi* (“village chief”) was the *Iyomante* (“sacred sending”). The sacrificed bear assumed the role of messenger between the Ainu and the divine ancestor bear, the mountain god *Kim-un Kamui*. The bear was therefore sent to bring messages and prayers of prosperity for the people to the mountain god. The mountain has competency on the winds, on the rigidity of the climate, on rainfall, on the amount of game to hunt, on the fire, since even the volcano falls under the category of the mountain. The bear had the task of telling the gods of the mountains about the goodness, loyalty, and honor of the community<sup>175</sup>. Sjoberg underlines how the ritual had to be perfectly executed to allow the *Ramat* to return to earth and not to wander elsewhere<sup>176</sup>. Another function of *ekashi* was to establish contact with the *Kamui*. To communicate, they used sacred objects, the *Inau*, with different amounts of *Ramat*, according to the *Kamui* that had to be invoked<sup>177</sup>.

The *Inau* are sticks carved in the wood of the sacred willow, from a few centimeters to over a meter long. They are pointed to one end to be able to stick them into the ground, while at the other they can have shavings (*kike*) planed by the stick itself or by another piece of wood, and fixed with a knot, taking the value of hair or sacred cloak with protective power<sup>178</sup>. Outside, the Ainu created palisades called *Inau san*, real supports for the *Inau*. Individuals or groups called *Nusa* were offered to the oak or to other trees placed in the mountains where the *Kamui* were believed to reside. They can be classified into two categories: *Kamui-inau* names offered to gods, and *Shinurappa inau* offered to ancestors on occasions of ancestral cults. There are also the *inau alati* (*Shutu-inau*), that is, cleaned sticks with a cut on top, to form the mouth, while on the sides are carved thin elongated tips directed upwards, to represent the wings. They are minor *Kamui* or subsidiary by their concentrated *Ramat*. There are about 15 species of trees useful for producing benevolent *Kamui* and 3-4 species for malevolent ones (including hawthorn and elder). Besides, for special purposes or if the willow was not available, trees such

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<sup>175</sup> Roselli, M.G. (2012). “Un giovane etnologo in Hokkaidō”. *Ainu-Antenati Spiriti e Orsi* (curated by Günther Giovannoni). Cahier Museomontagna, n. 178, pp. 30-31.

<sup>176</sup> The ancestors lived in the *Pokna Moshiri*, where they lived an existence similar to that of human beings. According to Naert, a dead person was judged for his actions in the *Pokna Moshir* and from there sent to the *Kamui Kotan* or paradise, or in the *Teinei Pokna Chiri* or hell. In Sjoberg, K. (1993). op. cit. p. 65; in Munro, N.G. (1962). op. cit. pp. 26-27.

<sup>177</sup> Tierney, E.O. (1977). op. cit. p. 87; in Sjoberg, K. (1993). op. cit. p. 66. To communicate with gods, *ekashi* spoke a special language called *kamui itak*, incomprehensible to women.

<sup>178</sup> The *inau-kikes* are vaguely reminiscent of the Shinto gohei. Maraini, F. (1942). op.cit. p .3.

as magnolia, lilac, and cornel were used<sup>179</sup>. An example is the *Inau* offered to the demon called *Chikapipenta-ekashi amba Kamui*, implored with prayers to hypnotize enemies during a night attack, a frequent event until not long ago<sup>180</sup>.

As for the multiple divinities, they are classified according to the benign nature *Pirika*, to the hostile nature *Wen* and the neutral one *Koshne*<sup>181</sup>. According to Peng and Geiser, the *Kamui Moshiri* consists of four levels<sup>182</sup>. According to Batchelor, there are six levels. Naert<sup>183</sup> and Hilger believe there are only three. A detailed classification of *Kamui* looks like this: remote and traditional; familiar and trustworthy; subsidiary; anthropomorphic; personal and guide spirits; naughty and wicked; of the plague; things of inexpressible horror. Head of the *Kamui* of the first class is *Kando-koro-Kamui*, possessor of the sky, also called *Pase-Kamui* (“the true god”) and *Kotan-kara-Kamui*. The term “kara” is used in compounds and stands for “the creator”. The term “koro” instead, stands for “the owner”<sup>184</sup>.

Other gods are *Kanna-Kamui*, the god of thunder; *Chup-Kamui*, the sun god; *Kunna-chup Kamui*, the deity of the moon<sup>185</sup>. One of the most important deities is *Ae-oina-Kamui*, or by abbreviation *Oina-Kamui*. According to a myth, he was created by *Kotan-kara-Kamui*<sup>186</sup>, according to others instead he can be identified with himself. In different versions of his myth, he is said to have been born on earth by the spirit of his father's elm<sup>187</sup>. *Shiramba-Kamui*, “the supporter of the world”, belongs to the second class. He is the god of trees and vegetation, the donor of the timber the Ainu use to build their houses, therefore considered the protector of the houses themselves. His *Ramat* has a place in a group of *Inau* called *ram nusa* or “*nusa* souls”, placed outside the sacred window. *Fuchi-Kamui* is the “supreme progenitor” whose *Ramat* manifests itself in the sacred fire of the earth. Together with *Shiramba-Kamui*, she holds the title of “*Shiri-koro-Kamui*” (“possessors of the world”). Her origin was in paradise, accompanied by

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<sup>179</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962). cit. pp. 28-43.

<sup>180</sup> Natori, T. (1940/41). “Hoppo-bunka”. *Studies from the Research Institute for Northern Culture*. Sapporo: H.W, n. 4.

<sup>181</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962). op. cit. p. 9.

<sup>182</sup> Peng, F.C.C. & Geiser, P. (1977). In Sjoberg, K. (1993). cit. p. 61.

<sup>183</sup> Naert, P. (1960). In Sjoberg, K. (1993). op.cit., p. 61.

<sup>184</sup> Hastings, J. (1980). op. cit. p.14.

<sup>185</sup> See Batchelor, J. (1889).

<sup>186</sup> Kindaichi, K. (1953). *The study of the Ainu*. Tōkyō, p. 211.

<sup>187</sup> Chiri, M. (1953). op. cit. p. 14.

*Kanna-Kamui*, the god of thunder and lightning. According to others instead, she was generated by the spirit of elm.

Another deity is *Nusa-koro-Kamui*. According to some sources, she was held in almost the same regard as her sister *Fuchi-Kamui*. It seems that *Fuchi-Kamui* chose the domestic hearth as a place of worship, while *Nusa-koro-Kamui* outside the sacred window. The nature of the latter is mysterious, although studies trace its origin back to the ancestral cult and traces of the serpent cult. *Kinashut-Kamui* is the guiding spirit of snakes, seen as the source of all evil, but not in a pagan sense. Accepted as a *Pase-Kamui* (“important *Kamui*” or “heavy gods”),<sup>188</sup> it is identified by some with *Nusa-koro-Kamui*, by others considered his brother or collaborator, invoked to drive away evil. *Hash-inau-uk-Kamui* is the female divinity protector of fishing, invoked to protect herself from the evil spirits of the hills, the woods, the forests. *Pet-orun-Kamui* (“river divinity”), resides in the waters, sometimes recognized as a man, sometimes as a woman; an example of its female manifestation is *Nai-orun-Kamui*, who presides in the springs and small valleys. Moreover, it is connected to the ancestral cult, like *Nusa-koro*, and together with *Kinashut*, they are invoked in the difficult parts. *Chiu-rape guru* and *Chiu-rape mat* control underwater currents; *Chi-wash Kamui* instead controls the waters at the mouth of the river. *Hattar-koro Kamui* controls the deep abysses. The *Apa-sam-Kamui* or sentinel deities belong to the third class. They are both male and female, and against evil spirits. Outside the house there are two *Kamui* servants of *Fuchi-Kamui*: *Mintara-koro* (“possessor of the borders”), and *Ru-koro-Kamui* (“*Kamui* of secret evil”) invoked to chase away evil.

Animals, good or bad, belong to the fourth category. According to some Ainu, it is possible to tell them apart by particular signs and colors. For example, a black fox (*Shitumbe-Kamui*) is almost always good; a red fox on the contrary is almost always unreliable. The *Kamui* animals are sometimes considered the incarnation of the *Pase-Kamui*: *Satchini-Kamui* (“the alcide”) that protects the fish; the crow is *Pashkuru-Kamui*; the spider *Yooshkep-Kamui*, also called *Tunchihi-Kamui* is the divine assistant of *Nusa-koro-Kamui*; *Hai-o-pira-Kamui* is the sword of the swordfish. The animal

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<sup>188</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). *Case, amori, universi*. Milan: Mondadori, pp. 430-431. In these pages Maraini will be discussing with the Reverend John Batchelor on the use of the singular or plural in the languages of East Asia. The reverend about *Pase Kamui* replied: [“should be understood” as referring to a single and supreme god].

skulls of certain *Kamui* such as mammals, birds, turtles, belong to the fifth class. They are cleaned and filled with shavings through the hollows of the eyes, the mouth, the skull itself. *Fuchi-Kamui* is invoked to activate the spirit of the twigs. These objects are called *Shirakti-Kamui* and act as protector spirits (“*epungine-Kamui*”). A fox skull is considered the favorite item for this action.

There are also invisible spirits that act without personification: *Kashi-Kamui* and *Seremak* for well-being and luck; *Kasanip* for spiritistic possessions<sup>189</sup> and finally *Mintuchi*, for aquatic nymphs. Care must be taken when invoking these divinities in times of danger, as they can have unfortunate consequences. The spirits lurking in the woods, in the cliffs, in the ravines, in the lakes belong to the sixth class. An important deity is *Pauchi-Kamui*, responsible for sickness and food poisoning. All the evil spirits belong to the seventh class. For example, *Pakoro-Kamui* is smallpox that devastates entire villages. In the eighth class, the most noteworthy deity is the caterpillar *Ashtoma-ikombap*. The term “ashtoma” stands for “terror”<sup>190</sup>. When Syoberg asked a member of the Ainu people if he agreed with Munro's classification of deities, he replied that it was difficult for other people to fully understand the weight they gave to *Kamui*, or what they meant by this concept. He added there was no Japanese word with which one could translate *imi* (“the true essence”)<sup>191</sup>.

The revision of the sources on the Ainu religion does not allow us to translate these statements to the best. Comparing it with Western cosmogony, many concepts are incomprehensible because they do not have an adequate reference point. Batchelor interprets the issue by claiming that the Ainu initially used to be monotheistic and when they later became polytheists, they created a language that evoked the Christian tradition<sup>192</sup>. The apparent sensitivity of Ainu religious practices within the complex cosmogony creates a harmonious dimension. The worship of gods gradually changed. The Japanese assimilation policy was seen as an integral part of the process of change

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<sup>189</sup> Jung, K. (1928). *Two essays on analytical psychology*. London and New York: B.Z.S., part. II, charter II.

<sup>190</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962). *op. cit.* pp. 16-27.

<sup>191</sup> Sjoberg, K. (1993). *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>192</sup> Hastings, J. (1980). p. 140.

and by the end of the nineteenth century, it had been accelerated. The laws imposed by the Japanese assimilation policy resulted in totally subduing this culture<sup>193</sup>.

## 3.2. Religious culture

### 3.2.1. The ceremonial objects

Traditionally, the Ainu express their religiosity through the use of the *inau*, sticks usually carved in the wood of the sacred willow, from a few centimeters to over a meter long. Pointed to one end to be able to stick them into the ground, while at the other, they can have shavings (*kike*), planed by the stick itself, hanging from it, or by another piece of wood, and fixed with a knot, taking on the value of hair or sacred mantle with protective power<sup>194</sup>. Outside the Ainu realize palisades called *inau san* real supports for the *inau*. Singles or groups called *nusas* are offered to the oak or other trees placed in the mountains where the *Kamui* are believed to reside.

They can be classified into two categories: *Kamui-inau nomi* offered to gods and *Shinurappa inau* offered to ancestors on occasions of ancestral cults. There are also the *inau alati* (*Shutu-inau*), that is, cleaned sticks that have a cut, on top, to form the mouth, while on the sides are carved thin elongated tips directed upwards, to represent the wings, considered minor *Kamui* or subsidiary by their concentrated *Ramat*. There are about 15 species of trees to make benevolent *Kamui* and 3-4 for malevolent *Kamui* (including hawthorn and elder). Also, for special purposes or because the willow is not available, trees such as magnolia, lilac, and cornel are used<sup>195</sup>. An *inau* for benevolent purposes is created, for example, when a creature is born. It is placed next to the child and will take the value of a guardian angel, it will cover it from illness, but the child will have to learn to venerate it day by day. The veneration of evil spirits plays a propitiatory role. For the occasion, an *inau* called *nitne-inao* or *nitne-hash-inau* is constructed, in case of illness or in case a person is thought to be possessed. After the prayer, the patient is beaten with the *takusa*, a bundle of grass. The revered *inau* is placed outside the hut, in the *nusa*. When an epidemic infested the village, *kotan-kikkara-inau* (“*inau* for the defense of the village”) was built. It represented the eagle owl, endowed with particular

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<sup>193</sup> Muñoz, Y. (1998). cit. 120-121.

<sup>194</sup> The *inau-kikes* vaguely recall the Shinto *gohei* in Maraini, F. (1942). p. 3.

<sup>195</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962). *Ainu creed & cult*. London: Routledge & Kegan, Columbia, pp. 28-43.

powers in defeating that kind of evil. Food was sometimes placed right in the mouth, as an offering to demons. Even the fisherman uses a particular *inau*, *hash-inau* (“*inao-bush*”). It has an opening at the top to represent the mouth, filled with shavings and having wings that point downwards<sup>196</sup>. There are two sizes of winged *inau*: small (*pon*), large (*ruwe*). A particular type is the *inumba-inau*, with 9 wings, made out of willow. Moreover, the *Chehorokakep* is made with willow or walnut wood, planted from below, like the *Chikappo shian* or “the real bird”, with two upper wings and spirals below, dedicated to the owl. In every moment of their life, the Ainu refer to these sticks. The greatest offense that can ever be inflicted on an Ainu is to treat it as an “individual without *inau*”<sup>197</sup>.

### 3.2.2. The *Kamui-nomi* ceremony (“Offer to the gods”)

The term “*nomi*” is defined by Batchelor<sup>198</sup> as “the ceremony which consists in offering *inau* or libations of wine (often both) to the gods”. A description of *Kamui-nomi* was made in 1881 by Heinrich von Siebold, then by Batchelor, Haas, and by W. Kremp<sup>199</sup>. Despite differences based on places or occasions, the ceremony is celebrated as follows. The Ainu takes a lacquered cup (*tuki*) from one of the lacquered boxes of Japanese origin, called *shintoko*. The *tuki* is also of Japanese origins and the type of cup used is the *tenmoku-dai* one. The lacquered boxes form the main “treasures” of the hut. The cup is laid on the ground with an *iku-bashui* laid on it crosswise. The *tuki* is laid in front of the place where the worshipped divinity is believed to reside. Most of the time, it is *Kamui Fuchi*, goddess of fire and mother-ancestor of the Ainu. The cup is placed near the hearth. To make the ceremony more solemn, especially if rather than to greet, one intends to pray, the elderly man plants some *inau* and plants them into the ashes. When the cup is filled with liquor, everything is ready. The Ainu sits cross-legged in front of the cup, then with a slow and measured movement, he takes it in his left hand, slightly

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<sup>196</sup> When God created man, his body took life from the earth, his hair from the hen grass and his spine from the willow. For the Ainu the backbone has assumed an almost sacred importance over time, since it is considered the seat of the vital essence of man, in Hastings, J. (1980). pp. 246-247.

<sup>197</sup> Muccioli, M. (1958). “La religione degli Ainu”. *Le Civiltà dell’Oriente*. Rome: Gherardo Casini, vol. III- Lo Shintoismo, pp. 1142-1143.

<sup>198</sup> Hastings, J. (1980). p. 136.

<sup>199</sup> Haas, D.H. (1925). “Die Ainu und ihre religion”. *Bilderatlas zur Religionsgeschichte*, vol. 8, Leipzig, p. 9; Kremp, W. (1928). *Beitrage zur Religion der Ainu*. Freiburg: Pressverein, p. 19.

holding the *iku-bashui* with his right hand and raises everything to his forehead with a bow. Subsequently, but not always, passing the hand to the left and the right. After this, while still holding the cup with his left hand, he dips the tip of the *iku-bashui*, which he holds in his right hand, in the liqueur, and sprinkles a few drops of it, collected by adherence in the tiny *parumbe*, in the air. He often spreads a few drops on the shavings of the *inau*. This happens especially when praying. Finally, the Ainu drinks the contents of the cup, simultaneously raising the mustache with the *iku-bashui* so that it does not get wet in the liquor, a serious ritual impropriety. The *Kamui-nomi* is said to be one of the main elements in the Ainu's social and religious life; it is performed on every solemn occasion<sup>200</sup>.

### 3.2.3. The *Chisei-nomi* ceremony (“Consecration of the house”)

While we are accustomed to different specialized figures involved in the process of building a house, for the Ainu instead, everything is preceded and accompanied by prayers and offers to the various *Kamui* of the house, whose collaboration is necessary for a good outcome<sup>201</sup>. It is said that the first Ainu house descended from the sky with the fire goddess *Fuchi Kamui* or *Iresu Kamui*<sup>202</sup>.

For you, if I'm not mistaken ... the house is one thing. For us it is rather a church ... Priests we have never had ... every landlord is a priest of his house-chapel. The building is all permeated with the sacred, it is home to men, yes, but also to numerous *Kamui*. Some consider it a living being, with its own conscience and its own personality<sup>203</sup>

Ever since the Ainu went to the woods in search of timber for the construction of the house, each tree was given its *inau*, along with forgiveness for cruelty in having taken its life and thanks for its future contribution. Thanks are also given to *Shiramba Kamui*, the great and heavy (*Pase*) god of vegetation. Of all the trees, lilac is preferred, the most resistant of all. When there is a need for water, prayers, and offerings of *inau* are addressed to *Wakka-ush-Kamui*, the god of springs and rivers. The Ainu are aware that the *Kamui* makes every kind of material available to them, but they should be

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<sup>200</sup> Maraini, F. (1942). p. 67-68.

<sup>201</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). p. 443.

<sup>202</sup> *Iresu Kamui* is an expression of respect which means “divine mother who raised us, nurtured us, who taught us everything”, in Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. p. 450.

<sup>203</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. p. 451.



nevertheless thanked, otherwise they may feel offended and eventually take revenge. Once the house is finished, it is time to prepare for the *Chisei-nomi*; the ceremony of consecration of the house. To begin, two *ekashi* (elderly) light the first fire of the new house, a sign of the birth of *Fuchi Kamui*, protector of the whole family. To get the flame, a man held a dry lilac stick still, taking it down with a porcelain cup, while another rotated it holding a string in both hands and skilfully moving it here and there. The stick was placed at the bottom within a hollow space created within a large log of dry and resinous conifer. In the meantime, a little boy scattered noticeably light and dry shavings on the hollow space “After a couple of minutes, it was possible to notice a thin wisp of smoke. Then the *ekashi* that held the stick with the cup began to vigorously blow on the redpoint of ignition”<sup>204</sup>. Using an *iku-bashui*, an *ekashi* performs solemn sprinkling of *Kamui-ashkoro*<sup>205</sup> on the *inau* of the hearth dedicated to *Fuchi Kamui*, and in the direction of the northeast corner of the house where the union of *Chise-Koro-Kamui* is, husband of *Fuchi Kamui*, and male protector of the hut and family. A prayer will follow:

Oh *Fuchi Kamui*, You who raised us! ...

Oh *Fuchi Kamui*, You who own the *Ainu Moshiri* (the land of the Ainu)

Oh *Fuchi Kamui*, You who descends from the heavens!”

Worshipping You with the deepest respect, ... once the rites that infuse souls (*Ramat*) into the *inau* of *Chise-Katkemat* and *Kenru-Katkemat* (the Ladies, Fairies, protectors of the house) have been complete. That being the case, we ask You to offer Your and your benevolent assistance ... as a Mother who raises (*iresu*) the Ainu, as well as a Lady of the Country.

We also hope that you will, oh *Fuchi Kamui*, act as a mediator between the Ainu and their *Kamui*, honoring the *Chisesopa* (the upper part of the house which is considered a chapel) with your presence, where the great *Chise-Koro-Kamui inau* will be placed, protector of the family and your spouse. We also pray to the precious heart of the divine *Ekashi Nusa-Koro-Kamui*, the Spirit who resides in the *nusa* (to the east of the house),

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<sup>204</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. pp. 452-457.

<sup>205</sup> The *Kamui ashkoro* is the milky beer of low alcohol content of millet, it was left to ferment in small lacquered vats, then collected in antique black lacquered jugs with gold ornaments and finally poured into *tuki*, or red cups of the individual *ekashi*, in Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. p. 458.

hoping it will intercede with *Fuchi Kamui* and send you our most ardent prayers. At the same time, it awakens the precious heart of the Divine *Ekashi Shiramba-Kamui* (god of woods and plants) making our respectful thoughts reach him.

Oh *Shiramba-Kamui*, are you not considered the most talented and eloquent character of the entire divine family? Please, therefore, protect us and present our honest wishes to *Fuchi Kamui*.” Finally, we invoke the minor *Kamui* of the house, where *Fuchi Kamui* is queen, honoring them with the *inau* they are owed.

Our human ancestor, *Aoina-Kamui*, wanted to teach us the arts of civil life and we learned from him by imitating him. To him we turn now, with the utmost respect to our thoughts, offering him these *chihorokakep-inau* rituals (smaller *inau* than the others and of peculiar aspect) ... Interpreting the spirit we invoke you with, I hope you will deign to listen to us. We have already prepared the *inau* of *Chise-Koro-Kamui*, the *Kamui* that will come to live in this house. “Oh protect us! Oh, guide us! “Such words humbly I offer.<sup>206</sup>

At the end of the prayer and using the *tuki* cup and an *iku-bashui*, an *ekashi* outside the house completes new libations of *Kamui-ashkoro* and sprinkles a few drops on the *inau* arranged on the *nusa*, the altar rack before the *rorun puyara*, the sacred window. Inside the house, other *ekashi* recite shorter prayers for the main *Kamui* of the new house. The dishes that are typically consumed on this occasion are *shito*, rice, and other grains crushed in mortars to form large dumplings, cooked in tasty meat broths.

#### **3.2.4. The *Shinnurappa* ceremony (“The rite of the ancestors”)**

The *Shinnurappa* is the ritual directed to the ancestors. It normally follows the *Chisei-nomi*, although the women cannot take part in the latter. Women distribute the *Kamui-ashkoro*, the milky millet beer, and abundant portions of *shito* (rice and other grains patiently crushed to form large dumplings, boiled in tasty meat broths)<sup>207</sup>. *Inau* and beer are offered to the ancestors and a prayer is recited on that occasion. The Ainu used to bury some objects together with the dead. These objects differed from man to woman. Before the burial, the objects were broken to allow their soul to freely accompany the soul of the deceased. If the deceased was a man, *iku-bashui* were also buried with him.

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<sup>206</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. pp. 459-461.

<sup>207</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. p. 462.

To facilitate this detachment, the body was wrapped up with a mat that held it together with its cherished objects. It was then placed in an isolated tomb<sup>208</sup>. On the outside, the tomb was marked by a sort of short pole, which presented phallic-looking shapes. The pole was placed at the feet of the deceased, to signal the presence of a tomb. Furthermore, the tombs were covered with timber and shrubs to protect them from animals<sup>209</sup>.

### **3.2.5. The *Iyomante* ceremony (“The sacred sending of the bear”)**

In the religious world of the Ainu, the cult of the bear plays an important role. The bear is considered a sort of *inau*. It was the earthly manifestation of the supreme god of the mountains, *Kira-Mante-Kamui* (or *Kim-a-Kamui*), who disguised as a bear to descend to earth. The ritual involved the capture of a bear cub, which was bred as a domestic animal until the age of three to four years, fed on the best food, and offered sacred millet beer and prayers. In the past, when the animal was very small and toothless, one of the village women became her “putative mother” and breast-fed him. This custom has long since disappeared but is clearly illustrated in Japanese paintings and prints from the 18th and 19th centuries<sup>210</sup>.

The fundamental idea behind these traditions and the *Iyomante* itself is that the bear-god rejoices in the same things that human beings enjoy. A human guest would rejoice in being honored with such respect and so many ceremonies, in receiving the best food and the best drinks, in seeing themselves offered beautiful and expensive gifts: the same is supposed to apply to the bear and the other adored divinities by the Ainu. We are faced with a remarkably interesting psychological reversal, in which the whole event is seen from an imaginary bear point of view. It is assumed that the animal-god is pleased, happy, fully satisfied with the way the Ainu treats it with ceremonies, songs, and gifts that it will bring to its parents and ancestors, bringing them pleasure and prestige. The fact that then the bear will be killed is negligible since the Ainu are certain the bear if fully satisfied by the richness and splendor of the feast, will return several times among men to be again started in the same way. The festival was celebrated in October when

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<sup>208</sup> Only the Ainu of Sakhalin used the coffin exceptionally.

<sup>209</sup> Muccioli, M. (1958). op. cit. p. 1145.

<sup>210</sup> Batchelor, J. (1901). *The Ainu and their folklore*. London: Religious Tract Society, p. 484. This practice was also observed directly by some Europeans.

the bear's fur was thicker, and the meat was sweeter<sup>211</sup>. It took the name of *Iyomante* or *Iyomante* (or *Kumamatsuri* in Japanese) which according to Fosco Maraini means (“start it”), referred to as an animal or an object<sup>212</sup>. This particular case refers to the Japanese custom of throwing away old needles or other objects, such as *obi*, in a ritual way<sup>213</sup>.

The first mention dates back to a Japanese description of 1652, translated into French in 1814<sup>214</sup>. It is especially important to remember the *Iyomante* is not exclusive to the Ainu. Many of their neighbors, especially the Ghiliachi, the Orok, and the Goldi (or Nanaj), who occupy territories north of Hokkaidō, in Sakhalin or on the mainland near the mouth of the Amur river, have ancient traditions that express similar beliefs and present the same articulation of the ceremonial phases. The sending of the bear represented the *Iyomante* par excellence. It was believed that when the deities were in the *Ainu Moshiri*, they were “dressed”, covered by a sort of shell that masked them and made them appear in the eyes of the people as animals, plants, everyday objects, or more. If they happened to come into the hands of men, they had to be ritually freed, so that their spirit (separated from the body) could return to the *Kamui Moshiri*, to the world of the gods. According to Emiko Ohnuki Tierney, the sending ceremonies represented a real rebirth for the Ainu<sup>215</sup>. During these ceremonies, the deity who was about to be sent was revered, served, and cared for in all possible details. An important document is represented by the Song of a Bear, recited by Etenoa Hiraga and recorded in 1932 by Itsubiko Kubodera, later translated into English by Donald L. Philippi. The song reveals a complete scenario of man-bear relations. The song is articulated as if the bear was narrating the facts in the first person. From the moment he feels fear at the sight of the bow, to the pain of the impact of the arrow with his flesh. The arrow, dipped in the juice

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<sup>211</sup> The Ainu, their Land & Culture. [Web site with a list on Ainu culture and rituals books]. Retrieved from [www.workingdogweb.com/ainu.html](http://www.workingdogweb.com/ainu.html)

<sup>212</sup> Maraini, F. (1996). “The Ainu *Iyomante* and its evolution”. In P.F. Kornicki & I. Mc Mullen *Religion in Japan. Arrows to heaven and hearth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 220. Italian Translation by F.P. Campione in the volum Maraini, F. (1997). *Gli ultimi pagani. Appunti di viaggio di un etnologo poeta*. Como: Red Edizioni; Shigeru, K. (1979). *Shashinshu Ainu: Nibutani no Utonmunukara to Iyomante*. Tōkyō: Kokusho Kankokai, pp. 90-91.

<sup>213</sup> Strip of fabric over three meters long and 25-30 cm high with which the kimono is held to the body.

<sup>214</sup> Frazer, J.G. (1933). *The Golden Bough. A study in Magic and Religion*. London: Spirits of the Corn McMillan, (I ed., ibidem 1912), II vol, p. 187.

<sup>215</sup> Tierney, E.O. (1999). “Ainu sociality”. In W.W. Fitzhugh, C. O. Dubreuil (curated by), *Ainu. Spirit of a Northern People*. Catalogo della mostra omonima. Washington 1 April 1999-1 April 2001. Artic Studies Center (National Museum of Natural History), Smithsonian Institution in association with University of Washington Press, Washington DC, p. 241.

of the aconite (*shurku*), quickly causes the animal to become unconscious. While the bear is in a new dream state, the God of Poison Aconite (*Shurku Kamui*) communicates a message to him from the human beings' goddesses of fire: "Oh powerful divinity, please come and visit me in peace and let us have a serene conversation together"<sup>216</sup>.

After falling to the ground due to the aconite effect, and after sleeping a little, the bear reopens his eyes and finds itself lying on a tree branch, "with hands and legs dangling limply". From this moment on, everything goes on as if it were the soul of the bear to observe the entire action. So, he will see the bear cub being picked up, the young hunters prepare *inau*, stick them in the ground near the carcass, worship the beast that they killed as the God of the Mountains. Ritually rubbing their hands, they will pay homage to the deity, with the following prayer: "You gods enjoy the conversation! Now it is already dark and since it is too late to move the bear, we shall leave it here. When the new tour starts, we will be back. Then we will bring the great deity (the bear) down to the village. You gods watch over one another!"<sup>217</sup>.

The song goes on to describe how the young people leave for the village, taking the cub with them. One stays behind, lights a fire and stands guard over the carcass of the great slain bear, spending all night driving out other animals, foxes, wolves, and birds of prey with a stick. In the morning, men skinned the carcass of the bear lying on the snow, cut the meat into pieces, and finally carried everything to the village, dividing the meat into packages that they carried on their shoulders. Once in the village, they place the bear in the middle of the external fence (*nusa*) and the Fire Goddess will invite the bear's soul to enter the house: "I thank you [she says] for coming to visit me in peace, for it is precisely for this conduct that a great deity is worthy of praise!"<sup>218</sup>. The soul of the bear enters the house and is invited to sit at the rear, to the right of the hearth, the most sacred and honored place in the house. Meanwhile, in the village, they are all busy with preparations for the "ritual leave" (*hopunire*). The *hopunire* is not an *Iyomante*, but a rite of lesser importance celebrated to please the soul of the killed bear. Within two or three days the *Iyomante* will follow. The *Iyomante* is aimed at 'starting the bear cub, brought down from the mountains and raised in a cage called *hepere-set*. After the *hopunire*, the soul of the bear returns to its shelters in the mountains, loaded with food,

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<sup>216</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. p. 55.

<sup>217</sup> F.Maraini, (1999), op. cit. p. 56.

<sup>218</sup> F.Maraini, (1999), op. cit. p. 57

wine, and gifts. The day before the ceremony, a prayer was said to *Ape-Kamuy*, the Spirit of Fire, and *Chise-Kor-Kamuy*, the Spirit of the House was invoked. On the day of the ceremony, the following prayer of introduction to the rite was recited:

Oh you divinity, you came this way so that we could hunt you. Oh, you precious little thing, we adore you; we implore you to listen to our prayers. We have nurtured and raised you with great care during so many difficulties, and all this because we love you so much. Now, since you have grown up, we are going to send you back to your parents. When you come to them, please speak well of us and tell them how kind we have been to you. We implore you to come back to us once again so that we can entertain you again<sup>219</sup>.

An example of another invocation is the following:

Oh Bear, listen to me!

I took care of you for a long time and now I give you carvings, sweets, wine, and other precious things.

Get on your carvings and on the other good things that I have given you here and go to Your Father and Your Mother. Go happy and gladden them!

When you have arrived, call many divine guests to a large banquet.

Come back into the world so that I, who raised You,

Meet you again and raise you again for the sacrifice.

I salute you, dear bear! Go in peace<sup>220</sup>.

The feast itself began when an Ainu, sitting in front of the cage of the animal, called *peurep-chise* (the “house of the bear”), apologized to him through special prayer, the *heper-kashpaotte* (“the order of the bear”), a farewell prayer, which instructed the “little god” to return to his parents and ancestors. A special *inau* called *shutu-inau*, which represents *Shutu-inau-Kamui*, the “god of *avi-inau*”, was given to the bear to protect him from demons and evil during his return home. The ritual was necessary to allow his soul to free itself from the body and to act as a messenger to the spirit of the mountains, his ancestor. In order to protect the Ainu, he had to become aware of how good the Ainu

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<sup>219</sup> Batchelor, J. (1939). *Ainu life & lore*. Tōkyō: Kyobunkwan, p. 207, in Maraini, F. (1999). *op. cit.* p. 58.

<sup>220</sup> Filoramo, G. (2005). “Le preghiere del mondo”. *Storia delle religioni*. Turin: Gius. Laterza & Figli, Vol. VII, pp. 25-26.

were. The ceremony proceeded with two young men who, holding a rope in their hands, climbed onto the bear's cage and performed a dance that mimed movements similar to those of a bear. The dance is called *set-kata-tapkara* (“dance over the cage”) and was accompanied by a special song. While the men danced, the women moved vigorously in a circle around the cage and the children shouted, raising their arms. After the dance, another man joined the two and together they pulled the bear out of the cage and tied it so that it could not attack them. Two ropes, each equipped with a loop that went through the neck and under one of the front legs; the free ends of the ropes were held by two men positioned on the sides of the animal. This moment is known as *tush-kore* (“fixing the rope”). The “little god”, with a dry and sudden movement, was hoisted and pulled out, causing it to fall over by the cage. He was then gently led to the Nusa altar, with his mats and with the high row of *inau*, so that he could pay his respects to his ancestors.

The *nusa*<sup>221</sup>, or appropriate nusa-san operation, was of fundamental importance. It had to be completed before the beginning of the *Iyomante*. Not too far from the sacred window, on the eastern side (*rorun puyara*) of the house of the bear's owner or of the head of the village, the nusa, which with a certain approximation can be called an altar, was formed by a series of poles with some new *inau* tied to them, dedicated to the various deities. It was draped with mats (*inausō*) from which various gifts hung. Examples of gifts were food, rice dumplings (*shto* or *shito*), dried fish, and dried algae. The second type of gifts varied according to the sex of the honored bear during the *Iyomante*. If the animal were a male, the gifts included swords (*emush*) with their typical belts (*emush-at*), arrows (*ai*), bows (*ku*), quivers (*ikayop*), and other similar objects; if the bear were a female, the gifts were very different and could include necklaces (*tamasai*), embroidered dresses (*kaparimip*, *attush*), earrings (*ninkari*), sleeves embroidered for the hands (*tekumbe*) and so on. Other mats were placed on the ground or in the snow in front of the nusa.

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<sup>221</sup> The *nusa*, despite having remained essentially the same in the structure, seems to have changed in detail, both over time and from place to place, on the island of Hokkaidō, and almost certainly also among the groups of Ainu. The conceptual and liturgical rigor of highly developed faiths, such as Christianity, Judaism or Buddhism, does not exist in the traditional religion of the Ainu, who have never had a religious center of reference, let alone a religious authority of such importance as to be able to impose defined conceptions and homogeneous ritual rules on the entire culture and its territory. The *nusas*, therefore, vary not only in relation to the relative importance of local deities (*kamui*), according to local conditions and traditions, but also in harmony with family traditions or even according to the tastes of certain authoritative *ekashi*.

At this point, the bear was embellished with a piece of colored fabric and earrings. This phase is called *pon-pake-imire* (“the clothing of the small head”). The bear was led to the house of the village *ekashi*, it was made to pass through the sacred window to pay homage to *Fuchi-Kamui* who lives in the hearth. The next phase is called *hepere-tukan* (“bear hunting” or “bear killing”). Utilizing shouts, handclaps, and blows inflicted on the animal through blunt arrows, it was turned repeatedly, causing it both pain from blows and fear from confusion, until it showed obvious signs of exhaustion and fatigue, which marked the final phase of the *hepere-tukan*. At this point in the ceremony, he was tied to a pole adorned with fetishes (called *tush-op-ni*) placed in the center of the circle, and he continued to be engaged with every kind of torture and when it would bite as it was being dragged it towards the two poles for strangulation, a piece of wood would be stuck between his jaws.

The two poles, fixed to the ground, were placed one behind the neck and the other under the throat, the latter was pushed with force until the animal was suffocated; this was the moment of actual leave. Sometimes people would aim at the heart with an arrow or a stab to collect the blood and drink it while it was hot, without dropping a single drop. If that had happened, it would have triggered divine vengeance<sup>222</sup>. As soon as the bear had died, it would be skinned, beheaded, and cut into pieces. The pieces were placed in front of the sacred window, where they remained for two or three days before being eaten<sup>223</sup>. The head was placed in front of the altar, facing towards the fire, with the associated offers, to celebrate the event with his ancestors<sup>224</sup>. Among the various offerings, food plays an important role: roundish rice dumplings, usually strung on sticks in groups of five, six, or eight; rice in Japanese lacquered cups, dried fish, and other delicacies. The sacred window played an important role. In this ceremony, it marked the beginning and the end: the beast was led at the beginning by two strong men under the window, lifted from the outside to pay homage to the holy goddess mother of the house that resides in

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<sup>222</sup> Kitagawa, J.M. (1961). “Ainu Bear Festival (*Iyomante*)”. *History of Religions*. Chicago: University Press, Vol. I/1, pp. 95-151.

<sup>223</sup> Muccioli, M. (1958). op. cit. pp. 1144-1145.

<sup>224</sup> The Ainu, their Land & Culture. [Web site with a list on Ainu culture and rituals books]. Retrieved from [www.workingdogweb.com/ainu.html](http://www.workingdogweb.com/ainu.html). The main gifts consisted of swords with the typical Ainu belt, bows, arrows and quivers. If the bear is killed, the gifts consist of necklaces, clothes (*attush*), and other clothing along with a bundle of *inau*. Earrings are also considered an appropriate gift. Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. pp. 63-64.



the hearth, *Fuchi-Kamui*. After the ritual <sup>225</sup>, once the meat was cooked, it was placed in cups and placed next to the cub's mouth. A prayer followed in religious silence. After taking one of the cups, a greeting followed, and the ceremony ended with the division of the content between the participants. This cup took the name of "oblation cup"<sup>226</sup>.

The festivities lasted three days. During the first night, a secret ceremony called *Keo-Mante* was performed at the left of the chimney. *Keo-Mante* means "to hunt the dead body". Brain, tongue, and eyes were extrapolated, and the remaining cavities filled with flowers. This ceremony took place at midnight, to convey the spirit of *Kira-Mante-Kamui* in its seat of the heavenly mountain. Later, a "Divine Protector" pole was prepared outside to support the bear's head. A prayer was said before the head was fixed to the end of the pole. The purpose of these ceremonies was the relationship with the divine, considered of extreme importance. The Ainu believed the gods came to earth, following invocations by men, under the guise of animals. The only way to get rid of it was to kill the animal itself. The killing of the animal was supposed to free the divinity and allow it to return to its world. According to the Ainu, an extremely complex and subtle spiritual relationship exists or existed between man and bear, something difficult for a Westerner to grasp. This relationship is intensely expressed in the *Kamui Yukar* ("divine songs"), which represented one of the most important components of the Ainu oral tradition. The famous Song of a Bear, transcribed by Prof. Kubodera in 1932, from the voice of Hiraga Etenoa, and translated into English by D. Philippi<sup>227</sup>, conveys the whole scenario of man-bear relations to us.

The most complete and ancient description of the *Iyomante* rite probably comes from Takemitsu Natori, who uses information gathered from reliable *ekashi* from various Hokkaidō locations before the Second World War<sup>228</sup>. In those years, the *nusa* was overly complex, characterized by numerous *inau* dedicated to different deities. An interesting

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<sup>225</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit.p. 425.

<sup>226</sup> Batchelor, J. (1971). *Ainu Life and Lore*. Echoes of a Departing Race. Tōkyō: Kyobunkwan, p. 210.

<sup>227</sup> Philippi, D. (1982). *Songs of Gods, Songs of Humans*. San Francisco: North Point Press, pp. 115-125.

<sup>228</sup> The work was originally published in the name of Inukai Tetsuo & Natori Takemitsu in the second and third volume of the Journal *Hoppo bunka kenkyu hokoku*, Hokkaidō University, Sapporo, 1939 and 1940. In 1972 it was published in the first volume of Natori's works Takemitsu (Natori Takemitsu chosakushu), published in Sapporo by the Hokkaidō Shuppan Kikaku Senta publishing house, pp. 246-330.

fact is that it concerns the way the *nusa* is built over time. When F. Maraini attended the ceremony in 1954, he described it as simple construction, consisting of six main *inau* and a couple of *tagusa* (sticks with bunches of bamboo-grass leaves, which are added at different times in the ritual). They reflected the country's socio-economic situation. [...] I was lucky enough to follow the three stages of this rite. In 1954, I saw one of the last genuine *Iyomante* in which the participants all knew the complicated liturgy by heart<sup>229</sup>. In 1971 I attended a ceremony with no participants, which became a theatrical play for tourists<sup>230</sup>. In 1977, F. Maraini attended the ceremony again. On that occasion, the event was directed by Shigeru Kayano, a recognized authority in the field of Ainu religion and culture. Two years later a book with complete photographic documentation of the entire ritual was published, in black and white and color. The book followed the entire ritual from the first preparations to its conclusion<sup>231</sup>. It is difficult to say how much there was of living tradition in this recent *Iyomante* and how much was instead the result of passionate research in libraries and museums. The third time, in 1989, the *Iyomante*, reconstructed in its various phases with philological perfection, was an opportunity for political and ethnic affirmation concerning the Japanese, who were intentionally kept at a distance. Through the phases of acculturation and ethnic revival, what used to be a religious liturgy has now become a political liturgy and the collective search for a lost identity [...] <sup>232</sup>.

From the late 1960s, the small but sensitive world of the Ainu underwent a new and radical transformation. For about twenty years, from 1950 to 1970, most of the young or middle-aged Ainu showed no interest in their ancient traditions and were committed to taking part, albeit marginally, in the extraordinary Japanese economic boom of those years. Many had stopped thinking about an Ainu identity, but in the early seventies, a wind of change began to blow in Hokkaidō, first slowly, then strongly<sup>233</sup>.

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<sup>229</sup> This affirmation of F. Maraini was made possible by the presence of a certain number of exceptional elders, who later died within a few years.

<sup>230</sup> In 1971, a group of filmmakers working for Italian television, asked F. Maraini to want to film an *Iyomante*, left for Hokkaidō, but he did not make any differences from the ceremony he attended in 1954. The *ekashi* he had known were dead, the new organization asked how much they were allowed to pay; it was *Iyomante* that had become, like a carved tray or embroidered *attush*, an object to be sold to tourists.

<sup>231</sup> Shigeru, K. (1979). op. cit. pp. 90-91.

<sup>232</sup> Campione, F.P. (1997). op. cit. p. 176.

<sup>233</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). op. cit. pp. 70-71.

## CHAPTER IV

# PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION OF AINU CULTURAL TRADITION

### **Introduction**

With the expression “ethnic group”, we mean a group of individuals who share common characteristics such as origin, language, culture, history, and that recognize themselves as members of the same community. Thus, by “ethnic identity” we mean an individual's conscious knowledge of belonging to a given ethnic group. Drawing on these issues, in this chapter, I will examine the data collected by a 2008 report, entitled *Living Conditions and Consciousness of Present-day Ainu*, produced by the Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies on the living conditions and awareness of the Ainu.

A topic closely related to these issues is cultural heritage. In Ainu's case, one's cultural heritage is not just something to be preserved as a traditional element for its own sake, but something that is also enriched by those aspects of “modern society”. After their assimilation into the Japanese state, the Ainu did not necessarily preserve all the identity elements of their cultural heritage and their religious tradition, in the original form. Currently, they experience the changes of contemporary Japanese society, thus, those essential elements of their traditional culture are labeled as “memory”. Over time, it has come to the construction of centers aimed at promoting Ainu culture and the organization of religious activities and practices. In this context, tourist villages, such as Shiraoui, Nibutani, and Akan, respectively in the regions of Iburi, Hidaka, and Kushiro, have become places where traditional culture is revitalized and the notion of “cultural memory” gets new meanings.

### **4.1. Identity, cultural heritage, ethnic conscience**

A report dated July 2009 from the Expert Panel on Ainu Policy identified two guidelines to improve the Ainu's conditions: 1) elimination of discrimination; 2) protection of indigenous culture, through the promotion of culture itself. This attitude was in line with the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted on 13 September 2007, and with the resolution on the recognition of the Ainu as an “indigenous population” approved by the Japanese Parliament on 6 June 2008.

However, an important consideration remains on the most appropriate way to address these specific measures, based on an understanding of how traditional culture has been handed down and how it has been maintained among the Ainu themselves.

In this chapter, I will examine the data collected by a 2008 report, entitled *Living Conditions and Consciousness of Present-day Ainu*, produced by the Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies<sup>234</sup> on the living conditions and awareness of the Ainu. Participants were the director, Prof. Teruki Tsunemoto, and many others<sup>235</sup>, who made their contribution by intervening on the issue, through articles that have enriched, from time to time, the data obtained from the report itself. It is extremely complex to speak about ethnicity. With the expression “ethnic group”, we mean a group of individuals who share common characteristics such as origin, language, culture, history, as well as recognizing themselves within these peculiarities. The concept of “ethnicity” is addressed to all the singularities that an individual, belonging to a given group, distinguishes from the other groups and that makes this group a unique cultural group<sup>236</sup>. The term “identity”, on the other hand, designates one’s awareness of the aforementioned distinctive elements<sup>237</sup>. Thus, by “ethnic identity” we mean an individual's conscious knowledge of belonging to a given ethnic group based on ethnicity.

We know that people cannot choose the ethnic group in which they were born, but they can change the value they attribute to their belonging and the role it plays in defining their identity. If personal identity is built on the individual identification process, ethnic identity is also elaborated starting from cultural identification, which is the result of a slow subjective process regardless of the objective belonging of the individuals. It has

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<sup>234</sup> The Report was produced in 2008, but published March 31, 2011, by the Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies, Hokkaidō University. The center, belonging to the University of Hokkaidō, was born in 2007, with the aim of promoting the Ainu culture based on its own policy of cooperation with the Ainu themselves through a variety of research projects. These have also included this report.

<sup>235</sup> Along with Teruki Tsunemoto (Professor - Hokkaidō University and Center Director), Toru Onai (Professor - Hokkaidō University), Koji Yamasaki (Professor - Hokkaidō University), Yoshiki Nozaki (Professor - Kokugakuin Junior College), Yasutoshi Nakamura (The Hokkaidō Shimbun Press), Hiromi Shinagawa (Professor - Sapporo International University Junior College), Rika Onodera (Professor - Nayoro City University), Yoshihide Sakurai (Professor - University of Hokkaidō). These data are relative to the year of publication of the report.

<sup>236</sup> Irimoto, T. (1997). “Ainu Shamanism and Ethnicity”. The IVth Conference of International Society for Shamanistic Research. Chantily.

<sup>237</sup> Irimoto, T. (2000). “Political Movement, Legal Reformation, and Transformation of Ainu Identity”. In P. Schweitzer et al. (eds.), *Hunters and Gatherers in the Modern World*. New York: Berghahn Books, p. 215.

been ascertained how each individual belonging to an ethnic minority can, at different levels, emphasize, hide or even reject their ethnicity, perhaps to assume other cultural identities<sup>238</sup>.

I would like to start with the question about personal knowledge about one's lineage. Out of a total of valid cases equal to 5,528 individuals, 2,386 people (43.2%), respond to having an Ainu descent of the patrilineal type, while 2,385 individuals (43.1%), claim to have a matrilineal Ainu descent. In fact, these percentages are quite similar. There are many families where only the father or only the mother are of Ainu descent, while 1,080 (18.9% of the total) declare that both parents are of Ainu descent. Individuals who admit to having Ainu blood starting from their grandparents is extremely low, only 327 (5.7%) while for 1,837 (32.2%) not even the parents were of Ainu descent. Moreover, 1,166 people have an Ainu spouse. Some have Ainu adoptive parents equal to 206 (114 fathers and 92 mothers), some know nothing of their parents (478), and some have no descendants (234).

Starting from these data related to one's descendants, I would like to add the results that emerged from the following question, which concerns the issue of one's awareness of their ethnicity. To the question "Are you aware of being Ainu?" we learn how 48.0% (2,486) answer they have no awareness of their own Ainu identity. In particular, concerning the under 30 age group, 66.8% (577) state they do not share this feeling. On the other hand, 13% (712) of the total claim they are constantly aware of their ethnic identity, while 11.4% (592) confirm they often feel it. Under 30, 3.4% (29) claim to always feel they are being Ainu, while 5.1% (44) claim to try it often. It is interesting to note there has been an increase in awareness over the years, among those who consistently experience a sense of belonging to an Ainu identity. We notice a 23.9% (215) in the 60-70 age group and a 26.4% (132) in the 70-year age range and beyond. However, it is also possible to observe, in the 60-70 age group, 35.2% (316) who claims not to feel any sense of ethnicity, while 38.2% (191), in the 70-year-old age group, denied ever having experienced such ethnic awareness. When asked how they see their future, 18.2% (456) replied they would like to live as Ainu, but 74.3% (1,857), would rather not think about particular ethnic issues. The highest percentage among those who

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<sup>238</sup> Liebkning, K. (1992). "Ethnic Identity. Challenging the boundaries of social psychology". In G.M. Breakwell, *Social Psychology of Identity and Self-Concept*. London: Surrey University Press, pp. 147-186.

would like to live as Ainu belongs to the category of 70 years and over for 22.6% (65), while 11.4% (31) belongs to the category under 30 years. A very high 77.9% (212), of this latter age group, reveals that it wants to live without having to worry about its identity. It is clear that most of the interviewees are not aware of their culture, nor do they feel the need or desire to preserve their heritage. One wonders how such a situation came about. Most likely, the negative experiences and discrimination, which have characterized their history and their experience, hence the “tangible” memory, may have triggered such a negative point of view. Let us not forget that discriminatory acts, over the years and more precisely over the centuries, have left a deep scar, especially in the older Ainu. To a survey on what does not appeal to being Ainu, 1,184 individuals (46.3%) confessed they reject discrimination. This aspect was confirmed by 34.1% (872) which stated that one's appearance can be a problem. Even among the youngest, in the category under 30, there is general discomfort around experiences of discrimination, equal to 29.7% (85). 40.6% (116) responds that the discomfort involves one's appearance. It is possible to notice how the traces of discrimination have wounded the minds of these people. When these questions are asked, bitter memories re-emerge as vigorous wounds, despite the passing of time. In fact, in the 70 years and beyond category, 59.4% (174) confirms the discriminatory experience constituted an extremely negative factor. Out of a total of 814 individuals, 517 (63.5%) admits this experience is derived from having had friends and acquaintances that were not Ainu. Instead, a minor percentage of 12.8% (108) is for teachers.

These experiences have caused a profound individual effect, which has led to the inability or reluctance to develop a positive feeling for the Ainu heritage. Moreover, the forced assimilation of most of the Ainu in the *wajin* ethnicity has made it difficult for them to be fully aware of their cultural heritage. A third and final interpretation starts from the previous one and is rooted in the existence of a cosmopolitan awareness.

A sense of awareness of their ethnicity, the mentioned study shows that 34.5% (881) sees history as a source of pride, while 45.7% (1.167) declare that the source of pride in the culture. Among those who do not feel any particular sense of pride, we find 26.4% (78) in the age group of 70 and over, but this figure undergoes an increase in the 39-49 age group, with 37.8% (109) and in the range under 30, with a 44.7% (126). In response to the question about who or what makes one proud to be Ainu, the majority declares

that it is the parents, with a 37.8% (666), demonstrating how the passage of cultural heritage has taken place largely through the parent relationship /child. A 38.0% (82) of the under 30 categories, on the other hand, reveals how very young people are less aware of their heritage. The latter percentage's discourse revolves around the concept of ethnicity and awareness of this feeling, which can translate into a skeptical diversification on an ethnic basis, or an individual perception that identifies them as citizens of the globe and not a manifestation of passive consciousness and attempts to conceal one's ethnicity<sup>239</sup>.

#### **4.2. Participation, learning, and revitalization of a cultural tradition**

Religious practice, whether traditional or modern, is not only limited to the members of a practicing community but also includes participation in events and spreading beliefs. In traditional societies, individuals are already born into a religious culture, shaping their lives around ritual acts. In modern societies, individuals are more likely to choose their own beliefs. In Ainu's case, one's cultural heritage is not just something to be preserved as a traditional element for its own sake, but something that is also enriched by those aspects of modern society.

From the religious affiliation point of view, it is possible to note that 46.2% (2,632) express Buddhism as a religious preference, while 34.5% (1,969) declare it does not follow any creed. Only 2.9% (166) admitted to practicing the Ainu religion, but it is unclear whether or not they belong to any particular religious community. Regarding the contexts in which the different ritual cults take place, and the diligence they are practiced with, a low percentage (0.7%) (38) still practice the sending ceremonies of other animals (except the bear). Next, the *Iyomante* ("sacred sending of the bear") is practiced by 1.1% (63), the celebration of the traditional marriage and the funeral ceremonies with 1.3% (76), the Kamuy names ("offer to the gods") with 2.1% (119). Only the commemorative ceremonies reach 9.3% (530). However, the percentage of those who still practice traditional rituals is less than 10%, a minimal percentage.

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<sup>239</sup> Nozaki, Y. (2010). "Ainu Heritage and Identity". In *Living Conditions and Consciousness of Present-day Ainu, Report on the 2008 Hokkaidō Ainu Living Conditions Survey*, Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies. Hokkaidō: Hokkaidō University, pp. 23-31. The statistical data are included in this article.

Indigenous peoples do not preserve ethnic tradition and religious culture in their original forms. Religious cultural customs from only a few decades ago, can be considered obsolete. The forced assimilation of the Ainu to the Japanese over the centuries has developed a condition of shared experiences, characterized by social changes from the modern era to the present day. Naturally, the Ainu perceive those elements of their own culture, preserved and handed down like memories. Considering these aspects and the additional data relating to other issues, participation in cultural activities appears minimal, while a large portion of individuals has never directly experienced it. Only a few have cared to pass on their culture, making it part of their daily reality.

Another interesting element that emerges concerns the category of the indirectly acquired knowledge. Actually, only a few have had the opportunity to acquire traditional culture directly from an *ekashi* (“old man”) or a *fuchi* (“old woman”). The Ainu consequently tend to acquire those essential aspects of their heritage through the various cultural activities organized by local communities, or the numerous events that private organizations or foundations constantly plan, to preserve and spread Ainu culture. The real participation in the activities seems clearer to us. As for the first two categories, the ones concerning current and past involvement, there is more participation. This denotes, above all, a lack of concern around the transmission of knowledge and regard of the latter as a supplement to everyday life. However, a group, albeit small in number, states its intention to learn traditional Ainu culture in the future.

Finally, I would like to discuss the activities they would like to practice in the future. The majority 10.2% (581), declare their intention to learn the Ainu language. Considering how most of the individuals who took part in the survey are no longer of school age, it is nevertheless 10%, and it represents an important sign of revitalization of one’s language, which becomes synonymous with the survival of the Ainu people itself. The contemporary situation of the Ainu is intimately connected with the strategy used during the years of forced assimilation<sup>240</sup>. Generally, when referring to Japanese culture, it is meant as a “homogeneous” culture, although there are currently different ethnic groups. Concerning the Ainu and their religious tradition, we can consider the latter as a work of construction or as a product subject to the condition of transformation.

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<sup>240</sup> Battipaglia S., (2011). “Gli Ainu verso il riconoscimento come ‘popolazione indigena’”, in *Il Giappone*, Volume XLIX [2009], Rome-Naples, pp. 161- 169.



This required periods of intense activity to affirm one's rights and religious aspects, as well as moments of great passivity, including a phase in which they were tempted to integrate into the dominant group's beliefs<sup>241</sup>. This attitude was since they saw their tradition as belonging to the past. The dynamic inherent to the values underlying the religious tradition was favored by the fact that religious ideologies continue to exist not only in memory but also in practice, as demonstrated by the fact that the Ainu still celebrate several religious rituals. They include the following ceremonies: 1) *Iyomante* ("sacred sending of the bear"), 2) Shakushain<sup>242</sup>, 3) Marimo Festival<sup>243</sup>.

Similar ceremonies in the past were labeled by the Japanese authorities as "uncivilized" and when Hokkaidō was annexed to Japan in 1868, the practice of *Iyomante* was forbidden. As for the "Marimo Festival", over time it acquired an important response, not only nationally but also internationally, resulting in the eyes of *wajin*, as an "invention". Finally, the Shakushain ceremony, which saw the creation of a statue by a non-Ainu artisan, was located in Shizunai<sup>244</sup>. The statue caused friction between the Ainu since it was not made by an Ainu. It was consequently assumed it could be removed and replaced by a new one made by an Ainu artisan. Starting from the assumption that the values of these ceremonies and representations have remained intact, we must not however neglect the difficult reconstruction of a world, due to the

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<sup>241</sup> Kwang-sun, S.D. (1983). *Theology, Ideology, and Culture*. Hong Kong: World Student Christian Federation, p. 49.

<sup>242</sup> The name of Shakushain (also Sakusain, Sakusyain, Syamusyain, Syakusen, Syuusen), is due to the most important Ezo rebellion in 1669. Chief of the Ezo settled to the east of the island near the Shibuchari river, killed Onibishi, head of the Ainu settled in the west of Ezo, near the Saru river, following a dispute over some hunting and fishing areas. The following year the Ezo attacked the Japanese vessels and incited the remaining Ezo to revolt. The Matsumae, fearing the gravity of the rebellion, asked for reinforcements in Edo. The revolt known as Ezo ran, continued, extending to the other tribes, until 1672. Eventually the chief Shakushain was killed. On September 23 of each year, an event is organized, which commemorates the very figure of Shakushain. To welcome him is the Mauta Park, in the town of Shinhidaka, on the southern coast of Hokkaidō. In September 2014, the event reached its 68th edition. Next to the statue of the chief, stands the Shakushain Memorial Museum', built in 1978 from an abandoned castle, you can visit it throughout the year, with free admission. Retrieved from [www.en.visit-hokkaido.jp/travelPlanner/details.php](http://www.en.visit-hokkaido.jp/travelPlanner/details.php).

<sup>243</sup> The term *marimo* derives from *mari*, which in Japanese is translated as "ball", while *mo* is a generic term for plants that grow in water. The first Marimo Festival was celebrated at Lake Akan in 1950.

<sup>244</sup> Sjoberg, K. (2004). "Rethinking indigenous religious traditions: The case of the Ainu". In *Beyond Primitivism. Indigenous religious tradition and modernity*. Routledge, New York & London: Jacob Olupona, p. 237.

difficulties they encountered in the past and the prohibitions they were subjected to. The Ainu's religious tradition has undoubtedly undergone numerous changes, interfacing with the different historical phases. Currently, religious activities are at the core of that active part, in the process of revitalization of one's cultural heritage. Moreover, it is interesting to see the debate around religious tradition about its interpretation. However, over time it has led to the construction of centers aimed at promoting Ainu culture and organizing religious activities and practices. The modernization theories put tradition and change in an antagonistic relationship, but the revitalization of culture requires a synthesis between tradition and change, an issue that revolves around what beliefs and ideologies currently belong to the Ainu and what aspects are emphasized or neglected. Therefore, what emerges here is that religious tradition does not disappear, but rather transforms itself.

#### **4.3. Religious tradition and current approaches**

When we talk about cultural activities and religious rituals, we mean practices whose potential has been underestimated for centuries. For most individuals in Japan, the concept of "Ainu" is associated with something unknown. In 1988, during her journey, Sjoberg was often told that Ainu was something related to food<sup>245</sup>. The recognition of the Ainu as an ethnic minority is a relatively recent phenomenon<sup>246</sup>. Their religious practices and beliefs have always been labeled "Neolithic" and "uncivilized", a sort of variation of belonging to *wajin*. However, a fundamental element of the practice and representations of this tradition concerns the prejudice of the majority group. Thus, in this way it is difficult to define the status of the entire Ainu cultural tradition as equal to that of the *wajin*. According to anthropological literature, the term "traditional" refers to the general category of hunter-gatherers living in egalitarian societies with an extensive division of labor between communities. Sjoberg<sup>247</sup> discussed the possibility that the "traditional" Ainu were once a hierarchical society, with a mixed economy, and their status as hunters/gatherers could be the result of a long and atrocious integration of Hokkaidō in the Meiji state. The incompatibility between the interpretation and the image that emerges from the texts written on the Ainu has always been a debated topic.

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<sup>245</sup> Sjoberg, K. (1993).

<sup>246</sup> Battipaglia, S. op. cit., pp. 161- 169

<sup>247</sup> Sjoberg, K. (1993).

Of course, we can confirm there are various ways of interpreting and understanding the indigenous religious tradition. Many Ainu are reluctant to accept academic interpretations of their religious tradition, so it is necessary to relocate their point of view in the area of research. This allows us to explore a field in which the Ainu have continually debated. On her journey among the Ainu in 1986, the scholar asked an Ainu chief to tell her about the essence of their creed. The old leader replied with the following words:

When you enter a Chise (typical Ainu home), you find sacred things, placed where you expect them to be placed. Everything is familiar to you, because of the information you received through books or other sources. Now you think you know their story. This makes you think you understand them and the context they are in. This, in turn, pleases you. You found and understood what was expected. True, you understand more than people with no interest in those things, but you understand very little compared to us. Why is that, you ask. I will tell you. You are involved with theory, but you are not emotionally involved or tied to these things, and you have no experience of how they work in practice. Therefore, you see them as objects. As objects, they have nothing living in them and they are what you call dead matter. To us, they are both dead and alive. Let me explain. They live lives of their own. They live because they are in their proper surroundings. Only in this surrounding can they live. When new or other objects take the place of the former, they are placed in harmony with the former. The objects and their orders are the same things to us. There is nothing if they do not come together. Therefore, they are both dead and alive at the same time. Alive because they have something to tell those who understand to interpret it properly and dead to those who do not understand what is delivered. The message they hide from you, we can see clearly. Therefore, the message they tell you is very different from the message they tell us<sup>248</sup>.

From these lines emerges the need for an emotional commitment to a greater understanding of the Ainu's religious tradition. Something that goes beyond the theories contained in scientific texts. Of course, not all Ainu descendants have such an interest in their religious heritage and this chapter certainly does not include this category. The focus is on those Ainu who are committed to representing themselves as a distinct cultural and religious group. The attitude we can identify among the Ainu sees, on one

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<sup>248</sup> Sjoberg, K. (1993). *op. cit.*, p. 56.

hand, those who pay more attention to their cultural and religious heritage, on the other hand, those who are interested in their origins, highlighting the similarities between themselves and *wajin*. The latter group tells us an interesting fact about national identity: there are Japanese or *wajin* who, in a national context, identify as Japanese of Ainu descent. They also use the term “double identity”, in the hierarchical sense, to distinguish between those who live in a rural context and those who live in the context of industries in large cities. The Ainu who belongs to the category of farmers identify themselves as Ainu in a national context, while in the regional and local context, they use the term *un-guru*. This concept expresses a sense of belonging and distinguishes the Ainu who are present in the different settlements; Nibutani *un-guru*, Shiraoi *un-guru*<sup>249</sup>. By integrating into a majority group, the Ainu have used their specificities in many ways, and among them it is important the strategy of emphasizing peculiar elements of their cultural heritage, showing themselves as Ainu in all contexts and situations.

Although many of the Ainu’s activities relating to material culture, customs, and religion, include purely commercial aspects and have less impact beyond the tourist season, they are nevertheless important for the social, cultural, and religious aspects. In this way, tourist villages, such as Shiraoi, Nibutani, and Akan, respectively in the regions of Iburi, Hidaka, and Kushiro, represent centers or places where all these cultural materials are used. Over time, these centers have become places where the Ainu put themselves and their activities on display, express their identity, emphasizing the distinctive aspects of their cultural and religious heritage. Tourists and the general public are not only invited to purchase manufactured products but also called to observe how they are made and even encouraged to make them themselves<sup>250</sup>. Another possibility is to learn about Ainu mythology, rituals, history, savoring food, and living in typical houses. There is a lot of information available on the activities and meetings these centers organize. This way of seeing the Ainu’s recognition borders on folklore. It includes the specific cultural nature of certain values belonging to the past. These values are integrated within the Ainu’s activities, such as debates and discussions, which makes them fit in the current context. Museums and exhibitions remain the only possible way

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<sup>249</sup> Sjoberg, K. (1993). *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>250</sup> Friedman, J. (1994). *Cultural Identity and Global Process*. London: Sage.

for the survival of one's religious tradition, resulting in a “clear” image of the fusion between assimilation and conservation of values and traditional ideologies.

The current practice of religious beliefs and ceremonies is not merely a matter of representation, but it places itself on a higher level, becoming an issue of one's way of performing these ceremonies. Ainu all over Hokkaidō have conveyed a different image of “traditional” religious ideologies, which consists in a modern interpretation of the spaces, as defined by those belonging to the dominant group. The Ainu use their ceremonial activities to attract tourists and newspapers. This way, they perceive their religious tradition as a lost fragment, as something external to itself, which they strive to recover. This is a simplistic interpretation of how the religious and cultural heritage has been scaled down and a commercial niche has been exploited. It also highlights the reduction of research into one's cultural tradition by the modern-day Ainu. Usually, the search tends to classify rather than analyze, labeling the Ainu's lifestyle as “backward” and “static”, blaming it for their current state, which sees them as a group of individuals who depend on social contribution for their survival.

In 1993, indigenous representatives from all over the world and other people took part in a meeting to discuss and elaborate on new ways of coping with the current situation. The meeting's results were published in the report entitled “Gathering in Ainu Moshir, The Land of The Ainu: Messages from Indigenous Peoples in the World”. The main purpose of the meeting was to show the natural resources of Hokkaidō, as well as to illustrate the link between traditional and religious culture, and the tourism industry. This meeting provided the village of Nibutani with a place on the world map. The representative of the Australian natives told the scholar that if one wanted to meet indigenous groups or people interested in these issues, they had to go to the Nibutani village. She reports how she met people from Siberia, New Zealand, Germany, England, the United States, Canada, Australia. The primary aim of the Ainu of Nibutani was to bring their problems to the international stage and align themselves with other ethnic groups in terms of visibility and rights, creating a space for future ideas and activities.

#### 4.4. Authenticity

In the summer of 1995, Sjoberg returned among the Ainu. The core of his investigation was the Nibutani village, which at the time was the most densely populated among the Ainu villages. His focus was on cultural and religious activities. One of the first elements he pointed out concerned the Ainu's enthusiasm in taking part in the village' life, in religious activities, such as the Marimo Festival ceremony in the village of Akan, another tourist village in the Kushiro region, and the ceremony of the *Iyomante* ("sacred sending of the bear"), in the village of Shiraoui, in the Iburi district. When the scholar enquired about the *Iyomante* the Ainu replied they were uncertain as to whether to continue with the demonstration in the future. The uncertainties were related to the duration and the efforts for the realization. The answer confirmed there was no intention to further bear ceremonies. Many criticized the isolation of the village of Nibutani from the rest of Japan's Ainu population.

The response to this situation of "isolation" came from a ceremony capable of attracting people from all over the world. Sjoberg attended it that year. The ceremony, which took the name of "Ichi man nen sai" ("10,000 years anniversary")<sup>251</sup>, was an idea of an Ainu woman's and it was celebrated for the first time five years before. It lasted five days and was attended by people from all over. The scholar was told it was all extremely complicated, and that it looked more like a hippie gathering. Five Ainu took part in the ceremony she attended, as opposed to the majority who were *wajin*. The latter had a Rasta-genre look and many wore typical Ainu accessories like swords, earrings, necklaces, and bags. When asked why they were dressed that way, they replied: "The Ainu are the original inhabitants of the islands of Japan. They are our ancestors.". When asked why they were participating in the ceremony, the answer was: "We are here to honor our respect for nature. To show our appreciation, we play and sing." Dancing and singing were the dominant aspects of this festival; many songs and dances were of Ainu origin, but others are rooted in other peoples' traditions. Others were a mix of different cultural traditions, but there were also several new songs.

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<sup>251</sup> The name of the ceremony refers to the Jōmon era, which is the oldest period in the history of Japan, which began around 10,000 BC. and ended around 300 BC. The value of the ceremony is attributed to the memory of the entire journey of the Ainu and to the richness of their ancient culture.

Ainu and *wajin* descendants occupy the same territory. The Ainu “participate” in the same space as the descendants of the majority group but are not treated equally. For the Ainu, putting cultural and religious elements of their heritage at stake is necessary to affirm their position within a large society. Looking back in time, up to a hundred years ago, and precisely at the time of assimilation, the Japanese government acted as if it had the right to prohibit the Ainu from practicing their religious tradition along with speaking their language, and living a life in accordance to their own beliefs. The image that we, as well as the Ainu, have of their religious tradition is certainly the result of their specific history, which has been and still is interpreted in different ways. Rather than one continuous process of construction of the religious tradition, there is a spectrum of possible constructions given by the fact that individuals learn from experience and reconsider their point of view.

In exploring the religious tradition of the Ainu aborigines, Sjoberg insisted on developing an understanding of their position within Japanese society. Over time, the attention has been directed to the surrounding context, which has influenced their own cultural and religious heritage. This can be seen and interpreted as a work of construction/transformation. These considerations concern the Ainu negotiations of the current “authentic” context of their traditional heritage, as well as all the factors concerning the way in which it is perceived by the majority group. The various ceremonies that were organized constituted a remarkable opportunity to create a connection with the participants, creating a common cultural experience that emphasizes the “respect for nature”. Finally, we can conclude by claiming that ceremonies at Nibutani have played a role in defining what is authentic and what is not, within the Ainu cultural heritage. In this context, they have served to create an “authentic” common knowledge-base directed at practicing and representing the cultural and religious tradition<sup>252</sup>.

## **Conclusion**

Following the forced assimilation, the Ainu did not necessarily preserve all the identity elements of their ethnic heritage and their religious tradition in the original form.

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<sup>252</sup> Sjoberg, K. (2004). op. cit., pp. 224-244.

Currently, they experience the changes of modern Japanese society, thus those essential elements of their traditional culture are labeled as “memory”. Although the research and promotion of the Ainu culture by the Ainu themselves is important, the involvement of Hokkaidō’s non-Ainu individuals becomes fundamental. At this point, the role of educators must be to mitigate rather than judge the authenticity of Ainu culture, based solely on blood relations, or measure the condition or level of the inherited ethnic culture. Finally, measures related to the promotion of Ainu culture are not enough, but traditional Ainu culture needs to be taught from generation to generation. The recent policies to promote the Ainu culture have seen an increase in the pride towards their ethnicity and extremely high motivation in wanting to pass on their culture in Hokkaidō society.

Another topic concerns discriminatory experiences, mentioned above all by the elderly. The requests range from compensation from the Japanese government for the discriminations suffered during the forced assimilation and the confiscated lands, to the possibility of being able to utilize public areas for the transmission of the Ainu culture. There are different ways for individuals to understand the promotion of the Ainu culture because rather than being a monolithic entity, the Ainu peoples are multiple and complex, something that is extremely valuable both for them and the whole Japanese society<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Sakurai, Y. (2010). “Ainu Religious Consciousness and Challenges of Cultural”. *Living Conditions and Consciousness of Present-day Ainu*. Report on the 2008 Hokkaidō Ainu Living Conditions Survey, Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies. Hokkaidō: Hokkaidō University, pp. 107-115.



## **PART II**

## CHAPTER I

# THE RECEPTION OF JAPAN IN ITALY: CULTURAL AND POLITICAL RELATIONS

### Introduction

This chapter explains the discovery of Japan in Italy, since the first echo of the name “Japan” in Marco Polo’s *Million*. Its appearance in the Italian geographical maps was in the fifteenth century. In 1549 Francesco Saverio was in Japan for two years. Thus, began an initial contact between Japanese and Europeans, merchants, adventurers, missionaries, especially Jesuits. Among these religious men, some of them were Italians such as the extraordinary figure of Father Alessandro Valignano. The very first, the authentic discovery of Japan occurred through another great enterprise of Valignano, the one which consisted of organizing an embassy of Christian Japanese nobles who went in person from the Pope to Rome. The presence of young ambassadors constituted an event due to the expected developments in the relations between the two different civilizations. From this point, we can talk about the ‘discovery of Japan in Italy’. Another Italian Jesuit, Hyeronimo De Angelis, from Enna in Sicily, who arrived in Japan in 1602, was able to go as the first European in the northern territories of Ezo (today Hokkaidō), then an almost unknown region, inhabited by very few Ainu ethnic aborigines. De Angelis made two visits to these remote territories, in 1618 and 1621.

In the early XVIII, another meeting took place between Italy and Japan, thanks to Giambattista Sidotti (or Sidoti). He completed his legal studies in Rome with great success. Sidotti arrived in Japan in 1708, with him the attempts to evangelize Japan ended and until the reopening in the Meiji period, no missionary entered the country. During the years of Japan's reopening, another expedition went to Japan between 1865-1868, the commander was Vittorio Arminjon with the *Magenta* pyro-ship (sailing and steamship, typical of the time), on 4 July 1866 Arminjon and his men landed in Yokohama. The result of these explorations was a monumental work, with great interest,

due to Professor E. Hillyer Giglioli<sup>254</sup>. Over 200 pages of the powerful volume are dedicated to Japan, and here we are facing a renewed and unbelievably valuable discovery of Japan in Italy.

It was necessary to wait until 1951 for diplomatic relations to be re-established between the two countries. Meanwhile, as early as in 1947, the Italian Institute for the Middle and the Far East was reconstituted as an Institution of Public Law under the presidency of Giuseppe Tucci and inside it was established in 1948 a Center for Japanese Culture Studies under the presidency of Giacinto Auriti. In 1952 Undersecretary Brusasca went to Japan to intensify relations and collaboration between the two countries and in 1953 the hereditary Prince Akihito visited Italy. Following his official visit, the visits, in 1954, of Prime Minister Yoshida in Italy, in 1955, of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Gaetano Martino in Japan yielded the stipulation and the coming into force of a new Italo-Japanese cultural agreement.

## **1.1. Japan in Italy**

### **1.1.1. The discovery of Japan**

The very first echo of the name Japan is found in Marco Polo's *Million* when it comes to Zipangu - from the Chinese Riben-guo the country where the sun is born". The famous book was known in the early fourteenth century and its success was phenomenal. It must be remembered, however, that many took the work for a fictionalized fantasy, and Dante, as it seems, did not consider it serious, also because Marco Polo's testimony, regarding peoples who lived under or near the equator, appeared in clear contradiction with the prevailing geographic and cosmological theories of the time. Marco Polo writes:

Zipangu is an island of the rising, which is neither the high seas fifteen hundred miles. The island is exceptionally large. The people are white, beautiful, and beautiful. The gentle is an idol, and no they receive lordship from anyone, if not from themselves.

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<sup>254</sup> E.H. Giglioli, (1975). *Viaggio intorno al globo della pirocorvetta Magenta*, Milan: Ricordi.

Then he adds information that circulated in China:

Here gold is found, however, a great deal; Neuno no go there, but neuno mercatante not leveraged: but nantano cotanto. The palace of the lord of the island is very large and is covered in gold as the churches are covered with lead quae. And the whole sweep of the rooms is covered with gold, two fingers thick, and all the windows and walls and everything and even the stairs: no one could say the time<sup>255</sup>.

We remain in the domain of news suspended between the true and the most unbridled fantasy. On the other hand, it should be remembered that these rumors were spurred for some great navigators in more mature times. They were also inspiring and guiding for Christopher Columbus who, perhaps until the end of his days, did not understand that he had discovered a new world, but thought he had stumbled across some of the famous 7448 islands. In the sixteenth century, the geographical and human features are specified<sup>256</sup>.

In 1542-1543 the Portuguese Ferdinand Mendes Pinto, with some companions, established the first European contact with the Japanese. A few years later (1549) Francesco Saverio landed in Japan, where he remained for two years and three months<sup>257</sup>. Thus, an initial period of contact between Japanese and Europeans began, entrusted above all to the Portuguese merchants, adventurers, and missionaries, especially Jesuits. Among these religious men, some of them were Italian. And among them, a truly extraordinary figure was Father Alessandro Valignano, born in Chieti in 1539 by a notable local family. After studying law, he entered the Jesuit order, and in just a few years (in 1574) he was appointed Visitor General of the missions, which extended from the Cape of Good Hope to the extreme borders of Asia. Landed in Japan

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<sup>255</sup> Polo, M. (1975). *Il Milione* (curated by V. Bertolucci Pizzorusso). Milan: Adelphi, pp. 234-239, see also Enoki, K. (1975). "Marco Polo and Japan". *Oriente Poliano*. Rome: IsMEO; Olschki, L. (1975). "Marco Polo, Dante Alighieri e la cosmografia medievale". *Oriente Poliano*. Roma: IsMEO; Olschki, L. (1960). *Marco Polo's Asia*. California: University of California Press.

<sup>256</sup> Polo M., op. cit. pp. 234-239; see also Enoki, K. (1975). "Marco Polo and Japan". *Oriente Poliano*. Rome: IsMEO; Olschki, L. (1975). "Marco Polo, Dante Alighieri e la cosmografia medievale". *Oriente Poliano*. Roma: IsMEO; Olschki, L. (1960). *Marco Polo's Asia*. California: University of California Press.

<sup>257</sup> Tacchi, V. P. (1937). *Il carattere dei giapponesi secondo i missionari del secolo XVI*. Rome: Scuola Salesiana del Libro, p. 50; see also Catz, R. (1989). *The travels of Mendes Pinto*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

in 1579 he confessed that for a long time he was completely disoriented by the complexity and the very high civil level of a society completely different from those hitherto known. He understood that he could not proceed, as had often been done on the American continent, destroying the local culture to rebuild from scratch. Instead, it was necessary to try to penetrate it through science, finesse, and diplomacy. It was necessary to learn the local language, to adapt to the customs and traditions of the country, in other words, to be rigorously nipponized, if one wanted to aim at a possible Christianization of Japan. Valignano composed, it seems around 1581, probably directly in Portuguese, a work of extraordinary interest<sup>258</sup>.

Unfortunately, this work did not serve the discovery of Japan in Italy, both because it was written in Portuguese and because it remained buried in the Roman archives for centuries. Today, reading it, we are surprised by the acuity of Valignano's gaze, and we are also struck by how recognizable sixteenth-century Japan is in today's world. The very first, the authentic discovery of Japan occurred through another great enterprise of Valignano, the one which consisted of organizing an embassy of Christian Japanese nobles who went in person from the Pope to Rome. Given the length of the journey, the ambassadors were chosen noticeably young. Luckily the company was carried out within the most acceptable period: an eight year-round trip. The four young nobles (Mancio Itō, Michele Chijiwa, Martino Hara, and Giuliano Nakamura), belonging to important families of the South Island, Kyūshū, where Christianity was particularly widespread, left Japan on February 20, 1582. Mancio Itō was the head of the mission composed of four young male students of the Jesuit missionaries, to pay homage to Philip II and Gregory XIII on the initiative of the Father Visitor Alessandro Valignano<sup>259</sup>. The journey was to foster the exchange of mutual solicitation and attraction between the two socio-environmental and productive systems of Western Europe and Japan and stimulate the mutual curiosity of Japanese and Europeans. Both had to grasp different reasons for reflection. All the Italian courts, in order not to be outdone by the other European courts, were competing for the best welcome to the ambassadors who arrived

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<sup>258</sup> Valignano, A. (1946). *Il Cerimoniale per i Missionari in Giappone. Edizione critica, introduzione e note di Giuseppe Schütte*. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, pp. 359.

<sup>259</sup> Boscaro, A. (2003). "I membri della prima missione". *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI*, curated by Adolfo Tamburello. Istituto per l'Africa e l'Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naplesp. 52.

in Livorno<sup>260</sup> on March 1, 1585, then proceeded to Pisa, where the Grand Duke Francesco I de Medici was staying with his family members and the court. After the reciprocal pleasantries, the ambassadors, object of vast popular interest for clothing, strange ways, and characteristics of behavior in the eyes of Italian observers visited Florence, Siena, Montefiascone<sup>261</sup>. On 7 March (1585) the young Japanese passed through Florence, where they stayed until the 13th of the month. They were housed in the Palazzo Vecchio and infamous monuments. The Japanese gave each of the young people an ivory crucifix. In Rome, the embassy was warmly awaited by none other than Pope Gregory XIII. The young Japanese remained in Rome from March 23 to June 3, 1585. They were received by Gregory XIII in the Sala Regia in solemn consistory, and also attended the funeral of the same Pope and the election of Sixtus V, took part in the procession to the Lateran (scene represented in a fresco in the Vatican library<sup>262</sup>).

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<sup>260</sup> In the vast existing literature, it should be noted Gutierrez, B. (1938). “La prima ambasceria giapponese a Roma e la storia delle missioni”. *Rivista italiana di storia delle missioni*, vol. I, pp. 150-176; Gutierrez, B. (1938). La prima ambasceria giapponese in Italia. Dall’ignorata cronaca di un diarista e cosmografo milanese della fine del XVI sec. Milan: Perego; Tucci, G. (1940). “Antichi ambasciatori giapponesi patrizi romani”. Rome: *Asiatica*, VI, pp. 157-165; Tucci, G. (1951-52). “Japanese Ambassadors as Roman Patricians”. Rome: *East and West*, II, pp. 65-71; Boscaro, A. (1965). “La visita a Venezia della prima ambasceria giapponese in Europa”, *Il Giappone*, Vol. V, pp. 19-32; Boscaro, A. (1967). “Manoscritto inedito nella Biblioteca Marciana di Venezia, relativo all’ambasceria giapponese del 1585”. *Il Giappone*, Vol. VI, pp. 9-39; Boscaro, A. (1970). “The first Japanese Ambassadors to Europe. Political Background for a religious Journey”, *Bulletin of the Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai*, 103, Tōkyō; Boscaro, A. (1970). “New Documents on the first Japanese Mission to Europe”, *Transactions of the International Conference of Orientalists in Japan*, Vol. XV, pp. 45-57; Boscaro, A. (1987). *Giapponesi a Venezia nel 1585*. Florence: Leo S. Olshcki; Boscaro, A. (1994). “I primi giapponesi in Italia”. *Il Giappone scopre l’Occidente. Una missione diplomatica. 1871-73*. Roma; Barrera, P. (1941). “L’ambasceria giapponese in Italia nel Cinquecento”. *Yamato, Italian-Japanese monthly*, I/4, pp. 111-112; D’Elia, P.M. (1951). “I primi ambasciatori giapponesi a Roma (1585)”. *La civiltà cattolica*, Vol. IV, pp. 43-58; Gunji, Y. (1980). “La missione degli ambasciatori del 1585 e Bagnaia”. *Biblioteca e Società*, II/3, pp. 19-30; Gunji, Y. (1985). *Dall’isola del Giappone: la prima ambasceria giapponese in Occidente*. Milan: Unicopli; A.A.V.V. (1985). *La scoperta e il suo doppio. Mostra commemorativa del quarto centenario della prima missione giapponese in Italia*, Biblioteca Marciana, Venezia, maggio, 1985. Turin: Moncalieri; A.A.V.V. (1985). *Geografie private. I resoconti di viaggio come lettura del territorio*. Turin: Moncalieri; Sorge, G. (1985). “Per il quarto centenario della prima ambasceria dei Giapponesi a Roma”. *Studi e ricerche sull’Oriente cristiano*, VIII/3, pp. 223-232; Sorge, G. (1988). *Il cristianesimo in Giappone e il De Missione*. Bologna: CLUEB; A.A.V.V. (1989). *La prima ambasceria giapponese in Europa. La visita a Roma (1585)*. Rome: Istituto Giapponese di Cultura.

<sup>261</sup> Sanesi, G. (1894). “I principi giapponesi a Siena nel 1585”. *Bollettino senese di storia patria*, vol. I, pp. 83-84; Angelucci, E. (1984). “I Giapponesi a Montefiascone nel 1585”, *Biblioteca e Società*, VI, pp. 83-84.

<sup>262</sup> Sorge, G. (1988). *Il cristianesimo in Giappone e il De Missione*. Bologna: CLUEB, p. 72.

From this point, we can talk about the *discovery of Japan* in Italy. The presence of young ambassadors constituted an event due to the expected developments in the relations between the two different civilizations and had a great resonance in the environments of the Roman Curia and Italian cities<sup>263</sup>. On June 3, 1585, after renouncing a visit to Naples, whose anti-Spanish revolt feared an unedifying spectacle for Asian guests, the embassy continued its journey across the peninsula headed for Venice. The embassy passed through Loreto, Pesaro, Cesena, Forlì, Imola, Bologna, Ferrara<sup>264</sup>.

After the stop in Ferrara, the Este bucintoro led them to Chioggia, the first possession of the Republic where Mayor Filippo Cappello welcomed them and Bishop Gabriele Fiamma, a well-known speaker, wove the praises of the Jesuits for their missionary work and the present embassy. All the pomp and richness of the Republic were manifested on the occasion of the procession of San Marco postponed in honor of the ambassadors on June 29th, of which the most famous description remains that of the notary Gio. The ceremony of the solemn audience granted by the Doge Nicolò da Ponte is documented by a detailed description of the epoch preserved in the Venice State Archive<sup>265</sup>. The embassy then passed through Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Mantua, Cremona, Milan, Pavia, Voghera, Tortona, Novi, finally arriving in Genoa, where on August 9 it embarked for Spain<sup>266</sup>.

The gifts received in the Italian courts were reciprocated by ambassadors with examples of Japanese art or with objects of more modest value welcomed with interest and amazement by the Europeans by now very attracted by collectors. For example, Pope Gregorio XIII presented two golden screens with representations of the city of

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<sup>263</sup> Malena, G. (2003). “Le ambascerie giapponesi in Italia (1585, 1615) ed il loro lascito nell’editoria e nelle arti”. In *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, p. 42.

<sup>264</sup> Gualtieri, G. *Relazioni della venuta degli ambasciatori Giapponesi a Roma fino alla partita di Lisbona. Con le accoglienze fatte loro da tutti i Principi Christiani per dove sono passati*, in Roma, per Francesco Zannetti, MDLXXXVI. See also Malagola, C. (1864). “Un’ambasciata giapponese in Roma e in Bologna nel 1585”. *La Patria*, XI/117, 22 April, 1864.

<sup>265</sup> Reported in full by Boscaro, A. (1965). op. cit. pp. 28-30.

<sup>266</sup> Gutierrez, B. (1938). *La prima ambasceria giapponese in Italia. Dall’ignorata cronaca di un diarista e cosmografo milanese della fine del XVI sec.* Milan: Perego; Berselli, C. (1968). “Principi Giapponesi a Mantova nel 1585”, *Rivista Civiltà Mantovana*.

Azuchi<sup>267</sup>. Exquisite works, by the most talented painter of the time, Kanō Eitoku (1545-1590), were placed immediately in the gallery of Gregory XIII. Unfortunately, the only portraits that remain are completely anonymous and tell us nothing: all four are in the fresco depicting the hold of possession of the Lateran for Sixtus V, and in a fresco at the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza. A little better characterized are in the color sketches made by Urbano Monte as they pass through Milan, and inserted in the fourth volume of his diary, *Of the most notable things happened in the city of Milan*, preserved in the Ambrosian Library in Milan. All four of them having entered the Society as novices, Giuliano died as a martyr in the torture of the well in 1633, Mancio of natural death in 1612, Michele left the Society without recanting and Martino was transferred to Macao where he taught the language in the Jesuit college<sup>268</sup>.

The stay and departure of the young ambassadors raised a wave of unmatched publications. Everywhere reports, notices were printed<sup>269</sup>. In Rome, Florence, Ferrara, Cremona, Bologna, Venice, Milan and Brescia, all the major printers, seizing the absolute novelty, fed and satisfied curiosity by entering the market relations of a certain consistency and a series of pamphlets, some of which very short, others more substantial<sup>270</sup>. Unique in their kind, testimony to the Milanese passage of the Japanese, are the colored portraits of the four ambassadors and Father Mezquita that Urbano Monte (1544-1613) from Milan executed and inserted in the fourth volume of his Compendium of the most notable things of the city of Milan and in particular of the Monti family, a four-volume manuscript preserved in the Ambrosian Library in Milan<sup>271</sup>. The chronicles remained unpublished and the numerous letters of gratitude

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<sup>267</sup> From Bartoli: *Offersero al Papa, [...] alcune cose recategli dal Giappone [...] fra queste il meglio erano due panni da addobbo, che colà chiaman Beobi nell'uno dei quali era effigiata a pennello la nuova città, nell'altro la inespugnabile fortezza d'Azuciana: e sono quelli che Nobunaga donò al p. Valegnani in pegno, il maggior che dar gli potesse [...] perché l'Europa vedendoli avesse un saggio del dipingere e del fabbricar giapponese*. Bartoli, D. (1985). *Dell'Historia della Compagnia di Giesu. Il Giappone. Seconda parte dell'Asia descritta dal P. Daniello Bartoli della medesima Compagnia*. Rome: Ignazio de'Lazzeri, p. 314.

<sup>268</sup> Boscaro, A. (2003). "I membri della prima missione". *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI*, curated by Adolfo Tamburello. Istituto per l'Africa e l'Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, p. 52.

<sup>269</sup> Boscaro, A. (1973). *Sixteenth Century European Printed Works on the First Japanese Mission to Europe, A Description Bibliography*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

<sup>270</sup> Malena, G. (2003). op. cit. p. 45.

<sup>271</sup> Malena, G. (2003). op. cit. p. 46.



written by the young noble ambassadors, preserved in archives and libraries of Italy, still bear witness to the resonance of the embassy.

For Valignano and the Jesuits, the embassy was a great success, but the return of the young nobles to their homeland (1590) did not have the expected results, because in the meantime the Japanese political situation had profoundly changed. Hideyoshi (1536-1598) had begun to suspect that the missions were the avant-gardes of a possible foreign attempt at the occupation of his country and, worried about the situation in the Philippines under Spanish rule, proscribed in 1587 all Christian missionary activities. In 1597 the first martyrs were executed (26 crucified in Nagasaki).

The persecutions were more ruthless under Hideyoshi's successor, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616), and under his descendants. In 1609, after Japan had opened up to the missionary activities of the Mendicant Orders, whose religious members came in large numbers from the Spanish Philippines<sup>272</sup>, the governor Rodrigo y Velasco, traveling to New Spain onboard the *San Francisco*, was shipwrecked on the north-eastern coasts of the island of Honshū. During the long stay, he offered Tokugawa Ieyasu, shōgun in the retreat of a now unified Japan, the opportunity to verify the possibility of opening a new trade route linking New Spain to the north of the archipelago. In the year 1640 Japanese Christianity had been almost uprooted. After all, the country was completely closed to the outside world. But let's go back a few years. In 1613, in a time of still uncertain political situation in Japan, while the persecutions against Christians had officially resumed brutally, a powerful Northern Daimyō (domain lord), Date Masamune (1567-1636), sent a second embassy in Rome, this time under the guidance of a Spanish Franciscan from Seville, Luis Sotelo (1574-1624). Initially, 180 people were part of the mission, including Japanese and foreigners.

In the interest of the shogūn in a commercial alliance with New Spain, the Franciscan saw the key to intensify evangelization by the mendicant orders in northern Japan, under the protection of Madrid. The religious carried with him the letters that accredited him

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<sup>272</sup> Schilling, D. (1937). "Le missioni dei Francescani spagnoli nel Giappone". *Il pensiero missionario*, vol. IX, pp. 289-309; vol. X, (1938), pp. 193-223.

with Hasekura representative of Masamune to the King of Spain and the Pope. Reports and letters on the true aims of the mission preceded the arrival of the legates. General Acquaviva received a worrying letter from the bishop of Japan, Luis Cerqueira, who painted the Franciscan as an insubordinate friar, organizer of the expedition against the wishes of the Superiors and therefore dangerous for his confreres since the promises to open Japan to the missionaries they were dictated only by the commercial interest linked to the presence of Spanish ships in Japanese ports. The perplexities and suspicions that have already arisen when the first embassy was passing reached their climax with the arrival of the second in Spain from overseas on 5 October 1614. They then set off for Rome. The *Notices*, in the enthusiasm of the second extraordinary event, anticipated and spread the news of the arrival in Rome, solemn like the previous one. An almost contextual report of the hearing is that described by Fra 'Angelo Rivalta for the Prince of Sulmona, dated Aracoeli November 7, 1615, in which the author presented all the highlights of the ceremony which took place in the room adjacent to the Clementina, where the missive of Masamune was read. The mission, after crossing the Pacific, Mexico, and the Atlantic reached Spain a year later. Another year, and here are the Japanese in Rome, in the audience with Pope Paul V.

The *Notices* of Rome listed and described the gifts given to the pontiff and the moment when Sotelo extracted *from a box [...] a letter of Indian paper entirely illuminated in gold written in Latin*. In the letter, in which the Lord of Ōshū, after declaring himself the protector and supporter of the Christian religion, asked for the sending of numerous observant friars to his region, the creation of a diocese of which Sotelo was to be Bishop and, finally, the help of the same pontiff to establish trade relations with New Spain, he holds all the importance of a document that testifies to the desire for diplomatic relations between Japan and Europe, shared at least by local lords of the time. The ambassadors' popularity was witnessed by Scipione Amati, who followed the ambassadors as an interpreter during the journey from Spain to Italy, overseeing the work, which Giacomo Mascardi also published in 1615<sup>273</sup>. Amati draws up the volume in a lively language

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<sup>273</sup> The title of the book: *Historia del regno di Voxu del Giappone, dall'antichità, nobiltà, e valore del suo re Idate Masamune, delli favori, c'ha fatti alla Christianità, e desiderio che tiene d'esser Christiano, e dell'aumento di nostra Santa Fede in quelle parti. E dell'Ambasceria che hà inviata alla S.tà di N.S. Papa Paolo V, e delli suoi successi, con altre varie cose di edificazione, e gusto spirituale dei Lettori.*

consistent with wide dissemination, with the characteristics of adventures book in the exposition of the succession of facts and the punctual and interesting rendering of the arguments used in the dialogues and the preaching. In his turn, Giacinto Gigli, in his *Roman Diary* (1608-1670)<sup>274</sup>, apart from certain inaccuracies in dates and details, gave notable news of the Roman permanence of the ambassadors. The embassy was of considerable importance for the cultural level, leaving also various testimonies in the artistic field.

In these hard and ferocious years, we must remember another Italian Jesuit, the Jesuit Hyeronimo De Angelis, from Enna in Sicily, who played an important role in the Italian *discovery of Japan*. De Angelis, who arrived in Japan in 1602, was able to go as the first European in the northern territories of Ezo (today Hokkaidō), then an almost unknown region, inhabited by very few Ainu ethnic aborigines. De Angelis paid two visits to these remote territories, in 1618 and 1621, then sending to Rome a very well-informed *Relatione del Regno di Yezo*, in which, among other things, he hypothesizes the insular nature of the territory, then and for a long time still, considered a peninsular offshoot of “far” East Asia. It is painful to recall that Father De Angelis, along with many other coreligionists, ended up burning at Edo in 1623<sup>275</sup>. The two Japanese embassies in Italy had extraordinary resonance, easy to detect from the number and quality of the publications that accompanied and followed them over time. An episode that had little influence on the discovery of Japan, but has great importance was the circumnavigation of the globe which, fortunately, succeeded two clever Florentine merchants, Antonio and Francesco Carletti (1573-1636), father and son. His father died but he wrote several reports on his and his parent's adventures, for the Grand Duke Ferdinando De 'Medici. His eyes on everyday life, mostly neglected by the other authors of letters and diaries<sup>276</sup>. In the early XVIII, another meeting took place between Italy and Japan, highly significant in a secular setting. Born in 1668 in Palermo, Giambattista Sidotti (or Sidoti),

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<sup>274</sup> Ricciotti, G. (a cura di). (1958). Roma: Tumminelli.

<sup>275</sup> See A.A.V.V. (1987). *Il Beato Girolamo de Angelis: Relazioni e mappa del Regno di Yezo*. Enna: Amministrazione Comunale; Boscaro, A. (1981). *Ezo (today Hokkaidō) nella storia della cartografia europea (sec. XVII-XVIII)*. Florence: AISTUGIA; De Palma, D. (1993). “La rappresentazione del mondo. La cartografia giapponese di Yezo nei secoli XVI-XVIII”. *Atti del XVI Convegno (AISTUGIA)*, Venice.

<sup>276</sup> See Carletti, F. (1958 and 1989). *Ragionamenti del mio viaggio intorno al mondo*. (curated by P. Collo). Turin: Einaudi.

completed his legal studies in Rome with great success. Very young he was ordained a priest and soon succeeded in persuading his superiors, and finally also Pope Clement XI, to send him no less than in Japan, a country that the whole world knew now hermetically and fiercely closed to all contact with foreigners. In 1702 Sidotti embarked on a ship bound for China, but only in 1704 could he reach Manila, where he remained for a good four years, given the almost total lack of communication with Japan.

Finally, in 1708, the Spanish governor of the Philippines, partly motivated by the enthusiasm and perseverance of Sidotti, hoping that the enterprise would serve to reopen contacts with Japan, had a ship built, the Holy Trinidad, and the expedition could take the sea on the 28th of August. Sidotti sailed from Manila and secretly landed on the island of Yakushima located in the extreme south of Japan in 1708. He was captured and brought to Nagasaki, then to Edo around mid-December of the following year. Having converted the jailers, the conditions of his imprisonment became more severe until he died. With him, the attempts to evangelize in Japan ended, and until the reopening in the Meiji period, no missionary entered the country. Thus, ended the great dream of Christianizing Japan for which so many energies had been spent and so many cherished hopes<sup>277</sup>. By chance, we have diaries of the time concerning this adventure, both from the Spanish side and from the Japanese side, and we can relive the thrill of a night approach to the forbidden islands, the encounter with terrified fishermen, the final landing of Sidotti on the rocky and deserted coast of the island of Yaku, the tearful separation from the companions, the meeting at dawn with some local farmers<sup>278</sup>. By then decades had passed since the last Christians and the last foreigners had been hunted or violently suppressed. These circumstances were favorable to Sidotti, who was not killed on the spot but sent to a sedan chair in Edo (now Tōkyō), the seat of the government of the shogūn of the Tokugawa family. Fortunately for Sidotti, his landing had taken place in a period of total, definitive consolidation of the Tokugawa regime and the exceptional individual ended up raising more curiosity than disdain<sup>279</sup>. In this

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<sup>277</sup> Tollini, A. (2003). “L’ultimo missionario in Giappone: Giovanni Battista Sidotti”. *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, pp. 66-67.

<sup>278</sup> Tollini, A. (1979). “Giovan Battista Sidotti (1668-1715) missionario siciliano in Giappone”. In *HO Theologus*, vol. XXIII, Palermo, pp. 3-8.

<sup>279</sup> Ackroyd, J. (1979). *Told around the brushwood fire, (The Autobiography of Arai Akuseki)*, Tōkyō: University of Tōkyō Press, p.8.

sense, “For Sidotti the importance of a country did not depend on the size or geographical position, and the misfortunes could not be attributed to religion, but man”<sup>280</sup>.

His conduct intrigued two guardians: Sidotti baptized them in great secrecy. Of course, it was known; the miserable Sidotti was practically buried alive in a pit, surviving almost a year in horrible conditions, and finally he died of fatigue, cold, dirt. A century and a half later the world scene has completely changed. Italy is about to complete an adventurous journey towards unification and the capital, for a short period, was Florence (1865-70). The new kingdom of Italy, thanks to General Prime Minister La Marmora, decides to send a naval unit to East Asia to establish diplomatic relations with China and Japan. Commander Vittorio Arminjon is entrusted with the task, who is entrusted with the *Magenta* pyro-ship (sailing and steamship, typical of the time), with his crew and a group of scientific researchers. The expedition is away for more than three years (1865-68), it obtained the “Treaties of friendship and commerce”, both with China and with Japan, and makes the circumnavigation of the globe. On 4 July 1866 Arminjon and his men landed in Yokohama. Japan had been open reluctantly for a few years and was traversing a tumultuous, agitated, uncertain period, and for foreigners not without dangers<sup>281</sup>. The worst years had been those between 1860 and 1863: in 1866 calm had returned. After all, both the British and the French had clearly shown that they would not be intimidated (bombing of Kagoshima and Shimonoseki, in 1863). Arminjon and his men, while waiting to complete the treaty with the government of the *shogūn*, were able to freely visit many places in the country. The result of these explorations was a monumental work, with great interest, due to Professor E. Hillyer Giglioli<sup>282</sup>. Over 200 pages of the powerful volume are dedicated to Japan, and here we are facing a renewed and very valuable discovery of Japan in Italy. In 1875 the Italian public was able to have a clear panorama of the Japanese territory and people, traced by an intelligent, scrupulous observer.

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<sup>280</sup> Katō, S. (1980). *Storia della letteratura giapponese*. (curated by A. Boscaro). Venice: Marsilio, vol. II, pp. 73-83.

<sup>281</sup> Arminjon, V.F. (1969). *Il Giappone e il viaggio della corvetta Magenta nel 1866*, Geneve.

<sup>282</sup> Giglioli, E.H. (1975). *Viaggio intorno al globo della pirocorvetta Magenta*. Milan: Ricordi.

### 1.1.2. The appearance of Japan in Italian geographical maps

With Marco Polo's words: "Cipangu is an island towards the east, in the middle of the ocean, fifteen hundred miles from the mainland"<sup>283</sup>, the first news of Japan in Italy and Europe and, with them, the first cartographic representations of the island. Marco Polo, returned to Venice in 1295, after a twenty-four-year journey, most of which he spent in distant China (Cathay) serving Kubilai Khan, "Lord of all the Tartars", described the journey and the characteristics of the countries visited in the book *Il Milione*, dictated in the Genoa prison to Rustichello from Pisa. The data and descriptions in *Il Milione*, Western cartography drew on the knowledge and topographical indications that allowed it to substantially modify and renew the representation of South and East Asia: the first hints of new knowledge appeared in Venetian globe maps of the early 14th century, still medieval-type; in Italian world maps of the fifteenth century; in some "new tables" inserted in the codes of the geographical work of Ptolemy, starting from the last decades of the XV century<sup>284</sup>, and later also in printed editions<sup>285</sup>.

In 1474, the Florentine physicist Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli sent a map, unfortunately, lost, to the Canon Fernão Martins in Lisbon; the same fate, fortunately, it was not shared by the accompanying letter, in which it was enthusiastically affirmed the real possibility of reaching Asia navigating to the west. This letter provides some information about the paper: it focused attention on the ocean space between Europe and East Asia, and on its shores, it gave particular prominence; in the ocean, islands were represented, including Cipango and Antilla<sup>286</sup>. Although there is no certain proof that Christopher Columbus

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<sup>283</sup> Polo, M. *Il libro di Messer Marco Polo Cittadino di Venezia ditto Milione dove si raccontano Le Meraviglie del Mondo, Ricostruito criticamente e per la prima volta integralmente tradotto in lingua italiana da Luigi Foscolo Benedetto*. (1932). Milan-Rome: Treves-Treccani-Tumminelli, pp. 281-282.

<sup>284</sup> The toponym *Cathay* and the wording *hic stat Magnus Canis* compare, for example on *Planisfero circolare* (in colors, with about cm 27 of diameter), of 1320 or 1321, by Pietro Vesconte or in *Planisfero circolare* (about cm 24,8 diameter) annexed to the treaty *De Mapa Mundi*, maybe in the year 1320, by Fra Paolino Minorita (Cod. VAT. LAT. 1960, fol. 264 v, in down). Cfr. Almagaia, R. (1952). *Monumenta Cartographica Vaticana*, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vol. I-Tav. XXX, Vol. II-Tav. XXV, Vol. IV, p. 6.

<sup>285</sup> Almagaia, R. (1954). Introduzione al Catalogo descrittivo della mostra "L'Asia nella Cartografia degli Occidentali", curated by T. Gasparrini Leporace, Venice, pp. 3-4.

<sup>286</sup> Caraci, I.L. (1991). "L'Asia di Colombo", in *La cartografia geografica e il progresso delle conoscenze sull'Oriente nell'Europa dei secoli XV-XIX* (curated by Bencardino, F.). Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, Contributi geografici, n. 5, p. 39. Among the various attempts to reconstruct the paper, starting from elements of the text in the letter, by Herman Wagner, dated 1894, was considered the most plausible. Reconstruction and explanation in by Randles,

had seen and consulted this paper before the first trip and that he could have used it to elaborate his project, there are similarities between the concepts that inspired the Toscanelli's map and Colombo's map: Caraci says that, although we did not know how or when Colombo had a copy<sup>287</sup>. The theoretical premises of the Colombian enterprise are now also connected to the planisphere of Enrico Martello<sup>288</sup>, of 108x190 cm, painted in tempera on paper, unfortunately almost completely illegible, dated around 1490, of which there was news only in 1962, the year in which it became part of the heritage of the Yale University Library. It is the only non-Ptolemaic planisphere of the fifteenth century that has reached us graduated in longitude; the globe of Behaim is the only one in which it is possible to evaluate the extent of the ecumene and that of the ocean one which according to the conceptions of the time separated Europe from East Asia: the extension in a longitudinal sense of the known world reaches the 270 °, therefore the width attributed to the ocean between Europe and East Asia from the meridian of origin to Cipango is only 90 °, 105 ° from Lisbon to Cipango and 135 ° from Lisbon to Quinsay<sup>289</sup>. The *Cipango* island is located at 30 ° east of Cathay, at a latitude between 7 ° and 31 ° N<sup>290</sup>. But the *Ixola de Cimpagu* had already appeared, close to the Giava island in the world map of the Camaldolese Fra Mauro<sup>291</sup>, completed in 1459 and

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W.G.L. (1992). "L'Atlantico nella cartografia e nella cultura europea dal Medioevo al Rinascimento". *Cristoforo Colombo e l'apertura degli spazi – Due mondi a confronto 1492-1728*. Roma: *Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato*, Vol. I, pp. 427-448, Vol. II- Tav. V. 10, Tav. V. 15.

<sup>287</sup> Caraci, I.L. (1991). *op. cit.* pp. 39-40.

<sup>288</sup> There is very little information about Enrico Martello's life. We only know that he was German, because he qualifies as "Germanus", and that he certainly worked in Italy, probably in Florence, in the last decades of the fifteenth century, where he joined the cartography laboratory of Rosselli, F. *Cristoforo Colombo e l'apertura degli spazi – Due mondi a confronto 1492-1728*, vol. I, p. 525.

<sup>289</sup> *Ivi*, pp. 525-526. Cfr. Vietor, A.O. (1962). "A pre-Columbian Map of the World, circa 1489". *The Yale University Library Gazette*, XXXVII, pp. 8-12; Vietor, A.O. (1963). "A pre-Columbian Map of the World, circa 1489". *Imago Mundi*, 17, pp. 95-96; Caraci, I. L. (1978). "Il Planisfero di Enrico Martello della Yale University Library ed I fratelli Colombo". *Rivista geografica Italiana*, n. 85, pp. 132-143.

<sup>290</sup> Caraci, I.L. (1991). *op. cit.* p. 43.

<sup>291</sup> About Fra Mauro we know quite little: he came from Veneto region and his fame is linked to the Camaldolese monastery of S. Michele from Murano, where he lived most of his life. In 1448, as documented by the monastery's records, he was engaged in "forming world maps" and directed a real cartographic laboratory with at least two collaborators. The fame of Fra Mauro was such that even the king of Portugal Alfonso V commissioned him a globe, which was completed and sent to destination in the first months of 1459. The death occurred shortly before October 20, 1459. The Serenissima Republic of Venice had minted a medal with the effigy of Fra Mauro surrounded by the writing "Frater Maurus S. Michaelis Moranensis de Venetiis ordinis camaldulensis chosmographus incomparabilis". *Cristoforo Colombo e l'apertura degli spazi - Due mondi a confronto 1492-1728*, cit., vol. I, pp- 173 e 176.

currently preserved in Venice, in the Marciana Library, placed at the entrance of the Sansoviniano Hall.

The globe *Mappamundo* drawn by Giovanni Matteo Contarini, a humanist, a geographer, was engraved by the Florentine printer Francesco Rosselli (1445 c-prev. 1527), found in 1922, and preserved in the British Museum (Map Room, Maps C.2 .CC4). The Globe is intended to illustrate, evidently as “tabula nova”, a Ptolemaic edition (the structure of the paper derives, in fact, from the conical Ptolemaic projection). This planisphere, in partial azimuthal polar projection, is the first that reports the New World. Moreover, it is the first in which a cartographic hypothesis of the relationship between East and West appears, between Far East Asia and the New World. Japan is depicted as an island, *Zima*<sup>292</sup> Zipangu, located on the Tropic of Cancer and extends from 10 ° N to 30° N<sup>293</sup>.

Instead, we find Japan as the island of Zipangu, with two small islands in the south, at the eastern end of the world map of Francesco Roselli, perhaps in 1508, of 353x170 mm, preserved at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich<sup>294</sup>. The same representation can be found in an unpublished atlas by Francesco Rosselli<sup>295</sup>. The map of the east coast of Asia, which went north as far as Japan, depicted as Chisgirina insula, represents the XXI table (fol. 11th) of the Atlas which came into possession of the British Museum in 1895<sup>296</sup>. *Veneziana* is the third Italian edition of Tolomeo's work,

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<sup>292</sup> The contiguity between the term *Zima* and the Japanese word *shima*, is remarkably interesting.

<sup>293</sup> Baldacci, O. (1992). *Atlante Colombiano*. Roma: Poligrafico dello Stato, Tav. XXI, A, Tav. XXI, C, e Tav. XVIII, Tav. XLI, p. 83, Tav. XVIII; Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana Treccani (curated by), *Iconografia Colombiana*, Introduction and notes by Gaetano Ferro (1991). Rome, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato e Zecca, Tav. D.-5, pp. 434-435 e Tav. D.-XL, pp. 514-515. Cfr. Heawood, E. (1923). “A Hitherto Unknown World Map of AD 1506”. *The geographical Journal*, LXI, pp. 279-294; Sprent, F.P. (1924). A map of the world. Designed by Giovanni Matteo Contarini. Engraved by Francesco Rosselli. 1506. London: The British Museum; Almagià, R. (1924). Un planisfero italiano del 1506, *Rivista Geografica Italiana*, XXX, pp. 67-72; Crinò, S. (1941). “I Planisferi di Francesco Rosselli dell’epoca delle grandi scoperte geografiche”. *La Bibliofilia*, XLIII, pp. 381-405; Almagià, R. (1951). On the Cartographic Work of Francesco Rosselli, *Imago Mundi*, VIII, pp. 27-34.

<sup>294</sup> Baldacci, O. (1992). op. cit. p. 99, Tav. XXI, C.

<sup>295</sup> Ivi, Tav. XXI, D, by Crinò, S. (1940). “L’Atlante inedito di Francesco Rosselli”, *Rivista di cultura Marinara*. Rome, Tav. XXI, D.

<sup>296</sup> *Atlas of Portolan Charts, Facsimile of Manuscript in British Museum*, ed. By Edward Luther Stevenson. (1991) New York: The Hispanic Society of America.



printed, in the Latin version by Jacopo di Angelo da Scarperia and by Bernardo Silvano Ebolensis (born in Eboli) in 1511. From the cartography point of view, the importance of the work lies in the modern globe, tav. XXVIII, *De universali habitabilis figura cum additionibus loco rum nuper inventorum*, in cordiform projection, which he added to the 27 Ptolemaic papers to insert some lands, discovered only in modern times, which could not be known to Ptolemy. The globe, of 495x257 mm, has the Zampagu Ins at the right end.

In another world map by Pietro Coppo, *Orbicularis totius terrae et maris figuratio*, printed from a wood engraving on a double page in 1524, and part of a valuable cartographic collection of the author kept in the Sea Museum of Piran, at the west of *Mundus Novus* extends the Oceanus Occidentalis until to the *ins [ula] zimpragis*. This island is like a similar representation, also due to the presence of the castle, at the *Zipangu* of the Contarini-Rosselli *Mappamondo*, and presents a large group of islands to the south, probably the 7448 islands of the *Milione*<sup>297</sup>. Pietro Coppo dedicates the fourth book of *De toto Orbe*, compiled in 1520, to the description of Asia, from Egypt to India, to Java, to Cimpangis, and the 7448 islands of the *Milione*. The work is accompanied by twenty-two general and particular geographical tables; East Asia, with *Cimpangri*, composes table 21 (320x530 mm)<sup>298</sup>.

In another paper by Pietro Coppo (1469-1555), the *Portolano* of 140x98 mm, printed in 1528 in Venice by Augustino from Bindoni, and preserved in the Marciana Library, the island of *Cipangu*, which has six small islands to the south, still appears in the extreme left<sup>299</sup>. It is interesting to note that Coppo uses different names to indicate the island; *Cipangu*, *Zimpragis*, *Cimpangis*, *Cinpangri*. The uncertainty of the spelling means that the names transcribed identically in the various cards of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries can be called a rarity, and most appear so fake that only the similarity of the situation and the contiguity of the names allow their identification. Thus, the *Cipangu* of Marco Polo is found transcribed in the maps also as *Cipango*, *Sipango*, *Zipango*,

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<sup>297</sup> Lago, L., Rossit, C., & Coppo P. (1984). *Le Tabulae (1524-1526)*. Una preziosa raccolta cartografica custodita a Pirano. Trieste: Edizioni Lint, pp. 41-45.

<sup>298</sup> Lago, L. "Notizie sull'Oriente tra '400 e '500", in *La cartografia geografica e il progresso delle conoscenze sull'Oriente nell'Europa dei secoli XV-XIX* (a cura di F. Bencardino), op. cit., pp. 83-90.

<sup>299</sup> Baldacci, O. (1992). op. cit. p. 99, Tav. XXI, A.

*Zimpang, Cimpaga, Zipangri, or Zumpagu*, as in the planisphere of Giovanni Andrea Vavassore (1522)<sup>300</sup>.

During the Renaissance, the geographical literature cultivated the topic of the islands with particular attention, giving rise to the tradition of the “Isolari”. Worthy of note is the figuration of the *Zipangri* island in the oval planisphere, anonymous, and in Italian, contained in the *Urbinate Latino Code 274*<sup>301</sup>. The codex, from the 15th century, in folio, written entirely on parchment and elegantly illuminated, in which the planisphere, of approximately 37.5x59 cm, drawn in oval projection with straight parallels and curved meridians, with a small scale in the lower left, recalls the type of nautical ones, but it is very plentiful also for the interior. The *Zipangri* island appears at a very short distance from the western coast of Central America between 10 ° North latitude and the Tropic of Cancer: *the Cipangu* thus comes to be about 35 ° longitude from the Asian coasts, and of this wrong situation is responsible, as is known<sup>302</sup>, an indication of distance dating back to Marco Polo.

The mural world map is dated 1544, destined therefore to be exhibited, by Sebastiano Caboto (Venice 1475-80 or 1480-82 Great Britain 1557), navigator, cosmographer, explorer at the service of England and Spain. It is a very rare globe. This is the first attempt to reconcile the Ptolemaic geographical grid with the grid of the nautical chart in wind turbines<sup>303</sup>. This geo cart, which measures 2190x1250 mm, is composed of an assembly of eight distinct parts that are joined and glued on a piece of cardboard and then on canvas. The actual cartographic design is realized on four rectangular sheets (c. Cm 80x62), on the sides of the engraved sheets are then mounted two typographic printed strips, each of which results from the junction of two sections (c. Cm 28x62 each), entitled *Tabula Prima* and *Tabula Secunda*, divided into 22 numbered paragraphs, each of which has a reference to the globe, written in Castilian and translated into excellent Latin (but not all texts are bilingual). The presence of this very long accompanying text is a curious feature of the globe since it is a more unique

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<sup>300</sup> Bencardino, F. op. cit., p.23.

<sup>301</sup> *Codice Urbinate Latino 274, fol. 73v-74r*, in R. Almagià, *Monumenta Cartographica Vaticana*, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 58-59, Tav. XXX.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 59, nota 2.

<sup>303</sup> Baldacci, O. (1992). op. cit. p. 179, Tav. XLI.

circumstance than rare in the single geographical maps of the time<sup>304</sup>. The *Ciapāgu Insula* is present to the east of the profile of the Asian coasts, which occupies the left side of the globe.

The Italian cartographer who best understood the descriptions of the Venetian merchant in his work was the Piedmontese Giacomo Gastaldi<sup>305</sup> (c. 1500 - c. 1568, Venice). He is also the author of a *Planisphere*, copper edition by Forlani and Camocio [or Camozzi], Venice 1560, in which the Japanese archipelago is still represented as a single island, *Giapan*, of which only a part appears, with the locality and the Cangosina field [Kagoshima]. It is interesting to compare this planisphere to the large paper in eight sheets, *Asiae Orbis Partium Maximae Nova Descriptio*, a faithful Venetian reproduction of the original paper of Ortelio, printed in Antwerp in 1567<sup>306</sup>. Although Ortelio admits to having imitated Gastaldi's paper and integrated it into the missing parts, in this Japan is depicted as an archipelago of seven or eight islands, among which the huge *Iapan*, with six localities and three regional names: it is something completely different from the *Cipangu* of Marco Polo, of which a flap is also outlined at the upper right margin, with the toponym *Zianpagu*. The Ortelio changed its opinion between 1567 and 1570; in fact, in the *Tartary map sive Magni Chami Regni Typus*, inserted in his *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* since the first edition of 1570, *Ziampagu* does not appear, while a legend expressly warns that it must be identified with *Iapan*<sup>307</sup>, depicted with many toponyms and also with the islands minor to the southwest.

However, the new information and discoveries interposed or overlapped the already existing ones, and the cartographers, according to their doctrine or criterion, either identified the new country with some of the ancients or to place it were forced to move or upset the material provided by the old traditions. Therefore, in the papers of the XV and XVI, we find, especially about East Asia, Western America, and the insular world in between, a mixture of regions, provinces, and islands, so one is amazed to see

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<sup>304</sup> Cerreti, C. (1996). "Il Mappamondo di Sebastiano Caboto". *Antiche Carte Geonautiche*. Presentation of Gaetano Ferro, texts of Claudio Cerreti, Rome, pp. 25-52.

<sup>305</sup> Name and surname are reproduced in his prints also as Giacobbo de Gastaldi, or Jacopo Gastaldi, or Giacomo Gastaldo, because the spelling of his name, like that of the names of many scientists and senior figures of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was variable.

<sup>306</sup> L. Walter, (a cura di), *Seiyōjin no egaita Nihon chizu – Zipangu kara Shiburuto made*. (1993). Tōkyō, tav. 8.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibidem*, tav. 9.

contemporary maps so different from each other. As for the nautical atlases, *Cimpagu* Island appears in the *Planisphere in five spindles*, along the upper and lower edges of which are respectively the symbols of the six zodiacal constellations of the northern hemisphere and those of the southern hemisphere, Table X of the anonymous *nautical-geographical Atlas* of the 16th century, preserved in the University Library of Genoa (Ms. GV 32). It is attributed to Ravelli<sup>308</sup>, to the Genoese cartographer Francesco Ghisolfi (or Ghisolfo, or Gisolfo) operating in the Ligurian capital around the second half of the sixteenth century, considered for many reasons a pupil of his fellow citizen Battista Agnese<sup>309</sup>.

In another *nautical-geographical Atlas*, of the XVI century, preserved in the National Library Vittorio Emanuele III of Naples (Ms. VIII. D. 6), it is presented as a volume richly bound in leather and decorated with golden friezes, the Tav. XIII 13v-14r, depicts the whole world inside a rich golden frame, not according to the traditional projection, but taking into account the projective innovations of the 16th century. The whole world is divided into eight conical figures. In the fourth upper cone, starting from the right, it is possible to see the western part of Mexico, the Gulf of California, California, whose coast continues until it touches and joins the Asian coast, of which it seems the continuation and below it the *Cimpagu* island. This table can perhaps shed light on the paternity of the atlas: a remarkably similar paper (the XIV), especially for the particular projection of the world, is found in the atlas of Francesco Ghisolfi<sup>310</sup> preserved at the Riccardiana Library in Florence.

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<sup>308</sup> By Battista Agnese, a Genoese cartographer active in Venice between 1536 and 1564 (dates reported in two atlases he signed, preserved in the British Museum in London), we do not know biographical data or documents that allow us to retrace the events related to his activity. His vast production (more than seventy volumes or atlases), almost certainly due to a real cartographic laboratory (as evidenced by the existence of atlases with calligraphic diversity and lacking his signature) was perfected over the years to create atlases of the entire known world made up of over thirty finely outlined cards Cfr. Fra Mauro. *Cristoforo Colombo e l'apertura degli spazi - Due mondi a confronto 1492-1728*, cit., vol. II, p. 723.

<sup>309</sup> Bencardino, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>310</sup> Ongania, F. (1881). Fac-simile delle Carte Nautiche di Battista Agnese dell'anno 1554 illustrate da Teobaldo Fischer (The original version is in the Biblioteca Marciana), Venice; *Atlante nautico e Terrestre. L'Atlante manoscritto della Scuola di Battista Agnese conservato a Bergamo*. (1984). Bergamo: Banca Popolare - Camera di Commercio; numerous papers of the Laboratory of Battista Agnese in Almagià, R. (1952). *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 62-71.

The structure of the *Nautical Atlas* preserved in the Marciana National Library of Venice, c. 1563, by Giorgio Sideri Callapoda, a Cretan cartographer, clearly refers to Agnese's atlases, with the large initial frame that houses the recipient's coat of arms and with the overall picture represented by the double cordiform globe, *Generalis totius orbis descriptio partim ex veteribus partim ex recentioribus colecta*, Table I ff. 1v-2r, of great spectacular effect, presents Japan as an island, *Sipango*, to the northeast of the Asian continent. It is a copy of the globe published in 1538 by Mercatore, then widely distributed also in Italy through the editions of Antonio Salamanca (1550 c.) and Lafreri<sup>311</sup> (1564 c.). The Japanese archipelago, located in the heart of the northern Pacific, halfway between the American and Asian continents, with eight toponyms on the island of *Giapan*, constitutes instead the most important element from a historical-cartographic point of view in Table XI, of a precious anonymous manuscript, preserved among the manuscripts of the Biblioteca Angelica of Rome, in excellent condition, composed of twenty plates 42x30.5 cm, which depict the entire earth's surface<sup>312</sup>. The atlas, dated approximately at the end of the sixteenth century, is considered a product of the laboratory of Joan Martines or, not without uncertainties, of the same cartographer of Majorcan origin, operating during his long activity (1556-1591) in Messina and then in Naples where he held the position of royal cosmographer<sup>313</sup>.

Over the years the representations of the Japanese archipelago thicken, even if the usual differences remain. Among the geographic murals, in addition to the mural *Mappamondo* dated 1544, by Sebastiano Caboto of which we have already spoken, another is added, the atlas of Palazzo Farnese in Caprarola, freshly painted in 1574 by Giovanni Antonio da Varese (Antonio Vanosino), active in Rome in the second half of

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<sup>311</sup> Ravelli, P. (1937). *Cristoforo Colombo e la scuola cartografica genovese*. Genève: Colombo, pp. 407-408.

<sup>312</sup> Fra Mauro, *Cristoforo Colombo e l'apertura degli spazi – Due mondi a confronto 1492-1728*, cit., vol. II, p. 862, Tav. V. 10. Cfr. Astengo, C. (1981). "Le carte nautiche manoscritte conservate presso la Biblioteca Universitaria di Genova". In *Annali di Ricerche e Studi di Geografia*, 37, pp. 1-21.

<sup>313</sup> Fra Mauro, *Cristoforo Colombo e l'apertura degli spazi – Due mondi a confronto 1492-1728*, cit., vol. II, pp. 874-877, Tav. V. 15. Cfr. Uzielli, G. & Amat di San Filippo P. (1882). "Mappamondi, Carte Nautiche, Portolani ed altri monumenti cartografici specialmente italiani dei secoli XIII-XVII". *Studi Biografici e Bibliografici sulla Storia della Geografia in Italia*, pubblicati in occasione del III Congresso Geografico Internazionale, II, Rome, pp. 170-171; Miola, A. (1905). "Contributo di studi e ricerche intorno ai cimeli cartografici conservati a Napoli". *Atti del V Congresso Geografico Italiano*. Naples, pp. 591-599.

the sixteenth century (1562-1596)<sup>314</sup>. The south wall of *Sala del Mappamondo* is entirely covered by a map of the world (7.62x4.44 m); the eastern wall interrupted by a door that leads to the inner courtyard, is decorated with the maps of Asia (6.42x3.90 m). The map of Asia follows the model of Gastaldi's famous cards with only one considerable difference regarding Japan: instead of a dozen names appearing on Gastaldi's cards of the Far East, only *Bungo* appears on Caprarola's Asia card, and the name *Giapan*; the profile is an unfortunate compromise between the representations of Japan by Ortelio and Mercatore<sup>315</sup>. The same Antonio Vanosino finished in 1585 the *Mappamondo* that occupies the corner between the two wings of "Terza Loggia"<sup>316</sup>, the most imposing of the paintings in the Loggia and the Vatican Palaces themselves: the equatorial diameter of each hemisphere measures, in fact, about 5,5 meters<sup>317</sup>. Almagià notes, among the most singular features of the globe, "the identification of Asia from present-day North America using two straits separated by an inland sea, of which the southernmost is bounded between two peninsulas and almost closed to the south by an archipelago in which the Porena rightly identifies Japan"<sup>318</sup>.

The Almagià makes a comparison between the Vatican's *Mappamondo* and the geographical tables that the Dominican friar from Perugia, Egnazio Danti (1536-1586), cosmographer and mathematician of the Medici<sup>319</sup>, had drawn between 1563 and 1575 on the wooden doors of Palazzo Vecchio wardrobes in Florence<sup>320</sup>, commissioned by the Grand Duke Cosimo I de' Medici. The fourteen tables of Asia and the New World ones too are his own. One, untitled, is a map of East Asia and portrays a large island, surrounded by numerous small islands, called GIAPAN, OVERO CIPANGU ISOLA. A manuscript map, entitled THE LAST KNOWN PARTS OF THE WESTERN INDIES

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<sup>314</sup> Kish, G. (1953). "The Mural Atlas of Caprarola", *Imago Mundi*, vol. X, 1953, pp. 51-56.

<sup>315</sup> *Ivi*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>316</sup> This Loggia, located on the third floor, is usually called "Loggia della Cosmografia" for the geographical maps painted on its walls.

<sup>317</sup> Almagià, R. (1952). vol. IV, pp. 28-29.

<sup>318</sup> *Ivi*, p. 28.

<sup>319</sup> For the info about Danti cfr. Gambi, L. (1994). "Egnazio Danti e la Galleria delle Carte Geografiche". *La Galleria delle Carte Geografiche in Vaticano*. Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, pp. 88-96.

<sup>320</sup> Del Badia, J. (1898). *Egnazio Danti Cosmografo e Matematico e le sue opere in Firenze*. Florence.

shows the eastern end of Japan not far from the west coast of North America<sup>321</sup>. The toponyms on Danti's map seem to be selected from two main sources: Marco Polo's book and the reports of the Jesuits. The same definition JAPAN, OVERO CIPANGU ISOLA indicates that the mysterious island *Cipangu*, land of silver and gold, described by Marco Polo, was now identified with the distant oriental empire recently penetrated by the missionaries of the Society of Jesus<sup>322</sup>. To the same Egnazio Danti were attributed the geographic paintings present in the northern wing of the Vatican Loggia, probably painted in the years 1576-1580, which are no longer visible. There was a *Japan* island map with the following inscription: "Japan an M. Paulo Veneto Aepangia ab aliis Ciampagù dicta. Haec vel Chryse est antiqua insula, vel in sinu magno here Chryse dicitur, posita"<sup>323</sup>.

Besides, I want to mention the printed globes, including the Giuseppe Rosaccio one, a Friulian doctor and cosmographer (Pordenone), entitled *The world and its parts, namely Europe, Africa, Asia, and America, in which, in addition to the tauoles in drawing, we talk about his prouincie, kingdoms, regions, cities, castles, vile, mountains, rivers, lakes, seas, ports, gulfs, islands, populations, laws, rituals, and customs*, published in Verona in 1596<sup>324</sup>, in which *Japan* appears at the left end in Tab. XVII, dedicated to America in the face of Fr. 213 of the aforementioned volume. Like *Japan* it is also present in Fausto Rughesi's paper from Montepulciano, composed and printed in Rome in 1597, and dedicated to the Duke of Mantua Vincenzo Gonzaga<sup>325</sup>. The *Charter of Asia*, copper engraving in two sheets joined together, measuring 52x68.5 cm, has as its principal model the map of Asia in three parts by Gastaldi, published in 1561. The analogies are very close but, for the section concerning the real China, Korea, and Japan, the design is completely different from the one in Gastaldi. Japan is represented with many toponyms, with the islands of *Scicoco* [Shikoku] and *Simo* [Shimo] and all the southern

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<sup>321</sup> Kish, G. (1951). "The Japan on the 'Mural Atlas' of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence", *Imago Mundi*, VII, p. 53.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>323</sup> Taja, A. (1950). "Descrizione del Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano". Rome: Niccolò and Marco Pagliarini, pp. 250 and 263, cited in Almagià, R. (1952). *op. cit.*, vol. IV, note 1, p. 6. Cfr. Banfi, F. (1952). "The Cosmographic Loggia of the Vatican Palace", *Imago Mundi*, IX, pp. 22-25.

<sup>324</sup> Fra Mauro, *Cristoforo Colombo e l'apertura degli spazi – Due mondi a confronto 1492-1728*, *cit.*, vol. II, pp. 879-881. See also Almagià, R. (1924). Un grande Planisfero di Giuseppe Rosaccio (1597), *Rivista Geografica Italiana*, 31, pp. 264-269.

<sup>325</sup> Stamb. Barb. X. 1. 80 Cfr. M. Fiorini, *op. cit.*, pp. 956-972.

islands. Greater similarities are found with the *Japoniae Nova Descriptio* paper of the Dutch Linschoten, which however dates back to 1599.

The differences increase, as we proceed northward and are huge for Japan. In the Rughesi *Mappamondo*, in the same year 1597, Japan appears at the edge of the border, but it is not delineated; only the writing can be seen, on the Chinese sea, *Iapan*<sup>326</sup>. A Japanese archipelago with exorbitant dimensions is described in the *Description of the world known so far* by Urbano Monte, and it received in 1585 from the Japanese noble delegation in Italy to meet the Pope<sup>327</sup>. Among merchants, edifying *Letters* and embassies, with the sixteenth century the “mythical phase” or at least the “second hand” of the representation of Japan ends. In the following century, despite the subsequent isolation of Japan following the almost total closure policy of the country wanted by the Tokugawa shogūnate in 1639, a new phase opens up with decidedly scientific intentions, much more organic and homogeneous in which it is more evident the phylogeny of documents<sup>328</sup>. Between 1618 and 1621, the Sicilian Jesuit De Angelis created a small map of the Ezo (now called Hokkaidō)<sup>329</sup>. He represented the island he depicted as four to five times the size of the rest of Japan and also made a written report for example with, descriptions of Ainu boats that brought dried fish from northern seas, sea otter pelts from the Kurils, Chinese silk from the Amur River.

It is like imagining a community through a map. In an essay for the landmark *History of Cartography*, Kazutaka Unno wrote that such activity could be overestimated in terms of its cultural impact on Japan itself, suggesting that the Jesuit cartography is of “tangential interest” while at the same time recognizing “the role the Jesuits played in

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<sup>326</sup> Almagià, R. (1952). *op. cit.*, vol. II, tav. XXV, p. 70.

<sup>327</sup> Monte, U. (1994). *Decrizione del mondo sin qui conosciuto*. Lecco: Edizioni Periplo, Tav. 9, Cfr. Guglielmetti, T. (1979). “Il Giappone nella carta di Urbano Monte del 1589”. *Incontri tra Occidente e Oriente*. Saggi IV. Venice: University of Venice.

<sup>328</sup> De Palma, D. (2003). “Dal ‘Cipangu’ al ‘Giappone’: la transizione dalla cosmologia medievale alla cartografia moderna”. *ITALIA –GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, Vol. I, Rome-Naples.

<sup>329</sup> Kitagawa, K. (1950). “Map of Hokkaidō of G. de Angelis, ca. 1621,” *Imago mundi* 7: 110–14; Schütte, J. (1952). “Map of Japan by Father Girolamo de Angelis,” *Imago mundi* 9: 73–78; and Kudo, C. (1953). “A Summary of My Studies of Girolamo de Angelis’s Yezo Map,” *Imago mundi* 10: 81–86. The documents are collected in Cieslik, H. (1963), ed., *Hoppo tankenki: Genna nenkan ni okeru gaikokujin no Ezo hokokusho*. Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kobunkan.



diffusion<sup>330</sup>. De Angelis's enlarged map of Hokkaidō, the first of its kind, reveals as, in other Jesuit cartography, abstract and global representations become intertwined with highly localized efforts to comprehend particular regions of missionary activity<sup>331</sup>.

### 1.1.3. The knowledge of Japan in Italy between XVI and XVIII centuries

From the sixteenth century, during the counter-reformist climate of pushing the evangelical conquest of Asia and Africa, the first nucleus of a true and proper orientalist culture in Italy had been formed, supported (to recall the words of G. Gabrieli) from a general intensification of the “search, purchase and treasury” of the eastern manuscripts<sup>332</sup> and in this context various curiosities and a first scientific interest for Japan were also nourished. In the XVI century, Italian historical literature devoted greater attention to the more evident and superficial aspects of the country as the recipient of missionary propaganda, for which the object of interest was above all the people, its material civilization, the beliefs, customs, and customs found, therefore the origins and history. As in the XVI century the almost total ban of the Tokugawa *shogūn* to any religious, commercial or diplomatic exchange with Europe inevitably led to a historicization and a general deepening of what was inherited from the previous literature, while the news related to the West started then to be filtered through the Dutch merchants.

Numerous manuscript reports and letters from missionaries sent from Far East Asia to Rome to the Company and other religious orders began to be published starting in 1551, providing a wealth of news on Japan that, spread among scholars and intellectuals, would have inspired all subsequent literature. Under the *Special Notices from the Indies of Portugal*<sup>333</sup>, were written testimonies collected of the Jesuit fathers (often translated

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<sup>330</sup> Unno, K. (1994). “Cartography in Japan,” in *History of Cartography: 2:2, Cartography in the Traditional East and Southeast Asian Societies*, ed. John Brian Harley and David Woodward, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 376.

<sup>331</sup> Batchelor, R. (11 March 2019). “Introduction: Jesuit Cartography”, in *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, Volume 6: Issue 1, pp. 1-13.

<sup>332</sup> Bartoli, D. (1985). *Dell'Historia della Compagnia di Giesu. Il Giappone. Seconda parte dell'Asia descritta dal P. Daniello Bartoli della medesima Compagnia*. Rome: Ignazio de' Lazzari, 1660.

<sup>333</sup> See the first collection of letters from Japan: “Copia d'una lettera del Padre Maestro Francesco Xavier dal Giapan indirizzata al Collegio delli scolari di detta Compagnia di Coymbra di Portogallo”, in *Avvisi particolari dalle Indie di Portogallo ricevuti in questi doi anni del 1551 e 1552 da li Reverendi Padri de la Compagnia de Iesu, dove fra molte cose mirabili, si vede*

from Spanish or Portuguese) concerning primarily the progress of the Catholic missionary, therefore geographical, historical, political, and those on uses and customs of the Japanese. Many reports, which recur in the Italian writings of the period and which are reported with irrelevant variations and additions of the works that followed, were drawn from the letters of some missionaries, in particular, Saverio, Luis Frois, Cosmo di Torres, João Rodriguez, which were the most active in Japan and their erudite memories were widespread in Italy both in Latin and in the vernacular.

Among the Italian missionaries, Alessandro Valignano will be remembered as the author of a fundamental essay for the knowledge of Japan for the missionaries who came there to preach<sup>334</sup>. Saverio, who was among the first to write detailed reports, learned information about some distinctive aspects of Japanese people, which later became commonplaces and in the collective imagination and the literature of the entire sixteenth-seventeenth century and beyond. Saverio noted how the Japanese had skilled martial activity, another characteristic aspect of the people, so much to observe in more steps that always carry swords and daggers, both noble and low people, starting at 14 years<sup>335</sup>.

Frois, like Saverio, emphasized the Japanese's marked inclination towards military activities, so he affirmed that in “no part of the world, which up to this point is known, are so many revolutions” and noted among other things, the importance in his opinion purely democratic of the people, for which “they are so many and so great mutations in the States. So that the one, who was King a few days ago, immediately became a poor man: and on the contrary again what yesterday was a poor man becomes a great

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*delli Paesi, delle genti, e costumi loro e la grande conversione di molti populi, che cominciano a ricevere il lume della santa fede e Religione Christiana*, Rome, Valerio Dorico e Luigi, 1552, p. 288; *Diversi Avisi particolari dall'Indie di Portogallo ricevuti dall'anno 1551. Fino al 1558 ecc.*, Venice, Michele Tramezzino, 1559; *Nuovi Avvisi del Giappone con alcuni altri della Cina del LXXXIII, et LXXXIV. Cavati dalle lettere della Compagnia di Giesu. Ricevute il mese di Dicembre prossimo passato MDLXXXV*, Venice, Gioliti, 1586; *Lettera annuale del Giappone scritta dal Padre Generale della Compagnia di Giesu Alli XX di Febbraio M.D.LXXXVIII*, Rome, Francesco Zannetti, 1590.

<sup>334</sup> Valignano, A. (1946). *Il Cerimoniale per i Missionari in Giappone*. Edizione critica, introduzione e note di Giuseppe Schütte. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.

<sup>335</sup> “Copia d’una lettera del Padre Maestro Francesco Xavier dal Giapan indirizzata al Collegio delli scolari di detta Compagnia di Coymbra di Portogallo”, op. cit., pp. 288-289.

Lord<sup>336</sup>. Cosmo di Torres, in detail on the geographical coordinates of the country, tried to shorten the distances in comparing Japan to Europe when he wrote:

This island and country of Japan are in that same climate and degree that is Spain: it has 300 leagues in width and according to what they say 600 in length; it is very fertile land and bears fruit twice a year, for what in May gives grain and in September rice, in summer there are rains like in India and many of the fruits it has resemble those of Spain. There are also many silver mines<sup>337</sup>.

During the Japanese embassy occasion in 1582 for Pope Gregory XIII, which marked the first important direct meeting of Japan with Italy, inspired works specifically dedicated to the country. The same thing happened a few years later with the mission of 1613 to Pope Paul V<sup>338</sup>. Here are published, a short distance from these events of unquestionable historical significance, volumes inspired by the theme, such as the *Reports* by Guido Gualtieri and the *History of the Kingdom of Voxu* by Scipione Amati<sup>339</sup>, together with other chronicles on the Japanese embassies and from here some writings, once again, on the contribution of the Italian missionary to Japan, including the brief *Compendium* compiled by Marc'Antonio Ciappi on the work carried out by Gregory XIII, in which the residences of the Compagnia di Gesù in Arima are illustrated with special miniaturized tables and in other Japanese locations<sup>340</sup>. Alongside the first reports of the missionaries, historical works on the so-called East Indies and Asia, in general, were published, written by ecclesiastical scholars and scholars of the Society of Jesus, in which Japan had also appeared.

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<sup>336</sup> Annual letter of Japan, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

<sup>337</sup> "Copia di una del Giapon del padre Cosmo di Torres, for the Father Antonio of Quadros Provincial of India on 8th October MDLXI", *Nuovi Avisi delle Indie*, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>338</sup> Regarding the Japanese embassies, see Gunji, Y. (1985). *Dall'isola del Giappone: la prima ambasceria giapponese in Occidente*. Milan: Unicopli.

<sup>339</sup> Gualtieri, G. (1586). *Relationi della venuta de gli ambasciatori a Roma, sino alla partita di Lisbona. Con una descrizione del loro paese e, costumi, e con le accoglienze fatte da tutti i principi Christiani per dove sono passati*. Venice: Gioliti; Amati, (1615). S. Historia del Regno di Voxu del Giappone, dell'antichità, nobiltà, e valore del suo re Idate Masamune...e dell'ambasciata inviata a Paolo V. Rome: Giacomo Mascardi.

<sup>340</sup> Marc'Antonio Ciappi. (1596). *Compendio delle heroine et gloriose attioni, et santa di papa Gregorio XIII distinto in tredici capi, in memoria delli XIII anni, che esso visse nel suo felice pontificato: raccolto da Marc'Antonio Ciappi et dal medesimo nuovamente corretto, et di molte parti accresciuto*. Rome: Stamperia de gli Accolti, with tab. pp. 39-40. The first edition in Roma in 1591. Other book: *Breve relatione del concistoro publico, Dato a gli Ambasciatori Giapponesi dalla Santità di Papa Gregorio xiiij in Roma, il di 23. di Marzo 1585*. (1585). Rome: Francesco Zannetti.

Among the works of lay authors, for a certain precocity, the *Fabrica del Mondo* (1573)<sup>341</sup> by Giovan Lorenzo D'Anania, which deals with the subject in a few significant pages of the “Second Treatise”, inspired by missionary sources and texts and globes mentioned at the beginning of the text, such as *Asia* (1552-53) by Jōao de Barros already reported by Ramusio<sup>342</sup> and then translated and published by Alfonso Ulloa<sup>343</sup>, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* by Abramo Ortelio, the *Commentaries of China*, and those of *Eastern India*, the *Summary of Oriental Things*, from which the reader gets the sense of first historicity of the now increasingly rich material also related to Japan. As part of the “Universal machine of the earth”, the Archipelago is presented by D'Anania in enthusiastic terms: “the Giapan island, one of the largest and most beautiful in the universe, as large as a country, as in a multitude of cities and nobility of inhabitants”<sup>344</sup>.

Among the annotations, D'Anania is keen to point out both the mercantile character of Japanese society and the development of trade in cities. In his *Fabrica*, moreover, D'Anania highlighted how the meeting between Europe and Japan, favored by the missionary, had inspired the study of each other's languages and civilizations, so reading “visit the Evangelium, and there [at Bungo, current Ōita] a Seminary is being held, where our people learn the Japanese language, and they with our law the Portuguese idiom, and some the Latin language”<sup>345</sup>.

Among the scholars' text of the Society of Jesus, it is necessary to include the *Historiarum Indicarum Libri XVI* (1588) by Giovan Pietro Maffei, an impressive historical essay which, although it emphasized, in particular, the spread of Christianity

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<sup>341</sup> D'Anania, G.L. (1573). *La Universal Fabrica del mondo dell'Eccell. G. Lorenzo Anania della città di Taverna Cosmografo e Teologo dove s'ha piena notitia De i costumi, Leggi, Città, Fiumi, Monti, Provincie, et. Popoli del Mondo*. Napoli: Gioseppe Cacchij.

<sup>342</sup> Ramusio, G.B. *Delle navigazioni et viaggi*, Venice, Giunti, 1550-1559, vol. II: Secondo volume delle Navigazioni et viaggi nel quale si contengono L'Historia delle cose de Tartari, e diversi autori, dell'Indie Orientali, della Tartaria..., 1559, p. 50 r. e v.

<sup>343</sup> De Barros, J.(1562). *L'Asia del Sig. Giovanni di Barros...Nuovamente lingua Portoghese tradotta. Dal Sign.Alfonso Ulloa. Deca prima. La seconda deca*. Venice: V. Valgrisio, vol. II.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 38 r.

<sup>345</sup> *L'Universale Fabrica del Mondo, overo Cosmografia dell'Eccell. G. Lorenzo Anania, Divisa in quattro Trattati: Né quali distintamente si misura il Cielo, e la Terra, e si descrivono particolarmente le Province, Città, Castella, Monti, Mari, Laghi, Fiumi, e Fonti, et si tratta delle Leggi, et Costumi di molti Popoli; de gli Alberi, et dell'Herbe, e d'altre cose pretiose, et Medicinali, et de gl'Inventori di tutte le cose*. (1582). Venice: Muschio, p. 275.

in the Indies, also presented a detailed description of Japan. To enrich the Italian knowledge on the Archipelago in the sixteenth century intervened the memories of merchants and especially foreign travelers (it was mostly Iberian, English, or Dutch merchants) which spread in translation and were generally included in collections of reports of travel<sup>346</sup>. Also, the historian and scholar Giovan Battista Ramusio in his famous collection of *Navigazioni e viaggi*, which appeared in the first edition between the years 1550 and 1559, had once again followed the description of *Zipangu* by Marco Polo<sup>347</sup>.

The *Itinerary* (1595-96) by Jan Huygen van Linschoten, translated into Latin in 1599, would have guided every European navy towards the shores of Japan and its notoriety would have opened Japan's ports to northern European ships landed in the early 1600s<sup>348</sup>. Francesco Carletti's reasoning only came into being in 1701. Carletti arrived in Japan from the Philippines in 1597. According to text *Reasoning I* relating to the East Indies, we can read a description of Nagasaki "as a place populated almost entirely by Japanese Christians, and where there are some few Portuguese merchant"<sup>349</sup> houses and various news on the practice of trading in earthen vessels from the Philippines of widespread use among the Japanese to be the subject of expensive transactions, being "five, six and ten thousand scudos each, which would not be considered an ordinary value for an ordinary value and knowing that the Japanese value more those things, which are good for preserving health, than any other precious thing"<sup>350</sup>. Even Carletti, like the missionary fathers, dwelt on the very "Japanese" tendency to prefer martial weapons and practices. Carletti's reading shows the preference accorded to Japan rather

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<sup>346</sup> Iannello, T. (2003), "Il Giappone nelle conoscenze storico-letterarie dell'Italia fra Cinquecento e Settecento". Italia – Giappone 450 anni (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l'Africa e l'Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale, Vol. I, Rome – Naples, pp. 55-56.

<sup>347</sup> G.B. Ramusio, *Ibidem*.

<sup>348</sup> Van Linschoten, J.H. *Navigatio ac itinerarium Johannis Hugonius Linscotani in Orientalem sive Lusitanorum Indiam. Descriptiones eiusdem terrae ac tractuum littoralium...*, Hagae-Comitis, A.Henrici, 1599, in vol. XXI, Théodore de Bry, *Collectiones peregrinationum in Indiam Orientalem et Indian Occidentalem, XXV parti bus comprehensae, a T. de Bry, J.I. de Bry, M. Merian publicatae*, Francoforti ad Moenum, Joannis Feyraband, 1590-1634.

<sup>349</sup> Carletti, F. (1701). *Ragionamenti di Francesco Carletti fiorentino sopra le cose da lui vedute nei suoi viaggi sì dell'Indie Occidentali, e Orientali come di altri Paesi*. Florence: Giuseppe Manni, pp. 11-13.

<sup>350</sup> *Ibidem*.

than to China and the greater affinity to Japanese bellicosity than to Chinese pacifism<sup>351</sup>. From the third decade of the seventeenth century, the collections of Purchas would also have spread, many of which related to trade and English navigation in Japan<sup>352</sup>. Giovanni Botero was the heir of the substantial XVI century heritage of information reached in Italy from the rest of the world, which marks at the end of the century a meeting point for the knowledge filtered by the channel in Jesuit species and for those coming from a secular canal, so to speak (which also awaits to be completely discovered) that is to say derived from the numerous readings of commercial relations and travel memories and from the contacts which it is presumed he had with ambassadors, travelers, and merchants in Rome, Spain, and France<sup>353</sup>. With its *Universal Relations*<sup>354</sup>, which appeared in the first edition in 1591, where Japan is placed among the “Islands” (Part I. Vol. II) in the section entitled “Relations of the sea”, it is the first to summarize the greater amount of geophysical, political, historical, religious, philosophical, ethnographic, even statistical-economic information on the Archipelago. Among the scholars, we want to remember the Jesuit Antonio Possevino, who inserted a reference to Japan in the tenth book of his chosen historical apparatus, related to all the nations of the world and entitled *Bibliotheca Selecta de Ratione Studiorum*<sup>355</sup>. There are references to the beliefs and divinities of Japan, drawn, as specified by the author, from the Polian memoirs.

The curtain lowered over Japan after 1640, when all Europeans were expelled from the Archipelago with the only exclusion of the Dutch, because the interest in both European and Italian works and the other ones that followed, numerically inferior in originality

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<sup>351</sup> Guglielminetti, M. (1967). *Viaggiatori del Seicento*. Turin: UTET, p. 17.

<sup>352</sup> See Purchas, S. *Purchas His Pilgrimes*. (1625-1626). London: W. Stansby.

<sup>353</sup> Among the major biographies, see Gioda, C. *La vita e le opere di Giovanni Botero con la quinta parte delle Relazioni Universali e altri documenti inediti*. (1895). Milan: Hoepli, in particular the vol. II, pp. 402-403, which deals with the sources used by Botero for his work and vol. III, pp. 237-246, for the part relating to Japan.

<sup>354</sup> Botero, G. (1591). *Delle Relationi Universali di Giovanni Botero Benese*. Rome: Georgio Ferrari.

<sup>355</sup> The first italian edition: Antonio Possevino, *Apparato all'Historia di tutte le nazioni. Et il modo di studiare la Geografia. Di Antonio Possevino Mantovano della Compagnia di Giesù. Prima in Lignua Latina uscito in luce nella stampa Vaticana Pontificia in Roma: Da poi accresciuto e stampato...*, Venice Gio. Battista Ciotti, 1598, pp. 207-208. For the latin edition: *Bibliotheca Selecta de Ratione Studiorum, Ad Disciplinas, e ad Salutem omnium gentium procurandam: Recognita novissime ad eodem, et aucta, e in duos Tamos distribuita...*, Venice, Altobellum Salicatum, 1603, p. 458 ss., p. 506 ss.

compared to the sixteenth-century ones, were generally improvements and in-depth analysis of the previous ones<sup>356</sup>. The second volume by Daniello Bartoli focused entirely on Japan, wrote a copious and detailed history of the country under the *daimyo* from the second half of the sixteenth century, from Oda Nobunaga onwards. This is the story of missionary activities that are intertwined with the major historical and political events in Japan, but with a special emphasis on the institutional affairs of the empire. The latter began to become aware and gradually take more account, not only, in anticipation of a possible resumption of Christian preaching<sup>357</sup>, but for the awareness of the importance and dignity of a nation among the most civilized Asia. Shortly after the Bartoli, it was the P. Filippo De Marini, who, although he dealt little with Japan, concentrating rather on the Tonkin, he did not shy away from naming his work to the *Province of Japan*<sup>358</sup>, assimilating to the Japanese empire the entire peninsular area between Cocincina and Tonchino. He updated on the missionary activities of the last years preceding the publication of his work in 1663.

Some years later we read of Japan in the brief geopolitical treatise of Count Nicolò Maria Corbelli, who dedicates only geese lines to the *King of Japan, to the east of China*<sup>359</sup>, while some insignificant news came from Lodovico Passerone, author of a *Geographical Guide*, who he presented in a synthetic and lapidary way the Japanese people: “they are idolaters, superstitious, cruel and disloyal, removed if there is any Christian converted to the Faith of the Jesuit Fathers”<sup>360</sup>. Another work titled *Universal History*<sup>361</sup> by Francesco Bianchini, in which a comparative analysis was proposed

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<sup>356</sup> Iannello, T. (2003), op. cit., pp. 57-58.

<sup>357</sup> The work came out in 1660, when the missionary activities in the archipelago had already been interrupted for a little over twenty years following the total interdiction of the missionary fathers from the country, already victims of bloody persecutions.

<sup>358</sup> See De Marini, F. *Delle Missioni de' Padri della Compagnia di Giesù Nella Provincia del Giappone, e particolarmente di quella di Tunkino. Libri cinque. Del P. Gio. Filippo De Marini della medesima Compagnia.* (1663). Rome: Nicolò Angelo Tinassi.

<sup>359</sup> Corbelli, N.M. (1673). *Il Mondo Geografico e Politico del Conte Nicolò Maria Corbelli, Consacrato all'Eminentissimo Principe Cardinale Flavio Ghigi.* Colonia: Gio Misio, p. 100.

<sup>360</sup> Passerone, L. (1674). *Guida Geografica Overo Compendiosa Descrizione del Globo Terreno, Premessa una breve notitia di tutto l'Universo. Di D. Lodovico Passerone di Lantosca Dottor d'ambe le Leggi. Ampliatad' Aggiunte dal Sig. Carlo Assonica Dottor.* Venice: Niccolò Pezzana, Part III, Capo 9, p. 278.

<sup>361</sup> Bianchini, F. (1697). *La Istoria universale, provata con monumenti, e figurata con simboli de gli antichi, e dedicata all'Eminentiss, e Reverendiss. Principe Pietro Otthoboni cardin. Vicecancelliere Signor suo clementissimo Da Francesco Bianchini Veronese.* Rome: Antonio de Rossi, Deca I, Cap. I, p. 73.

between the idols of the Japanese and those of ancient Egypt. In the XVIII, Italian works and written in Italian languages assumed the typical encyclopedic character required as a literary genre of choice, favoring all that was referred to Dutch people through their activities and their privileged diplomatic relations. Certain literature specialized in scientific knowledge and offered in particular observations aimed at the natural heritage and Japanese technologies, for a cultural exchange that benefited from new theories, inventions, and scientific discoveries in disciplines such as botany, zoology, medicine, physics, and chemistry, which Europe gradually exported to Japan and which the latter received systematically with enormous interest.

We must include among the compilers of the last quarter of the seventeenth century who left written memory at the beginning of the XVIII as Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri. Author of a famous *World Tour*<sup>362</sup> printed in the years 1699-1700, from the trip made in China did not fail to report news and impressions about Japan, its people, history, customs, traffic, based on what he had learned in Macau from local people. He reported how the Dutch had damaged the trade-in Macau. In the context of the historical knowledge of the country that came from abroad, extended this time also to the natural sciences, the indisputable contribution of the writings of the German scientist and traveler Engelbert Kaempfer, who had a great resonance during the XVIII, should not be ignored. In his work *Amoenitatum Exoticarum* (1712)<sup>363</sup> there was enough material to know not only the rich heritage of *Japonica flora*, but also on *fauna*, but to draw on an original historical synthesis that would permeate all the subsequent European historiography concerning Japan. A few years later, a natural, civil and religious history of Japan was published by Sir Hans Sloane in the first English edition which made school throughout the XVIII and beyond: it was translated into French and Dutch and only later in the original German version<sup>364</sup>.

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<sup>362</sup> Careri, G.F.G. (1699-1700). *Giro del Mondo del Dottor Gio. Francesco Gemelli Careri*. Naples: Giuseppe Roselli. Gio.

<sup>363</sup> Kaempfer, E. (1712). *Amoenitatum Exoticarum Politico-Physico-Medicarum Fasciculi V, Quibus continentur Variæ Relationes, Observationes e Descriptiones Rerum Persicarum et Ulterioris Asiae, Lemgoviaë, Henrici Wilhelmi Meyeri, Aulæ Lippiacæ Typographi*.

<sup>364</sup> Id., *History of Japan and Siam*. (1727). trad. J.G. Scheuchzer, vol. II, London. German edition: *Geschichte und Beschreibung von Japan*, vol. III, Lemgo, 1777.



During the first half of the XVIII, a translation work that had great editorial fortune also in Italy was *The present state of all countries and peoples of the world* (1717-1738), written by the English scholar Thomas Salmon, who dedicated the whole second volume to Japan and other islands of Southeast Asia<sup>365</sup>. The work is a complete and extremely accurate treatise for the clarity of information and the didactic character, shown also through clear illustrations of geographical areas and weights, dimensions, coins. In ten chapters the author deals with Japan starting from a geophysical and political description, then the education, customs, architecture, language and history, art, commerce, and economic resources. The presence of recurrent topics and annotations on Japan in the literature is partly because many authors were indirect observers and drew mostly from the same sources. This immense wealth of knowledge has been transmitted to us from our literature and has helped to stimulate an ever-growing interest of Italy towards Japan<sup>366</sup>.

#### **1.1.4. The knowledge of Japan in Italy between XIX and XX centuries**

In 1816, a work that inaugurates the new century of studies and researches of the “Far East” is the monumental work, divided into 21 volumes, wanted and signed by Giulio Ferrario<sup>367</sup>. It is a work that represents a collection of a previous production of centuries and which is a prelude to the debut of the new one, to which many later works will be performed. Ambitious is the idea, as the title itself (*The ancient and modern Costume or history of the Government, of the militia, of religion, of the arts, sciences, and customs of all the ancient and modern peoples tried with the monuments of antiquity and represented with similar drawings*), demonstrating a serious and generous commitment of our author, looking for a “high” disclosure. The re-evaluation, or better, the rediscovery of a work like this represents the possibility of making tangible, concretizing, and innovating that complex of disparate knowledge that we have about Japan. Considering the work from that angle to place our author, the knowledge of the

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<sup>365</sup> The original English edition as: Thomas Salmon, *Modern History: or the Present state of all nations. Illustrated with cuts and maps...by Herman Moll...*, 31 vol., London 1717-1738. A second italian edition: Id., *Lo stato presente di tutti i paesi e popoli del mondo naturale, politico, e morale con nuove osservazioni, e correzioni degli antichi e moderni viaggiatori. Vol. II: Del Giappone, Isole Ladrone, Filippine, e Molucche, Regni della Kochinchina, e Tonkino e della Provincia di Quansi.* (1738). Second Edition. Venice: Giambattista Albrizzi.

<sup>366</sup> Iannello, T. (2003). op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>367</sup> The number of volumes varies considerably depending on repeated extramilan reprints, at least seven until the 40s.

“ancient and modern costume”, it will be easier and more appealing to draw a summa of knowledge on Japan of the early 1800s and to increase the neophilia and curiosity that had previously ensnared us.

The admirable descriptions of the geophysical characteristics of the island deserve special attention. These are brief and concise descriptions that allow us to draw a complete and realistic picture of *Nipon*. He talks about the sweet climate, marked however by heavy rains, the opulent variety of the animal species, terrestrial and marine, is also exalted. A large part of the section is dedicated to the observation and treatment of the wedding ceremony. There is no parallelism with the West in the customs of these people who, imperiously, administer and regulate the union between a man and a woman. Worthy of mention is the investigation carried out on the legislative system, which for its ferocity drew to itself the attention of Montesquieu. This reality of government is no longer perceived as something categorically different, but as something known, examined, compared, and united. The Japanese ferocity has always been considered one of their distinctive signs, but this ferocity, as Ferrario warns, is closely linked to the Caesarism of the imperial system<sup>368</sup>.

Other descriptions of Japan, more and more precise and information are found in the reports of the great travelers of the sixteenth century. Japan is mentioned in the *Report of the first voyage around the world*<sup>369</sup> written in 1525 by Antonio Pigafetta (1485-1534), and on it, with details related to the writing in use in the country, to the uses, customs, and traditions, Francesco spreads Carletti, who stayed there from June 1597 to March 1598<sup>370</sup>. A special role in the knowledge of Japan was played by the Jesuit missionary's works. Among these, we must especially mention Alessandro Valignano's ones, such as *Advertimentos and avisos acerca dos costumes and catangues de Jappão*

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<sup>368</sup> Amatruda, P. (2003). “Una ‘summa’ di conoscenze del primo Ottocento:l’opera del Ferrario”. *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI*, curated by Adolfo Tamburello, Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Rome and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, Rome-Naples, vol.I, pp. 266-267.

<sup>369</sup> It was reprinted in the volume Manfroni, C. (1956). *Il primo viaggio intorno al mondo di Antonio Pigafetta*. Milano: Ist. Edit. Italiano.

<sup>370</sup> Carletti, F. (1976). In *Viaggiatori italiani del Seicento*, curated by Marziano Guglielminetti. Turin: UTET.

(1581)<sup>371</sup>, *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* (1583), and *Adiciones del sumario de Japón* (1592)<sup>372</sup>.

Daniello Bartoli S.I. (1608-1685), dedicated five volumes of his *History of the Society of Jesus to Japan*<sup>373</sup>. After Bartoli, the silence practically fell on Japan. The “century of Enlightenment” saw the attention from the European intellectual circles, and from Italian ones, concentrated above all on China. The almost total closure of Japan to the Europeans, decreed in 1614 by the *shogūn* Tokugawa Hidetada (1579-1632, in power 1605-1623), decreased traffic, which was limited just for the Dutch authorized to reside in Deshima, and prevented any further missionary action, also triggering violent persecution of Christianity. Interest in Japan would only be awakened in the nineteenth century when Japan was forced to open to the West.

A decisive boost to the establishment of regular relations with Japan came from a disease, the pebrina, which had hit Italian silkworms causing a significant decrease in the quantity and quality of production. Luigi Torelli, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce who succeeded Minghetti in the Lamarmora cabinet in 1864, was convinced of the need for greater expansion of commercial relations with the outside world and in particular with the East. His insistence led to sending a warship to China and Japan with a plenipotentiary to negotiate trade treaties with both countries, all producers of the prized seed necessary for our silk industry. The chosen vessel was the *Magenta* pyro-corvette, a very modern ship, launched in Livorno in 1862, which was entrusted to the command of Vittorio Arminjon (1830-1897), also appointed head of the mission charged with negotiating the treaties. The instructions given to Arminjon provided that if he failed to enter into the treaties, he would have to prepare the ground for a political mission to be sent later. The Arminjon left on November 8th in the year 1865 for Montevideo, where *Magenta* is. Taking command, he set sail on 2 February 1866. In mid-March, he arrived in Singapore.

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<sup>371</sup> See the Italian edition curated by Shütte S.J., (1946). Rome: Edition “Storia e letteratura”.

<sup>372</sup> Alvarez-Taladriz J.L., (1954). *Monumenta Nipponica Monographs*. Tōkyō: Sophia University, n. 9.

<sup>373</sup> Bartoli D.S.I. (1825). *History of the Society of Jesus to Japan (1608-1685)*. Turin: Giacinto Marietti.

On July 4th the *Magenta* was in Yokohama and negotiations began with the Japanese shogūnal government. The negotiations ended soon and on August 25 the treaty with Japan was signed in Edo (now Tōkyō). The chosen companions were Filippo De Filippi (1814-1867), Director of the Zoological Museum of Turin and scholar of the silkworm epidemic, and Enrico Hillyer Giglioli (1845-1909), zoologist and ethnologist. However, Arminjon's mission also had an impact on the field of cultural relations. He published a book, entitled *Japan and the journey of the Corvette Magenta* in 1866,<sup>374</sup> which contains the stages of the journey and the processes in the negotiations, and gave historical information and descriptions of different aspects of life, of Japanese art, medicine, and religion. It was the first non-missionary secular description of Japan that appeared in Italy. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Japan was one of the countries that most aroused interest in the West. At the end of the XVIII, the interest was directed to the Chinese world, but during the end of the nineteenth century, the interest in Japan increased, with the spread of the so-called Japanism, which influenced the European arts of that period<sup>375</sup>. Japan opened to the West and aroused particular interest also in the cultural field. Italian culture became part of this current<sup>376</sup>.

The Italian prime minister accredited in Japan was Vittorio Sallier de La Tour, who in 1869 made a journey within Japan, looking for the silkworm seed to be imported into Italy. The chronicler of the trip was Pietro Savio, who left his memory in his *First Italian expedition in the middle of Japan and its sericoli centers*<sup>377</sup>. Even his successor, Alessandro Fè d'Ostiani (1825-1905), made similar journeys, and it was Pietro Savio who gave the results, with a second book, *Japan today in his public and private life, politics and commercial - Travel inside the island and in the sericoli centers performed in the year 1874*<sup>378</sup>. These essays, which not only deal with the problem of bugs but also provide interesting news on Japan at the time, must be added to the books written by

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<sup>374</sup> Genoa, Co' tipi del R.I. dei Sordomuti, 1869.

<sup>375</sup> Cfr. Arzeni, F. (1987). *L'immagine e il segno. Il giapponismo nella cultura europea fra ottocento e novecento*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

<sup>376</sup> See De Gubernatis, A. (1876). *Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire des études orientales en Italie*. Paris: Libraire de la Société Asiatique. Florence-Rome-Turin: Libraire Lœscher, pp. 367-422; Beviglia, R. (1966). "La letteratura giapponese in Italia. Parte I: 1871-1950", *Il Giappone*, Vol. VI, pp. 9-11; Yoshiura, M. (1969). *Nichi-i-bunka shikō*. Tōkyō: Itaria Shobō.

<sup>377</sup> It is possible consult the text in Savio, P. (1872). *La prima spedizione italiana nell'interno del Giappone e nei suoi centri sericoli*. Milan: F.lli Treves.

<sup>378</sup> (1875). Milan: F.lli Treves.

Riccardo Truffi<sup>379</sup> and Felice Santini<sup>380</sup> on the occasion of the visits to Japan by Duke Tommaso di Savoia of Genoa in 1873 and 1879-81.

The correspondences of Luca Dal Verme, *Japan, and Siberia. Travel notes with a map of Siberia*<sup>381</sup> and *China and Japan from the end of the 20th century*,<sup>382</sup> are also noteworthy. In 1860 the subalpine government, which probably was already thinking of an expansion activity towards the “Far East”, announced a national competition for a scholarship in Oriental languages in Turin. The Minister of Public Education was Terenzio Mamiani, who declared Antelmo Severini the winner (1828-1909) and sent him to study in Paris. Returning to Italy, the new minister Michele Amari gave him the appointment as Professor of Far Eastern Languages in the Royal Institute for Higher Studies in Florence. Thus, the university teaching of the Japanese language, literature, and culture began. In his studies on Japan, Severini found a valid collaborator in Carlo Puini (1839-1924), more interested in historical-religious studies than in literary ones. Puini, who held the chair of History and Geography of East Asia for a long time, in Florence and then in Rome, made known in Italy the Japanese “national religion”, Shinto, with the essay *The seven geniuses of happiness*<sup>383</sup>. *News on a part of the cult of the Japanese* translation of the *Ema no tehon (Examples of votive tablets)*, a collection of ancient paintings with historical and mythological subjects.

Carlo Valenziani (1831-1896)<sup>384</sup> also played an important role. From 1876 to 1896 he was Professor of Languages and Literatures of the Far East at the University of Rome. Valenziani's fundamental interests were in Japanese theater, which he first made known in Italy, and popular literature. Valenziani's work was also noteworthy for setting up a collection of Japanese books at the Vittorio Emanuele II National Library in Rome<sup>385</sup>.

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<sup>379</sup> “Un principe di Casa Savoia due volte in Giappone nello scorcio del secolo passato, iniziando rapporti di fervida amicizia tra i due paesi”. (1939). in *Bollettino Storico Pavese*, vol. II, fasc. II.

<sup>380</sup> *Intorno al mondo a bordo della Regia Corvetta Garibaldi*. (1886). Rome: Voghera Carlo.

<sup>381</sup> (1882). Milan: Hoepli.

<sup>382</sup> In *Nuova Antologia*. (1898). Rome: Forzaini & C., Tipografia del Senato.

<sup>383</sup> (1872). Florence: Successori Le Monnier.

<sup>384</sup> Cfr., Guidi, I. (1897). “Carlo Valenziani”. *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, vol. VI, pp. 333-335.

<sup>385</sup> Cfr. Valenziani, C. (1876, 1877, 1878, 1882). “Catalogo di Libri giapponesi e cinesi”. *Bollettino Italiano degli Studi Orientali*. 25 December 1876, n. 12; 10 June 1877, n. 23; n.s., fasc. III (n. 3), 1878; n.s., fasc.V (n. 5), 1878; n.s., fasc. VI (n. 6), 1878; n.s., fasc. VII (n. 7), 6

Giulio Gattinoni, a Japanese and Chinese professor at the Oriental Institute of Naples from 1903 to 1910, devoted himself to teaching activities, and in 1890 he published a *Japanese Grammar of spoken language*<sup>386</sup>, the first systematic attempt to offer students a means to approach the Japanese language. Pietro Silvio Rivetta, known as Toddi, from Naples, was a Professor from 1910 to 1913, whose production, in these years, was mainly directed to the history and current affairs of Japan. The first steps towards the knowledge of Japan in Italy, between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, were uncertain and sporadic initiatives. Japanese literature, until then almost unknown, was presented by brave scholars without an organic plan. The presentation obeyed chance and, often, the availability of Japanese texts scholars received. Thanks to Rivetta's work we have a complete and exhaustive discussion about history. The same applies to the teaching of the language, for the initiative and inventiveness of individual teachers, until Gattinoni, whose interest was the grammar. The following decades would have seen quite a blossoming of studies<sup>387</sup>.

### **1.1.5. The relations between Italy and Japan after World War II**

After the declaration of war by the Parri government to Japan, following 8 September 1943, it was necessary to wait until 1951 for diplomatic relations to be re-established between the two countries. Meanwhile, as early as in 1947, the Italian Institute for the Middle and the Far East was reconstituted as an Institution of Public Law under the presidency of Giuseppe Tucci and in 1948 a Center for Japanese Culture Studies was established under the presidency of Giacinto Auriti. In 1952 Undersecretary Brusasca went to Japan to intensify relations and collaboration between the two countries, and in 1953 the hereditary Prince Akihito was welcomed in Italy. The visits, in 1954 of Prime Minister Yoshida in Italy and in 1955 of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Gaetano Martino in Japan, yielded the stipulation and the coming into force of a new Italo-Japanese cultural agreement replacing the document of 1939. In 1954 a performance of Nō theater was presented at the Venice Biennale, and in 1955, Giuseppe Tucci, head of

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agosto 1878; n.s., fasc. XII (nn. 22, 23, 24), 4 August 1882, pp. 497-501 and Battaglini, M. (1996). *Pagine dall'Oriente. Libri cinesi e giapponesi della Biblioteca Nazionale*. Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Roma, March 13-April 30. Rome: Bardi Editore.

<sup>386</sup> (1890). Venice: Edition Aldo Manuzio.

<sup>387</sup> Corradini, P. (2003). "Le conoscenze e gli studi giapponesi in Italia dal secondo Ottocento al primo Novecento". *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l'Africa e l'Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", Vol. I, Rome-Naples, pp. 268-272.

a mission of the Italian Institute for the Middle and the Far East, visited Japan. In 1958 the first exhibition was set up at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni, about the “Treasures of Japanese art”. In 1959 the Italian Cultural Institute was inaugurated in Tōkyō<sup>388</sup>. In 1960, with “Naples-Kagoshima”, the first Italian twinning with a Japanese city was tightened, in the presence of Ambassador Maurilio Coppini. Since 1961, the Italian Embassy in Tōkyō has organized “Italian evenings” in various Japanese cities, which lasted a few years.

At that moment, in Italy, Japan was famous for its transistors, cameras, optics, large ships, but not yet for its cars. For cars it was, Italy famous in Japan, as also for chemistry and other industries. In December 1962, the Japanese Cultural Institute of Rome was inaugurated, and in 1970, with the Ōsaka Expo, Japan was the first Asian country to hold a world exhibition. The Italian pavilion covered 3000 square meters and developed on three levels, reserving 2500 square meters for the exhibition area. In 1972 the Japan Foundation was established in Tōkyō to replace the Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, which, since its establishment in 1934, had also assisted Italy in its scientific and cultural collaboration. In 1974 the Italian Association for Japanese Studies (AISTUGIA) was founded in Rome. In 1979, Gherardo Gnoli was President of IsMEO, giving new impetus to Italian Japanese relations. In 1984 the Italian School of East Asian Studies was inaugurated in Kyōto, which in 1992 merged with the Italian Cultural Institute of Kyōto<sup>389</sup>. Meanwhile in Rome in 1982 the Italian Association for Friendship with Japan had been set up under the direction of Umberto Agnelli, while in Naples the plane volumetric project of its new Directional Center curated by Tange Kenzō was presented. In 1989 the Italy-Japan Business Group was established by the foreign trade ministers of the two countries to increase trade interchange.

In 1995 the Italian Institute for Africa and the East (IsIAO) was established as a section governed by public law, which brought together the Italo-African Institute (IIA) and the Italian Institute for the Middle and the Far East (IsMEO). In 2000 the University of Naples “L’Orientale”, with the patronage of the IsIAO and other Italian and Japanese

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<sup>388</sup> The Italian Japanese cultural agreement signed in 1955, included the short-term reconstruction of the Italian Cultural Institute of Tōkyō, razed to the ground by aerial bombardments, and the construction of a corresponding Japanese Institute in Rome, already conceived before the Second World War, but remained on paper as a project for the conflict.

<sup>389</sup> About the new foundation, it was articulated in a Center for Economics and Technology, a Center for Epigraphy and Historical Studies, a Center for Natural and Mathematical Sciences.

institutions, organized the International Conference “Italy and Japan at the threshold of the 21st century. Budgets and study perspectives”. Other events have taken place, such as in Florence, the “Italy in Japan - Japan in Italy”, organized by the Faculty of Literature of the University of Tōkyō and the new Research Center of the Tōkyō University in Florence in collaboration with the Florentine University in Rome, the International Convention *Italians in Japan during Meiji period (1868-1912)*, organized by the University “La Sapienza”<sup>390</sup>.

The Treaty of Friendship and Commerce had a brief history behind it. In 1858, the commander of the Sardinian brig *Giovanina*, Antonio Oneto, arrived in Japan and sent a message to Cavour inviting him to contact John Dent, the British consul in Hong Kong, to establish official relations with Japan. In 1859 there were about fifteen Italian entrepreneurs in Japan for the purchase of silkworm seed. In 1862, the Tuscan merchant and entrepreneur Ferdinando de Perfetti, in Yokohama from the previous year, asked the Italian government to promote the signing of a commercial treaty with Japan. The following year, Foreign Minister Visconti Venosta commissioned Cristoforo Negri to prepare an expedition for the stipulation of a treaty and again in the following year, in 1864, the President of the Council of Ministers Marco Minghetti promoted the initiative in agreement with the Minister of the Navy Effisio Cugia. Finally, Alfonso La Marmora, who succeeded Minghetti, sent a mandate in 1866 to stipulate a treaty to the commander of the corvette *Magenta*, Vittorio Arminjon, who was taken to Yokohama<sup>391</sup>.

With the mediation of the Italian Vincenzo Comi, Vittorio Arminjon successfully concluded the first Trade and Friendship Treaty between the two nations. Arriving in Yokohama on the 5th of July, he signed the document on the 25th of August. Like all previous Treaties entered into Japan by the Western powers since 1854, it was also officially agreed, not with the *tennō* (or mikado), but with the *shogūn* (the *taikun*), still

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<sup>390</sup> Tamburello, A. (2003). *La ripresa e lo sviluppo dei rapporti nel secondo Novecento*, in *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI*, (curated by) Adolfo Tamburello. Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Rome and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, op. cit., pp. 175-176.

<sup>391</sup> Arminjon, V.F. (1869). *Il Giappone e il viaggio della corvette Magenta nel 1866. Coll’aggiunta dei trattati col Giappone e della Cina e relative tariffe*. Genoa: Tipografia Sordomuti; Ammannati, F. & Calzolari, S.(1985). *Un viaggio ai confini del mondo 1865-1868. La crociera della pirocorvetta Magenta dai documenti dell’Istituto Geografico Militare*. Florence: Sansoni Ed.



considered by the West as the head of the Japanese state and at the top of a national government, which in reality was not recognized as such by the internal opposition represented by *daimyō* and aristocrats (*kuge*) from the Kyōto court<sup>392</sup>. A few months later, the Treaty of Arminjon was informed of a compromise of current political relevance with articles 9 and 10 of the additional Convention, which established full freedom of trade and movement in the open ports of the archipelago and abroad for all Japanese subjects without discrimination. It was a further step forward that the traffic could take place *without the intervention of any officer*<sup>393</sup>. On July 14th of the following year (1867) Vittorio Sallier de La Tour established the Italian Legation in Yokohama and then in Edo (Tōkyō). As an extraordinary envoy and plenipotentiary minister<sup>394</sup>, with Deputy Robecchi as consul, Sallier was hesitant to present credentials. Sallier sent to our Minister a message<sup>395</sup> dated 12 February 1868, and one year after, in 1869, Sallier de La Tour was the first Italian diplomat to be received by the Emperor Mutsuhito<sup>396</sup>.

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<sup>392</sup> Tamburello, A. [1991] (1993). "I trattati internazionali delle potenze occidentali col Giappone, I: considerazioni sulle strategie diplomatiche dello shogūn Tokugawa". *Il Giappone*, XXXI, Rome, pp. 177-190.

<sup>393</sup> Tamburello, A. (2003). "L'apertura delle relazioni ufficiali". *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI*, (curated by) Adolfo Tamburello. Istituto per l'Africa e l'Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, op. cit. p. 85.

<sup>394</sup> Monaco, L. (1965). "Relazioni di Sallier de La Tour, primo inviato italiano in Giappone (9 giugno 1867-15 gennaio 1869)". *Il Giappone*, V, Rome, pp. 33-43.

<sup>395</sup> When the shogūn regime collapsed, the new Meiji government issued the following imperial rescript on February 3, 1868: The emperor of Japan announced to the sovereigns of all foreign nations and their subjects that permission was given to the shogūn Tokugawa Yoshinobu to return the government power in accordance with the same request. From now on we will be the ones to exercise the utmost authority over both domestic and foreign affairs in the country. Consequently, the title of Emperor must be replaced by the Tycoon one which has been used in the Treaties so far. Officials will be appointed by us to conduct foreign affairs. It is desirable that the Representatives of all the powers of the Treaties recognize this announcement Signed: Mutsuhito. *Meiji Japan through contemporary Sources, Volume Two: 1844-1882*. (1970). Tōkyō, pp. 68-69.

<sup>396</sup> Grassi, F., (curated by) (1973), 1987. *La formazione della diplomazia nazionale (1861-1915)*. Repertorio bio-bibliografico dei funzionari del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome; Ugolini, R. (1987). "I rapporti tra Italia e Giappone nell'Età Meiji". *Lo Stato liberale italiano e l'età Meiji, Atti del primo Convegno Italiano di Studi Storici*. (23-27 September 1985), Rome, pp. 131-152; Gueze, R. (1987). "Fonti archivistiche per la storia delle relazioni italo-giapponesi. Elementi di ricerca", *Lo Stato liberale italiano e l'età Meiji. Atti del primo Convegno Italiano di Studi Storici*. (23-27 September 1985), Rome, pp. 191-218.

## CHAPTER II

### JAPANESE ART IN ITALY: EXHIBITIONS AND PROMOTERS

#### Introduction

The circumnavigation of Africa opened to Europe the maritime routes for East Asia and direct relations were established with the Japanese people. Japan entered the European trade in the mid-sixteenth century, when the Portuguese arrived and began to trade in gold, copper, silver, and lacquer. At the beginning of the seventeenth century also the English and the Dutch arrived. Some works, such as paintings and metal crosses, made by local artists and artisans, were sent to Europe, and essays on the qualities of the converts and the alacrity of missionary work were written. In Italy, during the nineteenth century, large collections were formed, and several private collections merged in many museum institutions.

In the consideration of this period, Edoardo Chiossone, Enrico di Borbone, and Vincenzo Ragusa should be mentioned as the most important scholars thanks to whom the Japanese heritage increased in Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century. The development of ethnological studies in Italy in the meantime favored the establishment of various museums that also acquired oriental collections. Already in the early twentieth century, the Italian public did not yet possess the appropriate tools and cultural background to admire and appreciate this different type of art, although important exhibitions were organized throughout Europe and the Japonisme fever was ubiquitous.

Drawing on these issues, in this chapter, I will consider the relationship between Japan and Italy from an artistic point of view, through the formation of the Japanese artistic heritage and the exhibitions of Japanese art in Italy, in order to explore the historical precedents of the social interest on the Ainu traditional art in Italy, that I will analyze in the following chapters.

## **2.1. Japanese artistic heritage in Italy**

### **2.1.1. The formation of the Japanese artistic heritage**

During the sixteenth century, after the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, the circumnavigation of Africa opened to Europe the maritime routes for East Asia, and direct relations were established with the Japanese archipelago. Both the commercial traffic and the Catholic apostolate, especially by the Jesuit missionaries, increased. In such circumstances, the influx of Chinese artistic products in general rapidly increased and imports of ceramics and especially porcelain grew. Japan entered the European trade in the mid-sixteenth century when the Portuguese arrived in the archipelago and began to trade in gold, copper, silver, and lacquer. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the English and the Dutch arrived: the first left Japan in 1623, while the Dutch helped to expel the Portuguese from the country in 1639. Since the seclusion edicts of the *Sakoku*, Japan remained politically isolated and the only foreigners authorized to reside and trade there were the Dutch and the Chinese. The Dutch, confined to Deshima in Nagasaki, were only allowed to leave Deshima once a year to visit the *shōgun*, and therefore for about two hundred years this strip of land represented the only link of Japan with the western world.

Restrictions were also imposed over the Japanese themselves, for whom there was an absolute ban on leaving the country. This prohibition greatly favored Dutch and Chinese companies that held the monopoly of all commercial traffic. From 1640 onwards, the Dutch began a lucrative trade in hundreds of thousands of pieces of porcelain that were sent each year to Asia and Europe. The role of the Chinese and the Dutch was fundamental for the history of oriental trade and in particular for the production and export of porcelain. With the crisis of the Chinese markets, in the first half of the seventeenth century, the Dutch Company of East India decided to turn to Japan to face the enormous demand for Chinese tableware requested by Europe. In the area of Arita in Kyūshū, porcelain was produced only from the early seventeenth century; nevertheless, the Japanese succeeded in satisfying the western commissioning, initially producing Chinese-type pottery and subsequently sending enameled specimens to Europe. The first decades of the XVIII represented the apex of the Japanese porcelain trade, both for the quality and for the quantity of the products sent. From the year 1740, exports from Japan fell sharply and China, economically more competitive and more

organizationally prepared, returned to dominate the commercial scene. The dense and continuous exchange between China and Japan was the cause of confusion between the two countries, especially in Europe, where very often Japanese pottery was considered Chinese. Among the goods exported from Japan, the lacquers had a prominent place, famous also in China and sent to Europe as early as the 16th century.

The missionaries even opened art schools in East Asia to produce religious paintings, statues, wallpapers, and liturgical instruments. Some works, such as paintings and metal crosses, made by local artists or artisans, were sent to Europe along with several essays on the qualities of the converts and the alacrity of missionary work. For example, in 1595 a *Crucifixion* was sent to Rome by Leonardo Kimura (1574-1619), a Japanese artist and scholar raised at the school of the Jesuit Giovanni Cola, who founded in Nagasaki the Accademia di San Luca<sup>397</sup>. Also in Rome, the works celebrating the first Japanese martyrs were destined by the Jesuit missionaries, with the famous “umbrella”, by St. Francis Xavier, which depicts the expedition of the “Christian *daimyō*” in Korea in eight scenes<sup>398</sup>. In 1627 the Urban College of Propaganda Fide was founded in Rome and, with the various missions active in Asia, the city became the most important center of oriental studies in Europe. Many oriental artistic products were placed in religious institutions<sup>399</sup>. Some objects were reproduced in the monumental *Illustrated China* by Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680)<sup>400</sup>, which sets up the museum called Kircheriano in Rome<sup>401</sup>. The contraction suffered by Italian businesses with the development of Iberian mercantilism, and then with the Dutch, English, and French ones, was not a propitious

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<sup>397</sup> Sullivan, M. (1989). *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art. Revised and Expanded Edition*. California: Philip E. Lilienthal Books, p. 9; D’Elia, P. (1939). *Le origini dell’arte Cristiana in Cina (1583-1640)*. Rome: Reale Accademia d’Italia; McCall, J.E. (1947- 1948). “Early Jesuit Art in the Far East”. *Artibus Asiae*, n.10, 1947; n.11, 1948, pp. 45-69, pp. 121-137, 216-233, 288-301; 11, 1948; see Nishimura, T. *Nanban Bijutsu*. (1958). Tōkyō; Arimichi, E. “The Jesuits and Their Cultural Activities in the Far East”. (1959). *Cahiers d’Histoire Mondiale*, V; Tani, S. & Sugase, T. (1973). *Nanban Art. A Loan Exhibition from Japanese Collections*, New York: International Exhibitions Foundations.

<sup>398</sup> Schurhammer, G.O. (1927). “Ein christlicher japanischer Prunkschirm des 17. Jahrhunderts”. *Artibus Asiae*, n. 2, pp. 94-123; Schurhammer, G.O. (1943). “Le missioni cattoliche e il Giappone”. *Le missioni cattoliche e la cultura dell’Oriente – Conferenze Massimo Piccinini*. Rome : ISMEO, p. 132.

<sup>399</sup> Gabrieli, G. (1930). “Collezioni di oggetti orientali in Italia per cura di ordini religiosi, di prelati e di pontefici, in particolare di Pio XI”, *Il pensiero missionario*, II.

<sup>400</sup> See Kircheri Athanasii, *China monumentis qua sacris qua profanis nec non variis naturae et artis spectaculis aliarumque rerum memorabilium argumentis illustrata...*, (1667).

<sup>401</sup> See Bonanni, F. (1709). *Musaeum Kircherianum*. Rome: Georgius Plachus.

condition for the Italian peninsula to maintain a position of preeminence in imports of oriental products, apart from the turnout of works that continued through the Catholic Church and some traveler or noble collectors. In Italy, in the nineteenth century, large collections were being formed, to which different series of bequests and donations were added, merged into many institutions that gave rise to the modern museums.

An active market and collecting center since the mid-nineteenth century was Trieste, where Adolf Wunsch had been opening a workshop for oriental art objects in 1843, known as the “Chinese Cabinet Wunsch” and also renowned among Austrian-German buyers, such as the Archduke Massimiliano. Around it, the first collections of various objects were formed, partly at the Civic Museum of History and Art of Trieste, with mainly Japanese collections and in particular with works of *ukiyo-e*<sup>402</sup>. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the oriental collection was also formed, including ceramics, jades, lacquers, and metals, of Placido de Sangro, Duca di Martina, which was enriched by the heirs and then donated to the city of Naples to become part of the Duca di Martina Museum, established in 1931 in the villa La Floridiana<sup>403</sup>. In 1999, the eastern section, after a long period of closure due to the necessary upgrading works, found suitable accommodation in the new rooms, fitted out with modern criteria, in the basement of the villa. The preponderance of ceramics, until the end of the nineteenth century, especially porcelain and lacquers, had been concentrated in inheritance from the traffics of the various companies of the European Indies<sup>404</sup>. They were often products made in East Asia for export and therefore closer to the European taste than to the aesthetic criteria of their own countries.

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<sup>402</sup> Basilio, O. (1934). “Saggio di storia del collezionismo triestino”. *L’Archeografo Triestino*, vol. XIX (III series). Trieste, pp. 183-186; see also Crusvar, L. *Giappone, Stampe e Surimono dalla Collezione Orientale dei Civici Musei di Storia ed Arte di Trieste*. (1977). Trieste; Loseri, L.R. *L’Oriente da Camera. Vezzi, arredi, mode esotiche a Trieste nel XIX secolo*. (1992). Monfalcone.

<sup>403</sup> Romano, E. (1946). “Il Museo Ceramico di Napoli”. *Faenza*, XXXII/3-4, pp. 1-7; Molaioli, B. (1949). “La Floridiana – Le preziose collezioni del Duca di Martina sono state di recente riordinate in una delle più belle ville napoletane”. *Le vie d’Italia*, September, pp. 979-985; Romano, E. (1956). *Il Museo Duca di Martina nella villa La Floridiana di Napoli. Itinerari dei Musei e Monumenti d’Italia*, Rome; Doria, G. (1965). *La Villa e il Museo – La Floridiana, Cava dei Tirreni*; Ambrosio, L. (1984). *Kakiemon e Imari. Porcellane giapponesi nel Museo Duca di Martina*. Naples; Caterina, L. (1986). *Museo Nazionale della Ceramica Duca di Martina. Catalogo della porcellana cinese di tipo bianco e blu*. Rome.

<sup>404</sup> Beurdeley, M. (1962). *Le porcellane della Compagnia delle Indie*. Milan: G. G. Goerlich.

However, there were works of great prestige destined to the most refined connoisseurs, among which there were also paintings, bronzes, jades, which, gradually, made known the entire range of artistic production in East Asia. This occurred increasingly with the nineteenth century, coinciding with the liberalization of traffic, after the dissolution of the various companies of the East Indies that had long monopolized the artistic market by imposing the products that involved the greatest commercial profits for them. Japanese porcelain was preserved in many public collections, most of the time without being exhibited. Among those, instead, that were part of exhibitions or have recently been the subject of publications, there are the Japanese porcelain from the civic Genoese collections<sup>405</sup> and the National Gallery of Palazzo Spinola, also in Genoa<sup>406</sup>, and some others from the Cagnola collection kept in the homonymous villa of Gazzada<sup>407</sup>. For Italian art collectors or art lovers, there was little chance of going directly to East Asian countries and, due to the limited artistic market on the peninsula, they continued to stock up with antique dealers and art dealers, mostly French or English. Only after the unification of Italy, in the second half of the nineteenth century, things changed, and the opportunities for travel and stays in the East Asian countries.

Edoardo Chiossone, Enrico di Borbone, and Vincenzo Ragusa were the main scholars thanks to whom the oriental heritage increased in Italy. Also, many other art lovers or scholars bought objects in Europe or Asia, constituting private collections, assigning by donation, or selling them to Italian museums, or even buying them on commission. Some purchased by G. Bolmida and C. Nocentini, for example, are among the collections of “L. Pigorini” Museum in Rome. The development of ethnological studies in Italy in the meantime favored the establishment of various museums that also acquired oriental collections. Among the most important there are the Museum of Far Eastern Art and Ethnography of the Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions in Milan with Japanese ceramics and bronzes dating from the nineteenth century; the National Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology of Florence with ceramics, weapons, *inrō*, *netsuke* and ethnographic material on the Ainu population collected by Fosco Maraini

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<sup>405</sup> Padula, Z. (1992). *Viaggio in Occidente. Porcellane orientali nelle civiche collezioni genovesi*. Milan: Fabbri Editori.

<sup>406</sup> Padula, Z. (1999). “Ceramiche orientali”. *La collezione Cagnola. Le arti decorative*. Busto Arsizio: Nomos Edizioni, pp. 395-398.

<sup>407</sup> Padula, Z. (1999). “Ceramiche orientali”. *La collezione Cagnola. Le arti decorative*. Busto Arsizio: Nomos Edizioni, pp. 395-398.

in Hokkaidō from 1939 to 1941; and above all the already mentioned Prehistoric and Ethnographic Museum “L.Pigorini” in Rome, which is considered the most active and praiseworthy institution in the field of paleontological and general ethnological studies since its foundation in 1876<sup>408</sup>. In this museum, H. Giglioli’s work increased the collections and produced the drafting of a first inventory catalog. Moreover, in 1927, the Ethnological Missionary Museum was inaugurated in the Lateran Palace in Rome with oriental collections from the missionary exhibition in 1925, from Borgia Museum, and the gifts from various missionary congregations. The museum was later transferred to the Vatican City. The journal *Annali Lateranensi* remains an example of its activities.

In 1928, a small Ethnological Museum, with lacquers, ceramics, sculptures, and other oriental objects, was established in the Sanctuary of the Beata Vergine delle Grazie in Covignano, near Rimini<sup>409</sup>. Ceramics and other oriental objects also became part of the collections of the International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza, founded by Gaetano Ballardini in 1908<sup>410</sup> and enriched by numerous donations<sup>411</sup>, including ones by Giuseppe Tucci and Francesca Bonardi<sup>412</sup>. A fruitful activity of collection and concentration in the unitary center of oriental works of art was subsequently deployed by the Italian Institute for the Middle and the Far East (IsMEO, today ISIAO) in Rome, which was established in 1933 and came into possession through deposits, gifts and bequests of many oriental art objects: among others the gift of the collection of Chinese, Korean and Japanese bronzes by Ambassador Giacinto Auriti<sup>413</sup> and the gift of a collection of paintings and other Chinese and Japanese objects by the baron Mitsui.

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<sup>408</sup> Pigorini, L. (1891, August, 16). “Il Museo Nazionale Etnografico e Preistorico di Roma”. *Nuova Antologia*.

<sup>409</sup> Caterina, L. (2003). “La formazione del patrimonio artistico giapponese nella penisola. Le principali collezioni”. *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Rome and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, pp. 416.

<sup>410</sup> See Liverani, G. (1975). *Il Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche in Faenza*. Rome: *Itinerari dei Musei e Monumenti d’Italia*, III Edition.

<sup>411</sup> Liverani, G. (1927). “La consegna ufficiale delle ceramiche della Danimarca e del Giappone al Museo”. *Faenza*, XV, pp. 77-91; Liverani, G. (1965). “Le collezioni orientali al Museo”. *Faenza*, LI, pp. 85-86.

<sup>412</sup> Caterina, L. (1990). *Il Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche in Faenza*. Donazione Tucci Bonardi. Ceramiche di Cina e Giappone, Bologna.

<sup>413</sup> Lanciotti, L. (1962). “La donazione Auriti al Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale”, *Il Giappone*, II, n. 3, pp. 33-35; A.C. Soper, *Chinese, Korean and Japanese Bronzes. A Catalogue of the Auriti Collection Donated to IsMEO and Preserved in the Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale in Rome*, Rome, 1966 (italian ed: *La collezione Auriti: Bronzi Cinesi, Coreani, Giapponesi*, Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale, Rome, 1966).

Giuseppe Tucci's praiseworthy work, in the fifties, created an agreement between the IsMEO and the Ministry of Public Education, whose stipulation allowed the establishment in 1957 of the National Museum of Oriental Art in Rome, in which The Institute then deposited its collections, constituting its original fund<sup>414</sup>. On the progressive accessions of the oriental collections in the various Italian museums, periodical information is provided by the journals *Musei e Gallerie d'Italia* and *Bollettino d'Arte*. In 1999, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities published a volume on the recent acquisitions and donations of oriental art material kept at the National Museum of Oriental Art in Rome<sup>415</sup>.

### 2.1.2. Japanese art in Italy

Some Italian artists were called to Japan and a few Japanese artists studied in Italy thanks to the first diplomats who worked to introduce Italy as a country of art and culture to Japan. Count Alessandro Fè d'Ostiani (1825-1905), during the Iwakura mission in Italy, played an important role to show the beauty of Italy to the Japanese visitors<sup>416</sup> and he also promoted a precious collection of Japanese art which was preserved in Brescia<sup>417</sup>. Upon returning to Japan from the mission, Fè d'Ostiani moved to government leadership to call some Italian artists. From Turin, Antonio Fontanesi (1818-1882) arrived in Japan in 1876 as a master of Western painting at Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō, founded in the same year, although the artist was repatriated for health reasons in 1878, only two years after. Among Fontanesi's successors, Prospero Ferretti and Achille Sangiovanni, Iseki Masaaki<sup>418</sup> confirm the negative judgment on the first and

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<sup>414</sup> Facenna, D. (1961). "Il Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale in Roma". *Musei e Gallerie d'Italia*, VI/14.

<sup>415</sup> Ciarla, R. & Nista, L. (1999). *Acquisizioni e Donazioni. Archeologia e Arte Orientale (1996-1998)*. Rome: Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali.

<sup>416</sup> Iwakura, S. (1993-1994). "L'arte italiana vista dall'ambasceria giapponese nel 1873. La visita a Napoli". *Annuario dell'Istituto Giapponese di Cultura*, XXVI, pp. 33-44; Iwakura, S. (1994). "La missione Iwakura e l'arte italiana", *Il Giappone scopre l'Occidente. Una missione diplomatica 1871-73*. Rome, pp. 75-82; Iwakura, S. (1995). "Il conte Alessandro Fè d'Ostiani e la missione Iwakura", *Dipinti giapponesi a Brescia*, Brescia.

<sup>417</sup> Kondō, E. (1991). "Pitture giapponesi a Brescia: vicende della collezione Fè d'Ostiani e di alcune opere appartenute a Mussolini". *Bollettino d'Arte*. Rome, July-October, pp. 13-20; 177-192; Prestini, R. "Alessandro Fè d'Ostiani e le origini della collezione dei dipinti orientali dei Musei civici d'arte e storia di Brescia. Regesto", *Ibidem*, pp. 169-178.

<sup>418</sup> He was an author who lived in Italy and can be counted among those who have oriented and intensified the activities of the Japanese Cultural Institute in Rome since its establishment. Iseki's book, in Italian edition by Ornella Civardi, is entitled *Pittura giapponese dal 1800 al*



the persistent lack of news on the second one. The same negative success, as Fontanesi in painting, had the sculptor Vincenzo Ragusa, followed by Gagliardi. However, the link with Italian painting was not only limited to them. Between 1878 and 1881 the painter Kawamura Kiyō (1852-1934) was in Venice, before the Fontanesi arrived in Japan, and when he returned there (he had also stayed in the United States and Paris), he founded in Tōkyō the Meiji Fine Arts Society (Meiji Bijutsukai), with other artists such as Koyama Shōtarō at Asai Chū, and later he created the Tomoe Society (Tomoeikai). In Italy, the Fontanesi student learned from other artists, such as Hyakutake Kaneyuki (1842-1884) and Matsuoka Hisashi (1862-1943). Both of them, based in Rome in the early 1880s, completed their training at the school of Cesare Maccari. In the first decade of the twentieth century, precisely in 1905, Arishima Ikuma (1882-1974), an artist who studied in Rome at the Academy of Fine Arts, was being inspired by Cézanne. Meantime, Fujishima Takeji (1867-1943), who also was in Paris, returned to Japan in 1910 after having studied in Rome with Carolus Duran.

Later in the twentieth century, the artistic resonance of Italy in Japan was above all linked to futurism. Regarding sculpture, Rodin became stronger in Japan than Ragusa, which had the real merit of sculpture from the European school in Japan. Among Ragusa's students, over twenty, Ogura Sōjirō (1846-1913), pioneer of marble sculpture, Ōkuma Ujihirō (1856-1934) and Fujita Bunzō (1861-1934), masters in bronze, Kikuchi Chūtarō (1859-1934), clay and plaster; along with others that include architectural decoration and ceramics. Umakuma was one of the sculptors who worked most for the grafting of monumental statuary in the urban fabric of the new Japan. Sculptors and decorators were called upon by architects and urban planners to renew the face of the cities of the Meiji era. Thanks to Fontanesi and Ragusa, the architect Giovanni Vincenzo Cappelletti was called to Japan until 1885, to embark for America where he died two years later. One last pupil of Ragusa was Naganuma Moriyoshi (or Shukei, 1857-1942). He completed his artistic training in Italy between 1881 and 1887, studying at the Art Academy of Venice, where he left his work in the cemetery of the island of San Michele

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2000 and published by Skira publisher in Milan in February 2001. It does not deal only with painting, but more generally with Japanese art and formulates important value judgments on the Italian contribution it had.

dedicated to Ogata Korenao, buried there. When Naganuma returned to Japan, he was among the founders of the Meiji Bijutsukai as the first sculptor of the European school to carry out official teaching that continued at the Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō (the School of Fine Arts of Tōkyō). The role played by international art exhibitions held in Italy in favor of an “internationalization” of Japanese artistic production should not be underestimated, a role that would have intensified over the century, above all, with the growing participation of Japanese artists at the Biennale in Venice, established in 1895. Another engraver, Ikeda Masuo (b. 1934), exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1966. From the late 1960s, the participation of Japanese artists in Italy became uncountable<sup>419</sup>.

### 2.1.3. First Japanese art exhibitions in Italy

Italy was not one of the first Western countries to promote Japanese art through exhibitions and performances of great artistic value. The Italian public of the early twentieth century did not yet possess the tools and cultural preparation suitable for admiring and appreciating this different type of art. In Italy, Vittorio Pica, first expert and popularizer of Japanese woodblock, testified in 1894 the vague knowledge of this art: “Very few is the number of people that in Italy know and appreciate since it deserves the art of Japan, this art, so original and so brilliant in its manifold manifestations”<sup>420</sup>. This is the situation in Italy, although important exhibitions were organized throughout Europe and a fervent *Japonisme* was present. Among the rare occasions in Italy to admire works and objects of the “exotic” Japan, there was also an exhibition set up in 1897 in the halls of the Venice Biennale<sup>421</sup>.

The following year, the vases, the bronzes, the fabrics of the new industrial schools in Tōkyō attracted the attention of the public at the Turin Exhibition<sup>422</sup>. Also in Turin, in May 1902, the first International Exhibition of Decorative and Industrial Art took place at the Parco del Valentino. From Japan, fifteen artists were invited and exhibited ceramics, porcelain, lacquers, screens, and a few prints, none of which was representative of that genre, and *ukiyo-e* works, which could still be considered an

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<sup>419</sup> Tamburello, T. (2003). “L’Italia e l’arte giapponese”. op. cit., pp. 114-116.

<sup>420</sup> Pica, V. (1984). *L’arte dell’Estremo Oriente*. Turin-Rome: L. Roux, pp. 12-13.

<sup>421</sup> Pica, V. (1987). *Catalogo della II Esposizione Internazionale di Venezia*. Venice: Premio Stabilimento di Carlo Ferrari.

<sup>422</sup> Thovez, E. (1898). *L’arte all’Esposizione del 1898*. Turin: Roux Frassati and C.

inspiration for that art in the exhibition<sup>423</sup>. If we consider as Italians, more for patriotism than for historical reporting<sup>424</sup>, the events that already in the nineteenth and early twentieth century developed a growing interest in the objects and works of art of Trieste city, in which the first pioneering Italian initiatives linked to the exhibitions and promotions of Japanese art, as well as the consequent compilation of catalogs. Even before in Paris and London, and precisely in Trieste that since 1843, at the 300th of the Corso operated a workshop of oriental objects, the Wünsch Chinese Cabinet, worthy of note and worthy of attention so much to be reported on the Austrian guides German of the time. From a rather detailed description by Oreste Basilio: “it was a shop, but at the same time a real and authentic private collection, to visit which you paid 20 carantani who were deducted from the price if you made purchases”<sup>425</sup>.

Even Genoa city, already before Chiossone gave to it its art collection, in 1892, during the events for the Colombian Fourth Centenary, set up the “Mostra d'Arte Antica” at the Palazzo Bianco, which also exhibited several Japanese works from private citizens' collections. Vittorio Pica in *Japanese art at the Chiossone Museum in Genoa*, in 1907, wrote:

The well-guided study of so many small wonders that are found in Genoa could inoculate a bit of life-giving blood in anemic and combat organisms from the governmental or municipal schools of applied art of our Italy ... and again ... that they [the Japanese arts] can benefit not just to refine the taste of our public and to provide and provide useful examples to our artists and our creators, especially as regards those applied arts, of which fortunately also in Italy you observe, in this last five years, a healthy awakening<sup>426</sup>.

The interest in the Japanese objects, and in particular in the prints, developed and grew in Trieste also as a result of fervent private collecting and hunting of the exotic object,

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<sup>423</sup> Fagioli, M. (1994). “La presenza del Giappone all’Esposizione Internazionale d’Arte Decorativa Moderna di Torino”. AA.VV., Torino 1902, *Le arti decorative internazionali del nuovo secolo*. Galleria Civica d’Arte Moderna e Palazzina della Società promotrice di Belle Arti, 1994-5.

<sup>424</sup> Trieste fell in the 14th century under Austria, was the preferred port of the Habsburg empire until 1918 when it finally rejoined Italy, to which it was definitely returned only in 1954.

<sup>425</sup> Basilio, O. (1934). “Saggio di storia del collezionismo triestino”. *L’Archeografo Triestino*, vol. XIX (III series). Trieste, pp. 184-185.

<sup>426</sup> Pica, V. (1984). *L’arte dell’Estremo Oriente*. Turin-Rome: L. Roux, pp. 10-11 and p. 41.

as documented by various articles of the 1930s, by the activity of the captains of the Shipping Companies that had brought several objects, some of value, back from their long journeys in the East, which were now part of the so-called family treasures<sup>427</sup>. In just a few years, Trieste became the venue for Japanese art exhibitions which, although not able to compete with the few others organized in European metropolises such as London and Berlin<sup>428</sup>, developed a curiosity interested in the Japanese art that it gave life to an exclusive and almost unknown Japanese club, composed of four or five passionate collectors of prints and art objects who tried to emulate the now widespread European and German collecting in particular<sup>429</sup>. Since the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, a series of exhibitions was organized by the Trieste Artistic Circle in the Sala della Permanente. The exhibition, inaugurated on May 16th, 1908, was accompanied by a catalog whose cover was designed by Wostry who also took care of its introduction<sup>430</sup>.

In the following years, specifically in 1912 and 1932, two other exhibitions were set up. The first one, organized by Argio Orell in the Sala della Permanente, can be considered almost a second edition of the one set up four years earlier. This time the works on display almost all came from Leipzig and the real novelty was represented by the participation of the same Trieste collectors<sup>431</sup>. The last exhibition, which closes this first cycle of exhibitions, was inaugurated in June 1932 in the Pavilion of the Public Garden and set up by the Community of Art Collectors<sup>432</sup>. There were almost fifty exhibitors from Trieste, among collectors and simple possessors of objects, “curious” and

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<sup>427</sup> *Ibidem*. In 1932, during the Far Eastern art’s exhibition also *Il Piccolo* di Trieste remember in “Appello agli Organizzatori”, in the third pag. 5/5/1932, the activity of the captains.

<sup>428</sup> S.A., “L’Esposizione d’arte giapponese alla Permanente” in *Il Piccolo*, 6/6/1908 (n. 9509), p. II.

<sup>429</sup> Crusvar, L. (1977). “Collezionismo private ed arte applicata”. *Stampe giapponesi dalle collezioni dei Civici Musei di storia ed Arte di Trieste*. Venice: Electa Editrice, p. 13.

<sup>430</sup> *Catalogo della mostra giapponese (Collezione Huc)*, Trieste, 1908; cfr. Crusvar, L. *op. cit.*, that reported at p. 16 the description of the catalog cover referring to an article (S.A., “Alla Permanente”) appeared on *Il Piccolo* del 19/5/1908 p. IV, in this way: *in primo piano, senza alcun rilievo plastico, una testa di donna giapponese, ricalcata da una figura di Hokuba, si contrappone alla retrostante testina di donna europea, chiaroscurata con tocco “impressionistico”*.

<sup>431</sup> L. Crusvar, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>432</sup> *Ibidem*.

“exotic”<sup>433</sup>. Meanwhile, the Japanese showed an increasing interest in wanting to exhibit, outside their borders, the most appreciated works of their art by participating in the Universal Exhibitions in every part of the world. The exhibition in Rome was organized in 1911 for the fiftieth-anniversary celebration of the Kingdom of Italy and once again among the various employees was Vittorio Pica who at the time wrote about a lack of in-depth knowledge from Italy of the “real” art of Japan<sup>434</sup>. The historical events that led Italy to an alliance treaty with Japan in 1939 offered further opportunities to showcase other examples of Japanese art<sup>435</sup>. The most important was the April-May one in 1930, organized and set up in Rome, under the patronage of Benito Mussolini, exhibited only paintings by contemporary artists. In the first half of the 1950s, several different exhibitions took place in Rome, organized by the IsMEO and by its president Giuseppe Tucci. These include 40 ancient Japanese prints from Tōkyō National Museum graciously granted by the Japanese Government, an exhibition organized in collaboration with the Tōkyō National Museum and accompanied by a meager catalog presented by Giacinto Auriti<sup>436</sup>.

As Adolfo Tamburello justly wrote in a recent essay: “we had to wait for the exhibition of Japanese art treasures, held in Rome at Palazzo delle Esposizioni in 1958-59, to finally see ancient masterpieces from Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, museums, and collections, including the Imperial House’s ones”<sup>437</sup>. The 1958-59 exhibition represented, therefore, a great moment between the two countries in which there was the appropriate opportunity to compare and finally discover the long and harmonious tradition of the Japanese archipelago documented by extraordinary witness masterpieces of four thousand years of history<sup>438</sup>.

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<sup>433</sup> Crusvar in his essay cited in a note a series of names of which I report only a few: M. Morpurgo de Nilma, A. Orell, O. Basilio, C. Wostry, Mrs Fano and Fonda, the boss Cossovich, the lawyer Sardini, the architect Pulitzer-Finali, the engineer Liebmman.

<sup>434</sup> Pica, V. (1913). *L'arte mondiale a Roma nel 1911*. Bergamo: Istituto italiano di arti grafiche p. CXXXIII.

<sup>435</sup> The Tripartite Pact, as it was called, was signed between Germany, Japan and Italy.

<sup>436</sup> The catalog does not contain editorial data. For the bibliographic compilation and its content collected in just 11 pages, it is limited to the presentation and listing of the exhibited works. A review of the exhibition was done on *East and West*, V, 1, 1954.

<sup>437</sup> Tamburello, A. (1999). *Le Arti del Giappone*. Naples: EDiSU, pp. 3-4.

<sup>438</sup> Palermo, A. (2003). “La scoperta italiana del ‘genio nipponico’ attraverso le mostre dal secondo Ottocento agli anni Cinquanta del Novecento”. *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, pp. 238-241.

## **2.2. Crucial Promoters of Japanese Art in Italy**

### **2.2.1. Enrico Hillyer Giglioli**

Enrico Hillyer Giglioli was born in London on 13 June 1845 (he died in Florence in 1909), the first of 5 children of Vincenzo Giglioli, an anthropologist who was a follower and exile of Mazzini from Italy for political reasons. After the family returned to Italy after 1848, the young Enrico attended the National College and then the Technical Institute of Pavia; at 16 he won a scholarship that led him to attend, from 1861 to 1863, the Royal School of Mines in London. There he met Charles Darwin and studies natural sciences with Lyell, Owen, Huxley. Back in Italy in 1864, he graduated in Natural Sciences at the University of Pisa (where his father held the chair of Anthropology) and attended Filippo De Filippi, director of the Zoological Museum of Turin and first supporter in Italy of Darwinian theories on evolution. Thanks to him, in 1864 Giglioli became a professor at the Technical Institute of Casale Monferrato, and thanks to De Filippi, he was indicated as an ideal candidate to follow him on a circumnavigation journey of the world that was planned at that time. In the spring of 1865, the project seems to fade: the father dies, leaving Enrico the responsibility to lead the family, constituted by the widow with two other cadet sons at the Military Academy of Modena, and two small children still entrusted to maternal care. In summer, however, the situation changes, as the two brothers leave Modena with the rank of officer, while their mother moves to Florence with their children, finding work as an English teacher.

In October 1865 Giglioli left with De Filippi for the journey on the *Magenta* and returned to Italy in 1868. On his return, Giglioli was appointed professor at the University of Turin to follow the classification and arrangement of the rich zoological and entomological collections collected during the journey. In 1869, now famous for his experience in the field, he became professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy of Vertebrates at the Royal Institute of Higher Studies in Florence. In 1876 Giglioli founded the Central Collection of Italian Vertebrates, which today bears his name. Later the Giglioli's interests are focused on some major issues, in which he makes an extremely important scientific contribution for which will have the highest governmental positions until his death. He became President of the Royal Advisory

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Committee for Fisheries, director of the Italian Ornithological Inquiry, president of various commissions for rehabilitation and fishing in Italian lakes, and representative of the government in many international treaties. In addition to the many scientific interests and governmental offices associated with them, Giglioli cultivates his interest in anthropological studies throughout his life, an interest that derives from his father's family and that he found fundamental food and stimulus in the *Magenta* journey.

Giglioli established very important ties of friendship and scientific thought with the major Italian anthropologists, from De Filippi to Paolo Mantegazza, and creates (starting from the private collection of ethnographic objects made during the *Magenta* journey) a collection of objects (accompanied by a photographic collection and from a specialized library) that already in 1888 will be imposed in the panorama of ethnographic studies as one of the largest ever realized. In December 1909, in Rome to preside over the commission for fishing, Giglioli was taken ill. Returning to Florence, he died on the morning of December 16, 1909. Following his wish, in 1913 the entire ethnographic collection of Enrico H. Giglioli became part of the National Museum of Prehistory and Ethnography in Rome directed by Luigi Pigorini. With the great tradition of travel since the Middle Ages, Italy had accumulated a large bibliography on travel and travelers even in Asia<sup>439</sup>. Commanders and crews, along with passengers in charge of scientific, commercial, entrepreneurial, or military missions, reported notes and travel diaries that represented new and precious documentation of Japan for the Italian public<sup>440</sup>. In 1865, Prime Minister La Marmora and the Minister of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce Luigi Torelli decided to send the *Magenta* pyro-corvette to the East, in a diplomatic mission to forge relations with Japan and China. The commander of the ship, Vittorio

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<sup>439</sup> De Gubernatis, A. *Memoria intorno ai viaggiatori italiani nelle Indie Orientali dal secolo XIII a tutto il secolo XVI*, Florence (1867); Amat di San Filippo, P. *Bibliografia dei viaggiatori italiani ordinata cronologicamente ed illustrata*. (1874), Rome; De Gubernatis, A. *Storia dei viaggiatori italiani nelle Indie Orientali*. (1875), Livorno; "Storia della deputazione ministeriale istituita presso la Società Geografica Italiana", *Studi biografici e bibliografici*. (1875), Rome; Amat di San Filippo, P. *Biografia dei viaggiatori italiani con la bibliografia delle relazioni di viaggio dai medesimi dettate. Contribuzione di Pietro Amat di San Filippo al Congresso Internazionale Geografico riunito in Venezia*. (1881), Rome; Id., *Biografia dei viaggiatori italiani colla bibliografia delle loro opere*. (1882), Rome; Id., *Gli illustri viaggiatori italiani* (1885), Rome.

<sup>440</sup> Surdich, F. (1985). "L'esplorazione scientifica e la prospezione politico-commerciale". In *Storie di viaggiatori italiani*. Milan: Electa, pp. 214-237.

F. Arminjon<sup>441</sup>, was designated plenipotentiary of S. Maestà Vittorio Emanuele II; Sen. Filippo De Filippi, professor of Zoology at the University of Turin, together with the young naturalist Enrico H. Giglioli<sup>442</sup> and the trainer of the organic finds Clemente Biasi, was commissioned to collect news and naturalistic collections during the journey. On November 8, 1865, while cholera was raging in Naples, the Italian crew embarked on the *Regina* frigate to reach the Italian naval station division at the Rio de la Plata, in Montevideo, where the *Magenta* served. On February 2, 1866, the corvette sailed to the seas of Japan, and after touching Batavia, Singapore, Saigon, in July of the same year gave fund in the bay of Yokohama. The commander Arminjon, with the help of an interpreter secretary granted to the French delegation and an Italian resident, Vincenzo Comi, succeeded in concluding brilliantly the negotiations with the shogūn government, stipulating on August 25th, 1866 the first treaty of friendship and commerce between Italy and Japan. Set off for China on September 1, the *Magenta* reached the mouth of the Yang Tse Kiang; on the 24th it was founded in the fortified port of Ta-Ku, where Captain Arminjon moved with De Filippi to Beijing. On 26th October the first Italian Chinese treaties were concluded.

At the beginning of November, the Italian pyro-candlestick set sail for Shanghai, and after a brief pause, it resumed the sea on the way to the south. In Hong Kong, De Filippi, returning from an excursion to Macau, was seized by a serious form of dysentery that led him to death on 9 February 1868 moored in the port of Naples. Also, the scientific results were relevant; geological and botanical collections, rich zoological and entomological collections enriched the museums of Turin and Florence; finally, the foundations of the great ethnographic and photographic collection of Enrico Hillyer Giglioli had been laid. This collection, with over 17,000 cataloged finds, is probably the

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<sup>441</sup> Arminjon, V. F. (1869). *Il Giappone e il viaggio della corvetta Magenta nel 1866*. Genoa. In Adolfo Tamburello, (2003). “Viaggiatori italiani in Giappone fra secondo Ottocento e primo Novecento”. *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI*, op. cit. p. 106.

<sup>442</sup> In 1875, Giglioli E.H. published *Il viaggio intorno al globo della R. pirocorvetta italiana Magenta negli 1865-66-67-68 sotto il comando del cap. di fregata V.F. Arminjon*, F. Ammannati, S. Calzolari, *Un viaggio ai confini del mondo 1865-1868. La crociera della pirocorvetta Magenta nel documento dell’Istituto Geografico Militare*. (1985), Florence; Puccini, S. (1989). “Il viaggio della Magenta intorno al globo (1865-1868). Enrico H. Giglioli e le sue osservazioni su usi e costumi dei popoli”. In *La conoscenza dell’Asia e dell’Africa in Italia*, A. Gallotta e U. Marazzi (curated by), III/1, Naples, pp. 337-362.



most important private collection in its genre in Italy. The collection was very well documented: each object was accompanied by a parchment label (written by Giglioli in his hand) which contained all the information in the collector's possession, a brief description, the date of acquisition, the bibliographical references.

The Giglioli photographic collection preserved in the Photographic Archive of the “L. Pigorini” National Prehistoric Ethnographic Museum includes 6,095 images mainly on ethnoanthropological themes, mostly executed between 1860 and 1890, different for geographical sections and illustrating many peoples of all the continents. Today the collection has an exceptional value both for the history of anthropological science and for the history of photography. The criteria underlying the use of photography in nineteenth-century anthropological studies emerge clearly from the entire work of Giglioli, who constantly documents with his visual medium his descriptions of human types and social uses of “other” peoples, the most diverse pathologies, without however neglecting the more domestic Italian costume.

In the sale of 1913 to the Ethnographic Prehistoric Museum of Rome, Costanza Casella Giglioli included only the folders with the photographs mounted on cardboard and the folio folder. Another 3,000 photographs of various subjects, mounted on sheets bound in 12 large albums, remained in the Giglioli house in Florence, from which they reached the Library of the Military Geographic Institute in the 1950s. The National Prehistoric Ethnographic Museum “L. Pigorini” and the Italian Military Geographical Institute have recently started the complete edition of the Photographic Collection Giglioli<sup>443</sup>. Its importance is not only linked to its considerable size or to the quality and rarity of the material collected: the criterion behind this collection, the cognitive principle that led Giglioli to put together the thousands of objects from every corner of the orb, allow us to understand more directly, in almost tangible ways, the evolution of ethnoanthropological studies in Italy and the eclectic nature of the scholars of that era.

### **2.2.2. Edoardo Chiossone**

The second distinguished figure for the discovery of Japan in Italy was Edoardo Chiossone (1833-1898) from Genoa. He found permanent employment at the Japanese

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<sup>443</sup> Retrieved from <http://webdb.muciv.beniculturali.it>

government from 1875 to 1891 as a master engraver; he was given drawings and the printing of paper money and stamps, both considered by the new imperial regime, to be especially important elements of national prestige. As a painter, he distinguished himself for the portraits<sup>444</sup>. A man of great taste and extraordinary artistic knowledge, he collected an extraordinary collection of art objects from Japan. He died in Japan in 1898 but left his extraordinary collections to Genoa city. Today the various collections are open to the public in the museum aptly named after the talented engraver and tireless collector<sup>445</sup>.

The museum is housed in the neoclassical Palazzo dell'Accademia Ligustica and remains here for 35 years. The first *Catalog of Chiossone Museum* (Genoa 1905) is published by the Ligustica Academy of Fine Arts, while Vittorio Pica presents a presentation in *Japanese art at the Chiossone Museum in Genoa* (Bergamo 1907). Later thanks to Orlando Grosso the publication of a larger catalog, *The Chiossone Museum of Genoa*, in the series “Itineraries of the Museums and Monuments of Italy” (Rome 1934). It was closed in 1940 to remove the collections from the danger of bombing; the collections were transferred to a safe place by the Municipality of Genoa, which, under a testamentary clause, from then on became the owner. Reconstructed after the war as “Edoardo Chiossone Oriental Art Museum”, the museum has been enriched with additional collections for purchases and changes since 1953, accepting archaeological and artistic materials no longer only Japanese, but also from other Asian countries.

The current site of the museum in the small villa Di Negro, designed by the architect Mario Labò, was inaugurated and opened to the public in 1971. The exhibition was curated by dr. Giuliano Frabetti, Director of the museum until 1990, while the installation was carried out by the engineer Luciano Grossi Bianchi. The figure of Edoardo Chiossone, an erudite collector in Meiji Japan, was very beautifully illustrated

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<sup>444</sup> Tamburello, T. (2003). *L'Italia e l'arte giapponese*. op. cit., p. 113.

<sup>445</sup> Maraini, F. (2003). “La scoperta del Giappone in Italia”. *ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, p. 11.

and documented in an exhibition curated by Donatella Failla, both in Genoa and in Rome<sup>446</sup>.

### 2.2.3. Enrico di Borbone

Enrico Carlo di Borbone-Parma (12 February 1851 - Parma; 13 April 1906 - Menton) was Prince of Parma and Count of Bardi. In 1888, he embarked on a long journey in the Far East, staying especially in Japan (1887-89) and buying numerous art objects. Initially, the collection housed in Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi in Venice was ceded later to a Viennese antique dealer who in turn sold many works to foreign collectors and museums. Regarding the collection, it was assigned to Italy after the First World War, in the account of war reparations by Austria and placed at Ca'Pesaro in Venice, starting from 1928, where it constitutes the first and main bottom of the local "Oriental Museum". A catalog has been edited by Nino Barbantini<sup>447</sup>.

The Museum is one of the most important Japanese art collections of the Edo period. The collection that Prince Henry II of Bourbon bought during his trip to Asia. More than 30,000 pieces including swords and daggers, Japanese armor, delicate and precious porcelain, with large sections dedicated to Chinese and Indonesian art<sup>448</sup>. It is important to mention the figure of Raffaele Ulisse Barbolani (1818-1900), an extraordinary envoy and plenipotentiary minister in Japan between 1887 and 1881, whose correspondence includes letters with the Duke of Genoa Tommaso di Savoia, and other Vettor Pisani's officers in Japan from the end of 1879 to the beginning of 1881. The album contains a collection of photographic views in 180 sheets<sup>449</sup>. In addition to the most famous Italian artists who went and worked in Japan (Chiossone, Fontanesi, Ragusa), Alfonso Gasco discovered others such as San Giovanni, Ferretti, and Gagliardi. Also, Catalano mentions, among the Italian names in Japan the consul of Yokohama De Prosperi, the councilors Mariani and Garbaccio, and the Rijeka, called "very Italian", Melkay<sup>450</sup>.

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<sup>446</sup> Failla, D. (1995). *Edoardo Chiossone un collezionista erudito nel Giappone Meiji*. Museo d'Arte Orientale "Edoardo Chiossone". Genoa; Failla, D. (1996). *Edoardo Chiossone un collezionista erudito nel Giappone Meiji*. Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale. Rome.

<sup>447</sup> Barbantini, N. (1954). *Il Museo Orientale di Venezia*. Itinerari dei Musei e Monumenti d'Italia, Rome.

<sup>448</sup> Retrieved from [www.arteorientale.org/sito/ita\\_museo.html](http://www.arteorientale.org/sito/ita_museo.html)

<sup>449</sup> Di Russo, M. (1992). "Giappone scomparso. Un album fotografico inedito dell'inizio del periodo Meiji". *Itaria-go kotoba no shosō. Miscellanea di studi in onore di Yoshi Akiyama*. Tōkyō, pp. 310-345.

<sup>450</sup> Catalano, M. C. (1937). *Orme d'Italia nell'Estremo Oriente*. Bologna: Ed. Cappelli, p. 45.

During the twenties and thirties, travel literature was increasingly managed by journalists and professional writers for correspondences and reports. The collection, composed of about 36,000 pieces, includes lacquers, fabrics, screens, paintings, prints, ceramics, *inrō*, *netsuke*, weapons, armor, bronzes, etc. which testify and document in a significant way the Japanese art of the Edo period<sup>451</sup>. Around 2000 pieces, made up of weapons, armor, objects of furniture and art, clothes, toys, and musical instruments were deposited in the years 1935-1942 at the Museum of the previous Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology of the University of Padua<sup>452</sup>. At that moment, Giovanni Comisso and Ercole Patti were also special envoys of the *Gazzetta del Popolo* of Turin, one in 1929-1930, the other in 1931-1932<sup>453</sup>.

#### **2.2.4. Vincenzo Ragusa**

Vincenzo Ragusa, born near Palermo in 1841, followed the instructions of Giuseppe Patricolo, a painter from Palermo. After some jobs and his trip with Garibaldi in Sicily, from 1866-67 he studied sculpture with Nunzio Morello and Valerio Villareale and drawing at the Accademia del Nudo, following the courses of Salvatore Lo Forte. Lived a few years in Milan (with stays in Nice and Lugano), he distinguished himself as an artist with great technical versatility and a style of measured and lively naturalism. In 1875, he received an *honorary degree* from the Brera Academy, he was awarded the title to participate in the competition held at the government level for the choice of three *oyatoi* experts in painting, sculpture, and architecture to be sent to Japan for teaching techniques and European arts.

First, on the list of over fifty candidates (the other two were the painter Antonio Fontanesi and the architect Vincenzo Cappelletti), he arrived in Tōkyō on November 21, 1876, to take service at Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō (the School of Industrial Art), established in the same year. There he carried out an intense educational activity,

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<sup>451</sup> Spadavecchia A. F. (1990). *Museo d'Arte Orientale. La collezione Bardi: da raccolta privata a museo dello Stato*, Quaderno Soprintendenza Beni Artistici e Storici di Venezia. Venice, n. 16, p. 126.

<sup>452</sup> Alciati, G. & Ponzetta, M.T. (1996). *Caratteri, Arti e Mestieri nel Giappone del secolo scorso*, Museo di Antropologia ed Etnologia dell'Università di Padova, Padua.

<sup>453</sup> Tamburello, A. (2003). *Viaggiatori italiani in Giappone fra Ottocento e primo Novecento. ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI* (curated by Adolfo Tamburello). Istituto per l'Africa e l'Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Oriente, vol. I, Rome-Naples, p. 107.

formative of a school of western sculpture in marble, clay, bronze, which numbered disciples from the remarkable artistic future, such as Ōkuma Ujihirō (1856-1934), Fujita Bunzō (1857-1942). The latter between 1881 and 1887 completed his training in Venice. Honored as a court artist, he performed works on commission, such as the Waiting for the Empress Mother, an equestrian portrait of Emperor Mutsuhito, a portrait of Prince Kuroda, one of Prime Minister Okubo Toshimichi. The technical experience of sculpture and plastic enabled him to work with materials ranging from stone to plaster and clay, to statues, bronzes, earthenware, etc. He was considered the founder of the Western school in Japan and a renowned master especially of portraiture both male and female.

A great admirer, like Chiossone, of the Japanese arts and also a tireless collector, during his seven years in Japan he collected more than four thousand works already with the intention, as he still explained by Tōkyō, to return to Italy and establish a school, applying the splendid discoveries of the East, both adapting them in the art of ceramics and enamels on metals, on glass, fusions in bronzes, chisels and on very varied works of lacquers and many other brilliant industries, that all bloom in Japan, constituted in an immense factory. With the plan to realize his art school, he repatriated in 1882 with three Japanese artists: the painter Kiyohara Tama (1861-1939), already his pupil and model, later his wife, Eleonora, his sister, and her brother-in-law, as lacquerers and gilders. Encountering numerous difficulties and various bureaucratic obstacles in receiving the promised attentions as well as the necessary economic interventions by the Italian State to complete his project, he decides to set up the ancient perennial exhibition comprising 4000 pieces in eleven halls of his house, an ancient Palermo building about which he had collected in Japan<sup>454</sup>. Under the patronage of the Municipality, his school was officially born the following year, when for the occasion Ragusa held a lecture and printed the text entitled *The workshop schools. Conference to the workers of Palermo in February 1884*. Recognized by the government, the school was nationalized in 1887 under the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce as “Artistic-Industrial School”, to launch young people into the artistic working of wood, metals, marbles, and stones and the art of decorative painting. Also, Ragusa continued

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<sup>454</sup> Ragusa, V. (1883). *Per la istituzione di una scuola-officina industriale da stabilire in Palermo*. Palermo: Tipografia del *Giornale di Sicilia*, pp. 6-7.

his activity as a sculptor, retaining an inspiration to the Japanese world for works such as *Portrait of his wife* and *Driver of the rickshaw*, both from 1883 in terracotta, which are kept at the Civic Gallery of Modern Art in Palermo. In 1908 his school-workshop was transformed into a Higher School of Applied Art in Industry, but little was left of Japanese techniques and arts, while from 1922 it was the only section of the Decorative Art of the Royal Industrial School for Mechanics. Electricians. Autonomy recovered in 1926, as a School of Art it was employed by the Ministry of National Education and, in 1932, renamed the Royal Institute of Art. Today the activity as a State Institute of Art continues. Even the Japanese Museum had a short life, with the collections that Ragusa himself was forced to sell by selling them to the “L. Pigorini” in Rome, located in a room of the former Chircheriano Museum in the place of ancient Collegio Romano (today in large part to the EUR to some works at the National Museum of Oriental Art).

The figure of the sculptor, his work as a master and an artist, his undoubted position of originality among the avant-gardes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century still await to be critically evaluated. In 1955 the ISMEO exhibited at Palazzo Brancaccio, in Rome, an exhibition of his paintings<sup>455</sup>. Ragusa was one of the first Italians to identify in Japanese art the possibility of drawing, from Italian artists, new life blood, and a rich source of inspiration. In two of his pamphlets<sup>456</sup>, Ragusa addresses a heartfelt appeal to the authorities, to the citizens of his beloved city, and the artisans so that even Sicily, through the Japanese Museum and the annexed school of applied arts specialized in the production of lacquers and ivories, paintings watercolor and tempera that followed the Japanese models in the stylistic-formal rendering<sup>457</sup>, could offer its contribution to the progress of the nation like other regions.

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<sup>455</sup> Tamburello, A. (2003). *Lo scultore Vincenzo Ragusa ed il progetto di un museo e di un'officina 'giapponese' a Palermo. ITALIA – GIAPPONE 450 ANNI*, (curated by) Adolfo Tamburello. Istituto per l’Africa e l’Oriente, Roma and Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, vol. I, Rome-Naples, pp. 236-237.

<sup>456</sup> Ragusa, V. (1883). *Per l’inaugurazione del Museo giapponese. Parole del fondatore Prof. Vincenzo Ragusa*. Palermo: Tipografia del *Giornale di Sicilia*

<sup>457</sup> Ragusa, V. (1883). *Per la istituzione di una scuola-officina industriale da stabilire in Palermo*, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

## CHAPTER III

### JAPAN ACCORDING TO FOSCO MARAINI

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter, my attention turns to the life and works of the scholar Fosco Maraini, an orientalist, ethnologist, mountaineer, and photographer who specialized in the study of the Ainu. I analyze his bio-bibliography through his family and personal life. He was one of the most eclectic intellectuals on the Italian cultural scene of the XX. Maraini's approach to the Ainu concerns his total willingness to understand their cultural and symbolic world.

The Museum of Natural History, Anthropology, and Ethnology in Florence houses the great Ainu collection of Fosco Maraini donated to the Museum before he passed away in 2004. Publicly well-known in Italy and recognized in specialized academic circles, the intellectual figure of Fosco Maraini has often been overlooked in neighboring scholarly cultures, and, in this sense, the following chapters aim to make a contribution to the scholarly dissemination of his works.

#### **3.1. Life and works of Fosco Maraini**

##### **- *A bio-bibliography of Fosco Maraini***

Fosco's father, Antonio, was born in Rome on 5 April 1886, showing his artistic talent early, but the family pushed him to graduate in law. The passion was so strong that during high school he attended evening classes at the Academy of Fine Arts. His first sculptural work was a bronze Perseus from 1910, with which he won a silver medal at the Universal Exposition in Brussels, and which he then exhibited also at the X Biennale in 1912. In 1911 he met in Rome the English writer of Polish origin Yoi Pawlowska Crosse, who portrayed in several of his works. The two moved to Florence, where in 1912 their first child, Fosco, was born. On March 26, 1914, Antonio Maraini and Yoi Pawlowska Crosse were married in London, and in 1917 their second son Grato was born. Later, around the middle of the twenties, Maraini moved with his family to another house with a large garden in the outskirts of Florence. The house, called "Torre di

sopra”, was restored, furnished, the park adorned with works by Maraini and became a true example of a modern and refined house<sup>458</sup>.

The 1930s saw an increasingly profound change in Maraini's activity. From October 1927 until 1942 he was general secretary of the Venice Biennale; always since 1927, he was secretary of the regional union of Tuscan artists and since 1932 commissioner of the National Union of artists. The organizational activity and the relationship life were therefore increasingly closely with art critic and artist. Moreover, with the commissions prevailing for works to be included in public buildings, his sculptural language approached monumentality<sup>459</sup>. In these years Maraini was absorbed by his activity as an organizer, especially at the Biennale in Venice, to enhance contemporary Italian art, also through exhibitions abroad. For the Biennale, he established the Historical Archive of Contemporary Art and created the section of the cinematographic exhibition. He also collaborated as an art critic for several journals. He was convinced that the creative energies of artists and architects should be channeled into public works through a sense of nationalistic pride, so these same years the Maraini extended his interests to the political sphere, becoming the first deputy from 1934 and then national councilor from 1939. The years of the war and the immediate post-war period saw him retire to his Florentine home, devoted above all to the reorganization of his documents, which went on to constitute a precious fund now preserved in the Archive of the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome. Maraini died in Florence on May 23, 1963<sup>460</sup>.

Fosco's mother, Yoi, an Englishwoman of Polish origin, had lived as a child in Hungary, was a writer of short stories and travel stories. From early childhood, therefore, Fosco lived in family bilingualism, in a climate characterized by a multiplicity of traditions, habits, cultural horizons also in contrast between them<sup>461</sup>. He spent his childhood and adolescence in Florence making frequent trips with his parents to Italy, England, Switzerland, France, and Germany. The mother's family ties with South Africa, India,

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<sup>458</sup> Fiumi, N.G. (1928). “Casa colonica ora casa di A. M”. In *Domus*, 15 April, pp. 10-14, 53.

<sup>459</sup> Among the most important works of these years stands the bronze door for the Roman basilica of S. Paolo fuori le Mura, for which he won a competition in 1929 and whose doors were cast in 1931 by the foundry of Mario Nelli in Florence, as he indicates the inscription on the door itself.

<sup>460</sup> Grasso, M. (2007). *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*. Volume 69.

<sup>461</sup> Maraini, F. (1997). *Gli ultimi pagani. Appunti di viaggio di un etnologo poeta*. Como: Red Edizioni, p. 9. Hence the phrase “In the family the differences prevailed over the similarities”.



and several other countries in the world. His first education was mainly housewife, he then attended the first years of high school at the Florentine Pious Schools held by the Piarists, then for three years a college in Zugerberg, Switzerland, and finally the Dante Alighieri High School in Florence, but his true formation took place thanks to meetings outside the school: the multifaceted artist E. Michahelles (alias Thayaht) and the classical philologist G. Pasquali. Attending the artist's library opened up new horizons in the field of painting and literature, especially in the direction of the East, thus developing that attraction that would have always moved him towards “the peripheral, the remote, the unusual, the “external”<sup>462</sup>. In the philologist, Maraini always saw a master of humanity and culture, dedicating to his memory *Ore Giapponesi*<sup>463</sup>; there were numerous signs of a strong bond with Pasquali, disseminated, explicitly or implicitly, in his works.

The cultural interests of Maraini were different, first of all, the desire for adventure, the attraction for the natural world that was at the origin, the passion for the mountain, developed as a boy. He joined the Italian Alpine Club (CAI), took part in ski-mountaineering trips to the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines, and then to the Dolomites, where he also had the opportunity to accompany himself to great climbers such as T. Piazz and E. Comici. In 1934 he published a Guide of Abetone for the skier and, at the time of the lever, he chose to join the Alpine troops. Another great interest of Maraini was photography. In the same year, he was an English teacher for the cadets of the Livorno Academy, on a cruise with the training ship “Amerigo Vespucci”, towards the coasts of the Middle East. He was thus able to visit Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey. From this trip, the reportage Photographer's Holidays was born on board a sailing ship that appeared in “The Photographic Progress” in December 1935<sup>464</sup>.

In 1937 he left with the famous orientalist Giuseppe Tucci for a long expedition to Tibet. Maraini was in Misurina in the Dolomites, to ski, and a fortune perhaps made his fortune. He wrapped his ski boots in a newspaper, once he removed the newspaper to put on his boots, he noticed a short paragraph in which he said that Professor Giuseppe Tucci would go to Tibet to stay a long time to study Tibetan religions. After this reading,

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<sup>462</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). *Case, amori, universi*. Milan: Mondadori, p. 225.

<sup>463</sup> Maraini, F. (1957). *Ore Giapponesi*. Bari: Edizioni Leonardo da Vinci, p. 7.

<sup>464</sup> De Martino, D. (2007). *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, Volume 69.

Maraini, who was a young man eager to see the world, to do adventurous things, wrote to Professor Tucci who miraculously answered him. Tucci gave him an appointment in Rome to discuss it. Thus, Maraini went to Rome and found in the Professor an affable and well-disposed person. Maraini added to their speech that he was practicing photography, and this was the winning card because Tucci wanted to document his shipments meticulously. They left for Tibet<sup>465</sup>. This experience convinced Fosco Maraini to devote himself to ethnological research and Eastern culture studies.

Tucci's observation was that of the orientalist scholar, not the anthropologist's observation. That is, he stopped to look around in the folds of everyday life. Maraini, on the other hand, had a different attitude. From the beginning, he tried to establish, almost by instinct, with the "informants", that he prefers to define friends, a relationship devoid of formalisms because the real interest for the other must be dictated by sympathy, availability, and openness that underlies every friendship. Another important fact for him concerned the perception of a cultural reality that cannot be entirely entrusted to rational investigation. Back in Italy, he completed his studies, graduating in the same year in Natural Sciences at the University of Florence. A scholarship for foreign researchers made available by Kokusai gakuyū kai, an agency of the Japanese government, allows him to devote himself fully to ethnological research. After the trip to Tibet, he understood his interest in the ethnological direction and he also understood that Tucci did not like anyone else to take care of his field. At this point, he decided to seize the opportunity presented to him. At the end of October 1938, he embarked, with his wife Topazia and his daughter Dacia, who had not yet turned two, for Japan.

In 1939 he moved with his family to Sapporo, on the Hokkaidō island, where he carried out his research ranging from the themes of art, traditional religion, the ideology of the Ainu, the "white people" of Japan. At that time, ethnology implied the study of the "primitive" people, and the Ainu were the only ethnic group identified in the Japanese archipelago. He did not prepare himself for the research before. He began to study Japanese and read John Batchelor's book *The Ainu and their Folklore*. Once there, in Sapporo, he had the opportunity to deepen his studies on the Ainu. He resided in

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<sup>465</sup> Ferrari, G. (2004). "Il Miramondo" [video: YouTube. [https://youtu.be/8\\_gzvW8c6MA](https://youtu.be/8_gzvW8c6MA)]

Sapporo and from there, along the eastern coast of the island, he visited the Ainu villages, of which there were still about ten; from two to three days to more than two weeks, he tried to collect as much material as possible, then back to the base, organized the material and concentrated on a new trip. The language used was Japanese, because the Ainu was the language used, and the Ainu language was in use only among the women and children of the most remote villages. At that time, he was not the only one to focus on the Ainu, but from the University of Hokkaidō (Hokudai), he promoted an intense research activity, with a dozen scholars, who tried to record all the traits of the Ainu before they disappeared. Maraini collaborated with the Anglican pastor John Batchelor, who spent part of his life in the Ainu community of Biratori (he lived in Hokkaidō since 1877), and afterwards he retired in the last few years in Sapporo<sup>466</sup>.

In this period, Maraini also collaborated with Kodama Sakuzaemon, doctor and anthropologist, professor in Hokudai, who assisted in the treatment of the first Japanese translation of the Reports of the Yezo reign (Hokkaidō), concerning the journeys made by the Sicilian Jesuit Girolamo De Angelis in 1618 and 1621<sup>467</sup>. The results of field surveys in Hokkaidō will be published in Tōkyō in 1942 in a major monographic work entitled *The Iku-bashui of the Ainu*. In the same year, he published, in Japanese, a photographic report on the peoples of Tibet, titled *Chibetto - Far Tibet*, with bilingual captions in Japanese and Italian languages. Between 1942 and 1943, after leaving Sapporo, he held a new job as an Italian language Professor at Kyōto University. After September 8th, refusing to join the Republic of Salò, Maraini, together with his family and another thirty Italian residents in Japan, was interned in a concentration camp in Nagoya; he remained there until 15 August 1945. After the end of the war, he was in Tōkyō, working for a year as an interpreter of the VIII American Army. He returned to Italy. In 1948, Maraini left for a second trip to Tibet with Giuseppe Tucci.

From this experience, *Segreto Tibet*, a volume translated into twelve languages, whose ethnological work and narrative style of Maraini brought him to the attention of the

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<sup>466</sup> Campione, F.P. (2001). "Interview to Maraini, F." *Gli ultimi pagani*. Milan: Rizzoli, p.161-196.

<sup>467</sup> Kodama, S. (1941). "De Angelis no Ezo koku hokokusho ni tsuite" (De la relación del reino de Ezo por De Angelis). *Studies from the Research Institute for Northern Culture*, IV, pp. 201-296.

international public. In 1953, he left for the United States, at the U.S. State Department to carry out the project he had presented within the “Leaders” program. In this way, he had the opportunity to study Eastern art museums in the United States, which he cataloged. During this experience, six months in America. Later he returned to Japan to prepare a series of ethnographic documentaries for the Italian production house “Filmeco” unfortunately today largely lost. We should remember here “The last Ainu”, focused on the *Iyomante* ceremony, “At the foot of the sacred Fuji” on Japanese rural life and Shinto ritualism, “The Fisherman's Island” filmed, partly with underwater shots, between the Ama of the small islands of Hékura and Mikuria, in the Nanatsu-to archipelago.

During these years Maraini collected numerous materials for the publication of three volumes: *Ore Giapponesi* in 1958 (translated into five languages), the *Isola delle Pescatrici* in 1969 (translated into six languages), and, finally, *Japan. Patterns of Continuity* in 1971, illustrated a monograph on Japan, which has more than ten reprints and has been translated into several languages<sup>468</sup>. In 1958, a long-time keen mountaineer, he was invited by the Italian Alpine Club to the national expedition to the Gasherbrum IV (7980 m.) in the Karakorum. The following year he was head of the Italian expedition to the Saraghrar Peak in the Hindu-Kush. The mountaineering and ethnographic account of these expeditions is the subject of the two volumes *G4-Karakorum* in 1959, and *Paropàmiso*, in 1960, which are both translated into several languages.

During the years 1960 and 1964, thanks to the invitation of Professor Richard Storry, he worked as an Associate Researcher at St. Antony's College (Far East Department of Civilization) in Oxford. He spent the first two years in England and then two years in Japan, for a journey across Asia, for six months. Life was too expensive, so he obtained an English scholarship for a new job as an editor at 'Reader's Digest' which allowed him to stay in Japan uninterrupted for another four years and then again until 1972, but with interruptions due to other trips to Asia and periods of stay in Italy<sup>469</sup>. Between 1968 and 1969, he spent several months in Jerusalem. The material collected will be used for

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<sup>468</sup> De Martino, D. (2007). *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, Volume 69.

<sup>469</sup> Campione, F.P. (2001). op. cit. p.161-196.

the publication of a very interesting volume, *Jerusalem, Rock of Ages*, published by Harcourt Brace of New York, among the most beautiful books about that city. In 1970, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed him director of public relations at the Italian Pavilion of the Osaka Universal Exposition. In 1972 Maraini returned to Florence where he obtained a new job as a Japanese Language and Literature Professor at the Faculty of Education of Florence University, until the year 1983 for age limit. In the same 1972, he founded the Italian Association for Japanese Studies “AISTUGIA” of which he was president until his death.

During the seventies, he published the book *Incontro con l'Asia* (1973), Tōkyō, published in five languages. In 1980 he published with Giuseppe Giarrizzo a volume on peasant civilization in Italy, the photographic material collected concerned South Italy and Sicily Island, in the years immediately after the war. During the nineties, we can mention the books *L'agape celeste* in 1995, *Gli ultimi pagani* in 1997, and some volumes in a 'metasemantic' language, *Gnosi delle Fànfole* (1994) and *Il Nuvolario* (1995). Thanks to the Ente Cassa di Risparmio of Florence and to Maraini himself, his eastern library and photo library with the images taken during his life were acquired by the G.P. Vieusseux, in this way the space named “Vieusseux-Asia” was born. The materials he collected were formidable tools for the knowledge of East Asia in Florence and Tuscany, thus guaranteeing the revival of that interest that had been so vital until the 1930s. In 1999 he published his autobiography, until 1946, *Case Amori Universi*, depicting himself in the fictional character of Clé, and also reusing sections of other books such as *Segreto Tibet* and *Ore giapponesi*<sup>470</sup>. In the same year, the Gabinetto Vieusseux promoted a major anthological exhibition of his photographs, *Il Miramondo*, exhibited at the Marino Marini Museum in Florence, then at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome and the Japanese Institute of Culture and then in Tōkyō, at Metropolitan Museum of Photography. In 2001 the Gabinetto Vieusseux promoted and published the conspicuous volume *Florence, Japan, and East Asia*. In 2003 the international conference dedicated to the relationship between science and literature in the East and

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<sup>470</sup> De Martino, D. (2007). *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, Volume 69.

the West was held at the Gabinetto Vieusseux. Fosco Maraini died in Florence on 8 June 2004<sup>471</sup>.

**- Maraini's first wife: Topazia Alliata**

Topazia was the first wife of Fosco Maraini. She was an Italian painter, curator, gallerist, and writer. Born in 1913 in Palermo, and died in 2015, her father was Prince Enrico Alliata di Villafranca, Duke of Salaparuta, and her mother the opera singer, Amelia “Sonia” Ortuzar Olivares, daughter of a Chilean diplomat. After she graduated from art high school, she studied Fine Arts at the Art Academy in Palermo, where she was a fellow student of Renato Guttuso, who portrayed her in many of his first paintings<sup>472</sup>. In 1935, Topazia married Fosco and, in 1936 was born Dacia in Fiesole (Florence). In 1939 Maraini was invited to teach Italian literature at the University of Kyōto, so he moved with his family to Japan, where two other daughters Yuki and Toni were born, respectively in 1939 in Sapporo and 1941 in Tōkyō. During an interview, Topazia describes their relationship as “love at first sight”. They met on a specific occasion. When she was twenty years old, Fosco Maraini's father, Antonio, went to Sicily to inaugurate an exhibition where Topazia was also there, and he was so impressed by her art that he asked her to go to Florence, where he lived. She accepted. She went to Florence to see Antonio Maraini's works, and the situation that appeared to her was a lunch with his parents. After lunch, Antonio asked her if she wanted to join them at the theater. When in the theater, in this dark room, suddenly a boy came in and she had never seen him before. It was Fosco. The two stood looking at each other. It was love at first sight. Their principal interest was the sport, the contact with nature, they loved to go barefoot and neither of them particularly cared about formal clothes, for example, Fosco never wore a tie. Two nonconformists by nature.

Fosco received a scholarship that brought him to study the Ainu, and they went together to Japan. “It was the end of 1938. We spent the first period in Hokkaidō. They were

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<sup>471</sup> “La Biblioteca orientale di Fosco Maraini”. (n.d.). *Gabinetto scientifico letterario G.P. Vieusseux*. Retrieved from <https://www.vieusseux.it/vieusseux-asia/la-biblioteca-orientale.html> (7-10-2020)

Retrieved from <https://www.vieusseux.it/vieusseux-asia/la-biblioteca-orientale.html>

<sup>472</sup> Nicita, P. (24th November 2015). “Morta a 102 anni Topazia Alliata, madre di Dacia Maraini”. *La Repubblica*. Abstract 7th December 2015. Retrieved from [https://palermo.repubblica.it/cronaca/2015/11/24/news/morta\\_a\\_102\\_anni\\_topazia\\_alliata\\_madre\\_di\\_dacia\\_maraini-128030152/](https://palermo.repubblica.it/cronaca/2015/11/24/news/morta_a_102_anni_topazia_alliata_madre_di_dacia_maraini-128030152/)

intense, beautiful years for the contact with very refined culture. I noticed, there was the seal of care and attention<sup>473</sup>“. They left for this trip but did not know what would happen shortly after. On 8th September 1943, the Japanese government asked her and her husband for an oath of allegiance to the Republic of Salò. They were asked to sign and without being able to talk to each other, she and Fosco signed. A single glance was enough, and they decided for their refusal to swear allegiance to the Republic of Salò. Following their decision, the family was deported to a concentration camp in Nagoya. “They treated us as spies for the enemy. We were arrested. A nightmare was opened to which we were not prepared”<sup>474</sup>. Topazia describes that experience as extremely painful. Alliata says that at a certain point Maraini asked her whether to abandon the girls in a boarding school or not. The woman answered that she wanted her daughters close to her because if life had decided to make them die, they would have died together. They found themselves in a concentration camp on the outskirts of Tōkyō, where they found themselves in a group of about fifteen Italians, where there were no other children except their three daughters.

They were released and taken to Tōkyō in September 1945, before returning to Italy in September 1946. They boarded a ship that would take them to France and then to Bagheria where they settled<sup>475</sup>. Once there the Alliata put the family winery back on its feet, but everything began to go wrong. First, his father died, then the crisis with Maraini who wanted to return to Japan. Thus in 1955 Alliata and Maraini decided to separate. However, since divorce was illegal in Italy at the time, they were able to divorce only in 1970. She sold the winery and moved to Rome. In the capital, he decided to open an art gallery. It was 1959. She had frequented American artists, enjoyed relations with Palma Bucarelli and Peggy Guggenheim, and launched artists in Italy. In 2015 Topazia Alliata passed away at the age of 102 years. In the previous year, he witnessed the publication of the book *Love Holidays. Notebooks of Love and Travel*, which contains five diaries with letters, telegrams, photos, and drawings exchanged between Fosco

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<sup>473</sup> Kodama, S. (1941). op. cit. pp. 201-296.

<sup>474</sup> Kodama, S. (1941). op. cit. pp. 201-296.

<sup>475</sup> About these historical and family pages, two books will be published by their daughters. Dacia Maraini wrote *La nave per Kobe* in 2001 and another book by Toni Maraini *Ricordi d'arte e prigionia* in 2003. The Dacia Maraini book *Bagheria*, in 1993, was about their return from Japan.

Maraini and her in the years 1934 and 1935. Dacia Maraini says about this book: “It is a way to stop time, to build a memory for the future” by giving us words of rich love<sup>476</sup>.

In November 2016, just a year after Alliaata's death, a documentary entitled “Haiku on a plum tree” was presented, directed by Mujah Maraini-Melehi, her niece, the daughter of her daughter Toni. In this documentary, the director retraces, through stories and family photographs, the places where her grandparents Fosco Maraini and Topazia Alliaata, along with her two aunts and her mother, namely the two concentration camps not far from Nagoya. Mujah Maraini-Melehi supports a very deep thought, so she says, sometimes it takes the awareness of a new generation to honor, to heal the personal and collective past.

#### **- Maraini's daughters: Dacia, Toni, and Yuki**

Dacia Maraini was born in 1936 in Fiesole (Florence). He spent his childhood in Japan where, between 1943 and 1946, she was interned with his family in the Japanese concentration camp in Nagoya. In 1943 the Japanese government, based on the pact of the alliance that it signed with Italy and Germany, asked the Maraini spouses to sign the adhesion to the Republic of Salò. Since they refuse, they were interned together with the three daughters in a concentration camp in Tōkyō. They suffer two years of extreme hunger and were released, only at the end of the war, by the U.S. Forces. In her collection of poems *Mangiarmi pure*, 1978, the writer will tell of the privations and sufferings of those years. Once back in Italy, the Maraini move to Sicily, with their maternal grandparents, in Villa Valguarnera in Bagheria, where the girls begin their studies. A few years later the family split up: the father went to live in Rome, leaving his wife in Palermo and the three daughters attending schools in the city. For Dacia, they were the years of the first literary education, but above all the dreams of an escape that however arrives only after the eighteenth birthday, with the decision to go and live in Rome with her father. Then she continued the high school and at twenty-one, she founded, together with other young people, the literary journal *Tempo di letteratura*, and began to collaborate, with stories, on journals such as *Paragone*, *Nuovi Argomenti*, *Il Mondo*.

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<sup>476</sup> Berdozzi, V. & Murrari, E. (2015). “Reporter Nuovo”. Scuola di giornalismo Luiss. [video: YouTube. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/jJugzWSVaIY>]



In 1962 she published her first novel, *La vacanza*, followed by *L'età del malessere* in 1963 and *A memoria* in 1967. Meanwhile, she married Lucio Pozzi, from Milan, a painter from whom she shared four years of common life and a little lost son before being born. In these years, Dacia Maraini also began to work in theater. Together with other writers, she founded the *Teatro del Porcospino*, which represents only Italian novelties. During this period, she met Alberto Moravia, who left his wife and writer Elsa Morante in 1962. The new couple will live together for a long time, until the early 1980s. In 1973 she founded together with L. Leone, Francesca Pansa, Mariola Boggio, and others, the *Teatro della Maddalena*, managed and directed by women. Since 1967, Dacia Maraini has written more than thirty plays, many of which are still represented today in Europe and America<sup>477</sup>. Another novel was published in 1972, *Memorie di una ladra*, from which Monica Vitti got one of his most successful films. The following year she released *Donna in guerra*, later translated, like almost all her books, into many languages. In 1980 is published *Storia di Piera*, written in collaboration with Piera degli Esposti, from this work Marco Ferreri will make a lucky film with Marcello Mastroianni. The novels *Il treno per Helsinki* (1984), on the nostalgic search for the enthusiasm of the past, and *Isolina* date back to the 1980s, *La donna tagliata a pezzi* (1985), the touching story of a girl at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century. In the 1990 she wrote *La lunga vita di Marianna Ucrìa*, that won the Campiello and other prestigious awards and achieved enormous critical and public success. In 1993 she published *Bagheria*, an exciting autobiographical journey in childhood places, and *Cercando Emma*, which traces the story of Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary* to understand its charm and unravel its mystery. In 1994 the novel *Voci*, which also won many literary awards, offers a new interpretation about violence against women. The

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<sup>477</sup> Among the titles: “Il ricatto a teatro e altre commedie” (1970); “Viva l'Italia” (1973); “La donna perfetta” (1974); “Il cuore di una vergine” (1975); “Don Juan” (1976); “Dialogo di una prostituta con un suo cliente. Con un dibattito sulla decisione di fare il testo e la preparazione dello spettacolo” (1978); “I sogni di Clitennestra e altre commedie” (1981); “Lezioni d'amore e altre commedie” (1982); “Stravaganza” (1987); “Paura e amore” with Margarethe von Trotta and Laura Novati (1988); “Erzabeth Bathory; Il gecko; Norma 44” (1991); “Veronica, meretrice e scrittrice” (1992); “La casa tra due palme” (1995); “Maria Stuarda. Mela, Donna Lionora giacobina, Stravaganza, Un treno, una notte” (2001); “Veronica, meretrice e scrittrice. La terza moglie di Mayer” (2001); “Memorie di una cameriera. Storia di Isabella di Morra raccontata da Benedetto Croce, I digiuni di Catarina da Siena” (2001); “Per Giulia” (2011); “Per proteggerti meglio, figlia mia” (2011); “In viaggio da Itaca” with Gabriele Marchesini (2011); “Lettere d'amore” (2012); “Teresa la ladra” (2013); “Passi affrettati” (2015).

great social themes, women's life, the problems of childhood are still at the center of her later works: the short essay on modernity and abortion *Un clandestino a bordo* (1996), the book interview *E tu chi eri?* (1998) and the collection of stories about violence on childhood *Buio* (1999, winner of the Strega Award). In 1997, the novel *Dolce per sé*, in which a mature woman and globetrotter writes to a child to evoke memories of her love for a young violinist, describing trips, concerts, family anecdotes. Between 2000 and 2001 are published: *Amata Scrittura* (on the secrets of the writer), *Fare teatro 1966-2000* (which collects almost all her plays), and *La nave per Kobe* (which recalls the childhood experience of imprisonment in Japan). In 2003 *Piera e gli assassini* came out, the second book written in collaboration with Piera degli Esposti. In 2004, instead, *Colomba*, in which themes such as literature, family, and the mystery of the body appear. The novel *Il gioco dell'universo* in 2007 sees her co-author with her father in imaginary dialogues. In 2008 she published the novel *Il treno dell'ultima notte*, in 2011 *La grande festa* and *Menzogna felice*, in 2012 *L'amore rubato*, and the following year *Chiara di Assisi. Elogio della disobbedienza* and *Gita a Viareggio*. In 2015 *La bambina e il sognatore*<sup>478</sup>, in 2017 *Tre donne. Una storia d'amore e disamore*. She has also written stories for children<sup>479</sup>, poems<sup>480</sup>, stories<sup>481</sup>, essays<sup>482</sup>,

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<sup>478</sup> Maraini, D. (n.d.). "Biografia". Retrieved from <http://www.daciamaraini.com/biografia.shtml>

<sup>479</sup> "Storie di cani per una bambina" (1996), "La pecora Dolly. E altre storie per bambini" (2001), "La notte dei giocattoli", drawn by Gud, Latina, Tunué (2012).

<sup>480</sup> "Botta e risposta poetica... o quasi", with Nicolò Maraini (1960), "Crudeltà all'aria aperta" (1966), "Donne mie" (1974), "Mangiami pure" (1978), "Dimenticato di dimenticare" (1982), "Maraini, Stein" (1987), "Viaggiando con passo di volpe. Poesie 1983-1991" (1991), "Occhi di Medusa" (1992), "Se amando troppo. Poesie 1966-1998", with CD-ROM (1998), "Notte di capodanno in ospedale" (2009).

<sup>481</sup> Among the stories: "Mio marito" (1968), "L'uomo tatuato" and "Delitto" (1990), "Cinque donne d'acqua dolce" (1993), "La ragazza con la treccia" (1994), "Mulino, Orlov e Il gatto che si crede pantera" (1994), "Silvia" (1995), "Il mostro dagli occhi verdi" (1996), "Buio" (1999), "Berah di Kibawa. Un racconto con dodici finali" (2003), "In volo" (2005), "Un sonno senza sogni"; "Gita in bicicletta a Mongerbino" (2006), "Ragazze di Palermo" (2007), "Il poeta-regista e la meravigliosa soprano" (2008), "La ragazza di via Maqueda" (2009), "La seduzione dell'altrove" (2010), "Gita a Viareggio" (2013), "Telemaco e Blob. Storia di un'amicizia randagia" (2017).

<sup>482</sup> Among the essays: "Fare teatro. Materiali, Test, Interviste" (1974), "Suor Juana" (1980), "La bionda, la bruna e l'asino" (1987), "Cercando Emma" (1993), "Un clandestino a bordo" (1993) and then (1996), "Il sommacco. Piccolo inventario dei teatri palermitani trovati e persi" (1993), "Dizionarietto quotidiano. Da "amare" a "zonzo" (1997), "Giromondo" with Enzo Biagi (1999), "Fare teatro. 1966-2000", 2 vol., (2000), "Amata scrittura. Laboratorio di analisi letture proposte conversazioni" (2000), "Madri e figlie. Ieri e oggi", with Anna Salvo and Silvia Vegetti Finzi (2003), "Dentro le parole. Aforismi e pensieri" (2005), "I giorni di Antigone. Quaderno di cinque anni" (2006), "Passi affrettati" (2007), "Sulla mafia. Piccole riflessioni personali" (2009), "Il sogno del teatro. Cronaca di una passione", with Eugenio Murralli (2013), "La mia

screenplays<sup>483</sup>. Author of fiction, poetry, theater, and non-fiction, acute and sensitive investigator of women's conditions, she has often outlined in her texts complex and determined female figures, inserted in a wider reflection on multiple social themes, faced in a historical perspective. With the collection of stories *Buio* (1999), she won the Strega award. She received the honors of Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic - 9 January 1996<sup>484</sup> and the other one of the Order of the Rising Sun, Raggi in Oro with Rosetta on 3 November 2017<sup>485</sup>.

Yuki Luisa Maraini was born in Sapporo in Japan on 10 July 1939. "Yuki" is translated from Japanese as "snow", but it was not possible to register her with this name in the Italian registry office, following the Royal Decree of 1939<sup>486</sup>. She specialized in music therapy<sup>487</sup> and she took some courses in New York<sup>488</sup>. Founder of the feminist theater in 1973 together with Maricla Boggio, Annabella Cerliani, her sister Dacia and other women artists, in the same year she was in the cast of the theatrical performance *La contessa* and *Cauliflower in Rome*<sup>489</sup>. In 1975 she signed the music for *The Perfect Woman* at the Alessandro Bonci Theater in Cesena, directed by Dacia Maraini<sup>490</sup>, where

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vita, le mie battaglie" con Joseph Farrell (2015), "Se un personaggio bussa alla mia porta. "Come si racconta..." (2016), "Il diritto di morire" with Claudio Volpe (2018).

<sup>483</sup> Among theatrical texts: "L'età del malessere", directed by Giuliano Biagetti (1968), "La donna invisibile", directed by Paolo Spinola (1969), "Cuore di mamma", directed by Salvatore Samperi (1969), "Certo, certissimo, anzi... probabile", directed by Marcello Fondato (1969), "Uccidete il vitello grasso e arrostitelo", directed by Salvatore Samperi (1970), "L'amore coniugale", directed by Dacia Maraini (1970), "Teresa la ladra", directed by Carlo Di Palma (1973), "Il fiore delle Mille e una notte", directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini (1974), "Abrami in Africa" (1976), "Aborto: parlano le donne" (1976).

<sup>484</sup> "Cavaliere di Gran Croce e ordine al merito della Repubblica Italiana" (1996, January, 9). Presidenza della Repubblica. Retrieved from <https://www.quirinale.it/onorificenze/insigniti/11519>

<sup>485</sup> Valtorta, L. (2017, December 11th). "Il Sol Levante premia Dacia Maraini per il suo contributo all'approfondimento della conoscenza reciproca tra Giappone e Italia". Retrieved from [https://www.repubblica.it/cultura/2017/12/11/news/il\\_giappone\\_premia\\_dacia\\_maraini-183818582/](https://www.repubblica.it/cultura/2017/12/11/news/il_giappone_premia_dacia_maraini-183818582/)

<sup>486</sup> Bianchi De Vecchi, P. (2010, October, 7-9). *Atti del XV Convegno internazionale di O&L*, Università degli Studi di Enna Kore. pp. 189. Retrieved from [www.riviste.edizioniets.com](http://www.riviste.edizioniets.com)

<sup>487</sup> Furnari, F. (2009, June 23). Discographic Project "Sono venti". Adnkronos. Retrieved from [www.adnkronos.com](http://www.adnkronos.com)

<sup>488</sup> "Madonna sul set, l'emozione di una comasca" (2010, September, 1). *Corriere di Como*. Retrieved from [corrieredicomo.it](http://corrieredicomo.it)

<sup>489</sup> Carlo Celli, *The Divine Comic: The Cinema of Roberto Benigni*, Scarecrow Pr, 2001.

<sup>490</sup> Maraini, D. (Writer). Maraini, D. (Theatre Director). Maraini, Y. (Music). Teatro Alessandro Bonci. Retrieved from <http://www.teatrobonci.it/index2.php?prodotto=1356>

Yuki plays the guitar<sup>491</sup>. She also took part in the Roman Feminist Movement and, in 1975 she published together with Fufi Sonnino the album and the book *Canti delle donne in lotta* for which she is also the author of some songs, under the label, *I dischi dello Zodiaco*<sup>492</sup>. The following year but still for the same record company, the second volume of the previous album was released, with some compositions composed by Maraini<sup>493</sup>. From June 1976 she created the music for the theater show *Dialogo di prostituta* with one of her clients, directed by her sister Dacia and in 1979 she composes the melodies for the performance *Suor Juana*<sup>494</sup>. Between November and December 1980, she was the protagonist of the show *Lezioni di schizofrenia*, for the Teatro La Maddalena in Rome<sup>495</sup>. Also in December, she read and directed *The Voice Hypothesis* at the Teatro Stabile in Turin, a show also proposed in Rome<sup>496</sup>. Moreover, in the same period, she produced the music for *La pièce*, directed by her sister Dacia<sup>497</sup>. She also composes the music for the *Netočka show*, based on the novel *Netočka Nezvanova* by Fyodor Dostoevsky in 1985<sup>498</sup>. Yuki Maraini died in Rieti on August 20, 1995,<sup>499</sup> due to an illness. Two years later, in February, it was remembered at the Teatro dell'Orologio in Rome in the presence of family members and other artists. Moreover, again in 1997, her music was used in Latin America (Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina) for the show *The Reasons of Suor Juana*<sup>500</sup>.

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<sup>491</sup> Merry, B. (1997). *Dacia Maraini and the Written Dream of Women in Modern Italian Literature*, Department of Modern Languages. Australia: James Cook University of North Queensland.

<sup>492</sup> *L'Almanacco: luoghi, nomi, incontri, fatti, lavori in corso del Movimento femminista italiano dal 1972*. (1978). Rome: Edizioni delle donne.

<sup>493</sup> "Canzoni contro la guerra" (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.antiwarsongs.org>

<sup>494</sup> Maraini, D. & Murrari, E. (2013). *Il sogno del teatro: Cronaca di una passione*. Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli.

<sup>495</sup> "Girl's life' apre domani La Maddalena". (1990, October, 8). *La Stampa*. Retrieved from <http://www.archiviolaStampa.it>

<sup>496</sup> "Her story Gruppi e Collettivi femministi a Roma e nel Lazio dagli anni'70 ad oggi". Associazione La Maddalena. Retrieved from <http://www.herstory.it>

<sup>497</sup> Baldassarri, G., Di Iasio, V., Pecci, P., Pietrobon E. & e Tomasi, F. "La letteratura degli italiani 4. I letterati e la scena". (2014). *Atti del XVI Congresso Nazionale Adi*, Sassari-Alghero 19-22 settembre 2012 (PDF). Rome: Adi editore.

<sup>498</sup> Maraini, D. & Murrari, E. (2013). *Il sogno del teatro: Cronaca di una passione*. Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli.

<sup>499</sup> "Canzoni contro la guerra" (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.antiwarsongs.org>

<sup>500</sup> See Maraini, D. & Murrari, E. (2013). *Il sogno del teatro: Cronaca di una passione*. Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli; Baldassarri, G., Di Iasio, V., Pecci, P., Pietrobon E. & e Tomasi, F. "La letteratura degli italiani 4. I letterati e la scena". (2014). *Atti del XVI Congresso Nazionale Adi*, Sassari-Alghero 19-22 settembre 2012 (PDF). Rome: Adi editore.

Toni Maraini (art name of Antonella Maraini) was born in 1941 in Tōkyō. Historian of art, writer, poet, essayist, and Maghreb's scholar. She spent her childhood and adolescence in Sicily, a maternal land, where the family settled, and attended public school in Bagheria and Palermo; she continues her high school studies in Florence, where she goes to live with her paternal grandfather. In 1958 she left for England. She studied History of Art at the Courtauld Institute of Arts in London (1959-1961). In 1962 she won a scholarship for the Smith College University (Northampton, Mass.) In the United States, where she graduated in 1964 in History of Art, also obtaining a minor in Cultural Anthropology. She alternates her studies with periods of holidays in Rome, where the family has moved since the 1950s, where the father leaves for numerous trips and stays in Asia and where her mother, Topazia Alliata - who as a young woman, and as a painter, had participated in the modernist artistic ferment - opened an art gallery (Galleria Trastevere) active in the avant-garde. Her father's experiences and travel accounts, and her mother's artistic activities and friendships in those early years fueled her interest in modern art, non-Western arts, and cultures, cultural anthropology. In Rome, she made friends with several young artists.

After the first trip to Morocco in summer 1963, she returned there in September 1964 and accepted the job as History of Art teacher at the municipal school, École des Beaux-Arts, in Casablanca. In Morocco, she married the painter Mohamed Melehi, collaborated in the creation of the journals *Maghreb Art* (1965) and *Integral* (1971), participated in the ferment of the new post-independence cultural situation by engaging in numerous artistic and literary events in collaboration with the painters of the “Casablanca Group” and the poets of the journal *Souffles*. After the experience at the École des Beaux-Arts in Casablanca, she taught History of Art at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Rabat (1979-1982) and Aesthetics of Image and Iconology at the Institut de Communication Audiovisual in Casablanca (1980 -84). Between 1966 and 1967, she stayed in Paris to attend the North African Ethnology courses by Germaine Tillon at the École Pratique des Hautes Etudes. Back in Morocco, she carried out field research (history, arts, traditions) for *Maghreb Art* and *Integral* the short essay entitled “Marocco, Tradizione e Mestieri”, published in *Oriente Moderno* (NS, XV, 1996) where she collected research on the popular arts and the text Juba de Maurétanie et l'Héritage

Antique (published on *Horizon Maghrebins/Heritage commun en Mediterranee* No. 39, 1999) and on Morocco's history in antiquity. In 1978 she took part in the creation of the Moussem / Cultural Festival of Asilah (Tangier).

For several years, at Asilah, she held a summer art workshop for children on the expressive/symbolic language that continued in Casablanca, creating, between 1979 and 1982, an art-therapy atelier in the Ibn Abbad public elementary school and at the Averroés Children's Hospital / Ibn Rochd. She wrote *Enfant Soleil* (unpublished) about this experience. She is one of the promoters of the "Présence Plastique" artistic manifestations in some squares and schools (Casablanca, Marrakech) and at the Berrechid Psychiatric Hospital. She documented these activities and wrote about numerous artists, journals, and catalogs and presented the Moroccan artists at the Panafrican Festival of Algiers (1969), at the Pan-Arab Biennale in Baghdad (1974), at the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona (1980), at Musée d'Art Moderne in Grenoble (1984), at Musée d'Ixelles in Brussels (1988), at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris (1989, 1991). In Morocco she published: *La Peinture de A. Cherkaoui* (Casablanca, 1976), *Au Rendez-vous de l'Histoire, la Peinture* (Casablanca, 1987), *Écrits sur l'Art*, (Rabat, 1990, preface by Pierre Restany), *Une Collection, Une mémoire* (Casablanca, 1998). Between 1972 and 1974, she traveled with a group of artists in Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon, and Iraq. Over the years, she regularly traveled to Italy, wherein in 1976 published the novel *Anno 1424* (see below). In Morocco, she publishes the poetry collections *Message d'une Migration* (Casablanca, 1976, preface by Mostafa Nissaboury, illustrations by M. Melehi), *Le Récit de l'Occultation* (Casablanca, 1983), *Phantasmata Diwan* (preface by Abdelkhebir Khatibi, Rabat, 1987). In 1987 she returned to live in Italy with her daughters Mujah and Nour Shems, born in Casablanca, respectively in 1970 and 1978, and settled in Rome.

Alongside her writings, and necessary work experiences, she continued her research collaborating in various publications including the University of Toulouse journal *Horizons Maghrébins*, for which she has been writing since 1990. She also published essays and texts on Africa and the Mediterranean, *Revue Noire* (France), the African Art Gallery catalogs by Chantal Dandrieu (Rome / Paris), etc. In 1988 she received the Woman-City of Rome Award, Inediti section, for the *Poema d'Oriente* collection.

Between 1988 and 1990, she was the editor of the *Ecology and Culture Journal Being*. Between 1991 and 2006 she set up (archives, inventories, a project for Casa Museo) and directed the Moravia Fund, for which she organized exhibitions, events, and meetings, created, conceived, and edited the *Notes of the Moravian Fund* (1993- 2004) on which she published various poetic “dossiers” (poetry of the American Indians, of Albania and Arberesh, of Afghanistan, Iraq, Chechnya, Kosovo, Bosnia, Near East, Mediterranean, Southern Italy) for “Ponti a Meridione”. For Ponti a Meridione too, in 1996 and 1997, she organized in collaboration with Predrag Matvejevic and Circolo 99 of Sarajevo, the meeting of the members of the Circolo 99 in Rome and the journey by bus Rome-Mostar-Sarajevo of 21 Italian writers and intellectuals (including, Vincenzo Consolo, Erri De Luca, Emanuele Trevi, Ginevra Bompiani, Edoardo Albinati, Luisa Morgantini).

In 1993 she participated (with the journalist Giuliana Sgrena and Luciano Ardesi from the “League for the Rights of Peoples”) in the creation of the Italian Committee of Solidarity with Algeria that will be mobilized for several years to give support and visibility to the democratic associations (students, women, intellectuals, writers, etc.) of Algerian civil society and to analyze and denounce the emergence of the fundamentalist/fundamentalist phenomenon. She translates, publishes, presents in Italy male authors and female authors (including Rachid Boudjedra, Assia Djebar, Fatima Mernissi, Mohamed Choukri), poets and poets (many of them translated for the first time in Italy), and artists and filmmakers from the Maghreb to more understanding about the history and culture of North Africa. In 1994 she began a close collaboration with the “March Seminars and the Journal”. Later, thanks to Giuseppe Goffredo, founder of the Poiesis Laboratory and Poiesis Publishing House (Alberobello, Puglia) aimed at a pioneer Mediterranean intercultural work in the Italian context, the bridge between different Mediterranean countries.

As part of this inter-Mediterranean commitment, she collaborated with the international poetry journal *Pagine*, directed by Vincenzo Anania. In Italy she published *Anno 1424* (Marsilio 1976, foreword by Maria Corti, Second National Unpublished Award, finalist of the Premio Strega, in *La Murata*, La Luna, 1990, preface by Alberto Moravia), *Sguardi d'Africa* (with Laureano, Triulzi, Manacorda) and the photographs by Laura

Sonnino Jannelli, Ed. Fratelli Alinari, 1994), *Imago, conversation with Fellini* (Semar, 1994), *Ultimo tè a Marrakech* (Edizioni Lavoro, 1994), *e Nuovi Racconti* (Edizioni Lavoro, 2000), *Poema d'Oriente* (Semar, 2000, Unpublished Woman-City of Rome 1988 Prize, Premio Sabaudia 2001), *Le porte del Vento* (Manni, 2003), *Diario di viaggio in America* (La Mongolfiera, 2003), *West / World Muslim, clash or encounter?* (Giardino dei Ciliegi - Giunti, 2003), *Memorie di Arte e Prigionia di Topazia Alliata* (foreword Denis Mack Smith, Sellerio, 2003), *Fuga dall'Impero* (La Mongolfiera, 2004), *La Lettera da Benares* (Sellerio, Premio Mondello 2008), *I Sogni di Atlante* (Poiesis, 2007) [together with *Ultimo tè a Marrakesh* and *Fuga dall'Impero*, this book constitutes the “North African Trilogy”] and *Pandemonio Blues* (Poiesis, 2008). She also worked with newspapers, journals, associations (Associazione Rosella Mancini, Donna-Poesia, Il Giardino dei Ciliegi, etc.), participated in meetings and conferences, published poems in anthologies and journals, wrote about Italian and foreign artists and poets, worked on poems / collages and “visual” texts and collaborated with her poems on “Artist Book”.

Between 2001 and 2007 she traveled to the United States, and carried out research on American fundamentalism, that collected in some writings and the book *Diary of Travel in America*. In the Italian climate of growing disinterest and historical/political and cultural disengagement for the Mediterranean and the Maghreb, she wrote the document “Is Italy still a Mediterranean country?”, published in 2009 by the *Italian Studies Journal* of the University of California. Since 2001 she is a member of the jury of the De André Poetry Prize with Claudio Damiani and Marco Lodoli. In 2008 she received La Palme de Marrakech in recognition of her writings on the art and culture of Morocco<sup>501</sup>.

Every once in a while, she and her colleagues went straight to the mountains after struggling all night, without having slept. During one of these occasions, on the train that took her to her final destination, a gentleman sat in front of her. It was an accident because she lost her train and waited for the next one. This gentleman, who was Fosco Maraini, was there to join friends, but he had not booked accommodation, so Mieko

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<sup>501</sup> Maraini, T. (2017). “Bio-Bibliografia”. Retrived from <http://www.tonimaraini.org/bio-bibliografia>



offered to help him, even if she went on to another place. She worried so much that she called his hotel to make sure it was all right, but she couldn't say “hello” because Maraini was already on the ski slopes. After that day, she never thought about him because she wasn't so impressed. Accidentally they met twice in the immense Tōkyō city, and on the third time, when they met again, he invited her for a coffee. He was already separated from his wife and so they began their beautiful and long love story. In 1968 she followed him to Italy, in Florence even though she was not very convinced, enough to prepare a reserve plan and work independently as a designer. Mieko reminds us of him as a very curious person, who always wanted to travel and explore, a person who always studied and when he had to work on a project his room was full of books, everywhere and she was even forbidden to enter. She concludes by saying that they were accomplices and very close-knit, so when they did not want to be understood by someone we played with words in a mixture of Italian-English-Japanese. A language of their own<sup>502</sup>.

Fosco Maraini was buried in the small cemetery of Alpe di Sant'Antonio. Every year on the Sunday following June 8, Mieko finds himself in that place with some friends and representatives of the institutions to remember Fosco. During this occasion, incense is ignited directly from Japan. Then, after the greetings from Mieko, some extracts from the books written by Fosco Maraini are read. Maraini was an honorary citizen of the municipality of Molazzana, so the mayor Simonetti wanted to remember him officially, naming the square of the church. This meeting also gave rise to an important project destined to enhance the places, the paths, and the house of the great narrator<sup>503</sup>. His tomb is recognizable from afar because it is adorned with Tibetan flags above his name, while below is the epitaph so dear to him “*citluvit* has returned to his homeland”, furthermore two other symbols are present, on the left a Christian cross and on the right a seated Buddha with a bowl in his left hand and the *bhumisparsha mudra* in his right hand. It is one of the most important gestures because it recalls the final victory of Buddha over Māra, the tempting demon, also linked to the ability to transform anger and disappointment into wisdom. Mieko says that it was 1975 when “Fosco sought his last

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<sup>502</sup> Amodio, S. (2015, May). “Il Giappone a Firenze”, *Informatore*. Retrieved from <https://www.coopfirenze.it/informatori/notizie/il-giappone-a-firenze>

<sup>503</sup> “Quel rifugio di Maraini sotto le Panie”. (2018, June, 11). *Il Giornale di Barga e della Valle del Serchio*. Retrieved from <http://www.giornaledibarga.it/2018/06/quel-rifugio-di-maraini-sotto-le-panie-305569/>

refuge”, the cave-dwelling that she shared with her husband for almost thirty years. She still lives on these Alps, in the Apuan Alps<sup>504</sup>.

Regarding the question on how he would define himself, Fosco Maraini always replied that he disliked the limitations, both ethnic, geographic, but also religious, and political. Jokingly he used the term “citluvit”, to indicate a citizen of the Moon is visiting Earth. The most satisfying thing is to understand each other. And it was the reason that pushed him from the beginning because he immediately saw that going to another country is completely different from reading about that country, because when you read you always stay in the same place, with the same atmosphere. Instead, if you leave, you are immersed in a completely different world. Another question was why he had chosen the Moon, and in this case, he replied that because it is far and close enough, and Mars or Saturn were too far away. The Moon was at the right distance, so he could look at the Earth with clear passion. The theme of passion arises here because the “*citluvit*” is a passionate move, to the point of falling in love with its object of study, but avoids the greatest risk, that of identifying oneself, by watching events with amused interest but with detachment. Maraini claimed that the “*citluvit*” was he: “to whom a fellowship was given with a few simple instructions: go to the Earth, sieve it, understand it, and try to understand something of there”. At the end of that Earth, the citizen of the metaphorical Moon does not inevitably end up falling in love. In this sense, photography will become a necessary tool for him to “capture places, colors, situations, but above all a means to grasp the secrets of a moment, of a country, of a people”<sup>505</sup>.

### **3.2. Maraini on Japan and the Ainu: A romantic approach?**

#### **- Fosco Maraini the scholar**

Fosco Maraini was one of the most eclectic personalities on the Italian cultural scene of the 20th century: orientalist, alpinist, photographer, writer, and poet. To those who asked him how he identified himself, Maraini replied that he felt “conscious” and sometimes

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<sup>504</sup> Neri, Mario (2012, August, 4). “Quel giorno che Maraini fu stregato dalle Apuane”. *La Repubblica*. Retrieved from <https://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2012/08/04/quel-giorno-che-maraini-fu-stregato-dalle.html>

<sup>505</sup> Battaglia G. (2013, February, 28). “Giappone – Gli Ainu visti da Maraini”. *China Files – Reports from China*. Retrieved from <https://www.china-files.com/viaggio-tra-coloro-che-scompaiono-fosco-maraini-e-gli-ainu/>

“shameful” about his too many activities. However, the central point between his various souls was “knowing and feeling *citluvit*”. A fundamental tool that accompanied him on his travels was photography. Besides Tibet, considered his “first love”, he devoted much of his life and photographic work to Japan. In Tibet, he photographed in black and white because at that time there was still no color, while in Japan he also photographed in color. Although he believed that the photographic language and the language of writing were different, he recognized them as two complementary ways sharing the same goal, especially when trying to capture the soul of a place, a people, a ceremony, an event. Images had to be snatched in the moment of what he calls “empresente”. It is [...] “the moment we live, it is the present that emerges and unravels into the future, that is right now. It is a physical question, it is the moment that flees, different from the philosophical present, and is characterized by the fact that we do not know what will happen even in five minutes”. Very important to him was the theme of understanding the place, emphasizing the danger of those who flit here and there of not being able to enter the place. The important thing is therefore to deepen. It is only by giving yourself the time that you have the opportunity to enter into communication with the worlds that you cross, with the people you meet<sup>506</sup>.

Maraini's original approach concerns his total willingness to understand the cultural other without losing the rigor of a lucid observation, and the consideration of their own worlds. Indeed, he also lived between two or three worlds: the English one of his mother, the Italian one of his father, and the peasant world in which the Tuscan dialect was spoken. The traveling experiences during adolescence enriched him further. During the years at university, he chose to enroll in the Faculty of Natural Sciences, and his points of reference were the anthropologist, Franz Boas, because of his acute observations on the artistic phenomena and on the social organization of the peoples of Alaska and of the northwestern coast of the USA, and above all the scholar Alfred Kroeber, whose anthropological manual constituted for him a first-rate intellectual guide. He recognized himself perfectly in that scientific relativism. After the strong experience in Tibet, where he studied the religious aspect mainly, it was the turn of the Ainu in Japan.

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<sup>506</sup> “A bagno in mondi diversi” (n.d.). Nikon School. Retrieved from <https://www.nikonschool.it/sguardi/7/maraini.php>

It was precisely these aspects of the religious and ceremonial that struck him that he still saw alive in their culture, with a very strong symbolic connection. From the very beginning, he was particularly struck by the rite of the bear, but given the historical conditions, during the war, the Ainu had been forbidden to carry it out. At this point, he fell back on the *iku-bashui*, those special sticks that the *ekashi* elders used to present the ritual offering of wine to the gods. Later he realized that all those signs that adorned the sticks could constitute a useful key for reading the ideological and religious Ainu system. Maraini rejected the mechanism of relations of symbolic derivation, thus elaborating a conception of the internal relations between representations, geometric motifs, and symbols which in some respects appears to be close to modern semiology<sup>507</sup>.

Furthermore, he remained faithful to his informants' conceptions. His *Gli Ikubashui degli Ainu* (1942), was highly praised in Japan and it is still considered a reference text on the Ainu culture, while in Italy it received no interest, partly because it was on the eve of the war, and in part because the ethnological and anthropological disciplines had different horizons then. In 1953, he left for the United States to carry out the project he had presented within the "Leaders" program. He had the opportunity to study the Museums of Oriental Art in the United States, which he cataloged. From there he returned to Japan to prepare a series of ethnographic documentaries today unfortunately largely lost, including videos on the bear ceremony. The Ainu were his main ethnological field of application, his various trips to Hokkaidō, even for quite long periods, made him familiar with places and people and he was considered by the Ainu as an old friend of theirs. A ritual so dear to him that allowed him to see an evolution, a transformation in the sense of an acculturation process was *Iyomante*. Already in 1954, he was able to witness one of the last rituals performed in the original form, in which there was a whole liturgy by heart. In 1971, on the other hand, he saw a play for tourists. The version he witnessed in 1989 saw the ritual reconstructed in its various phases, an operation that had all the flavor of the ethnic revival and that therefore followed the phases of acculturation, a religious liturgy that had become political liturgy with the aim of recovering a lost identity<sup>508</sup>.

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<sup>507</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). *Il Miramondo. 60 anni di fotografia. Catalogo della Mostra a cura di Fosco Maraini & Cosimo Chiarelli*. Florence: Polistampa, p. 43.

<sup>508</sup> Campione, F.P. (2001). "Interview to Maraini, F." *Gli ultimi pagani*. Milan: Rizzoli, p.161-196.

The Museum of Natural History, Anthropology, and Ethnology in Florence houses the great Ainu collection by Fosco Maraini. There are 468 objects that the scholar donated to the Museum before his departure. In April 1941 he moved to Kyōto. Many pieces of baggage, since he had collected over five hundred objects of the Ainu material culture and a thousand books that filled fifty-one boxes. He should have returned to Italy, but international communications were all interrupted. In this way he then searched for something else to do and, through our Embassy, he found a job as an Italian Lecturer at the University of Kyōto. The work was not at all expensive, and he also had time to write and publish the volume on the *Iku-Bashui* of the Ainu.

How did he manage to bring his collection of Ainu objects to safety in Italy and then bring them to Italy? Thanks to a sum of lucky coincidences. In the days immediately following September 8, a dear friend who worked at the French Institute of Kyōto, Jean-Pierre Hauchecorne, offered to keep in the cellars of the Institute all the materials that he could not take with him. The fifty-one crates remained there for two years, until the post-war period. He placed them in the small apartment they occupied in Tōkyō. When it came to repatriating, thanks to a truck and the help of two soldiers who had been made available by Captain Collins, the American officer of the Labor Office where he worked, he managed to transport them from Tōkyō to Yokohama, where they were boarded on an American ship to Le Havre. Here he was able to add the boxes to the over one hundred large boxes of Japanese objects that a diplomat from Northern Italy had brought with him. Thanks to his courtesy, his cargo arrived for free up to Rome. The only expense he had to bear to transport them from Rome to Florence<sup>509</sup>. The objects have all been collected in the same period and the Museum boasts the privilege of receiving such a large number. Hence its extreme importance in Italy and beyond.

#### **- *Vieusseux Library***

The fund includes over 100,000 photographs, currently being cataloged, including black and white negatives, color slides and rare prints; consistent in epistolary nucleus, with general character, from family and editorial nature, with correspondence addressed to

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<sup>509</sup> Campione, F.P. (2001). "Interview to Maraini, F." *Gli ultimi pagani*. Milan: Rizzoli, p.161-196.

Fosco Maraini and numerous replies; correspondence inserted by the author himself in thematic dossiers related to assignments, photographic exhibitions, various events, with other complementary materials; papers relating to his work archive, including manuscripts of books, articles, volume contributions, conference papers, university lectures, reviews, interviews; documents relating to his private archive, consisting of personal and family records and documents, school papers, diaries, drawings, documents relating to childhood and early youth, notebooks with diary entries; printed publications, consisting of almost all the volumes of Maraini's works, of writings contained in periodicals, in excerpts or in cropping, reviews of his works, exhibition catalogs, as well as a small corpus of about one hundred works by other authors and some publications in Japanese<sup>510</sup>.

The oriental library, consisting of approximately 9,000 volumes, is instead kept in the Sala Maraini at Palazzo Strozzi, accessible via the online catalog of the Gabinetto Vieusseux Library, together with the small volume section “Vieusseux-Asia”, consisting of new purchases<sup>511</sup>. Research tools: unified inventory list of photographic images, whose computerized cataloging is in progress: about 2,000 images already digitized and available online on the business website of Fratelli Alinari which manages the copyright of the entire photo library<sup>512</sup>, list of senders in chronological order, divided by alphabetical order; summary list of manuscripts and personal documentation; descriptive list of printed publications, present, like the other lists, in the consultation room.

## Conclusion

Ainu studies underwent a major change, in fact before the Second World War, they were interested in theoretical aspects, but at some point, they felt the need to reconsider everything critically. In this way, the social and folkloric aspects were explored. The first scholar who undertook a study like this was Fosco Maraini, who with the text *The Iku-bashui of the Ainu* (Tōkyō, 1942), collected a formidable collection of libation

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<sup>510</sup> Maraini, F. (n.d.). “Firenze, 15 Novembre 1912 – 8 Giugno 2004”. Archivio Contemporaneo Vieusseux. Retrieved from <https://www.vieusseux.it/archivio-contemporaneo/elenco-dei-fondi/fosco-maraini.html>

<sup>511</sup> “La Biblioteca orientale di Fosco Maraini”. (n.d.). *Gabinetto scientifico letterario G.P. Vieusseux*. Retrieved from <https://www.vieusseux.it/vieusseux-asia/la-biblioteca-orientale.html>

<sup>512</sup> See: <http://www.alinariarchives.it/internal/home.aspx>

sticks, now preserved at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology of Florence, accompanied by important information on manufacturing, symbolism. In general, during the fifties and sixties of the twentieth century, interest in the Ainu remained stable in Europe, it grew much in the United States, where it was considered part of the Japanese field of study.

Fosco Maraini was a pioneer in this endeavor, who looked at the Ainu material objects and traditional culture, in ways not far from the ones nowadays applied to the promotion of Ainu traditional in the open museums and reconstructed villages, as I will consider in the following chapters.

## **PART III**



# CHAPTER I

## MATERIAL CULTURE AND PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS

### **Introduction**

In this chapter I will analyze the Ainu life from a historical-ethnological perspective, focusing on the Ainu material culture and a cultural life that was considered in harmony with nature. I will describe the architecture of the traditional houses, the objects of material culture such as clothes, domestic utensils.

After this section on material culture, I will turn my attention to the artistic-craft production. The Ainu tradition is characterized by a highly developed artistic sense which is expressed in carving works. The craft is a very important topic at a historical and economical level because it marks the transition from social exclusion to the touristic interest on the Ainu. In the final section, I will explain the situation of the Ainu collections in different museums and its historical beginning in the first exhibition fairs that allowed the Ainu culture to spread their visibility beyond Japan.

The objective of this chapter is to show a traditional life, through the rhythms of the village, of daily practices, in which the discourse of craftsmanship is inserted as a practice born to make everyday objects, and that has mainly transformed from the postwar period onwards into an activity with touristic purposes.

### **1.1. Material culture**

#### ***- Daily life***

Ainu commonly practiced nomadism. During winter, they also lived by seasonal seminomadism. The village was known as *kotan* in the Ainu language. A study conducted between 1789 and 1803, when Etorofu was in power, revealed that out of a total of six areas comprising 25 villages, none exceeded twenty houses, few villages counted more than 100 souls, and there were even villages with only one house. It appears they did not know the concept of life outside their *kotan* village. They found the necessary game along the coasts or rivers, but the need for natural food sources forced

the Ainu to migrate from area to area. This figure was reported in the *Ezo Shima Ki* or (“Ezo Island Register”): “They lived in villages close to the sea or the river. If fish, birds, animals became scarce, they left their village and settled in more prosperous areas”<sup>513</sup>.

They lived either in river valleys or along the coast where food was more easily accessible, especially trout and salmon<sup>514</sup>. In the nineteenth century, they were forced to transfer their settlements near the Japanese fish factories where they were sent to forced labor. The result was the emergence of the traditional village, with its typical bark and bamboo leaves houses, and a size of 7m x 5m. The houses had three windows, including the *rorun-puyar* (“the sacred window”). This was an opening on the opposite side of the entrance, through which the gods entered and left, and the ceremonial instruments were introduced. It was even forbidden to face it<sup>515</sup>. Given the lack of cooperation between villages, each leader had a voice-only within his village, fulfilling his duties. These were: presiding over funeral and marriage ceremonies; settling disputes; punishing offenders; directing hunting and fishing activities, as well as supervising economic activity; negotiating in trade outside the village; commanding in battle. Sometimes the villages joined together through marriages, so within family relations, such as abductions and sales found their place<sup>516</sup>.

### **- The houses**

The house was commonly called *chisei*, but the ancient name was *kenru*. It was more a place of worship than *Kamui*. The center of the environment was called *abe-shokti* or “the bed of fire”<sup>517</sup>. The Ainu house to our eyes would be a large room, a sort of modern loft, but with a slightly different vision. There was a “very high” part of the house, in a religious sense: the northeast corner of the *inau* of *Chise-Koro-Kamui*, the protector of the house, was located. The *rorun puyar*, the holy window, was also very high. From the hearth to the front door, one would descend towards the “bottom” of the house. This was the reason why the guests and the landlord were “up”, while the women and the

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<sup>513</sup> Takakura, S. (1960). *The Ainu of Northern Japan*. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, vol. 50, IV, pp. 16-19.

<sup>514</sup> Retrieved from [www.ainu-museum.or.jp](http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp)

<sup>515</sup> Journal “Giappone”, (2003). Novara: De Agostini, n. 3, p. 64.

<sup>516</sup> Takakura, S. (1960), op. cit. pp. 16-19.

<sup>517</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962). *Ainu creed & cult*. London: Routledge & Kegan, Columbia, pp. 55-57.

boys stayed “down”. The hearth also had a more important part, the high part. It was located near the *rorun puyar*, i.e., where the small special *inau* (*Chihorokakep*) dedicated to *Fuchi Kamui* was placed on ashes<sup>518</sup>. The buildings adjacent to the houses were equipped with toilets, separated for *ashinru* men. Women were given a *menokoru* storage area for food preservation. It took the name of “processing unit”<sup>519</sup>.

#### **- The Interior furnishings and furnishings**

Two mats rolled out on the grounds or the floor served as chairs. Their belongings hung on the walls and the ceiling: decorated swords, domestic utensils, kimonos, vases. The fireplace was located in the middle of the room, in a rectangular hole of one meter by one meter and a half. From the fireplace hung a pot suspended from an adjustable hook. Along the walls, there were planks, isolated by matting screens, which made up the bed. The more affluent people covered themselves with furs, while the others slept with clothes on and close to each other to keep warm<sup>520</sup>.

#### **- The Boats**

Before leaving their homes, the Ainu built an *inau*. They burned offerings while praying *Fuchi-Kamui*, *Shiramba-Kamui*, and *Wakka-ush Kamui*. While a tree was torn down for the construction of the boat, they treasured their intention for fear of attracting the interest of the evil spirits, who could have taken possession of the tree. Soon after, other small *inau* were given, and a prayer was offered to *Shiramba-Kamui*. The boat was named *ni-mam katkimat* (floating wood lady). Once the canoe work was completed, thanks were given to *Wakka-ush Kamui* and one to *Shiramba*<sup>521</sup>.

#### **- Hunting and fishing**

The hunting was done by several hunters with dogs. Whether they were fishing or hunting, the Ainu used poison to facilitate capture<sup>522</sup>. During the winter season, especially in the period between the end of November and the beginning of December, women, and men fished salmon in the river. They chopped firewood, pounded millet in

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<sup>518</sup> Maraini, F. (1999). *Case, amori, universi*. Milan: Mondadori, p. 434.

<sup>519</sup> Retrieved from [www.ainu-museum.or.jp](http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp)

<sup>520</sup> Zardi, L. (1979). *Popoli Diversi*. Turin: ed. SAIE, Vol. V, p. 68.

<sup>521</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962), op. cit. p.115.

<sup>522</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit. p. 68.

a mortar, shelled legumes, etc... For fishing, packs of dogs were often sent off the beach to scare the fish. They pushed the fish towards shallow waters, where it is easier for them to catch them and bring them to their owners, receiving the fish heads as a reward<sup>523</sup>. During the summer season, trout fishing was extremely popular, as opposed to salmon, which abounded in the autumn season. Another distinction was between river fishing and maritime fishing. Concerning the first, each village or individual had a well-defined territory; for the latter, 3-4 m longboats were used. The fish that was most fished were tuna, marine mammals which were highly sought after for their fur, and whales and dolphins. This type of fishing was quite common in Funka bay<sup>524</sup>.

### **- Agriculture and food**

The Ainu approached agriculture as a secondary activity. Unlike hunting and fishing, which were mainly done by men, agriculture was a woman's prerogative. The seasons defined its phases: spring was the period of preparation of the land and sowing. The main product was millet. After being removed, the roots were washed, boiled, and reduced to a pulp. They were used for the preparation of sweets or left to dry in the sun to be used in the colder months to come. The vegetables took the name of *ratashkep* and played an important role in the Ainu diet. A typical dish was a soup called *ohaw*. According to the ingredients, it took different names: *kam ohaw* ("meat soup"); *pukusa ohaw* ("garlic soup"); *pukusakina ahaw* ("anemone soup"). Another food was the *sayo*, a wheat porridge, which was left to boil together with other ingredients, such as *munchiro* ("millet"). Finally, *shito*, rice, and other grains were crushed in mortars to form large, cooked dumplings in tasty meat broths. These were the main meals during the *Chisei-nomi*. Another dish was chestnuts mixed with lard or with fish eggs<sup>525</sup>. Animal meat, such as bear or venison, was first boiled and then dried in the sun, or left to dry on racks on the fireplace inside the house. The belief that the Ainu people were used to eating raw meat turned out to be unfounded. It is thought that perhaps the term "raw" referred to the use of roots, leaves, and wild plants<sup>526</sup>. The typical drink was *Kamui-ashkoro*, a milky beer with low alcohol content<sup>527</sup>.

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<sup>523</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit p. 68.

<sup>524</sup> Retrieved from [www.ainu-museum.or.jp](http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp)

<sup>525</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit. p. 68.

<sup>526</sup> Retrieved from [www.ainu-museum.or.jp](http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp)

<sup>527</sup> Maraini, F. (1999), op. cit. p. 458.

## - Family

*Watarashima nikki* reports the following sentence<sup>528</sup>: “The Otona family was hereditary. However, the chief was elected according to his qualities and skills, even if he was an illegitimate child.” At the head of every *kotan*, made up of 4-7 families, there was a man chosen by origin and skills. He was responsible for administering and managing every aspect of the village life. Each house was home to a single-family, so it is possible to speak of a mononuclear family. Each village referred to a leader called *otona* (a term used by the Japanese) or *bankinnenshippa* (an archaic term, derived from Dankenne Nishipa, meaning “the chief”).

Batchelor<sup>529</sup> used synonyms to indicate “the chief:” *ainutopake* or *topake*; *ikiripake*; *utara-pa* or *pa*; *sapaneguru* or *esapaneguru*; *paunguru*, or *apta* with the meaning of “guide”; *pungineguru* in the sense of “overseer”. His house was built in the middle of the village. It was spacious enough to accommodate the various heads of the family during the holidays. In a community of relatives where people were united by the concept of a common ancestor and the ancestral tradition represented the unwritten law, people gathered around the person who was considered the direct descendant. This person was known as *hashio* and was more important than the *otona*. A significant change took place following the establishment of relations outside the village. Qualities such as wealth, eloquence, intelligence, became indispensable to become “chief”. If an heir was deemed inadequate, he was replaced by a relative, upon the decision of the council of elders. However, he retained the right to preside over religious ceremonies. Over the years, the village’s community spirit diminished and was replaced by the family unit. The latter was an important economic unit headed by the father. If at the death of his father, a son still lived with the family, he would take the reins of the house, becoming its chief. On the other hand, divorce was allowed on valid grounds. The Ainu family was of a patriarchal type and the woman’s condition was rather complex. She could not pronounce the name of her husband, she could not worship certain gods directly, she could not speak to male guests. In case of adultery, the woman was severely punished.

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<sup>528</sup> In Takakura, S. *The Ainu in Northern Japan. A Study in Conquest and Acculturation*. (1960). *Transactions*, New Series, Vol. 50, part 4. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society.

<sup>529</sup> Batchelor, J. (1889). *An Ainu English-Japanese Dictionary and Grammar*. Tōkyō: Iwanami.

### **- The position of women and the question of marriage**

Before marriage, a woman's position was considered equal to that of a man. After marriage, she kept her name, meaning she did not have her husband's one. She ended up becoming servile in everything, except for the management of the house<sup>530</sup>. In the house, she could consider herself the queen, although her seat was in the "low" part of the house, that is in the area that goes from the hearth to the entrance door<sup>531</sup>. If her husband was unfaithful to her, she could at least enjoy watching him be hung by his hair<sup>532</sup>. Punishment for male adultery existed even if it was less severe than the one reserved for women. To mark the entrance into adulthood, certain changes were required. Men wore a long tunic dress, like a *kaparamip kimono*, they adopted the traditional hairstyle and grew a beard (a sign of great virility and wisdom). Women wore long and loose dresses and fabric belts, and they had tattoos done. After the marriage, the new couple live into the paternal house; however, after a short period spent with the parents, the bride and groom built their hut. The company was seated around the hearth in the center of the hut, while the father of the bride sang the *yaikurekarapa*. In front of him, there was a cup filled with liquor with an *iku-bashui* resting on it crosswise, with its tip turned towards the left. When the speech was over, the father handed the cup to his daughter's betrothed, turning the *iku-bashui* first. This was an act of courtesy whereby the instrument was placed in such a position that the other could effortlessly take it in the right. This act took the special name of *bashui oshipi* or "revolt of the *bashui*".

In general, whoever handed the cup to someone else would take a sip of the liquor first. In this case, the father handed the cup intact to the betrothed, perhaps as a symbol of the purity of the woman he was about to give in marriage. After drinking half of the contents, the betrothed passed the cup to his fiancée. If she refused, the marriage would not take place. If she accepted, she would receive the cup, raise it to the forehead, gently moving it three times from right to left and drink its contents. Afterwards, she would lay it down, giving thanks through an act called *raimiki*. This consisted of rubbing the index finger of the right hand, from the left hand, along the left arm, the left shoulder, and the

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<sup>530</sup> Batchelor, J. (1939). *Ainu Life & Lore*. Tōkyō: Kyobunkwan, pp. 196-197.

<sup>531</sup> Maraini, F. (1999), op. cit. p. 434.

<sup>532</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit. pp. 68- 74.

left side of the face, over the lips<sup>533</sup>. If the spouses lived together with their relatives in the same village, they were called *uiriwak* by their relatives (“blood relations”). If they did not, they were called *uiritak* (“distant relations”) by their distant relatives.

Sometimes kinship is expressed with the offer of a sword by the suitor's father to the girl's father, followed by a prayer to *Fuchi Kamui*, then a wine libation and two or three days of revelry. Once the marriage is over, the husband will complete the tattoo around his wife's lips. The tattoo begins at the time of the engagement and ends with dots that extend to the ears. If the man becomes a widower, he can destroy his house for his deceased bride to use it in the afterlife. Afterward, he can remarry. Things are different for widows. A widow must marry the youngest of her brothers-in-law or resign to being alone. Married women maintain a very reserved attitude towards men: if they leave the hut in front of them, they must walk backwards; if they meet them on the street, they have to give way, bow their heads and cover their mouth with their hands<sup>534</sup>. The Ainu's polygamy is reported in *Ezo dan hikki* (Notes of conversations on Ezo)<sup>535</sup>, which talks about men with a minimum of four and a maximum of eight wives. The number increased according to the man's social status. An exceptional case was Tsukinoi, head of Kunashiri, who had 18 wives. Each one of them lived in their own home. In the event of the death of the man, his wives were entrusted to his relatives<sup>536</sup>.

### **- The clothes**

Traditional clothes were made with bird skin and seagull or cormorant feathers, with inner sections of bear, deer, and dog, or fish skin garments, such as trout or salmon. Other items used were bark fiber jackets called *attush* in elm fabric, which became ceremonial garments once embroidered or decorated. As trade with Japan flourished at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Ainu bought massive quantities of cotton, thus becoming embroidered. These clothes were known as *chikarkarpe* or “things decorated by us”. The clothes made from nettle fibers were called *retarpe* or “white”, from the color of the fabric. This type of dress was known to the Ainu of Sakhalin. Other

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<sup>533</sup> Munro, N.G. (1938). “Yaikurekarapa: an old Ainu oration”. In Maraini, F. (1942). *Gli iku-bashi degli Ainu*. Tōkyō: I. C. I., Vol. I, p. 3.

<sup>534</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit. pp. 68- 74.

<sup>535</sup> Kanzan, M. (1710). “Ezo Dan Hikki”. In Takakura, S. (1969). *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shūsei*. Tōkyō: San'ichi shobō, vol.4. p. 392.

<sup>536</sup> Takakura, S. (1960), op. cit. pp. 16-19.

types of clothes were the *kaparamip* or “thin clothes,” which required a large quantity of white cotton, and the *ruunpe* dresses, embroidered with small applications. The generic term *chijiri* can also be used to indicate embroidered clothes but without any application. The women's accessories were the *matanpushi* or an embroidered band, the *ninkari* the earrings, both originally worn by men, a necklace called *rekutunpe* made with a long and narrow strip of cloth with metal plates, or female necklaces. Their length reached the breast, and they were called *tamasay* or *shitoki* with glass spheres. Older women used *maidari* aprons decorated with traditional motifs<sup>537</sup>. During the mild climate, sandals were made of bark and vine. The salmon skin ones turned out to be excellent for walking on ice due to their rough texture. Other shoes were made of wood and leather straps<sup>538</sup>.

### **- Tattoos**

It is said that *A-e-oina* and *Fuchi-Kamui* descended to earth and introduced the tattoo technique among the Ainu women. This type of ornament was practiced from the age of 12-13 years, continuing until the years of marriage; around 19-20 years for men, 16-17 years for women. Lip tattooing was essential to marriage. It began at puberty and was completed by the age of 18. The one on the arms was normally completed at 20. Finally, the tattoo on the hands could also be completed after marriage, but not after the birth of the eldest son. For ornamental purposes, they tattooed the eyebrows, forearm, back of the hand, while the fingers are decorated with designs of rings and other jewels. Men rarely resort to tattooing. If they do, it is normally just for therapeutic purposes<sup>539</sup>. This practice was performed in a very precise way; the bark of ash or birch was cut into pieces and boiled. This resulted in an infusion of a greenish color, which did not affect the tattoo in any way. The affected part was cut with small cuts and the tattooed applied the carbon black from the bottom of the container. Finally, the infusion was applied three times using a cloth. During the female cycle, work was interrupted due to the greater sensitivity experienced. To speed up the healing process, women had to refrain from eating meat and fat. They were also advised to remain at home for at least a week<sup>540</sup>.

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<sup>537</sup> Retrieved from [www.ainu-museum.or.jp](http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp)

<sup>538</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit. p. 55-56.

<sup>539</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit. p. 71.

<sup>540</sup> Munro, N.G. (1962), op. cit. pp. 117-118.



### - *Hospitality*

The Ainu were kind and hospitable as long as their customs were respected: they could not enter a hut without having burped and having taken off their shoes; when they met two old friends, they crouched half a meter away and then alternately rubbed their fingers on the palm of the other, while talking with great vivacity, or raised their hands on the head making them then slip on the face and the beard, emitting a sound that was similar to a moan that ended with a sharp cry. If instead, the women met again after a long period of separation, they accompanied their embraces with abundant tears, exchanging stories about their adventures<sup>541</sup>.

### - *Music and dance*

The instruments used were a sort of straw-whistle *Wakka-kukutu* or *chi-rekte-kuttar*, a *kosa*-ox bark horn, a whistle to attract deer, a *kaco* drum that accompanied shamanic tusu songs, a sort of five-piece zither *tonkori* strings, and a *mukkuri* Jewish harp. Ainu music shows affinity with Chinese sounds, with the Gilyaki people of Sakhalin, with the Amerindians, and the Eskimos. Others claim affinity with the ancient Japanese sounds and with others from northeast Asia<sup>542</sup>. Women were the protagonists. They would sit in a circle and they would rhythmically strike each other on the chest, while the choir increasingly sang words of Ainu tradition, making the atmosphere cheerful was a prelude to most dances. In addition to the *upopo*, there was also a variant called *rimse*. The latter saw the participants standing. It originally referred to a combination of dances and songs, derived from a dance parade. In addition to the *rimse* of the *emush*, accompanied by brave cries, other types had animals as their theme. They were characterized by the respective onomatopoeic sounds, such as *Hararki's Chikapne*, with the theme of the bird; the *Chironnup* with the fox theme; the *Fumperimse* with the theme of the whale. The latter began with a scene in which an elderly woman found a weakened whale. The news soon spread among the villagers, who rushed to her aid. This marked the beginning of the representation. It appears that the villagers would perform this magical dance to make people's desires come true<sup>543</sup>. Another type of representation was the *tapkar*, which saw the mere presence of men slowly beating their feet on the ground.

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<sup>541</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit. p. 68.

<sup>542</sup> *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* (1983). Tōkyō: Kodansha Ltd ed., vol. I, p. 37.

<sup>543</sup> Retrieved from <http://eogweb.ucla.edu>

### **- The oral tradition**

The Ainu language lacked a writing system, so the stories, legends, and experiences were transmitted orally. The most common genre was the *yukar* (*yukara* in Japanese). In most of the cases, the disseminator of stories was an elderly woman or an elderly man, chosen as the official narrator of the village. The choice was based on remarkable skills, such as knowing how to tell, playing mnemonic games, acting<sup>544</sup>. While seated at the hearth, he, therefore, narrated the glorious adventures of heroes ... brave men who with their deeds have marked a moment in history (*uepeker* or “old story”), or divine deeds manifested through the appearance of animals, of natural phenomena<sup>545</sup>. Since 1928, an Ainu woman known as Kannari Matsu spent many years transcribing all the epic novels she remembered<sup>546</sup>. Hero, for example, was a young orphan *Poiyawumpe* (also called *Pon-shinutapkaunkur* or *Pon-otasamunkur*, depending on the area) son of the generous and courageous god who fought to save a beautiful girl from the clutches of a monster. This happy ending-story, being too long, was told in installments. In the *yukar*, the language differs from the Ainu language, so much that it can be considered “classical Ainu”. Another kind of oral literature called *Yaysama* and differed from the previous one because it was sung by a woman who improvised using her emotions.

### **1.2. Craft**

Famous examples of the highly developed artistic sense which they express in carving, at which they excel, are their sword sheaths and knife handles, decorated with sacred representations<sup>547</sup>. Embroidery is also very developed. It is characterized by interrupted and intertwined symbols, such as spirals, which form vague figures of hearts or rosettes, crosses, or fish scales, with little imagination. For centuries, the production of ceramics has been forgotten. They obtain their supply of containers, vases, bottles and anything else from the Japanese, trading in kind in exchange (bearskin, birds of prey for arrows, dried fish, dried algae). They never developed metallurgy of their own for similar reasons<sup>548</sup>. The production of handicrafts has undergone a very particular historical

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<sup>544</sup> Retrieved from <http://eogweb.ucla.edu>.

<sup>545</sup> Retrieved from [www.ainu-museum.or.jp](http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp).

<sup>546</sup> *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* (1983), op. cit. p. 37.

<sup>547</sup> Zardi, L. (1979), op. cit. p. 74.

<sup>548</sup> Maraini, F. (1999), op. cit. p. 442.

development. It all began during the Tokugawa period (1603-1868) first, and the Meiji period (1868-1912) later, when the Japanese imposed reforms on the Ainu community (1799-1821 and 1855-1874) and forced their assimilation (1899-1997). Hunting and fishing were forbidden, and the Ainu were forced to abandon the activities that had given them sustenance up to that time. In 1869 and 1882, the following bans were imposed: the tattoo around the mouth of women, the earrings worn by men (1871 and 1876), the immolation of women's houses after their death (1871), the hunting method that included the use of poisoned arrows and bows with iron wires (1875 and 1876). Little by little the Ainu were deprived of their cultural heritage. Discrimination against them played a decisive role and was equal to the denial of their origins, of their ethnicity as a way to escape abuse.

In March 1899, the *Hokkaidō kyūdojin hogohō* or in English LPN (Law for the Protection of Natives), entered into force, with the consequent economic relocation, agricultural training, education, and education, assistance, and medical care. Several hectares of land and tools were used to cultivate it, a concession that could be revoked if the land had not been cultivated for 15 years. Historically, cultivation was practiced exclusively by women, who took care of the production of wheat and millet, in a way that allowed the earth to rest during certain periods of the year. The balance was therefore modified and definitively disturbed. The men found themselves working in the fishing and railway industries, the women assumed the role of anchoring the family, which included agricultural work, the education of children, and more. Nowadays the Ainu identity has changed to fit its Japanese stereotype, which sees them as a certain number of people who live in tourist resorts. The difficulty on the Japanese part was not only to accept a “non-monolithic” (socially and culturally) country, but also a division within the Ainu themselves. From the image of “last” to that of “assimilated”, following their recognition by the Japanese government as an “indigenous population” on 6 June 2008. Their path was long and difficult, and in the Japanese imagination, a cosmopolitan Ainu identity did not exist. Growing up in the contemporary era, they have been unintentionally influenced by the “colonization consciousness”. Today's return to one's roots and ancient values turns out to be a residual mix of colonialism combined with modernity. From a classical point of view to acquire modernity, it is necessary to

transform oneself, accept the rules of the world, compromise and use a new communicative language. For some Ainu, this questioning is a complex and painful attempt, as it goes through the perception of oneself as different phenotypes from the *wajin*. Additionally, another factor is the awareness of the lack of experience, sometimes almost total, of one's cultural heritage or removal from one or two generations.

Due to the lack of training in agriculture, the poor quality of the land, and the lack of interest in this practice, many preferred to turn to the handcraft tradition of carving wooden utilitarian objects. This kind of traditional artisanal creation was created by people who did not feel the need to put their signature, as their “style” was known throughout the community. There are numerous “anonymous” handcraft products housed in museums around the world. The origins of this change are to be found, as it happens for many traditional societies, in social and economic transformations. The *wajin* immigrants would ask for those handcraft products to embellish their houses, like boxes of every type, objects in fine wood worked, but also clothes. As a result, in the nineteenth century, artisans began to work on demand. Shortly after the colonization of Hokkaidō, the government completed a series of projects and initiatives. An important railway network was built throughout the territory to facilitate the development and transport of goods. Starting in 1880, together with the idea of promoting the new territory with its beautiful landscapes and incredible nature, the Ainu were inserted, but as a tourist attraction. When the huge financial project had started, an army division was placed to monitor the area and organize it so that Japanese traders could offer a whole range of products to the newcomers. Examples were tableware such as plates, cutlery but also textiles. On this occasion, the first demonstrations of wood inlay and embroidery were organized. At this point, artisans identified a possibility which they could take advantage of economically. However, this was not the phase in which they began to sign their handcraft products.

Subsequently, in 1900 the first handcraft shop was opened in Chikabumi (Asahikawa province), but a few years later, precisely in 1917, the Japanese's response was double duty. In particular, they were obliged to sell the entire artisanal production to the authorities and had to buy all the necessary wood exclusively at the Forestry Office. The *wajin* authorities made considerable profits from this type of trade and the Ainu felt compelled to produce more to satisfy the ever-increasing demand, in addition to trying

to vary their production. It must be said, however, that the Ainu have never been enriched by this whole situation. Among the first examples of thematic variation is the image of the bear. The bear is a figure of extreme importance in the ancestral Ainu tradition. The bear was believed to be Kimun-Kamuy, the god of the mountain, to whom an important ceremony is dedicated, if not the most important, the *Iyomante* (“the sacred sending of the bear”). The bear had always appeared in miniature on the *ikybashui*, which were ceremonial sticks or on the *sapaunpe* male crowns. Until then, the creation of divine images had never been considered, as was the case for the Ainu of Sakhalin, where the image of the bear was used as an amulet during the important ceremony. The only representations of the bear for the Ainu of Hokkaidō were stylized images or pictorial realizations. From the 1920s onwards, tourists showed interest in these new sculptures. The bear became an exotic figure of the island, purchased as a simple souvenir. The difficulty in finding the right trade route and making a good profit from it was manifold, since the objects were not realistic.

There are several versions of the commercial origins of these bear sculptures. Some, like Ōtsuka Kazuyoshi (1941-), claim the sculptures were introduced by a Japanese tourist who returned from a trip to Switzerland. Another version concerns Tokugawa Yoshichika (1886-1976), a descendant of the last shogūn’s family in the Oshima peninsula, who in 1922 returned from one of his stays in Europe, brought figurines of bears made by Swiss farmers who used to supplement their incomes. It seems that he later encouraged the Ainu to do the same during the long winters in Hokkaidō. The Ainu were seduced by the idea and began the wooden production of images of the bear, which quickly became a tourist souvenir for visitors from the rest of Japan. Another version features Matsui Umetaro, a skilled sculptor who received a special award from the Hokkaidō prefecture during an exhibition on Ainu crafts in 1933. His fame also reached Emperor Hirohito, who in 1936, during his visit to the island bought a sculpture made especially for him. At this point, the artist began to sign his works. He received the opinion of a famous Japanese sculptor, Katō Kensei (1894-1966), who was invited to Asahikawa to introduce both traditional and modern inlay techniques to Ainu carvers. This was the first time the Ainu were trained in the use of modern instruments. The art of sculpture acquired the standard canon used by all sculptors from then on, marking a crucial step in the cultural change of traditional methods.

The experiment was so successful that soon the Chikabumi artisan community became renowned for the peculiarity of the new techniques, negotiation skills, and demonstrations of wood inlay. Furthermore, there were plenty of occasions when one's own experience was exported to other communities. The fame of Chikabumi's sculptures grew, and the production of bear figurines reached exponential levels. A key figure in this new genre was Matsui Umetarō (1901-1949), who created a new production code for these sculptures, formalizing the general shapes that became parameters borrowed from all the other sculptors. The increasing benefits of this situation also convinced the Ainu of Nibutani to create their sculptures on a large scale. Artists such as Kaizawa Kōji (1962-) or Kaizawa Tōru (1958-) are well known. In this circuit, instead, sculptors created new desires. They felt artistically limited in producing objects while remaining faithful to specific themes, in the tourist sense of the term. Establishing oneself for one's talent became a need for them, and it encountered great obstacles. Racial discrimination hindered learning at art schools, where often the support and knowledge network of influential and wealthy families was required. Thus, the young artists of the Ainu fine arts found their artistic path, in which they were accepted in Hokkaidō but disdained by the world of contemporary Japanese art. The postwar of World War II drew the focus away from these activities, but in the meantime, the massive presence of the American occupation armed forces on the Japanese territory represented a new market for the Ainu. The artisans began to produce large quantities of wooden sculptures to satisfy the demand of soldiers in search of typical souvenirs, always innovating the animal motifs that adorn the objects (besides the bear, also salmon or orcas, and others). Consequently, those ancestral animal symbols like bears, owls, and others ended up becoming popular subjects for souvenirs. Tourism remains an important activity both for the Japanese and for the prefecture of Hokkaidō, where the valorization of the territories and the promotion of their ecosystems are the main priorities.

During this period, Asahikawa maintained a privileged position in the production sector, which saw a strong expansion throughout Japan and even outside. His fame had another great demand, this time from the large tourist village Porotokotan of Shiraoi, which requested and purchased most of the handicraft produced by 1950. Many were the centers that were constantly influenced by the style and techniques used by Chikabumi craftsmen. In the 1960s many visionary artists began to push Ainu craftsmanship into

the domain of fine arts, but in the Japanese national imagination, Ainu objects continue to be tourist art or simply souvenirs. In the same years, Sunazawa Bikki made the inlay a realistic way to represent. He was the first to introduce his signature in this new field. His way of working, a mix of themes of Ainu culture and abstract art, made him enter the Association of Modern Art of Japan in 1962. Since the 1980s, there have been numerous Ainu exhibitions in Japan, which have been displayed as “personal exposure” or “collective”. Their creations have become expressions that are halfway between Ainu symbolism and modern art. Through exhibitions in museums and galleries, they have made their way to a new type of market<sup>549</sup>.

### **1.3. Permanent exhibition**

#### ***- Museums and collections***

When talking about Ainu material culture, one must paradoxically necessarily speak of overseas collections. The oldest materials, before being placed in museums in Japan thus becoming permanent collections, have traveled elsewhere. A total of 13,000 objects and 5,000 objects in the 21st century completed this journey<sup>550</sup>. But let us take a few steps back. The first to establish studies on the Ainu and incorporate them into Japanese culture were Mogami Tokunai (1754-1836) who traveled throughout Hokkaidō, from the Kurili to Urup from 1786, and Mamiya Rinzō (1780-1844) who traveled to Sakhalin and the Amur region in the years 1808 and 1809, thus becoming an example for other European scholars. Another scholar was Isaak Titsingh who traveled to Deshima between 1779 and 1780 and again between 1782 and 1784. One of his current successors, Cock J. Bloemhoff, was in Deshima between the years 1817-1822 and was the first to include objects of Ainu origin in his Japanese collection. Back in Europe, he donated his collection (37 Ainu objects) to the King of the Netherlands. Today, the collection is housed at Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden and represents the

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<sup>549</sup> From the Meiji Restoration onwards, the commodification of artistic works diminished their value by classifying them as objects of craftsmanship, meant simply as art for tourists. By labelling artistic work this way, the Ainu production seems very far from being considered “art”. The lack of any kind of governmental support has made the realization of the work even more difficult.

<sup>550</sup> Lewallen, A.E. (2016). *The Fabric of Indigeneity. Ainu Identity, Gender, and Settler Colonialism in Japan*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press. School for Advanced Research Global Indigenous Politics Series, p. 187.

oldest Ainu collection in Europe outside of St. Petersburg<sup>551</sup>. Much of the Ainu material is kept in the museums of Saint Petersburg, where there are 4,766 objects. There are more than 800 in Russia, namely in Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, and Yuzhno Sakhalinsk<sup>552</sup>. Taking into consideration the objects of the Japanese collections, on the other hand, we estimate 30,000 in total. In North America, the situation is the following: 3 Museums in Canada and 31 Museums distributed throughout the United States, with a total of 3,000 objects. As for Europe, Germany ranks first, with 24 Museums and a total of 3,486 objects (51.46%), Italy ranks second with a total of 498, including 468 objects<sup>553</sup> preserved in a single Museum (7.35 %) and the United Kingdom ranks third, with 864 objects spread across 8 Museums (12.75%)<sup>554</sup>. In detail, there are 58 Museums in 17 European countries - excluding Russia - with around 6,773 objects from the Ainu culture.

From a research conducted by Kotani Yoshinobu, 13,254 are Ainu material culture objects distributed in museums around the world. Russia has a total of 4,438 objects, the United States 3,130, Germany 2,925, Europe with ten nations 2,071, the United Kingdom 605, Canada 75 and Australia 10<sup>555</sup>. The data of the two researchers differ, because Kreiner (1993) took into consideration all objects, including the private collections ones, while Kotani refers to those contained in museums. Between 1983 and 1986, a group of researchers from the Institute of Japanese Studies at the University of

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<sup>551</sup> Kreiner, J. (1987). “Yōroppa-ni okeru Ainu-kankei korekushon-no rekishi to genjō” (History and current state of Ainu Collections in Europe). In Katō K. And Kotani Y. (eds.): *Piusutsuki shiryō to hoppō shominzoku bunka no kenkyū* (Bronislaw Pilsudski’s Materials on Northern Peoples and cultures). Ōsaka: Kokuritsu minzokugaku-hakubutsukan kenkyū-hōkoku bessatsu, n. 5, p.430.

<sup>552</sup>Kreiner, J. (1993). “European Images of Ainu and Ainu Language and Culture” in Joseph Kreiner (ed.) *European Studies on Ainu Languages and Culture*. Monographien 6 aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien der Philipp-Franz-von-Siebold-Stiftung. München: Iudicium –Verl., p.128.

<sup>553</sup> Kreiner, J. (1993). “Ainu Collections in European Museums” in Joseph Kreiner (ed.) *European Studies on Ainu Languages and Culture*. Monographien 6 aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien der Philipp-Franz-von-Siebold-Stiftung. München: Iudicium –Verl., p. 289. In addition to the collection of the Italian scholar Fosco Maraini, donated to the National Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology of Florence, there are three other collections, for a total of 30 objects; a collection dating back to around 1880, of the Museo della Specola of Florence with a number of 6 objects; another collection belonging to Lamberto Loria, Florence 1936 (1880) with 2 objects; that of A. Henry Savage Landor, 1957 (?) (1890), with 17 objects. Finally, there are still 5 objects, but they are n.c.

<sup>554</sup> Kreiner, J. (1993). “Ainu Collections in European Museums”, op. cit. p. 272.

<sup>555</sup> Lewallen, A.E. (2016), op. cit. p. 239.



Bonn, supported by the German Science Foundation and the Toyota Foundation in Tōkyō, verified these collections, specifically in Europe, where 5,706 objects were verified, which corresponds to 84%. These collections have some characteristics. First of all, the time factor, the crucial moment in which they were created that coincides with the phase of contact between Ainu, Japanese and Western culture. The oldest collections ever were made in the first half of the 18th century, once part of the Tsar Peter's Great Collection of Art, now at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology (MAE) in Saint Petersburg. Among the most recent Kirsten Tapuchi (126 objects) in Aarhus, around 1970.

In Europe, the oldest collection is at the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden, Netherlands, from the 19th century. Among collectors, Jan Cock Blomhoff, who held the important position at the Dutch trading post in Japan, on the Deshima peninsula near Nagasaki, from 1817 to 1823, collected 37 items. Another important collector was Franz von Siebold, physician, botanist, and German traveler, in Deshima between the years 1823-1829, during which he collected 81 objects. We know that they received items from several expedition members sent by the Tokugawa Shogunate to explore the northern frontier at the turn of the nineteenth century and from Japanese friends, including Tokunai Mogami. There was a difference between the collection dates of these collections and those in Japan, where they were not made before the 1930s of the 1900s. In Europe, instead, the collections were made towards the end of the nineteenth century and some, like that of the Prussian diplomat Max von Brandt (with 52 objects preserved in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, others in Lübeck and others in the Mankind Museum in London) before Meiji Restoration.

One of the largest collections was that of Johann Friedrich Gustav Umlauff, a naval carpenter who opened his “curio shop” in Hamburg in 1868. It was an exhibition space specializing in ethnographic objects from all over the world and which saw his fame grow more and more. His widow in 1889, opened the Umlauff's Weltmuseum, which saw the collaboration of Fritz Lang and other filmmakers passionate about exoticism. After a few years, an episode raised doubts; the well-cataloged Ainu pieces, in addition to the identifying name, saw the addition of *fushiko-ampe* (that is, of an object of no value). This was due to the Museum's purchase, in the years 1906-1907, of a collection comprising nearly 700 Ainu objects, of which 2/3 from Sakhalin, and the incident was

due to Adrian Jacobson who worked for Umlauff's brother-in-law, Hagenbeck. The Norwegian captain made his journey from Sakhalin to Indonesia, buying a collection of 172 items for Berlin between 1884 and 1885, and one of the first Museums that bought the collection (210 items) was the Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum in Cologne in 1907<sup>556</sup>. In following years other museums and institutions did the same thing, such as Leipzig, Stockholm, Hildesheim (lost during the Second World War), Copenhagen, St. Gall, London, Bucharest, Frankfurt am Main, Freiburg, Dresden; the last collection purchased in Hamburg was destroyed by bombs in the year 1944.

The second significant data is that relative to the formation of the collections. In Europe, the collections were collected mainly by scholars of anthropology and ethnology (41.6% against 12.2% of material purchased by merchants), while the Japanese, having started collecting only later, were able to recover the material only from merchants and “curio shops”. Among scholars, Erwin Baelz, German Professor of Medicine at the University of Tōkyō, collected 84 objects, 10 held in Berlin the rest kept at the Linden Museum in Stuttgart. His colleague Hans Gierke, with 65 objects in Berlin, the ethnographer Wilhelm Joest of Cologne in Hokkaidō between 1880 and 1881, collected 155 objects distributed between Dresden, Berlin, Cologne, Munich, Copenhagen, and Leiden. The linguist Basil Hall Chamberlain collected 123 objects kept at the Pitt-Rivers Museum in Oxford in 1892 and the Hungarian Benedict Balogh von Baráthos, who from Siberia passes the Bering Strait, Alaska and then was in Sakhalin and Hokkaidō between 1913 and 1914, collected 821 objects, which were confiscated at the outbreak of the First World War and once returned in the 1920s, sold 223 objects to the Museum of Ethnology in Hamburg. Another important aspect to take into account is that related to the collection of ethnographic material by travelers, about 22.7% of the total, which they could buy or barter directly in the villages. Isabella Bird traveled to Hokkaidō in 1878 and collected 5 pieces now kept in the Royal Scottish Museum. Other collections, but in a very small percentage (around 4%), are due to naval officers and graduates. The missionaries' collections are also included, preserved in more places like the

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<sup>556</sup> Kreiner, J. & Ölschleger, H.D. (1987). “Ainu: Jäger, Fischer und Sammler in Japans Norden: Ein Bestandskatalog der sammlung des Rautenstrauch- Joest-Museums” (Ainu: Hunters, fishers, and gatherers in northern Japan: A catalogue of the collection of the Rauten-strauch-Joest-Museums). *Ethnologica*. Cologne: Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum für Völkerkunde, vol. 12.

Ethnological Missionary Museum at the Vatican. The collection consists of 18 objects, put together by P. Kinold in 1928. At the Horniman Museum in London (by the company missionary of the church, 14 objects in 1952) and at the Pitt-Rivers in Oxford whose collection was made by P. Rousseau in Muroran in 1900, where he collected 84 objects. The third and last aspect concerns the objects on which the collections are formed. The European collections consist mainly of weapons, tools for hunting and fishing, baskets for collecting food, religious and religious objects (such as *ikubashui*), of which about 400 are in the wonderful collection of the European scholar Fosco Maraini, now at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology in Florence. The Japanese collections, on the other hand, put more emphasis on clothes and some objects associated with agricultural activity.

An interesting difference relates to the Hokkaidō Ainu objects that appear in the Japanese collections, while few objects are from Sakhalin mainly preserved in Hakodate, in Asahikawa, and at the National Museum of Ethnology and even less than the Kurile (mainly kept in Hakodate and Tōkyō National Museum). European collections are preserved in museums in Hokkaidō and Sakhalin, while Russian collections focus mainly on the latter and also group objects from the Kuril Islands, which are almost non-existent in the Western European collections, although there are some small woven baskets in Siebold's collection in Leiden, in Berlin and at Musée de l'Homme in Paris. In 1980, specialists from bookstores, archives, and museums from various central European countries were invited by the University of Bonn for comparison. The significance of their collections for Japanese studies was discussed, but museums were unable to give detailed descriptions of their collections, for different reasons. A great deal of ethnographic material, craftsmanship, and art was purchased at the end of the nineteenth century when Japan resumed contact with the rest of the world but lacked personnel and the available training was not advanced enough to organize and classify it. During this occasion, it was discussed on the importance of the Japanese collections<sup>557</sup>. After the First World War, the acquisitions stopped almost completely, and the museum staff became impoverished. During the Second World War, many

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<sup>557</sup> Kreiner, J. (1999). "European Images of the Ainu as reflected in Museum Collections". In *Ainu Spirit of a Northern People*, edited by William W. Fitzhugh and Dubreuil Chisato O.s, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, pp. 130-131.

important collections were destroyed, such as that of Bronisław Piłsudski in Warsaw (although his contributions to the Saint Petersburg Museum survived) or dispersed.

Since the Second World War, European studies on the Ainu have found a new identity. Previously the theoretical concepts had dominated the scene and, at this point in history, a critical reconsideration became necessary. The first to undertake such a different type of study was the Italian scholar Fosco Maraini, who with his monographic work *Gli Iku-bashui of the Ainu* (Tōkyō, 1942), collects a formidable collection of libation sticks, now preserved at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology of Florence, accompanied by important information on these ceremonial objects, from a manufacturing point of view, from a symbology point of view. During the 1950s-60s of the 1900s, interest in the Ainu grew in the United States, where it was considered part of the Japanese field of study, but the reference to the situation of hardship and the association with the American Indians were frequent<sup>558</sup>.

#### **1.4. Ephemeral exhibitions**

##### **- *Exhibition fairs***

The Ainu had great success in Europe, and this caused the use of ethnographic material not always ethically correct. An example is given by the first international exhibition, in which the modern Japanese government took part. In the year 1872, the Austrian photographer Raimund von Stillfried was commissioned to take pictures of the Ainu at the Vienna World Exposition in 1873. The Japanese government faced a strong obligation, namely, to promote a new one more decisively Japan to the whole world. In an area of around 1,300 tsubos (1 tsubo = about 31.3 m<sup>2</sup>), the government built a Shinto shrine and a Japanese garden with a white wooden gate. Behind the door was the main structure of the sanctuary, traditional music and a ballroom, and an arched bridge. At the industrial pavilion, the government exhibited works by *ukiyo-e* and art products, as well as having set up some exhibitions, such as the one on Kinshachi (the golden dolphins) of Nagoya Castle. Furthermore, a model of the Great Buddha of Kamakura, a five-story model and nearly four meters high of the Tennōji temple of Yanaka (Tōkyō), a large drum of about two meters in diameter, and a lantern of approximately four meters

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<sup>558</sup> Kreiner, J. (1999), op. cit. pp. 127-131.

in diameter were made with the image of a dragon on a waterfall<sup>559</sup>. Thanks to the contribution of Professor Gottfried Wagener, a member of the Japanese Exhibition Commission, 57 objects of the Ainu culture were donated to the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin<sup>560</sup>.

At the beginning of the 20th century, two groups of Ainu moved from the area around the holy river Saru, to participate in two events outside Japan<sup>561</sup>. They were the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, in St. Louis, Missouri, from April 30th to December 1st, 1904, with more than 20 million visitors<sup>562</sup>. The material was collected by Frederick Starr of the University of Chicago, who was sent to Hokkaidō and met the scholar John Batchelor. For the Exposition, the Japanese government sent around 200 Ainu sample objects that subsequently were preserved in the Brooklyn Museum in New York<sup>563</sup>. The second in 1910, was an Anglo-Japanese exhibition held at the White City, Shepherd's Bush in London, from May 14th to October 29th, with more than 6 million visitors. An event on Japanese collections that had no equal in any other country. The Japanese Empire was eager to present “its aborigines” and in addition to a Taiwanese group, there were 5 men, 4 women, and a child from the Ainu village of Nibutani. The Ainu were a great attraction and all the English newspapers talked about it. The Ainu objects on that occasion were 234, including some brought from the Saru valley, others made in London, during traditional craftsmanship's demonstrations. This collection is currently dispersed in five museums in the United Kingdom: the Museum of Mankind (76 pieces), Liverpool (66 pieces), Pitt-Rivers (49 pieces), Horniman (35 pieces), and Cambridge University (8 pieces).

The International Exhibitions were considered as media events of the second half of the nineteenth century. It seems that before the Londoners, it was the French who started,

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<sup>559</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.ndl.go.jp/exposition/e/s1/1873-2.html>

<sup>560</sup> Kreiner, J. (1993). “European Images of Ainu and Ainu Language and Culture”, op. cit. pp. 42-43.

<sup>561</sup> Miyatake, K. (2012). “Ainu in London 1910: Power, Representation and Practice of the Ainu Village”. In Ayako Hotta-Lister and Ian Nish (eds). *Commerce and Culture at the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition: Centenary Perspectives*. Global Oriental, p. 103.

<sup>562</sup> Retrieved from Missouri Digital Heritage [https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mdh\\_splash/default.asp?coll=muellis](https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mdh_splash/default.asp?coll=muellis) and <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/archive/history-forest-park/fair.html>

<sup>563</sup> Yoshinobu, K. (1993). “Preliminary Notes on Ainu Materials in North American Museums” in Joseph Kreiner (ed.) *European Studies on Ainu Languages and Culture*. Monographien 6 aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien der Philipp-Franz-von-Siebold-Stiftung. Munich: Iudicium-Verlag, op. cit. pp. 301-304.

creating the event in 1797, while London organized the first in 1851<sup>564</sup>. The first international exhibition of Japanese objects took place in 1862 when in London a Japanese mission aroused much curiosity and so was the enthusiasm for these artifacts never seen. The euphoria continued also in Paris in 1867, when the Japanese authorities realized the potential of such events. Subsequently, the new Meiji government took over the organization of exhibitions both in Japan and abroad, showing that it could belong to an industrialized world rather than the Euro-American Empire. The criticisms emerged. For example, the writer Nishimura Toshihiko, from the *Asahi shinbun*, expressed his irritation for the Ainu performance and did so in his *Eibei yuranki* (Notes from a journey between Europe and America, Ōsaka 1910), arguing that westerners are certainly different from the Japanese, who put the Ainu in small huts, making them look like creatures in a zoo, thus lacking in humanity<sup>565</sup>. These claims continued over the years and still, today often refer to the situation of the Ainu as of people in “human zoos” where the folkloristic revival reigns. Ziomek<sup>566</sup> argues that the “human zoos” originated from European colonialism, starting with showing human beings during the Paris Exposition of 1889, followed by that of Chicago, the “Chicago World's Fair” of 1893.

One of the most recent Ainu occasions was in 2015 when Milan hosted its Universal Exposition from May 1st to October 31st, which featured a Japanese pavilion that produced an event called “At the Hokkaidō Fair”, organized by the Hokkaidō Committee for Expo Milano 2015, on 6 - 8 October. The event was characterized by a seminar on Ainu culture, a cooking exhibition, and a video on Hokkaidō island, as well as tastings of typical products<sup>567</sup>. The Ainu representative was the musician Kanō Oki who held a performance with his *tonkori*, a traditional musical instrument. After this experience, there was another different occasion, the “International Festival of Tribal and Indigenous Groups of the World” organized by the Italian Association “The Spirit of the Planet” which has been held for years in Chiuduno, in the province of Bergamo

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<sup>564</sup> Lockyer, A. (2012). “Japan and International Exhibition, 1862-1910”. In Ayako Hotta-Lister and Ian Nish (eds). *Commerce and Culture at the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition: Centenary Perspectives*. Global Oriental, p.27.

<sup>565</sup> Kreiner, J. (1999), op. cit p. 130.

<sup>566</sup> Ziomek, K. (2014). “The 1903 Human Pavilion: Colonial Realities and Subaltern Subjectivities in Twentieth-century Japan”. *Japan Journal of Asian Studies*, 73 (2), p.510.

<sup>567</sup> Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Retrieved from <https://ccigi.org/expomilano-hokkaido/>

(Italy). I took part in the 17th edition held between May 26th and June 11th, 2017, personally organizing the present Ainu group<sup>568</sup> which was divided between the group of musicians (which included the Marewrew, only 3 members, Kanō Oki, and their manager) and the group of sculptors (as representative there was Fujito Kōhei of the Fujito Kumanoya laboratory, with his wife and their 4 children, plus the assistant of the sculptor accompanied by his wife with their 3 children), for a total of 9 adults and 7 children.

From the entrance of the city park, there were two sections; the section on the left, a more commercial one, with various restaurants and ethnic shops, as well as a small building and the large main stage on which a concert of different people was held every evening, and the section on the right dedicated to the spiritual part, consisting of a series of 3m x4m wooden huts, arranged in a semicircle, one next to the other. The group of musicians (as well as all the musicians of other peoples) had their own space in a specific point of the city park where he held his demonstrations every day for 20 minutes (in their case in the evening or around 8.00 pm or towards 22,00). The group of sculptors had set up their hut with the craft objects arranged in this way: on the sides, one next to the other (4 on the right and 4 on the left), tree trunks of about 30-40 cm in height, were the basis for many handicrafts, placed by gender on each base (t-shirt with an image of a bear or other Ainu symbols, bandanas, towels, hair objects/ jewelry, bear-shaped stickers, plastic I-phone covers and *tonkori*-shaped bookmarks (musical instrument), *mukkuri* (musical instrument) and a base was reserved for the various CDs of both Marewrew and Kanō Oki. On the back, at the top, some objects adorned the wall, including small cutting boards or mini *kimono*, at the bottom instead arranged horizontally and attached to the wall, 7 thin trunks on which 7 glass cabinets rested inside each with an exquisitely crafted “precious” wooden object, which are usually exhibited in museums, such as clocks, needle and thread containers, a knife (with wooden handle and Damascus blade) and a wooden I-Phone cover. The eighth space was not made up of a base, but from an iron structure that supported a sculpture: it was

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<sup>568</sup> In addition to organizing the group, I worked as a field coordinator, as a guide in relation to the objects displayed under the hut and to the characterizing aspects of the Ainu culture and I held three lectures on the themes of History & Survival, Religious tradition & Material Culture and finally on Ainu ethnicity in contemporary Japan. I conducted long interviews with the musician Kanō Oki and the sculptor Fujito Kōhei.

a copy of an original that participated in the project *Imago Mundi* by Luciano Benetton<sup>569</sup>.

In the center of the hut, there was a post that went up to the front, that is a trunk always between 30-40 cm in height but larger, on which the sculptor executed his extemporaneous sculpture. It was a piece of wood precisely made of Japanese larch, 1.20 high and 14 cm wide, which Fujito Kōhei brought from Japan and started creating, and concluded it during the Festival. It was an *ikubashui* and wanted to be a tribute to the Italy that had hosted them, with a fusion of Ainu symbols, so the sculpture appeared in this way, at the extremes vertically you can see the outline of the boot of Italy both on the right side that sinister and in the center richly carved Ainu symbols. The sculpture during the last day was blessed through a ceremony attended by a member of each indigenous group present during the Festival, at the end of which it was donated to the city of Chiuduno. It is possible to see freely by going to the city park. Currently, the situation in Italy includes in addition to the aforementioned private collections and the one at the Museum of Florence, also the work created for Luciano Benetton and that at the Parco di Chiuduno. During the days of the Festival, handicraft products were sold, a total of 203 objects, and orders were commissioned for some Damascus blade knives, such as the one displayed in one of the showcases. For the Ainu, it was the first time as an indigenous group to have been a guest in Italy.

The Ainu visibility continued with another event held in Italy, from September 23 to October 30, 2018, with free admission, a collaboration between Etro, the famous fashion house, and Mudec, the Museum of Cultures of Milan. For that occasion, *yurts* were prepared with the possibility of meeting the Huicholes, the Native Americans of the Western Sierra Madre of Mexico, and also the Ainu of Hokkaidō.

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<sup>569</sup> Luciano Benetton wanted to involve experts and curators from all over the world for this project that is constantly evolving. In 2018 the new documentary on the project was presented, entitled “Behind the Frames”, directed by Stefano Ribaldi, tracing the adventure of the non-profit and global contemporary art project *Imago Mundi* and its promoter. To date, more than 25,000 artists representing more than 150 countries, regions and native communities around the world have taken part, using the indicated format of 10cmx12cm.



## CHAPTER II

### AINU PARKS AND RECONSTRUCTED VILLAGES

#### **Introduction**

Nowadays in Japan, the presence of the traditional Ainu culture seems limited to the reconstructed villages, entirely devoted to tourism. The representation of a culture (tradition, rituals, craft products) for tourism purposes provides for economic remuneration. These activities are especially important for the Ainu but, at the same time, in the most dramatic cases, they refer to the image of a life that no longer exists, where tradition becomes folklore, revealing in this way the last danger faced by the Ainu. However, it is also true that ethno-tourism can result in formidable socio-economic support.

Indeed, there have come to be real cultural centers, which are excellent examples of the preservation of the fundamental aspects of traditional Ainu culture. Tourism plays an indispensable role in the affirmation of Ainu ethnicity, which has progressively established through ethno-tourism a place of personal expression and redefinition of identity in continuous change. Over time it has become an integral part of the contemporary Ainu social sphere. The ethno-tourism has a generating power because it stimulates the careful search for rituals and traditional objects, thus supporting the revitalization of ancient knowledge and supporting the formulation of identity claims. We are therefore witnessing a compromise between tradition and modernity, between inherited rituals and new forms of expression.

In this chapter, I will focus on these issues through the consideration of the different Ainu reconstructed villages and the celebration of the Marimo Festival, as an effective case of preserving and promoting traditional culture through the tourist economy.

#### **2.1. The touristification of identity**

During the Meiji Restoration, the government forced the assimilation of the Ainu into Japanese society by prohibiting any sign of ethnicity such as female tattoos, beards, and male ornaments and even speaking their language, converting them to agricultural

policy. The Ainu who had always lived by hunting and fishing were deprived of any rights as indigenous people<sup>570</sup>. Thanks to the first “protective” measures undertaken, with a law establishing compulsory education promulgated in 1872<sup>571</sup>, the school programs provided for Ainu children were lower in quality and duration than those for Japanese children. They began their studies at the age of 6, while the Ainu at 7, moreover the complete cycle of studies was 5 for the Japanese and 4 for the Ainu. In March 1899, the *Hokkaidō kyūdojin hogohō* or in English LPN (Law for the Protection of Natives the LPN entered into force. The law, drafted in 13 articles, established the economic relocation and transformation of the Ainu in peasants, education, assistance, and medical care, and issued the possibility of giving the Ainu five hectares of land and tools to cultivate it, concession revocable if the land was not cultivated for 15 years<sup>572</sup>. The Ainu faced a crossroads: to remain faithful to their identity, giving up assistance and sustenance, or entering the new market economy. The majority of the Ainu “chose” the first way. They transferred to areas with specific regulatory plans, employment in the fields<sup>573</sup>, in a process that often involved the issues of poverty and alcoholism<sup>574</sup>.

In the last decades, the commoditization of Ainu culture (tradition, rituals, craft products) for tourism purposes provides economic remuneration to their agents<sup>575</sup>. These activities are very important for the Ainu but, at the same time, they have aroused numerous debates about the political sphere, the economic sphere, and the social sphere. Tourism takes on a negative connotation, when the image of sacred traditions is altered, making everything appear artificial and, at worst, organized cultural events are devoid of any historical truth. In the most dramatic cases, these activities become the reflection of real human zoos that, together with the reconstructed villages, refer to the image of a life that no longer exists, revealing in this way the last danger faced by the Ainu.

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<sup>570</sup> Honda, K. (1993). “The situation of Ainu people”. *The Impoverished Spirit in Contemporary Japan*. New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 108-109.

<sup>571</sup> D’Angelo, S. (2008). “Note in margine al centenario del sistema scolastico giapponese”. *Il Giappone*, Vol. XLVI, [2006], Rome-Naples, p. 96.

<sup>572</sup> Siddle, R. (1996). *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*. London: Routledge, p. 71.

<sup>573</sup> In 1872, following checks on the intellectual abilities of the Ainu, some of them were sent to Tōkyō to be educated. Battipaglia, S. (2009). “Gli Ainu verso il riconoscimento come ‘popolazione indigena’”. *Il Giappone*. Volume XLIX, Rome-Naples 2011, 161- 169.

<sup>574</sup> Siddle, R. (1995). “With Shining Eyes: Ainu Social and Political Movements, 1918-1937”, *Asian Cultural Studies*, n. 21:1-20.

<sup>575</sup> Clercq, L. (2017). *Les Aïnous de Hokkaidō: Transformations socioculturelles des aborigènes de l’extrême Nord du Japon*, Université de Hokkaidō – EHESS, PhD Thesis.

If ethno-tourism is based on health conditions, it can also result in formidable socio-economic support. Indeed, the impetus of local economies can considerably improve the quality of life of those concerned, as well as prevent simple extinction, creating a dense network of jobs. The Ainu, therefore, offer active participation in the economy, proving to be a valid example of collaboration between communities of mutual interest. It has therefore brought considerable incomes to the Ainu communities closer to poverty, soon acquiring a pedagogical dimension. Gradually, there have come to be real cultural centers, which are excellent examples of the preservation of the fundamental aspects of traditional Ainu culture. Tourism plays an indispensable role in the affirmation of Ainu ethnicity, which progressively established itself through ethno-tourism, a place of personal expression and redefinition of identity in continuous movement. Over time it has become an integral part of the contemporary Ainu social sphere. Another important aspect is the moral prejudice from the government policy that refers to an official and persistent stereotyped image. In this way, they are seen as condemned people, presented as a fragile, and “primitive” community. This is the case of the unidentified bones of Ainu skeletons, stolen from their graves and distributed among 11 Japanese universities<sup>576</sup>. Consequently, the reappropriation and control of one's image are quite necessary, and ethno-tourism in this regard can be significant support. The tourist industry around which it develops, is part of the most important Ainu art distribution company, the Northern Japan Folk Art Society (*Kita Nihon mingeisha*), managed by a *wajin* businessman.

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<sup>576</sup> In 2012 the Ainu were outraged to learn that 1,636 ancestral remains were held in twelve universities across Japan, of which 60% were in the University of Hokkaidō. Lewallen, A.E. (2016). *The Fabric of Indigeneity. Ainu Identity, Gender, and Settler Colonialism in Japan*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, School for Advanced Research Global Indigenous Politics Series, p. 2014. Lewallen, A.E. (2013). “The Ainu”. In the *Indigenous World 2013*, edited by Cæcilie Mikkelsen, Copenhagen: IWGIA, pp. 223-227.

Only 1% of these skeletons have been taken into account in order to be identified by research anthropologists in a period between the Meiji Era and 1972. The publication of these figures caused a considerable upheaval by the Ainu community, while the government started a program of progressive restitution of the skeletons to the places of origin both in Hokkaidō, that in Sakhalin that in the Kurils. The fundamental question concerns the difficulty of identification, after several years and following the not always optimal storage conditions. The government announces that it will bury the unidentifiable skeletons, with a dignified burial, but that they will be part of a memory museum in the city of Shiraoi, Hokkaidō.

Scholars<sup>577</sup> propose to analyze the essential role of ethno-tourism, which passes through the conservation and development of contemporary cultural expressions. It has a generating power because it stimulates the careful search for rituals and traditional objects, thus supporting the revitalization of ancient knowledge and supporting the formulation of identity claims<sup>578</sup>. The quality of their services in addition to the search for cultural authenticity is accompanied by a constant training investment. This is the creation of a real re-appropriation of identity.

Furthermore, participation in international forums with peoples from all over the world has enormously stimulated the pride of one's identity and efforts towards ethno-tourism, now perceived as a serious possibility of recognition. It has become a place where the symbols of contemporary Ainu identity are built before being used on the political scene, such as for the theme of ecological awareness, thus attracting the attention of public opinion. It can therefore be considered a source of stimulus for the preservation of traditions, for the creation of others and to motivate the search for new meanings in rituals and traditional objects. Revitalizing the old rites creates a problem when facing the question of authenticity, which appears to be negotiable in many respects. Most artistic representations and products sold in these centers may seem artificial when they do not appear to have been invented for the occasion. Authenticity itself is perceived here as a social construction in progress and not as an intangible creation that refers to a mythical time outside of history. Nowadays, Ainu live in a complex society that takes advantage of the means of modernity, such as smartphones or touchscreens. We are therefore witnessing a compromise between tradition and modernity, between mythology and new forms of expression. The example is given by the *Akan Kotan* where the multiple shops offer different sculptures, some of which are authentic works of art that reach considerable sums for the most renowned artists. The substantial difference in the production of handicrafts concerns the tradition linked to the creation of everyday

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<sup>577</sup> Scheou, B., (2009). *Du tourisme durable au tourisme équitable: quelle éthique pour le tourisme de demain?*. De Boeck; Bernard, P., "ethno-tourisme, écotourisme, tourisme équitable, etc.". (2006). *Ikewan* n° 60, p. 3-5; Hiwasaki L. "Ethnic Tourism in Hokkaidō and the Shaping of Ainu Identity". (2000). *Pacific Affairs*, 73 (3), pp.393-413; Kazuyoshi, O. "Tourism, Assimilation, and Ainu Survival Today". (1999). In *Ainu-Spirit of a northern people*. (Ed. William W. Fitzhugh & Dubreuil Chisato O.). Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, op. cit., p. 92-95.

<sup>578</sup> Clercq, L. (2013). "Expressions culturelles et identitaires des Ainu de Hokkaïdô à travers l'aire sociale et politique de l'ethno-tourisme." *Research Journal of Graduate Students of Letters*, Hokkaidō University Collection of Scholarly and Academic Papers, n° 13, pp. 385-416.

objects and the new fashion of sculpting objects with remarkable artistic dimensions. The growing demand for these specific creations has motivated the Ainu to work in novel forms. The analysis of these issues deserves further consideration, as we will do in the next section on the reconstructed villages.

### **2.1.2. The reconstructed villages**

Currently, there are three active reconstructed villages: *Poroto Kotan*; the *Nibutani Kotan*, and the *Akan Kotan*.

#### **- *Poroto Kotan***

The entrance to the village is guarded by a large statue, 16 m high, known as *Kotankorkur* (“the statue of the head”). Originally, it stood in the urban district of Shiraoi, later located on the shores of *Lake Poroto* in 1965, went to form an open-air museum whose purpose was the conservation and dissemination of the cultural heritage of the Ainu. The structure includes five *chisei* (“straw house”), a barn, a hall for dance performances<sup>579</sup>, music and for performances such as the *Kamuy-nomi*, a botanical garden, a miniature zoo with the Siberian bear, a kennel for Ainu hunting dogs, a well-stocked exhibition center with bilingual documentation (Japanese and English), a museum and numerous souvenir shops. The botanical garden accommodates about 50 types of plants used by the Ainu in the kitchen, but also as natural remedies, in this way, it becomes a very important instrument of knowledge both on a culinary and a medical level. It is known as *Poroto Kotan* (“great lake village”). In September 1976, the “Shiraoi Foundation” was established, which proposed the conservation of the Ainu culture, promoted through global educational projects, through research, study, transmission, and conservation of Ainu culture. In 1984, the Ainu Folk Museum (*Ainu minzoku hakubutsukan*) was added to this structure to display and pass on the assets of

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<sup>579</sup> The traditional Ainu dance (Ainu *buyō*), in 1984 was recognized by the Japanese government as an important intangible cultural asset. Riyo Nomoto has played an essential role in this recognition. Nomoto, she dedicated herself to preserving and transmitting the traditional dance she had learned from her mother and to manual work learned from other women. Since 1965 he has worked for the Shiraoi Porotokotan Museum and since 1976 he has collaborated with the “Shiraoi Foundation”. In 1993, he received the “Shiraoi culture promotion award”. She has appeared in more than 60 shows, including the “Japanese Festival” at the 1970 Expo. She currently lives in Shiraoi. Nomoto is considered a model for future generations.

material and immaterial culture; as many as 800 objects on permanent display, plus audio-visual aids and the possibility of guided tours by specialized personnel<sup>580</sup>. Since 1990, an important contribution came from the Ainu Museum Foundation, which also committed itself to the transmission of the Ainu culture<sup>581</sup>.

The Ainu Museum Foundation is an important research center for Ainu culture. Currently, the operation of the village of Shiraoi is unique: some rituals are accessible to visitors, others are handed down mainly to the Ainu who wish to learn these ceremonies in detail and reproduce them in the privacy of their homes and guarantee their transmission<sup>582</sup>. Currently, the museum is closed, and the area has been completely cleared, indeed when I visited it in August 2019, it looked like a huge open-air construction site. The reopening is scheduled for 24th April 2020 for the Tōkyō Olympic Games, but because of the Covid-19 pandemic, it opened on the 12th of July 2020.

#### **- Nibutani Kotan**

Nibutani is a neighborhood in the town of Biratori in Hokkaidō. The term *Niputai*, in the Ainu language, means “the place where trees grow in abundance”. It is a forest where the rich beauty of the seasons, which is characterized by a sparkling spring, a summer of bright colors, and still scenarios with warm tones that mark the autumn up to the white candor of winter, are reflected in the waters of the Saru river.

The village hosts the Museum of Ainu Culture<sup>583</sup>, which features a vast collection of objects from the Ainu tradition, along with a more modest collection, exhibited permanently in the Kayano Shigeru Museum, founded in 1972. It includes over 10,000 objects that he collected over time. Outside the museums, several *chise* were created, in which representations alternate with traditional rituals and dances. Each *chise* includes a hearth used for both heating and cooking, but above all for the veneration of Fuchi

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<sup>580</sup> “Spotlight: Poroto Kotan (Hokkaidō)”. (2014. June 16). Uncovering Japan. Discoveries from around the archipelago. Retrieved from <http://uncoveringjapan.com/2014/06/16/spotlight-poroto-kotan-hokkaido>

<sup>581</sup> Retrieved from [www.ainu-museum.or.jp](http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp).

<sup>582</sup> Naohiro, N. (2007). “The Representation of Ainu Culture in the Japanese Museum System”. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, XXVII, 2, p. 331-365.

<sup>583</sup> The Nibutani Museum (Biratori chōritsu Nibutani Ainu bunka hakubutsukan), was founded in 1992. On 8th April 2001, a radio was established by the director, Kayano Shirō, son of Kayano Shigeru. Ainu music. Tunein official site: <https://tunein.com/artist/Ok-Dub-Ainu-Band-m525675/>

Kamuy, the divinity of fire, which watches over resident families. The hearth is presented with a wooden rack fixed to the ceiling, to allow the fish or meat the typical smoking. Next to the Museum of Ainu Culture stands the Historical Museum of the Saru River, founded in 2010, considered an extremely interesting archive. It houses within it a scale model of the surrounding area before the dam was built, with clearly condemned cultural spaces highlighted. Among the objects in the collection, there are iron swords, bowls, and needles, from trade with the Japanese people<sup>584</sup>. Similar to a tourist office, it completes the previous institution by offering a lot of information on aboriginal socio-cultural practices.

Finally, a remarkably interesting datum comes from the oral literature (*yukar*) and from the typical ornamental motifs, which were considered as cultural assets of the Hokkaidō, such as the inlaid wooden trays and traditional clothes. They have been recognized by the Ministry of the Economy, Commerce, and Industry as “objects of art”<sup>585</sup>. Nibutani is not comparable to tourist centers, but the place where among the 500 people who live there, the majority (more than 80% of the population) is Ainu people. A growing interest in their culture leads to a greater number of tourists. In 2011, we are witnessing an interesting initiative that sees artisans as protagonists. The project *Takumi no michi* means “the way of the Craftsmen”, where careful craftsmanship soon gained official status as a “traditional trade”, issued by the Ministry of the Economy in 2013. During my visit in August 2019, I realized that the situation is not that of a tourist village, but it is an area where Ainu craftsmanship/artwork, including museum collections and dusty workshops of different artisans/artists.

### **- Akan Kotan**

The village is located on the shores of Lake Akan, within the National Park<sup>586</sup>, where about 200 Ainu live, into 36 family units. It is the only one to offer performances

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<sup>584</sup> Robson, D. (2010, October 24). “Nibutani, Hokkaido: Travel, hospitality and the Ainu identity”. *The Japan Times Life*. Retrieved from [www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2010/10/24/travel/savoring-the-joys-of-ainu-hospitality](http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2010/10/24/travel/savoring-the-joys-of-ainu-hospitality).

<sup>585</sup> Traditional Ainu folk crafts. Nibutani Ainu Takumi no michi. Retrieved from <http://nibutani.jp/gallery>

<sup>586</sup> Lake Akan, in 1934, was designated as a national park. The Akan National Park covers an area of 904.81 km<sup>2</sup>. The area has 3 famous lakes: Lake Akan; Kusharo; Mashu. Moreover, some volcanoes including Meakan, Oakan, Mokoto and Mashu, contribute to enrich the landscape with a breathtaking natural scenic that weaves in its plot forests, lakes and volcanoes.

throughout the year and socio-cultural representations of Ainu life. Characterized by the main artery, marked by about 40 souvenir shops (Ainu crafts, various gadgets with symbols or Ainu-inspired), restaurants where you can taste typical dishes, coffee, and more, it has a theater called *Ikor*, which offers the possibility of attending dance shows, listening to traditional music and carefully following the traditional Ainu stories. A performance entitled “Lost Kamuy”, whose theme is the symbiosis between the Ainu and the Hokkaido wolf, was staged from March 19, 2019. Yoshida Nagia, Takahashi Kuniyuki, UNO, WOW, and Sakamoto Daisuke (JTB Communication design) created a show that includes various fields such as photography, digital art, sound design, traditional Ainu dance with modern rhythms. The idea comes from the collaboration between the Akan Ainu Craft Association and the Japanese Regional DMO, thanks to which the Akan Tourism Association NPO is born.

According to the schedule, it is possible to attend the shows once a day from March to April, including weekends, twice a day. Another show is the traditional dances, entitled “Ainu Ancient Ceremonial Dances”. Another show is the Iomante Fire Festival, held from April 21st to November 30th. The shows outside the *Ikor* theater, from the last week of January until March, Lake Akan turns into a unique stage during the Ice Festival, which offers a demonstration every night under the sky of fireworks. Another opportunity to live the Ainu experience is *Kamuy Lumina*, from 5 July 2019 to 10 November 2019. It is a walk in the forest that combines the pleasure of contact with nature and reconnection with the gods. To remember this commitment there is the large sculpture of the owl that observes men and protects the Akan village. Furthermore, many activities can be performed at the *Akan Kotan* during the year, such as embroidery lessons, wood inlay, traditional music, Ainu story readings. At the beginning of October, the Marimo Festival is celebrated, whose purpose is the preservation of the *marimo algae* (aegagropila). Ancient rituals, dances, and traditional parades alternate for the occasion. The calendar concludes with the *Iyomante* Festival, which from mid-October to the beginning of December, provides that the onlookers gather around a fire, attending the ceremony with dances, of the Ainu tradition. The impression that accompanied me during my visit to the village in August 2019 was that of a tourist industry: shops, restaurants, workshops, shows, where curious visitors who had perhaps come there for a simple vacation at the spa or to enjoy the lake would buy a souvenir to remind them of the experience.



### 2.1.2. Recovery and creation of new expressive forms

The ethno-tourism has had a negative connotation, because reflects how the stereotypical image of the Ainu is used by official policies that condemns them to remain “out of time”, on the edge of “modernity”, housed in the reconstructed villages. On the other hand, the positive aspect concerns having been able to maintain some fundamental characteristics of traditional culture at a time when their extinction was announced. The reaction from the Ainu was to conceive the traditional rituals and how they could be showcased at the service of the tourist, thus reactivating the pride of one's own identity useful for the cultural preservation of an entire community.

Many Ainu see the tourism industry as a brake on their efforts to integrate into modern Japanese society, in which they try to confuse their origins to escape heavy daily oppression. For others, it is a pantomime associated with the commodification of a culture, which is their identity. In this regard, I recall the words of the musician Kanō Oki released during an interview at the 17th International Festival of Tribal and Indigenous Groups of the World in Italy<sup>587</sup>. Oki considers himself somewhat skeptical of these cultural representations in Tōkyō Disneyland. He made his choice of life by distancing himself from this “great machinery” in which there is no Ainu at the head (he pointed out) and making his music his job, performing as a soloist along with his *tonkori*<sup>588</sup>, with his musical group *Oki dun Ainu band*, and often collaborating with the all-female group of *Marewrew* or with the soloist *Rekpo* and going up on stages all over the world.

For others, living in a so-called “modern society” can be beneficial. Through the long chats with the artist and sculptor Fujito Kōhei, during the Festival, I could understand what these advantages could be. Father of 4 children, had with his wife Sachiko, Mr.

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<sup>587</sup> It is a festival organized by the “Lo Spirito del Pianeta” Association in Chiuduno, which has been held in the province of Bergamo (Italy) for years. I took part in the edition May 26 and June 11, 2017. I participated in the festival as an organizer of the Ainu group, as a field coordinator and expert holding three conferences, together with the Ainu present, on the themes of “History and Survival”, “Religious Tradition and Material Culture”, and “Ainu Ethnicity in Contemporary Japan”. On that occasion I had the chance to conduct some interviews with the musician Oki Kano and the sculptor Kohei Fujito.

<sup>588</sup> Characterized by five strings, as kind of guitar, it was used in ritual dances and, after a period in which it fell into disuse, from the 70s of the twentieth century came back into vogue. Kanō Oki is considered the most important living *tonkori* musician.

Kōhei works with his father at the family shop in the Akan Kotan<sup>589</sup>. A shop of simple souvenirs would seem, at least at first glance, but that hides objects that make them skilled sculptors capable of engraving wood, creating works that belong more to the field of art than craftsmanship. For these Ainu, who have decided to live within the so-called “modern society”, the reaction can be translated as an act within the final stage of acculturation of an ethnic group, which finally sees the recognition of its rituals as cultural identity and no longer as folklore, associated with a discourse of development of microeconomics that becomes a support to understand how to improve the conditions of the artists.

Tourist villages are considered privileged places where *wajin* interact with the Ainu and where both of them are in “cultural security” areas. When ritual representations try to anchor themselves to the past, they seem to clash with their contemporary identity. This reaction is nothing but the final stage of the acculturation of the members of an ethnic group that no longer recognizes these rites as cultural identifiers, considering them anecdotes and foreigners to their identity. On the other hand, mass tourism has increased the visibility of the Ainu on local and international scenes, allowing them to reclaim their culture of belonging, and not least has given back a means of emancipation and subsistence. These places of knowledge have become real cultural centers because they welcome researchers and publish a large number of books by specialists.

The Nibutani Kotan has become fundamental for the studies concerning the Ainu language, the Akan Kotan instead, the seat of study projects in the field of oral literature (*yukar*) and mythology, finally the Poroto Kotan is renowned for the conservation of dances and traditional songs. This rush to Hokkaidō has increased and as a result, tourism has been greatly developed, bringing with it the emergence of new rural infrastructure and new, previously non-existent transport networks. For many Ainu, this has meant the opportunity to escape social declassification. The exoticism of a people has become a strong attraction that has made this form of trade possible. Tourists, curious about the folklore of a culture “unknown to them”, try to live a unique experience, expecting unusual costumes, dances, and crafts, that allow the tourists to enjoy taking photos, buying souvenirs, and attending some dance and music shows. It

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<sup>589</sup> The shop is “Kumanoya” and his father Fujito Takeki passed away in 2018.

is therefore an operation of “commercialization” of one's rituals, of one's traditions, of one's culture for tourism purposes.

This activity that over time has become of vital importance for many ethnic populations, is the subject of heated debates since the end is commercial. The image is the one that many have associated with amusement parks, where contact with the inherited part of their culture has been set aside to cope with performances and accessory scenes far from their original cultural meaning, but close to the viewer. During my interview with the musician Kanō Oki, he often used the terms “theme parks”, until he suggested “experimental parks”. The park, according to him, becomes a place, a third place between the Ainu world and that of the tourist, where identities and cultures interact, creating something new. Tradition becomes a ready-to-sell folklore, illustrating both a threat and a challenge to the Ainu culture.

The extremely positive note that has been developed through ethno-tourism is strength, the ability to recover one's roots, to transform, to shape new expressive forms, with the sole purpose of surviving in time and history. It most likely played an important role in the affirmation of the Ainu ethnic group, as it gradually became a way of expressing oneself and redefining one's identity. The strength to continue in this race for survival is derived and also derives from the support of the international community, which makes them aware of the value of their roots and of the importance of affirming and reaffirming themselves. For their part, the Ainu, have used this support in the most congenial way perhaps to themselves. At the same time mass tourism in Hokkaidō has had a profound impact on the Ainu community from a cultural point of view, since the strategies implemented had as their goal the conservation and transformation of their own culture. Furthermore, it has significantly increased the visibility of the Ainu on the local but above all the international political scene. The encounter with external individuals allowed the Ainu to show their differences from the Japanese, thus encouraging the image of a plural Japan. The role played by the international community in support of the Ainu has been remarkable, considering the high comfort to Aboriginal consciences. Ethno-tourism, therefore, serves as a serious possibility of recognizing cultural identities and tourism can be defined as one of the rare places of exchange between communities, where a mutual dialogue can be established. In this sense, after talking about the tourist villages, I will deal with the most important Ainu artists who

have distinguished themselves for having produced objects classified not as “crafts” but as “art”.

## 2.2. Craft vs. art

The Ainu tourist handicraft has been officially linked to the development of tourism in the Hokkaidō as a whole and, in particular, after the annexation of the island to the Japanese nation, to Asahikawa, a very important experimental center whose fame lasted a long time. Many artists, however, have decided to distance themselves from this tourist situation to give life to a typology that will come closer to the world of art than craftsmanship.

The Ainu creations intended as works of art and not as handicrafts were not studied as such at least until 1926. If, on the one hand, travelers and explorers dealt with symbolism on ceremonial instruments, on clothes, and on the body<sup>590</sup>, on the other hand, scholars were interested in art, and the first volume that marked the boundary between the two fields elevating Ainu art as a subject of study, was *Ainu no mon'yō* by Sugiyama Sueo<sup>591</sup>. Another research followed: a work in three volumes entitled *Ainu geijutsu* by Sugiyama and Kindaichi Kyōsuke,<sup>592</sup> based on the proper material culture of the Ainu. In general, everything that has evolved from traditional roots finds it difficult to be classified. For the Japanese historians and specialists in contemporary art, the Ainu art remains as folk or ethnic art. Thus this material has not yet been investigated in detail. The process that has allowed us to evolve into a part of the fine arts after its incubation period in tourist centers remains to be studied. Until now, no Japanese scholar or historian, or art specialist has been interested in analyzing this aspect until the mid-1990s, when the

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<sup>590</sup> Kodama, S. (1970). “Ikuji, meimei, kyoiku, seijin” (Childcare, naming, education, and becoming an adult). In *Ainu minzokushi* (Ethnology of the Ainu). Tōkyō: Daiichi Hoki Shuppan ed. Ainu Bunka Hozon Taisaku Kyogikai, pp.466-475.

Kodama, S. (1970). “Ainu non bunshin” (Ainu tattoo). In *Ainu minzokushi* (Ethnology of the Ainu). Tōkyō: Daiichi Hoki Shuppan, ed. *Ainu bunka hozon taisaku kyōgikai*, pp. 131-139; Yamakawa, T. (1980). *Ainu minzoku bunkashi eno shiron* (An essay on Ainu cultural history). Tōkyō: Miraisha.

<sup>591</sup> Sugiyama, S. (1926). *Ainu mon'yō* (Ainu reasons). Tōkyō: Kogei bijustu kenkyūsha.

<sup>592</sup> Sugiyama, S. & Kindaichi, K. (1941). *Ainu geijutsu: Fukuso hen* (Ainu art: Clothing). Sapporo: Hokkaidō shuppan kikaku sentā; Sugiyama, S. & Kindaichi, K. (1942). *Ainu geijutsu: Mokko hen* (Ainu art: Woodwork). Sapporo: Hokkaidō shuppan kikaku sentā; Sugiyama S. & Kindaichi, K. (1943). *Kinko/Shikki hen* (Ainu art: metalwork and lacquerware). Sapporo: Hokkaidō shuppan kikaku sentā.

scholar Chisato Dubreuil began to deal with Ainu art no longer stigmatizing it but giving it value to an expressive form as such. The difficulty of placing art on a different level concerning craftsmanship also derives from the lack of consideration in oral literature and indigenous cultures in general.

Since the annexation to Japan, the difficulties encountered by the Ainu following the conversion to agriculture led them to use their skill as woodcarvers, thus working on the production of tools and objects for daily use. On the other hand, there have been artists who have distanced themselves from those who carved figures like the bear and with women who carried on the embroidery tradition. Few of them have broken the boundaries of artisanal production and reached heights in the art field by developing unique and immediately identifiable styles. Soon they used the artistic expression as a struggle against increasingly pressing policies<sup>593</sup>. The roots of contemporary Ainu art can be traced back to the first commercial exchanges with China, Korea<sup>594</sup>, and Russia, Japan<sup>595</sup> in the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, of products such as carved wooden clothes and household items. In order to explore more in-depth this topic, the next section will review the work of the most influential Ainu artists, who have marked a breaking point between craftsmanship and real art, without ever forgetting their origins, but transforming the knowledge of their origins into something that went beyond, that surpassed the categories.

### **2.2.1. Kaizawa Tamami**

Born in Nibutani (Biratori), on 10th August 1974, she graduated in 1995 from the Hokkaidō Design School, interior design section and decided to create her own brand *Sikerpe Art* “Tamami” in December 1997. She subsequently exhibited her work on

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<sup>593</sup> Dubreuil, Chisato O. (1999). “Ainu Journey: From Tourist Art to Fine Arts”. *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People*. (edited by William W. Fitzhugh and Dubreuil Chisato O.). Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, p. 335.

<sup>594</sup> Saitō, R. (1994). “Hoppō minzoku bunka kenkyū ni okeru kankō jinruigakutei shiten (1) – Edo kara Taishōki ni okeru Ainu no baai”. Hokkaidō: *Bulletin of the Hokkaido Museum of Northern Peoples*, n. 3, 139-60.

<sup>595</sup> Battipaglia, S. “L’Avvicinamento russo all’Ezo e al Giappone secondo la storiografia basata su fonti russe”. (2012). *Il Giappone*, Volume L [2010], Rome-Naples, pp. 7-25; Battipaglia, S. (2009). “Gli Ainu verso il riconoscimento come ‘popolazione indigena’”. (2011). *Il Giappone*. Volume XLIX [2009], Rome-Naples, pp. 161- 169.

several occasions, in December 1999, working on the “Tamami” exhibition in Machida (Tōkyō), and then in February 2000 the “Three People Exhibition” in Ginza (Tōkyō).

In August 2000 she participated in the fashion show at the Rising Sun Rock Festival, and in February 2002 organized the “Sannin” exhibition in Ginza (Tōkyō), while in August of the same year took part again in the fashion show for the same rock festival. In March 2006 she worked as a reporter for the STV channel for the broadcast “Ebisu Shouretsu-zou. Himera-reta higeki”. In December she worked on producing “Eizou to Oto to Kinu Show” on the occasion of the Festival of Ainu culture held in the city of Shiraoi. In November 2007 she exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in Hokkaidō, during the 30th anniversary “Born in Hokkaidō” and in July 2008 in the forest of Niseko-Amakusa, had a collaboration show with the musician Kanō Oki and in August of the same year, on the occasion of the 34th G8, the Hokkaidō Tōyako Summit, she produced Furoshiki as a reminder of the event for the Prime Ministers from various countries. In May 2010, another “Ainu and Modern” exhibition in Kyobashi, Tōkyō. In February 2012 she exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in Hokkaidō with a performance titled “Ainu Art”, in August 2013 realizes a personal exhibition at the Authent Hotel Otaru, in October 2015 she was in Italy for an introductory workshop on the Ainu culture at the Expo from Milan<sup>596</sup>.

Tamami combines traditional Ainu symbols with bright colors to create garments and accessories with a modern and appealing look. For her, nature is a great source of inspiration and draws energy from it for her creations. She claims that the only way to learn the style of symbols is to copy them, and she has copied over 100 kimonos to teach the basics of Ainu design. To create his first design inspired by the Ainu, she did a long and profound research on their culture, through texts and listening to their voice through personal interviews. Later, Tamami returned to Nibutani at the Ainu School of Arts where she was praised for her meticulous attention to detail. It was here that Tamami learned by himself what it meant to be Ainu and that it was right to feel proud of his culture and heritage. Back in Sapporo, she began teaching at the University<sup>597</sup>. Her harmonious mixing of traditional Ainu symbols and modern graphics on clothes,

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<sup>596</sup> Tamami, K. (official website). Retrieved from <http://www.tamamikaizawa.com>

<sup>597</sup> Yogi, (2011, February 18). Retrieved from <https://www.powderlife.com/blog/ainu-patterns/>

accessories, various objects such as lamps, jewelry, have led to defining Kaizawa Tamami among the most inventive and sophisticated young people.

### 2.2.2. Fujito Takeki

When we think of the sculptors of Asahikawa and how the sculptures are artistically elevated, we must refer to the figure of Fujito Takeki. Born in 1934 (died 2018), he is the eldest son of the talented sculptor Fujito Takeo who did not sail in gold and little Takeki at the age of 12 was forced to leave school to help his father in his workshop. The genre of tourist craftsmanship was already established, so he had the opportunity to travel with his father in Hokkaidō to learn from the most respected sculptors the fine art of inlay work. From the age of 17, he was fascinated by the figure of the gray wolf from Hokkaidō, an animal worshiped by the Ainu because of his hunter skills, honored together with the bear and the owl as a deity. An animal is extinct because of the settlers during the Meiji era<sup>598</sup>. In the late 1970s, Fujito produced his first wolf carvings<sup>599</sup>.

Fujito claims that the origin of the bear's inlay dates back to the 1930s and among his works we can just mention that of a bear entitled “*kuma*” (bear in Japanese), which sees the animal lift its left front leg and open your mouth as a sign of defense or attack. Strength and tension are given by the use of Manchuria grain powder. In other works, the feeling of peace transpires as in the one entitled “Winter” (Hibernation), whose protagonist is always a little bear nicknamed “*suyo-kamuy*” (the God who is in the cave).

In addition to the bear, he also sculpts other animals, such as eagles, owls, the common denominator is a respect for nature, for animals, for gods. In addition to animal themes, he is known for the life-size sculptures of *ekashi* and *fuchi*, the portrait of *ekashi* Hikawa Shinchirō, who was one of the last to represent a traditional ceremony entirely in the Ainu language. Another famous sculpture is the one inspired by his grandmother Fujito Takeki, with whom he had a very strong relationship, due to the death of his mother the day after his birth. It was represented with a melancholy air as if to remember the forced

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<sup>598</sup> Fujito noted that the last trace of the species was an exchange of a few furs in Hakodate in 1896.

<sup>599</sup> Chikuba, S.R. “Revelations: Wood Sculptor Takeki Fujito at the Sapporo Art Museum”. (n.d). Retrieved from [http://www.dnp.co.jp/artscape/eng/focus/1712\\_02.html](http://www.dnp.co.jp/artscape/eng/focus/1712_02.html)

abandonment imposed on the Ainu. Looking at the sculptures, one can be captivated by a strong realism, by attention to detail, which concerns both the inlay and the clothing and accessories included, whether they are in traditional clothes or dressed in Japanese fashion. The expression of faces is incredible, there are different emotions, from relaxation to seriousness, from the lived experience to sadness, but they all convey an evocative force, a depth that has made him one of the most important contemporary artists<sup>600</sup>.

### **2.2.3. Fujito Kōhei**

After Fujito Takeki, the generation of wood sculptors continues the tradition in his family thanks to his second son Kōhei. Born in Akan in 1978, Kōhei e joined an art club in 1994, and in 1999 moved to Tōkyō to study film and acting. In 2006 he returned to Akan and began his career as a sculptor (of wood). In 2008 and 2010 he received the Ainu Art Encouragement Prize award during the Ainu Art and Crafts Contest. In 2011 his works entitled “Yama-Katana,” “iPhone case” and “Watch” were exhibited at the National Museum of Japanese History in Chiba prefecture. In 2013, his works entitled “Powder Perfume Case”, “Knife for Life”, “iPhone Case”, “Happy 5th Birthday Yuta” and “My Best Friend Masaki's G-SHOCK”, were exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in Sapporo (Hokkaidō), during a special exhibition entitled “Contemporary Ainu Art and Crafts”. Finally, in 2016, his works “iPhone Case”, “Compass” and “Survival Neckless in the City” were exhibited at the National Museum of Ethnology in Ōsaka. In 2017, he was the representative for the “sculptor” section of the Ainu group present in Italy during the 17th International Tribal and Indigenous Groups of the World Festival, organized by the Italian Association “The Spirit of the Planet”, which has been held in Chiuduno for years, in the province of Bergamo. Kōhei diverges from his father for the subjects represented, his inspirations are objects for daily use, which are watches, knives (also in Damascus blade), cases for needles and threads, pendants, jewelry for the hair, cell phone covers, but have artistic value, some with stone insertions. The rigor and

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<sup>600</sup> Dubreuil, Chisato O. (1999), op. cit. pp. 339-341.



minuteness for the detail certainly put him in the category of contemporary Ainu artists<sup>601</sup>.

#### **2.2.4. Kawamura Noriko**

In the textile branch highlights Kawamura Noriko. Her family was active in the thriving tourist industry, promoting the image of the Ainu as a people who still lived their life as hunter-gatherers. This raised many disappointments and criticisms from other Ainu, but the family defended itself by saying that those who judged were those who were ashamed of their origins. Noriko's grandfather and great-grandfather created a private museum and as they were in tourism, they organized themselves to travel a lot, not only in Hokkaidō but throughout Japan, demonstrating traditional Ainu culture and dance. When she was still a student, she was interested in the Ainu culture on several fronts, moving from dance performances to revitalizing traditional dress design in the 1980s.

Afterwards, he learned the art of embroidery from her mother and other women, claiming that the traditional symbolism has an intense power, made to prevent evil spirits from attacking the body of the wearer<sup>602</sup>. Noriko was inspired by Peramonkoro Sunazawa, mother of the artist Sunazawa Bikky, who is one of the most respected textile artists of the 20th century. In 1989 she created a new style called *Mon'yō*, symbols characterized by curved lines that are very reminiscent of the Indian art styles of the north-western coast. In the same year a work entitled “Ryo”, which in Japanese means “strength,” with the dominant blue color, a central band moving horizontally in black and white that makes the idea of energy movements given by different colors, just the others are orange, green, yellow and brown. Between 1990 and 1991, she will produce another four-part work entitled *Hokkaidō no shiki* (The Four Seasons in Hokkaidō)<sup>603</sup>.

#### **2.2.5. Sunazawa Chinita**

Its name means “dream” in the Ainu language. Daughter of the sculptor Bikky Sunazawa, Chinita was born in 1960, in Chikabumi (Asahikawa), and during her growth, she watched her father's work, but unlike him, she became passionate about

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<sup>601</sup> I collected this information directly on the field during long interviews conducted in the Festival of Indigenous Peoples of Bergamo (Italy), May-June 2017.

<sup>602</sup> *Hokkaidō shinbun*, 6th January 1994.

<sup>603</sup> Dubreuil, Chisato O. (1999), op. cit. pp. 349-351.

drawing and sketching from an early age. She works as an illustrator for the book *Ainskii Fol'klor* by Nikolai A. Neviskii (1892-1937), a Russian linguist who lived in Japan from 1915 to 1929, published posthumously in 1972 in Russia, but was also translated into Japanese in 1991. One of her works is called *Daughter's Happiness*, it represents the story of a growing girl who becomes a beautiful woman under the protection of the bear god. Another work, entitled *Sad Fox* is the story of a fox who tries to turn into a deity but was caught red-handed by Okikurumi, a hero of Ainu literature, who severely punishes him.

Other works are for example *Yin* from 1998 and *Yang* from 1999, they differ from the former because they are on a large scale. The paintings are respectively in red with the central part in black represented by the *Kanji* of happiness, the other in black, this time the central part is in red with the Chinese character of longevity. They are the example of the message that Chinita wants to convey, the concepts of harmony between human beings and nature, of peace. She claims to be inspired, both when she paints and when she draws, from the graphic arts from all over the world, always keeping in mind the subtle balance between symmetry and asymmetry. It often refers to herself as a “hybrid” in the sense of recognizing its Ainu origins. Chinita starts from its origins to expand. It values and embraces other cultures and makes differences in the engines of force that can give positive tips to the world<sup>604</sup>.

### **2.2.6. Sunazawa Bikky**

Born on March 6, 1931, he grew up in the village of Chikabumi near Asahikawa. Bikky was an impressive presence for Ainu art. He was inspired by the culture of belonging and the assimilation phase of the latter to Japanese culture. His grandparents lived in a traditional Ainu house, which was flanked by that of his Japanese-style parents. He started by making animal sketches he saw during the day, but little by little he wanted to go deeper and deeper, capture the essence of what he drew<sup>605</sup>. Compared to other sculptors, such as Fujito Takeki for example, tied to bear carving, Bikky takes his distance, considering it not the focus of the Ainu identity, but only a mental limit. He

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<sup>604</sup> Dubreuil, Chisato O. (1999), op. cit. pp. 351- 352.

<sup>605</sup> Tsutomu, Y. (1988). *Asu o tsukuru Ainu minzoku* (The Ainu and their future). Tōkyō: Miraisha, p.183.

did not like the carving of the bear as he claimed that the essence of Ainu art could be reflected in expressions of life or simply with a sort of empathy with the piece of wood<sup>606</sup>. At the age of 21, he creates jewelry, such as necklaces with Ainu symbols. Consequently, he devoted himself to larger sculptures, such as birds and totems, revolutionizing the tourist art of Ainu, when he had not yet become famous.

In 1953 he left Hokkaidō to move to Tōkyō, but he returned every summer. He began an experience of different influences and contacts, between avant-garde and intellectual thoughts, he devoted himself to the biographies of so many artists and those that inspired him most will be the sculptors Ossip Zadkine (1890-1967) and Ueki Shigeru (1913-1984). The common and also Bikky interests were the exploration of biomorphic forms, which will lead to the creation of a series entitled “Animals”, thanks to which he was accepted by the Modern Art Association in Japan, in 1962. In 1970 he divorced and moved back to Hokkaidō, in Sapporo. Subsequently, he worked on mask carvings, about 150 pieces, with the name of *Ki-men*. This series broke the boundaries with the carving of the bear and opened up new horizons for the Ainu artists. An interesting fact concerns the total absence of masks in the Ainu tradition<sup>607</sup>. Bikky however also dealt with tourist crafts, or rather produced more tourist crafts than works of art, he carved bears, like the one entitled *Bear and Hunter* (Ekashi), whose meaning is the Ainu fight against human and natural forces. In 1978, from Sapporo, he moved to the small village of Otoineppu. The move was due to his second divorce and third marriage. This environment was congenial to Bikky because of the immersion in nature. In Otoineppu he created the totem now at the Ainu Memorial Museum in Chikabumi in Asahikawa. In the Ainu tradition, there are no traces of totems, but after the end of the Second World War, small totems were erected in the tourist area.

In addition to the totems, he also created a sculpture consisting of a massive piece of wood titled *Kami no shita* (Tongue of God), characterized in its 2 m height by the *parunps*, or by the triangular signs that characterize the *ikubashui* ceremonial instruments. The meaning attributed to it concerns the power of the gods and their presence in the life of the Ainu. Another inspiration in the wake of the ceremonial objects, this time it takes up the inau, in its series entitled *Juka* (Wooden Flower), a

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<sup>606</sup> *Asahi Shinbun*, 22 November 1960.

<sup>607</sup> *Asahi Shinbun*, 19 July 1976.

series that will begin to develop in 1982. Later his interest brought him to the symbolism of mythical creatures in the last breath as if to recreate a bridge between life and death, a natural cycle that will make space in his art.

These were the years when he met a Canadian professor of indigenous law, Douglas Sanders, who in turn introduced him to the famous artist Bill Reid who invited him to visit British Columbia. He had the opportunity to see totems in their natural environment, such as those in the old village of Gitksan on the Upper Skeena River and the Queen Charlotte Islands<sup>608</sup>. He was surprised to learn that the native artists of those areas were widely published and exhibited in museums and galleries<sup>609</sup>. Back in Otoineppu, he thought of his Canadian experience, which caused him a profound transformation. His attention was reserved to the relationship with nature. The theme of the wind inspired his work entitled *Yotsu no kaze* (Four Winds). It consisted of 4 pieces of wood arranged in a circle to mark the 4 cardinal points, and with the facade hollowed out for most of the length. He was commissioned to work on the occasion of the opening of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sapporo, and for this work, he used 400-year-old spruce.

Another one is called *Kaze ni kiku* (Listening to the Wind), a piece of wood 6 meters in the shape of a canoe and with the addition of four cylindrical pieces which had at the top, in the shape of a smaller rectangular piece thus giving the impression of human figures. In 1987 he devoted himself to a new series entitled *Gozen sanji no gangu* (Toys at 3:00 a.m.). The curious title derives from the time of day when the objects were created. These games were identified with the primordial creatures of the spirits of the world, made with all their details. His last work was titled *Nitne-Kamuy* (Evil God), which began in 1988 but stopped during the summer of that year<sup>610</sup>.

After being diagnosed with cancer, he continued working and he took part in the opening of “The Contemporary Artists’ Series ‘89”, at the Prefecture of Kanagawa, near Tōkyō. The gallery asked him to write something for the exhibition catalog and he wrote a single

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<sup>608</sup> Kenji, H. (1987). “Kamera man nikki: Kita no daichi o horitsu zukeru, Sunazawa Bikky sa” (A Diary of the photographer: Mr Bikky Sunazawa digs northern land). *Gekkan Shakaitō*, December, pp.192-199.

<sup>609</sup> Tsutomu, Y. (1988), op.cit. pp. 208-209.

<sup>610</sup> Toshiya, E. (1992). “Dohoku no bijutsu II: Saunazawa Bikky no Nitne-Kamuy” (Art of Northern Hokkaidō II: Bikky Sunazawa’s Nitne-Kamuy), *Hyōka* 30, p.4.

word *Kiki*, which for him meant “spirit of life”. His contribution to modern art was a vision beyond the conventional forms<sup>611</sup>. After inserting short biographies of the most famous Ainu artists, in the next section I will deal with the tourist situation, through some of the most performed ceremonies, to draw a parallel between the more traditional culture (or what remains of it) and the shape created specifically for tourists.

## 2.3. The tourist economy

### 2.3.1. The Akan Kotan (Akan village)

The Akan Park, was born from an initial idea of an individual and thanks to the involvement of many, came to the expansion of a territory and its development. It is becoming a place of cultural exchange between different “worlds” and economic support. When Matsūra Takeshiro<sup>612</sup> visited Hokkaidō towards the end of the Edo era, there were no Ainu communities around Lake Akan, except for fishing shelters. The *wajin* moved to Lake Akan for the first time in 1893, to organize a trade center for salmon of the lake. In the same year, due to the sulfuric activities of Mount Akan, the workers moved away from the area where they resided and occupied another corner of the lake. In 1897, they remained there until the winter season. In 1908, Seikichi Yamaura opened the first *ryokan* (Japanese hotel) on the side of Lake Akan<sup>613</sup>. Furthermore, Maeda Masana of Satsuma (Kagoshima Prefecture), who was undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Trade, supported “the establishment of commercial rights by various industrial organizations, strengthening the national power of direct trade”. In 1899, he founded the Maeda Paper-manufacturing Company and also began the development of part of Lake Akan, obtaining 5,000 hectares of forest in 1906, aiming to incur a forest model and a model of farm to promote migration. The spirit that hovered can be grasped by the following phrase: “The Maeda's property will be considered

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<sup>611</sup> Dubreuil, Chisato O. (2006). *From the Playground of the Gods: The Life & Art of Bikky Sunazawa*. Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press, p. 17-18.

<sup>612</sup> Matsūra, T. (1985) [1858]. *Bogo Tozai Ezo sansen chiri torishirabe nissshi (Jo) Dai-8-Kan Akan ruchi no shi (Ichi)* (A Diary of Geographical Explorations in the Eastern and Western Yezo, in the Year of Bogo). Sapporo: Hokkaidō shuppan kikaku sentā, p. 283.

<sup>613</sup> Akan-cho (Akan-Town) (1966). *Akan-chō shi* (History of Akan Town), Akan-chō: Akan-chō, pp. 701-702.

public property”, which contains the thoughts of the local inhabitants<sup>614</sup>. During the Taishō period, the lake flourished in an incredible forest, and many entrepreneurs, woodcutters, and workers were hired by the Maeda Paper-manufacturing Company. The number of workers expanded in 1914 when the extension reached 35,000 cubic meters<sup>615</sup>.

In 1919, there were 5-6 Ainu houses around the lake<sup>616</sup>. Although not many *wajin* lived there, some of them settled near the Shirikomabetsu river, to work in the forest. The Ainu, on the other hand, lived in places like Piporo, Soushi, Fubushinai, and Akubetsu near Lake Akan. In these places, temporary shelters for fishing and the sale of fish with *wajin* were made. After the Meiji Era, the government encouraged the Ainu to employ themselves in agriculture. Those who did not adapt to the new policy moved towards Lake Akan, residing there throughout the year. In addition to fishing and hunting, they exchanged land collection products and traded them with *wajin*, and were hired as loggers and assistants. Unfortunately, all the property led by Maeda was forced to close, following the designation of the Akan National Park in 1934, which persuaded the Akan area to move its economy, founded on a tourist base. In 1939, Yamamoto Tasuke started the production and sale of wooden objects at the lake. After the end of the war, the promotion of tourism was revived and the *marimo* (aegagropila) protection measures were discussed.

In 1950, the Marimo Festival was created for the first time. In 1954, the idea was put forward to integrate all the Ainu houses and souvenir shops scattered around Lake Akan, in a single area. The Maeda Ippoen took over the Ainu Kotan free of charge, which was placed on the slope of a hill west of the lake, away from the city center, and which saw

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<sup>614</sup> Irimoto, T. (2004). “Creation of the Marimo Festival: Ainu Identity and Ethnic Symbiosis”. *Senri Ethnological Studies. Circumpolar Ethnicity and Identity*, edited by Takashi Irimoto and Takako Yamada. Sapporo: Hokkaidō University, p. 20.

<sup>615</sup> Akan-cho (Akan-Town), *Akan-chō shi* (History of Akan Town), op.cit. pp.702-704, 709; Kushiro Ainu Bunka Konwakai (Kushiro Gathering for Ainu Culture Discussion). (1994) “Chobun, Ko Tanba Setsuro Kaicho Tsuito Tokushu” (“The message of condolence for late President Setsuro Tanba”), Kushiro Seikatsu Bunka Densho Hozon Kenkyukai. *Kusuri* 3, p. 242; Zaidan hōjin Maeda Ippoen zaidan (Foundation of Meda Ippoen). (1994), *Zaidan hōjin Maeda-Ippoen zaidan jigyo annai* (Guide for Activities of Foundation of Maeda Ippoen). Akan: Zaidan hōjin Maeda Ippoen zaidan, p. 2.

<sup>616</sup> Hokkaidō kyōiku iinkai (Hokkaidō Board of Education), *Heisei 10-nendo Ainu minzoku bunkazai chōsa hokokusho, Ainu minzoku chōsa XVIII (Hosoku chōsa 5)* (Urgent Field Research on Ethnography of the Ainu). (1999). N. 18, Supplement N.51. Sapporo: Hokkaidō kyōiku iinkai, pp. 214-216, 251, 253, 255-254.

the construction of several houses, starting in 1955. According to statistics dating back to 1966<sup>617</sup>, out of a total of 103 Ainu citizens, 45 (25 men and 20 women; 43.7% of the total) lived legally on the beach of Lake Akan. Assuming an average of 4-5 members per house, a presence of 10 houses was calculated, which does not make much difference compared to the 11 houses of 1955, when they began to be built, and approaches the number of houses at the beginning of Shōwa, when there were between 8 and 10. In October 1999, the number had risen to 102 (50 men and 52 women) or 34 houses<sup>618</sup>, suggesting an increase of three times compared to 1955, in 44 years. Tourists visiting the lake, in this first phase, were very intrigued, in this way they asked the Ainu for the names of places, plants, birds and fish, legends, but also dances and songs<sup>619</sup>. Over time, an *onnecise* (big house) was built as a restaurant, a meeting place for dances, and a *poncise* (a small house) as a space to display the traditional Ainu instruments. They were built in 1970 to attract tourists, as the Ainu themselves claim. On the second floor of the *onnecise* a restaurant was placed, on the first floor instead, a souvenir shop. Between 1970 and 1980, a sale of around 200,000-300,000 yen was calculated. This situation attracted 7,000-8,000 visitors a year, many of whom returned and bought souvenirs. As for the discourse on traditional dance performances, called *Ainu koshiki buyo* at the *onnecise*, admission in those years was 1,000 yen for adults and the shows were held twice a day (8:00 pm; 21:00) between April 15 and April 28 and 6 times a day (11:00; 13:00; 15:00; 20:00; 21:00; 22:00) between April 29 and October 31.

In 1994, the percentage visiting the Ainu Kotan was 80% among the visitors (800,000 in the evening and 700,000 in the day). Thus, restaurants, traditional dance performances, were not only a source of income but also served as a strategy to encourage visitors to explore these places and buy souvenirs.<sup>620</sup> The business cycle ran from March to October. The number of visitors increased from November to December, while it diminished in January and February. During the period that received fewer tourists, the Ainu were intent on producing wooden sculptures. Therefore, the rhythm of their activities was characterized by the production of wooden objects inlaid during

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<sup>617</sup> Akan-chō (Akan-Town), *Akan-chō shi* (History of Akan Town), op. cit. p. 39.

<sup>618</sup> Akan-ko Ainu Kyōkai (Lake Akan Ainu Association), *Marimo Matsuri 50-nen no ayumi* (50-Years Steps of Marimo Festival). (2000). Akan-chō: Akan-ko Ainu kyōkai, p. 40.

<sup>619</sup> Yamamoto, T. (1940). *Akan kokuritsu kōen to Ainu no densetsu* (Akan National Park and Ainu Legends). Tōkyō: Nihon Ryokō Kyōkai, p. 10.

<sup>620</sup> Akan-ko Ainu kyōkai (Lake Akan Ainu Association), *Marimo Matsuri 50-nen no ayumi* (50-Years Steps of Marimo Festival). (2000). Akan-chō: Akan-ko Ainu kyōkai, p. 40.

the winter and in sales activities during the spring, summer, and autumn. This means careful observation of tourist flows, which led them to develop a strategic system to welcome tourists and to induce them to purchase souvenirs. There was the sale of objects, packaging, shipping to customers; behind all this, numerous employees worked exclusively on the success of this device. The Ainu Kotan itself can be defined as a survival contraption strongly linked to the tourism economy.

### 2.3.2. The Marimo Festival

The Marimo Festival, born as a countermeasure for the protection of the *marimo* (aegagropila), aroused an enormous interest so much to become, after fifty years, an effective survival system based on the tourist economy.

#### *-Alga Marimo or Aegagropila linnaei*

It is a multicellular green alga belonging to the Cladophoraceae family, widespread in the northern hemisphere. The plant was called *marimo* by the Japanese botanist Tatsuhiko Kawakami, in 1898. The word *mari* in Japanese is translated as “marble”, while *mo* is a generic term for plants that grow within water. The terms in the Ainu language are *tōrasanpe* (“ghost of the lake”)<sup>621</sup> and *tōkarippu* (“thing that rolls in the mud”)<sup>622</sup>. Sometimes the *marimo* alga is sold in aquarium shops with the name “Japanese moss ball” even if the *Aegagropila linnaei* is not a moss. The name refers to a specific formation of algae, which develop into large green spheres with a velvety surface. The colonies of these spheres are known only in Iceland (Lake Myvatn), Japan, and from Siberia to Estonia (Lake Oisu)<sup>623</sup>. They were discovered in the 1920s by Anton Sauter in Lake Zeller, in Austria. The *Aegagropila* genus was established by Kützing (1843) classifying the spherical formation as a species, called *Aegagropila linnaei*. Six years later Kützing himself transferred the species from the genus *Aegagropila* to the

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<sup>621</sup> Chiri, M. (1953). *Bunrui Ainugo jiten, Dai-1-Kan shokubutsu hen* (A Classificatory Ainu Dictionary). Tōkyō: Nihon jomin bunka kenkyūsho. Hokkaidō kyōiku iinkai (Hokkaidō Board of Education), Vol. 1: Plants p. 254; Yamamoto, T. (1940), op. cit. p. 15; Takahashi, M. (1966). *Ainu densetsu shū, Akan chihō hen* (A Collection of Ainu Legends, Part of Akan). Sapporo: Kotan Ya, p. 15.

<sup>622</sup> Sarashina, G. (1942). *Kotan seibutsuki* (Natural History of Kotan). Sapporo: Hoppo shuppan sha, pp. 77-78; Chiri, M. (1953), op. cit. p. 254.

<sup>623</sup> The news related to Lake Myvatn was reported in the Journal Hokkaidō shinbun Press of 07.07.2004, while that related to Lake Oisu in the Hokkaidō shinbun Press of 2000.08.02.



genus *Cladophora*<sup>624</sup>. Subsequently, *Aegagropila linnaei* was inserted into the genus *Cladophora* with the name of *Cladophora aegagropila* from Rabenhorst and subsequently classified as *Cladophora sauteri* da Kütz. In 2002, extensive research was carried out, including DNA tests, which ascertained the presence of chitin in the cell walls, making the alga not comparable to the *Cladophora* genus. This alga appears as a set of many very thin multicellular stems with colors from bright green to dark green. The algae have no roots and absorb all the substances they need through the stem. Scientific studies have shown that they absorb a large number of nitrites, nitrates, and ammonium components in the water, releasing a large amount of oxygen in the form of bubbles visible on the stems. It can develop on the muddy bottom of the lakes, forming a compact horizontal carpet, or it can cover rocks and submerged woods. But the most known form is the spherical one, due to a mass of stems that develop radially from a “tuft” free in the water. The movement of the water allows the algae to acquire a spherical shape, with a diameter from 20 to 30 cm, guaranteeing all the barrels sufficient oxygenation and illumination. During the day the spheres float on the surface of the water because photosynthesis produces oxygen that draws the sphere towards the surface<sup>625</sup>. *Aegagropila* is a rare species and its biological classification was an essential academic task.

The Marimo Festival was born to preserve the *marimo*. During a meeting entitled “Discussing the past of the Marimo Festival, held on September 28th, 1975, Tanba Setsuro, Director of the “Kushiro Community Center” in 1950 and President of the “Kushiro UNESCO Association” in 1975, specified that: “It was held to protect them. However, it has been written about it in Sapporo, it is described as if the purpose was to attract tourists”<sup>626</sup>. Furthermore, Yoshihide Matsuoka, Manager of the “Akan Kanko Hotel” in 1950, President of the *Akan-ko no Marimo* (*Aegagropila* of Lake Akan) and President of the Akan Kohan onsen ryokan kumiai (Akan lakeside hot-spring hotels

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<sup>624</sup> Sakai, Y. (1991). *Marimo no kagaku* (Science of *Aegagropilas*). Sapporo: Hokkaidō daigaku tosho kankokai, Hokkaidō University Press, pp. 142-144.

<sup>625</sup> Kuroki, K. (1990). “Marimo 5-wa. In *Akan-ko no Marimo Hogokai 40-Shunen kinen shi*” (Five Stories of *Aegagropilas*. Memoir of 40-years History of Conservation Society of *Aegagropilas* of Lake Akan). Akan: Akan-ko no Marimo. Hogokai 40-Shunen Kinen Jikko Iinkai, p. 96; Nakazawa, S. (1989). *Marimo wa Naze Marui* (Why *Aegagropila* is Round). Tōkyō: Chuo Koron Sha, pp. 75, 100; Sakai, Y. (1991), op. cit. pp. 90, 102-103.

<sup>626</sup> Akan kankō kyōkai (Akan Sightseeing Association), *Marimo Matsuri 40-shunen no ayumi* (40-Years Steps of Marimo Festival). (1989). Akan-chō: Akan kankō kyōkai, pp. 24-35.

Union), argued: “The idea of it is completely irrelevant”, referring to tourist attraction. Another confirmation comes from Akira Benibayashi, head of the Kushiro region office, of the Hokkaidō Board of Education in 1950 and President of the Hokkaidō Board of Education in 1975, at the time of the meeting he declared: “When we were discussing the original approach, we were not thinking at all about how to create a new step for tourism. There is no sense in doing so if the local people's understanding, interest, and consciousness for the protection of the aegagropila cannot be reflected”. Therefore, more testimonials confirm that the creation of the Marimo Festival has not been matured for tourists, but with the sole purpose of preserving the alga from extinction<sup>627</sup>. Actually, in 1921, when the aegagropila was designated a protected species, many expeditions were organized to Tōkyō for commercial purposes.

Beginning in 1941, we witnessed the extinction of algae in the Shirikomabetsu river, whose course flows into Lake Akan, due to trees falling against the current and subsequent transport along the waterway<sup>628</sup>. In the summer of 1950, enormous damage was caused to them, following the lowering of the water level and the consequent exposure to air. On 10th June, as a countermeasure, the Marimo taisaku kyogikai (Committee for the Protection of the Aegagropila) was established: a commission was established to protect the fishing of algae; a committee of researchers specialized in conducting investigations on the aegagropila and its power of generation and finally, members of the Ministry of Education were sent to carry out reports<sup>629</sup>. In other words, it became clear from a point of view of biological clarifications and academic assessments, the biologists set the measure against the degradation of the algae as necessary, which laid the foundations for the establishment of an association for protection. Residents of the area around Lake Akan, were interested in the issue of algae, to give their consent to the various activities proposed by the Association for Protection, *Akan-ko no Marimo* (Aegagropila of Lake Akan); on October 5, 1950, promotions were activated for the conservation and development of algae. This association, in 1964 became the Society for the Preservation of the Aegagropila of Lake Akan and in 1979,

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<sup>627</sup> Irimoto, T. (2004), op. cit. p. 14.

<sup>628</sup> Kuroki, M. (1976). *Tokubetsu Tennen Kinenbutsu Akan-ko no Marimo no Seiikujokyo to Kankyo* (Situation and Environment of Aegagropilas, especially protected species, in Lake Akan). Akan: Akan-cho, pp. 80-81.

<sup>629</sup> Kuroki, M. (1976), op. cit. pp.81-82; Nakazawa, S. (1989). *Marimo wa naze marui* (Why Aegagropila is Round). Tōkyō: Chūōkōron-sha, op. cit. pp. 167-169; Sakai, Y. (1991), op. cit. pp. 167-168.

changed its name again into Society for the Conservation of the Aegagropila of Lake Akan. It transmitted the interest in returning the alga to the whole nation, creating the foundations for the creation of the Marimo Festival<sup>630</sup>. Among the individuals who contributed to the creation of the Festival, we should mention: Tanba Setsurō<sup>631</sup>, who dedicated much of his life to the Ainu, and Yamamoto Tasuke (*ekashi*),<sup>632</sup> who, going back to 1989 on the occasion of the 40th Marimo Festival, stated how the idea of the festival was good, pointing out that the arrival of autumn offered nothing spectacular to Lake Akan, therefore tourists were attracted only for the short period from June to August. At this point, he asked Tanba and Matsuoka if, in addition to the conservation

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<sup>630</sup> *Akan-ko no Marimo*, “Hogokai 40-shunen kinen jikko iinkai” (Executive Committee Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Marimo Hogokai [Conservation Society of Aegagropilas] in Lake Akan), *Akan-ko no Marimo hogokai 40-shunen kinen shi* (Memoir of 40-Years History of Conservation Society of Aegagropilas of Lake Akan) (1990). Akan-chō: “Akan-ko no Marimo” Hogokai 40-shunen kinen jikko iinkai, p. 190; Akan-chō (“Akan-Town”), Akan-chō shi (History of Akan Town), op. cit. p. 753.

<sup>631</sup> Kushiro Ainu bunka konwakai, (1994). (Kushiro Gathering for Ainu Culture Discussion). “Chobun, Ko Tanba Setsuro Kaicho Tsuito Tokushu” (“The message of condolence for late President Setsuro Tanba”), Kushiro Seikatsu Bunka Densho Hozon Kenkyukai. *Kusuri* 3, p. 242. Setsuro Tanba was born in Hakodate in 1907. He was first teacher in the secondary school of Kushiro, then in Sapporo, in primary school. After the end of the war, as a teacher he felt a strong responsibility, which led him to become director of the Kushiro Community Center, in 1950. He not only organized the “Marimo Festival”, but also committed himself to the Shiranuka koma odori (Shiranuka horse-like dancing tradition), founded Kushiro Takuboku-kai (Kushiro Takuboku Society), became a founding member and president of the Kushiro UNESCO Association. Also in 1959, he inaugurated the Kushiro Busshari-to (Kushiro stupa of Buddha), showing great understanding and cooperation in cultural activities. In 1986, he founded the Kushiro Ainu bunka konwakai (Kushiro Gathering for Ainu Culture Discussion), participating for sure at 80 conferences over 7 years, until in 1994 the assignment passed to Yamamoto Tasuke. He was acknowledged devotion and benevolent soul, he received the appellation of *michi* (“father”) from the Akan-ko Ainu kyōkai (Lake Akan Ainu Association) in 1975, becoming a trusted personality for the Ainu people. His sympathy for the Ainu cause, created the collaborative conditions with Yamamoto, which led to the creation of the Marimo Festival.

<sup>632</sup> Yamamoto, T. (1991). *Itakkashi Kamui, kotoba no rei* (Itakkashi Kamui, Spirit of words). Sapporo: Hokkaidō daigaku tosho kankōkai (Hokkaidō University Press); Kushiro Ainu bunka konwakai (1993). (Kushiro Gathering for Ainu Culture Discussion), Ko Yamamoto Tasuke Ekashi ryakureki (Brief history of late Mr. Tasuke Yamamoto). *Kusuri* 2, Kushiro Seikatsu Bunka denshō hozon kenkyūkai, pp. 190-192.

Tasuke Yamamoto, was born in 1904, in Harutori, Kushiro. Bilingual (Ainu language at home and Japanese at school), in 1934, when Akan was designated as a national park, he sensed the possibility of tourism, so in the following years, he began the manufacture and sale of wooden sculptures along Lake Kussharo. He was therefore the first to start trading with the Akan National Park. After the end of the war, he committed himself to returning the rights of the Ainu, becoming an important guide for the Ainu. In 1946, he became president of the Kushiro headquarters of Shadanhōjin Hokkaidō Ainu kyōkai (Hokkaidō Ainu Corporate Association) and fought to improve the living conditions of the Ainu. In 1948, with the aim of promoting the Ainu culture, he founded the Kushiro Ainu koten buyō hozonkai (Kushiro Ainu Classic Dancing Preservation Society) of which he became president.

project of the algae, it could also be thought of as an ultimate tourist purpose<sup>633</sup>. This was one of the important impulses for the creation of the Marimo Festival. Finally, Yamamoto argued that, although the main purpose of the festival was related to the protection of the alga, the added tourist purpose should not penalize another important cause, namely the maintenance of the Akan Park, which also required its costs<sup>634</sup>.

### 2.3.3. Changes on the Marimo Festival

The first Marimo Festival, as we have already stated, was carried out in 1950. Since then, every year the appointment is on the shores of Lake Akan to demonstrate the strong intention to protect the Aegagropila. This is why we talked about festivals as a precursor to the “green movement”. In 1955, with the sixth edition of the festival, 3,500 aegagropilas were returned. Since 1960, since there is no aegagropila to postpone, the restoration movement completed its mission. In this way, the Akan kankō kyōkai Association (Akan Tourist Association) decided to extend the festival to include the fall season, creating a very popular and nationally renowned event<sup>635</sup>. Thus, from that year, the purpose of the festival changed, giving viewers a more touristic approach, as was reported in the *Hokkaidō shinbun*<sup>636</sup>. The following years, from 1965 to 1970, were defined as “economic effects”. The festival, which was held from October 10th, was extended for ten days due to issues of greater tourist flow, receiving the collaboration of bus companies and travel agencies. All the changes of those years were reported in annual articles<sup>637</sup>. In 1961, for example, on the occasion of the 12th edition, the procession took place after leaving the Ainu Kotan and a prayer was addressed in front

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<sup>633</sup> Yamamoto, T. & Shitaku, T. (1990). “Daishizen no kamigami to tomo ni”. In *Akan-ko no Marimo hogokai 40-shunen kinen shi* (“With Deities in Great Nature”, in Memoir of 40 years History of Conservation Society of Aegagropilas of Lake Akan). Akan: Akan-ko no Marimo, Hogokai 40-shunen kinen jikko iinkai, p. 89.

<sup>634</sup> Akan kankō kyōkai (Akan Sightseeing Association), *Marimo Matsuri 40-shunen no ayumi* (40-Years Steps of Marimo Festival), op. cit., p. 31. Yamamoto's statement was: “Although the Marimo Festival developed originally from scientific and business-related problems, it is now (1975) helping tourism”.

<sup>635</sup> Shitaku, T. (2000). “Marimo Matsuri konjaku”. In *Marimo Matsuri 50-nen no ayumi* (Now and then about the Marimo Festival, in 50-Years Steps of Marimo Festival). Akan: Akan-ko Ainu kyōkai, p. 15.

<sup>636</sup> *Hokkaidō Shinbun*, 10 April 1979.

<sup>637</sup> Akan kankō kyōkai (Akan Sightseeing Association), *Marimo Matsuri 40-Shunen no Ayumi* (40-Years Steps of Marimo Festival), op. cit., pp. 9-12; Akan-ko Ainu kyōkai (Lake Akan Ainu Association), *Marimo Matsuri 50-nen no ayumi* (50-Years Steps of Marimo Festival), op. cit., p. 10.

of the statue of Maeda Masana, visiting the shrine of Mount Akan and heading towards the festival stage. In 1962, the Kamuy Festival and a Taimatsu torchlight were held, presented as a pre-festival event. In 1963, in addition to the phases described above, a parade of drums and a boat lit for the night was organized. In 1967, during the 18th edition, the festival took place for three days, from 9 to 11 October. On the 9th, the aegagropilas were brought from the lake to the Ainu Kotan through a procession, with illuminated boats and fireworks. The real festival took place on the 10th, when the usual aegagropila procession left the Ainu Kotan and proceeded with the ritual of sending the alga. Finally, during day 11, it was up to local women and hotel employees to hold a dance parade. Since there were no more aegagropilas to be returned, the festival program changed, the *Kamuynomi* (prayer to the gods)<sup>638</sup> was inserted, but a “welcome ceremony” was held from 1965. In 1970, the 21st festival took place, and the show was witnessed, focusing on fireworks, which were able to create an evocative atmosphere, to leave the ever more numerous spectators with awe.

In 1974, on the occasion of the 25th festival, the date was set for 8-10 October, on the occasion of the national holiday, the Day of Health and Sport. During the 29th edition, in 1978, the torch procession was moved to the second day, while on the 8th, the procession was performed by the Sightseeing Association and Women's Society and a pre-festival, characterized by a “welcome ceremony” for the aegagropilas, with Ainu dances performed in the evening at the Ainu Kotan. A welcome rite of the aegagropilas, fireworks, torchlight procession, and *kamuynomi*, took place on the 9th and a ceremony of sending algae was held on the 10th. Later, other tourist-related events were added, such as the competition of Miss Marimo during the 34th edition of the festival in 1983, a music festival during the 38th edition in 1987, and a symposium and an exhibition in honor of the celebration of the centenary of the discovery of the Aegagropila during the 49th edition in 1998. In 1999, the Marimo Festival reached its 50th edition<sup>639</sup>.

All these data, therefore, illustrate that, as for the first decade (1950-1960), the festival took place to protect the algae, but it witnessed a change of conception, through its transformation into a tourist event in the following ten years (1960-1970). The year 1960

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<sup>638</sup> *Kamuynomi* is also called *Kotannomi*, because it is made by the inhabitants of the Ainu Kotan.

<sup>639</sup> Akan-ko Ainu kyōkai (Lake Akan Ainu Association), “Marimo Matsuri 50-Nen no Ayumi” (50-Years Steps of Marimo Festival), op. cit., p. 10.

marked a change, also due to the post-war period, which led to a more proper tourist phase. From 1970 to today, the festival program has been formalized, even if several events have been added to it, acquiring with time an appreciable position, becoming the most important annual tourist event at Lake Akan. During these years, the number of tourists has increased considerably: from 600 during the first festival to 800 during the fifth edition; 2,000 during the tenth; 10,000 for the twentieth edition, and 20,000 for the twenty-eighth edition<sup>640</sup>. During the discussion held in 1990<sup>641</sup>, the executive director of the Maeda Ippo Foundation argued that as the Marimo Festival became a business, the organization by a tourist association and that the main purpose of the Marimo Conservation Society was to carry out a widespread movement for the protection of the Aegagropila. For some, these goals had to be accomplished separately. This means, presumably, that the research in the ecological field of the Akan National Park, which the Foundation was carrying out, was necessary for the protection of the Aegagropila and that it could not be combined with tourism-related events, such as the Marimo Festival.

The fact that the Marimo Festival, in its fortieth year, had already been decreed as a tourist event, rather than an event to protect the algae, is undeniable. In this regard, Masanori Toyōka, president of the “Akan Ainu Association”, defined the Marimo Festival not only as a tourist event, nor as a countermeasure, but with a broad symbiotic value between nature and man. This new value became clear with the “welcome ceremony” of the aegagropilas, which were taken by the lake, then kept in a *chise* (“house”) in the Ainu Kotan and returned to the lake the following day. This denotes precisely the reciprocity between nature (divinity) and human beings, based on the traditional Ainu culture, on a dualistic view of the world<sup>642</sup>. Taking into consideration the aegagropila as a symbol of the natural blessing, instead of bears, fish or plants the festival is oriented in this sense, which is equivalent, from a value point of view to the *Iyomante* (“sacred sending of the bear”). Therefore, the festival becomes an event that connects the world of the gods and the world of men, through which this link is

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<sup>640</sup> Yamada, T. (2001). *Ainu no sekaikan* (The world view of the Ainu). Tōkyō: Kodansha (1994), pp. 58.

<sup>641</sup> *Akan-ko No Marimo*, “Hogokai 40-shunen kinen jikko iinkai” (Executive Committee Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Marimo Hogokai [Conservation Society of Aegagropilas], op. cit., pp. 50-52.

<sup>642</sup> Yamada, T. (2001). *Ainu no sekaikan* (The world view of the Ainu). Tōkyō: Kodansha (1994), pp. 58, 224.

described, affirmed, and reproduced. In this way, a new theme is created to appreciate nature. The festival is not only organized by the Ainu, but also by the locals, who live around Lake Akan, including the *wajin*.

## Conclusion

Ethnic tourism means negotiating ethnicity through the multiple expressions of traditional culture (songs, dances, rituals, clothes, designs, etc.). But, in some manner, this also means demolishing and rebuilding the Ainu culture. It refers not to practices such as hunting and fishing, but to a culture that displays and represents its ethnicity, in a new way of subsistence and resistance. Therefore, it is possible to refer to the Ainu culture as a traditional culture that has adapted to become a tourist culture. The Marimo Festival is a perfect example, since it adapts rituals to tourism, preserving that spiritual inherited sense placed in the “heart” of the Ainu ethnicity. In this sense, the Ainu ethnicity is “transformed” by the Ainu themselves, through the conscious use of their identity for tourism purposes. Thus, the survival strategy adopted by Lake Akan can be defined as a process of ethnic symbiosis, having as its symbol the creation of the Marimo Festival.

The discourse on the “protection of the aegagropila” or that of the rite addressed to nature, represent at the same time their vision of the world and its interpretation. However, for the Ainu the presence of others for their survival is indispensable. Their ethnic expression, their compromises, discourse, and the managing of identity, give life to that form of existence called “cultural hybridization” which is established to lead a better lifestyle. Furthermore, the relationship between different ethnicities evolves within a symbiotic relationship starting from a real comparison and the Marimo Festival becomes the real process that allows this ethnic symbiosis. On this occasion, an identity conscience is established where the festival becomes a great theater, in which different interests through integration cooperate in realizing a common field<sup>643</sup>. Having said this, it is evident that the cooperation between Ainu and *wajin* is not only for tourism and

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<sup>643</sup> Irimoto, T. (1994b). “Anthropology of the North”. In T. Irimoto, T. Yamada (eds.), *Circumpolar Religion and Ecology*. Tōkyō: University of Tōkyō Press, p. 4; Irimoto, T. (1996b). *Bunka no shizen-shi* (An Anthropology of Nature and culture). Tōkyō: Tōkyō daigaku shuppan kai (University of Tōkyō Press), p. 4.

economic purposes, but also involves human relationships in multiple ways, as a fundamental aspect that makes this possible<sup>644</sup>.

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<sup>644</sup> Irimoto, T. (2004), *op. cit.* pp. 34-36.



## CONCLUSION

The Ainu are at the center of numerous debates regarding the social, political, and cultural spheres in contemporary Japan, a nation that has always defined itself as monolithic but has gradually come to accept ethnic diversity and the presence of the Ainu people(s) within its borders. The relationship between the Ainu and the Japanese has never been easy, ever since the first contact between the two and throughout the Meiji period, with the Japanese policy of forced assimilation in the last decades of the 19th century. Positive changes have recently occurred, with the Ainu recognition in 2008 and, above all, in 2019, followed by the construction of a large museum and park as well as a place for the restitution of the skeletons of Ainu ancestors, stolen for research purposes in the first half of the last century. There is a strong ideal among the Ainu, according to which the path of coexistence with the non-Ainu Japanese could develop constructively, including respect for each of the two cultures, both within small regional communities and in Japanese society at large. There are different ways among individuals to understand the promotion of Ainu culture, since there are different viewpoints and ideas on what the Ainu culture means. However, it is unquestionable that the Ainu heritage represents an invaluable element and a precious resource both for the Ainu themselves and for the Japanese society, understood as a truly multicultural society.<sup>645</sup> This investigation into the power relations between the Japanese state and the Ainu aboriginal group, operating through a long process of colonization and the new postcolonial order, leads to conclusions that can be classified into three distinct categories.

The first one is historical, and generally concerns the knowledge of Japan and the decisive role that the integration of the island of Hokkaidō has played in its national and international development. The colonization of the island happened at the crucial moment when the country opened to the West. Hokkaidō embodied a new expression of Japanese culture, rich in its particular western contribution to this original

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<sup>645</sup> Sakurai Yoshihide, “Ainu Religious Consciousness and Challenges of Cultural”, in *Living Conditions and Consciousness of Present-day Ainu*. Report on the 2008 Hokkaidō Ainu Living Conditions Survey, Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies. Hokkaidō: Hokkaidō University, 2010, pp. 107-115.

environment. The Ainu people, for their part, remain the most important losers of this long-term annexation process, making Hokkaidō and its dependencies (Karafuto and Kuril Islands) a type of laboratory, where many colonial, administrative and technical measures were adopted, and from where an intense political struggle still takes place today for the cultural recognition of their identity. Historically, global forms of colonization were designed and soon applied to the Ryūkyū islands (1872) and later to Formosa (1895), Korea (1910), and Manchuria (1931). The Ainu did not have the means to successfully counter the huge influx of Japanese immigrants into its territories, so their original environment, *Ainu Moshiri*, was simply reorganized and the hunter-gatherer-oriented lifestyle of the Ainu dramatically altered. The Japanese viewed the Ainu as an inferior race and deemed them unable to become competent farmers, even though agriculture techniques were not unknown among them.<sup>646</sup> Colonization had started some time before the modern Constitution (1890) of the Japanese state in the second half of the 19th century, through the *basho ukeoi* system, i.e., the commercial and social exploitation of the Ainu imposed during the Tokugawa period and aimed to enforce sedentariness.

The second conclusion is ethnological and directly affects the Ainu people. The contribution of western modernity to the Japanese colonial process was deeply rooted in the existing native Japanese discourse, which stigmatized the ethnic-cultural differences between the Ainu and the *wajin*, or ethnic Japanese. In the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, disciplines such as physical anthropology were functional to the theory explaining differences between two “races” and contributed to the justification of their cultural inequality, and of Japanese colonization of the Ainu territories. Evolutionist academia adopted the forms of representation of the Ainu already existing in Japan’s collective imagination (Emishi, Ebisu, mythological literature of Yamato and phantasmagoria of a part of the *Ainu-e*), to reify an essentialist idea of cultural alterity concerning which *wajin* could largely conceptualize their own cultural identity. Once the Russian threat had been controlled, stereotypes inherited from Matsumae on barbarism and supposedly aboriginal primitivism were transformed and adapted to match a racial viewpoint at the service of the Japanese colonization. Thus,

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<sup>646</sup> Tanimoto Akihisa, “Document on The Memories of Ainu Agricultural Studies by Dr. Yoshishige Hayashi:1950-1980,” in *Journal of the Center for Northern Humanities*, Vol. 7, 2014, pp. 109-121.

the expropriation of the Ainu and their progressive impoverishment were accomplished in the last decade of the 19th century, through a meticulous and systematic scheme of expropriation of the Ainu lands and fishing areas, the first source of the economy on which colonial development was based. This expropriation was institutionalized with the approval of the law of 1899, supposedly designed to protect the Ainu culture and way of life, but *de facto* the final legislative phase of a state-sponsored violent plan. The Ainu became legally second-class citizens, occupying the lowest economic level of handler workers, socially outdistanced from the rest of colonial society, due to a discriminatory system that forbade any personal enrichment and social movement. These institutional and socio-economic changes relentlessly accompanied the transformation of the distorted perception that was socially operating about the Ainu. Like many other aboriginal minorities affected by modernization, the Ainu had to face history on unfair terms, approaching in a disadvantaged manner the unfathomable void of modernity. After the legal reforms in the 21st century, the Ainu are officially recognized as the aboriginal people of Japan, but they do not yet have concrete rights deriving from this status.

Finally, the third conclusion is political and shows us that the Ainu struggle for identity, socio-cultural survival, and the right to culturally exist is an act of resistance that requires time. One case in point is the recent opening of the National Ainu Museum and Park in Shiraoi (also called Upopoy, an Ainu word meaning “singing together in a large group”), postponed twice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The museum is expected to contribute to the promotion of local economy and tourism, as well as to the promotion of Ainu culture. The decision to build a National Ainu Museum appears to stem, at least according to media like the *Asahi shinbun*, from the government’s need to increase its policy efforts to promote the rights and cultures of ethnic minorities in conformity with the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the resolution of the Diet in 2008. The government’s effort seems genuine, but the relics of a problematic language when addressing the past struggles of the Ainu are far from vanished. In a news conference held in July 2020, minister Hagiuda Kōichi, while defining the Ainu aborigines, stated that the latter had “differences in values” compared to the Japanese who came to develop Hokkaidō. The formula “differences in values” appears like a strategic edulcoration of the actual discrimination undergone by the Ainu

in the past.<sup>647</sup> This is to say that historical awareness on the part of the Japanese political elite appears to require just as much time, even as the ongoing struggle of the Ainu hits an important milestone and cultural centers focused on Ainu traditions gain new momentum.

Bearing in mind the complexity of the forces at work in the historical development of the Ainu struggle to preserve their existence, while, at the same time, shaping and reshaping their identity, in this thesis I have attempted to address the objectives mentioned in the introduction:

1) Despite the difficulties undergone, the Ainu have not lost the courage to reach back. Throughout history, Ainu have initiated several acts of rebellion, opposed the Japanese, developed forms of activism to ensure that their voice would not be left unheard. The key-notion to address the evolution of the Ainu in history is that of resilience. By way of a complex process of identity negotiation, the Ainu people have succeeded in defeating the impending threat of extinction.

2) In the context of ethnic tourism, the protagonists are represented by objects belonging to the material culture, created and sold to the public, and rich in traditional symbolism. These symbols have been researched since the post-war period, when the need for a new perspective, one that could combine theory with more empirical analysis, emerged. In Europe, and specifically in Italy, Fosco Maraini stands out as one of the first scholars who understood how the power hidden within these symbols could be used at the Ainu's advantage, as it turned out to be in more recent times. The focus on Maraini in the thesis served the purpose of showing how the image of the Ainu traveled outside Japan, stimulating a growing interest on the part of the Europeans, and the "West" at large, concerning Ainu history and cultural practices. European museum collections of Ainu material culture represent further proof of such an interest. The journey overseas made by Ainu objects and practices as well as the global discourse on the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide have played a

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<sup>647</sup> "Editorial: Visit the new Ainu museum for insight into their culture, history", *The Asahi Shinbun*, 27 August 2020. See: <http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/13671950>.

significant role in the cultural policies implemented by the Japanese government concerning the Ainu in recent years.

3) The preservation of Ainu culture in European museums is important, but so is the establishment of museums and cultural centers, where Ainu performances are staged, within the Japanese archipelago. Musealization and touristification may indeed be part of a process of commodification of Ainu cultural traditions, one which can come across as problematic and quintessentially negative. However, I hope I have successfully demonstrated that there is also a constructive side to this process. While unquestionably implying a form of compromise, this process also enables the survival of the Ainu, by ways of a periodical re-negotiation of their ethnic identity, whereby the Ainu (or at least a part of them) actively operate a selection of a portion of their traditional culture to be combined with more easily accessible contemporary elements and transformed into marketable goods for touristic purposes.

Assuming that today's Ainu cultural artifacts and practices ought to be categorized as non-authentic is also a viewpoint I tried to object to in my thesis. The notion of authenticity is far more complex and dynamic and is often debated within the context of ethnic tourism. If, for some scholars, objects and performances destined to tourists are to be classified as mere secondary experiences, since ethnic tourism is understood as a travel "motivated by the search for the first-hand contact with people whose ethnic and/or cultural backgrounds are different from one's own ... to gain direct experience of the culture",<sup>648</sup> for others commercial entities make up a significant part of ethnic tourism.<sup>649</sup> As a notion, authenticity should not be confused with the non-indigenous search for authentic indigeneity, a "postmodern fantasy of authentic alterity"<sup>650</sup> or rigidly considered as the very antonym of cultural commodification. In the cases analyzed in the thesis, authenticity rather constitutes a performative process, one which

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<sup>648</sup> Yamamura Takayoshi, "Heritage Tourism and Indigenous Tourism", in *Indigenous Heritage and Tourism: Theories and Practices on Utilizing the Ainu Heritage* ed. Okada Mayumi and Kato Hirofumi (Hokkaidō: Hokkaidō University Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies, 2014), p.42.

<sup>649</sup> Li Yang, "Ethnic Tourism and Cultural Representation", in *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol.38, 2010, pp. 561-585.

<sup>650</sup> Chris Tilley, "Performing Culture in the Global Village", in *Critique of Anthropology*, Vol. 17, 1997, pp.67-89.

takes place in a “contact zone”<sup>651</sup> integrated with the contemporary socio-cultural and political environment, and involves the joint agency of the Ainu, the Japanese, and the tourists.

Allow me to assume, to conclude this final reflection, a personal point of view to talk about the recent establishment of the Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park and the excitement that I felt, albeit from afar, when I saw the images of their opening to the public, of the dance and traditional music, shows organized for the occasion, and of a beautiful light show projected right on the museum building. The facility's opening had been postponed twice due to the COVID-19 pandemic and came two and a half months behind schedule. The museum complex, originally scheduled to open on April 24, aims to attract one million visitors annually once the admission limits are lifted, according to the Japanese government. It is expected to contribute to the promotion of the local economy and tourism. The complex comprises a museum, a park, and a memorial. It has a hall to show traditional Ainu dance and musical performances, a workshop for cooking Ainu cuisine and playing Ainu instruments, and a studio for Ainu craft demonstrations. It also has an area showing a traditional Ainu village. The memorial site has buildings for performing memorial services and keeping displaced remains of deceased Ainu people, along with a monument and a cemetery. In order to draw one million visitors to the facility annually, the government views it as a base for reviving and developing the Ainu culture, which, along with their language, was at the risk of extinction due to a policy of assimilation that started in the Meiji Era (1868-1912).

In the museum's venue some traditional houses have been built, to show the tourists the traditional way of life. Moreover, there is the possibility to see the demonstrations of handicrafts, inlay of wooden objects, as well as having a traditional embroidery experience. In the different restaurants the tourists can enjoy the traditional Ainu food, but there are also café areas and souvenir shops. The museum houses a large collection of objects from the Ainu material culture and during the dance and the performances, the images are projected on the screen and the floor of the stage so that you can experience the view of nature as if you were in Hokkaidō or in the Ainu village. There is a theatre/cinema with 96 seats, in which high-definition films are presented on various

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<sup>651</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, “Arts of the Contact Zone”, *Profession*, 1991, pp. 33-40.

themes related to Ainu culture, there is a special exhibition hall where the results of research and studies on Ainu culture and indigenous culture will be presented. In the future, there will be exhibitions on different cultural aspects. Finally, there is a basic exhibition hall, in which there is the presentation of the six themes: “language”, “world”, “life”, “history”, “work” and “exchange” from the point of view of the Ainu people. Upopoy is a national center that dives from the base for the reconstruction and development of Ainu culture, aiming to be a symbol for the future of Japan. A symbol intended as an emblem to build a vibrant society that respects the dignity of indigenous people and that has a different culture without discrimination. The name means “singing together” in the Ainu language and wants to be a wish for peaceful coexistence, for mutual enrichment. In this sense, Kato Tadashi, executive director of the Ainu Association of Hokkaidō, said at the opening ceremony that “The Ainu people have the spirit of tolerance” and “Upopoy was completed through dialogue and interactions.”

For many years, initiatives like this museum have been the object of heated debates and intellectual discussions that have pointed out the complex implications (social, political, economic, cultural) that identity representation has in the contemporary world. However, the fact that, for the first time, this would be an “official” “national” museum is not a minor issue and must be closely considered in future researches that address complex topics such as multiculturalist discourses, monoethnic tendencies, and nationalist revivals in the definition of Japanese cultural identity. In my view, this new museum is a revealing testimony of the cultural and social vitality of Ainu identity and the important role that play in its expressions thematic parks and reconstructed villages, as I have tried to point out in this thesis. In this sense, going back to the hypothesis that brought me to these final pages, we can say that, beyond their negative connotations, the commodification practices within open museums, reconstructed villages, and theme parks are contributing to the complex redefinition of Ainu culture in contemporary Japan.

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## PHOTOGRAPHIC APPENDIX<sup>652</sup>



Welcome to Hokkaidō, midnight arrival at Chitose Airport.



Ainu souvenirs, at Chitose Airport.

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<sup>652</sup> All the pictures are mine.





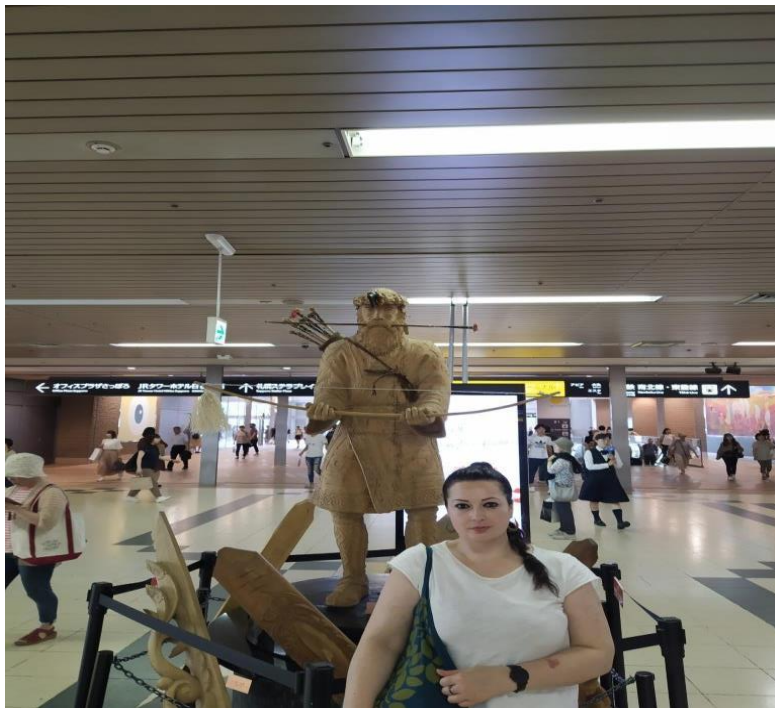
Ainu traditional craft shop, at Chitose Airport.



Ainu embroidery at Sapporo station.



Ainu panels at Sapporo station.



Ainu chief sculpture made by artist Fujito Takeki, at Sapporo station.





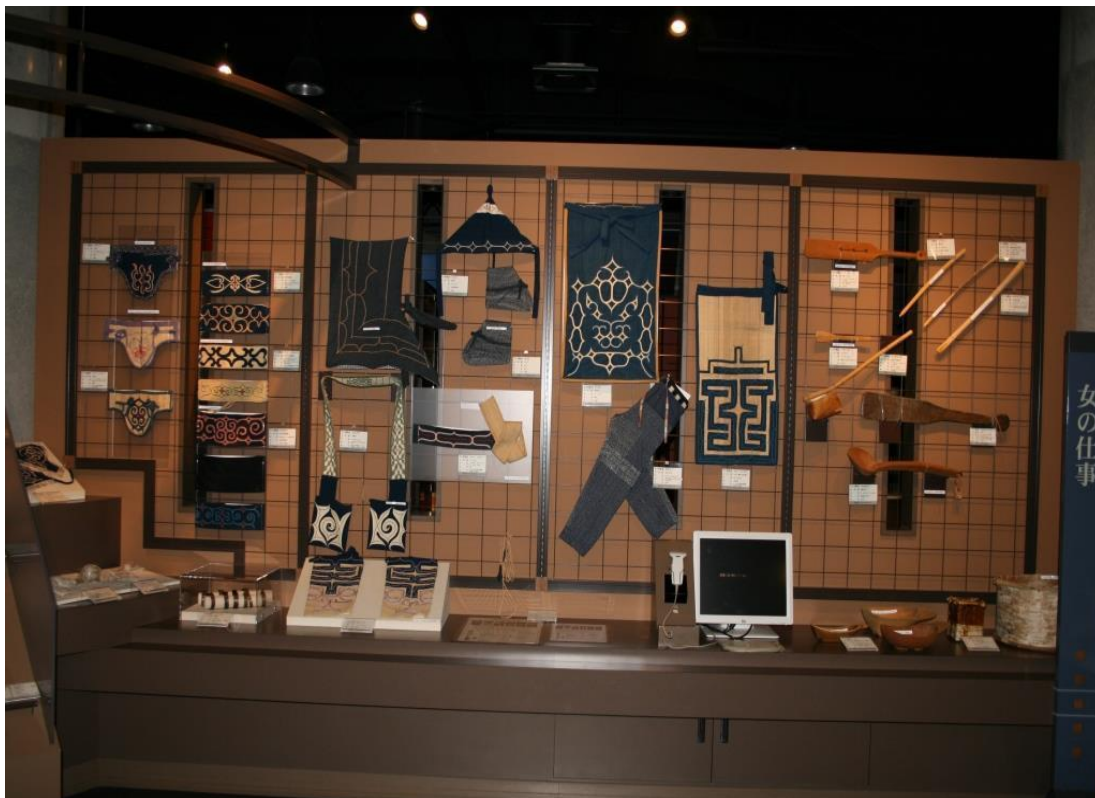
*Ainu embroidery, at Sapporo station.*



*Pirka kotan and Ainu Culture Promotion Center, Sapporo.*



*Pirka kotan and Ainu Culture Promotion Center, Sapporo.*

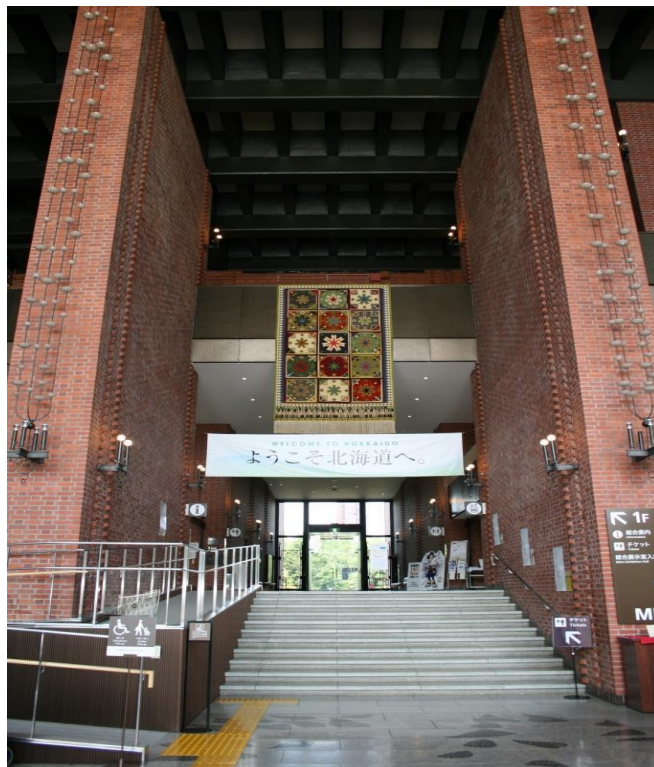


*Pirka kotan and Ainu Culture Promotion Center, Sapporo.*





Traditional Ainu home “Chise”, reconstruction, at *Pirka kotan* and Ainu Culture Promotion Center, Sapporo.



Hokkaidō Museum.



Traditional Ainu house “Chise”, reconstruction, at Hokkaidō Museum.



The area where the *Poroto Kotan* stood, closed in March 2015 for the renovation and redevelopment works. The first Ainu national museum entirely dedicated to Ainu culture will be built here and open in April 2020, in Shiraoi.



The area where the *Poroto Kotan* stood, closed in March 2015 for the renovation and redevelopment works. The first Ainu national museum entirely dedicated to Ainu culture has been opened in July 2020, in Shiraoi.



View on Lake Poroto, *Poroto Kotan*, Shiraoi.



Shakushain new sculpture, at Shizunai.



Shakushain Memorial Museum, Shizunai.





Shakushain Memorial Museum, Shizunai.



View on Saru river, the sacred river, at *Nibutani Kotan*, Biratori.



*Nibutani Kotan, Biratori.*



*Nibutani Aino culture Museum, Nibutani Kotan, Biratori.*



Nibutani Ainu culture Museum, *Nibutani Kotan*, Biratori.



The main street, where there are many Ainu craft shops, *Akan Kotan*, Kushiro.





Theatre "Ikor", at *Akan Kotan*, Kushiro.



*Akan Kotan*, Kushiro.



*Akan Kotan, Kushiro.*



Aynu embroidery workshop. The elderly woman explains how to use the needle to create the typical knots of the Aynu embroidery, at *Akan Kotan, Kushiro.*



A young AINU traditional dancer at the theatre “Ikor”, after the shows, at Akan Kotan, Kushiro.



Lake Akan in the evening, Kushiro.





Kushiro city museum, Kushiro.



Kawamura Kaneto Museum, (K. Kaneto was an old Ainu chief and this is the oldest museum in the city), Asahikawa.



“Attush”, traditional Ainu dress, made with elm bark fibers, at Hokkaidō Museum.



“Tamasai”, traditional Ainu necklaces made with glass beads, at Nibutani Culture Museum, Biratori.





“Rokuniku sutēki” (sliced deer), at “Harukor”, Shinjuku, Tōkyō.



“Rataskep” (pumpkin, corn, and spices), at “Harukor”, Shinjuku, Tōkyō.



“Kitopiro ramen”, at “Drive in Yukara”, *Nibutani Kotan*, Biratori.



“Chep Ohaw” (soup with salmon and vegetables), at “Poronno”, *Akan Kotan*, Kushiro.



“Puccheimo” (potatoes left to ferment during winter under the snow), at “Poronno”, *Akan Kotan*, Kushiro.



“Kabanoanatake”, (herbal tea based on chaga that grows abundantly in the Akan forest), at “Poronno”, *Akan Kotan*, Kushiro.



“Marimo mojito”, at “Ajishin”, *Akan Kotan*, Kushiro.