



EPOK

Exchange Program Okayama

Spring 2023



EPOK Research Essay Collection



About EPOK Research Project

EPOK リサーチプロジェクトは、岡山大学の交換留学 EPOK 生の個別研究科目です。岡山での留学機会を活かして日本の社会や文化をより深く、実践的に探求する目的で、個々のテーマを自由に設定し研究します。春学期の約4カ月を通じて、フィールドワークを含みリサーチを行い、成果を小論文にまとめました。多忙な留学の1学期は、日本語や日本の習慣と格闘するうちに刻々と過ぎ、時間や言語の壁を実感しながら取り組みました。其々の調査方法を模索しながら完成した2023年度春期のリサーチには、11名のEPOK生が参加し、学期末には、恒例の研究発表会を行いました。その最終研究エッセイをここに掲載します。

In 2023 spring eleven students worked on the individual set their own research topics in exploring Japanese culture and society, conducted the research for about 4 months. The variety of their interest stretches from Japan's language and literature, politics, to contemporary and traditional art scenes. The compilation of the EPOK research essay demonstrates the vigorous interest, effort and contribution of the students in pursuing the topics on Japan. At the end of the semester the students presented the paper and finalized the course with good applause.

2023年8月

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Junko Obayashi'.

Obayashi Junko 大林純子, **ph.D.**

EPOK Advisor

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[Japanese Language](#)
[Japanese History](#)
[Social Issues](#)
[Japanese Thinking](#)
 and [Forests.....](#)

Table of Contents: 2023 Spring Research Projects

Student Name	Research SUBJECT (Title)	Pages
WEIDNER Alexander	The Everyday Use of Kanji	4-9
KULITZA Fabian	English Katakana loanwords and their Japanese counterparts - Perception and use in the Japanese language	10-16
STEELE Naudia	From Edo to Now: The Impact of the Sankin kotai system on the Formation and Integration of Japanese Culture	17-23
BOMAN Grace	"The Warrior who Surpasses Death": The Lasting Legacy of Honda Tadakatsu	24-29
RUCKER Brianna	Roses and Lilies: Representation of Lesbian relationships in Japanese literature and media	30-39
VASQUEZ SARMIENTO Daniela	Recognition of the rights of the Ainu Indigenous	40-48
THIMM Gabriel	Statement of the social pressure in Japanese society 日本社会における社会的圧力	49-56
GURGENIDZE Lasha	Martial arts as a practice for the Self	57-63
AMBRIZ Roberto	Disparity of Athletic Opportunities	64-69
CANTA Donatella	The role that universities can play in the promotion of a more sustainable, inclusive and ethic lifestyle: the case of Kyoto University' s VegeProject	70-77
YEH Yu Yo	Forestry in Okayama 岡山の林業について	78-84



Use of kanji in everyday life of Japanese people

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Abstract:

日本の漢字は 10 万語以上あり、日本人の生活のあらゆる場面で漢字が使われ、文化と言語において中心的な役割を果たしている。本研究は、日本人大学生 41 人を対象にアンケートを行って、「漢字の難しさ」についての意見、スキル、使用パターンを収集することで、漢字の学習と使用の分野における意識を明らかにすることを目的とした。調査の結果、漢字の文字数の多さ、複雑な書き順、漢字間の類似性などについては難しさを感じているが、同時に、面白さや興味も感じていることがわかった。本研究の結果は、日本語を勉強したい言語学習者、教師、研究者にとっての貴重な情報を提供するものである。

Introduction:

Kanji, the complex Chinese characters, play a central role in Japanese culture and language. With over 100.000 characters, their complexity is unparalleled in the world of languages. So it is fascinating and also understandable that only about 2500 characters are used for the every day life of an average Japanese person. Their use extends to all areas of everyday Japanese life, be it in contracts, in communication with superiors or in public spaces. However, using kanji is of course not without its challenges, and many Japanese people find them difficult. This survey was conducted to gain insight into Japanese people's opinions, skills, and usage patterns of kanji and to examine how kanji are used in everyday life to better understand their ground laying phenomena collect the data, a survey was conducted in which 41 Japanese people of different ages and backgrounds took part. Participants were asked to share their opinions on the difficulty of kanji, the most challenging aspects of learning kanji, and their preferred learning methods like reading or writing. In addition, questions were asked about the use of analogue and digital media in order to take into account the changes in modern language use. Furthermore the survey also provided an opportunity to explore participants' attitudes towards the possible future change in kanji usage or complexity. This is of great interest because it is known that in most regions and cultures languages start to change to function better with the modern life and



technology. The expectations of this survey were diverse. A majority of participants were expected to find kanji because of their high complexity, difficult, supported by the general consensus. The challenges of learning kanji were anticipated, primarily in relation to the large number of characters, complicated stroke order, similarity between the kanji, and the variety of readings. Participants were expected to use various methods of learning kanji, with writing being seen as a traditional and effective method. Participants' interest in the various aspects of kanji such as the possible readings and the origins of the words was also expected.

The knowledge gained provides valuable insights into the use of kanji in everyday Japanese life. They help increase understanding of the challenges, interests and attitudes of the Japanese people. The results of this survey enable a well-founded discussion about the future of the kanji system and possible changes. This is important because a lot of existing surveys do not question normal persons' opinions but work with existing older data and from the view of western people. The following report presents and discusses the detailed results and findings of this survey. This information provides valuable insight for language learners, teachers, and researchers studying Japanese language and culture who wish to better understand the phenomenon of kanji usage.

Methodology:

To gather data on the usage of kanji by Japanese individuals in their everyday lives, a questionnaire was conducted. The survey collected data from participants that study or work at Okayama University, mostly students between the ages of 18 and 23. A total of 41 persons participated in the survey. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice and text-generating questions, designed to explore participants' opinions, skills, and usage patterns related to kanji. The questions covered various aspects, including the perceived difficulty of kanji, specific challenges in learning and using kanji, the level of interest in kanji, preferred learning methods, and attitudes towards the future of kanji. Participants were asked to rate their kanji ability, provide their gender, age, and occupation, and indicate the number of years they have been learning kanji. Additionally, their preferences for taking notes in class and the situations in which they pay attention to kanji usage were also inquired. The survey was administered through an online platform, ensuring ease of participation and data collection. Participants were provided with clear instructions and were given sufficient time to complete the survey. The survey did not collect any personal data from the asked person to maintain privacy and sustain the reliability of the data. The results obtained from the survey were analyzed and compiled to identify trends among the participants regarding kanji usage. These findings provide valuable insights

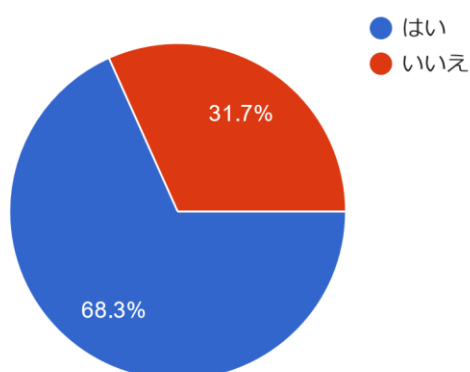
into the perceptions and behaviors of Japanese people towards kanji, helping in a better understanding of its role in their everyday lives. It is important to note that due to the specific target group of Okayama University students, the findings may not be representative of the entire Japanese population. However, the data collected from this survey offers valuable insights into the views and experiences of this particular group regarding kanji usage in their daily lives.

Results:

Based on the collected survey data, it appears that participants think learning and using kanji is challenging (68.3%) in various aspects. The difficulties mentioned include the abundance of kanji (56.1%), the need to memorize them, recalling and differed their meanings and readings, understanding their structure and similarity (46.3%), and mastering the stroke order (46.3%). The multiple meanings associated with kanji and their various readings (41.5%) were also mentioned as sources of complexity. Although not all but most participants expressed that they think kanji are challenging, there is a broad variety of opinions about the interesting aspects of kanji that almost outshines the critic about kanji.

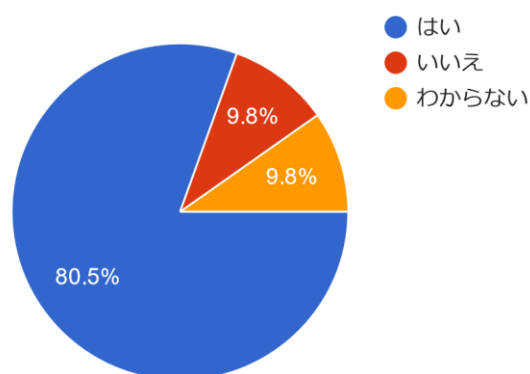
1. 漢字は難しいですか。

41 responses



3. 漢字は面白いですか。

41 responses



Picture 1: Graphic 1 and 3 from the questionnaire. Graphic 1: Are kanji difficult? Blue - yes; Red - No. Graphic 3: Are kanji interesting? Blue - yes; Red - No; Yellow - Do not know

Some think that the complexity and structure of kanji (38.5%) is intriguing, while others appreciated the variety of meanings (43.6%) associated with each character. The historical origin and beauty (43.6%) of kanji characters were also mentioned as interesting elements. Regarding learning methods, participants mentioned writing kanji repeatedly, reading books, engaging in calligraphy. The use of



flashcards (2.4%) or games is used very rarely if not not existing. Quite a lot participants also relied on reading texts (41.5%) and looking up unknown kanji meanings and making notes for future reference. The consensus was that exposure to kanji through reading and writing it repeatedly aids in the learning process.

This aligns with the information about teaching methods, most participants said that schools typically use writing kanji multiple times (82.5%) or using kanji workbooks as part of homework (70%) assignments to improve their proficiency. Reading books (50%) and incorporating kanji-related games (10%) were also mentioned as potential teaching approaches. Although way more rarely used. Regarding the future of kanji, participants had a more or less common view. Almost all do not want or see any big change in the kanji system. An often said wish was the reduction of the kanji in form of the reduction of the stroke or the end of the stroke order. In terms of evaluating their own kanji abilities, participants had varied assessments. Most (60%) considered themselves to have average or below-average proficiency, while others believed they possessed a general level (40%) of competence. Not one participant thought about their proficiency in a way above average manner. The use of kanji in different contexts was also discussed. Participants highlighted the importance of paying attention to kanji usage, particularly in formal or public situations such as writing official documents or emails, while maintaining a more casual tone in casual conversations with friends and also paying attention at the kanji proficiency of the other person. Overall, the survey data indicates that while kanji presents challenges in terms of its quantity, memorization, and complexity, it also offers interesting aspects such as its structure, multiple meanings, and historical background. The learning methods commonly employed involve repeated writing, reading texts, and using various learning materials. The use of kanji in educational settings typically includes writing exercises and workbooks and seems very traditional but is seen as efficient and reliable to improve the knowledge about kanji. The future of kanji remains uncertain, with potential changes in character complexity and increased digitization. Evaluations of personal kanji abilities vary among respondents, and careful attention to kanji usage is considered essential in different contexts.

Discussion:

This survey on the usage of kanji in everyday Japanese life has provided valuable insights into the opinions, skills, and patterns of kanji usage among Japanese individuals. Participants expressed that learning and using kanji can be challenging (68.3%) due to the abundance of characters, the need for



memorization, and the complexities of meanings, readings, and stroke order [3]. Despite these challenges, participants also found various aspects of kanji interesting (80.5%), including their complexity, structure, multiple meanings, and historical origins. Participants mostly relied on traditional learning methods, such as repeated writing, reading texts, and making notes or the usage of dictionary's to look up unknown kanji. Writing kanji multiple times and using workbooks were commonly employed teaching methods in schools [4-5]. While some participants mentioned the use of flashcards and games, these methods were relatively rare. Reading texts and looking up unknown kanji meanings were also important strategies for improving kanji proficiency. Regarding the future of kanji, participants generally did not desire significant changes to the system. However, there were suggestions for simplification, such as reducing stroke count or eliminating stroke order. Participants expressed a desire for maintaining the traditional aspects of kanji while potentially incorporating more digitization in its usage. With an unavoidable increase of digital technology it is essential to think about how the kanji can be adjusted to this and their use in the bounds of the new possibilities and also in parallel retain their unique beauty and function. When evaluating their own kanji abilities, most participants considered themselves to have average or below-average proficiency, with none perceiving themselves as above average. From the gathered information it can be assumed that most people are either humble or their rate their proficiency in the context of the complete kanji existence. According to the Daikanwa Jiten [1] (book from Morohashi) 50.000 kanji are known in a general way. Combined with older scripts the number of kanji lays by 80.000 to 100.000 characters. For the public use 2.137 [2] characters are common. So the today used kanji amount to about 2 % to 5 % of the total known. Even academic people know often no more than about 6.000 characters. One of the most difficult kanji tests, the kentei test shows this through the results. Only 15 % of all participants can pass the test at the highest level with 6.000 characters [6]. The importance of paying attention to kanji usage in different contexts was emphasized, with formal or public situations requiring greater precision and casual conversations allowing for a more relaxed approach. This also is influenced through the Japanese culture to not embarrasses and care for others. So it is common to reduce the use of kanji in presence of a person with low kanji proficiency. For example if teaching an elementary school student or interacting with foreign language speaker. The findings of this survey contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges, interests, and attitudes of Japanese individuals toward kanji usage. It provides valuable insights for language learners, teachers, and researchers studying Japanese language and culture. While the results are limited to the specific target group of Okayama University students, they shed light on the experiences and views of this particular group and offer a starting point for further research on kanji usage. Future research could explore the impact of digitization and technological advancements on kanji usage and learning methods. Additionally, investigating the



perspectives of a broader and more diverse sample of the Japanese population would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the current state and potential changes in kanji usage. In conclusion, this survey has illuminated the challenges and interesting aspects of kanji usage in everyday Japanese life. It has revealed traditional learning methods, varied perceptions of personal proficiency, and the importance of context-specific kanji usage. The insights gained from this study contribute to the broader understanding of kanji and its role in Japanese language and culture, paving the way for further exploration and potential advancements in the field.

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English Katakana loanwords and their Japanese counterparts - Perception and use in the Japanese language

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この研究プロジェクトでは、英語の借用語が日本語のカタカナ語として使用される背景と動機を調査した。具体的な目的は、借用語の使用頻度、日本語に相当する単語に対する優先順位、現代的な概念を伝える上での意義を探ることだった。日本語母語話者を対象としたアンケート調査を通して、日本語の漢字語よりもカタカナ語を使用する動機や言語的選択の傾向が明らかになった。

Introduction

The Japanese Language is a fascinating and rich Language with many cultural and historical influences. Compared to a greater time scale, one linguistic development stands out as fairly recent, the wide-ranging implementation of loanwords from the English language. English loanwords, in the form of Katakana words, have emerged as an elementary component of the everyday language of Japanese in modern times. But their influence goes beyond this and can also be found in a variety of different fields, such as in technical and educational language. The history of English loanwords in the Japanese language dates back to the 16th century when Japan allowed trade with western countries and imported goods and knowledge. Until this point unseen or uncommon goods or knowledge were often named after its original name but slightly changed to fit more into the Japanese language. However, the main source of new loanwords shifted from various European languages such as Portuguese, Dutch, German and French to mainly English in the 19th century during the Meiji Restoration. In this period, Japan was undergoing rapid modernization and internationalization. Implementing Western advancements, Japan allowed global trade and diplomatic relations. With it came a big variety of foreign concepts and knowledge, products, and ideas. However, it was the English language that eventually came to the fore as the main source of new loanwords. In the mid-20th century 80 % of loanwords in Japanese were English loanwords with numbers increasing. This may be due to the global predominance and worldwide influence of the US American economy and media industry. English loanwords, translated into katakana script, proved not only to be linguistic borrowings, but also evidence of cultural



exchange. Today Katakana loanwords play an important role in everyday language in Japan. Beyond purely linguistic interest, the use of English loanwords in Japanese reveals an interesting cultural phenomenon. In some cases, Japanese speakers choose native Japanese kanji words, evoking a sense of authenticity and cultural or linguistic heritage. Conversely, a preference for katakana loanwords may indicate a desire for modernity, international trends, or even a touch of cosmopolitan flair. Additionally, the nuanced connotations and meanings associated with certain katakana words could make them more appropriate than their Japanese equivalents in certain contexts. Therefore, the adoption of English loanwords in the form of katakana words has brought a variety of benefits and challenges and shaped the linguistic landscape of Japanese. In some circumstances Katakana words often convey a sense of modernity and internationality, fitting Japan's status as a global player in various industries. By using these loanwords, Japanese speakers can effortlessly incorporate modern ideas, technology, and trends into their daily conversations. By doing so it comes to no surprise that Katakana words convey special meanings associated with certain concepts, mostly of non-Japanese origin. For this work of special interest are those words which were implemented into the Japanese language despite already having a Japanese counterpart. While these Katakana words still offer the beforehand elaborated benefits they might also come with some challenges. Because global trends and katakana expressions are constantly evolving it is important for Japanese speakers to be familiar with the latest Katakana terms. The fast pace of language change in some aspects can require constant adaptation of language use, which can be challenging for some people. Especially for some words that have a Japanese counterpart, expressing a similar meaning, it might raise the concern of potential dilution of cultural identity. Some critics argue that an over-reliance on foreign terms could lead to a gradual erosion of traditional Japanese vocabulary and the cultural nuances associated with it.

The aim of this research project is to explore the motivations and preferences behind language choice. This research project studies the use of English loanwords in the Japanese language, specifically focusing on their occurrence and commonness compared to their original Japanese equivalents and the underlying reasons behind their implementation.

Methodology

In the following will the procedures be described used to collect data about the use of English loanwords in the Japanese language. For the objective to investigate how and to what extent certain Katakana words are implemented, perception of them as well as the opinion on the use of foreign Katakana words, a survey targeting Japanese native speakers was held. The survey questionnaire includes questions related to the frequency of English loanword usage, as well as inquiries into the motivations behind using katakana words. A list of sample words, comparing English words, Katakana

loanwords and Japanese equivalents, was included in the survey to provide a context of words that could be evaluated in terms of frequency and preference. It was further intended to explore whether and which situation-dependency favors the use of certain words. It was intended to interview about 30 to 50 people in order to obtain statistical significance. The survey was held online, accessible through a QR-Code. For the spread of the survey, a small flyer was designed and handed out. The survey was targeting mainly native speaking Japanese university Students but it was open for any age group to answer. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, were used to summarize the information and the frequency of loanword usage. Moreover, responses to open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively to identify recurring themes and motivations behind loanword preferences.

Results

In the following, the results of the online survey will be presented and trends and majorities, as well as the main points of interest will be summarized. All participants interviewed were in the age range of 18 to 25 years. Despite the fact that there were no restrictions on age, these survey results only reflect the young population. 33 people were interviewed, which was within the set minimum number of participants. First, the participants were shown a list of English katakana loanwords and Japanese equivalents. Referring to this list of 26 katakana loanwords and Japanese equivalents, from which participants were

asked to intuitively choose preferred usage, a large majority of 81.8% responded that they use Japanese words and katakana words of this list about equally often. A similar majority of 78.8% stated frequent use of katakana loanwords in everyday conversations, while the remaining 21.2% reported occasional use. Thus, all respondents state that they use loan words in everyday life. This use of language seems to please more than half of the respondents at 57.6%, as they indicated that they like the use of katakana loanwords. A third of respondents (33.3%) were neutral about the use of katakana loanwords. The reason of use given by 21 people (63.6%) is that katakana loanwords more accurately express the meaning of what they intend to say compared to their Japanese equivalents. A little more than a third of the respondents underline this and state that they use katakana loan words because they are better understood depending on the context. These results correspond very closely to those of the question of whether loan words help respondents to express meanings that they cannot express in the same way with the Japanese words. Here, 63.6% said they would agree and 33.3% would occasionally agree.

Do you like the use of Katakana loanwords?

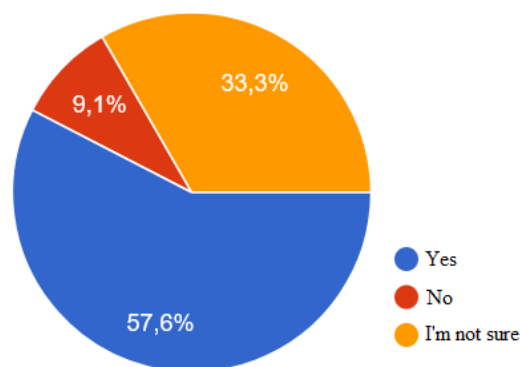


Figure 1: Chart showing that majority of respondents like using katakana words



Another reason given by a quarter of those surveyed is that they use them because they are used by friends and the media. None of the respondents reported using katakana loanwords to sound "cool" or "trendy." About half of the respondents stated that they rarely encounter new katakana loan words in everyday life and incorporate them into their own vocabulary. However, a third state this as often. 75.8% of all respondents find the general occurrence of katakana loanwords to be very often, but are neutral about it. 12.1% feel the amount of katakana loan words in the Japanese language in everyday life is just right, while a small proportion of respondents at 9.1% feel the amount is too much. This naturally leads to the question in which situations people tend to use katakana loanwords. Respondents were free to answer this open question, with three patterns in particular emerging. On the one hand, it is often used in colloquial situations among friends. Furthermore, it is also very often used in context of Western-associated subject areas and knowledge originally imported from Western countries. The third area is frequent use in business or in digital contexts such as computers. Respondents' attitudes were relatively balanced as to whether there are situations in which they actively try to avoid katakana loanwords. 42.4% reported not actively avoiding katakana loanwords in certain situations. However, 33.3% try to use only Japanese words instead of loan words in certain situations. The situations given by most respondents were relatively similar, with business, official and school situations, as well as when speaking to teachers or higher-ups, being the most common responses. While usage in business situations is somewhat inconsistent with the previously reported usage of katakana loanwords in business situations, the results show a clear trend. Katakana loanwords are used by most respondents predominantly in private interactions with friends and less in official and important situations. The majority of respondents, 69.7%, said they believe katakana loan words improve their understanding of the English language and culture. On the other hand, only 21.2% denied this. Regarding the use of katakana loanwords, almost all respondents with a majority of 93.9% indicated that they perceive a difference between the generations. Since the respondents are all young people, this suggests that there is a difference in the handling and use of katakana loanwords compared to older generations.

Furthermore, the survey results on the use of English loanwords in the form of katakana words in the Japanese language from the list of English katakana loanwords and Japanese equivalents revealed that interesting patterns and preferences emerge among the respondents. Of the 26 words evaluated, there was a clear difference between those with a majority preferring the Japanese kanji word and those with a clear majority preferring the katakana word. For 10 of the words, the majority of the participants chose the Japanese kanji word. This suggests that in these cases, the Japanese equivalent conveys a sense of authenticity, familiarity, or formality that resonates with respondents, or the meaning of the loanword may be different, making them prefer it over the katakana loanword. With 12 words, on the other hand, a clear majority of the participants tended towards the katakana word. This preference indicates a prevailing tendency to use expressions of foreign origin in certain contexts. The katakana loanwords seemed to have a specific connotation or meaning that resonated better than their Japanese

counterparts or more closely matched the associated meaning. It is still possible that these katakana words offer a contemporary or modern perspective and an alternative to possibly outdated or cumbersome Japanese terms. Interestingly, for 5 of these 12 katakana words, not a single participant chose the Japanese word, but decided unanimously for the katakana loan word. This unanimous preference underscores the powerful appeal and relevance of these words in modern Japanese communication, underscoring their usefulness in conveying specific nuances or ideas that may not be fully captured by their native Japanese equivalents. On the other hand, there was no unanimous choice of the Japanese kanji word for any word, as a few respondents always chose the katakana version. This suggests that even when a Japanese equivalent exists, some of the population is drawn to the English-originated expressions, perhaps because of their association with modernity, global trends, or a sense of internationalism. Interestingly, there were four words where the distribution of preferences between katakana and Japanese words was roughly equal. With these words, it can be assumed that both versions are considered interchangeable by respondents and the choice of expression may depend on personal preference, context or regional differences in usage.

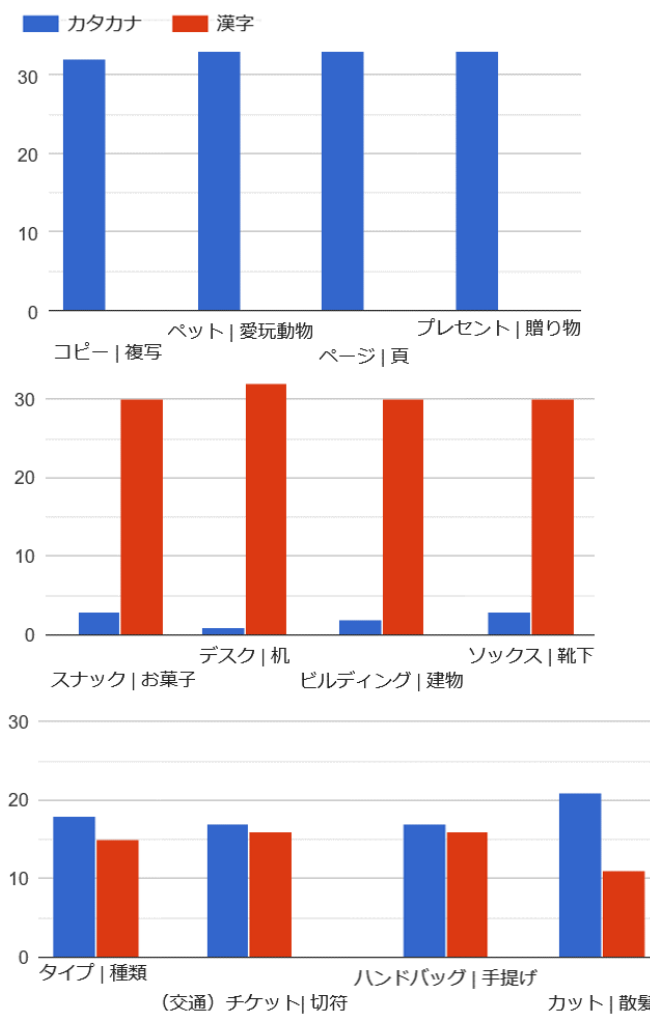


Figure 2: Graph showing the statistical distribution of preferred use of certain katakana loanwords and Japanese words. The third chart shows roughly evenly distributed usage. Katakana loanwords in

Discussion and conclusion

Through the conducted survey, a lot of interesting patterns and insights on preferences about the use of English loanwords in the form of Katakana words in the Japanese language could be obtained. These gained valuable insights regard motivations and choices behind language selection, showing various linguistic, cultural, and societal factors behind the use of Katakana words. One of the key findings was the widespread usage of Katakana loanwords in everyday conversations among the surveyed participants. A large majority of respondents reported frequent usage of these loanwords,



demonstrating their commonness in modern Japanese communication. This popularity reflects the integration of global trends and concepts into the current linguistics of the Japanese language. Katakana words allow Japanese speakers efficient communication of special meanings and expression of modern ideas. The survey results provided insights into the motivations behind the preference for Katakana loanwords. A significant majority of participants expressed that these loanwords more accurately conveyed the intended meaning compared to their Japanese equivalents. This highlights the perceived effectiveness of Katakana expressions in capturing specific nuances or concepts that may not be fully conveyed by native Japanese words. Another notable motivation for using Katakana loanwords was their association with specific contexts and areas of knowledge, particularly those with Western origins. Respondents frequently cited using Katakana words in colloquial settings with friends, as well as in Western-associated subject areas and technology-related discussions. Although it was commonly stated that the participants often used Katakana words because of their special meaning, many stated that they try to avoid using them in official situations or when speaking to higher-ups. These underlines that every day Katakana words are more associated with private settings and Japanese words carry a sense of authenticity. Interestingly, the survey results indicated a difference in the handling and use of Katakana loanwords between younger and older generations. The majority of young respondents believed that the use of Katakana loanwords differs between generations, suggesting a shift in language preferences and cultural attitudes toward foreign-derived expressions. This indication is substantiated by considering similar studies done about a decade and a half ago, which concluded that only about a quarter of the respondents liked the use of katakana loanwords, and nearly half disliked the use. This is in contrast to the results of this survey, in which more than half of the respondents like the use of katakana loan words and only a small proportion actively dislike the use. It is possible that this result could be different with a statistically larger number of respondents. However, it should also be noted that the people surveyed completely represent a young target group, which was not represented in previous surveys. Therefore, this could be an indication of changing preferences in Japanese language usage and linguistic changes. The use of English loanwords in the form of Katakana words has become an integral part of the modern Japanese language, reflecting the nation's openness to cultural exchange and global trends. The survey results provided understanding of the motivations and preferences behind language choices among Japanese speakers. Katakana loanwords offer significant advantages, allowing for efficient communication of modern ideas and facilitating cross-cultural understanding. Their prevalence in various contexts, including colloquial conversations and specialized subject areas, demonstrates their versatility and impact on modern Japanese expression. However, some Katakana words are also used despite the presence of a Japanese word for the same meaning. This also brings in some instances the need for cautious consideration of the potential impact of excessive foreign loanwords on cultural identity and linguistic heritage. As Japan continues to embrace global influences, keeping a balance between preserving traditional vocabulary and adopting foreign expressions might remain important. As Japan's linguistic landscape continues to evolve, a deeper understanding of the role and implications of Katakana loanwords becomes increasingly relevant. This research project contributes valuable



insights into the dynamics of language adaptation and influences shaping the Japanese language. The findings provide a basis for further exploration and discussion on language development in the context of a rapidly globalizing world.

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From Edo to Now: The Impact of the Sankin kotai system on the Formation and Integration of Japanese Culture

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Summary

本リサーチでは、江戸時代の参勤交代の発展が今日の日本文化の中でどのように生き続け、日本社会にどのような影響を与え、それがどのような形で今日の日本文化に見られる現象に繋がるかを分析する。まず、江戸時代について紹介し、参勤交代に関連すると考えた江戸時代のいくつかの現象について検討した。次に、それが何であったか、どのように作られたか、そしてそれが当時の日本人及び社会にどのような影響を与えたか等、参勤交代について考察した。本リサーチを実施するにあたり、学生を対象として行った調査も行った。調査結果をもって、今の若者はどれほど参勤交代について知っているか、参勤交代が日本文化に与えた影響について知っているか等を確認することができ、日本文化及び社会についての理解をさらに深めることができたのである。

Introduction

We all know that history can repeat itself, we also know that history defines many factors in today's world. These factors can include aspects of past culture, and society. These bits of history from the past shape a lot of today's current culture and societal ways of life. The questions we always ask are: "How?" and "Why?" How and why did this point in history create the significance of today's modern society. Through investigating instances of the past, we can answer those questions.

To begin, there is important background information to know, my focus is on the Edo period, and on how creations from then have become a part of Japanese culture and still exist today. One of the major factors that defined the Edo period was the Bakuhan system, a historical social system that placed daimyo, feudal lords who were vassals of the Tokugawa, under the absolute authority and power of the shogunate. A necessary instrument of political control developed and employed by the shogunate was the sankin kotai system. A rule was created by this system that demanded daimyo under the shogunate go to Edo and live there for a year. This caused many issues for those who had to travel which caused great expenses, inability to directly control their own domains, etc. Even though this may seem like an issue, there were quite a few positives that bloomed out of the sankin kotai system if we continue to investigate it deeper. Along the paths that were most traveled to get to the shogunate's capital, many stores and rest stops would happen to pop-up. With this trade had also begun to take root along these paths, leading to economic growth (Tsukahira,1966).



This one instant of history in the Edo period is proof that history can mold today's current culture and societal ways. The paths that the Bakuhan system opened further developed Japan's culture into what we see it as today. We can expand further into the Edo period to analyze even more ways that the past shaped the present.

In this research project, I analyzed significant Edo events, specifically the introduction, function, and effect of the sankin kotai system, and considered how they had shaped today's Japanese society. I collected information from history-related websites, literature, and other sources that involve or include the Edo period. I also visited historical sites, such as Yakage, that were involved in the Edo period to better understand the culture and events of the Edo period. I conducted a survey related to the Edo period. My focus was on the sankin kotai system. In the survey, I asked the respondents such questions as, "Do you know any current aspect of Japanese culture related to the Edo period?" or "Do you know what sankin kotai is, and how this system affected the culture and economy of Japan?" The target of my survey were mostly Japanese and foreign students who had some prior knowledge of the history of Japan and Japanese people. But I expected that some people would know, and some people would not know about Japanese history.

It would be great to learn more about Japan's past and the hidden meanings of everything around me today. The work I accomplished was overall a good learning experience that deepened my understanding of the topic and further enhanced my interest in Japanese society and culture.

To start, the Edo period was known for many cultural and societal innovations. The licensed quarters are one of the innovations that came from the Edo period. Though the licensed quarters are not around in today's modern Japan, they still exist in different forms. During the Edo period the licensed quarters were cultural centers as they were the setting and source for arts, literature, theater, and music. The people hired in the licensed quarters went wherever they were demanded. This can be a direct correlation to today's nightlife. There are many places in Japan that have a more active nightlife than other parts or prefectures. Nightlife can be a big part of many cultures, including Japan where tourism is high, and places stay open for longer hours. While licensed quarters are not the biggest point in the Edo period, it still offers a lot of history and value. The licensed quarters also focused on talents and arts, which in today's Japanese society can be seen in schools. Schools have many clubs where people join and learn different skills, thus evolving the way people learn and develop talents.



Licensed Quarters



Language is also a big part of any culture. During the Edo period, language developed in an interesting way. There were many dialects at the time of the Edo period. For example, you have the Edo dialect which became the national language at that time. Dialects differed in a way that certain dialects would either drop syllables or the pronunciation would be different (Gerstle, 2000). These differences in dialect are still clear today in Japan. Dialect being developed has also increased the literacy of people in Japan. With this Joruri was developed. Joruri was a wonderful way to show how tastes changed throughout the Edo period (Gerstle, 2000). Joruri is the art of manipulating puppets with music as the background. Joruri included a dramatic narrative that was told by chanters. Joruri may not have had the biggest impact during the Edo period, but it shows a lot about what was happening during that time. The stories could have been passed down by generations. Stories though have a significant impact on culture and society. Stories tell us how people lived and the things they used to do during their time. This can be helpful in analyzing what has stayed throughout the years in culture and in society.

Another thing to note about stories is how they usually have repeating patterns. They have repeating patterns as people from modern times use the stories from the past as inspiration. They use this inspiration to fuel arts and literature or form opinions that others might view as correct. That is the beauty of art and literature ever evolving.

1. Sankin Kotai System

As we know, modern society and culture evolved from the past. Past experiences and history that stayed until this day. During the Edo period the government at the time developed in an interesting way. There were two levels of government during the Edo period, each with their own high degree of independence. One of these levels of government was called the Tokugawa shogunate. The Tokugawa shogunate handled administration of limited territory. There were many responsibilities that they oversaw. For example, they collected taxes, kept civil order, and so on. The Tokugawa shogunate had developed a system called the sankin kotai system. The sankin kotai system was a big part of the Edo period. Developed in the Edo period it was a system that some loved yet some disagreed with. The sankin kotai was also known as the alternate residence duty. Under the Tokugawa shogunate there were people called daimyo. Daimyo were under the Tokugawa government. The daimyo were required under the Tokugawa shogunate to live in Edo for a year. Most daimyo did not agree with this system because they had to leave their family behind and only bring members that were considered important. The daimyo were needed to stay in Edo for a year and then were able to go back to their home (Walk Japan, 2021).

The sankin kotai's system involved a lot of traveling. On the routes that developed due to the sankin kotai system, the emergence of trade routes also followed. Trade routes are a reliable source of income for the economy and even for culture and arts. This improved a lot of national commerce and the financial system during the Edo period. The developed trade routes also brought together people and their ideas, making it a splendid example of Japan's cultural unity.



Along the trade routes, cities had started to develop. One of these cities was Yakage in Okayama Prefecture. Yakage is one of the routes that developed during the Edo period due to the alternate residence duty. Yakage is a historical town where samurai stayed during the Edo period (Yakage, 2020). Today, the town is proud of its past, and they have many activities to show the history of Yakage. These activities include the Daimyo Gyoretsu parade.

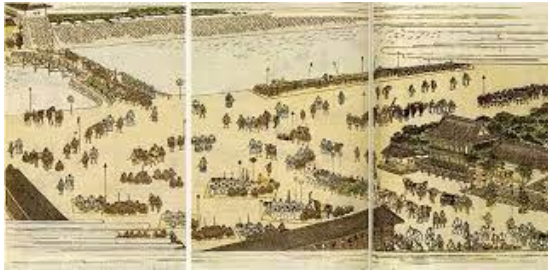


Yakage's Daimyo Gyoretsu

Daimyo Gyoretsu is a parade that is held in the historical town of Yakage. The Daimyo Gyoretsu parade is held every year on the second Sunday of November. The parade is described as a grand costumed parade, and it is said that it reenacts how the regional lords entered the town on their way to Edo. The regional lords would travel between their territory and the capital once every two years. There are about eighty people in the parade each year. These people include the regional lords, their retainers, handmaids, and so on to show power and dignity (Yakage, 2020).

Yakage is a notable example of living proof of the Edo period still existing to this day. Yakage can give us a glimpse of the Edo period that made it the town that it is today. Yakage is also where you can see the samurai accommodations and the samurai second accommodations, respectively named Yakage Honjin and Waki Honjin. Yakage is a wonderful place for youth or even older generations who may know about the Edo period to experience and learn.

Though the sankin kotai was made in 1635 there was a point in time during the years of 1722-1730 where the system was suspended (Frederic,2002). As said in the beginning the sankin kotai system was made so that the Tokugawa shogunate could have a better control over their daimyo making them weak and under the control of the shogunate. For the daimyo this was an event for them. The daimyo had to pay for everything just to live in their Yashiki, which is just another name for their residence in Edo (Frederic,2002). Though this was an expensive process, we also see that it brought lots of unity within Japan and peace to the people. It has helped with the national economy and has also contributed to the development of Edo, as well as the development of waystations and major roads.



Traveling to Edo.

With all the positives that the sankin kotai system has done for the Edo period the sankin kotai system was eliminated in the year 1862, when Japan started to approach a new era of modernization, forgetting about the rules and customs of feudal Japan.

2. Survey about the Sankin Kotai System

As part of the procedure, I conducted a survey about the sankin kotai system. To note, this survey was sent to a class that was learning about the sankin kotai system and history of Japan in general. The class consisted of Japanese and foreigners. What we can conclude from this is they may or may not have had prior knowledge of the sankin kotai system before enrolling into the class. I had several questions about people's knowledge of Japan, or their place of study's history which is here in Japan. To start I asked if the people doing the survey were Japanese or foreigners. Most who answered were of Japanese origin. The next questions all evaluated people's knowledge if they knew anything of the sankin Kotai system or not. When asked the question "Do you know what the sankin kotai system is and the effects of it on modern Japanese society?" Given that this survey was held online via a QR scan, I could not see their face when reacting to the question, but their answers gave them away. While most was confident in their answer, many were also wary. For this question specifically since I had already mentioned that I would be talking to foreign students who had prior knowledge of Japan's history, many of my answers were positive, yet most Japanese people do not know a lot of the history that has occurred in Japan, this can even be true for people outside of Japan. Foreigners may not know their own country's history but choose to study Japan's history making them more likely to know about Japanese history than Japanese people.

The next question asked was if anybody knew any routes or places that could have been affected by the sankin kotai system. Many people did not know, but there were a few mentions of Tokaido and Yakage. Here this is showing that either some did their research, in the past or recently. This just goes to show that some people are unaware of the history that surrounds us.

I then asked if anybody had noticed any similarities between the sankin kotai system and today's Japanese society. Majority of these answers were no. Yet that was to be expected. People are usually unaware where their history comes from, and that is why we need to research and find out that history for ourselves. The ability and readiness to understand our history in origins can further evolve



current situations. It is also important to know about your past because it can affect your future in a way that may even surprise you.

The next question was if they had known any material related to the sankin kotai system. This can include anything from books or even physical objects, if they were related to the Edo period. One of the examples that was received was a ship called Gozasen. The Gozasen was used by daimyo in Kyushu and Shikoku. This was interesting as this could have been involved in the routes that developed during the Edo period.

Lastly, I asked if the respondents knew anything about the sankin kotai system. This was the true test of their knowledge about the sankin kotai system. An answer that stood out to me the most was one that mentioned that the sankin kotai system was to prevent the daimyo from saving money during the Edo period. The answer also said that the daimyo's wife and children were to stay in Edo as hostages. They also mentioned that Tokugawa Iemitsu who was the third shogun of the Edo shogunate was the one who started this, and it was valid until the Edo period ended is what they thought. While the information I gathered went a little different from what this person has answered, it is a fitting example of how history changes in the eyes of those who are hearing it. This is also in general an interesting take because while books would say that the daimyo would only leave their family and kids, this person answered that the wife and kids were being held hostage. This also shows the differences in interpretation as well. There could be many interpretations in the books that many might view differently from each other. That is why it is also important to try and find correct facts as well, to dig deeper and uncover what made us the people we are today.

Conclusion

The known fact that history tends to repeat itself is known throughout the times. Yet we must ask ourselves, do we really know our history? Do we know the truth and reasoning behind certain events in time and what they did to our future? The answer is not an easy one to answer. It is all up to the person themselves to try and understand history wherever it may be. I believe with a deep understanding of our past, history, and even current events, we would be able to understand how people came to be. Many cultures and beliefs were instilled so long ago yet some people may not even realize that. A thorough understanding can lead to greater evolution of creating the future with our own hands.

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“The Warrior Who Surpasses Death”: The Lasting Legacy of Honda Tadakatsu

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Summary: 本多忠勝は 1548 年から 1610 年まで生きた勇敢な武士である。彼は徳川家康の信頼できる同盟者であり、厳しい戦いの中で家康を助けた。本多忠勝は、戦いの最中に一度も怪我をしなかったことから「死を超えた武士」と呼ばれた。戦いに長け、真の武士道精神を持っていた。徳川家康に忠誠を誓い、あらゆる戦いで家康を助ける強さを持っていた。こうした本多忠勝の徳川家に対する忠誠心と強さは彼の遺産でもあり、本多忠勝が未だ世界中の人々の関心を引き付け、彼らの憧れの的になっている理由でもある。

Introduction

Throughout the history of Japan, there have been thousands of notable samurai that made a name for themselves through their skill on the battlefield and their conduct off of it. These samurai’s names have gone down in history as the greatest warriors of Japan and are remembered and studied to this very day. What makes them so memorable? Was it their extreme skill on the battlefield as off of it, being unwaveringly loyal to their cause and doing whatever their master asked of them, even if it led them to an early grave? Or was it something else entirely? One of the many samurai that history remembers is Honda Tadakatsu, but his name stands out among the many due to his abilities on the battlefield. He earned himself the nickname “the warrior who surpasses death itself”, and in his lifetime he helped establish the Tokugawa Shogunate. Honda Tadakatsu’s legacy is vast, and yet many do not know who he is. What is the true extent of Honda Tadakatsu’s legacy, and how has it affected people today?

The Legacy of Honda Tadakatsu

Honda Tadakatsu was born in 1548 in Okazaki, Mikawa, in what is the modern-day Aichi prefecture. Not much is known about his early life other than the fact that he dedicated himself to serve Tokugawa Ieyasu, the third of the three “Great Unifiers” of Japan and the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate. He was said to have participated in his first battle at the age of 12 and by the age of 15, he was already achieving fame for his military exploits. By the time he reached the age of 19, he was chosen to be a *hatamoto sakiteyaku* of Ieyasu, meaning he was a direct retainer of his lord, and he lived near Ieyasu’s castle and performed as a hatamoto commander, leading others for Tokugawa Ieyasu.

Honda Tadakatsu’s legacy becomes more obvious later in his life as time and battles progress. Despite being one of Ieyasu’s most loyal retainers and participating in countless battles, he is said to never have received a single injury, earning himself the title “the warrior who surpasses death itself.” He also earned a number of other accolades. Along with a few



other of Tokugawa Ieyasu's most trusted and loyal retainers, he was named one of the *shitenno*, or the "Four Heavenly Guardians" of the Tokugawa clan. Oda Nobunaga, another notable warrior and the first of the "Great Unifiers," referred to Tadakatsu as a "samurai among samurai." Toyotomi Hideyoshi, a retainer to Oda Nobunaga and the second of the "Great Unifiers," called Tadakatsu "the best samurai of the east." Takeda Shingen said that the only things above Tokugawa Ieyasu were "his helmet and Honda Tadakatsu." Shingen was another samurai like Honda Tadakatsu with a well-known name and great influence in his region. Even Sakon Kasugi, a member of the Takeda clan, was said to have praised Honda Tadakatsu, claiming that he was too good of a samurai for a man like Tokugawa Ieyasu (Glenn, 2021: 178). Many people, friends, and enemies alike, praised Honda Tadakatsu for his prowess in battle and his conduct off of it.

Honda Tadakatsu was well-known for his skills, but he was also easily recognizable by his armor and weapon of choice. Honda Tadakatsu's armor was lightweight, made from raw leather that had been dried and reinforced with steel rods. Unlike most of his allies, whose armor was heavy and bulky, his armor was made to be lightweight while remaining protective. This lightweight armor was likely to allow him increased speed and mobility on the battlefield. Perhaps this is how he managed to participate in so many battles without receiving a single injury. The large deer antlers that adorned his helmet made it easy to spot him in a battle, though they were not real deer antlers—they were paper *mâché* copies. He wore the antlers to strike fear into the hearts of his opponents and to honor an memorable experience he had following a battle. The story goes that in 1560, following the Battle of Okehazama, where they defeated the Imagawa clan, Honda Tadakatsu was attempting to lead Tokugawa Ieyasu back to the castle, but due to recent rain, the rivers were full. When trying to find a way across, a stag appeared and showed Tadakatsu how to cross. Tadakatsu believed it to be a sign and adopted the antlers of the stag so he could continue to guide his lord. His spear was also known far and wide as the "dragonfly cutter," as it was said that the spear was so sharp it would split a dragonfly that landed on it in two (Glenn, 2021: 79,112,118).

Honda Tadakatsu was a highly effective samurai, but like most samurai of the time, he was unable to adapt to the new world order in Japan after the Battle of Sekigahara, the largest and most important battle of Japanese feudal history. He had grown very accustomed to the constant war and fighting of the Sengoku period, and the peace that came during the reign of Tokugawa left him with very little to do. He was given land in Otaki for his service to Tokugawa Ieyasu, and it was there that he built a castle where he spent the remainder of his days. A story goes that when woodcarving, Tadakatsu received his first wound in his life, a small cut on his hand. It is said that when he saw the blood, he was angry that his first wound was received in such a small and insignificant way, and he realized that his time had come. He died a few months later in 1610 (Glenn, 2021: 119).

Honda Tadakatsu was often referred to as one of the best samurai of the time, and it is easy to see why. His strength, his dedication to his lord, and his exploits make it clear why



people referred to him as the greatest of the samurai of the time. Honda Tadakatsu perfectly exemplified what it meant to be a samurai. The samurai had seven principles to live by, conceptualized as Bushido in the 19th century by Nitobe Inazo. These principles were righteousness, loyalty, honor, respect, honesty, courage, and consistency (Nitobe 2001). These principles are the basis for the samurai, and it is expected that every samurai follow them and live them throughout all their actions, something that Tadakatsu did.

Of the seven principles of Bushido, the ones that Tadakatsu exhibited the most are loyalty and courage. Like all samurai, Tadakatsu was loyal to his lord, but he never once wavered in that loyalty from when he was a young boy all the way to his death. He served Tokugawa Ieyasu through nearly every major battle up to the Tokugawa period. Many people's loyalties wavered throughout the tumultuous Sengoku period, but Tadakatsu was steadfast in his devotion to Ieyasu. His courage was also something many other samurai looked up to him for. This is shown best in his pursuit of Toyotomi Hideyoshi despite being severely outnumbered during the Komaki campaign. Tadakatsu was left at Komaki while Tokugawa Ieyasu went to Nagakute. While there, he saw Toyotomi Hideyoshi lead a large army in pursuit of Tokugawa. Tadakatsu rushed to intercept him, despite being outnumbered by 50 to 1, and Hideyoshi was so struck by Honda Tadakatsu's bravery that he ordered no harm come to him or his men, successfully buying time for Tokugawa to get away (Glenn 2021: 112). One of the other biggest principles of being a samurai is that samurai cannot fear death. Tadakatsu didn't fear death; death seemed to fear him as he escaped from every major battle without sustaining any injuries. These facts made Tadakatsu the ideal samurai of the time, a fact for which he was famous.

Honda Tadakatsu also showed the respect and righteousness expected of samurai. His dedication to Tokugawa Ieyasu proved his respect for the other man. He also had respect for others, creatures included. During the Battle of Sekigahara, when he was charging at enemy lines, a volley of arrows shot and killed his horse. In the midst of the battle raging around him, he took a moment to pray for his horse before continuing to fight (Glenn 2021: 118). Despite it posing a significant risk to him in such an important battle, he still paid the proper respects to his loyal animal companion. His righteousness is less obvious, but through his actions in battle and his loyalty to his lord, it's obvious that Honda Tadakatsu was a righteous man. The respect he showed to all on and off the battlefield proves it.

Consistency was also a big part of Honda Tadakatsu's legacy. There's nothing more consistent than participating in countless battles throughout your career and dodging a single injury the entire time. Consistency was seen in every part of his life: his training, his battles, his loyalty to Tokugawa Ieyasu. He was even consistent after peace had been established, having grown so accustomed to the constant battles of the Sengoku period that he struggled to adjust to the peace of Tokugawa's rule. His consistency made him a valuable asset in battle, but it also made him struggle when he was without battle, leaving him (and many other samurai) scrambling for purpose in a new world where the roles of the samurai and the ideals



of the Bushido were no longer needed (Glenn 2021: 118-119).

Survey and Analysis

Honda Tadakatsu is one of the more famous figures in Japanese history, with a name that is easily recognizable and a long list of accomplishments, but specific history is difficult to track down—especially if the researcher is not a native Japanese speaker. Sources about his early life are few and far between, and it can be difficult to collect information about anything other than the aid he provided to Tokugawa Ieyasu. Most of the resources in English are surface level, while the more in-depth information is written in high level Japanese. I was still interested in the topic, determined to learn more about Honda Tadakatsu and his legacy. My concern was, do young Japanese people really know about Honda Tadakatsu? Do they recognize his name? Do they know about his accomplishments, the people he fought alongside, and how well he reflects the title of samurai?

As a part of this project, to deepen my knowledge of the subject and learn about Japanese society more, I conducted a survey. The survey was given to ten Japanese people, all either college students or at higher levels of education. They were asked if they knew who Honda Tadakatsu was, if they recognized the names of Tokugawa Ieyasu, Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Sakai Ietsugu. They were then asked to name some of the traits of samurai that they thought were important, and then they were asked if they were interested in learning more about Honda Tadakatsu. The intentions of these questions was to gauge if Japanese students knew who Honda Tadakatsu was, and to compare how many knew of Honda Tadakatsu versus some of the other people Honda Tadakatsu regularly interacted with, starting with Tokugawa Ieyasu. They were asked about the traits of the samurai to see what traits they deemed most important for a samurai and to see if those traits could be easily linked to Honda Tadakatsu. Finally, they were asked about learning more about Honda Tadakatsu further to simply see if there was any interest in furthering their knowledge of the samurai, their history and culture.

When asked if they knew Honda Tadakatsu, five of the ten participants I asked said they knew him. However, when asked if they knew of Tokugawa Ieyasu, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, or Oda Nobunaga, all ten people said they knew of them. They were also asked about Sakai Ietsugu, another man who praised Honda Tadakatsu, but only two of the ten had heard of him. It's interesting to see that despite his fame, and arguably better skills on the battlefield, Honda Tadakatsu is not on the same level as other samurai. This may be in part owing to the fact that he is simply a samurai and not a lord or the unifier of Japan, but it could also be due to Honda Tadakatsu's rather modest living. He dedicated his life to the glory of Tokugawa Ieyasu, not to his own glory, so it makes sense as to why his name may not be on the same level as theirs.

Another question asked was the ideal traits of a samurai. I wanted to compare these ideals to traits exhibited by Honda Tadakatsu throughout his lifetime. Out of the ten responses gathered, five had to do with the Bushido ideals previously mentioned. The ideals submitted were loyalty, humility, and constantly striving for improvement, and the other two simply



mentioned Bushido. These are all traits that Honda Tadakatsu does exhibit, most especially the loyalty, as he dedicated his entire life to Tokugawa Ieyasu. He also greatly exhibited the ideals of Bushido, as discussed at length above. The other five responses had to do with military achievements, such as owning weapons, going out to fight, excelling in the martial arts, and being a part of a military caste. There was even one answer saying that a samurai was only a samurai if he had a topknot. These responses are not as much about the personality of the samurai, but his actions, which are also highly important. Honda Tadakatsu was a brave warrior who owned a strong spear, rode horses, and fought in many battles throughout his career. Most importantly, he was never injured in a single battle, proving his incredible skill in battle, which easily proves him as a greatly skilled samurai.

The final question asked of the Japanese participants in the survey was if they would want to learn more about Honda Tadakatsu, the “warrior who surpasses death itself”. Eight of the ten students said they would be interested in learning more, proving that the interest in his life still exists in many places. Some might wonder what the point of all of this is. What does the legacy of an old samurai have to do with the modern-day world? While it’s true that the results of Honda Tadakatsu’s actions have long since passed, it is his spirit and strength that persist into the modern day. His abilities as a samurai and the dedicated life he lived has captivated people throughout the modern day, making him a figure to look up to. As a part of my research, I decided to check what English speakers on the internet know or think of Honda Tadakatsu. In a comment left on a Youtube video titled, “Honda Tadakatsu: The Warrior Who Surpassed Death Itself (Japanese History Explained)” by The Legends of History, one user said, “Honda [Tadakatsu] is one of the most honorable and bravest Samurai to ever lived in history, His Unquestionable Loyalty to his lord, and those around him, his Sheer Brutally as a Warrior strikes Fear into the hearts of his enemies even gaining their respect for him as a warrior by heart, Honda Tadakasu is definitely one of the most [deleted by author] Samurai to ever lived during his time.” This sentiment is echoed by others in the comment section. Another, viewer, said, “The very fact that samurai were notorious headhunters makes this man’s reputation even more incredible. To go out of your way to make yourself as recognizable as possible, be on the frontlines, and never receive an injury? Baffles the mind.”

Honda Tadakatsu’s influence has also reached into the realm of modern media. For example, he appears in *Pokémon Conquest*, a Pokémon game about traveling the region and defeating other castles to unite it. The game includes many references to Japanese history, so it’s no surprise that such a well-known samurai makes an appearance as well. He also appears in *Samurai Warriors* as himself, under the service of Tokugawa Ieyasu. He appears in the *Sengoku Basara* series by game company Capcom, and in this game, he is referred to as “the strongest man in the warring states.” Such a strong samurai makes for an interesting character in any story, so it’s no surprise he’s made his way into a few as himself—a strong, capable samurai serving his lord, Tokugawa Ieyasu.

It is obvious that even hundreds of years later, Honda Tadakatsu has made an impact



on the minds of people all over the world. Strangers from all over the globe unite in their admiration for this strong samurai, using his actions as a guide for being more like him—reliable, strong, and influential. Honda Tadakatsu was the ideal samurai, using his strength to bring greater glory to his lord and protecting the people around him without fail. His legacy of strength, loyalty, and greatness lives on through the history books and the hearts of people whom he has touched.

Conclusion

While some may not recognize Honda Tadakatsu’s name, they will undoubtedly recognize what he achieved. He served Tokugawa Ieyasu his whole life, helping him win countless battles and establish the well-known Tokugawa Shogunate. His whole life, he lived out the values of a true samurai. He was unwaveringly loyal to Tokugawa Ieyasu, he fought with skill in countless battles without receiving a single scratch and retired in the peace of the reign of Tokugawa Ieyasu. He was a hero truly deserving of the famous title “samurai who surpasses death”. Some Japanese people may not recognize his name, but they can recognize his skills and the embodiment of the true Bushido spirit and the greatest traits of a samurai. His legacy of immense skill and the true samurai spirit has endured for the last several hundred years, ensuring that people all over the world can learn from him and what he has done. His strength and loyalty have inspired people to push themselves to greatness, and that is his true legacy—not what he has done for the world, but how his name and ideals live on in the hearts of many.

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Roses and Lilies: Representation of Lesbian relationships in Japanese Literature and Media

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Summary

メディア、特に文学は、その社会の見方を知るための優れた手段となり得る。どのようなメディアが制作され、誰に販売され、どのように受け入れられているかを調べることで、一般的な傾向や態度について多くを学ぶことができる。私の研究プロジェクトでは、日本社会がレズビアンとの関係をどのように見ているのか、また、文学の中で表現されている関係が日本のレズビアンとの関係を正確に表しているのかを探ります。まず、日本文学におけるレズビアンとの関係の様々な表現について研究する。レズビアンとの関係を取り上げた 3 つの文学作品を分析する予定です。次に、日本における LGBTQ/レズビアンとの関係に対する様々な見方について、アンケート調査とその後のフォーカス・グループを通して情報を収集する。アンケートとフォーカス・グループでは、参加者に LGBTQ の関係や日本文学における表現についての見解を尋ねる。この研究では、1900 年代から現代に至るまで、レズビアンとの関係とその主要なテーマを描いた日本の文学とメディアを観察し、分析する予定である。また、日本の若者の文学やメディアに対する現在の態度を解釈する予定である。この研究を通して、文学やメディアにおける関係の頻度と正確さを評価するつもりである。また、これらの関係性が日本の若者の LGBTQ 観にどの程度影響を与えているのかについても調査する予定である。

Media, specifically literature, can be an excellent way to find out a society's views. We can learn a lot about the general tendencies and attitudes by examining what media is allowed to be produced, who it is marketed to, and its reception. In my research project, I will explore how Japanese society views lesbian relationships and if the relationships represented in literature are an accurate representation of Japanese lesbian relationships. Firstly, I will study various representations of lesbian relationships in Japanese literature. I plan to analyze three pieces of literature that feature lesbian relationships. Then, I will collect information about various views of LGBTQ/Lesbian relationships in Japan through a survey and later a focus group. In the survey and the focus group, participants will be asked about their views on LGBTQ relationships and their representation in Japanese literature. In this research I plan to observe and analyse Japanese literature and media depicting lesbian relationships and its major themes from the 1900's to current day. I also plan to interpret the current attitude towards literature and media from Japanese young adults. Through this research I plan to evaluate the frequency and the accuracy of the relationships in literature and media. As well as how much these relationships influence the view of LGBTQ people for Japanese young adults.

Introduction



Recently, there has been an increase in activism for LGBTQ citizens in Japan. While there has been much progress, it needs to be researched how Japanese citizens feel about LGBTQ relationships and how it affects everyday life.

Media, specifically literature, can be an excellent way to find out a society's views. We can learn a lot about the general tendencies and attitudes by examining what media is allowed to be produced, who it is marketed to, and its reception. In my research project, I will explore how Japanese society views lesbian relationships and if the relationships represented in literature are an accurate representation of Japanese lesbian relationships. Firstly, I will study various representations of lesbian relationships in Japanese literature and media. Then, I will collect information about various views of LGBTQ/Lesbian relationships in Japan through a survey. In the survey, participants will be asked about their views on LGBTQ relationships and their representation in Japanese literature and media. With this research, I plan to help tell the stories of LGBTQ people in Japan. Since much of LGBTQ people are more secretive and hidden in Japan, I hope this essay helps add the discussion that LGBTQ people in Japan and deserve to have their stories told.

Background

Japan has a complicated history with the LGBTQ community and specifically, Lesbians. Much of the animosity towards LGBTQ people in western countries can be attributed to Abrahamic religions (Christianity, Islam, Judaism). But Shinto and Buddhism are the prominent religions in Japan. Buddhism does not outright condemn homosexual relationships. Buddhism condemns all sex, no matter the gender. Shinto also does not condemn homosexuality. There are many sects of Shinto. There are currently twelve government registered sects of Shinto. Because of this however, it can be hard to obtain a concrete answer on what Shinto thinks of homosexuality. But most sects and temples either are in support of the community or have shown indifference. If this is the case, why would some Japanese have a negative view of same sex relationships in the 21st century? And why would they exclude them from literary works and media? Well, the answer is complicated.

Same sex relationships were not a prohibited topic and were not viewed negatively for much of Japan's history. In fact, the samurai class had a culture of practicing same sex relationships upon themselves. This included older samurai engaging in a sexual relationship with younger samurai. This was seen as a way of educating the young men. As for women, since they are known to have freedom in choice of their partners for much of the early classical period, were economically independent, and were not in need of male companionship to ensure their livelihood, we may assume that the "freedom" allowed them to engage in romantic relationships with partners of any gender. However, this started to change after the introduction of Confucianist ideals. By the Edo period, in which Confucianism became the prevailing ideology, women lost their freedom both economically and in their private lives. During this time much of the population was literate. Many Japanese people attended schools and were taught to read. They were taught to read through Confucian text and primers. In these primers, "The

Confucian classics championed a submissive role for women, expecting them to yield to the demands of their natal families and in-laws.” (Ambros 2015, 102). For women specifically, they were taught to be of the house and in submission too her family and later her husband's family. Because of these texts, women's main objectives were to find a husband and be the best wife, mother, and daughter-in-law possible. That did not include having sexual relationships with women. In fact, “Women were told to avoid anger, harsh speech, arrogance, envy, and pride—supposedly innate to all women but most apparent in those who lack proper cultivation, such as the lower classes. Instead, women should cultivate virtues such as obedience, chastity, gentleness, and calmness.” as well as being taught to avoid anything that could lead to licentious behavior (Ambros 2015, 103). Lesbian relationships weren't even an option for women.

Although this was the view that was placed on women during the Edo period, it did not mean nothing was written about same sex relationships. On the contrary, “Instances of same-sex sexual acts between women are recorded in a variety of literary, artistic, and other sources, unlike sex between men such acts were not codified into a *dō* or "way" of loving. While male same-sex love developed a sophisticated vocabulary for discussing the various roles taken on by the male partners as well as the different contexts in which male same-sex love was practiced, love between women, although acknowledged, was not subject to similar elaboration and consequently there was little discussion of (or terminology for) women's same-sex love at this time.” (McLelland 2007, 2). So, during this time (1603-1867), women were not able to act freely, and discussion was not had about women sexuality. However, even though there was no open discussion, creatives did not stop creating works that focused on female sexuality. As McLelland also stated ““Women's same-sex love’ (*joshi dōseiai*) was a topic frequently discussed in the Japanese press from the early decades of the twentieth century.” (McLelland 2007, 1). There are many literary works that came out depicting women's same sex love. One famous one from around this era was *The Life of an Amorous Woman* by Ihara Saikaku. This story does not feature a lesbian relationship but does include scenes of women having sex with other women. However, it is important to mention that many of the works that included lesbians were written from the male perspective. This includes art. There are many works that were made to have men in a voyeur position. This trend would follow into the 20th and 21st century.



Nishikawa Sukenobu (1671–1750)

It was not until after World War II that we saw a push for equal representation of all relationships. In the 1920's the Class S genre starts to gain popularity. Class S is a relationship between two young



girls at a girls' school. During the 1920's many young girls were sent to boarding schools to gain education. These schools were primarily attended by upper middle class or high-class families. At these schools, "The patriarchal imperative for these girls to remain chaste and pure until (arranged) marriage upon graduation" meant that they were discouraged if not forbidden from socializing outside the school. The students were encouraged to form relationships with the other students. Thus, Class S relationships were formed. However, we should keep in mind that these relationships "were not expressions of affixed, innate, minority identity, but a transitory stage all girls passed through on the way to (heterosexual) adulthood." (Shamoon 2021, 28). The relationship formed was seen as a temporary thing, meant for preparing girls for their heterosexual relationships waiting for them outside of the school.

These relationships were then depicted in various Shoja magazines across Japan. One famous work that is in the Class S genre is *Hana Monogatari* by Yoshiya Nobuko. Who was lesbian writer who wrote specially in the Class S genre and was also an avid supporter for lesbian feminist but never joined an organization for reasons I will describe later. The relationships depicted were not supposed to be accurate depictions of lesbian relationships. They were still considered hentai and therefore often had sex acts depicted and were meant for heterosexual men. Most of the content of the time was written from the voyeur perspective of men. But also, the genre often portrayed the girls after they have left school, as having a platonic relationship. Many believe that it is literary works in the Class S genre that influenced the way that Japanese young girls have platonic relationships.

By the 1970's, after the introduction of the feminist movement or *Uman Ribu* (women's liberation) in Japan, we see more of a push for lesbian representation in media. This push is rather small however, because much of the feminist movement in Japan excluded lesbians. As explained in the book *Rethinking Japanese Feminism*, "Anecdotal evidence as well as the scarce references to lesbian experiences in published *ribu* discourse makes it clear that the *ribu* sphere was, on the whole, not a welcoming space for lesbian-identified women—nor for women merely considering the possibility of romantic or sexual relationships with other women." (Bullock 2018). Love for women was still seen as a carnal thing and made many heterosexual feminists uncomfortable. There are dozens of stories from Japanese lesbian feminist talking about how they were mistreated and ostracized from the movement all together. Because of this though, lesbian organizations started to form such as the *Wakakusa no Kai* (Young Grass Club).

Current views of LGBTQ relationships are mixed. Over 70% of Japan's population support same-sex relationships. However, the conservative side of Japan is against same sex- relationships and has been actively opposing the movement for the legalization of same-sex unions. Article 24 of the Japanese constitution, which often becomes the debate over legalization, states: "Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes, and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis" (The Constitution of Japan, 1947, Art. 24). The



conservatives use this article of the constitution to state that same-sex marriage should not be legalized. The progressive side believes that this article was to ensure that there were no more forced marriages, that the article is outdated and should not be used to limit human rights. While many legal scholars are still fighting over its interpretation, cities and municipalities have taken it upon themselves to give at least some protection to same-sex unions. These practices put in place by Shibuya Ward in Tokyo in 2014 to issue partnership certificates to same-sex couples rapidly spread across Japan, reaching 4,186 by December 31st, 2022.

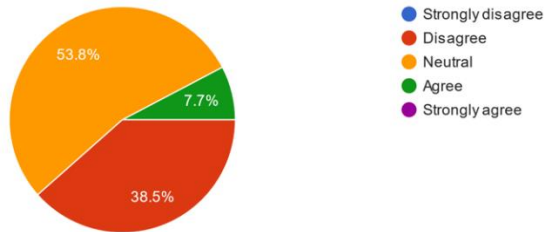
Methodology

The location the research was conducted was Okayama University, Okayama city, Japan. Okayama is a prefecture in the Chugoku region of Japan. The population chosen was the student population at Okayama University who could speak English. There is a mixture of Japanese students and international students living in Japan at the time of the survey. I used judgement sampling and convenience sampling to find respondents for the survey. I decided on convenience sampling as well as snowball sampling because of the nature of the topic. Speaking about LGBTQ people in Japan is still often times considered a taboo. For this reason, if the people who I already knew chose people to share the survey with who they believed would be comfortable with it, it made for the best and safest outcome. For the research itself, I used a structured, self-administered, online interview (CASI). I created an online questionnaire to collect responses. In the survey, demographic questions were asked as well as questions about respondents view of various topics corresponding to a LIKERT scale. The survey was also completely anonymous. I used this because all respondents would get the same questions and there would be no worry about interviewer bias or response effects, based on features of the interviewer. As Bernard states, “In self-administered interviews, people aren’t trying to impress anyone, and anonymity provides a sense of security, which produces more reports of things like premarital sexual experiences, constipation, arrest records, alcohol dependency, interpersonal violence, and so on.” (Bernard 2011, 497j). There was also an option for respondents to leave their thoughts about the questions and to expand further on their ideas. I will discuss the answers in the following section.

Discussion

The results of the survey revealed that respondents believed that Japan has an indifferent view on LGBTQ relationships but has a more negative view of lesbians specifically. In the survey, I asked questions about the broader LGBTQ community because I theorized that the view on lesbians specifically would be different from the general population. From this survey, my theory was correct. One of the respondents commented that Japan is still a majority patriarchal society. Where women are often still seen as second-class citizens. This statement is backed by multiple sources of data and anecdotal evidence. That is why I decided to split the questions into two parts. There were multiple questions in this format, but the following question is the one that holds the most weight.

LGBTQ relationships are accepted in Japan
13 responses



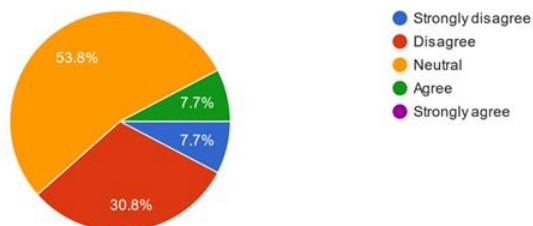
Here is what one of the respondents had to say about this question...

“I think people don’t not reject LGBTQ relationships, but LGBTQ rights are not respected in the social system. I cannot say good or bad. I think social system is delaying.”

This directly correlates to what many data sources have stated. Since the Meiji period, LGBTQ people started to be demonized more than ever before in Japanese history. With the influence of Western culture and media. The amount of demonized has decreased but, it is still very present in 21st century Japan.

I then asked a question about lesbians specifically because I expected a slightly different response than the prior question.

Lesbian relationships are accepted in Japan
13 responses



Here is what one of the respondents had to say about this question...

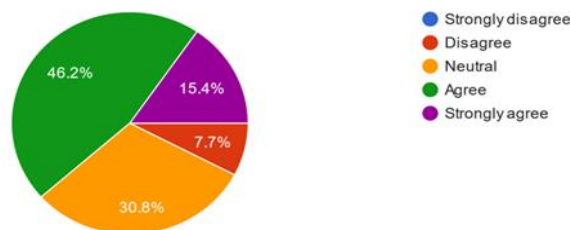
“Especially, I think young people accept Lesbian relationships. However, my friend (she is a Lesbian) said that “I worried about my friends think I love all girls if I come out,” so I think some Lesbians think they are not accepted/understood by other people.”

This statement caught my attention because it echoes what Bullock stated in her research on lesbians and feminism in Japan. From my research, it seems that most women in Japan who like other women have this experience. This could also be a contributing factor as to why much of lesbian culture is

more secretive or hidden. Even in literature and media, it seems that when women express their interest in one another, it is often done in private. One manga that was popular in 2014, Bloom into you by Nio Nakatani, shows this well. The story is about two young girls having an interest in each other and coming to terms with their sexuality. In almost all the scenes where the two are affectionate, it is done in private, away from others. There is even a male character who acts as a voyeur towards the two girls. Keeping the theme from the medieval era of lesbian activity for the amusement of men. Women have an easier time showing affection towards each other since in Japan, “skinship” is common among women friendships. But being affectionate to the point where it is obvious that the couple is in fact a couple, is rare to see in Japan.

I then asked questions about media and literature. Most of the informants said that they did not read, however, when I asked about general media with lesbian, I received the following result.

I have seen media with lesbian relationships depicted
13 responses



Here is what one of the respondents had to say about this question...

“Lesbian representation in Japan is quite scarce. Yaoi and Yuri both exist, but the former is much more popular and has a much more extensive catalogue.”

“I have seen media about sexual minorities, but I have not seen media with lesbian relations. There are no special reasons.”

“It's quite common to see lesbian media in the West.”

Japanese media rarely contains lesbians. That can be due to several reasons but, something that I have discussed with respondents is while characters might not be explicitly described as lesbian, many believe that there are characters that are coded to be lesbian. The example that was given to me was the American cartoon Adventure Time and the relationship between two characters. The series did not explicitly describe them as lesbians during the original show. However, throughout the show, based on the behaviors that they display towards each other and one of the ending scenes of the show, it could be inferred that the characters were either lesbians or attracted to each other. But many of the respondents could not give examples of when they have seen lesbians in media or in literature. I was



told by respondents however, that many of them remember seeing some representation in manga and webcomics. Webcomics are like manga, but they are online and often time include color, compared to the black and white look of manga. I felt that this was important because while most webcomics are made in either America or Korea, it shows that young people are still being shown LGBTQ culture, even if it is not from their country.

These responses are what was expected. Much of lesbian culture is hidden and not shown publicly for the safety of the community. Across the world, LGBTQ people face discrimination and often violence from their communities. Japan is not excluded from this. Japan is still a collectivist country. This means that people are taught to fit in and to shun those who don't. LGBTQ people are considered to not fit and because of this, often experience violence. The Outright International organization conducted research in five Asian countries about violence that lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people face in Asia. Japan was one of the countries studied. They found that "Some LBT individuals believed that reverting to heterosexual or cisgender identities would relieve their suffering from discrimination and stigmatization based on non-conforming sexual orientation or gender identity. "Corrective" rape and threats of "corrective" rape in Asia did appear in the research." (Outright International, 2023, 34). This idea that Japanese LGBTQ can be fixed has caused many of them to be mentally and sexually abused. Outright International found that Japan was one of the worse countries where "corrective" rape happens. Because of this, many people have decided to hide who they are for the safety of themselves and their loved ones. Especially lesbians since Japan is still patriarchal and misogynistic.

As well as people getting mistreated by their families and communities because of their sexuality. There is manga that came out in 2018 titled *I married my best friend to shut up my parents* by Kodama Naoko. This story details a woman who is nearing the "unmarriageable" age in Japan (around age 28). Keep in mind that this is a stereotype and does not accurately reflect how marriage is done in Japan today. However, because of this stereotype, the woman's mother has been pressuring the woman to get married. To try to get her parents to leave the topic alone, the woman and her childhood best friend (who is also a woman) decide to apply for a partnership certificate in their prefecture. After the woman's mother finds out, she comes to the house to abuse the woman verbally and physically before disowning her. Sadly, this is a common experience among LGBTQ youth in Japan.

I also had the opportunity to visit the gay district in Osaka, known as Doyamacho. Even in this district, there was nothing catering to lesbians specifically and not many of the izakaya that lined the walls openly made it known that they are a safe space for LGBTQ people. As one of the respondents stated, there is a lot of representation for lesbians in western media. This could be due to various reasons, but one definite reason is because of the rise of feminism. It is my theory that once feminism starts to move forward more, and lesbians are included more, there will be more media containing lesbians. However, more research needs to be done on this topic for more concrete conclusions.



Conclusion

Some may ask why research like this is needed. As the world expands ideas, as people meet people different from themselves, and as we as humans progress, there needs to be tolerance for all peoples. The countries in the G7 would agree with this statement. Japan is the only country in the G7 that does not have federal protections for Japanese citizens who are a part of the LGBTQ community.

In this research, I was able to present the history of Japan and the LGBTQ community. From adamant acceptance to shunning and violence from people who do not understand. Where many tropes that are prevalent in media that contains lesbians and their origins. Like men being in a voyeuristic position when it came to depictions of women's same sex love. To Class S coming from the girls' schools that were attended by wealthy families. I also describe what the youth of Japan thinks of the LGBTQ community and lesbians. Much of Japan in 2023 are accepting of LGBTQ people and the overwhelming majority seems to be young Japanese people. It seems that young people will be instrumental to the fight for LGBTQ people and lesbians to be completely accepted in Japan.

However, more research needs to be done and on a broader scale. The next steps for this research would be speaking to young people who do not have a high English language level. I believe that there is more data available in that population. This research, however, is a good start. As more research comes out and as LGBTQ people tell their stories, views start to shift. I hope through this project, I can help others tell their stories so they can fight for their rights. As well as starting research projects that can be developed further. So that people in Japan can, as one of the respondents stated, be who they are.

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Recognition of the rights of the Ainu Indigenous

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Abstract:

この研究論文では、日本のアイヌ先住民の歴史的背景と現状について調査しています。日本政府の政策、植民地化の影響、およびその後のアイヌ文化とアイデンティティの抑圧にも深く掘り下げています。研究方法論は、グラウンデッド・セオリーと帰納的推論を活用し、ウポポイ博物館からのデータ収集と専門家へのインタビューを組み合わせています。この論文は、国連の先住民権利宣言に則り、先住民の権利を認識し保護する重要性を強調しています。

This research paper examines the historical background and current situation of the Ainu indigenous people in Japan. It delves into the Japanese government's policies, the impact of colonialization, and the subsequent repression of Ainu culture and identity. The research methodology utilizes grounded theory and inductive reasoning, incorporating data collection from the Upopoy museum and expert interviews. The paper highlights the importance of recognizing and safeguarding the rights of indigenous peoples in line with the United Nations' declaration on indigenous rights.

Last year, through a course at the University of Hannover in Germany, I had the opportunity to participate in the session of Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) congress in the United Nation (UN) in Switzerland. One of the moments that impacted me was listening to the grievances of the Ainu people. As the speaker addressed the audience, the representative of the Japanese government entered the immense hall. Infuriated, the speaker stormed out to confront and demand his departure. The group accompanying the Ainu representative was documenting the incident as part of a documentary project.

Indigenous peoples worldwide have been historically oppressed, marginalized, and exploited, and their rights as indigenous communities have been violated (Amnesty international). Japan, despite having implemented repressive and aggressive policies against indigenous groups, there are currently two communities that recognize themselves as indigenous in the Japanese territory, the Ainu and the Okinawans, live on the northernmost and southernmost islands (International Work Group for



Indigenous

Affairs,

IWGIA)

In 2007, the United Nations (UN) issued a statement to protect the rights of indigenous peoples, and 144 states have adopted this declaration. This demand: “It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples of the world” (UN declaration) Japan was not an exception in adopting these measures; however, what is the current political situation of the Ainu indigenous people regarding the state recognition?

This research addresses a brief historical compilation of Ainu community and it analyzes their current situation, delving into the state recognition of their culture, tradition, language, territory, self-determination, and current way of life.

The methodology employed in this research study incorporates grounded theory and the principal method of inductive reasoning. Among the direct observation at the Upopoy museum in the town of Shiraoi, Hokkaido. And the conducting of expert interviews, with Professor Hiroshi Maruyama from The Center for Environmental and Minority Policy Studies (CEMiPoS)

Ainu’s Indigenous Status during the Meiji government and policy:

During the 15th century, the Japanese people migrated to various territories inhabited by Ainu groups to engage in trade. However, this led to conflicts and numerous battles between 1457 and 1789. Following the Japanese victory in the Battle of Kunasiri-Menasi in 1789, the Ainu communities were conquered, and their territories were annexed to Japan. The modernization of Japan under the Meiji government (1868-1889) brought about a strong sense of nationalism (Jozuka, 2019) and the idea of Japan as a homogeneous nation (Maruyama, 2021).

Since 1869, the Japanese government had formalized its colonial policy and designated the Ainu territory as Hokkaido. Subsequently, the central colonial office issued ordinances to justify colonization, which significantly affected Ainu communities. This culminated in the enactment of the "Law for the Protection of Former Aborigines" in 1899, prompting many families to shift from their traditional livelihoods to agriculture in order to protect themselves from the new law (Mauryama & Charbonneau, 2021, p. 51).

The introduction of the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act led to increased repression and exclusion of the Ainu language, culture, and traditions. The primary objective of this act was to eliminate the indigenous identity of the Ainu people and forcibly assimilate those identified as Ainu into Japanese culture (Charbonneau and Maruyama, 2019). As Lewallen (2016, p. 14) highlights, the adoption of Darwinist theories in academic circles in Japan in 1884 prompted politicians to advocate



for the implementation of eugenics. This aimed to ensure a population deemed entirely healthy within the construction of a nation-empire and resulted in the implementation of the "National Eugenics Law" in 1940. This law prescribed measures of compulsory sterilization for select populations, particularly handicapped individuals and their descendants, within the imperial territories (Robertson, 2002, p. 194).

Officials from Hokkaido prefecture concluded that the "Law for the Protection of Former Aborigines," which intended to integrate Ainu into modern Japanese life through educational and agricultural reforms, did not yield the expected short-term results as envisioned by the imperial authorities. Consequently, they advocated for biological assimilation or assimilation through intermarriage (Lewallen, 2016, p. 65).

Currently situation since 1995, local and national representation :

Indigenous communities lack their own territory, autonomy, and self-determination. Historically, they have fallen victim to settler colonialization policies that have stripped them of their places of refuge and habitation. These policies include the acquisition of lands through manipulative practices. Since indigenous lands are held individually rather than collectively, it becomes easier for the state or private companies to purchase individual parcels from each community member. Therefore, it is crucial to defend and advocate for collective rights, such as legal recognition of their indigenous identity.

In the case of companies like the electrification company or the museum, their approach is to employ the indigenous population as wage workers, disregarding their traditional practices, independence, and autonomy. This leads to economic dependence on wages, pulling them away from their traditional work in agriculture and fishing.

At the international level, several organizations recognize the rights of indigenous peoples, a demand that the

Ainu communities also seek in Japan. However, the Japanese government has not legally recognized these

rights. Faced with the lack of governmental cooperation, the Ainu communities have had to turn to international bodies like the United Nations in Geneva and New York to assert their cases.

Among the initial demands of the Ainu communities are the right to fish and the repatriation of their ancestors' remains. The government has refused to accept these requests and has filed lawsuits against Ainu individuals who fish for salmon in rivers, which is only permitted for ritual purposes. According to the authors Zaman, Charbonneau, and Maruyama (2022) more than 1,600 Ainu human remains



have been unearthed, gathered, and stored in various research institutions throughout Japan, with some also present in international collections. Starting from the 1980s, Ainu activists have been engaged in legal struggles to reclaim these ancestral remains and cultural artifacts that were excavated alongside them. Furthermore, despite requests from various organizations for the government to return the remains of their ancestors and allow dignified burials following Ainu traditions in their sacred territories, the state has chosen to store them in The Memorial Hall near the Uppopoi museum. Some organizations argue that this was done to turn it into a tourist attraction complementing the museum.

To date, there has been only one Ainu parliamentarian, Shigeru Kayano, who represented the community in the national congress from 1994 to 1998. This political representation is an important example of the recognition of the Ainu community in the governmental sphere, but it has been insufficient to fully address their needs and rights as an indigenous people.

The Ainu Policy Promotion Act of 2019

Recognizes the Ainu people as an indigenous community that has historically inhabited the northern of the Japanese, particularly in Hokkaido. In base on the description of the Uppopy museum homepage the Act aims to promote various measures: including regional development, industrial growth, tourism promotion, welfare improvements, and cultural preservation, catering to the needs of the Ainu people. It also includes new subsidies to support projects implemented by municipalities and provisions for the protection and promotion of their traditional culture, such as harvesting forest products and salmon from state-owned forests and freshwater surfaces.

Critics such from the NGO: The Centre for Environmental and Minority Policy Studies (CEMiPoS) argue that the Act, though seen as a step forward by some, perpetuates colonial domination and exploitation of the Ainu community by the Japanese state. They highlight two critical dimensions of this stance. Firstly, the policy's language erroneously combines indigeneity with ethnicity, failing to fully recognize the Ainu as Indigenous peoples entitled to self-determination and autonomy. Secondly, the Act obstructs the Ainu's ability to develop their culture on their terms and infringes upon international agreements Japan has endorsed, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

Additionally, there are concerns that the Ainu's recognition might be a facade used to exploit them for economic gain, especially in preparation for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Projects like the construction of an Ainu cultural theme park in Shiraoi have raised questions about how Japan reconciles its colonial past with the Ainu while simultaneously exploiting their cultural heritage for tourist revenue. Furthermore, Ainu representation in the drafting process of the policy has been minimal, with the two

primary advisory councils responsible for developing the Act having only a minority of Ainu members. This lack of representation compromises the Ainu's self-determination and calls into question the genuine intentions behind the policy's enactment.

Analyze of Museum Uppoy :

I had the opportunity to visit the Upopoy museum to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Ainu communities, their history, cosmologies, and current way of life. From my perspective, the museum provides a panoramic view of Ainu history. It is divided into three parts; the main hall offers a historical tour,

highlighting prominent Ainu writers and exploring their historical living locations. A significant portion of the exhibition is dedicated to their customs, daily life, and lifestyle. However, I argue that this representation is misleading and still presents the Japanese voice as dominant in the specific depiction of the Ainu and their history.

The museum also offers various workshops and activities for tourists to participate in. During my visit to the Upopoy museum, I had the opportunity to delve deeper into some of the Ainu traditions. Among the workshops offered. I participated in the performance to play a musical instrument, engaging in archery, and witnessing one of the traditional rituals, particularly the rain ritual. Unfortunately, all activities and explanations were conducted in Japanese, with no translation available.

Finally, the museum offers The Memorial Hall, where the remains of Ainu ancestors are deposited. For some Ainu and activists, this aspect of the museum represents the most problematic part, as they see it as a concrete violation of Ainu dignity.

For activists and Ainu citizens like Kimura, Upopoy is merely the materialization of empty, platitudinal measures taken to participate in a discourse around indigeneity for the sake of political grift, while ignoring the issues and inequalities that persist for Indigenous individuals and communities.

According to the authors Zaman, Charbonneau, and Maruyama (2022), in the 1997 Act, Ainu culture was considered as an aspect of Japanese history that should be preserved, disregarding the fact that they are elements of the lives of autonomous individuals. Additionally, it was also perceived as





intriguingly "exotic." These included elements of Ainu life such as dance, song, and craftsmanship, which were recognized and protected as part of their "culture." Consequently, this "protection" became intertwined with commercialization, as the distinct cultural attributes of the Ainu were marketed and commodified within the tourist industry of Hokkaido. It is evident that since the enactment of the 1997 Act, the demands raised by Ainu communities have been disregarded. By establishing this museum, the Japanese government seems to distance itself from recognizing the rights of the community as an autonomous entity and their right to self-determination, contrary to what has been stipulated by various international organizations such as the UN. While it is given a cultural connotation, it appears that the focus is not on preserving their traditions and political rights.

Despite the above, relevant questions arise regarding the purpose of the museum. Was it created with the intention of promoting the integration and gathering of Ainu communities? In other words, does it provide a space where they can meet, organize, and offer internal workshops to preserve their culture? Or does the museum represent an exhibition of their culture primarily directed towards tourists, without a genuine interest in strengthening intercommunity ties?

Interview with the professor Hiroshi Maruyama:

In retrospect, in 2007, Japan accepted the recommendations made by the United Nations in the General Assembly, which urged states to recognize the rights of indigenous peoples and implement public policies for their conservation. The following year, the annual meeting of the world's richest countries, the G8, took place in Hokkaido. Massive demonstrations occurred there, and one of the protesters' demands was the recognition of the Ainu as an indigenous people. Subsequently, the government decided to initiate a dialogue on the

future of the Ainu, leading to the presentation of a concept for Ainu policy. This final report was published in 2009. Nevertheless, questions remain about the composition of the committee and how they arrived at the conclusions presented in the final report.

The committee was composed of 8 individuals, and its objective was to hold monthly meetings. The members were: Ando Nisuke, Director of the Kyoto Human Rights Research Institute; Kato Tadashi, Director of the Ainu Association of Hokkaido; Sasaki Toshikazu, Professor of the National Museum of Ethnology; Sato Koji, Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University; Takahashi Harumi, Governor of Hokkaido; Tsunemoto Teruki, Chief of the Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies of Hokkaido University; Toyama Atsuko, Director of the New National Theatre Foundation, and Yamauchi Masayuki, Professor of Tokyo University. Mr. Kato was the sole representative of Ainu people. There is an evident overrepresentation of certain sectors in the committee, such as academic groups, while a lack of direct representation of Ainu communities is noticeable. There is only one person who

identifies as Ainu in the group, making them a minority in decisions about the future of their own communities.

The agreements reached and the measures to be implemented after the publication of the Final Report (July 2009) include:

(a) promotion of public understanding (education and awareness); and (b) promotion of measures for Ainu culture in a broader sense (development of the "symbolic space for ethnic harmony," research promotion, Ainu cultural promotion, including the Ainu language, promotion of land and resource use, business promotion, and improvement of living conditions). Furthermore, (c) the national government should establish an organizational framework to implement these measures.



Among the conclusions of this dialogue is the construction of a space for ethnic harmony, which translates into the creation of the Upopoy museum ten years later, with the intention of promoting Ainu culture.

The director of the Ainu Association of Hokkaido agrees with this construction, as he argues that it will generate more job opportunities for young Ainu.

However, for Professor Maruyana, the creation of the museum represents an insufficient measure as it does not recognize their political and collective rights, as demanded by different international organizations, including the UNDRIP, the International Covenant on Civil Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR), and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), and the right to prior consultation as established in the ILO Convention No. 169 of 1989.

The Ainu people continue to lack their own autonomy, collective territory, protected areas, and social and political organization where their decisions as a people have an impact on local and/or national policies. On the contrary, the cultural assimilation policies implemented by the Japanese government over the years have had a devastating impact, leading to the near disappearance of their identity as a distinct people. As a consequence, those who identify as Ainu now live their daily lives as Japanese citizens, with limited access to practice their language or traditions.

In conclusion, Professor Marayuna emphasizes that the creation and implementation of a new Ainu policy should involve more parts of the community and should be based on equal treatment, recognizing the Ainu



people as an indigenous nation. This approach would create dialogues from a nation-to-nation sovereignty perspective

Conclusion:

The Ainu indigenous people in Japan have faced historical repression and assimilation, as their rights have been systematically violated. Despite Japan's adoption of the UN declaration on indigenous rights, the current recognition and protection of Ainu rights remain insufficient. This research underscores the significance of acknowledging and safeguarding indigenous rights, particularly in the context of the Ainu community, and advocates for the fulfillment of their rights to culture, self-determination, and land.

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Statement of the social pressure in Japanese society

日本社会における社会的圧力

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この EPOK のリサーチ・プロジェクトで、私は日本における同調圧力に注目する。研究を通して、その起源と現在の人々への影響を説明し、なぜこのような大きな社会的圧力があるのかを理解したいと思います。この研究の目的は、道徳が何らかの形で世代から世代へと受け継がれていくこと、そしてその起源は間違いなく明治時代にあることを実証することである。

Introduction

Japan is renowned for being one of the countries where social pressure is most keenly felt in the world. Whether from an indigenous or endogenous point of view, it is presented as one of the dominant factors in societal problems and phenomena such as *Hikikomori*, a state of living permanently confined to one's home, due to a variety of factors and causes. This social pressure necessarily has its origins in the morals of the past, and like the arts and techniques, it too is passed down from generation to generation. However, morality includes morals and traditions, which implies that there is an effort on the part of the community to protect this transmission. Of course, it must be emphasized that morality in the city (i.e. Tokyo) is not transmitted in the same way as in a provincial town, or even in the countryside.

Methodology

The methodology applied to this work was very laborious. Firstly, the original subject was to be exclusively about moral education during the Meiji era. However, it was impossible to explain such a complex subject in just a few pages, so I had to redirect the research towards questions more relevant to present-day Japanese society. Indeed, as a Japanese studies student myself, I have been able to study some of Japan's sociological problems and phenomena in depth and from different angles. This is why



I chose to combine the teaching of morality in schools during the Meiji era with morality today. However, this type of subject cannot really be covered without listening to the voice of the natives and adopting their point of view. In other words, to make the connection between Meiji morality and today's morality, I would necessarily have had to conduct a survey. Thus, I set up a questionnaire and the analysis of my topic was based on discussions with a number of people from different generations, fields and working environments. But as the subject has evolved in the meantime, the answers to the survey turned out to be only partly relevant. The first seven questions were taken from the imperial education law promulgated in 1890, but a translation into modern language was necessary. Most of the people who provided answers regularly visit the L-café, a space in Okayama University dedicated to connected international and Japanese students. The last two people don't live in Okayama but work in the research field, so I thought their perspective would be interesting while shining a lot of light on the topic.

Transmission of the precession

a. The moral transmission

In terms of the transmission of morality, it is necessary to talk about one of the major eras when teaching morals, both in schools at home, was approaching its peak. This happened to be during the Meiji era (1868-1912). The importance of this era in the transmission of morals lies in Japan's relationship with the West at the time of its opening (*Sakoku*). The Meiji model followed European countries as a reference when it came to moral education, while the authorities embarked on an extensive propaganda campaign to promote and establish the power of the Imperial House at the center of Japanese civilization. As such, to cement this attestation of power and leadership, the government wrote two Imperial Rescripts, one being for children at school (*Kyoiku Chokugo*), and the other for the military (*Gunjin Chokuyu*). In this way, the origins of the modern social pressure known to the Japanese civilization could be traced back to these two imperial texts. On one hand, the Imperial Rescript on Education aimed at teaching doctrines, while on the other hand, the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors would be used to put those doctrines into practice. The doctrines covered included hierarchical respect and filial piety, honor, devotion and other traditional ideals derived from Confucianism. The emblematic consequence of the latter was the creation of the Special Attack Units, otherwise known as Kamikazes (1944), a combination of social pressure (to die with honor) and military/governmental pressure (respect and obedience to superiors and devotion to the emperor). Following Japan's defeat, the education system was completely overhauled in line with the directives of the new Diet. It took more than a decade before the teaching of morality, which had been forbidden at the time, was reinstated in schools. Its content was oriented towards a mainly secular morality in



which schoolchildren learned the notion of belonging (religious, national, etc.). Today, moral education focuses on an entirely different subject. That is to say, since 2014/2015, to alleviate the problem of the very high number of suicidal children who were victims to school bullying, the government has decided to intensify civic and moral education. From there on, children would learn what it meant to live in a community and society, as well as other themes highlighting the relationship with life in general.

b. Political and Social issue

Social pressure covers an extensive range of circumstances, so the focus in this paper will be limited to a few major areas. Firstly, as stated in the introduction, morality is in essence a societal phenomenon which, depending on the era and geopolitical context, oscillates between either political control (propaganda) or social control. Indeed, political involvement in a given area is usually interpreted as some form of control being enforced. In this regard, the Meiji period demarcates itself from other periods through its use of what would today be referred to as "propaganda", mainly in the school system. Because who better than a child could absorb any kind of ideology without ever (or rarely) questioning the people who teach it? Thus, it was in 1890, when the Imperial Rescript on Education was promulgated, that moral education took a decisive turn in Japan. It became linked to training a youth driven by a sense of patriotism, nationalism and colonialism. In other words, it was a common identity that the government wanted to instill in the Japanese minds from a young age. Interestingly enough, another peculiarity of this political movement, which is almost a direct consequence of it, is that people would completely adopt those doctrines and control themselves to fit in, without the government actively intervening in their daily lives. This regulation of wanting and/or having to conform to social and state norms was an obstacle to individual freedom. The state's policy of control was therefore not restricted to a theoretical concept but had successfully taken root in people's minds and become an integral part of their social mores.

Secondly, social pressure, derived from morality, cannot be transmitted in the same way as an object or knowledge. It takes the form of an invisible and discreet inheritance, voluntarily or involuntarily transmitted. It is not instituted, yet it is clearly present. While living in Japan, by rubbing shoulders with locals, and paying a little attention and observing interactions and reactions in details, one can easily notice a peculiar characteristic, that under the Western eyes can be likened to self-oppression. For example, to many foreigners, it feels as if a majority of Japanese people put conscious and unconscious efforts in making sure they do not stand out. An example of conscious effort personally witnessed at Okayama University was some students dyeing their hair back to black before starting their job search. Meanwhile, for unconscious efforts, the natural adherence to beauty standards,



especially maintaining a pale complexion for women even in the summer, or people striving for thinness by exercising (while in the West, the concept of body positivity is all the rage), is another example.

Finally, we can then divide the environments in which social pressure mostly dominates people's behaviors into two categories. The first one pertains to the school environment, and the second one is the workplace. Indeed, even today in Japan, the notion of hierarchy is taught from elementary school onwards, through the *Sempai* system, which is in line with the concept of respect for elders. In the same way, when a teacher gives a lesson, his or her word is absolute and must not be questioned. In the same line, if a student wants to get into Japan's top-ranked schools, he or she must achieve the best possible results at the national entrance exam. This is an additional source of pressure that is established as early as elementary school. Other honorable mentions are the strict dress codes that dominate the school and working world, the excessive use of formal language (*Keigo*), which is very difficult to master perfectly, and so on. There are so many rules to follow that being formal, conforming to morals and customs prevents the emergence of a deep, spontaneous individuality. This gives rise to the phenomenon of *tatema*, which is often referred to merely being "Japanese culture". It can be defined as the art of concealing one's emotions and let only what is assumed the other party wants to see show through.

This lead to an interesting question for this research project : is this image of a person who does not express their true emotions, under the constraint of societal rules established centuries ago, not tangible proof that social pressure is passed down from generation to generation?

c. Morality, from religion to minds evolution.

Compared to France or Europe in general, more and more people say they have no religion (42% in 2022), but consciously or unconsciously, people continue to perpetuate some of the traditions of Christianity, the dominant religion since its inception. In this way, the morality of French society is largely based on the Bible. However, more and more people are criticizing this religious origin and calling for a break with it, i.e. for a distinction to be made between religious and social morals, or for morals that are common sense (e.g.: don't commit murder; don't steal from your neighbor, etc.) to no longer have a religious connotation. In Japan, even though morality derives mainly from Confucian and Shinto doctrines, and even though the number of people with no religion is steadily increasing, very few people make this appeal to moral detachment. This intrinsic link is proof of the uniqueness of Japanese society, which favors transmission and adaptation rather than the revolution of ideas.

This is why we speak of Meiji "restoration" with the term "Restoration" *Ishin*, which also means "reformation, renewal". This word does not describe a separation from the past but the reuse of



old values to make a better future, the renewal of an old-fashioned past to illuminate the future with new designs. This state of mind of the Japanese government can be compared with that of China in the 1960s, when Mao Zedong's government was in power, and the Cultural Revolution was at the heart of civilization. The aim of this purely political movement was to cut all ties with the bourgeois society and implant proletarian ideology through revisionism (revising the memory of the past). In this way, in both Japan and China, these two purely political movements occurred, yet so similar in application (using youth by formatting them) yet so different in intent. In Meiji, the Restoration was achieved by opening up to the West, introducing modern thinking and technology into civilization, making people literate and so on. And although the warrior system (*Bakufu*), in which the samurai were at the heart of the system, was severed, the preservation of Confucian values was emphasized as a means of consolidating imperial power. This "renewal" is seen through the prism of preserving morals but separating them from the pre-established system. This contextualization is the starting point for understanding how social pressure is transmitted.

Survey results and discussion.

The survey is composed of 10 questions. The first 7 are linked as a list and more specific, meanwhile the last 3 are more general but still related to the previous questions. In total, 9 people answered. The answers obtained from the survey reveal whether there is still a link, strong or weak, between the directives of the Imperial Rescript and the moral pressure felt by the Japanese today. Question 1.1 was : "In your everyday life or at a certain point of your life, did or do you feel any pressure: being filial to your parents or did it come naturally to you?". The most frequent answer is that respect comes naturally and that no pressure is really felt. This is perhaps explained by the evolution of nuclear families, where many people leave the family nest in the countryside to live in the city, damaging the feeling of filial piety. Questions 1.2 and 1.3 were respectively: "(If you are currently or when you will be in a relationship) keeping the peace in your couple?", and "Not to be boastful or show yourself superior by acting modestly and/or in moderation in the society?". The answers are quite similar, i.e. the expression "fear of..." regularly appeared in the answers. Whether in relation to their partner or to people in general, many respondents expressed that they felt stressed from having to be careful not to harm others. This self-restriction can be found just about anywhere, especially on public transportation where silence reigns. Then, certain questions such as 1.4 and 1.7: "Learning and/or cultivating arts?", and "Always respecting the Constitution and observing the laws?", the answers are exactly the same as we might find in France, for example. No one feels any pressure to learn culture, it's more of a hobby that can prove useful over time. And when it comes to the law, no one wants to confront the police. Finally, some of the answers to questions 1.5 and 1.6 which were:



"Pursuing moral correctness and activities that society appreciates?", and "Working toward the public good and promoting common interests?", were very pertinent. They express the fact that the Japanese people are taught from childhood to live with discipline, and that the idea of righteousness is promoted during this period of their life. A few ideas are also mentioned which are more a matter of moral and individual obligation than of pressure from society, such as "I would come to the aid of people in an accident situation". On the other hand, another response states that to get into certain highly-rated schools, you need to have a sense of devotion to society. This puts a great deal of pressure on the school entrance exams.

Finally, the last questions were: "According to question 1, how much social pressure do you feel? Does it influence your choices, or do you not really care about it? If you don't care about it, do you feel like you are excluded from the society?", "Also following up from question 1, what do you think generates that pressure and where do you personally feel it the most?" and "Are you interested in the promotion of morality? Do you think it's really important?". From those, a general conclusion can be drawn. People are afraid of not following standards, and if they don't accept the pressure exerted by their peers, a feeling of rejection will be felt. What's more, if one is outside the norm, they will be criticized a lot or receive negative comments, resulting in the impression that one has no personality. As for family pressure, it is progressively vanishing as people move to the city.

Sources of error and improvements

The main problem was to find a subject that would combine moral education, modern Japanese society and transmission. So, with time, I came up with the theme of the transmission of social pressure. However, I had already created and shared my survey, so the answers were not totally appropriate. Also, many of the people I wanted to share my survey with refused because they found it far too difficult, demonstrating my difficulty in finding relevant questions. Furthermore, talking about social pressure can be perceived as a sensitive subject for many people, so I had to think carefully about how to ask all these questions.

Conclusion

There are many reasons why Japanese society is under such pressure. The first could be that Japan is an island country, and until globalization reached its peak, its interactions with the rest of the world were limited. Moreover, if we couple the long period of autarky that was the Edo era with the imperialism of the Meiji era, it can be understood that this civilization has only very recently been able to resort to individual freedom. But morals cannot be changed so quickly, at least not in Japan with its people accustomed to isolationism. It can be seen that social movements change very little



(loss of the notion of filial piety with nuclear families). This is due to the Japanese population's control over its peers, hence the popular Japanese expression which is expressed in English as "the nail that sticks out gets hammered down". But since trends are changing, people are feeling this pressure more or less strongly. Additionally, as more and more people want to live abroad or get acquainted with people from other countries, they tend to take less account of the surrounding pressure.

So, as a foreigner, I have been able to see and experience for myself the social pressure which, even if I felt a great deal of tolerance towards myself as a non-local, is still very much present. However, there is a noticeable difference between the older and younger generations. My elders are tolerant of my mistakes, while people my age are not concerned about moral issues.

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Martial arts as a practice for the Self

自己の修練としての武道

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世界中、様々な武道が人口の相当数によって修練されている。この流派の中心概念は「心技体」という理念であり、心、技、体を発展させることを目指している。この文脈で、全般的な練習を行える。これらの練習は「自己」を向上させるための修練である。

この研究の目的は、精神的な側面に焦点を絞って、運動的な修練と共に、個性、知的発達、社会的なスキルに与える影響を調査することである。

そのために、岡山大学武道部でフィールドワークを行った。EPOK 留学プログラムの中に、岡大柔道部に参加し、その後ボクシング部、空手部、テコンドー部、合気道部、岡山市の理科大学の柔道部にも行った。その上、武道に対する生徒たち意見、そしてどのように修養に活用しているかということ把握するように、十個の質問から成るアンケート調査を実行した。

研究の結果では、武術に対する傾向的な認識の方向がいくつか差し出した。ひとつ、武道、格闘スポーツ、そして一般的なスポーツとの間に、理念的な内容の点での違いと共通点を示した。ふたつ、身体活動と心の状態の関連性を付けた。その他に、一見したところ不明が、十分に重要で、掘り下げる価値のあるいくつかの概念を指差した。

Introduction

Mental health undoubtedly is an aspect of our well-being just as vital as our physical wellness. Nevertheless, for a variety of reasons (mostly for economical insufficiency or lack of affordable, well-prepared experts) many young people tend to neglect this factor. For this reason, it is necessary to provide other effective alternatives, and martial arts can be one option.

In this research, I would like to explore some factual or potential benefits that can be obtained for our mental health, intellectual abilities and social skills through practicing modern combat sports. As a subject, I chose Japanese traditional disciplines, called “武道 - *Budou*” in original language.

As I mentioned in the abstract, alongside with the fieldwork, I prepared a questionnaire consisting of ten question and divided in two blocks. Forty-one students, among Okayama University and Okayama University of Science, participated in the survey. All students actively answered to the questionnaire.

The first block of questions include, to cite a case: “How long have you practiced martial arts?”, “How did you start or who has introduced you to martial arts?”, “Currently, do you have any personal goal?”.

Next, the second block is dedicated to a number of open questions, including: “Do you approach your



discipline as a martial art or as a sport?”, “In your opinion what is the purpose of martial arts?”, “What is the most important thing in martial arts?”, et cetera.

Today the term “martial arts” can be used in relation to all fighting systems independently from region of provenience. However, this locution appears for the first time in "Takenobu Japanese-English Dictionary (Collection of the National Diet Library of Japan)" in 1918. It is an English translation of the Japanese term “武芸 *bu-gei*” (“武 - warrior”, “芸 - technique, ”), that means military arts¹; either called “古武道 *ko-bu-dou*”, that stand for “ancient martial arts. The word designates all traditional Japanese military disciplines developed since Nara period (710-794), especially combat systems and forms that have started being codified and conceptualized since Muromachi period (1336-1392). Subsequently, after Meiji Restoration modern martial arts have been named “現代武道 *gen-dai-bu-dou*”, “modern martial arts”, or just “武道 *bu-dou*”. *Budo* consists of Sumo, Karate, Judo, Kendo, Kyudo (archery), Aikido, Naginata (pole weapon), Shorinji Kenpo and less known Jukendo (bayonet fencing)².

Most of these disciplines contain character “道 - *dou*” in their name, an ideogram that means “way”. The presence of “do” implies that these systems are not just a number of physical exercises. Whether they go beyond and imply that the purpose of martial arts is to improve not only one’s body but also one’s character through continuous refinement of combat techniques. The main philosophical notion, that completely summarizes traditional *budo*, is “心技体 *shin-gi-tai*”, “mind, technique and body” and it refers to all essential elements that a martial artist has to possess in order to master the art. Nonetheless, there is also a big number of moral, spiritual and mental related notions, developed since antiquity, such as: “残心 *zan-shin*”, “remaining mind” or “continuous alertness” in case of danger; “気力 *ki-ryoku*”, “power of mind”, indicates human activity and mental power and it is linked to the Chinese concept of “氣 *ki*”, “energy”, which reciprocally refers to the mindset, intention and determination; following, there are some moral virtues that are not less important part of philosophical teachings of martial arts. These are: “忠節 - *chuu-setsu*”, “loyalty”; “武勇 *bu-yuu*”, “courage”; “信義 *shin-gi*”, integrity; and probably the most socially appreciated virtue, “礼儀 *rei-gi*”, “etiquette, respect”. Indeed, there many other concepts that are typical in martial arts.

There are also some exercises focusing only on mental aspect such as meditation, “黙想 - *moku-sou*” in Japanese, which aims to clear practitioner’s mind and focus on training. Meditation is performed even today. At judo club, we used meditate for a brief duration before and at the end of practice. All these concepts are essential and are inseparable from physical exercises and “Zen influence can be considered significant”³ (translation, Nakabayashi Shinji, 1981).

I. Practitioner students’ attitude toward Martial Arts (武道部に所属している大学生の武道に対する態度)

Now, when we have some conceptual and philosophical background of martial arts, we can proceed to analyze students’ answers to the survey.

In first place, this section is required to comprehend the approach of martial artists toward their respective



disciplines, owing to the fact that their attitude can influence what kind of notions a student can apprehend. Secondly, it will permit us to understand a tendentious image and perception of a small part of practitioners regarding *budo* in contemporary society, and will provide some data for future researches. Furthermore, it aims to grasp what kind of values are still preserved, emphasized either lost, in today's martial art clubs.

For this purpose, I will primarily rely on questionnaire answers; however, I will not provide any graphics or numbers. I will share a URL-link containing all the data (the questionnaire is completely anonymous and do not report any private data). Instead, I will focus the discussion on the most relevant information obtained from the survey.

After making Karate and Judo part of Olympic Games, general perception has changed. It might have happened due to considerable increase of athletes' number all around the globe. From statistical point of view, the change would be inevitable because of a great amount of cultural backgrounds distinct from Japan. It seems logic that if the general purpose of a discipline has deviated from conventional direction, as consequence, series values will change in their turn too. Nevertheless, most of students wrote that the most important things in *budo* are respect, mental and spiritual strength, understand the opponent, diligence, honesty, courage, cooperation, "self-denial", emotional and physical self-control.

The reader might fairly notice that among the disciplines there is Taekwondo, that is not a Japanese martial art, while Boxing is a combat sport and has nothing to do with *budo*. Indeed, it would be a true statement. The reason of including them was hypothesis that the approach can change in correspondence with social and cultural context, and it was partially true. When I visited Boxing club, I did not notice any differences between their and *budo* clubs' trainings, greeting routines, attitude either environment.

However, while on one hand, a boxing club member affirmed to view Boxing as a Martial Art, on the other hand, for my surprise, an Aikido practitioner said to approach his/her discipline as a sport. To mention, Aikido do not possess competitive tournaments, there are only "meetings" where Aikido artists just demonstrate their mastery, and there are no winners or losers. Even though, in my opinion, that person was referring to physical aspect of the Aikido, undoubtedly, it also depends on personal reasons and objectives. Therefore, one can lead one's own mind toward desired direction, independently of general teachings.

To the question, regarding if they think of their discipline, as a sport or as martial art, with a slight difference the answers leaned the scale toward sports. However, there were seven answers saying "both", and initially I could not properly understand what this implied. Fortunately, one of the students explained: "When it comes to tournaments I see it as a sport, while during trainings, it as a Martial Art" (Translation). As a result, depending on purpose, they might alternatively perceive their discipline as one or another.

Another unexpected result was that only one person answered that martial arts' purpose is self-defense. In European countries, it is common to believe that it is one of main goals, while in Japan it seems minor reason.

As a result, I came up with following main three groups: 1) those who train exclusively for self-



improvement; 2) those who to only to compete; 3) those who practice for self-improvement but when they compete for them it becomes sport.

The goal of sports is to compete, while martial arts aim to improve the self. In spite of different, or maybe even opposite goals, “道 *dou*” and sportsmanship have some common points, such as respect, honesty, perseverance, courage, calm and strong mind, concentration, et cetera.

Therefore, just as a mirror reflects the sunrays, *budo* reflects certain social values that have been consolidated in Japan throughout centuries. Martial arts are what they are, owing to people who have created them. That is one of the reasons why they are also considered a cultural heritage of Japan and that is why certain virtues will not be forgotten. Clearly, some of them are not as important as they were before, but that is because there are less wars and more peace.

II. The effects of practicing martial arts on intelligence, mind and social skills (武道が知能、精神、ソーシャルスキルに与える影響)

Alongside with the effects on these aspects of the self, this section aims to provide some evidence that martial arts can be an effective alternative for the purpose of improving mental health.

“礼に始まり、礼に終わる”, “it begins with a bow and it finishes with a bow” was one of the answer that students gave to the question of what is the most important aspect in martial. Most of the students shared the same answer and for this reason, I decided to start by examining the influence of martial arts on our personality from this aspect. Etiquette, respect and the significance of greetings seem to be the most valued virtues not only for martial artists, but also for the society in general. In disciplines as Sumo, these virtues are fundamental. This sheds light on the importance of social skills in martial arts.

Social anxiety, difficulty in bonding with new people and maintaining or strengthening the relationships is a present issue all around the world that terribly effects on one’s mental well-being and can lead to dreadful results.

Many students mentioned about their improvement in this aspect after joining martial arts club. Those who had some problems with creating relationship with new people said that they learnt how to start a conversation and became able to confidently maintain it. Some of them pointed out that they learnt how to properly greet and converse with seniors and adults. What is the concrete reason that let these people to improve this ability? Obviously, in social context, as sport club one has to interact with other people. However, there might be ones able to manage the issue just by trying to communicate with others and will gradually start feel more confident during conversation. On the other hand, there might be those who would need more time or a different approach. In case of the second outcome, this goal can be reachable directly via physical activity. Although it can seem there is no connection between kicking, punching or throwing people around and creating new relationship. Usually, it is the reason to have some issues with the Law. However, not in this case.



“[...]Moderate and high physical activity are inversely related with anxiety and high trait anxiety in adolescents [...]”(Beata-Kisiliewska, 2019)⁴. Martial art as an activity itself is high intensity endeavor, thus during this kind of physical engagement one can start to feel more comfortable to interact with others. Most of exercises are pair or even group exercises, which gives the opportunity to create deeper relationships.

Martial arts are as individual sports. Consequently, it is not considered as a social activity and importance of training partner and social potentialities of this kind of activity is often neglected. However, it is necessary to consider that one cannot improve without the aid of others and vice versa. In addition, some disciplines, as Judo and Taekwondo, also have group competitions. By helping each other and by thriving together for a common goal martial arts deepen interpersonal relationship and have the capacity to create strong bonds. A big part of students who participated in the survey said that the main reason why they continue to train is that it is fun. Hence, engaging an activity that provides positive emotions contributes even more for this scope.

Positive emotion do not contribute only for social skills, they also enhance cerebral activity. Martial arts provide various intellectual benefits, such as great concentration skill, mind sharpness, strategical abilities. Moreover, due to the presence of atypical movements, they permit to form excellent coordination skills. At the same time, such disciplines nurture a range of mental and psychological capabilities. Constant training of combat practices for a long arc of time develops better resistance to stress, as a result of necessity to control emotion and calm relax the mind. Although combat sports provide positive emotions, to improve physical abilities the body has to undergo fatigue and stress. This increase mental resistance and patience. In fact, some of students who answered the questionnaire mentioned that he/she applies this ability in everyday life to conclude the tasks that one has to do but does not have desire to do so.

Martial arts can certainly improve one’s mental abilities, just as one improves speed or strength. It is not indispensable that martial arts provide any moral or values. Nonetheless, they provide tools to foster our personal virtues, give us courage to follow our own morals and the capacity put them in practice within everyday-life.

Conclusions

Surveyed Aikido club member shared a very interesting and personal opinion. This person chose martial arts as means to foster her/his self, to understand it better, both body and mind. This was the inspiration for the title of this research.

Precisely the completeness and complexity of *budo*, just as it is the “self”, qualify them to be called practices for the self. The self is a term that encompasses all the aspects of who we are; our body, our personality, our sense of morals. For this reason, it is important not to neglect and ignore physical factor when in reference to our well-being.



Beata and Kisielewska article shows the importance physical activity for perception of the body self, especially among adolescents. Just one tries to understand one's own personality and way of thinking, in the same manner it is important to be conscious of one's own body. In the article, it is explained that body self "consists of multidimensional body representations" and classifies three main bodies: Body image – personal perception and opinion of our body; Body scheme - how we move, our motorial perception of the body and of our movements; In the end, body awareness – consciousness of the signals originating from inside of us (Beata – Kisielewska, 2019).

Our body and our consciousness are strictly connected to each other and one side is essential for the health of another. Being familiar with our body is also important due the fact that certain physical abilities require certain mental states. In other words, even if we are not consciously practicing any mental exercises, we still train our mind because otherwise we simply would not be able to achieve certain physical abilities or perform certain techniques. Hence, by training our body we also train our mentality. For example, during Karate "*Kata*" demonstration a performer has to perfectly execute every movement and every detail of the "form", what requires clear mind and great ability to concentrate, especially in context of competition.

Some of the students said to feel much more confident since beginning to practice *budo*. The reason of this can various: Because martial arts are considered, something practiced by strong people or because they get stronger through their path. How by training our body we also start to become familiar with our body, by time the consciousness the body changes. Feeling more confident can be simply connected to the fact that by exercising the body, motorial control. This is my personal opinion and based on my personal perception; as a practitioner of martial arts I feel much more confident only because I feel better control of my body.

As kids when we just start to learn to ride a bicycle we feel insecure and we are afraid to fall. But more we practice more confident we become, and the fear vanishes.

Still, it should not necessarily be martial arts, probably any kind of physical activity or even physical work can be utilized for these means. Just like when someone is stressed or and feels the need to do something, for example cleans the house or wash the dishes. "Positive relations between more frequent vigorous physical activity and the reporting of fewer symptoms of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and life dissatisfaction were noticed only in self-report measures, but not in objective measurement of physical activity" (Beata – Kisielewska, 2019).

Reference:

¹ Etymology of the term is provided from - "Martial arts", Wikipedia contributors, *Wikipedia, The Free*



Encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Martial_arts&oldid=1167687239 (accessed August 4, 2023)

² All the terminology mentioned before this tag and after the first tag are taken from this resource - 古武道 (ko-bu-dou) - "古武道", Wikipedia contributors, *Wikipedia*, <https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%8F%A4%E6%AD%A6%E9%81%93>, (accessed August 4, 2023)

³ All the notions, except "meditation", are provided from this online article: Nakabayashi Shinji, 1981, 武道の「精神性」に関する一考察, *Research Journal of Budo*, 1981-1982, Volume 14, Issue 2, Pages 21-22, Released on J-STAGE November 27, 2012, Online ISSN 2185-8519, Print ISSN 0287-9700, https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/budo1968/14/2/14_21/article/-char/ja

⁴ Mirucka Beata, and Monika Kisielewska. "The Importance of Physical Activity in the Normative Development of Mental Body Representations during Adolescence.: Implications for Teacher Education." *Rethinking Teacher Education for the 21st Century: Trends, Challenges and New Directions*, edited by Marta Kowalczyk-Walędziak et al., 1st ed., Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2019, pp. 223–38. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvpb3xhh.18>. Accessed 5 Aug. 2023.

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Disparity of Athletic Opportunities

運動機会の格差

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アメリカと日本ではバレーボールの機会が大きく異なります。バレーボールは、日本で熱心なファンとカジュアルなファンの両方に大きなファンを獲得することができました。しかし、米国については同じことが言えません。両国におけるスポーツの扱いの違いは、選手のプレイスタイルの大きな違いにつながっています。このレポートでは、両国の機会を比較し、それぞれの国の環境でアスリートがどのようにして非常に異なるプレイスタイルを開発したかを比較します。

Introduction

The differences between American and Japanese athletic development and play styles are hard to miss. Japan has a very distinct philosophy and methodology when it comes to the development of athletes in sports. Japan heavily pushes ideas of teamwork, discipline, gratitude, and so forth when playing sports. Virtues like these have a significant impact on the way these players develop. These virtues are what lead these players to develop playstyles that are so similar to each other. If observing volleyball specifically, it can be seen that each player has very similar approaches, serve tosses, arm swings, blocks, etc. When comparing Japan to the rest of the world's top volleyball teams, it is very evident how different they are. For Japanese volleyball, efficiency and discipline is the name of the game. Take a look at a country like the United States or Russia and you will find different playstyles as well. For example, Russia is a team filled with giants. Their philosophy is height and power. While the team itself has a system to follow and a strategy to accompany, each player plays distinctly. The same can be said about almost every other team. What about Japan has their players so similar when compared to the rest of the world? What makes it so different? Playing with the Okayama University volleyball team and interviewing other students in other sports clubs at Okayama University has helped shine a bit more light on these questions.



Methodology

The methodology for this paper required talking to students who currently compete or are involved in sports here at Okayama University as well as drawing from my own experiences playing with the Okayama University volleyball team. The questions they answered provided a better understanding of the principles that Japanese sports stand on, and why they so heavily influence athletes' playstyles. Fortunately, I was able to speak with 2 foreigners who are currently in an Okayama University sports club. This was perfect for comparing Japanese sports to their experiences back in their home countries of France and Germany. Since they are foreigners, they were able to provide some feedback on what they believe the Japanese clubs excel and fall short in when compared to their home countries. I also interviewed Japanese students who were in a club sport prior to university or are currently in a club sport. These different perspectives show the individualistic side of foreign sports and the collectivist, team-oriented side of Japanese sports. To compare the opportunities of both countries I will be drawing upon my experience playing with the San Jose State volleyball team and my knowledge about the opportunities presented for volleyball in the United States as a whole.

Volleyball Participation in Japan and the United States

Despite the United States outnumbering the Japanese population by over double, the number of people playing volleyball in Japan is almost equal to the number of people that play in the United States. A survey conducted by Alexandra Arbu shows the number of people that participated in volleyball from 2001 to 2021 in Japan. A similar survey was published by the Statistica Research Department surveying participation in Japan. The average number of Japanese participants in 2018-2019 was around 4.5 million people. The average number of participants in America was around 6.3 million people in 2018. Some things to consider when comparing these numbers are that the age groups are different. The age group for the American survey was 6 years and older. The age group for the Japanese survey was 10 years and older. This gives the American survey considerably more participants. Even with the age group boosting the number of people who played volleyball, the percentage of people who played volleyball was higher in Japan. The population of the United States is 332 million people. This means that the percentage of people who played volleyball in 2018 was 1.89%. The population of Japan is 125.7 million and the percentage of people who played volleyball between 2018-2019 was 3.58%. This is a good start to understanding the difference in opportunities provided by both countries.

Disparity of Opportunitites

Sports in the United States are enormous. Namely, sports like basketball, baseball, and football. Other sports garner millions of viewers in the United States as well, like soccer, hockey, MMA, etc. All of these sports are very well funded and have lifetime fans and unwavering support. Men's volleyball is very uncommon in the United States, as most areas of the country will have a hard time finding a club team outside of their high school or university. Almost all competitive volleyball



in the USA is limited to California, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, and a few other states. It is very common for high schools to not have male volleyball programs. If people are lucky enough to have a volleyball club in their vicinity, they now have to jump over the massive paywall. Many volleyball clubs demand a minimum of \$1000 to join their club for the season. This does not guarantee playing time, it only gets your name on the roster. Parents are also expected to pay for hotels and transportation since many tournaments are out-of-state since the clubs do not pay for transport or accommodation. There are many clubs that cost upwards of \$3000. The lack of clubs in most of the United States and these massive paywalls leave many parents with no choice but to put their kids in other sports. This leaves volleyball to stay as a physical education sport with a very casual player base.

Contrarily, Japan has plenty of opportunities in volleyball starting from a very young age. Not just volleyball, but most sports get somewhat equal opportunities for growth. Of course, some sports get more love than others, like baseball and soccer. Most middle schools and high schools in Japan have volleyball clubs. Unlike the United States, Japan has a professional volleyball league and very dedicated fans. Volleyball is also not just seen as a casual pick-up game, but a sport with opportunities to go further and make a living. This can be said about many of the sports in Japan. Japan is so full of extracurricular activities provided by schools that students can pick and choose what they would like to do. This is not to say that every school in Japan has good volleyball programs, or even has one at all. Plenty of schools in the Japanese countryside lack sports clubs and the funding to even support them. There are plenty of times where a club exists, but cannot afford to hire a coach. This makes it a very casual club with a teacher overseeing the club and a player acting as the leader of the club. Despite this, there is enough of an interest in volleyball as a country for there to almost always be a way to play volleyball.

	United States	Japan
Average Starting Age	(without access to club) 14 years old	8 years old
Practice Methods	Plenty of variety Few staple exercises	Fundamental oriented Everyone practices the same fundamental movements Little to no variety
Purpose of Practice	Most players have varying levels of motivation and goals	The whole team sets a goal and works as a team to achieve that goal
Coach/Player Relationships	Coach's words are almost absolute Every team has a coach	Coach is absolute Very common to not have a coach once reaching college

These differences in opportunities and Japanese culture are heavy influences on the way athletes play volleyball. Richard is a half-American, half-Japanese student at Okayama University



who also plays for the Okayama University volleyball team. I asked him if young Japanese children focus on one sport and stick with it, or if they like playing multiple sports. He said a majority of young athletes will usually pick up a sport and play it for several years, usually not playing anything else. There are many young athletes, however, who will stop one sport and then pick up another later. For the most part, these children develop skills in their respective sports for several years. This is where efficiency and technicality come into play very heavily. Japanese volleyball players are well-known for their “near-perfect” technique. Since these players focus on this sport their whole lives, they have so much time to hone in on the little impurities and imperfections. Their technique is closer to “perfection” than any other country in the world.

These young Japanese athletes have developed in a way that contrasts with American athletes significantly. Most American parents want their children to be in multiple sports. Many children in the United States grow up playing multiple sports at the same time at different points throughout the year. For example, a child will play a season of football for 5 months and a season of basketball for another 5 months. These kinds of schedules are very common since most sports are not year-round. In middle school and high school, the opportunity to be a multi-sport is higher than ever. American schools have fall sports, winter sports, and spring sports. These last around 3 months each, so many students will play one sport in each season in order to keep themselves busy, or they want to try another sport. American children playing all these different sports means they cannot focus on one sport as much as Japanese athletes. American athletes develop very different skill sets compared to Japanese athletes. While American athletes are not as specialized in one sport, they benefit from better motor and athletic development and skill transference to other sports. Each athlete will develop their own way of playing each sport, and develop their own way of using their bodies. Japanese coaches usually have their athletes practice each skill to perfection. Repetition is the bread and butter of Japanese athletic development.

Differences in Collegiate Sports

The difference between practices on the San Jose State team and the Okayama University team displays Japanese athletic values in full effect. The practices in San Jose State had a few staple exercises that are almost always in every practice. Most of the time, every practice will be different in some way. For example, if there are a total of 15 drills the volleyball team has done in the past, one practice might use 3 of those, another practice might use another 4, the next practice might use a mix of those 7, and so forth. Every practice feels like there is something new to work on.

Japanese practices are the complete opposite. Every day is the exact same drills in the exact same order. The biggest focus in Japanese practice will be the fundamentals. Rather than game-like situations, the team will spend almost all practice doing the same drills over and over again. It is reminiscent of sharpening a blade over and over again to hone sharpness. Sarah Fäth is on the women’s volleyball team and is a foreign exchange student from Germany. She weighs in on the heavy repetitions of Japanese practice by saying, “We do basically the same thing every practice. We have the warming up part which is the same for every practice. Afterward, we have the same 4 or 5 routines



of practice that we rotate depending on what the coach wants to focus on in practice. Basically the same thing all the time. My coach in Germany was always coming up with new things, so it was entertaining. But in Japan, since we only do certain practices I feel like I get a lot better at those specific things.” This allows us to see very simple pros/cons of Japanese practice. While practice with the volleyball team in Japan can get a bit boring and repetitive, certain skill sets are going to become exponentially better even if it might not be as fun as her home country’s practice. There is also a very big emphasis on team dynamics and team goals. A Japanese team will often set time aside during practice to have a meeting with the team and discuss the goals for the season and how they feel about their teammates. They all work and strive for one goal as a single machine. The United States is completely different. If there is ever an issue that comes up, it will be brought up immediately to whoever is involved or possibly the coach. Each athlete usually has their own motivation for playing. Some might play purely for fun, others might play to win.

Possibly the most noticeable difference between most collegiate teams in Japan is the absence of coaches. Most college teams in Japan do not have coaches due to the lack of funding to hire and pay a coach. Usually, coaches are only seen with very powerful schools. Gabriel Thimm is a foreign exchange student from France in the boxing club. Regarding the issue of coaches in Japan, he viewed not having a coach as a rather positive thing. “As long as the leader of the club has real experience and takes it very seriously and knows what to do and is a good leader then it's ok. This club is good since I am a beginner, so my goals aren't to go pro. If my goals were to go national with boxing, then I would leave the club to go somewhere better with a coach.” He elaborated by saying that a club not having an official coach tends to be more open and free. There is more lenience and athletes are relatively free to exercise in the way they feel appropriate, while also having a sense of direction provided by the club captain. He also talked about how much he enjoys the relationship he has with the club captain. In France, his coach would have a relationship similar to a parent and child. He said he was much more comfortable without that since he is in the club to have fun and not compete very seriously. The Okayama University women’s volleyball team has a coach and Sarah Fäth weighed in on the topic of coaches as well. “My coach in Germany was an old person and it was more like a coach/student dynamic. Sometimes our coach here didn't come. Usually on Sundays, he wouldn't come. I was surprised with how dedicated and disciplined the players were even without a coach. In Germany, we would usually slack off and talk.” The discipline of Japanese athletes runs very deep that they can run practice completely on their own. These values are encouraged in these athletes from a very young age. It is also worth noting that since Japanese practices rely so heavily on fundamentals, the practices are easier to run. The fundamentals that have been drilled into athletes from such an early age are practiced constantly throughout their entire sports career. Sarah mentioned that “In Japan, all the teams I've seen and met have very similar playing styles, of course, some are just better at playing than others.” The warmups and drills are all relatively the same and consistent throughout Japan. It's as if there is a curriculum in volleyball, and most teams decide to follow it.

Conclusion



Japan's values shine through brilliantly when looking at their sports. Their values of efficiency and discipline are most noticeable, no matter what club you look at. The students I interviewed thought the same. The athletes back in the United States are not taught the same values, but rather how to get better at the sport. Japanese sports incorporate these traditional virtues in their teachings and create talented athletes, who play very similarly to each other and all work toward one goal together as a unit. An added remark from a member of the men's volleyball team, Richard, talked about how consistent and repetitive practices make for a more disciplined and humble team. Not only do coaches instill these values in them from a young age, but they are also able to draw from these principles during their practices. It emphasized how humble and grounded Japanese sports are.

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**The role that universities can play in the promotion of a more sustainable, inclusive and ethic lifestyle: the case of Kyoto University's VegeProject.
Could Okadai be the next one?**

Donatella Canta

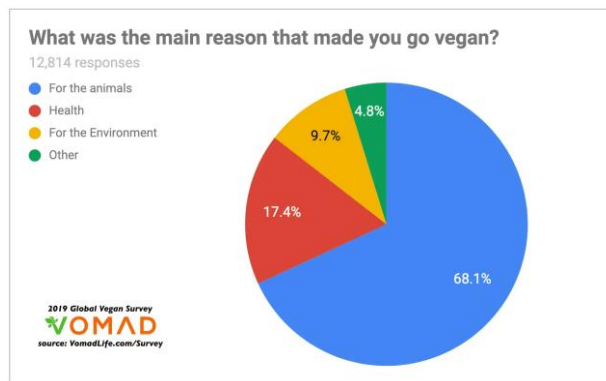
Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Italy)

Summary: この EPOK の自由研究のテーマは、「ヴィーガン」というライフスタイルである。気候変動や動物福祉に対する関心が増えてきたので、ヴィーガンになっている人が多いそうである。その問題を取り組んでいる京都大学の「VegeProject」という NPO を例にとって、大学が果たすべき重要な役割を説明する。その後、持続可能性を重視する岡山大学のカフェテリアにはヴィーガンの食品も提供されているかどうかを確かめ、5 人の学生とのインタビューの結果をまとめる。この調査を通じて、持続可能性とヴィーガンの繋がり、あらゆる学生のインクルージョンの大切さを示し、岡山大学の将来のに貢献できれば良いと考える。

I. Introduction

This research concerns the growing trend of veganism, commonly defined as “the practice of eating only food not derived from animals and typically of avoiding the use of other animal products”. Over time it has developed into a movement advocating for wide societal and systemic change, as extensive scientific evidence of the environmental cost of such products as meat and dairy began to surface and reach the general public, as well knowledge about the condition of animals involved in the industry started to spread, leading people to question the moral basis underlying the consumption of animal-sourced food. With the awareness that climate change could pose a real threat to our survival, questions about the sustainability of human activities have been arising in recent years, leading the UN to issue its Sustainable Development Goals¹, a call to action to work towards equality and to ensure the protection of the planet, with Okayama University being one of the several institutions worldwide adopting them. Some universities in Japan have also acted independently, as is the case of Kyoto University, which in 2013 saw the creation of VegeProject, now an NPO, by a then-graduate student aiming to introduce plant-based meals in the university's canteen. After providing an overview of the motives underlying the vegan choice, I will introduce VegeProject's case to show how universities can be at the forefront of producing positive change in society, not only by promoting more sustainable lifestyle, but also by taking action to secure the inclusion of all students. Following this, I will provide an overview of Okayama University's cafeterias' menus to show whether they offer any vegan meals. Lastly, as I believe that students are essential actors in shaping their university's character and values, I will report the results of interviews conducted with five Okadai students, in which they expressed

their thoughts and knowledge on veganism. By implementing these tasks, I attempted to obtain a more comprehensive view on Okayama University's overall state of affairs in relation to veganism.



II. Why do people choose to become vegan?

While it is true that the vegan movement can be defined as heterogeneous in nature, with people adopting this lifestyle on several different grounds, some main factors can be singled out. In 2019 travel vlog Vomad conducted a survey

involving 12,814 participants who were asked why they had chosen to become vegan. Results were as follows:

As shown in **Figure 1**, over half of the respondents attribute their lifestyle change to animal welfare concerns, while a smaller percentage of respondents did so out of health and environmental reasons.

Source: Figure 1

Animal welfare

In recent years widespread social media access has made it easier for animal rights activists to reach public consciousness, for instance by sharing footage taken inside slaughterhouses and farms to document the condition of livestock animals. Animal welfare NPO PETA denounced unsanitary conditions related to the transport of pigs from the farm to the slaughterhouse². Reportedly, pigs are often crammed inside the trucks and do not receive food nor water until the end of the journey, with many perishing due to scorching or freezing temperatures. Footage from an abattoir in the United Kingdom capturing pigs in apparent distress gasping for air while being subjected to asphyxiation by carbon dioxide has also been published by British newspaper The Guardian³. The dairy industry has not been exempt from criticism either. In modern day farming, cows are artificially inseminated repeatedly throughout their life until they reach 5 years of age, when their body is too damaged and diseased to continue the milking cycle, and are thus slaughtered for low-price meat. It is important to note that a cow's natural lifespan would typically be about 15-20 years. What is more, after the calf is



born, they are usually either slaughtered for veal or entered the milking production, if female⁴. Awareness about such practices has thus led many people to boycott animal products by turning vegan and rejecting such views as *speciesism*, defined as “the practice of treating members of one species as morally more important than members of other species; also, the belief that this practice is justified”, which they claim allows the consumption of farmed animals to be socially accepted in most parts of the world.

Health concerns

Although eating vegan cannot be defined as healthy per se, as vegan food can still be highly processed, experts claim introducing more plant-based meals into one’s diet could have several health benefits, including a lower risk of coronary disease, high-blood pressure and diabetes. Furthermore, plant-based food may contain all the necessary nutrients to maintain bodily functions, such as proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals. Red meat, instead, is reported to increase the risks of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes⁵.

Environmental concerns

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, a total number of 73,162,794,213 animals, including chickens, pigs, cows, sheep, and fishes were slaughtered in 2020⁶. There is ample scientific evidence that livestock raising and fishing contribute considerably to climate change and environmental degradation. For instance, animal agriculture reportedly accounts for 18% of total anthropogenic greenhouse gasses emissions⁷, due to the digestion process of such animals as cows involves the release of methane, a greenhouse gas that has been found to be more powerful than carbon dioxide. Furthermore, animal agriculture has also been identified as the major contributor to deforestation globally⁸, since clear land is needed to grow crops to feed billions of animals. Livestock raising also involves a massive usage of water; for instance, 8000 liters of water would be needed to produce on pound of beef, as opposed to around 185 liters to produce a serving of black beans⁹. However, despite occupying most agricultural land and utilizing a significant amount of water, animal-sourced food accounts only for 18% of the world’s calories and 37% of proteins¹⁰. Questions about the sustainability of our current fishing patterns have also been raised in recent years, with an increasing demand for marine products pushing the industry to overlook the way their practices affect marine life. For instance, a common practice called trawling, consisting in a net being dragged along the ocean floor, often damages the seabed by dragging plants and coral populations, which are essential for the survival of the ocean. What is more, fishing nets and gears account for most of marine pollution, each year injuring or killing thousands of animals of dolphins, whales, and turtles, further damaging the ecosystem¹¹.

III. VegeProject



Although it could be said that vegan food in Japan is yet to reach mainstream popularity, supermarkets in the country have gradually started to introduce a few plant-based products, such as soy meat, tofu cheese, and vegetable curry. Several of these items can be easily recognized by a “Certified Vegan by VegeProject” mark on the package. When then graduate student at Kyoto University Haruko Kawano founded “VegeProject”¹² in 2013, she probably would not have imagined that it was bound to play an essential role in boosting the plant-based market in Japan. It started as a project to urge the administrator of the college cafeterias to start serving plant-based meals for vegan students, as well as for everyone else to try them and learn about veganism. Thanks to her efforts, Kyoto University began offering vegan meals and continues to have a great selection to this day. In 2016 VegeProject became established as non-profit organization and since then has been collaborating with both the public and private sectors. In the case of universities, VegeProject has been offering consultation to help them develop and introduce vegan meals in their cafeterias, as well as organizing lectures on vegan-related topics, successfully contributing to the creation of plant-based menus in several universities, including Tokyo University and Osaka University. What is more, the organization has also been providing opportunities for businesses, including restaurants, interested in veganism to learn about it through seminars and lectures, also helping them make their products be easily recognized by allowing them to use the VegeProject mark. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government has also launched an annual partnership with VegeProject to create a guidebook listing restaurants and shops offering vegan food in the capital. With climate change pushing us to rethink our lifestyles, the demand for vegan food is expected to increase exponentially in the coming years, and VegeProject is proof that cultural institutions such as universities may hold great potential as the starting point for positive societal and systemic change.

IV. What about Okayama University?

An overview of Okayama University’s cafeterias

As aforementioned, Okayama University is among the several institutions all over the world that have pledged to promote sustainability by taking direct action. Thus, it seemed relevant to analyze whether and in what ways such commitments have translated into practice. Pertinent to the scope of this research was examining the menus of the universities cafeterias to find out whether and to what extent vegan options are offered to students. I illustrate my findings below, taking Peach Cafeteria in Tsushima campus as a representative example, since it offers the same number of vegan options as the rest of Okayama University’s cafeterias.

Table 1 Vegan meals at Okayama University’s cafeteria

Item	Total	Vegan
Rice, curry, donburi	22	1 (white rice)



Main dish (e.g., noodles)	65	0
Side dish	51	10, including vegetables, seaweed, and fruit
Soups	2	0
Desserts	32	2, including egg-free crêpes

As shown above, Okayama University's cafeterias provide a restricted selection of dishes suitable for vegans and vegetarians, mainly limited to white rice, a few side vegetables, and some fruit. Furthermore, it has been observed that vegan and vegetarian students, as well as other people with dietary restrictions other than allergies, would encounter significant difficulties in choosing a meal that is adequate to their preferences, since it is not possible to access a clear list of all the ingredients used in a dish unless one inquires directly at the Okayama University Co-op.

What do the students think?

As mentioned in the introduction to this research, I carried out an interview with five Okadai students to learn about their thoughts on veganism. Before beginning the interview, the respondents were given a reference sheet briefly illustrating the meaning of vegan and why some people are choosing this lifestyle. I summarize their responses in Table 2

As shown in the table, all the respondents reported that no previous knowledge about veganism. Furthermore, when asked whether they had heard about the problems related to the livestock industry, three respondents said that the information provided was not new to them, whereas no participant reported awareness on animal welfare issues, perhaps suggesting that such issues are not widely known and discussed in Japan. All respondents agreed that eating vegan in Japan entails a certain degree of difficulty. Each of them remarked that it is not usual for Japanese restaurants to include vegan options in their menus, for instance making it difficult to eat out for a group of friends that include a vegan person. Two respondents also believe that vegan food in supermarkets tends to be more expensive, discouraging people to become vegan. This was related to such processed products as soy meat and vegan cheese, and perhaps indicates that the two respondents did not associate other, usually cheaper, plant-based food such as vegetables, tofu, noodles, and rice with a vegan lifestyle, suggesting that they may think that a vegan diet largely consists of such packaged products as mentioned above. As for the impression the participants have of vegan food, all of them regarded it as being healthier than non-vegan food. The male respondent also perceived vegan food as having a gendered image and associated it with "femininity", adding that women are perhaps more open to try and consume such products as soy meat than their male counterpart. I believe that this may be linked to the fact that meat consumption is sometimes related to the concept of masculinity, as studies has proven, that it to say that some men feel that eating animals is a way of affirming their maleness¹³. Another respondent

also believed that vegan cuisine tends to be more sophisticated and that it uses high-quality and refined ingredients, different from every-day meals that one could easily cook at home. In my view, this is strictly related to the perception of vegan food as being inherently healthier, possibly leading many vegan restaurants in Japan to use bio and low-calorie ingredients in order to comply with this image. As per the last question, all respondents expressed willingness to try a vegan dish if given the chance, provided that it is not too expensive. One respondent regarded the presentation, that is the appearance of the food, as one crucial characteristic that they seek in a dish, remarking that being able to take an aesthetically pleasing photo of the food to share it on social media is what often persuade them to choose a particular dish. Although their answer cannot be representative of Japanese people's opinions as a whole, it perhaps shows the importance that aesthetics play in the marketability of a certain dish.

Table 2 Thoughts on veganism of Okayama University Students

	Student 1 (F)	Student 2 (F)	Student 3 (F)	Student 4 (M)	Student 5 (F)
Field of study	Education	Education	Science	Education	Letters
Did you know the meaning of vegan? Do you have vegan family members or friends?	Had heard the word before but was unsure of the meaning. Does not know any vegan person.	Had heard the word before but was unsure of the meaning. Does not know any vegan person.	Had heard the word before but was unsure of the meaning. Does not know any vegan person.	Had heard the word before but was unsure of the meaning. Does not know any vegan person.	Had heard the word before but was unsure of the meaning. Does not know any vegan person.
Did you know about the environmental issues and the animal welfare and health concerns of animal agriculture?	Had no previous knowledge of such issues.	Reported some previous knowledge on environmental and health concerns. Had heard of health benefits of soy meat in a TV program.	Reported some previous knowledge on environmental and health concerns. Had heard about it on TV.	Reported some previous knowledge on environmental and health concerns. Had read of such issues on the internet.	Had no previous knowledge of such issues.
Do you think it is difficult to sustain a vegan lifestyle in Japan?	Yes, because restaurants in Japan rarely include vegan options in their menus.	Yes, because it is difficult to find vegan options in restaurants.	Yes, because it is difficult to eat out. Plus, such products as soy meat and tofu	Yes, because restaurants in Japan usually do not offer vegan food.	Yes, because restaurants in Japan rarely include vegan options in their menus.



			cheese are not affordable to everyone.	Also, vegan products in supermarkets are quite expensive.	
What is your impression of vegan food?	Healthy	Healthier than other kinds of cuisines.	Healthy and uses high-quality ingredients. Sophisticated image.	Healthy and feminine image. Women are probably keener to consume it.	Healthy, suitable for those who wish to lose weight.
Would you be willing to try vegan food if given the chance?	Yes, but it depends on the price.	Yes, but it depends on the price. The food needs to look good so to be able to take a nice picture.	Yes, but it has to be cheap.	Yes, but it depends on the price.	Yes, but only if it's not too expensive.

V. Conclusion

Through this research I attempted to highlight the link between sustainability and veganism and to illustrate the positive role that universities may play in the present and coming future, as climate change and ethical issues prompts humanity to reconsider its way of live. VegeProject is one representative example of how the creativity and determination of students can achieve positive change extending beyond the academic realm and reaching common people, and how it is crucial for universities management to be flexible and receptive of such change. By looking into the food selection offered by the cafeterias in Okayama University, I discovered that for the moment they are not ready to guarantee complete and balanced meals for all students regardless of dietary restrictions. However, it is my view that several of the dishes offered could be made vegan by removing one or two ingredients, thus facilitating the process of rethinking the menus. Through the interviews I aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of how the Japanese youth think about the food system and to what extent the problems caused by animal agriculture are commonly known in Japan. While it is true that the number of people involved in this study may not be sufficient to delineate any general conclusion, I believe it still provided an interesting glimpse of what students regard as important when choosing their meals. Perhaps this could turn out to be helpful in case Okayama University will consider introducing vegan meals in its cafeterias at some point in the future. It is my hope that this research, however simple, will contribute to foster the inclusion of all students



at Okayama University, as well as the importance of transitioning to a more sustainable way of living friendly to the environment, to the animals and to humans alike.

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Look into Forestry in Okayama 岡山の林業について

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Summary: During my stay in Okayama, I visited many places about forestry. After that, I interviewed a forestry worker, and learned the following facts: 1) People become forestry workers because they are interested in forestry; 2) Natural disasters cause problem in forestry and forests under inadequate management causes problem; 3) Forestry work is routine in one year; 4) SDGs make more people interested in forestry; 5) Forest environmental tax is not changing forestry in Okayama.

1. 岡山県の自然環境と森林

令和3年3月の資料によれば、岡山県の面積は711,435haであり、そのうち森林の面積は485,091haであり、全体の68%を占めている。国有林は35,689haを占め、民有林は人工林の168,253haを含んでおり、総面積は447,108haである。〈近代岡山県における林産物と森林環境〉(2018)によると、岡山県の地質は花崗岩が多い、林地崩壊を招きやすいので、はげ山がよくある。岡山は全国ヒノキの生産量の一位である。県内生産木材は総需要量の78%の323千³mである。岡山森林組合の「森林組合だより」ニュースレターによると、令和3年度は21,967,000円の純利益を稼いだ。

2. 森林専攻で岡山の林業に深く理解したい

私は国立台湾大学の農学部の森林学科で勉強している。特に木材の利用について学んでいる。木は製材されてから、大きな板などの建材として家を建てることができる。しかし、最近の木は小さく弱くなっており、新しい技術が必要である。CLTという技術は、木を組み合わせて小さい木から固くて強い建材を作ることができる。しかし、CLTでも利用されない木の部分もある。例えば、枝や製材後の廃木材である。そのようなものはチップに粉碎され、木質バイオマスとして利用される。岡山県にはCLT工場や木質バイオマス発電所があり、情報収集のために見学した。



このレポートでは、岡山県の木質バイオマスの現状と岡山の林業従業者の声について明らかにすることを試みた。先行研究として、政府資料と論文をレビューし、現地調査とインタビューでデータを集めた。これからは時間順でイベントについて述べる。

3. 「第 74 回全国植樹祭 岡山 2024」 1 年前記念イベント (2023 年 5 月 20 日西大寺緑花公園)

岡山の林業について情報を収集するため、西大寺で開催された「第 74 回全国植樹祭 岡山 2024」 1 年前記念イベントに参加した。会場に林業 PR のコーナーがあり、そこには岡山県森林組合連合会と岡山森林組合と一緒に作った体験活動と問題シートが用意された。スギ、クスノキ、ヒノキとクリの丸太を展示されており、樹皮と年輪を使って、樹種当てクイズを正しく答えた人は、記念品のヒノキの葉がもらえた。この活動を通して、市民によく見える国産材の特徴を紹介した。

また、クイズラリーで岡山県の森林面積、丸太の生産量、森林の仕事について学んだ。さらに、現場作業のチェーンソー、服装 (図 1)、ドローン (図 2) が展示されていた。林業は進化しており、労働条件が改善されつつある。子供の参加者も多く、このようにして、林業に対する興味関心を高める試みを行っていた。

4. 真庭のバイオマスツアー (2023 年 6 月 27 日真庭市)

真庭前バイオマスツアーに参加した。チップの安定供給を確保する真庭バイオマス集積基地を訪ねた。7 年前アメリカから 7,000 万円で購入した固定式粉砕機の代わりに、新しく移動できる粉砕機を購入したが、コロナと戦争の影響で、一年くらい遅れて届いた。昔はばらばらに積み込んだ木材を粉砕機のところまで運ばなければならなくて、危なくて時間がかかった。粉砕機が移動できると、積み重ねた木材に寄せられて、効率的に作業を進める。

その後、真庭バイオマス発電所で、働きの状況を見学した。2015 年 4 月から稼働開始した発電所は過ごしつつ地元の施設へ売電している。初めて見たの私は発電所がとても大きい施設だと思うが、この施設はまだ不安定なので、伝統的な発電所の代わりにはなれない。

さらに、日本一の CLT 工場を持った銘建工業の事務所で CLT について学んだ。事務所の一階は強いヒノキ CLT で、二階はより弱いスギ CLT で建たれた。銘建工業は CLT の生産とともに出た木粉を利用して、ペレットを作っている。ペレットは発電所の燃料として使われた。



最後に真庭市役所本庁舎を訪れ、そこもバイオマス発電を行っている。2億2000万円で建てたバイオマスボイラを使い、チップとペレットを燃やして、Rankine cycle を用いて暖冷房をしている。冷房時は高温水を吸収式冷凍機に送って、冷たい空気を作る。暖房の時は直接に空調機に温水を送って、本庁舎の内を温める。本庁舎には気持ちよかった、言われなかったら、バイオマスエネルギーを利用しているなんて、想像できない。

今回のツアーで様々な場所を見学した。授業でチップもペレットも CLT について勉強したが、実際に見学することで現状をより深く理解できた。これらの知識と経験を用いて、今後、さらにバイオマスの製造や発電の効率について深く理解していきたい。

5. 岡山林業従事者のインタビュー（2023年7月4日）

「第74回全国植樹祭 岡山 2024」1年前記念イベントで、林業の作業について様々な質問をしたが、不明な点が多々あったため、7月4日に御津の岡山林業組合で岸本さん（業務課 課長）を訪問した。林業従事者はどんな人たちなのか、資料の情報だけでは十分に理解できない点を、以下、聞いてみた（図3）。

5.1 従業者は林業に関心も持つ人

岸本さんは林業に興味と関心を持ち、チェーンソーで伐採してみたいという気持ちから、緑の雇用事業^{注)}を通じて、途中で林業に従事しはじめた。組合の職員で、実家が林業の家は少ない。職種による定年も異なり、総務系が定年60歳で、業務系が65歳である。定年退職しても、契約社員として務め続ける人もいれば、やめる人もいる。組合で働きながら林業を理解していく中で、自ら重機を購入して独立する人もいる。これらの事実を考えると、森を持っていない人も森林組合で働くことが推測される。

岸本さんは組合のスタッフは管理をして、現場作業はほとんど業務系の下にある作業員に頼んでいる。現場の作業をあまりしないといても、山に登るための体力が必要である。インタビューは午後に行われたが、岸本さんは午前中に現場に行ったとのこと。山が好きだけでなく、暑さに耐えられる必要がある。実際に、暑さのために6月に退職する人が多い。

^{注)} 「緑の雇用事業」とは、2003年度から日本国内における林業労働力の確保育成施策である。新規就業者は、職場での現場実習と都道府県単位での集合研修を経て、三年間の研修を受けてフォレストワーカーになることができる。岡山森林組合にも緑の雇用の研修生がいる。2023年度には新規の人を四人雇用している。公的資金を活用して資格を取得する育成支援がある一方、林業を学び興味を持つ学生はなかなかいないようである。

林業従事者として、岸本さんは将来、日本の林業を担う世代に伝えたいことがある。人工針葉樹林の放置は災害を招く。手入れされない人工林では、樹木は栄養と光不足でやせて倒



れやすく、伐採された木材は使いにくくなるため、デメリットだらけである。林業に興味がある方には、新規職員のリクルート活動が行っており、インターネットを活用している。また、林業に従事したくなくても、もっと木材を使って欲しいとの願いもある。

5.2. 3Kな職場なのに、嬉しいと感じられることがある

林業は農業と同じく、天気に影響を受ける職種である。「林業をしていて大変だと思うことを教えてください」と聞いた時、岸本さんは梅雨の時期、現場作業は天候に左右されて、作業ができない日があると答えた。そして、夏には日射病と熱中症が恐ろしいため、作業のときは空調服を着る。また、業務は環境が見える朝6時から午後3時までに行っている。岡山は雪をあまり降らないので、冬も木を切る。ちなみに、木は冬に休眠するため、この時期には木を伐採にとって一番いい。

森林の天災は風による根返りや乾燥による山火事などが含まれる。天災に対して、森林保険がある。人の保険については、労災の中に種類があり、林業の者も加入している。林業は3K（きつい、汚い、危険）な職場で、リスクが高いため掛け金が高くなる。ケガをする人も亡くなる人もいる。厚生労働省の労働災害統計によると、災害に至る項目には、飛来・落下、激突され、切れ・こすれが圧倒的に多い。これはチェーンソーを使った「伐木作業中の事故」だと考えられる。また、安全のために、虫やスズメバチに敏感な人はエピペンを携帯している。

しかし、林業をしていて「嬉しい」と感じることもある。岸本さんは少し考えた後、「嬉しいことよりも、しんどいことが多い」といった。例えば、山にいて山の整備をし、山主が喜んでくれること。コロナ禍前は小学生向けの林業ワークショップを行ったりもした。インターネットで募集をかけて30名くらいの参加者が集まった。ワークショップでは、草刈り、枝打ちの体験で、木工、椎茸、本棚づくりなどを行った。参加者は岡山市の小学生で、山が少ない岡山南部の子がほとんど占めていた。

5.3. ルーチン作業で木を育て、伐採する

林業にはルーチン作業が多い。年間4月、5月が業務量が少なく、主に山主と契約して業務を行っている。毎年同じな業務をすることが多いが、管理的にしやすさからすれば契約をする方がいい。山主に林業経営について提案もすることもある。

毎年木を植える。針葉樹のスギとヒノキだけでなく、広葉樹も植える。2022年度では27.3%を広葉樹の山桜とコナラに充て、残った72.7%はヒノキと杉を植えた。広葉樹を植えるのは、山を自然に戻すためである。樹を植えた後、5年間は下草を刈って面倒を見てあげる。御津は鹿が少なく、幼齢木ネットなどの獣害対策用品は使わないが、ウサギとイノシシがいる。イノシシと遭遇することがある。5年後、樹木は高くなって草に覆われないから、草刈りをしなくてもよくなる。



針葉樹は20～30年後、伐採する。林業には木材価格の長期低迷や労働力不足の問題が起こっている。作業費と人件費は価格より高く、赤字になる。作業費は木材の価格ではなく、量によって決まっている。

伐採された木の主な用途は原木市場に出荷することである。原木市場月に3回あり、新見、勝山、津山の3ヶ所で行う(図4)。毎年初めの原木販売は初市という特別市として行われる。11月のコンクール特別市は高級材の杉と檜が売られる。原木市場ではなんでも持ち込んでいけるが、ニーズがある方が売れるため、ニーズに応じた品目を持っていく網がいい。また、これらの木はバイオマスとしても使われることがあり、真庭に持ち込まれる。

5.4. SDGs、税などの外部の影響について

SDGsとは、持続可能な開発目標の略で、人類がこの世界で安定して暮らし続けることための実施指針である。SDGsは現場の作業にはあまり影響しなかったが、興味を持ってくれる人は増えた。

コロナ禍も戦争は林業に影響を与えたが、特に値段の面である。コロナによる出社中止と作業中止とはなく、特に工程に影響はなかったが、戦争の影響で燃料費が高騰したり、航路中止のため部品が入れなかったり、作業が間接に影響された。ウッドショック時に価格は一時的に上がったが、また、元の価格に戻った。ウッドショックとは、小枝和弘(2022)によると、COVIDと戦争の影響で、海外からの木材輸入が困難になり、木材の値段が上昇したこと。しかし、感染拡大防止のため、過去2年間は森林組合の総大会が開催できなかった。

岸本さんは2024年から導入される森林環境税で林業は変わらないと考えている。もともとある財源である「おかやま森づくり県民税」と名前が違うだけで、森林環境税とは、2024(令和6)年度から国内に住所のある個人に対して課税される国税である。国が集めた税金は市区町村に森林環境譲与税として配分される。2024年には100%交付されるので、すでに少しずつ始まっている。岡山では、県や市区町村が森林環境税を使って間伐などを行い、組合にも間接的に恩恵があるとされている。

6. まとめ

私はこの4ヶ月の間、文献を読んだり、植樹祭1年前記念イベントを行ったり、真庭のバイオマスを参加したり、調査を行った。調べたことを基づいて、問題リストを作って、林業従事者にインタビューした。

収集した情報を通じて、以下のことが明らかになった。

ア) 林業に興味を持った人が、林業従業者になっている。新規就業者は緑の雇用事業によって支援され、林業従事者数は増加した。緑の雇用事業には集合研修とOJTを組み合わせ



せた研修があり、林業に必要な資格取得に加え、安全かつ効率的な林業に必要な知識・技能を実地で3年間で習得する。

- イ) 植樹祭関連イベントやバイオマスツアーなど林業のプロモーションにおいては、林業の実態を知ってもらうために装備や機械を展示し、安全かつハイテクな林業を伝えていた。そして、キノコ栽培や樹種の見分け方を教える等して、森林に対する理解を高める努力をしている。
- ウ) 林業組合では、自然災害に対する森林保険と労働災害に対する労働保険に加入している。伐採の経費は木材の価格ではなく、量で決まる。木材を作る経費は木材の価格より高くなることもあり、全国的には赤字傾向にある。
- エ) 林業にはルーチン作業が多い。森林組合は山主と契約して、現場作業を行う。組合の総務スタッフは管理業務をして、現場の作業は作業員が行う。
- オ) 作業は天気に影響される。特に、夏は暑いので、早く始めて早く終わる。新規に林業に従事した人は、気温が高くなると退職するケースもある。岡山市は冬の間あまり雪が降らないので、冬も通常通り作業を続ける。
- カ) 岡山は平成17年6月末に「持続可能な開発のための教育(ESD)」の地域拠点(RCE)」として認定された。それ以来、SDGsの推進を進めている。SDGsは林業に直接的な影響を与えないのにもかかわらず、人々に林業に興味を持たせる効果がある。
- キ) 真庭市のバイオマス発電は期待される技術であり、林業のモデルとして他の地域への移転期待されるが、他の自然エネルギーの発電設備と比べて、きめ細やかな運転ノウハウが必要とされる。

このレポートでは、岡山の林業の概要について論じると同時に、林業に関わる問題点が記載されている。私はさらに林業や木材について学び、木材の価格の上昇を促進する技術の開発など、林業の課題に対する解決策を導き出し、林業の赤字を減らすことに貢献がしたいと考えている。



図 1. 「第 74 回全国植樹祭 岡山 2024」
1 年前記念イベントでの聞き取り



図 2. ドローン。大きくて赤いものは
15 kg までの資材（苗など）の運搬が可
能、小さくて白いものは空中撮影を
行う。



図 3. インタビューの後で、岸本さんと
岡山森林組合の前で写真を撮った。



図 4. 岡山県森林組合連合会の
木材共販（原木市場）日程表の説明

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The EPOK Research Project Presentation held on August-2-2023



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