Salmon God: Indigenous Cultural Identity and Settler Colonial Attitude in the Japanese Media from 1984 to 2007

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1. Introduction

In 2007, as a result of a long struggle for recognition on an international scale, the landmark document 'The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples', or UNDRIP in short, enshrined the concept of indigenous human rights in international law. The affirmation of distinct rights for indigenous peoples, the UNDRIP, and the framework it provides for the protection and promotion of these distinct rights at both a national and international level, have created an important step forward towards equality for generally marginalized groups of people. Article eight of this declaration states that indigenous people have the right to not be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture. Furthermore, the State would have to provide mechanisms to prevent or redress this.[1] Cultural heritage, and in extension cultural identity, can be perceived as being more significant for indigenous people.[2] Consequently their basic human rights and cultural rights oftentimes become interwoven. This would mean that the UNDRIP recognises the right to protect their indigenous cultural identity. But how was this issue handled before the enactment of the declaration?

Indigenous peoples in settler colonial states, like the United States and Canada, have suffered assimilation policies and have been forcefully made into a more acceptable version based on the societal standards of those states.[3] The consequential erosion of their indigenous cultural identity is something that professor of politics at the University of Melbourne Sarah Maddison calls 'cultural genocide'.[4] In addition to this forceful assimilation, indigenous peoples have oftentimes been confined to a reservation, taking away their ancestral lands. The similarities between Canada, Australia, the United States and New Zealand in terms of the government of the indigenous peoples living within their borders is often associated with reservation life, in which people that live outside of these reservations do not get the same 'benefits' as those that do.[5] One nation that I would argue qualifies as a settler colonial state as well is Japan. A nation that has forcefully assimilated the indigenous population of the northernmost peninsula Hokkaido, called the Ainu. The settler colonial attitude of the Japanese government is reflected in their historical policies and treatment of the Ainu. But can we say the same for how this is portrayed in Japanese media? In this paper I aim to answer the following

[1] United Nations Development Group, "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People," G*uidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues* (New York and Geneva 2009) 46-57, at 49.
[2] Federico Lenzerini, "Reparations for Wrongs against Indigenous Peoples' Cultural Heritage," in *Indigenous Peoples' Cultural Heritage: Rights, Debates, Challenges*, eds. Alexandra Xanthaki, Sanna Valkonen, Leena Heinämäki and Piia Nuorgam (Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2017), 327-346, at 328.
[3] Sarah Maddison, "Indigenous identity, 'authenticity' and the structural violence of settler colonialism," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 20, no. 3 (2013): 288-303, at 290.
[4] Ibid., 289.
[5] Ibid., 299.

question: 'to what extent does the expression of indigenous cultural identity in the Japanese media from 1984 to 2007 reflect the attitude of settler colonial states?'

1.1 Indigeneity, culture, and identity

In order to fully understand the research question, the concept indigenous cultural identity needs to be explained. Culture in itself is a vague concept, and very complex in nature. The vagueness of culture stems from the uncertainty of the legitimacy of traditions, as is described in the influential collection of works edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger.[6] Additionally, identity is a vague concept as well, which translates in difficult situations regarding cultural identity in national and international legislative bodies.[7] As scholars like Marco Odello and Hilary Weaver have concluded, identity as a whole can include three aspects: self-identification, community identification, and external identification.[8] All three of these aspects can be examined when exploring its portrayal in the media. This conceptualisation of cultural identity is significant for indigenous people in particular. Anthropologist Ronald Niezen further explains this with Canada as an example for how liberal societies tend to pursue an egalitarian approach to legislation for its citizens. Legal claims for cultural distinctiveness are therefore difficult to process, as is often the case with indigenous people making claims for their ancestral lands.[9] Indigenous cultural identity is consequently connected to indigenous rights on many occasions.

As stated earlier, cultural heritage, and in extension cultural identity, can be perceived as being more significant for indigenous peoples. The inclusion of both tangible and intangible works of expression, and the natural background of the people, which in the case of the Ainu includes the natural resources of Hokkaido such as salmon and deer, creates a much more complex sense of heritage and identity.[10] Research on indigenous cultural identity understandably tends to focus on wrongdoings and suffering on the part of indigenous people. Concepts like cultural violence, coined by sociologist Johan Galtung, and cultural genocide are utilised as frameworks for such research.[11] Lindsey Kingston, for example, has approached forced assimilation policies and the consequential destruction of the culture of indigenous

[6] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger eds., *The Invention of Tradition*. 21st ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[7] Ronald Niezen, *Rediscovered Self: Indigenous Identity and Cultural Justice* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 67-68.
[8] Marco Odello, "Indigenous peoples' rights and cultural identity in the inter-American context," *The International Journal of Human Rights* 16, no. 1 (January 2012): 25-50, at 29; Hilary N. Weaver, "Indigenous Identity: What Is It, and Who Really Has It?," *American Indian Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (2001): 240-255, at 240.
[9] Odello, "Indigenous peoples' rights," 89.
[10] Lenzerini, "Reparations for Wrongs," 328.
[11] Johan Galtung, "Cultural Violence," *Journal of Peace Research* 27, no. 3 (1990): 291-305, at 291.

people, with a focus on a genocidal aspect of the issue.[12] Regarding the historical context of Japan as a settler colonial state, these perspectives have to be kept in mind as well.

1.2 Settler colonialism

The previous statement includes my thesis in an ongoing historiographical debate on the history of settler colonialism, wherein I too think that Japan has to be included in studies regarding the subject. The very concept of settler colonialism is transnational and transcultural in nature, based on the domination of indigenous peoples. It is considered transnational because of the dialectical tension between a 'here' and 'there', and transcultural because of the dynamic in the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised.[13] The historiographical debate is one of continual change, and it is only since the mid-1970s that the concept is used as a combination of 'settler' and 'colonial' narratives in analysing history.[14] However, even in modern times the inclusion of Japan within the debate is not widely recognised. Oftentimes researchers, like Sarah Maddison and Miranda Johnson, use Western nations such as the United States, Canada, Australia or New Zealand as a case study.[15] This does not mean that Japan is omitted or outright denied as a settler colonial state, but it does reflect a Western perspective.

In his historical research on settler colonialism in the subjugation of Hokkaido, Katsuya Hirano highlights the relationship between the Japanese government and the Ainu as a transformation of an indigenous people into a dispensable part of the population.[16] Furthermore, in an article based on the context of a workshop on settler colonialism in Japan, Hirano states that the dispossession of the Ainu was inspired by American frontier politics, which is seen as a prime example of how a settler colonial state treats its indigenous population. He also states that the ignorance regarding the settler colonial past of Japan has hurt the Ainu, and is continuing to hurt the Ainu in their struggle for indigenous rights in modern times as well.[17]

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[12] Lindsey Kingston, "The Destruction of Identity: Cultural Genocide and Indigenous Peoples," *Journal of Human Rights* 14, no. 1 (2015): 63-83.
[13] Lorenzo Veracini, "'Settler Colonialism': Career of a Concept," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41, no. 2 (2013): 313-333, at 313-314.
[14] Ibid., 324.
[15] Sarah Maddison, "Indigenous identity, 'authenticity' and the structural violence of settler colonialism," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 20, no. 3 (2013): 288-303; Miranda C. L. Johnson, "Connecting Indigenous Rights to Human Rights in the Anglo Settler States: Another 1970s Story," in *Decolonization, Self-Determination, and the Rise of Global Human Rights Politics*, eds. A. Dirk Moses, Marco Duranti and Roland Burke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020) 109-131.
[16] Katsuya Hirano, "Settler Colonialism in the Making of Japan's Hokkaidō," in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (London and New York: Routledge, 2017) 327-338, at 327.
[17] Tristan R. Grunow et al., "Hokkaidō 150: Settler Colonialism and Indigeneity in Modern Japan and Beyond," *Critical Asian Studies* 51, no. 4 (2019): 597-636, at 606.

The workshop regarding the historiographical debate reflected an innovative view on an older, mostly Western, narrative. Professor in Asian Studies Ann-Elise Lewallen also contributed to the debate portrayed in the article, providing a short retelling of her book *The Fabric of Indigeneity: Ainu Identity, Gender, and Settler Colonialism in Japan*, wherein she researches symbolic practices as a way to create indigenous identity in settler colonial Japan.[18] In this book she states that Japan cannot be called a postcolonial state, but very much a state wherein settler colonialism still continues.[19] Her focus on the more gendered side of political activism I consider to be very important in terms of creating a fresh narrative regarding the Ainu and their ongoing struggle for indigenous rights, and on the historiographical debate regarding settler colonialism. Eiichiro Azuma and Sidney Xu Lu have each researched Japanese settler colonialism in relation to the immigration to the Americas.[20] In his book, Azuma states that the colonisation of Hokkaido can be seen as an experiment in imperialism.[21] Furthermore, in agreeance with Hirano, he states that the frontier politics of the United States served as an example for the late nineteenth century Japan's settler colonial policies.[22]

1.3 Methodology and source material

This thesis is based on a discourse analysis utilising newspaper articles as the main type of primary source material. As newspapers are a valuable source of top-down information regarding indigenous cultural identity, I have explored the digital archives of The Japan Times and the Asahi Shimbun to closely examine the portrayal of the Ainu's identity in Japanese media. A new law regarding the cultural rights of the Ainu was enacted by the central Japanese government in 1997, and has served as a breaking point in perspectives on the Ainu. In short, this law recognised the Ainu as an ethnic minority in Japanese society. For this thesis, I have used a period of roughly ten years prior to this law, and ten years after the enactment. One of the first shortcomings of these archives is the available material. Because the digital archive of the Asahi Shimbun only goes as far back as 1984, I have elected to use that as a marker for the periodisation of this thesis. Furthermore, the public opinion on the Ainu started to shift from the mid-1980s as well due to the misplaced comments by former Prime Minister Yakasone on

[18] Ann-Elise Lewallen, *The Fabric of Indigeneity : Ainu Identity, Gender, and Settler Colonialism in Japan* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2016).
[19] Ibid., 3.
[20] Eiichiro Azuma, *In Search of Our Frontier: Japanese America and Settler Colonialism in the Construction of Japan's Borderless Empire* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019); Sidney Xu Lu, *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism: Malthusianism and Trans-Pacific Migration, 1868-1961* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
[21] Azuma, *In Search of Our Frontier*, 1-2.
[22] Ibid., 262.

Japan being a homogenous society.[23] Moving forward, with 1984 as the starting point of my research, I have examined articles published up until 2007 when the UNDRIP was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The Japan Times is a Japanese newspaper written in English, which was founded as a way for foreigners in Japan to receive both national and international news. This means that the perspective of certain articles is not Japanese per se, but more internationally oriented. While Japanese governmental positions on political issues can oftentimes be ascribed to a conservative nature in terms of retaining the status quo, the Asahi Shimbun as a newspaper is more linked to a socially liberal oriented national audience.[24] The main issue in the case of the articles published in that newspaper is that all of them have been written in Japanese. The only way for me to fully grasp what is explained in the article is to use translation software such as Google translate and DeepL. Luckily they have improved the last few years, which entails that it is possible to receive a reasonably accurate translation from Japanese to English. Still, certain nuances might be lost in translation and this has to be mentioned beforehand. Since I have studied Japanese for some time, I can single out missing words or misinterpreted context most of the time.

I have utilised certain search terms in my exploration of the digital archives of both The Japan Times and the Asahi Shimbun. In light of the Ainu's connection to nature, and salmon fishing in particular, I have used 'Ainu' and 'fishing' as the key search terms, which resulted in ninety-one applicable articles for The Japan Times. In the case of the Asahi Shimbun, one of the largest daily newspapers of Japan, I have used the terms アイヌ(Ainu) and サケ (salmon) in the digital archive. This revealed 208 relevant articles published from 1984 to 2007. The scope of this thesis might not prove sufficient enough to be able to analyse all of these, but a selection of different types of articles will provide valuable insights. The articles can be divided into three sections per chapter, the first of which covers the legal issues of the Ainu regarding their cultural and human rights, the second of which covers the connection Ainu have to nature, and the final section covers articles on the transmission of Ainu culture. There are a number of articles that fit in more than one section, which will provide interesting cross-references. The analysis itself will be presented in a chronological order, as following the current of events will highlight the most important changes in representation and reflection in the newspaper. For some examples on Ainu indigenous cultural identity I have contacted the knowledge platform 'AinuToday'. As the creation of this platform was initiated by Dr. Kanako Uzawa, herself

[23] Mari Koseki, "Ainu rights agreement seems as elusive as ever," *The Japan Times*, March 30, 1995, 3; Unknown, "'Homogeneous Japan' axed from texts," *The Japan Times*, May 30, 1997, 3.
[24] Louis G. Perez, *Japan at War: An Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, California: ABD-CLIO, 2013) 336.

identifying as an Ainu, this site offers an interesting and accurate perspective on their identity. The site provides many examples of art and other expressions of the Ainu culture, which will be mentioned in the first chapter.[25]

In what follows I will first explore the historical context regarding the subjugation of the Ainu by Japan, and the consequential settler colonial policies that resulted in the forceful assimilation of the Ainu. Furthermore, I will provide examples that signify the Ainu's indigenous cultural identity which can be seen reflected in the newspapers I have examined. The second and third chapter will be dedicated to a discourse analysis of respectively The Japan Times and the Asahi Shimbun. As stated above these chapters will be divided in three sections each covering legal issues, the Ainu's connection to nature, and the transmission of their culture. Finally, in the fourth chapter I will further analyse the findings as presented in the second and third chapters in relation to the settler colonial attitude of Japan in the historical context as presented in the first chapter.

2. Historical context and indigenous cultural identity

2.1 An overview of Ainu history

In order to gain an understanding of what exactly entails the identity of a people, and I would argue even more so for an indigenous people, the history of that people needs to be dissected and approached from different perspectives. Exploring the history of the Ainu, a mixture of anthropologic, sociological, historical and legal perspectives will provide the background necessary to fully examine their indigenous cultural identity. The situation of the Ainu is not entirely unique, as there are parallels to be found in other areas of the world: Native Americans, Australian Aboriginals, Inuit, Maori, Sami and other peoples.[26] What all of these peoples have in common is that the areas they inhabit, and usually have inhabited for thousands of years, are now part of a larger encompassing nation. Considering the three aspects of identity as previously mentioned, a space where a people can express their self-identification and community identification can be seen as their homeland. In the case of the Ainu, Hokkaido (or *Ainu Mosir* in the Ainu language) is their land of origin.[27]

[25] AinuToday, accessed March 24, 2023, https://ainutoday.com/.
[26] Richard M. Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," in *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*, ed. Michael Weiner (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) 17-49, at 17.
[27] Kanako Uzawa, ""Crafting Our Future Together": Urban Diasporic Indigeneity from an Ainu Perspective in Japan," (doctoral thesis, UiT Norges arktiske universitet, 2020) 12.

Hokkaido, the northernmost peninsula of what now makes up the nation of Japan, has been a cold and inhospitable environment to its inhabitants for centuries. Anthropologically speaking, the early movements of the original inhabitants are difficult to track. By the ninth century there would have been two distinct peoples living on the peninsula, whom are regarded as sub-arctic peoples; and one of which are considered to be the direct ancestors of the Ainu. This has given Ainu distinct features that sets them apart from the Japanese of Yamato ancestry that lived on the peninsula of Honshu.[28] I will further expand on this part more later in this section, as it helps explain why the Ainu were treated the way they were in later periods. The thirteenth century marks the beginning of what is now considered to be the Ainu culture. A hunter-gatherer society that lived as being one with nature, and would consider gods (*Kamuy* in the Ainu language) to be present in animals as well as other natural occurrences.[29] Another aspect of Ainu culture was fishing and, seeing as Hokkaido provided them with an abundance of salmon, the ceremonial act of fishing for salmon was and still is essential for the Ainu.[30]

The first contact between the Yamato Japanese (Japanese from this point on) and the Ainu occurred because of the abundance of natural resources on Hokkaido. There was a dichotomy between the two peoples, as the former found the latter to be barbaric in nature due to their close connection to nature, and their appearances. However, this did not stop the Japanese from engaging in trade relations with the Ainu, which would last until the late fifteenth century.[31] During this time in history the lesser lords of Japan were in a constant state of conflict, which would aptly be named the 'age of warring states' (*Sengoku Jidai* in Japanese). A unifying leader arose near the beginning of the seventeenth century, Tokugawa Ieyasu, under whose command almost the entirety of the peninsulas were joined together. The Matsumae clan, who had been loyal supporters of Ieyasu, were 'gifted' a part of Hokkaido.[32] This happened without the consent of the Ainu who still inhabited those same areas, leading to few violent uprisings in the following two hundred years that were struck down mercilessly by the Matsumae. As new subjects of the local ruler (*Daimyo* in Japanese) in Hokkaido, the Ainu were forced into wage

[28] Hiroshi Maruyama, "Japan's Post-War Ainu Policy. Why the Japanese Government Has Not Recognised Ainu Indigenous Rights?," *Polar Record* 49, no. 2 (2013) 204-207, at 204; Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 18.
[29] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 18.
[30] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 18; "International Symposium: The Indigenous Right to Catch Salmon in Rivers," AinuToday, accessed June 17, 2023, https://ainutoday.com/raporo-international-symposium/.
[31] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 19.
[32] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 19; Georgie Stevens, "The AINU and Human Rights: Domestic and International Legal Protections," *Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law* 2, no. 2 (2001): 110-133, at 111.

labour as there were taxes to be paid to the central government.[33] During the late eighteenth century the first assimilation policies were enacted as well, meaning that the Ainu had to learn Japanese and dress like them too. This was a tumultuous era in the history of Hokkaido, as a conflict between the Russians and the Japanese arose as well. Lands and islands where the Ainu lived were captured back and forth, and with it the assimilation policies could not be enforced at all times.[34]

The true assimilation process started with the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The emperor became the true ruler of Japan once more and, according to his divine right, made the entirety of Japan his domain.[35] Another aspect of Japanese society can be said to originate in this period, namely the myth of a homogenous society, on which I shall expand later in this section. What is important to note here is that, because of his divine right, the emperor was seen as the 'father-sovereign' of Japan. Professor in Japanese History David L. Howell calls this the emperor-system ideology. The idea of a homogenous 'father' as a ruler of Japan meant that his subjects would also be considered as such, hereby creating the myth of a homogenous society.[36] The existence of indigenous people and ethnic minorities contradicts this ideology, making the Ainu into members of a primitive race that needed to be civilised in order to function in Japanese society. The land of Hokkaido was made into an internal colony, and Ainu were dispossessed of their lands, as these 'barbarians' would be unable to properly use the lands and resources at their disposal. Even the Ainu that lived on the Northern Kuril Islands and in Sakhalin were forced to relocate to created communities in the southern part of Hokkaido due to the Treaty of St. Petersburg.[37] The dispossession of indigenous peoples is not unique to the Ainu, and the similar approach that was used in the United States in order to claim the lands of Native Americans allows for the use of a concept previously mentioned in the introduction: settler colonialism.[38] In my opinion, Japan can be considered to be a settler colonial state in the same category as the United States in regards to the treatment and dispossession of the native populus. The main difference between these situations is the ultimate goal of the settler state, which in the case of Japan was the 'total assimilation' of the Ainu.[39]

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[33] David L. Howell, "Making "Useful Citizens" of Ainu Subjects in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 63, no. 1 (2004): 5-29, at 6; Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 21; Stevens, "The AINU and Human Rights," 111.
[34] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 21-23.
[35] Wim J. Boot, *Keizers en Shōgun: Een geschiedenis van Japan tot 1868* (Amsterdam: Salomé – Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 107.
[36] Howell, "Making "Useful Citizens"," 6.
[37] Maruyama, "Japan's Post-War Ainu Policy," 204; Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 22-23; Stevens, "The AINU and Human Rights," 111.
[38] Johnson, "Connecting Indigenous Rights," 113.
[39] Howell, "Making "Useful Citizens"," 6.

By the end of the nineteenth century all of the former Ainu lands, which were now deemed as *terra nullius*, had been appropriated for Japanese agriculture. Furthermore, traditional practises such as salmon fishing, hunting for deer or felling trees, had been prohibited by the central Japanese government.[40] In 1899, due to the interference of a humanitarian movement in Japan, as anthropologist Richard Siddle calls it, the Hokkaido Former Aborigine Protection Act (*Hokkaidō Kyūdojin hogohō*) was enacted. This act would build on the appropriation of former Ainu lands and was aimed to employ the Ainu on state owned farm lands. Some of the terms that applied were as follows: The Ainu that wanted to engage in agriculture would be granted no more than twelve acres of land per household, which could only be transferred between them by inheritance. If these lands were not cultivated after fifteen years, the lands would be confiscated once more. Besides the agricultural articles, medical treatment and welfare policies were also available to those that were in need.[41] In regards to this newfound liberal humanism Katsuya Hirano made the following statement in his article on Japanese settler colonialism: "This perverse ethic of liberal humanism was the essence of the genocidal racism exercised by the Japanese state against the Ainu".[42] I agree, as this act made it possible for the Japanese government to control the Ainu and essentially do with them as they pleased.

An act of this magnitude has consequences that stretch across history. Due to the appropriation of their lands the Ainu were forced into agricultural labour, which resulted in an even lower income than had previously been the case with wage labour. This in turn made a lot of Ainu apply for the welfare policies that are stated in the Protection Act. Consequentially, from that point on the Ainu communities were forcefully dragged into the lowest position in Japanese society.[43] Other articles in the act that would stimulate assimilation are aimed at the separate education of Ainu children. This resulted in a significant increase in school attendance of Ainu children, as parents wanted their children to be able to escape poverty. In accordance with the assimilation policy, this trend in education caused the Ainu language to rapidly disappear. Furthermore, traditional clothing and food were also in decline.[44] The Ainu were effectively disappearing from Japan and, with Ainu leaders urging the general Ainu population

[40] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 23; Stevens, "The AINU and Human Rights," 111.
[41] Richard M. Siddle trans., "Hokkaido Former Natives Protection Law (Law No. 27, March 1 1899)," in *Reading Colonial Japan: Text, Context, and Critique*, eds. Michele Mason and Helen Lee (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2012), 57-59.
[42] Hirano, "Settler Colonialism," 337.
[43] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 24;
[44] Howell, "Making "Useful Citizens"," 10; Stevens, "The AINU and Human Rights," 112; Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 24.

to commit themselves to the assimilation in order to gain better economic and social standings, there was no real resistance in the early twentieth century.[45] This general acceptance of the situation, and the willingness to further seek assimilation, was embodied in the creation of the first Ainu association in 1930. The 'Hokkaidō Ainu Kyōkai' was essentially an extension of the central Japanese government and actively urged Ainu to relinquish their native background and join the Japanese society.[46] The structural and cultural violence committed against the Ainu, which nearly led to the destruction of their culture, can rightly be called a cultural genocide.[47] It is not until the 1960s and 1970s that a change in mentality became visible in younger generations of Ainu.

In the post-war period the increased movement in people, which includes migratory indigenous peoples, led to an increase in populations. This movement of people encountered forms of racism and discrimination outside of their own areas, and came into contact with people in similar situations with similar experiences. The claims for equality, connected to human rights issues, found their way to the United Nations where activists shamed states into accepting terms against the former assimilation policies.[48] This was also the case for the Ainu. The narrative of "Japanese blood" in the post-war period, which is a part of the aforementioned myth of a homogenous Japan, created an atmosphere for Ainu of non-belonging. Unless they possessed similar physical characteristics to Japanese people, discrimination could be seen as a logical consequence. At the same time, this narrative flat-out denied the existence of Ainu in the first place.[49] Influenced by movements worldwide, the younger generations of the Ainu started to reject the assimilation policies. Furthermore, they wanted to replace the 1899 Protection Act, as it was seen as discriminatory. Ainu figurehead Kaizawa Tadashi had met with leaders of indigenous peoples worldwide and saw how they fought to reclaim some of their rights, which would inspire the Ainu to make a draft of a new law regarding Ainu human rights.[50] It is in this period that the Ainu nation, as Richard Siddle calls it, was born.[51] The Ainu would consider themselves a nation that holds a desire for decolonisation, like many other colonised nations of indigenous peoples. As Siddle states on the sense of Ainu nationalism in the 1980s: "…, the idea of the Ainu nation was gaining strength among both radical and

[45] Howell, "Making "Useful Citizens"," 6.
[46] Stevens, "The AINU and Human Rights," 112; Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 24-25.
[47] Kingston, "The Destruction of Identity," 63-64.
[48] Johnson, "Connecting Indigenous Rights," 117.
[49] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 26.
[50] Stevens, "The AINU and Human Rights," 113; Maruyama, "Japan's Post-War Ainu Policy," 204.
[51] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 25.

moderate Ainu leaders…"[52] The connections and meetings with indigenous peoples in other parts of the world, i.e. Australia and the United States, enforced the nationalistic feelings as well due to the similar circumstances of these peoples and how they fought for their rights.[53] The terms *Ainu Minzoku* (the Ainu People) and *Ainu Mosir* (the Land of the Ainu) were reinforced in the 1970s and 1980s. The last of which would become especially important to Ainu, as this represents both a spatial and temporal place for them. Spiritual and natural lives are represented by this term, and the idea of an Ainu nation becomes stronger as well.[54]

Despite this, in the early 1970s there existed little sense of unity, which would be awakened by the younger generation of Ainu activists in the later part of the 1970s and early 1980s.[55] The draft for a new law was ready in 1984, in which the Ainu had assembled policies on various criteria. This included the rights to go fishing for salmon in rivers where the Ainu had done so historically, the right to enjoy their own culture, and to be formally recognised as the native inhabitants of Hokkaido.[56] There did exist some concerns, as a lot of Ainu were still heavily reliant on the welfare policies in the Protection Act of 1899. There were those who thought it could continue to function as an umbrella for the special welfare policies a lot of Ainu applied for; others denied the Act and saw it as the national manifestation of discrimination against their people.[57] It would not be until 1997 that this new law was enacted, but before I go over that process in more detail I want to briefly go over a landmark legal case in the Ainu's fight for rights that will come back in the following two chapters: the Nibutani Dam Case.

During the 1980s, the central government of Hokkaido started a few projects that involved the construction of two dams in Biratori and Nibutani. In order for the construction to continue, the central government forced the Ainu to vacate or sell the lands that would be flooded. This led to an outrage among the Ainu themselves, as a lot of sacred grounds and ceremonial places were located on the lands that would be flooded. The dam caused problems within the Ainu community which is reflected in a statement made by Kanako Uzawa of the Ainu Association of RERA. Uzawa states that a dichotomy was visible between the Ainu who did not sell their lands and those that did, even though it was seen as necessary for a lot of them due to financial hardships. Furthermore, with former ceremonial sites now being under water,

[52] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 40.
[53] Ibid., 38-39.
[54] Ibid., 36-38.
[55] Ibid., 35.
[56] Unknown, "Ainu People Struggle Long For Equality Among Japanese," *The Japan Times*, June 30, 1984, 3; Maruyama, "Japan's Post-War Ainu Policy," 204-205; Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 40.
[57] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 30.

the transmission of culture was negatively impacted as well.[58] The case was taken to court by the Ainu, and the Sapporo Court concluded that the expropriation of those lands, and the subsequent immersion of sites that hold religious and cultural importance for the Ainu, was illegal. In a landmark decision, the Ainu were recognised as being an indigenous people for the first time in a legal setting, while the decision also enforced the right for Ainu to enjoy their culture.[59]

A few years after the Nibutani Dam Case, in 1997, the new law was enacted: The Law for the Promotion of the Ainu Culture and for the Dissemination and Advocacy for the Traditions of the Ainu and the Ainu Culture. A lot of policies that the Ainu wanted to include, such as fishing rights, official recognition as an indigenous people by the central Japanese government and new welfare policies, were not included. It was a law based mostly on the preservation and promotion of Ainu culture while mentioning their ethnic pride.[60] Being officially and legally recognised as indigenous peoples is important as it would grant them rights to their lands and resources, which are now controlled by the Japanese government. Being pushed into poverty and low paying jobs, the Ainu stated that this new law does not recognize the discrimination their people have endured for over one hundred years.[61] A major point of criticism regarding the New Ainu Law of 1997, as stated by Hiroshi Maruyama, was that the Japanese government could "limit and control Ainu culture".[62] As the Ainu continued to lobby to be recognised as an indigenous people in the following decade, a landmark document was enacted by the UN with support from the Japanese government. The UNDRIP was enacted in 2007 and truly marks the internationalisation of indigenous human rights issues, including those of the Ainu.

But what constitutes their indigenous cultural identity? In the following part of this section I will explore the Ainu's sense of culture, and examine aspects that are considered to truly make up their indigenous cultural identity. I had hoped to be able to base this part on interactions with organisations based in Japan, but contact via email proved to be more difficult than anticipated. Instead I will look at three other options. First of all I will look at the book *Indigenous Efflorescence*, edited by Gerald Roche, Hiroshi Maruyama and Åsa Virdi Kroik.

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[58] The Ainu Association of RERA, "Statement by the Ainu Association of RERA," *Nineteenth Session of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations*, July 23-27 2001 (accessed March 23 2023).
[59] Stevens, "The AINU and Human Rights," 120-121.
[60] "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 Foundation for Ainu Culture, accessed March 23, 2023, https://www.ff-ainu.or.jp/web/english/details/law-for-the-promotion-of-the-ainu-culture-and-for-the-dissemination-and-advocacy-for-the-traditions-.html.
[61] Unknown, "New Ainu law fails to settle indigenous question," *The Japan Times*, June 11, 1997, 3.
[62] Maruyama, "Japan's Post-War Ainu Policy," 205.

The book consists of a collection of academic work, but also includes the voices of those that have contributed to indigenous communities and are a part of them. An anthropological and sociological collection of studies, which can serve as both literature and a primary source. Secondly I will look at Kanako Uzawa's dissertation about the urban diasporic indigeneity of the Ainu. She based her anthropological and sociological study on her own experiences as an Ainu in the greater Tokyo area as well, so it will provide a unique perspective in relation to the other voices in the historiographical debate. Lastly the knowledge platform AinuToday, which was initiated by Uzawa as well, shows some modern examples of Ainu culture with roots in their history.

2.2 The Ainu's indigenous cultural identity

The real examples of 'Ainuness', as Siddle calls it, could be seen in dance, the Ainu language, and oral literature. Not in the way this would be presented for tourists, but for the Ainu themselves.[63] This relates back to the three aspects of identity as mentioned earlier: self-identification, community identification, and external identification.[64] The most difficult part about the transmission of Ainu culture, both written and performed, is the absence of a language that can be written down at all. The Ainu language does not have its own script, so the only way for this part of their culture to be passed on to the next generation is through conversation and lessons.[65] The modern examples of their indigenous cultural identity can therefore be traced back to earlier periods in history. Besides the transmission of their way of life, living as one with nature and respecting the plants and animals when fishing or harvesting in the mountains of Hokkaido, the transmission of the part of their cultural identity such as traditional clothing happens within the communities of Ainu in Japan.[66] Those communities do not exist only in Hokkaido, as Uzawa explains in her dissertation. The Ainu that live in other places as a result of the assimilation policies and for economic reasons have to be taken into account as well. According to the Tokyo Ainu community there may be as many as 10.000 Ainu living in and around Tokyo.[67] Uzawa herself is one of the Ainu that lived in the greater Tokyo area, and found a community there. The term 'diasporic indigeneity' applies to the situation of the Ainu as well,

[63] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 36.
[64] Odello, "Indigenous peoples' rights," 29; Weaver, "Indigenous Identity," 240.
[65] Nobuko Tsuda, Hiroshi Maruyama trans., "Heading towards the Restoration and Transmission of Ainu Culture," in *Indigenous Efflorescence*, eds. Gerald Roche, Hiroshi Maruyama and Åsa Virdi Kroik (Canberra: ANU Press, 2018), 157-162, at 157.
[66] Mana Shinoda, Hiroshi Maruyama trans., "Living a Modern Life in Hokkaidō as a Young Ainu Dancer," in *Indigenous Efflorescence*, eds. Gerald Roche, Hiroshi Maruyama and Åsa Virdi Kroik (Canberra: ANU Press, 2018), 162-168, at 163-165.
[67] Uzawa, ""Crafting Our Future Together"," 4.

and entails the continuation of cultural lives in urban settings through the diaspora of indigenous peoples.[68] From the 1950s onward, half of the registered Ainu population moved to urban settings from their villages in Hokkaido, either in order to better their social and economic standing, or to escape the rampant discrimination they had to endure.[69] Uzawa claims that the main difference between Ainu in Hokkaido and Ainu in Tokyo is how and when they practice the Ainu culture. Some examples include food culture, traditional ceremonies for weddings, song, dance and embroidery.[70]

Expressing themselves through dance and music in order to show respect and appreciation was, and is, a very important part of the Ainu cultural identity.[71] The connection with modern expressions of the Ainu culture becomes apparent when looking at the art subsection of AinuToday. There are a few examples of expression of Ainu culture on this page. Videos can be seen of a dance performed with a song playing. The song is called "The Voice of the Forest", and is said to represent fir trees shaking in the wind when combined with the dance. The expression of nature in these ways is seen as inherent to how Ainu position themselves in the world. Other contemporary performers can be found by clicking on the links. Music, dance and design are all ways to transmit the Ainu culture to future generations.[72] The internet is a helpful tool in this way, and according to Sabra Harris, who is a PhD student at the University of California and a contributor to the knowledge platform, "AinuToday … attempts to include information on wide ranging Ainu cultural revitalization activities, which play an essential role in contributing to the Ainu Indigenous Rights discourse."[73]

The connection with nature becomes the most apparent, in my opinion, in the significance of fishing for, and preparing of salmon. This is also reflected in their perception of salmon. As stated earlier the Ainu practise a sort of animism that revolves around nature possessing spiritual essence. The name for salmon in Ainu is *Kamuy-cep*, which roughly translates to Salmon God.[74] Returning briefly to the history of the Ainu, oral histories and poetry tell us on how important the Ainu regard nature and how they view consecration of that nature

[68] Kanako Uzawa, "Everyday Acts of Resurgence and Diasporic Indigeneity among the Ainu of Tokyo," in *Indigenous Efflorescence*, eds. Gerald Roche, Hiroshi Maruyama and Åsa Virdi Kroik (Canberra: ANU Press, 2018), 179-204, at 181.
[69] Ibid., 183.
[70] Ibid., 188.
[71] Shinoda, Hiroshi Maruyama trans., "Living a Modern Life in Hokkaidō," 167.
[72] "Art,"AinuToday, accessed April 28, 2023, https://ainutoday.com/art/.
[73] Sabra Harris, email to AinuToday, April 4, 2023.
[74] Uzawa, "Everyday Acts of Resurgence," 194.

by man.[75] When the Hokkaido Colonial Commission created a hatchery to breed salmon artificially during the late nineteenth century, while also prohibiting the Ainu from catching salmon in the Hokkaido rivers, an important part of their lives was severed.[76] In the late 1970s a movement called 'Come Back Salmon' reared its head in Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido. Due to pollution the number of salmon in the rivers had decreased significantly, and the movement wanted to counteract this decrease. The newer generation of Ainu activists started performing the *Asircepnomi*, or *Kamuycepnomi*, once more to welcome the first salmon of the season in the early 1980s riding the coattail of the 1970s movement.[77] Shizue Ukaji, who is a well-known Ainu activist, states that salmon fishing is crucial in the creation of a feeling of community for the Ainu. Even more so in modern times, she wants the Japanese central government to give back one river in Hokkaido for the sole purpose of fishing for salmon.[78]

The feeling of community is also visible taking the restaurant Rera Cise (in the Ainu language 'House of Wind') into account, which Uzawa uses as a case study in her article. The restaurant, which is closed these days, reflected a space where Ainu in the Tokyo region could come together to really connect with their Ainu identity through, for instance, food. The use of salmon in their dishes was plentiful, as it remains one of the most important foods for Ainu.[79] Places like Rera Cise provided a space outside of their homeland where activism could flourish and culture could be exchanged by different generations. Uzawa states: "My Ainu identity in my early 20s was confirmed and strengthened by associating with other Ainu friends and in social spaces such as Rera Cise in Tokyo, without being in my so-called 'homeland'."[80] What Ainu culture represents is a temporary return to the homeland, through time and space, where traditional arts and food help them solidify their identity. This is regarded as an 'everyday act of resurgence' by Uzawa, and can be seen as the basis for their indigenous cultural identity.[81]

"*Indigenous identities are flexible and changing and reflect, instead of resist, a borderless world.*"[82]

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[75] Yōsuke Kosaka, "Revival of Salmon Resources and Restoratino of a Traditional Ritual of the Ainu, the Indigenous People of Japan," in *Indigenous Efflorescence*, eds. Gerald Roche, Hiroshi Maruyama and Åsa Virdi Kroik (Canberra: ANU Press, 2018), 69-78, at 69-70.
[76] Ibid., 71.
[77] Ibid., 75-77.
[78] Shizue Ukaji, Miku Maeda trans., "The Racing of Ainu Hearts: Our Wish for One Salmon River," in *Indigenous Efflorescence*, eds. Gerald Roche, Hiroshi Maruyama and Åsa Virdi Kroik (Canberra: ANU Press, 2018), 79-84, at 81-82.
[79] Uzawa, "Everyday Acts of Resurgence," 194.
[80] Ibid., 197.
[81] Ibid., 198.
[82] Ibid., 189.

This statement by Uzawa reflects the way Ainu position themselves within the world, and is an example of their self-identification. In this chapter I explored the historical context of the struggles Ainu have had to endure, and still endure to this day, with the settler colonial attitude of the Japanese government looming over them. Furthermore I explained certain aspects that make up the indigenous cultural identity of the Ainu, with expressions of art like dancing, singing, and oral histories being considered crucial for the transmission of Ainu culture to the next generation. Fishing for salmon is one of the most important parts of the Ainu's indigenous cultural identity, as it ties together their animalistic belief, their historical way of life in harmony with nature, and their rights. For this reason, most of the articles covered in the next two chapters will focus on that part of their identity. However, this does not mean that the context of the articles is solely based on salmon fishing. On the contrary, most of the articles covered explore different parts of the Ainu's lives and struggles as portrayed in the media. First I will examine articles from *The Japan Times*, after which I will turn my attention to articles from the *Asahi Shimbun*.

3. The Japan Times

After establishing the historical framework, and examining certain aspects of the indigenous cultural identity of the Ainu, in this chapter I will explore this multifaceted cultural identity through newspaper articles published in The Japan Times from 1984 to 2007. Through the critical contextual analyses of these articles, the complex interaction between power, identity, and representation will be laid bare, and we will be able to closely observe the portrayal of the indigenous cultural identity of the Ainu. The primary focus of the articles examined will be salmon fishing, as the act of fishing for and preparing every part of the salmon is seen as sacred and is one of the most practised parts of Ainu cultural identity. However, in order to prevent a fixed perspective, I will examine articles that cover other aspects of the Ainu cultural identity as well. The aim of this chapter is to gain an understanding of the discourses regarding the Ainu, and how this was presented in a newspaper written from an internationalistic perspective. As the next chapter will examine articles published in a newspaper with a nationalistic perspective, the consequent revelations will provide new insights in how the cultural identity of the Ainu is represented.

3.1 Legal issues

As has become clear in the previous chapter, the Ainu have been forcefully assimilated over the course of almost a century and put into a precarious legal position within Japanese society. The

1899 Act, which forced the Ainu to primarily work in the agricultural business, is mentioned in many articles; as the renouncement of this law and consequential enactment of a new law is a wish many Ainu activists have pronounced. One of the most important rights the Ainu want to reclaim with a new law is the right to freely fish for salmon in the rivers of Hokkaido, as they have done for the most part of their history. However, the economic significance of farming land has become quite noticeable for the Ainu. In 1984 a draft bill was already finished, wherein the provision of farming land and the rights to freely fish for salmon are laid out. In an article describing the demands the Ainu want to realise with the bill, a dichotomy between the Japanese and the Ainu is clearly visible. The explicit mentioning of fishing rights also showcases both the cultural and economic aspect of the seemingly banal act of trying to catch salmon.[83] After the draft for the bill was introduced to the larger public, conducted surveys revealed that an increasing amount of Ainu were interested in the maintenance of their culture. An article published in 1986 relays the results of one of those surveys, in combination with statistics that show how nearly half of all Ainu in Hokkaido engage in agricultural work compared to 8,6 percent of the general populace of Hokkaido.[84] Furthermore, a member of an Ainu organisation is interviewed and mentions the importance of Ainu being seen as their own ethnic group within the national borders of Japan.[85] The recognition of the Ainu as an ethnic group, and more specifically an indigenous population to Hokkaido, is something the Ainu wanted to establish with new legislation.

The Northern Territories, which is how Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands are called collectively, have been a source of strive for the Japanese and Soviet governments ever since the Soviet Union 'occupied' the islands from the end of World War II. The Ainu have weighed in on the discussion over who the rightful inhabitants are, as the Ainu can be seen as the original inhabitants before the Japanese forced them off. This discussion is the subject of quite a few articles in the late 1980s and early 1990s, wherein we find that joint venture businesses were being agreed upon between the Soviets and the Ainu.[86] The importance for the cultural identity of the Ainu is reflected in the type of joint venture, namely a business for the cultivation and fishing practices of salmon. In these articles we find a very clear dichotomy between the will of the Japanese government and the Ainu, as Japanese officials were not at all pleased with the

[83] Unknown, "Ainu People Struggle Long For Equality Among Japanese," *The Japan Times*, June 30, 1984, 3.
[84] Emiko Ohki, "Ainu Confronted With Discrimination in Daily Life," *The Japan Times*, December 1, 1986, 2.
[85] Ohki, "Ainu Confronted With Discrimination in Daily Life," 2.
[86] Unknown, "Soviets offer fishery on held island: Notes traded with Ainu group on joint Northern Territories project," *The Japan Times*, June 5, 1988, 2; James Kynge, "Ainu fish-deal with 'bear' from north irks officials," *The Japan Times*, October 1, 1988, 3; Unknown, "Ainu demand say on island issue," *The Japan Times*, April 29, 1992, 3.

deal between the Ainu and the Soviets.[87] This is reflected in statements from both sides as one of the fishermen that committed to a business venture with the Soviets claimed that the deal was made regarding Ainu islands, so any legislation against the venture could have been seen as "apartheid against the Ainu."[88] On the other hand the Japanese government, via an official, stated that this deal acknowledged Soviet sovereignty over the islands and would not be recognised.[89] Furthermore, Masanori Toyooka, who was the president of the Ainu Council on the Kuril Islands and Sakhalin, demanded in 1992 for the Ainu to have a say in the island issue as both Japan and the Soviet Union are described as invaders.[90] The articles provide an interesting portrayal of the issue, as the Ainu see their right to fish as one of the most important aspects of the struggle for sovereignty on the islands. Contextually, fishing is portrayed as a primarily economic motive for the Ainu to want to have a say in the conflict. If we take into account the significance fishing holds for the Ainu, and how salmon itself is seen as sacred, it is implied that the Ainu want to make a deal with the Soviets in order to regain a part of their cultural identity. Even in 2007 we find articles that voice the opinion of Ainu activists that believe they have the right to join in the discussions regarding the sovereignty dispute. In the article in question Tadashi Kato of the Hokkaido Utari Association states that the Kuril islands are seen as a place where the Ainu are indigenous. Furthermore, the animalistic beliefs of the Ainu are highlighted by Kato, with salmon fishing explicitly mentioned as a basis for the cultural identity of his people.[91]

It is not unusual for articles describing events that include the Ainu in some way to feature a summary of the history of the assimilation into Japanese society. Because the Ainu had still not been able to move the national government to accept the draft law they made to replace the 1899 Act, general statements on Japan being democratic or egalitarian evoked a response from Ainu activists. The funeral of the Japanese emperor in 1989 and consequent enthroning of the new emperor highlighted these issues for Kiyoko Kitahara, a member of the Kanto Utari Association, an organisation of Ainu in that region. She claimed that the media portrayed the new emperor as being highly educated on (Western) democracy, while the very

[87] Unknown, "Soviets offer fishery on held island: Notes traded with Ainu group on joint Northern Territories project," *The Japan Times*, June 5, 1988, 2; James Kynge, "Ainu fish-deal with 'bear' from north irks officials," *The Japan Times*, October 1, 1988, 3; Unknown, "Ainu demand say on island issue," *The Japan Times*, April 29, 1992, 3.
[88] Kynge, "Ainu fish-deal with 'bear' from north irks officials," 3.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Unknown, "Ainu demand say on island issue," 3.
[91] Shingo Ito, "Ainu people angle for deeper role in Japan-Russia dispute," *The Japan Times*, September 21, 2007, 3.

idea of an emperor goes against that.[92] A comparison is provided in the article where Kitahara looks back on her parents working hard at different farms throughout the seasons to provide for her and her sister who both suffered from malnutrition, while the royal family could be seen on her neighbours television living in luxury.[93] The forceful move from traditional ways of providing for their families, such as hunting for deer and fishing salmon, made the Ainu more susceptible to poverty. Articles like these allow for a representation of Ainu voices, who look at Japanese society in a completely different way. Another article that looks back at the remarks former prime minister Nakasone made regarding the homogeneity of Japanese society, showcases the representation of Ainu voices as well. Furthermore, fishing is laid out to be a large part of the Ainu way of life and can therefore be considered a true part of their cultural identity.[94]

One of the most important legal cases in modern history regarding the Ainu, and their will to protect the nature in Hokkaido and fight for their rights to fish for salmon, is the Nibutani Dam Case. In order for the project to continue, large plots of land were 'bought' from the Ainu who owned it that would become completely submerged in water. The submerged land was the site of many sacred places for the Ainu where traditional ceremonies took place. From the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, several articles in The Japan Times have been dedicated to the legal battle between the Ainu and the local government in Hokkaido.[95] The most important reasons for Ainu organisations and individual activists to be outraged are the rights to fish for salmon in the Saru river that would lead into the dam, and the seemingly forceful appropriation of land from the Ainu who lived in the area.[96] What sticks out after analysing articles from the Asahi Shimbun, which will be covered in the following chapter, is that the number of articles dedicated to this particular case seems to be on the low side considering what the implications of the case itself were. In the Asahi Shimbun we can follow the case nearly from start to finish, which is why I will go over this case in more detail in the next chapter. Nibutani is not only mentioned in articles on the dam case, as the 1993 Nibutani Forum is also featured in The Japan Times. The forum itself, which was organised by the Ainu in Nibutani, allowed for representatives of indigenous peoples from all over the world to come together and discuss

[92] Emiko Ohki, "Ainu calls emperors the source of bias," *The Japan Times*, February 22, 1989, 3.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Jocelyn Ford, "Nakasone's one-race view fuels Ainu fight for rights," *The Japan Times*, March 24, 1993, 3.
[95] Unknown, "U.N. urged to probe dam project in Hokkaido," *The Japan Times*, August 4, 1989, 3; Unknown, "Ainu sue to halt dam construction: Sacred site in danger, plaintiffs say," *The Japan Times*, March 29, 1994, 3.
[96] Unknown, "U.N. urged to probe dam project in Hokkaido," 3; Unknown, "Ainu sue to halt dam construction: Sacred site in danger, plaintiffs say," 3.

indigenous rights issues and environmental issues.[97] As indigenous people often have distinct cultural features that place them in nature, the stories that were exchanged about having the right to employ traditional ways of providing for their families through hunting or fishing taken away by overarching nations seemed quite similar.[98] In later years the Ainu would meet with indigenous people as well, for instance in 1997 during a convention against nuclear warfare when Native Americans met with Ainu legislator Shigeru Kayano.[99] The fact that articles are published on smaller meetings like this one reflects the interest in indigenous issues, or at least show the value that media sees in covering the subject.

The election of Shigeru Kayano as legislator in the Diet, the national parliament of Japan, in 1994 has also been heavily featured in The Japan Times, and in the media in general. The reason behind this attention is the fact that Kayano was the first Ainu elected to the Diet in history. Furthermore, he has dedicated his life to the preservation of Ainu culture and the fight for indigenous rights, including the right to freely fish for salmon.[100] In The Japan Times, articles dedicated to Kayano often allow for him to divulge in personal stories of how being Ainu has affected him in life. One story gets repeated in almost every article wherein Kayano speaks about what he wants to accomplish as a legislator: his father getting arrested for poaching.[101] Such a story is quite common for Ainu as the prohibition of fishing for salmon and hunting for deer, the staple food of the Ainu, means that they could get arrested for poaching if they ignore the prohibition for whatever reason. Kayano's wish for Ainu to be able to freely fish for salmon and hunt for deer is reflected in articles wherein his opinion is stated. He believes that fishing for salmon the way Ainu do is synonymous with keeping the nature of Hokkaido pristine, and one of the most important aspects of the cultural identity of Ainu.[102] These articles give an indigenous legislator a platform to reach as many people as possible, effectively providing him a way to not only voice his opinion to the people of Japan, but worldwide as The Japan Times is published in English.

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[97] Unknown, "Indigenous people appeal for restoration of rights," *The Japan Times*, August 22, 1993, 2; Mason Florence, "Rights, cultural pride underscored: Indigenous groups join Ainu-led forum," *The Japan Times*, August 27, 1993, 3.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Unknown, "Native American in Japan for convention against nuclear warfare discusses situation with Kayano," *The Japan Times*, August 1, 1997, 3.
[100] Mari Koseki, "Kayano ready to fight for new Ainu law: New legislator wants his people recognized as indigenous ethnic group," *The Japan Times*, August 13, 1994, 3.
[101] Mari Koseki, "Kayano ready to fight for new Ainu law: New legislator wants his people recognized as indigenous ethnic group," *The Japan Times*, August 13, 1994, 3; Unknown, "Ainu legislator starts giving lessons on discrimination," *The Japan Times*, August 26, 1994, 2; Unknown, "Ainu lawmaker questions policy on ethnic culture," *The Japan Times*, November 10, 1994, 2.
[102] Unknown, "Ainu lawmaker questions policy on ethnic culture," 2.

When the new Ainu law was enacted in 1997, a lot of Ainu were not satisfied with the contents. While the new law did recognise the Ainu as an ethnic minority, it did not recognise them as being indigenous to Hokkaido. This last part is important as it would grant them rights to lands and recourses, which are now controlled by the central government of Hokkaido. Having been pushed into poverty and low paying jobs, the Ainu feel this new law does not recognise the discrimination their people have endured for over one hundred years.[103] Interestingly enough, there has only been one article that was published on this matter in The Japan Times, wherein their lifestyles as fishermen and hunters was mentioned, and their wish to be able to fish for salmon freely. This might show the disconnection between the indigenous issue and the potential readers of the newspaper, or can simply be attributed to a lack of interest in the topic. In the following chapter we find that the Asahi Shimbun have published quite a lot more on the subject, so the audience might have influenced the publication of articles on the subject indeed.

3.2 Protecting nature

In the previous chapter I mentioned that Ainu live in harmony with nature and believe that gods reside within this nature, and those gods need to be thanked and protected. This belief is reflected in the actions the Ainu will undertake in order to preserve nature in Hokkaido. The Japanese government allegedly made plans that would bring about the deforestation of a large part of the Shiretoko National Park in the northernmost part of Hokkaido. These plans brought about protests from both Ainu and conservationists. An important part of the reasoning behind the Ainu delegation that protested the plans had to do with a bird called Blakiston's fish owl, which is referred to as *Kotan Koru Kamuy* (God that protects the village) by the Ainu. Two articles published in 1987 provide slightly different perspectives on this matter. The first of which explicitly mentions the Ainu as being "… Japan's aborigine Ainu people …"[104] Animalism is a big part of the Ainu cultural identity, so their protest to a plan of the national government to remove part of the habitat of an animal they consider to be sacred represents their will to protect their identity. The second article on this topic only briefly mentions the Ainu, as it is written mostly from the perspective of Japan. The cultural significance of the fish owl is explicitly mentioned however, which highlights the connection to nature the Ainu have.[105] In later years articles dedicated to projects aimed at saving the fish owls, or at least

[103] Unknown, "New Ainu law fails to settle indigenous question," *The Japan Times*, June 11, 1997, 3.
[104] Unknown, "Ainu protest forest plan," *The Japan Times*, April 13, 1987, 2.
[105] Unknown, "Forestry policies and practices," *The Japan Times*, April 19, 1987, 8.

increase their number in Hokkaido, always mention how the animal is sacred to the Ainu. One article published in 1992 even calls the Ainu indigenous to Hokkaido, which might seem out of place as this is not how they are seen in Japanese legislation.[106]

It is not uncommon for the Ainu to be named in conjunction with efforts to preserve wildlife in Hokkaido and the Northern Territories throughout the following years either. In an article on the shrinkage of the Kushiro Marsh, caused by the dairy farms and resorts in the area, certain endangered animal species are linked to the Ainu as they are considered to be sacred.[107] This shows at least some influence of the Ainu's cultural identity on the media coverage on such topics. These articles can also blend in with political issues. An article published in 1999 urges readers to join a group that wants to preserve the nature in the Northern Territories, and more specifically the Kuril Islands.[108] Firstly the species of animals residing on the islands are described as sacred to the Ainu, after which the author explains how different international groups of conservationists want it to become an international nature reserve.[109] This last part makes it complicated. In the eyes of the Ainu the islands were stolen from them and occupied by invading forces, as stated earlier. So an article firstly mentioning the deep cultural significance for an indigenous people and later on stating the need to convert the islands into a nature reserve can be seen as a form of appropriation. The goal of the article is after all to urge readers to join a group that wants to preserve the islands. However the cultural identity of the Ainu is acknowledged for the international audience as well, even if the author does not make a statement on the sovereignty issue. Along similar lines, an article on the exploitation of indigenous knowledge, and more particular knowledge about the environment and how to protect it, showcases the way that these explicit cultural references to indigenous peoples can be harmful to the people in question.[110]

Contradicting the previous article, the Ainu themselves try to capitalise on their connection with the environment through ecotourism. In an effort to make their culture more popular among the general population of Japan, and among tourists, tours are organised to showcase the nature of the Shiretoko peninsula. The area, which had been named a UN World Natural Heritage site in 2005, provides tourists with a newfound perspective on living in harmony with nature. For an article published in 2005, an Ainu tour guide is interviewed and

[106] Mark Brazil, "Efforts are under way to save giant owl," *The Japan Times*, November 12, 1992, 17.
[107] Sumiko Oshima, "Wildlife protection: Drying wetlands signal grave problems," *The Japan Times*, December 4, 1997, 1 and 3.
[108] Lucille Craft, "Become a friend of the Kurilsky Reserve," *The Japan Times*, March 17, 1999, 19.
[109] Ibid.
[110] W. Bradnee Chambers and Alphonse Kambu, "Stop exploitation of indigenous knowledge," *The Japan Times*, February 21, 2004, 17.

states that the tours might help Ainu to rekindle their own culture as well.[111] The guide explains tourists how the Ainu fish for salmon with regards to their beliefs in animalism and respect for nature. He also mentions a dam in the area that prevents the salmon from reaching the upper part of the river, highlighting the negative effects some modern infrastructure has on the environment.[112]

The last article regarding the protection of nature I want to mention does not directly tie in with the rest. In 2007 an article laid out the arguments the Ainu made for their right to freely fish for salmon to be restored in comparison to Japanese pro-whalers. Japan is whaling under a loophole that allows whales to be killed for research. The arguments the pro-whalers use to propagate their 'way of life' and tradition is almost identical to the Ainu and their salmon-fishing. The difference is that the whalers are allowed to do as they please and the Ainu are dismissed.[113] The article presents a seemingly three-way 'fight' between Western activists, Japanese pro-whalers and Ainu who feel that the principles of the pro-whalers are hypocritical.

3.3 Cultural transmission

Shigeru Kayano, who I mentioned above, was a central figure in Ainu activism. He was also the director of the Ainu Museum in Nibutani, where the Ainu way of life could be preserved for future generations. In an article describing Kayano's view on preserving indigenous culture, he explains the association between Ainu and nature, and how they express that part of their identity by the way they fish for salmon or hunt for deer.[114] As the article is written in such a way that allows for a full explanation of its purpose and the opinion of the director, it can be seen as a kind of advertisement for the museum. Of course museums are not the only way for culture to be transmitted to the general population of Japan, or future generations of Ainu. In 2001 a book was published along with a CD about Ainu traditions, as recited by an elderly Ainu woman remembering tales of discrimination and cultural aspects of her life. A familiar story of Ainu being arrested for poaching while engaging in their tradition of fishing for salmon using traditional tools is included as well.[115]

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[111] Kyoko Hasegawa, "Ainu pitch culture via ecotourism: Traditional way of life provides model of sustainability," *The Japan Times*, November 11, 2005, 3.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Bruce Wallace, "It's tradition: Yes to whaling, but no to Ainu salmon fishing," *The Japan Times*, November 29, 2007, 3.
[114] Takashi Kitazume, "Museum devoted to Ainu way of life: Curator-turned-lawmaker preserves, upholds indigenous culture," *The Japan Times*, August 30, 1994, 4.
[115] Keiji Hirano, "Ainu-language picture book, CD released," *The Japan Times*, April 7, 2001, 3.

Restaurants are excellent places for culture to be experienced as well. An example of this is a restaurant I mentioned in the previous chapter called Rera Chise. An article describing the restaurant and its cuisine highlights the differences between Japanese dishes and what was served at the Ainu run restaurant.[116] It provides an interesting view on how indigenous cuisine is presented in the media, as a lot of the dishes are traditionally prepared and made with staple food for the Ainu such as salmon. The Japan Times also features entire sections dedicated to Hokkaido in later editions, wherein the culture of the Ainu is heavily featured.[117] Furthermore, workshops or college classes on Ainu culture are featured in the media. An article on a course at the Muroran Institute of Technology describes how the assistant professor taught the class about the rich history and natural resources of Hokkaido, and how the Ainu coexist in harmony with nature.[118]

In this chapter I laid out three sections in which different kinds of articles published in The Japan Times were discussed. Firstly I examined some of the legal issues covered in the newspaper. The challenges that are reflected in these articles regarding sovereignty of lands they inhabit, cultural and legal recognition, and rights to practise their traditions, emphasize the significance of legal frameworks in how their cultural identity is presented. The second section focused on the Ainu's will to protect nature, and how their animalistic beliefs are portrayed in the media. The discourse surrounding these aspects can be seen to showcase the Ainu as a people protective of the environment, which can be seen as a rather positive image of their cultural identity. The last section provided a short look in the ways that Ainu utilise to transmit their culture to the Japanese population, foreign tourists, and future generations of Ainu. The portrayal of museums, restaurants or workshops in The Japan Times showcases the endeavour of the Ainu to preserve their cultural identity. To summarise, the comprehensive analysis presented in this chapter has offered valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of the Ainu's cultural identity and its portrayal in The Japan Times. A settler colonial attitude is not readily apparent after examining these articles, which I will explain in more detail and in comparison with articles from the Asahi Shimbun in chapter four. In the following chapter I will utilise a similar strategy for analysing articles from the Asahi Shimbun, a Japan oriented newspaper published in Japanese.

[116] Robbie Swinnerton, "Northern Exposure: Comfort food comes out of the cold," *The Japan Times*, January 28, 1999, 15.
[117] Robbie Swinnerton, "Seafood as fresh as it gets," *The Japan Times*, March 2, 2003, 10.
[118] Unknown, "New course allows students to experience Ainu culture," *The Japan Times*, August 16, 2001, 3.

4. Asahi Shimbun

After the internationally oriented Japan Times, this chapter will explore articles published in Asahi Shimbun, one of the largest daily newspapers of Japan. I will build upon the strategy utilised in the previous chapter, aiming to reveal the portrayal of the cultural identity of the Ainu. Accordingly, the same three section will be used to divide this chapter, firstly looking at legal issues, secondly at the Ainu's efforts to protect the nature of Hokkaido, and lastly cultural transmission in the form of organised workshops or other forms of showcasing their cultural identity. As a reminder: these articles were translated using software, which means that there might have been some mistranslations that alter the subtleties of the context. Nevertheless, for the most part this should not pose any problem in analysing the articles and exploring the sections as I have laid out.

4.1 Legal issues

An important figure in the Ainu activist movement is the previously mentioned Shigeru Kayano, and in the Asahi Shimbun he is featured in articles from as early on as 1986. As someone who has made it his purpose in life to preserve and transmit the Ainu culture, his actions provide interesting insights into how Ainu activism utilised the cultural identity to spread awareness. In an article describing his meeting with indigenous people in Canada, while they go fishing for salmon in the river, he tells the story of how his father was arrested for poaching salmon during his childhood. His remarks on how indigenous people should have the right to capture what they need to live is a powerful statement on indigenous rights as a whole.[119] The fact that articles wherein the opinion of an Ainu activist is voiced appear in a Japan oriented newspaper means that a platform in the media was available even before the new law was enacted in 1997.

The Nibutani Dam Case is also featured quite a few years before the first time an article was published in the Japan Times on the subject. In 1986 we already find an article on Ainu boycotting a Japanese festival organised to pray for the safety of workers in a dam project near Nibutani, which is the reason for the eventual legal dispute in the early 1990s.[120] Shigeru Kayano is one of the landowners that refused to 'sell' their land to the central government for the construction of the dam. Kayano's aspiration to regain the right to catch salmon and to

[119] Unknown, "萱野茂さん　アイヌの子どもを連れ加インディアンと交流（ひと）," *Asahi Shimbun*, April 22, 1986, 3.
[120] Unknown, "アイヌ、ダム交渉ボイコット　首相の単一民族国家論に抗議," *Asahi Shimbun*, October 16, 1986, 14.

include Ainu language in the education programs in the area is also mentioned in the article.[121] The explicit desire Ainu have to regain their right to fish for salmon is featured in the Asahi Shimbun significantly more than in the Japan Times. “Let us catch salmon” is the title of another article describing the early years of the Nibutani Dam Case.[122] The Ainu want to regain their right to freely fish for salmon at the very least. It is stated in the article that no one willingly parted with their ancestral land, but deals were made that would essentially force Ainu out.[123] Besides Kayano, the other Ainu unwilling to sell their land to the central government is Tadashi Kaizawa. Both of their opinions can be found in articles published from 1989, where the right to fish for salmon is repeatedly mentioned during the ongoing trials.[124] Furthermore, they highlight the history of their mistreatment by the Japanese in other articles, referring to the human rights report wherein the Japanese government does not even mention the Ainu as an ethnic group.[125]

The cultural significance of salmon fishing is presented in a way that affects the general context of the articles, as the general topic might be the dam project, but the focus is redirected to the Ainu’s aspiration to regain the right to freely fish for salmon in Hokkaido. During the legal proceedings regarding the dam project, the Ministry of Construction conducted an inspection in the area where the dam would be build. Shigeru Kayano greeted the inspectors in traditional Ainu clothing explicitly stating that the Ainu would lose the sacred place where they used to hold ceremonies to welcome salmon back in the rivers.[126] Furthermore, these articles highlight the dichotomy between those in the Ainu community who ‘choose’ to sell their lands and those who did not. However, it is also stated that due to the debts the Ainu had racked up in trying to make a living the deals were almost necessary.[127] Showcasing the disconnect

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[121] Unknown, “アイヌ、ダム交渉ボイコット　首相の単一民族国家論に抗議,” *Asahi Shimbun*, October 16, 1986, 14.

[122] Translated from: “サケを取らせて.”

[123] Katsuichi Honda, “「サケを取らせて」　巨大ダム建設地のアイヌ民族（時時刻刻）,” *Asahi Shimbun*, November 18, 1988, 3.

[124] Unknown, “アイヌの土地、強制収用へ　ダム建設で北海道収用委裁決　,” *Asahi Shimbun*, February 4, 1989, 30; Unknown, “土地収用に反発するアイヌ　民族の権利回復叫ぶ　,” *Asahi Shimbun*, February 8, 1989, 4.

[125] Unknown, “土地収用に反発するアイヌ　民族の権利回復叫ぶ　,” 4; Katsuichi Honda and Yoshihisa Masuko, “「国の弱い者いじめ」とアイヌ地権者が訴え　北海道（時時刻刻）,” *Asahi Shimbun*, March 13, 1991, 3.

[126] Unknown, “二風谷の現地を建設省が検証　アイヌ地権者土地強制収用取消請求で,” *Asahi Shimbun*, November 16, 1991, 16.

[127] Unknown, “二風谷の現地を建設省が検証　アイヌ地権者土地強制収用取消請求で,” 16; Unknown, “土地収用巡り亀裂なお深く　北海道・二風谷ダム（時時刻刻）,” *Asahi Shimbun*, November 17, 1991, 3.

between media and central government policies, articles on the way indigenous peoples are treated in other nations highlight how far behind Japan was on this front, using the Nibutani Dam Case as an example.[128] Although this case is mostly covered in articles that showcase the legal side, another reason for the Ainu, and nature conservationists in general, to be upset with the dam is the destruction of the ecosystem in the river.[129]

The rulings of the dam case were extensively covered in the Asahi Shimbun in 1997. In this landmark legal case, the Ainu were mentioned as indigenous people for the first time in a Japanese court of law. The court exclaimed that the expropriation of lands by the Japanese government was illegal. However, the dam would not be removed due to the harmful impact this would have on public interest.[130] As these articles also discussed and explained the new Ainu law that was enacted in the same year, the connection between the rulings in this case and the new law is made apparent in their context. In a previous chapter I mentioned the disappointment Ainu felt regarding the new law, as a lot of issues yet remained unsolved. The law did not position the Ainu as an indigenous people in legislation, and only the promotion of their cultural identity was actually posed as the main purpose. Another aspect that made the law stand out is how the right to fish for salmon can be understood as being a part of the Ainu cultural identity, so one might have thought that the right to freely fish for salmon using traditional methods would be allowed. This was not the case.[131] Ainu living in the greater Tokyo area even organised a protest regarding the newly enacted law in Tokyo, during which the placards they carried explicitly stated the desire to be granted the right to freely fish for salmon again.[132]

As the Asahi Shimbun is a Japan oriented newspaper, a number of smaller legal cases regarding Ainu is featured as well. Indigenous people have had pictures taken of them and used without consent since modern anthropology reared its head. In an article describing such a legal case regarding the Ainu, the anger in response to the use of the picture is palpable. Adding to

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[128] Katsuichi Honda, “「環境と民族」を考える　まず足元の見直しを　本多勝一編集委員　,” *Asahi Shimbun*, November 21, 1991, 3.

[129] Unknown, “北海道・沙流川開発（川ひと未来第２部問われるダム・堰：１）／徳島,” *Asahi Shimbun*, January 12, 1997, 0.

[130] Unknown, “アイヌ新法の新しい風（社説）,” *Asahi Shimbun*, April 4, 1997, 5; Yasuto Watanabe, “アイヌの先住権　二風谷ダム判決で注目（みんなのＱ＆Ａ）,” *Asahi Shimbun*, April 15, 1997, 4.

[131] Unknown, “アイヌ新法の新しい風（社説）,” 5; Yasuto Watanabe, “アイヌの先住権　二風谷ダム判決で注目（みんなのＱ＆Ａ）,” 4.

[132] Unknown, “文化振興法では不十分　復権訴えアイヌ民族団体が集会　渋谷　／東京,” *Asahi Shimbun*, June 9, 1997, 0.

the fact that the photo was used without permission, the book featuring the picture concludes that the Ainu are a dying race.[133] Another article about the case highlights the restriction of the rights of Ainu, using the prohibition of fishing for salmon as a prime example.[134]

The joint fishing business venture between Ainu in the Northern Territories and the Soviets can be dissected in more detail through the articles in the Asahi Shimbun as well. They provide interesting perspectives on the Soviet-Japan conflict regarding the islands. As the Soviets prefer to talk to the Ainu, and the Ainu still consider themselves to be the indigenous population of Sakhalin and the rest of the Northern territories, the cooperation does not sit well with the Japanese government. However, the Ainu themselves believed the venture was quite significant for the local community. For example, one of the Ainu fishermen behind the business venture states that he would want to hire more young Ainu and help them become more independent.[135]

In the years following up to the enactment of the new Ainu law in 1997 we find articles showcasing the support of Japanese organisations, and Japanese people in general, for the Ainu's issues. The reluctance of the Japanese government to enact the law, and naming the Ainu as indigenous people, did not go unnoticed, as is clearly stated in articles on the subject.[136] These articles also serve as a platform for Ainu activists, such as Shigeru Kayano, to call for an apology from the Japanese government for taking away rights, lands and resources from the Ainu.[137] In the following years, articles covering the precise nature of what is and is not allowed in terms of salmon fishing highlight the inconclusiveness in legislation. The 1997 law might have allowed for a limited amount of salmon to be caught in order to perform ceremonies, but the right to freely fish for salmon had not been given by the central government.[138] A general observation on articles published in the Asahi Shimbun from the enactment of the 1997 law is how general issues regarding the rights of Ainu are featured a lot less. There is an increase in advertisements of workshops, cultural exchange events, and other articles highlighting Ainu

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[133] Yoichi Tanaka, "まだわからぬかアイヌの痛み　札幌で相次ぐ和人告発（時時刻刻）," *Asahi Shimbun*, February 25, 1988, 3.

[134] Yoichi Tanaka, "アイヌ肖像権訴訟、同化政策拒否する先住民," *Asahi Shimbun*, July 28, 1988, 4.

[135] Unknown, "ウタリ　合弁事業が念願（春　国境の海で：４）," *Asahi Shimbun*, April 2, 1991, 18.

[136] Unknown, "アイヌ新法で県議会に請願　市民団体、早期制定を求める　／山梨," *Asahi Shimbun*, June 15, 1995, 0; Unknown, "広がる共感「アイヌ新法」　星乃勇介（記者ノート）　【大阪】," *Asahi Shimbun*, June 29, 1995, 4.

[137] Ibid.

[138] Unknown, "サケ捕獲許可条件「伝承儀式」明記へ　アイヌ民族に配慮【北海道】," *Asahi Shimbun*, December 13, 2004, 10.

culture. It would be irresponsible to make a statement based on this observation alone, but I do think it signifies a turning point in media portrayal.

4.2 Protecting nature

As was the case with the articles published in The Japan Times, whenever efforts are highlighted that aim to protect Blakiston's fish owls in Hokkaido, the divine status the bird holds for the Ainu is mentioned as well.[139] The previously mentioned Kushiro Marsh is also featured as early as 1987 in an article describing the efforts to make it into a national park. The animalistic beliefs of the Ainu are featured in that article as well, stating the divinity of the red-crowned crane or *Sarorunkamuy* in the Ainu language.[140]

The year 1993 was declared by the United Nations to be the International Year of Indigenous Peoples. A series of articles in the year leading up to this momentous occasion showcased Japan's own indigenous peoples and highlighted some parts of their cultural identity in relation to indigenous human rights. Authors provide explanations on the different kinds of flora and fauna in Hokkaido while retelling stories they heard from Ainu on how they are considered to be sacred.[141] The connection to nature, and traditions tied to the protection of that nature, are explained by the authors in a way that supplements the stories the interviewed Ainu tell them about poaching and the prohibition of fishing. In an attempt to make the Ainu's wish to be able to freely fish for salmon relatable to the audience, the comparison is made between Japanese people and rice on the one side, and Ainu and salmon on the other.[142] The portrayal of the Ainu as indigenous people of Hokkaido is surprising in a Japan oriented newspaper such as the Asahi Shimbun. If we take the discrimination and general stereotyping of Ainu into account, we should not expect to find articles wherein they are categorised as being indigenous in such a newspaper. Yet these series of articles highlight the struggles of the Ainu, as well as provide

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[139] Unknown, "絶滅寸前のシマフクロウ、人工巣箱で巣立つ　再生へ明るい一歩," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 2, 1984, 1; Unknown, "絶滅の危機にあるシマフクロウ（天声人語）," *Asahi Shimbun*, January 27, 1991, 1.

[140] Unknown, "釧路湿原、太古の素顔　国立公園指定待つ約２０００種の動植物," *Asahi Shimbun*, July 11, 1987, 3.

[141] Unknown, "川と海（コタンに生きる冬　９３国際先住民年に向けて：２）," *Asahi Shimbun*, February 5, 1992, 5; Unknown, "山の幸（コタンに生きる冬　９３国際先住民年に向けて：３）," *Asahi Shimbun*, February 6, 1992, 5; Unknown, "観光客（コタンに生きる夏　９３国際先住民年に向けて：７）," *Asahi Shimbun*, August 27, 1992, 5; Masuko Yoshihisa, Kikuchi Yoshitaka, Sato Takayuki, Goto Hirofumi and Takanami Jun, "神の魚（コタンに生きる秋　９３国際先住民年に向けて：１）," *Asahi Shimbun*, October 27, 1992, 5.

[142] Yoshihisa et al., "神の魚（コタンに生きる秋　９３国際先住民年に向けて：１）," 5.

a platform for the transmission of Ainu culture; especially in regards to their connection with nature.

This connection to nature can be inspirational to others. An example of this we find in an opiniated article by a professor in psychosomatic medicine. He uses the Ainu to describe the way that humans are meant to live in harmony with nature and respect their environment. Salmon is used as an example by the professor as the way the Ainu revere the fish as gods, use traditional methods to fish for them, and never take more than is needed, showcases how humans should position themselves in the world.[143] The Asahi Shimbun is a platform for these kinds of opinions as well, as opiniated articles that have an overall message of 'Japan has sold itself to Western society and forgotten about nature' are not uncommon.[144] Another article wherein that inspiration for others can be seen describes the actions of an organisation dedicated to the restoration of the salmon population in a part of Japan. The group actively seeks to engage in a cultural exchange with the Ainu to establish ways of involving their beliefs in the process of restoring the salmon population.[145] The way that these kinds of organisations look at the Ainu as a source of inspiration for their efforts makes it clear that the way Ainu position themselves in their environment, and how it is portrayed in the media, affects their modus operandi. The results of these kinds of actions can be seen in the Asahi Shimbun as well, for instance in 2000 when a fish passage installed in a dam in Hokkaido that resulted in an increase in salmon in the upper parts of a Hokkaido river.[146] Articles on these events are often combined with a description of the Ainu ceremony that accompanies the environmentalist efforts.[147]

A series of articles on places to find some rest and enjoy nature in Hokkaido showcases how important nature seems to be for Hokkaido. Every one of these articles explains about a local river or general subject related to nature and, furthermore, mention the Ainu as well as the connection with nature which the author deems relevant to the story.[148] The selection of

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[143] Yoshihide Nakai, "コスモロジー　中井吉英（臨床医の目）　【大阪】," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 27, 1995, 3.

[144] Yoshihisa Masuko, "「アイヌに学べ」の安易さ　増子義久（コラム・私の見方）," *Asahi Shimbun*, April 19, 1996, 4.

[145] Unknown, "三次市民らがサケ稚魚放流　江の川へ１万匹　／広島," *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 1996, 0.

[146] Unknown, "３３年ぶりサケが来た　石狩川の旧花園頭首工の上流　／北海道," *Asahi Shimbun*, October 28, 2000, 28.

[147] Unknown, "ひと・街　札幌圏　／北海道," *Asahi Shimbun*, April 10, 2007, 23.

[148] Unknown, "豊浦・インディアン水車公園（くつろぎ空間）　／北海道," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 21, 2001, 3; Unknown, "千歳川　自然育てる清き流れ（くつろぎ空間）　／北海道," *Asahi Shimbun*, December 5, 2001, 5; Unknown, "札幌・豊平川　名水にも勝る清き流れ（くつろぎ空間）　／北海道," *Asahi Shimbun*, February 13, 2002, 3.

Shiretoko, the northernmost part of Hokkaido, as a UN World Natural Heritage site is also portrayed in the newspaper as something of significant cultural value for the Ainu. An article describing the event states the environmental issues the multiple dams in Hokkaido pose for the salmon migratory tracks, as they are interrupted. In that same article the International Union for Conservation of Nature encourages the Ainu population to actively participate in the protection of Shiretoko saying that this would promote ecotourism.[149]

4.3 Cultural transmission

Shigeru Kayano's Ainu Cultural museum was featured in one article in the Japan Times, but we find an advertisement-like article as early as 1987 in the Asahi Shimbun.[150] Other efforts by Kayano to preserve the Ainu culture are featured in articles as well. For instance in an article describing a project that would introduce a special type of boat back to Hokkaido that was used to fish for salmon.[151] After the Nibutani Dam project was completed, the ceremonial site where the first of these boats would be let into the river was submerged; much to the dissatisfaction of Kayano and other Ainu.[152] Another one of his projects is featured in a series of articles dedicated to Ainu folktales retold by Kayano, as a way to promote the Ainu language of which he had made a dictionary for the preservation of the rarely spoken language.[153] The articles cover tales about the Ainu's animalistic beliefs, and how Ainu children were named 'covered in dirt' or similar names in order to repel bad gods.[154] Furthermore, their connection to nature is highlighted by a story on salmon and nature conservation. Salmon is seen and presented in the article as the 'real food' of the Ainu. The godliness of salmon is also explicitly mentioned. Kayano makes the comparison between Japanese rice and Ainu salmon, as we have seen in other articles. Ainu are stated to not really have the idea of nature conservation in their cultural

[149] Unknown, "（時時刻刻）知床、世界遺産に決定　自然と暮らし、共存課題　海域保護・ダムに注文," *Asahi Shimbun*, July 15, 2005, 2.

[150] Unknown, "アイヌ文化資料館の萱野茂館長（人きのうきょう）," *Asahi Shimbun*, December 1, 1987, 2.

[151] Unknown, "江南市から北海道まで和舟運ぼう　アイヌ資料館長呼びかけ【名古屋】," *Asahi Shimbun*, December 2, 1989, 12.

[152] Kentaro Owada, "北海道・勇払原野と沙流川　至福の地に破壊と再生（ぶらっと日本）," *Asahi Shimbun*, June 8, 1997, 37.

[153] Yoshihisa Masuko, "アイヌ＝人間　「言葉を消さぬ」と決意（萱野茂の世界：１　語る）," *Asahi Shimbun*, May 30, 1994, 3; Yoshihisa Masuko, "カムイ＝神　欲深い人間自制させる（萱野茂の世界：２　語る）," *Asahi Shimbun*, May 31, 1994, 3; Yoshihisa Masuko, "モシ＜リ＞＝大地　「自然」に保護される（萱野茂の世界：４　語る）," *Asahi Shimbun*, June 2, 1994, 3.

[154] Yoshihisa Masuko, "カムイ＝神　欲深い人間自制させる（萱野茂の世界：２　語る）," *Asahi Shimbun*, May 31, 1994, 3.

identity, as nature is seen as something for the gods. However, because Ainu live with respect towards nature, there was no need for such a thing.[155] After Kayano was elected to the Diet, his first speech was partly told in the Ainu language as a way to introduce how Ainu live, as well as criticising the way that construction projects are destroying the nature in Hokkaido. This goes hand in hand with the disappearance of bears, fish owls and salmon.[156] Articles that bring up subjects as these, including actual statements from the Ainu in question, can be said to promote a positive image of the Ainu as a people that just want to preserve their own cultural identity and language. When Kayano passed away in 2006, a number of articles portrayed the many accomplishments of the Ainu legislator, stating the preservation of the Ainu language and cultural identity through his work as having made a significant impact for the Ainu. What stands out in all of these articles is his wish for the Ainu to be able to freely fish for salmon in Hokkaido is explicitly mentioned, which highlights the significance salmon has for the Ainu.[157]

Exhibitions on Ainu folk tools, art, and general way of life in museums throughout Japan are advertised in the newspaper from time to time.[158] As the general public of Japan gets introduced to more aspects of Ainu culture, an awareness to the issues Ainu face in Japanese society gets promoted. International interest in the Ainu can also be seen in articles covering such expositions, as various materials, including traditional clothing and ornaments, that were shipped to Germany from Hokkaido during the late nineteenth century, would be showcased in some years.[159] In a similar fashion, social projects, such as the sale of calendars featuring cultural images and activities of import to the Ainu, are advertised in the newspaper. To bring

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[155] Yoshihisa Masuko, “モシ＜リ＞＝大地　「自然」に保護される（萱野茂の世界：４　語る）,” *Asahi Shimbun*, June 2, 1994, 3.

[156] Chieko Fujiwara, “アイヌ語響く国会議事堂　参院議員・萱野さん初質問（メディア）,” *Asahi Shimbun*, November 30, 1994, 29.

[157] Unknown, “（声）アイヌの文化、萱野氏に学ぶ　【名古屋】,” *Asahi Shimbun*, May 11, 2006, 14; Unknown, “萱野氏通夜「心一つ遺志継ぐ」　熱意や功績、人柄しのぶ　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, May 12, 2006, 30; Unknown, “（惜別）アイヌ民族初の国会議員・萱野茂さん　「文化と精神」記録し伝える,” *Asahi Shimbun*, May 29, 2006, 9.

[158] Unknown, “サケ漁と先住民－写真展で考える　三重県鳥羽市で,” *Asahi Shimbun*, January 19, 1993, 17; Unknown, “人権問題など考えるパネル展　２０日から神戸そごうで　／兵庫,” *Asahi Shimbun*, October 20, 1993, 17; Unknown, “ウイークリー兵庫・２４日　／兵庫,” *Asahi Shimbun*, October 24, 1993, 0; Unknown, “サケ寒干し、壮観　アイヌ民族「食」の伝統　白老町　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, January 12, 2000, 26; Unknown, “杉村満エカシの民具（モノつくりのモノ語り）　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, June 13, 2001, 3.

[159] Unknown, “アイヌ工芸品、独から「里帰り」　きょうから白老で展示　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, January 31, 1999, 0.

about a true feeling of authenticity, the advertisements are often accompanied by statements by Ainu artists or activists.[160]

Advertisements for, or articles about, workshops or other community gatherings where Ainu culture was practised are featured more extensively in the Asahi Shimbun than in the Japan Times. Cultural exchange events where Ainu showcase their traditional dancing, handicrafts and cooking are a way for the Ainu to transmit their culture to the general population of Japan.[161] There are also occasional cultural exchange trips mentioned in the newspaper. In 1996 an organisation that was founded by Japanese people from Kyushu, who wanted to establish links with the Ainu. The members who participated learned about the Ainu culture, and were taught how to properly prepare salmon with reverence to the animal.[162] Every now and then articles on recipes or ways to prepare fish are published in the Asahi Shimbun as well. These articles almost always feature the traditions of Ainu, as well as the staple dishes of Ainu cuisine.[163] The previously mentioned Rera Chise provided a space for both Ainu and Japanese to experience the Ainu cuisine in Tokyo, which is covered in promotional articles.[164] The publication of a picture book featuring Ainu folk tales highlighting the cultural significance of salmon and Blakiston's fish owl is portrayed in a few articles published in 2007.[165]

After the 1997 law was enacted on the promotion of Ainu culture, the government of Hokkaido tasked a committee to look for a way to create a space wherein the Ainu could practise

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[160] Unknown, "アイヌ復権運動を援助　泉大津・貝塚で「労組経営」の２社　／大阪," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 9, 1993, 0.

[161] Unknown, "料理や踊りで理解深める　甲府でアイヌ民族団体と交流会　／山梨," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 21, 1994, 0; Unknown, "アイヌ女性が伝統手芸展　来月５日から新宿と渋谷で　／東京," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 28, 1996, 0; Unknown, "アイヌ民族伝統のクマ捕り　２４日に白糠町で６６年ぶり再現／北海道," *Asahi Shimbun*, May 21, 1998, 0; Unknown, "アイヌ料理食べて伝統文化にふれよう　２３日、つくばで催し　／茨城," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 20, 1998, 0.

[162] Unknown, "九州とアイヌつなぐ旅　広がる交流・支援（ニュースアングル）／福岡," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 10, 1996, 0.

[163] Unknown, "内外の柳葉魚（お台所メモ）　【大阪】," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 7, 1989, 10; Unknown, "口にふわり海の香り　アイヌ民族のサケ料理マロッケ・チポロ・サヨ," *Asahi Shimbun*, January 6, 1993, 18.

[164] Unknown, "アイヌと和人の交流５周年　早稲田の料理専門店、記念の集い／東京," *Asahi Shimbun*, May 2, 1999, 0.

[165] Unknown, "アイヌ神謡を古布絵の技で　鴨川の宇梶さん、絵本「シマフクロウとサケ」出版／千葉県," *Asahi Shimbun*, January 28, 2007, 31; Unknown, "アイヌ神謡を布絵に再現　千葉の宇梶さん出版　／北海道," *Asahi Shimbun*, February 9, 2007, 25; Unknown, "布絵本が織りなすアイヌ伝説　千葉・鴨川の宇梶さん出版　／東京都," *Asahi Shimbun*, March 10, 2007, 34.

their culture.[166] In the years following this enactment several articles were published on the project, which would take a few years to complete. The advisory body proposed this plan in 1996, a basic concept was made in 1999, and it would take the Hokkaido government another couple of years to complete the plans. As the park would serve as a place where traditional hunting and fishing practises could go unpunished, fishing for salmon would also be accepted. This stands in contrast to the way that Ainu are now prohibited from freely fishing for their staple food.[167] The concepts on the specially designated space would be located near Biratori, where a lot of Hokkaido Ainu live. The zone was said to improve salmon return rates to the other parts of the Saru river. Furthermore, the local government would pick up forest maintenance to ensure the stable supply of raw materials for Ainu. It is also stated in one of the articles that the revival of traditional culture would promote tourism, which makes it seem that economic reasoning is also important for the Hokkaido government to conclude the plans.[168]

The new law also marked a new era of cultural transmission in terms of cultural exchange events. At Suehiro Elementary School located in Hokkaido, such an event took place in 1999. It was deemed important to get to know other cultures. Various cultural aspects of the Ainu were shown, such as arts and crafts, where students could make an Ainu instrument from bamboo. The way that Ainu fish for and prepare salmon was also demonstrated, and kids were encouraged to participate actively. This form of experimental learning is said to be a better way to teach about discrimination and human rights. This example has also raised questions as to how children are being taught about the Ainu, and a 1996 survey revealed that not even half of the primary school teachers covered the Ainu. This seems to indicate a vicious circle, teachers themselves have not been taught about the Ainu well, so they do not have the time of knowledge to do so for their own classes. It is interesting to see that they not only get to experience the way that Ainu treat the ingredient, but also how to prepare it. The children wrote essays in which they roughly stated that they realise that they could eat because they were given life in the form of salmon. The children also exclaimed how they now wanted to know more about the Ainu. It seems that, and this is also stated in the article, it is necessary for children to be exposed to these

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[166] Unknown, “アイヌ民族の生活、公園の形で再生　道の検討委が構想　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, April 8, 1998, 0.

[167] Unknown, “アイヌ民族の生活、公園の形で再生　道の検討委が構想　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, April 8, 1998, 0; Unknown, “アイヌ文化の空間再生　道の構想公表、国に事業化要望へ　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, August 5, 1999, 27; Unknown, “アイヌ文化の中核イオル候補地、胆振・日高地域に　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, February 22, 2002, 29.

[168] Unknown, “構造改革特区へ、道・２１市町から３０構想が提案　／北海道,” *Asahi Shimbun*, August 31, 2002, 29.

kinds of experiences to truly gain an understanding of human rights in their daily lives, which can lead to understanding of bullying and discrimination.[169] Schools outside of Hokkaido also ventured to the Ainu for these cultural exchanges where traditional fishing was taught to the students as well as ways to prepare salmon.[170] Articles covering these kinds of cultural exchange events, where children or younger generations come into contact with Ainu culture, convey a positive image of the Ainu. This effort for future generations to not have the same prejudices towards the Ainu, and even highlighting the importance of trying to live in harmony with nature, might be one of the most efficient ways to spread awareness both in Japan and internationally. Since society has since become more globalised, the effect such cultural exchanges have on a global scale in terms of raising awareness to the issues of the Ainu, and indigenous people as a whole, might not be clear yet. The fact that these kinds of workshops and cultural exchanges have taken place up until at least 2007 does show the longevity of the efforts.[171]

Another special cultural occasion for the Ainu took place in 1998, when the first serious ceremony outside of Hokkaido was organised in Miyoshi, near Hiroshima, to give thanks to the river and salmon gods. Another organisation had been releasing salmon fry into the Enokawa river, where the *Asircepnomi*, as the ceremony is called in the Ainu language, took place. So the fact that Ainu could organise a ceremony to give thanks to the gods means that the event for the return of salmon to the Enokawa river is deemed important for Ainu. The ceremony in 1998 would mark the start of a new tradition in that area.[172] The same ceremonies in Hokkaido would be featured in the Asahi Shimbun from that period onwards more frequently as well.[173]

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[169] Satoko Fukuno, "アイヌ文化体験で学ぼう　北海道・末広小に見る（きょういく９９）," *Asahi Shimbun*, January 11, 1999, 28.

[170] Unknown, "文化祭でアイヌ展　県立四日市北高校　／三重," *Asahi Shimbun*, October 30, 1999, 26; Unknown, "文化は「食」から、アイヌ料理に挑戦　松阪の小学校　／三重," *Asahi Shimbun*, February 4, 2004, 23.

[171] Unknown, "（がっこう探検隊）北海道千歳市立末広小学校　アイヌ文化を実体験," *Asahi Shimbun*, July 8, 2007, 29.

[172] Unknown, "川とサケの神に感謝の祈りを　三次町でアイヌの儀式　／広島," *Asahi Shimbun*, October 4, 1998, 0.

[173] Unknown, "石狩川でサケを迎える儀式「カムイチェップノミ」　旭川【北海道】," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 16, 2000, 26; Unknown, "サケの恵みに感謝、神々に祈り　豊平川でアイヌ民族儀式【北海道】," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 16, 2000, 26; Unknown, "神に恵みのサケ感謝　アイヌ民族、千歳川で儀式　【北海道】," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 3, 2001, 26; Unknown, "サケに感謝、豊漁を願う　アイヌ民族が伝統儀式　／北海道," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 6, 2004, 27.

In this chapter, the thorough contextual analysis of Asahi Shimbun's portrayal of the Ainu's cultural identity reveals a perspective that possibly contradicts the expectations one might have had taking into account the historical marginalisation imposed upon the Ainu by the Japanese government. Reviewing the same three sections as had been laid out in the previous chapter, valuable insights can be found in the way the Ainu's cultural identity is portrayed, and how this portrayal has changed over the course of modern history. The cardinal connection between the cultural identity of the indigenous people and their human rights issues is strengthened by the central role salmon fishing has played in promoting awareness. In notorious legal cases such as the Nibutani Dam Case this central role is highlighted by the actions of people like Shigeru Kayano, whose outspoken demand for the Ainu to be able to freely fish for salmon again ties in directly to the environmental and cultural issues of the dam project. The ways Ainu transmit their culture through workshops and cultural exchanges accentuates this aspect of their cultural identity as well. The most significant example of this can be found in the workshops organised for children still in school, whose changed perspective on the Ainu may very well cause general attitudes in Japanese society to change in a positive manner. Organisations dedicated to conserving the environment can be seen to 'use' the Ainu's beliefs in regards to their position in nature through the different projects as highlighted in this chapter as well. This creates a situation where awareness for the Ainu's indigenous rights issues is generated in the media, while also somewhat appropriating their influence on conservationist movements.

The discourse on the Ainu's general legal issues, protective attitude towards nature, and ways of transmitting their culture to the general population of Japan and the world, shows an evolution in societal attitudes. Some of the subjects that were covered in both The Japan Times and the Asahi Shimbun received noticeably more attention in the latter, which can be attributed to the general audience of the media in question. If we compare the portrayal of the Ainu's cultural identity to how this was done in the Japan Times, there are not as much differences as first anticipated. Despite the Japan Times being an internationally oriented newspaper published in English, and the Asahi Shimbun a Japan oriented newspaper, both media reflect a certain degree of recognition of the Ainu's cultural identity and the indigenous rights issues they face. In the following chapter I will expand on the analysis of both The Japan Times and the Asahi Shimbun, and certain facets that need to be explained in more detail.

5. Japan's settler colonial attitude: apparent or not?

Within the frame of a settler colonial state, expression of cultural identity becomes a conscious task for the indigenous part of the population. This is something we see reflected in the articles in both The Japan Times and the Asahi Shimbun. As stated earlier, cultural heritage, and in extension cultural identity, can be perceived as being more significant for indigenous peoples. When the voices of Ainu activists are heard, whether this is concerning legal issues such as the Nibutani Dam Case, or the protection of nature in Hokkaido, more than one concern is portrayed at once. In the case of salmon fishing, which is something that is shown to be reflected in a lot of the articles examined, the expression of cultural identity coincides with the human rights violations the Ainu had to suffer. Considering Lenzerini's take on reparations for wrongs on the part of indigenous peoples, as the rivers and animals of Hokkaido can be seen as a part of the Ainu's cultural heritage, how would reparations be processed by the Japanese government now that Hokkaido is a part of the nation of Japan?[174] The central government, much like in other liberal societies, tend to strive for an egalitarian approach to legislation and rights for its citizens. The decisions made, for instance the enactment of the new Ainu law in 1997, show legal claims for cultural distinctiveness. We can see this reflected in the articles, where it is explicitly mentioned how the Ainu have a connection with nature in Hokkaido and how they position themselves within that nature. This image of a people living in harmony with nature does not coincide with the image the Japanese government has for a people they once wanted to assimilate, even going as far as driving the Ainu to a state near extinction. The cultural distinctiveness of the Ainu is therefore a point of chagrin for the Japanese government, which makes legislative decisions difficult.

As Ann-Elise Lewallen states in her book on Ainu identity and settler colonialism, 90 percent of Ainu in Japan remain silent, or do not act on their cultural identity, in a response to colonial violence, fear of being rejected by society, or becoming the subject of discriminatory actions.[175] When reflecting on this statement, the voices we hear in the newspapers can be put into perspective. It is not the singular voice of the Ainu as a whole, but of community leaders who might be the representatives of parts of the Ainu community. Furthermore, the voices represented in the media are oftentimes that of older Ainu males. This provides a very gendered perspective on the portrayal of the cultural identity of the Ainu in the media, at least in the period I explored in this thesis. One of the key figures in Ainu activism until his death in 2006 was Shigeru Kayano, someone that I have mentioned quite a lot. His opinion is portrayed in

[174] Lenzerini, "Reparations for Wrongs," 345.
[175] Lewallen, *The Fabric of Indigeneity*, 3.

The Japan Times and the Asahi Shimbun, both as a legislator, an Ainu activist, and the director of an Ainu museum. This gives a one-sided view on the situation of the Ainu. However, even though this perspective is gendered and fairly one-sided, it shows that there is an interest in similarly themed articles in the media. The amount of articles wherein Kayano's opinion is voiced accentuates this. For example, in The Japan Times we can see that even smaller meetings between the Ainu and other indigenous people are covered in articles.[176] The interest that these articles create will undoubtably have an influence on the portrayal of the indigenous cultural identity of the Ainu, as interest generates awareness.

The expressions of indigenous cultural identity found in the articles I examined published in The Japan Times reflect an internationalistic attitude with regard to the position of the Ainu. A lot of the articles only portray a portion of an image, mostly to supplement the context of the article. The mentioning of Ainu and their animalistic beliefs in articles that describe the environmental issues Hokkaido faces might seem to indicate that the media show consideration towards them, in some cases even stating the indigeneity of the Ainu from the early 1990s.[177] The attitude the Japanese government held with regard to the Ainu can be placed almost at the other side of the spectrum. The new Ainu law of 1997 might have been a step towards the way the media portray the indigenous cultural identity of the Ainu for the Japanese government, but it was also a way to somewhat control the Ainu's cultural heritage.[178] This law can be seen as a continuity of the settler colonialist attitude of the Japanese government, but seeing as The Japan Times provides a platform for Ainu activists to voice their disappointment regarding the law, this is not at all reflected in the media.[179] One of the three aspects of identity I previously mentioned, external identification, applies to the portrayal of the Ainu in the examined newspaper articles. How the media reflects the indigenous cultural identity of the Ainu is not the same as how they perceive it themselves, or how it is perceived within the Ainu community.

There is a slight dissonance between the portrayal of, for instance, salmon fishing in the articles I examined and how the Ainu themselves perceive this part of their cultural identity. In The Japan Times, more so than in the Asahi Shimbun, salmon fishing is portrayed in quite a few articles as being an aspect of the Ainu's livelihood instead of the cultural significance it

[176] Unknown, "Native American in Japan for convention against nuclear warfare discusses situation with Kayano," *The Japan Times*, August 1, 1997, 3.
[177] Unknown, "Ainu protest forest plan," *The Japan Times*, April 13, 1987, 2; Unknown, "Forestry policies and practices," *The Japan Times*, April 19, 1987, 8; Mark Brazil, "Efforts are under way to save giant owl," *The Japan Times*, November 12, 1992, 17.
[178] Maruyama, "Japan's Post-War Ainu Policy," 205.
[179] Unknown, "New Ainu law fails to settle indigenous question," *The Japan Times*, June 11, 1997, 3.

holds for them. The statistics used in some articles seem to include salmon fishing in a category of ways the Ainu make a living, such as agriculture.[180] As the right to freely fish for salmon has been taken away from the Ainu, and agricultural work has been forced on them in historical legislation, it seems irresponsible to not mention the explicit difference in meaning to the Ainu themselves. In the Asahi Shimbun we find a much more nuanced view on how salmon fishing is perceived by the Ainu. I do have to reiterate that, while the translations were sufficient enough to grasp the context of articles, Japanese is not my main language. This means that certain words may have eluded me, which changes the meaning of sentences in some articles. Nevertheless, overall I found that the articles published in the Asahi Shimbun seemed to be quite respectful in the way the cultural identity of the Ainu was portrayed. The economic significance of salmon fishing was mentioned, but the cultural significance was very much interpreted by the authors. Furthermore, the way that their desire to freely fish for salmon once again is highlighted in a number of articles shows a level of respect to the cultural significance this holds for the Ainu.

I did not expect to see this level of consideration in the contents of a daily Japanese newspaper; even if the supposed political alignment of the newspaper is more on the socially liberal side.[181] The reason I say this relates back to a previous statement on the newfound liberal humanism that made the Ainu into a part of the Japanese workforce due to the enactment of the 1899 act.[182] Even if a movement of people is considered in literature to be liberal, that does not mean the actions, or articles in the case of the Asahi Shimbun, reflect this at all times. Even so, the attitude of settler colonial Japan is in this way not at all reflected in this newspaper. In addition to that, as a newspaper provides a top-down perspective of a society based on the publishing side instead of the reading side, one might have thought that the reluctance of the government to truly take the opinion of Ainu into account would be reflected in the media. As Lorenzo Veracini states in his article on the historiography of settler colonialism, scholarly contributions have had little to no success historically speaking in changing the perception of the conservative part of public opinion.[183] Based on this, there would have been a discrepancy between the public opinion and the central Japanese government in terms of attitude towards the Ainu. Certainly, newspapers provide mostly a top-down perspective. Still, public opinion has to be kept in mind by publishers in order to sell them. This makes the public seem more progressively minded in the timeframe I examined for this thesis. However, a survey conducted

[180] Emiko Ohki, "Ainu Confronted With Discrimination in Daily Life," *The Japan Times*, December 1, 1986, 2.
[181] Perez, *Japan at War*, 336.
[182] Hirano, "Settler Colonialism," 337.
[183] Veracini, "'Settler Colonialism'," 325.

in 2011 provides evidence for the contrary: based of 210 Ainu respondents who migrated from Hokkaido to cities elsewhere in Japan, over eleven percent moved due to rampant discrimination.[184] So what can we conclude from these observations? My research alone will not be able to provide an elaborate answer as to why the articles in the Japan oriented Asahi Shimbun seem to reflect a more progressive attitude with regard to the Ainu. Even if the intended public is socially liberal in their political views, as this movement is not seen to really make a stand for the Ainu in either literature or the newspaper articles I examined. However, it has become clear that the attitude of government, media, and the public are not aligned in this case.

I previously mentioned how certain aspects of indigenous cultural identity tie together with indigenous rights in general. The same can be said for salmon fishing. It is stated in article twenty-six of the UNDRIP that states have to provide legal recognition with respect to customs and traditions in regards to lands that were reappropriated from indigenous people.[185] In modern times this connection between cultural identity, or cultural heritage, and human rights is internationally recognised and processed in legislation. Before the new Ainu law of 1997, the legal issues the Ainu face are readily acknowledged by both The Japan Times and the Asahi Shimbun. This includes their struggle for cultural rights, but also to be recognised as indigenous people. However, there is a break in continuity regarding this seemingly progressive attitude the newspapers have. After the enactment of the 1997 law, the amount of articles mentioning the legal struggles of the Ainu appear to decline as the promotion of Ainu culture became solidified in legislation. There still appeared to be an interest in the battle for the rights to freely fish for salmon, and to obtain recognition as an indigenous people, but it was diminished. As the sources I have used are only placed between 1984 and 2007, I can only hypothesise regarding a comparison with media in an earlier period. Still, I believe the period I explored more thoroughly signifies a discontinuity in the history of the position the Ainu hold in Japanese society. In a previous chapter I mentioned the narrative regarding "Japanese blood" in the post-war period, as a part of the myth of a homogenous Japan.[186] Public opinion did not favour the Ainu, and their existence had been flat-out denied essentially. Mass media oftentimes adapt to public opinion in some way, which is why I think that earlier articles on the subject might reflect the settler colonial attitude of the Japanese government, especially in the post-war period. The

[184] Uzawa, "Everyday Acts of Resurgence," 183.
[185] United Nations Development Group, 'United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People', G*uidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues* (New York and Geneva 2009) 46-57, at 53.
[186] Siddle, "The Ainu: Indigenous people of Japan," 26.

only way to prove this thesis would be to explore other newspapers that have a digital or analogue archive dating back to that period. Furthermore, without the ability to properly read Japanese these archives might be impossible to navigate. Using modern translation tools might work for digital sources, but sources on paper have to be translated using analogue methods, which would have to be outsourced if one did not possess the ability to do so by oneself. Regardless, I still believe the period I explored signified a breaking point in history, in which interest for the situation the Ainu have faced in Japanese society is portrayed in the media. Even if the interest declined after the 1997 law, for the Ainu this fight is far from over: in May 2023 an international symposium was organised in Hokkaido in order to garner support for their historic lawsuit to regain the right to freely fish for salmon in local rivers.[187] So the apparent decline in interest does not reflect the current situation of the Ainu. But does it relate to an expression of a settler colonial attitude?

6. Concluding remarks

The portrayal of indigenous cultural identity in media provides new and interesting perspectives on self-identification, community identification and external identification. The attitudes of the central government of a state, the media, and the public are all reflected in the way these articles are presented. The central research question in this thesis was 'to what extent does the expression of indigenous cultural identity in the Japanese media from 1984 to 2007 reflect the attitude of settler colonial states?' Through historical research using newspaper articles from the internationally oriented The Japan Times, and the nationally oriented Asahi Shimbun, I am able to provide an answer. In order to examine the newspaper articles as accurately as possible, I first had to provide a brief overview of the history of the Ainu, and why I believe that Japan has to be included in the historiographical debate regarding settler colonialism. The colonisation of Hokkaido and consequential assimilation policies that the Ainu have had to endure lead me to conclude that Japan is indeed a settler colonial state. It would therefore be irresponsible to conduct research on settler colonialism without mentioning Japan in the same breath as the United States or Canada. Despite this near cultural genocide, the indigenous cultural identity of the Ainu has managed to survive. The cultural transmission through dance, song, and oral histories have made it possible for generations living in a more modern Japanese society to be able to express themselves in- and outside of Hokkaido. Furthermore, aspects of this identity, such their animalistic beliefs as reflected in their approach to salmon fishing, are intertwined

[187] "International Symposium: The Indigenous Right to Catch Salmon in Rivers," AinuToday, accessed June 17, 2023, https://ainutoday.com/raporo-international-symposium/.

with the ongoing struggle for cultural and indigenous rights. After exploring newspaper articles regarding legal issues, the protection of nature, and cultural transmission of the Ainu with a focus on salmon fishing, I have made some interesting observations. The settler colonial attitude of the Japanese government is not that obvious at first glance when examining the content of the articles. For an internationally oriented newspaper like The Japan Times this might be expected. However, a nationally oriented newspaper like the Asahi Shimbun might have reflected this attitude in some ways, taking into account the conservative nature of Japanese society; even if the newspaper itself is considered to be more socially liberal.

In this thesis I have only looked at two different newspapers, so the overall perspective is fairly limited. Furthermore, as my knowledge of the Japanese language is a limiting factor as well, I might have missed subtle nuances in contextual information or use of certain linguistic terms significant to either Japan or the Ainu. Despite these shortcomings, I believe that this thesis will contribute to the historiographical debate regarding settler colonialism, indigenous studies, and cultural identity. In most Western literature on the history of settler colonialism, Japan is not mentioned at all. This is in my opinion a great oversight, as removing the debate from the Western oriented methods and subjects can add new perspectives on these cases as comparisons between seemingly very different regions can be made. Of course this thesis offers a limited scope on the subject, but the evidence is readily available to justify further research on the topic including Japan in research on other settler colonial states like the United States or Canada. In addition to this debate, my research shows how stereotypical knowledge about Japan and public opinion deviates from what is actually presented in the media. Even in Japanese literature, mass media is almost never used as a primary source for research on this subject. Based on the list of recommended literature found on the knowledge platform AinuToday, only one Japanese title mentions an 'Ainu newspaper' (アイヌ新聞).[188] I have been unable to find this article anywhere, so it might be exclusively available at certain institutions in Japan. This exemption from both Western and Japanese literature makes mass media a fairly new type of primary source for research on the Ainu. I would refrain from claiming my thesis to be a pioneer on the subject, yet it does contribute to a remarkably vacant discourse on the interaction between indigenous cultural identity, mass media, and government. It is evident that this perspective is overlooked, creating a gap in our knowledge regarding the dynamics at play. By exploring these dynamics through newspaper articles, my thesis sheds light on the multifaceted ways media engages with indigenous peoples inside the frameworks as put in place by the government.

[188] "Scholarship,"AinuToday, accessed June 25, 2023, https://ainutoday.com/scholarship/.

So how do we move forward? The interdisciplinary approach to indigenous studies is important for the field as we are able to explore new perspectives. Sociologist Duane Champagne remarks on potential new research regarding indigenous people that it is imperative research helps in developing "healthy and sustainable tribal communities".[189] And while I do agree with him, I also believe that historical research should offer a nuanced view on the subject. Omitting the usual Western research methods, and looking for perspectives that have been overlooked in previous research, will help in this endeavour. I examined more or less two hundred Japanese newspaper articles for this thesis in order to broaden the perspective and gain newfound information that would normally be, quite literally, lost in translation. Research on a larger scale, examining more than two newspapers, will more than likely expand on my conclusion and provide new perspectives on the settler colonial attitude of Japan as reflected in the media. More importantly, taking into account the supposed political alignment of a newspaper in the selection of sources will allow for comparisons of the portrayal of the Ainu, or other indigenous peoples when applying this method to other regions.

7. Bibliography

7.1 Literature

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