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〔Article〕

The double missions of Ainu education and ethnography in Hokkaido, Japan: Yoshida Iwao's "unspeakable" moments and intersubjectivity of despair

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Abstract

This article examines a particular instance of Ainu counter-narrative and colonial indigeneity that emerged in an Ainu school named *Abuta gakuen* established by Oyabe Zenichirō in 1905. The Ainu schools exposed contradictory systematic forces of Ainu inclusion and exclusion. Japanese teachers transformed Ainu children and communities and attempted to incorporate them into the modern Japanese system; however, the Ainu school curriculum was kept simple and differed from that of other Japanese elementary schools. One key figure was Yoshida Iwao (1882–1963), who was a Japanese ethnographer, a colonial educator of the Ainu, and an adviser to the government of Hokkaido. Although Yoshida won extensive respect and praise from both the *Wajin* (ethnic Japanese) and Ainu public, he was deeply troubled by his experience teaching in the Ainu schools. Yoshida's personal conflicts vis-à-vis his double missions of Ainu education and ethnography were highlighted while he was teaching Japanese history at *Abuta gakuen*. In these moments in the classroom, while the Ainu children were constituting their subjectivity by speaking and crying, Yoshida was deconstituting his subjectivity by remaining silent. However, both Yoshida and the Ainu students shared the moment of articulation of the contradictions within Japanese colonialism, coupled with a simultaneously unsolvable despair on the part of Yoshida. In this article, I analyze this unusual moment by reading Yoshida's documented archives and his feelings, particularly his distress expressed in speeches and essays. By sharing these moments of despair in the classroom, Ainu children also experienced the complex interrelated workings of Japanese colonial modernity.

Keywords: Yoshida Iwao, Ainu Education, Ethnography, Intersubjectivity, Hokkaido, Japan

アイヌ教育と民族学の二重使命

――吉田巖の「いふ可からざる」瞬間と絶望のインターサブジェクティビティ――

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1. Introduction

In 2018, Japan celebrated the 150th year anniversary of the Meiji Restoration, which departed from the feudalistic old Japan and marked the beginning of modern Japan. The national government encouraged all municipal governments to hold various memorial lectures and events. The national discourse was centered on the progressive path of industrialization, modernization, and westernization which served as a foundation for creating the strong and civilized contemporary Japan. However, from the perspectives of the Ainu, this 150 year past cannot be celebratory; instead, it has to be the collective memory of being rejected, colonized, assimilated, and differentiated in the Japanese society. This conflicted memory between the government and the Ainu reveals the postcolonial contradiction that cannot be solved even today.

Fig.1 The cover page of *Ainu kara mita Hokkaido 150 nen*, edited by mai ishihara. This book publicly opposes the 150th year of Japanese national commemoration of the Meiji Restoration by illustrating the Ainu's collective voices and memories. The cover shows an Ainu child drawing a map of Ainu mosir (aka Hokkaido in the Ainu language) watched over by an *ekashi* (elder in the Ainu language). Produced by Matsuura Takeshirō as "*Ezo manga*."

Yoshida Iwao (1882–1963) was a Japanese ethnographer, a colonial educator for the Ainu, and an adviser to the government of Hokkaido. He is recognized for his life-long commitment to Ainu society, Ainu research, and development of Hokkaido in general, specifically in the city of Obihiro. Yoshida was also highly respected by the Ainu community because he was a mentor to leading Ainu public figures, such as Ega Torazō (1894–1965) and Mori Kyūkichi (1895–1978). Ega became a Christian minister and teacher in the Ainu community, and Mori became a board member as well as

an executive director of *Hokkaido Ainu kyōkai* (Hokkaido Ainu Association), a political organization that fights for the human rights of the Ainu. While Yoshida won extensive respect and praise from both the the *Wajin* and Ainu public, he was deeply troubled by his experience teaching in Ainu schools.

Ainu colonial schools provided a space for the early Ainu anthropological research in Japan, and this anthropological discourse also revealed the complex workings of colonialism. Johannes Fabian argues that anthropology provided "intellectual justifications" for colonialism by making the Other un-temporalized, spatialized, and visualized.[1] Although Fabian is not directly talking about the Japanese context, anthropological research on Ainu culture justified Japanese colonial enterprises over the Ainu. Yoshida's experience as a Japanese teacher as well as an ethnographer of Ainu culture suggests the intricate relations between colonialism and anthropology. As a metanarrative, Yoshida's dual positionality was supposed to ensure his public status, which it actually did if we look at the variety of his prestigious rewards granted by the Hokkaido government. However, this is not a one-sided story—Yoshida was caught up in the contradiction of his dual positionality, and he could not reconcile it. He intuited the double-edged effects of the conspiracy of Japanese colonial education with anthropological research. This colonial conspiracy was presented as a positive and progressive enterprise; however, it potentially contradicted the agency and subjectivities of the Ainu. In other words, it was regressive from the perspective of aboriginal education. Yoshida's distress tells us that the conspiracy of anthropology to promote colonialism was, as Fabian argues, not a cut-and-dried project and that Yoshida understood Fabian's critique from the inside. Rather, the experience of colonial modernity was affective and non-cognitive. Yoshida was acutely aware of the contradictions of colonial modernity. His distress foreshadowed the current scholarship of post-colonial studies that discusses contradictions of colonialism, for example, "excess" in the process of mimicry and transformation of civility.[2] Yoshida might have been able to predict the soon-to-come convoluted post-colonial future of Japanese society. Yoshida's distress as affect should be carefully examined, rather than its analytical aspects, such as those that post-colonial discussions presuppose.

It seems contradictory, methodologically inappropriate, or simply impossible to articulate an Ainu school experience through a Japanese teacher's distress because the Japanese experience is conventionally understood as the perspective of "the oppressor." In other words, a colonizer's experience or approach is taken as a completely opposite epistemology from the one of the Ainu.

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1 Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object,* 17.

2 Homi Bhabha, for example, discusses an effect of mimicry in relation to the politics of civility by explaining that "the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence: in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference." He argues that mimicry is not simply an issue of whether you identity or dis-identify with; rather, a more complex issue here is the effect of mimicry that produces its "slippage, excess, and difference" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 122).

Thus, Yoshida's "distress" has been ignored, even though he voiced it eloquently and reiterated it in his speeches and essays.

In my article, I examine Ainu counter-narratives and subalternity that emerged in the particular space of the Ainu school established in 1905 by Oyabe Zenichirō and argue that Yoshida's distress caused a transformative moment when the Ainu's oppressed voice was convoluted. It functions as "identity-constituting" for the Ainu children and "deconstituting" for Yoshida. Yoshida, intentionally or not, created a very particular moment in an Ainu classroom on November 16, 1908 that disrupted the colonial metanarrative and revealed the construction of intersubjectivity within both. By sharing such moments of despair in the classroom, Ainu children also articulated the complex interrelated workings of colonial education. Because of these experiences, Yoshida could not overcome his distress; instead, it haunted him for the rest of his life.

2. Colonial Relations between the Japanese and the Ainu in the Meiji Period

Post-colonial scholars, historians, and critics of modernity have discussed the contradictions of colonialism, and particularly, the complex workings between colonialism and modernity. Tani Barlow argues that concepts and histories of colonialism and modernity are intertwined such that we can understand neither colonialism nor modernity if we dismiss the interrelated workings of both.[3] Based on this analysis, she claims that colonial modernity is a "useful"[4] theoretical framework to examine the complex histories of East Asia. It poses questions to the already essentialized units, relations, and pairs, and encourages us to grasp complex workings of power by engaging in new ways of interpreting our history and presence. However, narratives of Japanese-Ainu relations tend to be ignored in those discussions of Japanese colonial modernity.[5] Nonetheless, the relations between the Japanese and the Ainu are one of the important threads of Japanese colonial modernity. Particularly, Ainu education should be considered an important site of convergence where complex workings of the colonial project intersect.

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3 Barlow, "Introduction: On "Colonial Modernity" (*Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*); Barlow, "Joron: Higashi Ajia ni oketu modan gāru to shokuminchiteki kindai" (*Modan gāru to shokuminchiteki kindai*).

4 Barlow, "Introduction: On "Colonial Modernity," 3.

5 Barlow's *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia* includes five essays related to Japan; however, narratives of the Ainu are not included in this book. Also, Michele Mason and others have pointed out that the inception of the Japanese empire typically is understood as the "foreign" colonial acquisition of Taiwan through the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), so prior colonization processes over Hokkaido, Okinawa, and Ogasawara have been largely forgotten or not paid attention to. Based on this critique, Hokkaido now has been recognized as one of the important sites for analyzing the Japanese expansive empire.

The discourse of Japanese colonial modernity developed in the Meiji period. As Japanese intellectuals engaged the international discourse of civilization and progress by translating Western literature and political theories,[6] they, voluntarily or not, began to acknowledge their racial position as "yellow" (semi-civilized) according to the race discourse and Japanese racial positionality in the international community.[7]

Japanese intellectuals and educators, however, did not simply take these Western political theories at face value. Along with other radical changes made through the Meiji Restoration, Japanese intellectuals were required to rework "the realm of civilization"[8] to refigure modern Japanese ethnic, geographical, and political configurations.

The colonial relations between the Japanese and the Ainu were constructed through a perceived time lag of coloniality. By the nineteenth century, the Ainu had been already considered "pre-modern" or "peripheral" in the Japanese archipelago;[9] however, in the Meiji period, under the Japanese progress (*bunmeikaika,* civilization and enlightenment), the Ainu were then incorporated as a target of protection to make the Japanese look and feel civilized. Although the Ainu were forcibly assimilated as part of this Japanese modernity, Japanese colonialists and ethnographers still viewed the Ainu as "primitives" or "uncivilized." The time lag constructed in colonial modernity defines "Self" as being progressive and "Other" as either stagnant or, more likely, regressing.[10]

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6 By differentiating the concept of *bunmeikaika* from modernization, Douglas Howland discusses the dynamic politics of translating Western political theories uniquely done by Japanese intellectuals. See Howland's *Translating the West*.

7 For example, Fukuzawa Yuchiki in *Sekai kunizukushi* (Account of the Countries of the World) introduced the Western racial categories with color coded illustrations: "Europeans are white, Asians 'slightly yellow,' Africans black, the people of the Pacific Islands brown, and the inhabitants of 'the mountains of America' red" (Fukuzawa qtd in Morris-Suzuki, *Re-inventing Japan*, 85).

8 Howell, *Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth Century Japan*, 8. Howell explains that after the collapse of the Tokugawa in 1868, the old Tokugawa peripheries, including the Ainu, became Meiji imperial subjects by accelerating the "ethnic" negation. Simultaneously, the "realm of civilization" was altered from the Sino-centric worldview to the Western modernistic civilization measure.

9 For the Japanese conquest of Ainu lands from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century, please see Brett Walker's *The Conquest of Ainu Lands*.

10 Prathama Banerjee in *Politics of Time* problematizes the concept of time in the context of Indian colonialism. She argues that modernity appeared in "temporal competence" and that temporality manipulates the logic of progress and regress. She articulates Indian colonial modernity as a form of being modern that is shaped and negotiated with the progressive forces of British colonialism. Banerjee claims not only that the colonials (the British) determined who the primitives (for example, the Santals) were, but also that the colonized (the Bengal middle class or intellectuals) produced the primitives (as "primitive within" or "primordial") while constructing themselves as a "historical," "national," and therefore knowing "self."

Ainu education was a primary location for the Japanese colonial project. Ainu schools exposed contradictory systematic forces of Ainu inclusion and exclusion in Japanese colonialism. Japanese teachers colonized Ainu children and communities by transforming Ainu subjects, including their literary and daily practices through Ainu school experiences, and attempted to incorporate Ainu subjects into the Japanese modern system. Ogawa Masato in his *Kindai Ainu kyōiku seidoshi kenkyū* delineates the Ainu educational history since the 1890s and argues that from the beginning of the educational system, the main purpose of educating the Ainu was to assimilate them into Japanese systems and society. However, subjects and methods in these Ainu schools were kept "simple," and the schools operated based on a principle of *besugaku* (segregation). Ainu schools, on the one hand, functioned to disseminate Japanese systems into Ainu society; on the other hand, they produced systematic discrimination and exclusion in the process of assimilation.

Takegahara Yukio, another important historian of Ainu education, sees that in the 1880s and 1890s, the education for the Ainu got attention as an important issue of the "*kyū dojin*"[11] in the Japanese education studies community. It matched with the national policy of making the Ainu imperial subjects. Both Ogawa and Takegahara characterize Yoshida as a representative Japanese colonial educator. Although they recognize the dual postionalities of Yoshida, they minimize his emotion because they do not question that he was a typical colonial educator (I will discuss this point later in detail).

Regarding the history of Ainu education, despite the early efforts made by the Development Agency,[12] the school attendance rate of Ainu children was less than 10 percent. After the 1890s when the Japanese government expanded its own policies of teaching farming and animal husbandry to members of the Ainu community, the Ainu schools also increased in number and spread even into the inland of Hokkaido. Then, *Kyū dojin hogo hō* (The Ainu Protection Act) in 1899, especially article 9, as well as the *Kyū dojin jidō kyōiku kitei* in 1901 regarding Ainu education established the particular Ainu education system which was initiated by the Japanese government. There were 25 schools in total. By 1909 when almost all the Ainu schools were established, the total number of Ainu children

11 The late 1890s were a critical time for determining colonial relations between the Japanese and the Ainu. The final stage, which culminated in the establishment of *Kyū dojin hogo hō* (The Ainu Protection Act) in 1899, completed the institutional assimilation of the Ainu to Japanese society. Through this law, a group of the Ainu became Japan's ethnic minority, subjects of the Japanese government's "protection." The Ainu were renamed "*kyū dojin*" in the Japanese language, a term that remained in Japanese legal discourse until 1997. The Ainu, which literally means a "human" or "human being" in Ainu language, was transformed into "*kyū dojin*," the "primitives."

12 The pioneer examples of the early Ainu schools were Hitsugakusho (1866), Kaitakushi kari gakkō (1872), and the Kyōikujo, which were established by the Development Agency (Kaitakushi) in 1877 in Tsuishikari, to which the Ainu were forced to relocate.

was 1,962, and 688 went to these particular Ainu schools. The rest of the children went to the Japanese public schools where *itaku kyōiku* (asking the schools to accept Ainu children) was practiced.[13]

3. Yoshida Iwao

Yoshida Iwao (1882–1963) is one of a few Ainu educators who are still memorialized and respected by the Japanese public. Examples of his high public standing include his commendations of the first Obihiro City Culture Plume (*Obihiro shi bunka shō*) in 1950 and the fourth Hokkaido Culture Plume (*Hokkaido bunka shō*) in 1952. He has been treated as a "typical" Japanese teacher who embodied Japanese colonial education, but I will contest this description.

Yoshida worked as an educator for the Ainu in Hokkaido for twenty-four years. He started his teaching career at *Abuta gakuen* (1907–1910) and continuously taught in several Ainu schools, including *Nioi dojin gakkō* (1911–13), *Toyokoro dai ni jinjō shōgakkō* (1913–1915), and *Fushiko dai ni jinjō shōgakkō* (1915–31; it was renamed *Nisshin jinjō shōgakkō* in 1928).[14] He was the principal and *kundō* (an official title for Japanese teachers) until the closing of the *Nisshin jinjō shōgakkō* in 1931.

His career as an ethnographer of Ainu culture was also impressive. He joined an academic association called *Tokyo jinruigaku kai* (Anthropological Society of Tokyo) in 1910, which was the most influential anthropological group organized by Tsuboi Shōgorō, the first professor of anthropology at the University of Tokyo. Yoshida published fifty-one articles/essays in the society's journal *Tokyo jinruigaku zasshi* (Journal of the Anthropological Society of Tokyo). In total, 235 essays/articles of his were published in various academic journals,[15] including *Minzokugaku kenkyū*. In addition to Yoshida's numerous publications, he has been particularly remembered as an exceptional ethnographer who paid attention to the heterogeneity of Ainu culture and language[16] and recorded the temporal and geographical information attached to the languages and materials he obtained.[17]

13 Ogawa, *Kindai Ainu kyōikuseidoshi kenkyū*, 11–12.

14 Kokuni, "Ainu kyōiku ni okeru kokuminka to minzokuka," 79.

15 Kobayashi, "Yoshida iwao sensei no shōgai," 11.

16 For example, Yoshida records heterogeneity of Ainu language as follows: "In the same way that there is difference in language and intonation depending on municipalities and *kuni*, in Ainu society, depending on *kuni* and *buraku* (villages), boundaries make the language fixed. According to my research, in the case of Abuta/Usu in Iburi, although there is only one *ri* [3.927 km] between two village, [and] in Usu, although there is [only] one village, I recognize difference. It also applies to other neighboring villages. Furthermore, the *kuni* such as Kushiro, Ishikari, Oshima, Iburi, Tokachi, which are far from here surely have difference" (Yoshida, "Hidaka hen 6 hen: Jimoku isshinki" in *Kokoro no ishibumi*, 102). Also, Kokuni in "Ainu kyōiku ni okeru kokuminka to minzokuka" mentions this point (80).

17 Kokuni, "Ainu kyōiku ni okeru kokumin ka to minzokuka," 80.

After his retirement from teaching, Yoshida started to work for the Obihiro community and the government of Hokkaido. In 1922, the Hokkaido government established a community-based advisory system called *hodō iin*, and Yoshida was invited to be a committee member to work in communities from 1922 to 1949. The name of the committee changed from *dojin hodō iin* in 1923 to *hōmen iin* and thereafter to *minsei iin* in 1946, but the nature of the community-based advising for Ainu communities remained the same.[18] He also compiled the history of Obihiro City as *Obihiro shi kō* in 1940.

Yoshida was a passionate and consistent writer. He published numerous essays on his experience in Ainu schools and Ainu culture/languages, particularly through the series of *Obihiro shi shakai kyōiku sōsho*. These included *Aikyō shiryō* (Resources about My Hometown) in 1955, *Nisshin zuishitsu* (Continuously Renewing Essays) in 1956, *Aikyō tanshō* (Essays on Love for My Hometown) in 1957, *Aikyō sōshi* (Love for My Hometown Book) in 1958, *Aikyō ōrai* (Associations with My Hometown) in 1959, and *Aikyō shunjyū* (Spring and Autumn in My Hometown) in 1960.[19] He kept writing in his diary for quite a long time, up until a month before he died in June 1963.[20]

4. Politics of the Ainu Archives

Yoshida's archives are preserved in the Obihiro City Library.[21] They are not only massive in quantity but also consist of records and stories of both parties: Japanese schoolteachers and Ainu children. However, we need to remember that although archives, specifically Ainu children's archives, remain, because many of their journals and essays were given as assignments as part of the school curriculum, we may not able to listen to the Ainu children's original "voice." Those Ainu's writings were reviewed, checked, and oftentimes compiled by schoolteachers such as Yoshida, to be presented and preserved. I should say that there is no pure voice that is unequivocably "the voice" of the Ainu. Illuminating the Ainu's experience is not confined to searching for, recuperating, extracting, or tracing their authentic and genuine "voice," but also includes examining their experience in the context of the Japanese system of power. The intersubjectivity of both the Japanese and the Ainu nevertheless needs to be considered more seriously from the perspective of archives research as well

18 Ogawa, "Yoshida Iwao shoshi," 2. Ogawa's article includes the most comprehensive records about Yoshida's publications.

19 Kobayashi, "Yoshida Iwao sensei no shōgai," 12.

20 Ibid., 13.

21 For details on Yoshida's archives, see Ogawa's "Yoshida Iwao shoshi."

as from the two groups' historical experience of colonialism.[22]

Many writings of Ainu students were produced and have been preserved because of Yoshida's pedagogy. He considered keeping a journal (*nisshi*) in the Japanese language essential to language learning. He emphasized the importance of the activity in the following way:

> I believe that there is nothing better than keeping a journal to emphasize deeds, cultivate scrupulous insights and store up organized thoughts, as well as to acquire a habit of diligence with simple writing. Therefore, I mimeographed a form at school and called it *Abuta gakuen nisshi*. I distributed the form to the students and ordered them to write a journal, picked the dates to inspect their journals, and gave them advice on how to write articles. It is amazing to see that it [keeping a journal] becomes their habit after a while. Among them, there are even students who confess that they cannot sleep in bed if writing is not done for a day. Acquiring a habit is surely promising.[23]

As his pedagogy of writing shows, the Ainu students started to write a journal in Japanese because of an "order" by Yoshida. Consequently, Yoshida periodically checked their journals, provided advice on their Japanese writings, and corrected their *kanji* and *okurigana* mistakes. Simultaneously, researchers are required to consider the aspect of performativity in Ainu children's archives, acknowledging that their journals were constrained and constructed under certain conditions. Thus, Ainu archives and their experiences cannot be examined as separate from Yoshida's or other Japanese teachers' experiences.

A Selection of Abuta Gakuen Nisshi (*Abuta gakuen nisshi shō*)[24] explicitly illustrates the politics of colonial archives. Yoshida compiled this selection from the Ainu students' journals. The journals were originally written between February and June 1909 by the nine Ainu students who were studying at *Abuta gakuen*: Ikushima Matsukichi, Uekawa Nagazō, Sunayama Rikitarō, Nomoto Benji, Mori Katsusaburō, Mori Kyūkichi, Akayana Tetsuzō, Kawamura Taichi, and Yamada Tokujirō. These

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22 Derrida discusses that archives are not simply recordings of the past, but they constitute the past and open the future. His argument is that political power working outside and inside of archives shapes what we see as archives (Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*).

23 Yoshida, *Kokoro no ishibumi*, Ainu shi shiryō dai 2 ki shuppan: dai 1 kan, Yohida Iwao chosaku hen 1(4), p. 50. Yoshida's *Kokoro no ishibumi* expresses his "confession of his experience as a teacher of Ainu school" (7). It is divided into three chapters, and each chapter is narrated according to his teaching careers in three different regions in Hokkaido: Iburi Chapter, Hidaka Chapter, Tokachi Chapter. His experience in Abuta is included in the first section of Iburi Chapter, 13–94.

24 *Abuta gakuen nisshi shō* was reprinted and published in *Obihiro shōsho vol. 40: Yoshida Iwao shiryō shū no. 6*, 9–36.

compiled journals were revised in order to make their writings clean, grammatically neat, and presentable for the visitors of the school.[25] All their journals uniformly describe their organized daily schedule and routines from morning to night: for instance, taking care of the fields, helping with domestic work, taking classes at school, preparing meals, eating, serving as apprentices in various shops in the village, playing, bathing and having their hair cut, and participating in a nighttime study hall held at *Abuta dai 2 jinjō shōgakkō* (a normal elementary school for the Ainu children).[26] Their journals certainly provide detailed information on their activities and routines when they were studying at the school. However, their writings were restrained because they did not describe their feelings and psychology, for instance, how they felt and thought about things that they did in school. It is difficult to illuminate the Ainu children's affective experience under the constraints of Japanese power in archives and texts.

My question to Ainu's recorded archives is exactly what Gayatri Spivak poignantly explored in her famous article, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"[27] Her critique was directed toward the easy promises of recovering voices of subaltern women in archives and texts. Spivak's statement about the impossibility of subalterns speaking is powerful. No matter how careful we are in trying to approach such subjects, subalterns are not able to speak. Their lost words are never recovered. Spiviak's critique, as well as the impossibility of defining marginalized archives, have required oppositional scholars to develop new ways of exploring subalterns' lost pasts that do not necessarily rely on recorded documents. Feelings, emotions, memory, and experience, so-called "archives of feelings,"[28] are important repertoires for histories of the marginalized.

While exploring Yoshida's archives about Ainu children, I must agree with Spiviak's argument about the impossibility of subalterns speaking in texts, and various other historians' approaches to "archives of feelings."

25 "Kaidai" in *Obihiro sōsho, vol. 40: Yoshida Iwao shiryōshū no. 6*, 11. Many of Yoshida's preserved archives have been published as *Obihiro shōsho* since 1955. The series was entitled *Obihiro shi shakai kyōiku shōsho* through vol. 15, and beginning with vol. 16 it was renamed *Obihiro shōsho*. The series *Obihiro shōsho* still continues publishing Yoshida's massive volumes of archives.

26 "Abuta gakuen nisshi shō" in *Obihiro shōsho, vol. 40: Yoshida Iwao shiryō shū no. 6*, 9–36.

27 "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. 271–313.

28 Ann Cvetkovich in her *An Archive of Feelings* sheds light on the history of trauma in lesbian communities and examines how trauma intersects with memory and history. She argues that the effect of trauma produces activism and the queer public sphere.

5. Yoshida's Distress: Torn by His "Double Mission" Positionalities of Ainu Education and Ethnography

Yoshida Iwao expressed his paradoxical feelings as a Japanese colonial educator for the Ainu in various essays such as "*Hokkaido senjūmin ni tsuite*" (Regarding the Hokkaido Indigenous People)[29] and "*Ainu ni kansuru zatsuwa*" (Miscellanea about the Ainu).[30] His two positionalities—being a Japanese teacher working to discipline the Ainu to become like the Japanese, as well as an ethnographer who collected, investigated, and preserved their culture, language, and history—appeared contradictory. On the one hand, Yoshida was responsible for transforming the cultural practices of Ainu children into "Japanese" ones for progress and civilization; on the other hand, he was keen on preserving the "native" culture of the Ainu as an ethnographer. What makes this story worth examining is that Yoshida was acutely aware of the double-edged effects of his positionality. That is why he was deeply distressed—he was aware of the contradictions of Japanese colonialism.[31]

Yoshida described his paradoxical positionality as being committed to the "double missions of destruction and construction."[32] He confessed that what he did as a Japanese teacher was the "destruction" of Ainu culture and simultaneously the "construction" of Japanese culture. He was tremendously distressed because he was not able to solve the paradox as a Japanese teacher, and he participated in the "mission of destruction" for his entire life. Yoshida powerfully confessed his experience of being trapped and torn by his dual missions, and the tremendous distress that resulted from his experience:

> I spent five years in Iburi, three years in Hidaka, and twenty years in Tokachi. To be precise, for thirty years and three months (from August 1906 to November 1936), if you exclude my past full

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29 This was originally a manuscript of his speech for The Obihiro Library Local Lecture (Obihiro toshokan kyōdo kōenkai) held on November 7, 1936. From November 10 to 15, it was released as a 6 article series in *Tokachi Mainichi Shinbun*. Also, it was reprinted in *Aikyō sōshi: Higashi Hokkaido Ainu koji fūdo shiryō (Obihiroshi shakai kyōiku sōsho no. 4)* in November 1958.

30 This was originally published in *Kamikawa chūgakkko gakuyūkai zasshi* in July 1912, and reprinted in *Aikyō sōshi: Higashi Hokkaido Ainu koji fūdo shiryō (Obihiroshi shakai kyōiku sōsho no. 4)* in November 1958.

31 My analysis of the double missions of Yoshida also comes from my own dissertation, particularly Chapter 2 (94–103), submitted to Emory University in 2013.

32 Yoshida Iwao, "Hokkaido senjūmin ni tsuite," 36.

> five years of seclusion, for twenty something years, I taught in *dojin*[33] elementary schools and a *jitsugyō hoshū gakkō* (vocational supplementary school). Because of that, time and opportunities to ceaselessly experience the real lives of the Ainu were given, and my life was blessed when it came to resource collecting and organizing. However, in order to fulfill my mission of being a teacher or a juvenile officer, I always always [*sic*] had to overcome psychological contradictions and various unreasonableness and difficulties due to *the double missions of destruction and construction. From the point of view of my conscience, I am troubled even now from not being able to change my principle/position* (emphasis added).[34]

Right after his confession about being trapped in his "double missions," Yoshida concludes that "the double missions" were contradictory in principle and that it was impossible to achieve equilibrium. The lack of balance, and perhaps the relentless weight of "the mission of destruction," troubled him for his entire life.

Yoshida's regret, frustration, and distress at not being able to change his principles or even challenge the dominant discourse, or simply salve his "conscience," made him more committed to Ainu research. Yoshida himself insightfully articulated why the double missions were contradictory in his own words. He even confessed that imbalance and his "conscience" connected him to Ainu research for the rest of his life:

> When I, as the same individual on the one hand faced them [the Ainu] as the object (target) of education, [and] on the other forced them to be the object of research, I was deeply troubled all the time. The linchpin of education was to assimilate the primitives entirely (in every aspect). The linchpin of research was not to intervene with the native and primitive conditions and rather to investigate faithfully while preserving them. To find the intersecting (matching) points of or harmony between both projects had been consistently impossible. *I am no longer in the position of the former. However, my conscience still does and forever will tie me to the latter; I have to confess that conscientiousness constrains my future* (emphasis added).[35]

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33 *Dojin* is now a derogatory term to describe the indigenous populations. The Japanese used several different ferms to refer to the Ainu in the Meiji period. The Development Agency of Hokkaido (Kaitakushi) in 1878 decided to call the Ainu *kyū dojin* (ex-indigenous people) although the Ainu also became equal subjects under the emperor due to the political reforms made through the Meiji Restoration. By marking and registering them as *kyū dojin*, the discrimination against them continued. The term *dojin* existed in the Japanese law discourse until 1997 when the *Hokkaido kyū dojin hogohō* (The Ainu Protection Law) was abolished (Historical Museum of Hokkaido, *Kindai no hajimari*, 44).

34 Yoshida, "Hokkaido senjyūmin ni tsuite," 36.

35 Ibid.

Yoshida was haunted by his distress for quite a long time, and in this inability to overcome his distress he inevitably always recommitted himself to researching the Ainu culture and language. This inevitability was another effect of his distress, which influenced him for his entire life.

6. Yoshida's Distress in Ainu Literary Praxis

One of the key complex workings of Japanese colonial modernity can be particularly seen in Japanese/Ainu literary praxis. In fact, Yoshida's major interest in Japanese colonial education, as well as Ainu culture in general, centered on literary praxis. Yoshida's distress makes a paradox in literary praxis explicit, just as the paradox clearly delineates his distress.

Yoshida taught Japanese language to Ainu children. Yoshida emphasized the importance of keeping a journal as his pedagogy and provided the Ainu students plenty of opportunities to write and practice Japanese writing and speaking. In school, the Ainu children were expected to have a literary life in Japanese, even though many of them continued using Ainu languages at home.[36] While Yoshida's job was to teach Japanese writing to the children, he was keen to learn the Ainu languages, including words, stories, and myths. In other words, Yoshida's mission was twofold: he contributed to disciplining Ainu children in Japanese and attempted to transform their literary practice into a Japanese one, and also asked these children to write, preserve, and translate their own languages, stories, and myths in the form of the Japanese language. However, in order to inscribe Ainu culture, including Ainu words, stories, and myths, both Yoshida and the Ainu children realized that they had to borrow the Japanese phonetic *katakata* syllabary or Roman alphabets, because Ainu languages had not developed a literary system of writing.

Yoshida was aware of the impossibility of fully documenting Ainu culture. He even noticed unsolvable contradictions in his ethnographical work. Yoshida was noted as an exceptional anthropologist who paid special attention to the heterogeneity of Ainu culture and language and recorded the temporal and geographical information attached to the languages and materials he obtained.[37] He clearly acknowledged that a "dictionary, " even the famous John Bachelor's dictionary of Ainu language, was not able to capture the comprehensive Ainu literary practice: "Many of the Ainu language dictionaries edited by Bachelor are not even satisfying if you have a conversation exclusively based on the dictionary because it does not translate to each village. Taking this into account, it is unavoidable to reach the conclusion that he compiled just one dialect of Ainu language."[38] The heterogeneity of the Ainu language and its practice meant that Ainu students who

36 Yoshida, "Ainu ni kansuru zatuwa" in *Aikyō shōshi: Higashi Hokkaido Ainu koji fūdo shiryō. Obihiro shi shakai kyōiku sōsho no. 4*, 33.

37 Kokuni, "Ainu kyōiku ni okeru kokumin ka to minzokuka," 80.

38 Yoshida, "Hidaka hen 6 hen: Jimoku isshinki" in *Kokorono ishibumi*, 103.

came from various parts of Hokkaido had to communicate with each other through the Japanese language, which Yoshida and other involved teachers expected and encouraged them to do. Again, Yoshida experienced the impossibility of fulfilling the responsibilities of his dual positionality because as much as he encouraged the Ainu to speak Japanese in school, he became an agent of destroying the rich culture of Ainu heterogeneous languages.

Kokuni Yoshihiro suggests that two different aspects of Yoshida existed: a researcher to document Ainu cultures and languages, as well as a teacher to discipline the students in Japanese, thereby depriving them of their own cultural practices. These aspects are not "dissonant" but "consonant,"[39] Kokuni maintains, specifically responding to Takegahara Yukio's article which claims that "Yoshida conducted his teaching in Japanese and denied the educational praxis in Ainu language; therefore, his educational praxis and research were completely separated; he never thought about incorporating the results that stemmed from his Ainu research."[40] Kokuni, contrary to Takehara's analysis, observes that Yoshida's anthropological interests in Ainu culture and language and his educational interest in Ainu children do not contradict each other. Rather, they were almost identical, given that what Yoshida collected as "Ainu culture" anthropologically produced "the Ainu." Kokuni's critical shift to determine the "consonant" functionalities of being an "Ainu" researcher and a teacher in an "Ainu" school is important because it reveals the colonialists' functionalities vis-à-vis the anthropological discourse.

My focus is on Yoshida's distress that came out of his colonial experience of engaging in two contradictory positionalities. The "double missions of destruction and construction" troubled him deeply, even after he retired as a teacher in 1931. Although he finally confessed to his feelings of being trapped in "the double missions," he was not relieved because he did not, and could not, abort the "destruction mission" completely. His distress produced by his dual missions made him continuously committed to his research on Ainu language and culture. As an ethnographer of Ainu culture, he acknowledged heterogeneous Ainu culture and wanted to preserve it as innate. However, his positionality as a Japanese teacher did not allow him to do so. Instead, he had to be the agent of "destroying" the Ainu culture he respected and transforming it for assimilation into a Japanese, civilized culture.

7. Yoshida's "Unspeakable" Moments in Japanese History Class and the Intersubjectivity of Despair

Yoshida's conflicts in his "double positionalities" were highlighted while he was teaching Japanese

39 Kokuni, "Ainu kyōiku ni okeru kokuminka to minzokuka," 82.

40 Takegahara qtd in Kokuni, "Ainu kyōiku ni okeru kokumin ka to minzokuka," 82.

history at *Abuta gakuen*. Yoshida's internal conflicts and distress became "unspeakable" and unbearable for him when realizing Japanese colonial history from the side of the Ainu, from the side of the people in Ezo, who were invaded by Japanese conquerors. The moment of articulation of the unsolvable contradictions of his double missions silenced as well as distressed him—knowing the narrative from "the other side," from the side of the Ainu, while, as a Japanese teacher, his responsibility was to tell a Japanese colonial story as national history. He described how this experience was "unspeakable," and he could not justify his position as a Japanese teacher because of his articulation of the contradictions within Japanese colonial schools. However, he still had to uphold his role as a Japanese colonial teacher in public. Later in his life, he confessed this unbearable distress and actually wept over the unreasonableness of Japanese colonialism by empathizing with the Ainu's indigeneity:

> In history, whenever I encounter a word of Ezo, it evokes a kind of unspeakable feeling (*iubekarazaru*). Moreover, when I speak in front of the pitiful party (*karera* — in this context, the Ainu children), a teardrop inevitably falls. We say *Ezo* [the people of *Ezo*] rise in rebellion or we take revenge or attack *Ezo*. These are not wrong as our national history. Nonetheless, speaking from their side, from the people who were expelled as *kegai no tami* ("uncivilized people[s]"), it is a reality that they think their native land had been invaded and damaged. That's why they rebelled. In this case, their rebellion was not absolute violence, but to some extent, it could be interpreted as a self-defensive vendetta. This interpretation is not necessarily a justification that is too affected by [the Ainu themselves]. We should feel great compassion for them. Moreover, in the current situation in which impartiality is guaranteed under the emperor (*isshidōjin*), they should not be excluded as *kegai no tami*. If exclusion exists, it is too lamentable to bear. *I am so filled with emotion that I cannot speak about the situation* (emphasis added).[41]

At a very particular moment in class, Yoshida provided time and space where Ainu children were able to express their own emotions and feelings. Moreover, all the Ainu students cried over their history, and some Ainu students explicitly voiced their frustration, opposition, and desire for vengeance over the Japanese conquest (albeit under the limited conditions of Yoshida's classroom). While the Ainu children were constituting their subjectivity by speaking and crying, Yoshida was deconstituting his subjectivity by being silent. However, at this moment, both Yoshida and the Ainu students shared the experience of articulating the contradictions within Japanese colonialism, coupled

41 Yoshida, "Ainu ni kansuru zatsuwa" in *Obihiro shi shakai kyōiku shōsho vol. 4: Aikyōshōshi, Tōhoku Hokkaido Ainu koji fūdo shiryō*, p. 31. This excerpt originally appeared in *Kamikawa chūgakkō gakuyūkai zasshi* in 1912.

with a simultaneously unsolvable despair on the part of Yoshida.

For instance, Yoshida told the story of Sakanoue Tamuramaro in his history class during a third session on November 16, 1908. Sakanoue Tamuramaro, along with other ancient and medieval Japanese heroes such as Yamato takeru no mikoro, Abe no hirafu, and Minamoto no yoshitsune, are considered significantly important Japanese historical figures to the regions of Tōhoku and Hokkaido. These heroes are frequently depicted, narrated, and memorialized, particularly in modern historiographies, essays, and historical documents about those regions.[42] Sakanoue Tamuramaro was appointed by Emperor Kammu in 791 to expel the native people of northeastern Honshū called *Emishi*. Due to the military success of controlling the region, he became the first recipient of the title *seii taishōgun*("barbarian-subduing shōgun"), and the espoused history of the Ezo conquest still reflects the core identity of the people in Tōhoku.[43]

In the following class, after Yoshida taught the story of Sakanoue Tamuramaro, he unexpectedly changed the teaching schedule and asked the students how they felt about the conquest history and what they would have done if they had lived in the time of Tamuramaro's conquest. Although Yoshida had told the Japanese audience at his speech that the Ainu students' essays had affected him deeply, he had also tried to disguise his experience with Ainu students in order to sound like an authentic Japanese colonial narrative. Being aware of the potential criticism that he was too sympathetic to the Ainu, he switched back to the positionality of a Japanese colonial officer, maintaining that the purpose of hearing the voice of the Ainu was for his research, to understand the Ainu better for colonial projects:

> On one occasion, when I told the historical evidence about Generalissimo Tamuramaro's conquest of *Ezo*, I gave them an assignment to write on the theme of "Alas, Tamuramaro shōgun" in order to find out their honest thoughts. I received something interesting and extremely touching. I cannot reveal the contents of their essays here; however, in the Meiji emperor's period, I believe that it is significantly worthwhile to investigate what sort of mettle is to be found in the minds of the second-class nationals.[44]

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42 Kikuchi, *Kita nihon ni okeru tamuramaro, Yoshitune densetsu no kindaiteki tenkai*, kagaku kenkyūhi hojo kin, kiban kenkyū (C) kenkyū seika hōkokusho, 1.

43 Kikuchi Iwao, who is a historian of *Hoppōshi* (Northern History), points out that the regional consciousness of Tōhoku (northern Japan) has been synchronized with the viewpoint of conquerors rather than of the people being conquered. Kikuchi further analyzes that this historical consciousness of the Ezo conquest has underpinned the sense of "nationalism" for people in the region of Tōhoku.

44 Yoshida, "Ainu ni kansuru zatsuwa" in *Obihiro shi shakai kyōiku shōsho vol. 4: Aikyōshōshi, tōhokuhokkaido ainu koji fūdo shiryō*, 33.

From this statement, we can understand that Yoshida was definitely curious about what Ainu children thought about the Japanese conquest history of Ezo. However, his intention in creating this particular moment is difficult to determine. Again, it could have been for the purpose of colonizing the Ainu or for documenting the psychology of the Ainu as an ethnographer.

According to Kikuchi's explanation, Yoshida's teaching of Tamuramaro to the Ainu children should be considered a determined act of imprinting Japanese consciousness. However, a lot more was happening at those moments of implementing Japanese consciousness. Yoshida was rendered silent and distressed, his eyes wet with tears ("a teardrop inevitably falls"), while the Ainu children also cried and showed their resistance. They all shared the moment of despair as a poignant result of the contradictory projects of Ainu schools under Japanese colonialism.

Yoshida's teaching of Tamuramaro also appeared in his personal journal. Yoshida's journal keeps a record of this class as follows:

> In the third session, history, we talked about Sakanoue Tamuramaro. In the following fourth session, using the time assigned for handicrafts, I suddenly wrote on the blackboard: "Alas, Sakanoue Tamuramaro Generalissimo." I asked each one to write whatever they thought. Each one cried after they finished writing.[45]

Although Yoshida was reluctant to share exactly what Ainu students wrote for this assignment, he kept clean copies of their essays. When this assignment was given, some students had already taken the conquest story as their own and synchronized it with the viewpoint of a conqueror, as I will show here. They consequently showed their appreciation of Tamuramaro's conquest because they understood that his eighth-century conquest and control over the Tōhoku region (then called Ezo) had purportedly led to the current progressive situation where the Ainu were incorporated into the modern Japanese nation. For example, a 13-year-old first-year student wrote, "Alas, I would have become an ancestor of Tamuramaro and beaten up the bad people. If Tamuramaro had not existed, we would not be here. I am truly grateful that we had Tamuramaro."[46] Another first-year student expressed his appreciation in this way:

> If Tamuramaro Generalissimo had not existed, we would neither have studied in school nor felt relaxed. If I had been there at that time, I would not have fought in war. Instead, I would have studied and done other things. Our ancestors did a truly stupid thing. Ah, it was really good that

45 Yoshida, *Yoshida Iwao nikki no. 5 (Obihiro shōsho vol. 24)*, 42.

46 Kokuni, "Ainu kyōiku ni okeru kokuminka to minzokuka," 84.

> we had Tamuramaro Generalissimo.[47]

While some Ainu children calmly accepted and even appreciated the achievements made through Tamuramaro's conquest over the Ezo, other students revealed not only their frustrations about Tamuramaro's merciless violence toward their ancestors and land but also strong opposition and resistance against him. It is also important to note here that they understood that opposition to Tamuramaro might have been "disrespectful" to the emperor and eventually to the state. Therefore, it simply should not have happened. Nonetheless, these students condemned Tamuramaro for his violence toward their ancestors. For example, a 13-and-a-half-year-old third-year student, wrote:

> Generalissimo, this is way too much.[48] You are such a violent generalissimo who attacked our residential *kuni*. It is way too much that you destroyed our ancestors' houses. Generalissimo, please listen to me carefully. Just because of you, only you, generalissimo, we are now in a very small land of Hokkaido, being laughed by *Wajin* [the Japanese]. Don't you have love for us? If you do, please take care of us kindly. I heard that you and our ancestors fought in war to a great extent. We attacked and also were attacked. If I had been there at that time, I could have killed you and gotten your head [as a sign of our victory]. Ah, it is too unfortunate [that I could not have done this]. Oh, I have written something bad. Even though I have written something disrespectful to the emperor, this is not about him. I am writing to the generalissimo.
>
> Please forgive me, emperor.
>
> Perhaps our ancestors did not know about the existence of the emperor. In my mind, I believe they fought in war just because they thought that you came to attack their *kuni*.[49]

On the one hand, this student acknowledged how he was expected to respond to the story of Tamuramaro (he even said to the Meiji emperor, "Please forgive me") because Tamuramaro is considered a Japanese historical hero who fought under the orders of an emperor; on the other hand, he explicitly disapproved of Tamuramaro's violence done to the region and aggressively expressed his vexation and desire for revenge against Tamuramaro. He was very careful not to sound too oppositional to the Japanese emperor system and the current assimilation politics of the state, but he

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47 Ibid.

48 Writings of Ainu children are not always grammatically correct. I translate their essays in order to make sense of the meanings. If I have to speculate about the meaning or find "errors" in terms of Japanese language grammar, I signal those places and include my interpretation as well their original sentence. The first sentence in his original essay reads: "Shōgun, anmari muri dewa naika" I think what he means here is this: "Shōgun anmari dewa naika"("Generalissimo, this is way too much!").

49 Kokuni, "Ainu kyōiku ni okeru kokuminka to minzokuka," 83–84.

eloquently framed his oppositional consciousness to Japanese history and the state.

8. Conclusion: Can the Subaltern Cry?

How should we comprehend Yoshida Iwao's distress? One might even question whether Yoshida's "unspeakable" distress changed the colonial relations between the Japanese and the Ainu. Anticipating these concerns, I still believe that his distress matters because it reveals a critical moment of affective articulation of the contradictions within Japanese colonialism. In short, he was aware of the contradictions of his own colonial project. The moment of articulation, the affect of Japanese colonialism, was also shared by the Ainu students, who were crying in despair in his classroom.

Yoshida was tremendously distressed because he was aware of his dual positionalities that participated in the "double missions of destruction and construction." As a Japanese teacher, he was the agent of "destruction" and "construction" simultaneously, destroying the Ainu culture and language by teaching Japanese language, history, and culture to the Ainu. He also encouraged them to transform their language and cultural practices into Japanese, for example, advising them to write a journal and practice Japanese during school hours. He was also a meticulous and careful ethnographer of the Ainu. He believed that the Ainu culture needed to be preserved; however, as an educator, he encouraged his Ainu students to transform their language and culture into a Japanese one. Yoshida was ambivalent about his dual role as a colonial: both preserving and destroying Ainu culture. His ambivalent positionality created space in which his students felt it was safe to explore some forms of resistance. Being trapped by the dual positionalities of being a teacher and ethnographer, he was distressed because there was no way to consolidate them. The affective climax occurred when he found himself speechless in his own classroom.

As I have discussed, Yoshida repeatedly described his distress in his articles and speeches. He definitely spoke out later in his life, although he had been rendered speechless at particular moments. In the context of colonial modernity, as Spivak critically argues, the subaltern—the Ainu children—cannot speak. Nonetheless, Yoshida created an unusual moment when Ainu children were not only speaking but also crying, sharing despair. We still do not know what his intentions were, whether he did this for the cause of the Ainu or for his Ainu research. I do not mean to romanticize Yoshida's action because his action was almost accidental. However, because it was a sudden disruption, an affective and critical moment was highlighted when both Yoshida and the Ainu children genuinely engaged with the paradox of Japanese colonial education.

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