

The West, the East, and the insular middle: trading systems, demand, and labour in the integration of the Pacific, 1750–1875*

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Abstract

This article offers the novel interpretation that Pacific integration began in the ocean's western sphere and later moved into its insular middle and eastern sphere. It demonstrates this by tracing three ocean-wide trends: the emergence of common trading goals and systems, the expansive role of reciprocal demand, and the shared experiences of Pacific peoples, who, both as slaves and in tribute-based and free labour systems, produced prominent trade goods. It presents additional new perspectives by identifying a 'silver-substitute century' in maritime commerce from 1750 to 1850, and by establishing the 1850s and 1860s as a period of transition from the influence of China-centred to Western-centred demand in Pacific trade. It thus reveals the limits of established interpretations that emphasize Western state and imperial initiatives and the role of Western technological and manufacturing dominance in the process of integration.

Keywords entrepôt, integration, Pacific, reciprocal demand, silver substitution

When approaching the Pacific, historians have traditionally viewed Spain and other Western states and empires as the primary facilitators in shaping the ocean into a more connected, engaged, and therefore integrated maritime space after 1500. Such state-centred interpretations identify the mobility and colonial initiative of Western explorers, merchants, and scientists as key in making them agents of integration. For example, O. H. K. Spate has concluded that Spanish exploratory and later commercial voyages from the Americas, via the

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Pacific Islands, to the Asia-Pacific (defined here as an area composed primarily of East and Southeast Asia) shaped the previously amorphous ocean into a ‘Spanish lake’ in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹ Eric Jones, Lionel Frost, and Colin White assert that the Pacific was subsequently defined by a *Pax Britannica* from the late eighteenth century, and began an ‘American Century’ around 1900.² More recently, Katrina Gulliver has argued that an integrated ‘Pacific World’ commenced with a cluster of Anglo-American commercial, exploratory, and colonial activities in the 1780s. She asserts that thereafter, until the Second World War, a Pacific World was created by a ‘critical mass of people traversing the Pacific and crucially identifying themselves and their activities with the Pacific’.³ In this state-centred approach, it follows that Asia-Pacific states and peoples did not influence integration because they did not dispatch ships on trans-Pacific voyages and establish distant colonies on the European model. In this vein, Walter McDougall has argued that domestic political concerns prompted seventeenth-century Japanese leaders to embrace isolation instead of competing in the ‘great game for control of the still empty North Pacific’ over the next two centuries.⁴

By contrast, Dennis Flynn, Arturo Giráldez, and James Sobredo emphasize flows of precious metals and the economic role of China in their periodization of integration that starts with a ‘silver period’ that commenced when the Spanish founded Manila in 1571. They see the Pacific as thereafter defined by the flow of silver to China, chiefly from Acapulco to Manila in Spanish bottoms, but also from Japan via Korea and on Portuguese and Chinese vessels. Merchants around the world drove the creation of this period by cashing in on arbitrage: the purchase of silver in Japan, Latin America, and elsewhere, and its sale, at high returns, on the China market. Flynn, Giráldez, and Sobredo identify an ensuing period of ‘exploration and early integration of the South and North Pacific with “the Rim”’, emerging in 1750 and extending to 1850. As engines of integration, they point to European exploration, demand from China for forest and marine products, and plantations for sugar, tobacco, and other tropical products that used native or Asian wage labourers. Discoveries of gold in California in 1848 and later in Australia and New Zealand led to successive rushes that brought economic and demographic surges that reshaped the ocean’s dynamics.⁵ Building upon this economic approach, environmental historians have examined how Pacific Islanders experienced integration via the spread of contagious diseases and non-native species when the islands were incorporated into trade networks connecting Europe, North America, and China, beginning in the late eighteenth century.⁶

1 O. H. K. Spate, *The Spanish lake*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1979.

2 Eric Jones, Lionel Frost, and Colin White, *Coming full circle: an economic history of the Pacific rim*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1993.

3 Katrina Gulliver, ‘Finding the Pacific world’, *Journal of World History*, 22, 1, 2011, p. 83.

4 Walter McDougall, *Let the sea make a noise ...: a history of the North Pacific from Magellan to MacArthur*, New York: Perennial, 1993, p. 39.

5 Dennis O. Flynn, Arturo Giráldez, and James Sobredo, ‘In search of periodization for Pacific history: an introduction’, in Flynn, Giráldez, and Sobredo, eds., *Studies in Pacific history: economics, politics and migration*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002, pp. 2–6, 19–21.

6 John McNeill, ‘From Magellan to MITI: Pacific rim economies and Pacific Island ecologies since 1521’, in Sally M. Miller, A. J. H. Latham, and Dennis O. Flynn, eds., *Studies in the economic history of the Pacific rim*, London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 72–93; David Iglar, ‘Diseased goods: global exchanges in the Eastern Pacific basin, 1770–1850’, *American Historical Review* 109, 3, 2004, pp. 693–719.

This article presents an alternative view of Pacific integration from *c.*1750 to 1875 through a novel, holistic approach that conceptualizes it as a process that began in the ocean's western sphere and later moved into its insular middle and eastern sphere. It divides the Pacific into western and eastern spheres at roughly the International Date Line, with island groups on both sides – such as Fiji, Hawai'i, and the Aleutians – forming an insular middle. It demonstrates that integration unfolded from west to east by using a socioeconomic lens to trace common trading goals and systems, as well as the expansive role of reciprocal demand. It also reveals the shared experiences of peoples who, as slaves and in tribute-based (involving especially the production of specific goods for superiors) and free labour systems, produced prominent trade goods and became consumers of products obtained through maritime trade.

The article shows the common trading goals and systems by detailing how, initially in the ocean's western sphere, Asia-Pacific and western European participants, guided by political and ideological agendas and not merely by profit, developed entrepôts (or refashioned existing ones) to capitalize on regional and intra-Pacific trade. A key factor in these enterprises was a desire to limit the use of silver in trade with China. Silver-substitute strategies subsequently moved into the ocean's eastern sphere and insular middle, creating what I term a 'silver-substitute century' of integration lasting roughly from 1750 to 1850. During that period, silver remained prominent in Pacific trade, with chiefly US ships hauling Latin American silver to China.⁷ Nonetheless, as the following will demonstrate, silver-substitute strategies drove integration by prompting a cross-section of Pacific peoples to become involved in the harvest and trade of forest and marine products in demand on the China market. Through the silver-substitute model, I strive to balance the respective contributions of different regions and peoples in the process of integration. In so doing, I seek to avoid not only the justly criticized 'Eurocentric' approach but also a corrective impulse to emphasize Asia-Pacific and Pacific Islander contributions and influences at the expense of those from Western states.

I also endeavour to begin to chart a Pacific-wide interpretation of the role of demand, which historians have considered largely in unilateral, national perspectives, such as the US need for whale oil to fill lamps and lubricate machinery, which brought its whalers into the Pacific in the nineteenth century. The subject has also been explored bilaterally, notably in the context of the British thirst for tea and the Chinese desire for silver and later opium that shaped Sino-British trade. In contrast, this article identifies an ocean-wide reciprocal demand dynamic that defined trade between China and, respectively, Britain, Japan, the United States, Australia, and various Asia-Pacific peoples. It begins by tracing the influence of demand from China for forest and marine products and a concurrent, reciprocal demand for tea from Britain, the United States, and Australia. Second, it details how Chinese demand for forest and marine products defined the maritime trade of Japan and other Asia-Pacific peoples and states, which, in return, sought from China medicinal products and consumer durables. Overall the article suggests that this reciprocal demand, in conjunction with the rise of entrepôts and silver-substitute strategies, propelled integration.

Reciprocal demand remained a defining dynamic even after the silver-substitute century, and with it the China-centred entrepôt system wound down in the 1850s and 1860s.

7 Alejandra Irigoin, 'The end of a silver era: the consequences of the breakdown of the Spanish peso standard in China and the United States, 1780s–1850s', *Journal of World History*, 20, 2, 2009, pp. 210–11.

Increased demand for tea from Britain and the United States prompted a surge in the flow of Latin American silver to China. Nonetheless, the 1850s and 1860s became a period of transition during which Chinese demand steadily assumed less importance compared to that from western Europe and the United States. Contributing to this transition was the fact that Asia-Pacific peoples ceased to view China as the prime source for medicinal and other consumer products, instead choosing Western-made goods. In addition, the emergence of Japan and India as tea-exporting states ended China's long-held position as sole purveyor for the world market. Britain, the United States, and other consuming nations that had previously obtained tea only from China were no longer beholden to Chinese demand in order to acquire the leaf.

As its final theme, the article considers the perspective of peoples throughout the ocean who experienced integration as their lives were shaped by the systems of trade and reciprocal demand. Particularly as producers, but also as consumers, they developed sustained commercial ties, often for the first time, with intra-Pacific and global networks.⁸ They thus experienced integration in individual and enduring ways, going beyond the oft-noted 'first contact' facilitated by James Cook and other Western explorers, and the subsequent influence brought by Western ships crisscrossing the Pacific. By the late nineteenth century a significant portion of the population living around the Pacific's shores were active participants in a maritime zone with widespread and sustained socioeconomic connections.

Chinese demand and western Pacific entrepôts

In starting with the ocean's western sphere, our gaze turns first to Qing China, the largest and most dynamic Pacific economy in 1750. Qing leaders fostered maritime commerce with surrounding states through a China-centred tribute system, which permitted a thriving 'native trade' in which junks sailed between Chinese and Southeast Asian ports, where they connected with networks of overseas Chinese. In the late 1750s, the Qing court issued a series of decrees that made Canton the sole trading port for western European vessels, and intercourse through it increased in subsequent decades.

Recent scholarship has well chronicled China's influence on the world economy through its demand for silver, and the related growth of trade through Canton.⁹ Flynn and Giráldez conclude that Chinese demand led to a steady rise in silver imports into China in the first half of the eighteenth century. European merchants profited, as favourable gold to silver ratios meant that their cargoes of silver often held a 50% higher value in China than in Europe. When the value of silver declined in China compared to Europe after 1750, Europeans (such as British merchants who came to Canton for tea) quickly pivoted, bringing Indian opium instead.¹⁰

8 'Intra-Pacific' and 'global' are used instead of 'transnational' or 'international' because this article explores a period before the rise of the nation-state to global prominence in the late nineteenth century.

9 For example, Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: global economy in the Asian age*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998. On the Canton system see Paul Van Dyke, *The Canton trade: life and enterprise on the China coast, 1700–1845*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007.

10 Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, 'Cycles of silver: global economic unity through the mid-eighteenth century', *Journal of World History*, 13, 2, 2002, pp. 405–11.

I argue that steady demand from China for forest and marine products, either unavailable at home or not produced in sufficient amounts to satisfy Chinese consumers, played an equally – if not more – prominent role than fluctuations in the value of silver. Chinese demand for such goods shaped maritime trade throughout the Pacific in the century after 1750 and continued to do so, even after opium gained increasing significance after 1820.¹¹ Historians have examined Chinese demand for forest and marine products through studies of individual states, islands, or regions, many of which are cited below. I will here offer a survey of production and trade in forest and marine products, their role in Western and Asia-Pacific silver-substitute and trade strategies, and the related influence upon peoples throughout the Pacific.

Chinese consumers desired specific products for their medicinal value, to enhance haute and popular cuisine, and for household use. Chinese physicians used extracts from Southeast Asian tropical plants – such as dragon’s blood, a gum-like substance from the rattan palm – to treat a range of ailments. They also prescribed seaweeds for menstrual conditions and kelp to counteract oedema.¹² In some regional cuisines, cooks used imported sea cucumbers in chicken and pork soups and stews. Others complemented soups with shark fins, abalone, and bird’s nests, the last seen as an especially refined and delicate ingredient.¹³ Aromatic sandalwood was used as incense and to make fans and furniture. Chinese physicians also prescribed sandalwood oil to treat acne and body aches.¹⁴

For the historian, an unconventional yet revealing source on Chinese elite consumption of imported goods is the tale of the wealthy Jia family in the novel *Story of the stone*. In its first volume, a senior woman of the household urges a depressed younger relative to find comfort and invigoration in a bowl of bird’s nest soup.¹⁵ Later, to help secure a job, a poorer member of the Jia clan proffers a gift of Borneo camphor, natural crystals from the trunk of the *Dryobalanops aromatica* tree found in Borneo and Sumatra.¹⁶ The novel also includes references to sandalwood clappers (employed to keep the beat for a troupe of dancers), fragrant sandalwood fans, and sandalwood incense.¹⁷

The *Story of the stone* also wonderfully illustrates the penchant among wealthy Chinese for clothing adorned with fur. In one scene, Wang Xi-feng, the wife of a Jia son, dons ‘a little cap of red sable, which she wore about the house for warmth, fastened on with a

11 British traders brought just over 5,000 chests to Canton in 1820, a figure that jumped to 20,000 by 1833. Samuel S. Mander, *Our opium trade with China*, London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1877, p. 3.

12 Li Shizhen, *Chinese medicinal herbs: a modern edition of a classic sixteenth-century manual*, trans. and ed. F. Porter Smith and G. A. Stuart, Mineola, NY: Dover, 2003, pp. 23–4, 79–80, 428–9.

13 In 1792 Yuan Mei, a noted Chinese poet and scholar, published *Sui Yuan’s simple account of food*, which included suggestions for preparing abalone, shark fins, bird’s nests, and sea cucumbers. Yuan Mei, *Sui yuan shi dan*, trans. Aoki Masuri as *Zuïen shokutan*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1980, pp. 65–73.

14 Li, *Chinese medicinal herbs*, pp. 394–5.

15 Cao Xueqin, *Story of the stone*, vol. 1, ‘The golden days’, trans. David Hawkes, New York: Penguin, 1973, p. 220. The novel’s title is also translated as *Dream of the red chamber*.

16 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 478. The Chinese used Borneo camphor, often described as worth its own weight in silver, to make powders to treat skin inflammation and lesions. See Li, *Chinese medicinal herbs*, pp. 155–7.

17 Cao, *Story of the stone*, vol. 1, p. 139; sandalwood fans are mentioned in vol. 2, ‘The crab-flower club’, p. 448; sandalwood incense is noted in vol. 1, p. 461 and vol. 2, p. 356. Sandalwood mainly came from Timor in this period.

pearl-studded bandeau. She was dressed in a sprigged peach-pink gown, with an ermine-lined skirt of dark-red foreign crêpe underneath it, and a cloak of slate-blue silk with woven coloured insects and a lining of grey squirrel around her shoulders.¹⁸

The significance of Chinese demand for particular marine products is illustrated in Japan's redefinition of its commercial relationship with China, its most important foreign trading partner. Several decades ago, Japanese and Western historians effectively challenged the view that Japan adopted a policy of seclusion in the seventeenth century and steadfastly maintained it until Western military pressure forced change in the mid nineteenth century.¹⁹ They demonstrated instead that Japan remained commercially connected with East Asia in the seventeenth century: for example, exchanging silver for Chinese silk in trade with Europeans and Chinese at Nagasaki, and with Korean merchants through the fief of Tsushima (on the island of the same name).²⁰

Scholars have also examined (though in less detail) how successive Japanese leaders revised the trading system away from a focus on silver exports. Concerned that domestic mines could not keep pace with Chinese demand, officials of the ruling Tokugawa shogunate conducted a market survey at Nagasaki in 1698 to explore other potential exports. Because Chinese traders expressed interest in dried abalone and sea cucumbers, Tokugawa officials encouraged the shipment of those goods, along with dried shark fins and kelp, from coasts throughout Japan to Nagasaki.²¹ In subsequent decades the trade expanded, and in 1764 Tokugawa leaders could recast Nagasaki into an entrepôt that invited a steady and profitable trade with the China market – without exporting silver. Increased domestic silk production permitted the shogunate to end silver exports, and to pursue a limited mercantilist policy using marine products and copper to import significant amounts of silver and gold from China.²²

In 1785, the Tokugawa regime fortified its entrepôt by establishing tighter control over the marine product trade, directing fishers to sell items at set prices exclusively to Tokugawa officials.²³ By eliminating the ability of fishers to sell at market prices, the Tokugawa made the harvesting and production of these marine products acts of tribute, similar to the practice throughout Japan of villages delivering fixed amounts of rice to their feudal overlords. The shogunate also issued edicts in Osaka and other urban areas restricting the consumption of abalone and sea cucumbers, favourite side dishes for those drinking sake (rice wine).²⁴

18 Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 159–60.

19 A prominent work is Ronald Toby, *State and diplomacy in early modern Japan: Asia in the development of the Tokugawa bakufu*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984.

20 For example Tashiro Kazui, *Kinsei Nitchōtsūkō bōekishi no kenkyū (A study of early modern Japanese–Korean commercial intercourse)*, Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1981.

21 Wakamatsu Masashi, 'Nagasaki tawaramono o meguru shokubunka no rekishi-teki tenkai (The Nagasaki marine products trade and the historical development of the dietary cultures)', *Kyoto Sangyō Daigaku Nihon Bunka Kenkyūjo Kiyō (Bulletin of the Institute for Japanese Culture, Kyoto Sangyo University)*, 1, 1996, p. 140.

22 Nakamura Tadashi, *Kinsei Nagasaki bōeki shi no kenkyū (The history of trade in early modern Nagasaki)*, Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1988, pp. 423–59; Robert Hellyer, *Defining engagement: Japan and global contexts, 1640–1868*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009, pp. 83–6.

23 Copies of the Tokugawa orders can be found in Osaka-shi sanjikai, ed., *Osaka shishi (The history of Osaka city)*, vol. 3, Osaka: Osaka Shiyakusho Zōhan, 1911, pp. 1072–3.

24 Ibid., vol. 4.1, pp. 562–3.

In addition, it moved to control a greater share of the burgeoning market in imported medicinal products (herbs, roots, and even animal parts), which, coming from China, the long-trusted source of medicinal knowledge, commanded premium prices on the domestic market.²⁵

Tokugawa policies reshaped trading patterns in neighbouring states. To meet Tokugawa demand, Tsushima purchased sea cucumbers and abalone from Korean merchants and shipped them to Nagasaki for re-export to China. This trade helped the domain to assuage its loss of profits when, owing to Tokugawa limitations on silver, it ceased to serve as a conduit in the silk-for-silver trade with China through Korea.²⁶

The Matsumae domain created a more sustained commercial relationship in Japan's north. A fief that controlled the southern tip of Hokkaido, Matsumae used trade to dominate Ainu tribes inhabiting Hokkaido, the Kuril Islands, and Sakhalin. Matsumae initially traded rice, sake, tobacco, and lacquer-ware to Ainu in exchange for hawks and animal pelts, which the domain sold on the Japanese market. In the second half of the eighteenth century, domain leaders, following directives from their Tokugawa overlords, pressed Ainu to harvest and process abalone, sea cucumbers, and kelp. Domain trading outposts would, for example, give an Ainu 3 cups of sake for 100 dried sea cucumbers and a bundle of tobacco for 150. Spending their days harvesting marine products for a distant Chinese consumer, Ainu tribes grew economically dependent upon Matsumae and, in so doing, moved further away from their previous, more autonomous, hunter-fisher economy.²⁷

Also in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Ryukyu kingdom (today's Okinawa prefecture) made adjustments in its foreign trade as less silver flowed from Japan, silver which had been a mainstay of the kingdom's tribute trade with the Qing. Previously Ryukyu had traded Japanese silver for Chinese silk. It had then shipped the silk to the domain of Satsuma in southern Kyushu, which had established political dominance over Ryukyu in the early seventeenth century but still allowed the kingdom to maintain its tribute tie with the Qing. As the Tokugawa moved to shut off the flow of silver, Satsuma pressured Ryukyu to find substitutes. In 1758, Ryukyu officials at the capital of Shuri on the main island of Okinawa directed islanders in the Yaeyama island chain, located 400 kilometres to the south-west, to send as tribute sea cucumbers for export to China, to complement the shark fins and skins already being shipped to China in the kingdom's tribute trade. The sea cucumber trade remained steady until 1771 when a powerful tsunami devastated the islands, killing an estimated 10,000 people. Yaeyama and its sea cucumber production only recovered in the early nineteenth century.²⁸

Also pursuing trade with China was the Sultanate of Sulu, located further south at the centre of a maritime 'Sulu Zone' extending to Palawan in the north-west, Mindanao

25 Yamawaki Teijirō, *Kinsei Nihon no iyaku bunka (The medicinal culture of early modern Japan)*, Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1995, pp. 207–8.

26 Ogawa Kuniharu, 'Tsushima-han no tawaramono seisan to tōsei (The regulation and production of marine products by the Tsushima domain)', *Nihon Rekishi*, 296, 1973, pp. 53–73.

27 Brett L. Walker, *The conquest of Ainu lands: ecology and culture in Japanese expansion, 1590–1800*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001, pp. 11–12, 96.

28 Maehira Fusaaki, 'Ryūkyū ōkoku ni okeru kaisanbutsu bōeki: sangokyō kaiiki no shigen to kōeki (Trade in marine products in the Ryukyu kingdom: commerce and natural resources in coral maritime regions)', in Akimichi Tomoya, ed., *Kaijin no sekai (The world of marine peoples)*, Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1998, pp. 228–30; Hellyer, *Defining engagement*, pp. 96–7.

in the north-east, Sulawesi to the south, and Borneo to the south-west. Three to four Chinese junks sailed annually from Amoy, which, along with Shanghai, emerged as a key port in the marine product trade with Southeast Asia.²⁹ The junks brought Chinese goods that were in demand in the region – porcelain, silk, brassware, wrought iron, and rice – which were exchanged for mother-of-pearl, seaweed, and precious shells from Sulu, pepper and betel nut from Basilan and Mindanao, and bird’s nests, beeswax, and Borneo camphor from Borneo.³⁰ James Warren argues that, in order to obtain these products, including large amounts of sea cucumbers (known as trepang in Southeast Asia), Sulu leaders of the Tausug ethnic group maintained an expansive slave-trading network. For example, they sponsored raids that captured and made slaves of inhabitants of the Visayan Islands in the Philippines, and members of the Minahasa ethnic group in northern Sulawesi, as well as a smaller number of Bugis.³¹ An ethnic group that also maintained a slave and maritime trade network extending throughout much of insular Southeast Asia, the Bugis competed with the commercial enterprises of the Dutch East India Company (the VOC) in the region.³²

Magotarō, a Japanese castaway, experienced and chronicled slave labour in Sulu. After encountering a storm off the eastern coast of Honshu in 1763, Magotarō’s crippled vessel drifted for over one hundred days before finally landing on Mindanao. He and his twenty shipmates stumbled on a temporary beach camp for harvesting and processing trepang. Taken prisoner, they were sent to Sulu, where multiple buyers purchased them as slaves. Magotarō and a crewmate found themselves the property of Kolō, a merchant who owned several junks and traded in bananas, rattan, millet, and trepang. The two joined a trading voyage, part of a crew of thirty male and female slaves, whom Magotarō described as ‘shipwrecked peoples from various countries’.³³

Sulu’s Tausug leaders also depended upon the Samal Bajau Laut, nomadic boat people of the region. In ways similar to Matsumae’s trade with the Ainu, the Tausug created enticements, such as wells to supply fresh water, which encouraged nomads to harvest and sell trepang and pearls to them.³⁴ Through the combination of free and forced labour, Sulu created a lucrative system for obtaining marine products.

29 Dai Yifeng, ‘Food culture and overseas trade: the trepang trade between China and Southeast Asia during the Qing Dynasty’, in David Y. H. Wu and Sidney C. H. Cheung, eds., *The globalization of Chinese food*, Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’i Press, 2002, pp. 21–42.

30 James Warren, *The Sulu zone, 1768–1898: the dynamics of external trade, slavery, and ethnicity in the transformation of a Southeast Asian maritime state*, Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981, pp. 7–8.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 149–81.

32 Heather Sutherland stresses the limits of ethnic labels in understanding maritime trade in insular Southeast Asia, describing the Bugis as ‘anyone from South Sulawesi’. Heather Sutherland, ‘A Sino-Indonesian commodity chain: the trade in tortoiseshell in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’, in Eric Tagliacozzo and Wen-Chin Chang, eds., *Chinese circulations: capital, commodities, and networks in Southeast Asia*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011, p. 178.

33 W. G. Aston, ‘Adventures of a Japanese sailor in the Malay Archipelago, A. D. 1764 to 1771’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, January 1890, pp. 163–7. Aston offers an abridged translation of Magotarō’s account given to a scholar, Aoki Okikatsu. A recently published version can be found in Aoki Okikatsu, Iwasaki Toshiaki, Joseph Heco, and Ikeda Akira, *Nankai kibun (An account of the Southern Seas)*, Tokyo: Yūshōdō Shuppan, 1991.

34 Warren, *Sulu zone*, pp. 67–9.

Warren identifies ‘Western traders’ insatiable demands for produce acceptable in Chinese markets’ as driving a rapid expansion in Sulu’s economy in the decades after 1768. To meet demand, the Tausug sponsored more raiding expeditions, which seized slaves who, along with the Samal Bajau Laut, harvested the marine products sought by western European merchants increasingly sailing into the region.³⁵ Many were ‘country traders’ who, while independent, often maintained affiliations with the English East India Company (the EIC) as they traded between India, insular Southeast Asia, and China. Financed by Anglo-Indian and Parsee concerns, the ships brought Indian cloth, opium, and guns to barter for sea cucumbers, pearls, shells, and bird’s nests, which they carried to Canton.³⁶

The EIC pursued on a larger scale the country trader’s strategy of obtaining forest and marine products to substitute for silver at Canton. Following its victory in the Battle of Plassey in 1757, the Company gained broad colonial control in Bengal, and in turn garnered a larger share of revenue from the region’s economy. Om Prakash stresses how, from this new, stronger position, the EIC successfully exploited Bengal’s revenues and implemented its own mercantilist policy. In contrast to the VOC, the Company ended shipments of bullion from Europe to Asia. When it resumed bringing treasure from Europe two decades later, it earmarked much of it for military spending.³⁷ The decision to reduce silver in trade with China, the fact that Britons were drinking more tea, and the limited Chinese demand for British cotton and woollen manufactures together caused socioeconomic ripples throughout much of Southeast Asia.

One effect was the Company’s search to establish a strategic entrepôt that, like Nagasaki, could function as an emporium for the collection of both silver substitutes and Chinese goods. Eric Tagliacozzo notes that Alexander Dalrymple, a Company official, developed the first entrepôt plan, pushing EIC officials to obtain the island of Balambangan, near Sulu off the coast of Borneo, in 1763. Dalrymple sought to attract not only Company vessels and country traders but also Chinese and other Asia-Pacific merchant ships to the island. He planned for Asia-Pacific traders to bring shark fins, cowries, and bird’s nests to Balambangan. In turn, tea- and silk-laden Chinese junks would arrive to obtain those products, thereby allowing the Company to acquire desired Chinese goods without using bullion.³⁸ The EIC finally established a settlement on the island in 1773, but officials never effectively developed the entrepôt model and neglected relations with the Sultanate of Sulu. Tensions rose, and in 1775 a cousin of the sultan led a successful attack on the island, ending the Company’s presence there.³⁹ EIC and British government officials continued to search for a viable entrepôt, in 1786 establishing a trading base on Penang. The island proved only partially successful in supplying large quantities of forest and marine products for the China trade, both because of its distance from active trading routes further south and because ships carrying the goods from insular Southeast

35 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

36 *Ibid.*, pp. 38–53; Eric Tagliacozzo, ‘A necklace of fins: marine goods trading in maritime Southeast Asia, 1780–1860’, *International Journal of Asian Studies*, 1, 1, 2004, pp. 37–40.

37 Om Prakash, *European commercial enterprise in pre-colonial India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 346–7. He offers estimates of Dutch precious metal exports to Asia, pp. 86–7.

38 Tagliacozzo, ‘A necklace of fins’, p. 27.

39 Howard T. Fry, *Alexander Dalrymple (1737–1808) and the expansion of British trade*, London: Cass for the Royal Commonwealth Society, 1970, pp. 36–93.

Asia shied away from sailing up the Strait of Malacca owing to concerns about piracy.⁴⁰ While other sites, such as Cochinchina (present-day southern Vietnam), were proposed, British interests found more lasting success with the establishment of Singapore in 1819.⁴¹

Further south, the Sulawesi port of Makassar, on the cusp of the Indian and Pacific oceans, developed into an entrepôt tied significantly to Pacific networks, particularly via trade with China. While the VOC administered the port, Chinese merchants controlled commercial transactions, and country traders were excluded. Makassar merchants concentrated on collecting trepang from Sulawesi fishers, shipping the holothurians to Amoy on junks that began to call annually after 1769, bringing tobacco, tea, silk, pans, and linens from China.⁴² Heather Sutherland emphasizes that, unlike transactions at Sulu, where slaves harvested a large share of trepang, Makassar's fishers generally worked on behalf of themselves and others as part of trading networks in the region.⁴³ Makassar-based fleets timed their activities to coincide with patterns of agricultural production, departing in December or January to obtain trepang, either collecting it themselves or purchasing it from locals. Returning in May or June, the fishers delivered their cargoes and paid off debts to Chinese merchants, who financed their voyages.⁴⁴

Makassar-based fishers also began to make long voyages to northern Australia to obtain trepang. C. C. Macknight explains that harvest and preparation of sea cucumbers for transport necessitated that Macassans remain for extended periods on the Australian coast. At beach camps, they built stone fireplaces to boil the holothurians before next burying them in the sand to remove unwanted skin, finally drying them in smokehouses. During these sojourns, Macassans traded food and goods with Aborigines, and some had sexual liaisons with Aboriginal women. Rock paintings and a smattering of Macassarese words in the vocabularies of northern Australian Aboriginal groups are vestiges of these regular interchanges, created by demand from the China market.⁴⁵

Around the same time, Borneans living in inland mountains began to harvest more forest products for Chinese consumers: beeswax, Borneo camphor, and bird's nests, which Borneans thought useful only as pig fodder. Although Borneans had offered such products as part of a tribute trade with China since the early days of the Ming empire, Tagliacozzo

40 Tagliacozzo, 'Necklace of fins', p. 29; K. C. Tregonning, *The British in Malaya: the first forty years, 1786–1826*, Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1965, pp. 120–6.

41 Tagliacozzo, 'Necklace of fins', pp. 29–32. John Barrow, a British Admiralty official who accompanied Lord Macartney on the noted British diplomatic mission to China, advocated establishing a British commercial and naval base on the coast of Cochinchina after visiting the region in 1793; see John Barrow, *A voyage to Cochinchina*, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1975 (reprint of 1806 edition), pp. 334–60. I initially offered these comparisons of Tokugawa and British trading strategies in Hellyer, *Defining engagement*, pp. 81–3, and Hellyer, 'Taiheiyō ni okeru Nihon: kinsei kōki no taigai bōeki (Japan in the Pacific: foreign trade in the late early modern period)', in Kawanishi Hidemichi, Namikawa Kenji, and David Howell, eds., *Shūhen shi kara zentai shi e: chūki to bunka (From peripheral history to total history: regions and cultures)*, Tokyo: Seibundō, 2009, pp. 128–30.

42 Sutherland, 'Sino-Indonesian commodity chain', pp. 184–6.

43 Heather Sutherland, 'Review article: the Sulu zone revisited', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 35, 1, 2004, p. 145.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 153.

45 C. C. Macknight, *The voyage to Marege': Macassan trepangers in northern Australia*, Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1976, pp. 48–60, 83–92.

explains that the trade expanded because of demand from European merchants for silver substitutes. The port city of Brunei, already a regional trading centre, welcomed more European and Asia-Pacific traders bringing Chinese gongs, iron bars, porcelain, glassware, and cutlery, to be traded for forest and marine products for the China market.⁴⁶

In a parallel activity, Bugis, Tausug, Chinese, and ‘Free Bajau’ traders, visiting coastal areas in search of trepan and pearls, began to move upriver to purchase forest products. Borneans in the interior learned of the demand for bird’s nests and Borneo camphor during encounters with foreign merchants at markets that sprung up in their forests. Many made long treks, sometimes spanning months, to find the rare crystals of the Borneo camphor tree. Some organized expeditions to obtain heads for local rituals, and to protect their share of access to bird’s nests, which were bartered for cloth and knives, which peoples throughout Borneo soon came to deem necessities.⁴⁷

Magotarō also experienced trade in Borneo, after the ship of his Sulu master arrived in Banjarmasin, a port that included a Dutch factory and a sizeable Chinese merchant community. As was the case in Makassar, the denizens of the port feted the arrival each January of a large junk from Amoy. At stalls in the Chinese quarter, they purchased the ship’s cargo of silks, glassware, and earthenware.⁴⁸ Sold for thirty silver pieces to a Chinese merchant in Banjarmasin, Magotarō thereafter assisted in the sale of silks and pottery. The peripatetic castaway also joined excursions deep inland; one such trip involved a ten-day canoe trip upriver to a village where the people lived ‘by the sale of wild animals’, perhaps a reference to the gathering of bird’s nests. Magotarō went door-to-door peddling pottery, once, to his shock, visiting a house where three human heads were stacked neatly on a shelf, commodities ready for sale.⁴⁹

As the above examples show, demand from China for particular forest and marine products, combined with the *entrepôt* strategies of the Tokugawa shogunate and the EIC, had a far-reaching effect throughout the Pacific’s western sphere. From the Ainu in Hokkaido to Aborigines in northern Australia, peoples engaged in time-consuming harvesting practices, often involving long-distance travel, to obtain products that they did not usually consume. In turn, peoples throughout the Asia-Pacific became more dependent upon imported goods, often from China. In all, commercial and socioeconomic integration spread, bringing more peoples, especially in coastal areas but also further inland, into intra-Pacific and global trade via slave, tribute, and free labour relationships.

Into the eastern sphere and the insular middle

On the other side of the Pacific, beginning in the mid eighteenth century, Russian trappers/adventurers (*promyshlenniki*) forcibly initiated a similar process of integration. To obtain

46 Eric Tagliacozzo, ‘Onto the coasts and into the forests: ramifications of the China trade on the ecological history of northwest Borneo, 900–1900 CE’, in Reed Wadley, ed. *Histories of the Borneo environment: economic, political and social dimensions of change and continuity*, Leiden: KITLV Press, 2005, pp. 25–48.

47 *Ibid.*

48 Leonard Blussé, ‘Junks to Java: Chinese shipping to the Nanyang in the second half of the eighteenth century’, in Tagliacozzo and Chang, *Chinese circulations*, pp. 234–5.

49 Aston, ‘Adventures’, pp. 168–72.

fur-seal and sea-otter pelts to sell both to their home market and especially to China, the *promyshlenniki* exploited natives of the Aleutian Islands, holding Aleut women and children hostage until their men delivered prescribed amounts of pelts. Although resisting such tactics, the Aleuts eventually succumbed to Russian domination as infectious diseases and a series of brutal Russian raids took their toll.⁵⁰ Historians have thoroughly explored the imperial-centred story that involved Russian expansion to points further south, as well as commercial competition between Russians, Spanish, British, and Americans along the Pacific Northwest coast and in the eastern Pacific.⁵¹ What I offer here is instead a discussion of the spread of trading systems, which had emerged in the Pacific's western sphere, into the ocean's insular middle and eastern sphere. It will highlight how Westerners aimed to develop entrepôts to gather forest and marine products to trade with China, and how maritime trade facilitated a deeper socioeconomic integration of Pacific peoples into intra-Pacific and global networks.

Learning of the grand profits garnered for sea-otter pelts at Canton by members of Captain Cook's Pacific expedition, in the 1780s Spanish officials and merchants in Spanish America and in Manila developed plans to exploit the fur trade by funnelling it through the ports of San Blas and Acapulco. In addition to the revenue, Spanish officials hoped to obtain, at low prices, Chinese quicksilver (mercury) for use in mineral mining. Spanish missions along the California coast began to acquire sea-otter pelts from Amerindians, exchanging them for Mexican flannel, beads, blankets, and abalone shells (gathered along the Mexican coast and valued by Amerindians for their colours). The furs were shipped via San Blas to Acapulco, and then transported on the annual galleon to Manila, and eventually to Canton. In Spanish America and Manila, many began to advocate streamlining the trade to exclude other Westerners and enhance Spanish profits. Offering a detailed plan was Esteban José Martínez, a Spanish captain who in 1789 boldly seized several British ships for illegally trading at Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island. Martínez urged that a merchant company be established to gather pelts from missions. The company would also supervise the creation of coastal outposts that could obtain more furs in exchange for Chinese clothing and other goods, brought to San Francisco and Monterey by the same ships that carried the furs directly to Manila and Canton. Like other Spanish plans, Martínez's never came to fruition, hampered by the competing interests of officials in Spanish America and Manila, as well as the challenge of regularly supplying outposts with food and provisions.⁵²

At Nootka, Martínez seized the ships of John Meares and thereby helped to quash the British trader's scheme to establish a permanent trading base there. Meares had earlier demonstrated the profit available in the fur trade by sailing from Canton directly to Nootka, where he obtained furs before making his way again across the Pacific to Canton. While ending in failure, the scope of Meares' plan underscores the strong desire among Westerners to create an outpost to exploit intra-Pacific trade. Indeed, Meares ambitiously

50 Stephen Haycox, *Alaska: an American colony*, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2002, pp. 55–8.

51 See, for example, James R. Gibson, *Otter skins, Boston ships, and China goods: the maritime fur trade of the Northwest coast, 1785–1841*, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1992, pp. 12–25.

52 Adele Ogden, *The California sea otter trade, 1784–1848*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1941, pp. 15–31.

brought a group of Chinese artisans to Nootka, stressing that, ‘If hereafter trading posts should be established on the American coast, a colony of these men would be a very important acquisition’.⁵³

Soon after the 1783 Treaty of Paris established the United States as an independent nation, US merchant ships began to sail into the Pacific, primarily via the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. They became a commercial force, freely pursuing maritime trade unencumbered by the monopolies that defined the commerce of their European competitors.⁵⁴ US ships made their way to Canton, most carrying Spanish dollars, trusted by Chinese merchants because of their high silver content. Like their European rivals, US traders acquired silks, porcelains, and especially tea, feeding an increasing US appetite for the beverage. US tea consumption, chiefly of green tea, rose steadily from an annual average of 3.35 million pounds between 1801 and 1812, to 7 million pounds annually between 1821 and 1833.⁵⁵

As had been the case in the Pacific’s western sphere, participants’ choices about silver proved influential. Philadelphia-based merchants thrived using silver at Canton but faced criticism from congressmen and many in the press, who angrily complained that the traders were draining the national wealth.⁵⁶ Beginning in 1804, Philadelphia and Baltimore ships began to sail to Smyrna in the Ottoman empire, where they used goods such as coffee, sugar, and logwood to acquire opium before making their way around the Cape of Good Hope to Batavia or directly to Canton.⁵⁷ The trade flourished until the 1830s, when US and British merchants switched to carrying Indian opium, preferred by Chinese consumers.⁵⁸

Not enjoying the access to bullion of their Philadelphia competitors, New England and especially Boston merchants focused on silver substitutes from the start.⁵⁹ Many initially placed their hopes in ginseng, which grew naturally in the forests of New England and eastern Canada. In another example of the far-reaching power of Chinese demand, Amerindians harvested the root, selling it European and later US buyers.⁶⁰ Because of its poor reputation compared to Korean and Chinese ginseng, Canton merchants never regarded the North

53 John Meares, *Voyages made in the years 1788 and 1789, from China to the North West Coast of America*, London: Logographic Press, 1790, p. 2.

54 James R. Fichter, *So great a profit: how the East Indies trade transformed Anglo-American capitalism*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010, pp. 7–55.

55 John Macgregor, *Commercial statistics of America: a digest of her productive resources, commercial legislation, customs, tariffs, shipping, imports and exports, monies, weights, and measures*, London: Whittaker and Company, 1840, pp. 816–17.

56 Jonathan Goldstein, *Philadelphia and the China trade, 1682–1846: commercial, cultural, and attitudinal effects*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978, pp. 46–54.

57 This was the case with the Baltimore-based brig *Eutaw*, which in 1805 sailed to Canton via Smyrna. ‘Manifests, inwards and outwards, of the brig Eutaw, Christopher L. Gant master’, in *Public documents printed by the order of the Senate of the United States, third session of the twenty-fifth Congress begun and held at the city of Washington, December 3, 1838*, vol. 3, Washington, DC: Blair and Rives, 1839, p. 83.

58 Carl A. Trocki, *Opium, empire, and the global political economy: a study of the Asian opium trade, 1750–1950*, London: Routledge, 1999, pp. 76–7.

59 Gibson, *Otter skins*, p. 95.

60 Beginning in 1750, members of the Royal Society of London published papers about the harvesting of ginseng in North America and its export to China. John H. Appleby, ‘Ginseng and the Royal Society’, *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 37, 2, 1983, pp. 137–45.

American variety highly.⁶¹ New England traders therefore moved to capitalize on the coastal fur trade. In 1799 the crew of a Boston ship, *Eliza*, bartered for furs with coastal Amerindians, finding that ‘the articles most in demand were Blue board cloth, & red—Muskets—Great Coats—Powder, Wire, Axes & coarse Cutlery’.⁶²

A US merchant plan for a coastal entrepôt soon emerged, backed by the financier John Jacob Astor. In 1810, Astor’s Pacific Fur Company moved to create an emporium at the mouth of the Columbia River. Washington Irving described how the ‘chief trading post or mart’ was intended to function:

Inferior posts would be established in the interior, and on all the tributary streams of the Columbia, to trade with the Indians; these posts would draw their supplies from the main establishment, and bring to it the peltries they collected. Coasting craft would be built and fitted out, also, at the mouth of the Columbia, to trade, at favourable seasons, all along the north-west coast, and return, with the proceeds of their voyages, to this place of deposite [*sic*]. Thus all the Indian trade, both of the interior and the coast, would converge to this point, and thence derive its sustenance. A ship was to be sent annually from New York to this main establishment with re-enforcements and supplies, and with merchandize suited to the trade. It would take on board the furs collected the preceding year, carry them to Canton, invest the proceeds in the rich merchandize of China, and return thus freighted to New York.⁶³

As it turned out, a senior partner at Astoria scuttled the enterprise, selling the outpost to the British North West Company amid fears of a British attack after the start of the War of 1812.

The case of the Tlingit, one of the more dominant Amerindian tribes along the North American Pacific coast, demonstrates how the fur trade, like similar trades in forest and marine products in the Pacific’s western sphere, drove socioeconomic integration. The Tlingit consistently parried Russian attempts to force them to supply pelts solely to Russian traders. Historians of the Tlingit conclude that tribal leaders grew especially troubled by Russian plans to make Sitka, established in 1799, a collection point for pelts that Russian trappers harvested during forays deep into tribal lands with the assistance of long-standing Tlingit enemies. Like the Sultanate of Sulu, the Tlingit demonstrated their strength against a European interloper by launching, along with the powerful Haida, a successful, coordinated attack on Sitka and two other Russian outposts in 1802.⁶⁴ Although they regained Sitka two years later, the Russians never subdued the Tlingit. Over the next few decades relations remained generally peaceful, but violent skirmishes did occur. Over time, the Russians at

61 Daniel Hanbury, *Notes on Chinese materia medica*, London, 1862, p. 33.

62 ‘William Sturgis on the American vessels and the maritime trade’, in Briton Cooper Busch and Barry M. Gough, eds., *Fur traders from New England: the Boston men in the North Pacific, 1787–1800: the narratives of William Dane Phelps, William Sturgis, and James Gilchrist Swan*, Northwest Historical Series 18, Spokane, WA: Arthur H. Clark, Company, 1997, p. 104.

63 Washington Irving, *Astoria; or anecdotes of an enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains*, vol. 1, London: Richard Bentley, 1836, pp. 44–5.

64 Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Richard Dauenhauer, and Lydia T. Black, ‘Russians in Tlingit America: new perspectives on the Baranov era, 1792–1818’, in Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Richard Dauenhauer, and Lydia T. Black, eds., *Anóoshi lingít aani ká, Russians in Tlingit America: the battles of Sitka, 1802 and 1804*, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2008, p. xxxiii.

Sitka employed more Tlingit men, and grew dependent upon the Tlingit to supply food and fish to feed the outpost.⁶⁵

Paralleling events in the Pacific's western sphere, the Tlingit abandoned established economic pursuits such as fishing, hunting, and gathering of foods and instead became increasingly involved in intra-Pacific trade, consuming goods brought by Russian and US traders. They also became intermediaries between Western merchants and inland Amerindian tribes and villages. From other Amerindians they obtained furs desired by Westerners involved in trade with China. In exchange the Tlingit offered not only established products such as fish oil and dried molluscs but also increasing quantities of Western goods: metal kettles, axes, knives, and flour. And, for a considerable price, Tlingit would barter slaves, usually other Amerindians but also, in a few instances, Hawaiians brought by US ships. All told, the Tlingit expanded their trade routes to the upper and middle Yukon in the north and to Puget Sound in the south.⁶⁶

While the boom of the sea-otter fur trade waned around 1810, US and European ships continued to visit the Pacific Northwest and California coasts, partly to obtain beaver and other furs. Drawing on his database of the 953 known vessels that entered California waters from 1786 to 1848, David Iglar calculates that the number of ships surged after 1820. Most were from the United States and just over half visited a Pacific island to pursue trade. Many also sold goods at Hawai'i instead of making the trans-Pacific journey to Canton.⁶⁷ US and western European vessels sailed to Honolulu in particular, because it had, within a few decades after the first European visit by Captain Cook in 1778, emerged as a thriving Pacific entrepôt for furs and other North American goods destined for the China market.

Sandalwood also drew US and western European traders to Hawai'i, mirroring earlier events in the Pacific's western sphere and in the insular middle islands of Fiji. As was then transpiring in the Marquesas Islands further south, Hawaiians abandoned established agricultural and commercial enterprises in favour of harvesting for the Chinese consumer a wood for which they had previously found little value.⁶⁸ After achieving domination of the Hawaiian Islands, King Kamehameha I and his successors wielded a high level of control, via kinship networks, over the harvest and sale of the archipelago's rich stands of the wood. Leaving their gardens and fields, groups of Hawaiians – at times numbering in the thousands – cut sandalwood in mountain areas and hauled it to the coast, in labour-intensive campaigns that sometimes spanned months. The ordinary worker received little remuneration, except for rare instances when a cutter was allowed to sell individually small amounts. The Hawaiian kings, as well as chiefs who held privileges to goods produced on their lands, used the profits to obtain Western ships, weapons, and wares.⁶⁹

65 Sergei A. Kan, 'Events and nonevents on the Tlingit/Russian/American colonial frontier, 1802–1879', in Sergei A. Kan and Pauline Turner Strong, eds., *New perspectives on native North America*, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006, p. 313.

66 Andrei Val'terovich Grinev, *The Tlingit Indians in Russian America, 1741–1867*, trans. Richard L. Bland and Katerina G. Solovjova, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2005, pp. 213–17.

67 Iglar, 'Diseased goods', pp. 705–11.

68 Greg Dening, *Islands and beaches: discourse on a silent land, Marquesas, 1774–1880*, Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 1980, pp. 115–24.

69 Patrick Vinton Kirch and Marshall David Sahlins, *Anahulu: the anthropology of history in the Kingdom of Hawaii, volume one: historical ethnography*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992, pp. 83–4.

Westerners soon noted the importance of Hawai'i's key position and speculated about future trade through the islands that would link the Pacific's western and eastern spheres. Writing in 1816, Alexander McKonochie, a commander in the Royal Navy, urged British leaders to establish a colony on the islands to enhance the EIC's trading relationship with China, seeing a Hawaiian entrepôt as a means to limit the Company's use of silver in the China trade. By utilizing furs and other North American products instead, he calculated that the Company could cease the costly business of shipping specie from Europe and begin to sell Chinese and East Asian goods to Spain's American colonies. McKonochie also envisioned expanded access across the Isthmus of Panama – at the time limited to river, mule, and foot routes – to move goods to and from China.⁷⁰ The new Hawaiian colony would be distinctly commercial, and would also serve as a provisioning centre for what McKonochie correctly speculated was the growing Pacific whaling industry.⁷¹

Demand from western Europe and the United States prompted an increase in Pacific whaling in the 1830s and especially the 1840s.⁷² Whaling ships arriving in Hawai'i, most flying the US flag, jumped from 177 in 1842 to 383 the following year. The boom continued throughout the 1850s and made Honolulu a provisioning and trading centre.⁷³ Additionally, western European and US demand for fertilizer advanced the trade in guano, thick deposits of sea-fowl excrement. Peru, which became independent in 1825, profited from guano dug from its coastal Chincha Islands, thereby diversifying the nation's economy beyond agriculture and mining.⁷⁴ Imports of Peruvian guano into Britain surged from 1,733 tons in 1841 to just over 13,000 tons the following year. By 1855, Britain imported 210,000 tons.⁷⁵

Chinese coolies, part of an estimated 87,000 who entered Peru from 1850 to 1874, worked the guano pits, representing another layer of the new labour relationships created by trade in forest and marine products.⁷⁶ A similar trend in migrant labour had emerged in previous decades as Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders became seamen on ships that acquired and transported furs, sandalwood, and sea cucumbers. They also numbered among the crews of whaling vessels that crisscrossed the Pacific.⁷⁷

The rising importance of guano and whale oil – products destined chiefly for western Europe and the United States – did not diminish the influence of Chinese demand on

70 For an account of a passage across the isthmus using such modes of transport, see Augustus Campbell and Colin D. Campbell, 'Crossing the Isthmus of Panama, 1849: the letters of Dr. Augustus Campbell', *California History*, 78, 4, 1999/2000, pp. 226–37.

71 Alexander McKonochie, *Considerations on the propriety of establishing a colony in one of the Sandwich Islands*, Edinburgh: Walker & Greig, 1816, pp. 5–23.

72 Macgregor, *Commercial statistics*, p. 535.

73 Kirch and Sahlins, *Anahulu*, pp. 101–15, esp. p. 103.

74 Catalina Vizcarra, 'Guano, credible commitments, and sovereign debt repayment in nineteenth-century Peru', *Journal of Economic History*, 69, 2, 2009, 365–9.

75 Charles L. Bartlett, *Guano: a treatise on the history, economy as a manure, and modes of applying Peruvian guano, in the culture of the various crops of the farm and the garden*, Boston, MA: C. L. Bartlett, 1860, pp. 3–4.

76 Eugenio Chang-Rodríguez, 'Chinese labor migration into Latin America in the nineteenth century', *Revista de Historia de América*, 46, 1958, p. 387.

77 Matt K. Matsuda, *Pacific worlds: a history of seas, peoples, and cultures*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 184–5.

Pacific trade. In the late 1820s, familiar forest and marine products began to be harvested in new parts of the ocean. US ships, which had bypassed Fiji after its sandalwood stands were depleted, called again, this time to obtain sea cucumbers. Akin to Hawaiian leaders, Fijian chiefs ordered their subjects to spend extended periods harvesting and drying sea cucumbers. When holothurians grew scarce in the late 1840s, Fijians, who had grown dependent upon imported manufactured goods and iron, faced an economy in crisis.⁷⁸

Westerners also visited Yap, an island located roughly between Palau and Guam, in search of new supplies of trepang. A British trader, Andrew Cheyne, stopped there in 1843 and gained permission to harvest and process sea cucumbers, being told by an island leader that ‘biche de mer [sea cucumber] is plentiful on the reefs, and of no use to us; why then should we keep it?’⁷⁹ In sporadic exchanges with Western merchants in subsequent decades, Yapese acquired guns, alcohol, cloth, and iron goods, although their island’s economy did not become dependent upon the sea cucumber trade.⁸⁰

Established trades in marine and forest products continued in other parts of the Pacific’s western sphere. In 1832 a Singapore newspaper noted that ‘the British merchant has begun extensively to avail himself of Singapore, as an entrepôt for China goods’.⁸¹ Flowing into Singapore were dragon’s blood, bird’s nests, and trepang, which John Phipps asserted ‘forms the most important article of commerce between the islands of the Indian archipelago and China, excepting, perhaps, pepper’.⁸² Still choosing to avoid exporting silver, in the same year the Tokugawa shogunate issued decrees prohibiting non-sanctioned trade in marine products to assure a steady flow of those goods to Nagasaki.⁸³

The persistence of silver-substitute strategies in Pacific trade is further illustrated by Australian merchants who sought to counteract a perceived loss of specie used to import Chinese tea, consumed by all classes in the British colony. Australian traders attempted to use domestic goods – seal skins, lumber, and wool – as barter for tea at Canton. But, as a commentator lamented in a Sydney newspaper in 1830, the ‘cunning China merchant’ rejected those goods, forcing the colony to send instead ‘hard dollars’ (Spanish dollars), often in short supply.⁸⁴ In response, Australians obtained a tried and true product: sandalwood.

78 I. C. Campbell, *A history of the Pacific Islands*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996, pp. 64–6.

79 Andrew Cheyne, *A description of islands in the western Pacific Ocean, north and south of the equator*, London: J. D. Potter, 1852, p. 149.

80 Amanda Morgan, ‘Mystery in the eye of the beholder: cross-cultural encounters on 19th-century Yap’, *Journal of Pacific History*, 31, 1, 1996, pp. 34–5.

81 *Singapore Chronicle*, 1832, quoted in John Phipps, *A practical treatise on the China and Eastern trade comprising the commerce of Great Britain and India, particularly Bengal and Singapore, with China and the Eastern Islands*, Calcutta: sold by Thacker, 1835, p. 268. Phipps provides only the year for this reference.

82 *Ibid.*, p. 321. Phipps restates an assertion that John Crawford offered in an earlier study of insular Southeast Asia: see John Crawford, *History of the Indian Archipelago*, vol. 3, Edinburgh: printed for Archibald Constable and Company, 1820, p. 441.

83 Ishii Ryōsuke and Harafuji Hiroshi, eds., *Bakumatsu ofuregaki shūsei (A compilation of official proclamations from the final years of the Edo period)*, vol. 5, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992, p. 569.

84 *Sydney Gazette*, 3 August 1830, quoted in Dorothy Shineberg, *They came for sandalwood: a study of the sandalwood trade in the south-west Pacific, 1830–1865*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967, p. 6.

Commencing the final phase of the Pacific sandalwood rush, during the 1840s and 1850s Australian merchants bartered beads, fish hooks, and knives for the wood during visits to Melanesian islands largely bypassed by previous maritime traders: New Caledonia, the Loyalty Islands, and Vanuatu.⁸⁵ Merchants also recruited Melanesian islanders to work on their ships that transported sandalwood to Canton, often via Sydney. In addition, Australian captains came to rely on Melanesian seamen and fishers on ships that obtained trepang and pearl in the Admiralty and Belep Islands, the Torres Strait, and Australia's Barrier Reef.⁸⁶ By the 1870s, Yapese were also numbered among the crews of such voyages.⁸⁷

Yet while trade in forest and marine products continued throughout the Pacific, the successive rushes eventually reduced available supplies. Despite continued Chinese demand, beginning in the late 1840s forest and marine products therefore played a diminishing role in Pacific maritime trade. What is more, US and British traders carried more opium, which (as historians have long noted) allowed them to turn the tables and acquire significant amounts of silver at Canton, and later at other treaty ports established by the Treaty of Nanjing (1842), signed in the wake of Britain's victory in the Opium War (1839–42).⁸⁸

Even with the opium trade and the increasing scarcity of forest and marine products, the reciprocal trading relationship created by Chinese demand and the Western desire for Chinese products continued. In 1844 Robert Forbes, a prominent Boston merchant involved in Pacific trade, stressed that 'the prospective extension of the China trade, in consequence of the opening of four new ports, is very much over-estimated'. He asserted that 'we must materially increase the consumption of tea and silks in this country, before we can expect to enlarge materially our trade with China; and the same remark applies to Great Britain'. Forbes concluded that 'Therefore it is clear, that we can only sell in China, profitably, just as many goods as will pay for the articles of export from China, which we respectively want'.⁸⁹

Beginning in the late 1840s, US and British demand for tea did increase; in 1849, China exported over 65 million pounds of tea to the United States and Britain but by 1856 exports to those two nations jumped to over 131 million pounds. In 1849 the United States imported just over 18 million pounds of tea, a figure that climbed to 40.2 million by 1856. Over the same period, Britain's tea imports surged from 47.2 million to just over 91 million pounds.⁹⁰ As Forbes predicted, Anglo-American demand for tea (and silk) meant that more opium and manufactured cloth and clothing flowed to China, but not enough to pay for the increased purchases of tea, prompting British and US ships to bring more silver.⁹¹

The China-based British firm of Jardine, Matheson and Company (hereafter Jardine) commissioned the transport, usually on US ships, of silver and also copper from Peru and Chile.

85 *Ibid.*, pp. 145–62.

86 K. R. Howe, 'Tourists, sailors, and labourers: a survey of early labour recruiting in southern Melanesia', *Journal of Pacific History*, 13, 1, 1978, pp. 24–6.

87 Morgan, 'Mystery', pp. 36–8.

88 Phipps, *Practical Treatise*, pp. 167–9, details the amount of silver carried away by British ships in the 1830s.

89 Robert B. Forbes, *Remarks on China and the China trade*, Boston, MA: Samuel Dickinson, 1844, pp. 55–6.

90 J. Smith Homans and J. Smith Homans, Jr., eds., *Cyclopedia of commerce and commercial navigation*, New York: Harper Brothers, 1858, p. 303.

91 Man-houng Lin, *China upside down: currency, society, and ideologies, 1808–1856*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006, pp. 72–114.

In October 1848 a clipper ship, *Sea Witch*, loaded just over \$126,000 in silver bars and coins at Lima before making its way to Canton. Two years later another US vessel, *Congress*, stopped at Valparaiso, where it took on silver and copper (and some gold) valued at over \$120,000, which it transported to Canton.⁹²

The continued importance of silver to Pacific trade is also evident in the US mission to Japan headed by Commodore Matthew Perry, which departed from the United States in 1852. The mission is popularly remembered as the commodore cleverly presented it: an avatar of US industrial progress surging across the Pacific, despite the fact that Perry sailed via the Indian Ocean to ensure access to coal en route. Commanding a fleet comprised of half of the steam-powered warships then commissioned in the US Navy, Perry carried a letter from President Millard Fillmore boasting that US steamers could sail in a scant two weeks from California to Japan. Nonetheless, Fillmore's appeals for trade were firmly planted in the context of mid-nineteenth-century Pacific commerce. He stressed that the United States could export precious metals to Japan, as 'Our great State of California produces about sixty millions of dollars in gold every year, besides silver, quicksilver, precious stones, and many other valuable articles'.⁹³ In a report submitted following his mission, Perry was challenged to identify 'valuable articles' other than manufactured cotton clothing that might entice Japanese leaders to open trade. It is not surprising that he therefore advocated establishing a 'commercial entrepôt' on Taiwan, which could use the island's coal to supply the steamships increasingly plying the waters of East and Southeast Asia. Perry asserted that the entrepôt 'unshackled by the restrictions of duties upon foreign or domestic commerce beyond some trifling municipal impost, would draw to its ports vessels of all nations, and it would not be long before it would rival the great commercial marts of Hong Kong and Singapore'.⁹⁴

The 1850s and 1860s transition

Fillmore's and Perry's appeals underscore how Pacific trade had entered a period of transition during which some previously dominant flows, such as those in silver and tea, continued, but others, such as the China-focused entrepôt model, were fading. Had it come to fruition, Perry's Taiwan entrepôt would probably have acquired attributes similar to those of Singapore and Nagasaki in the late 1850s and early 1860s: namely, while trade with China was still vital, the ports were ceasing to be defined as entrepôts for forest and marine products. Instead they became emporia in an emerging Pacific commercial network increasingly shaped by demand from Western nations and an influx of Western-manufactured wares, chiefly cotton clothing. In Singapore in 1863, cotton manufactures formed the most valuable article imported from Britain, the origin of most imports (by value). From Manila, Singapore chiefly received tobacco and sugar, and from Borneo, sago, a starch extracted from varieties of native palm trees, which

92 Jardine, Matheson, and Company Archives, Cambridge University (hereafter JM), 'Miscellaneous invoices, 1823–1881', A8/62/2, invoices: *Sea Witch*, 14 October 1848 (Lima); *Congress*, 5 September 1850 (Valparaiso). I thank Matheson & Company for permission to research the archive and to cite this and other documents from it. While not stated, we can assume that the cargoes were valued in Spanish and Mexican silver dollars, standard currencies of nineteenth-century Pacific trade.

93 Matthew Calbraith Perry, Francis L. Hawks, and George Jones, *Narrative of the expedition of an American squadron to the China Seas and Japan*... vol. 1, Washington, DC: A. O. P. Nicholson, Printer, 1856, p. 256.

94 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 180.

was exported exclusively to Europe where it was used in puddings and to thicken soups. Borneo also sent coal, which fuelled the growing number of steamships calling at Singapore. To China, Singapore shipped tin, rice, opium, and cotton goods in values that well outpaced exports of bird's nests and trepang, mainstays of shipments just three decades earlier.⁹⁵

In 1850, the shogunate again issued edicts to maintain the flow of marine products to Nagasaki in order to continue to obtain medicinal products from China.⁹⁶ After Westerners were allowed to trade at the port in 1859, Japanese and Western merchants first competed for shares of the still profitable trade with China. During the 1860s, Jardine and other Western merchants increasingly moved away from trade with China, focusing instead on exports of tea and silk to Britain and the United States.⁹⁷ Nagasaki would also later become an important purveyor of coal to steamships sailing newly established routes.

San Francisco, which burst on the Pacific maritime scene as a prominent port following the discovery of gold in 1848, provides another example of the transition in Pacific trade. Initially much of the port's traffic involved transporting prospective miners and supplies to the rapidly growing city, as well as shipping gold to the US eastern seaboard. After the gold rush ended, trade remained focused on Western markets, with wheat, transported primarily to Britain, becoming the largest export.⁹⁸

Yet San Francisco also became a centre for a still thriving silver trade to China, partly because, after 1856, Chinese merchants came to adopt the Mexican dollar rather than the long-trusted Spanish dollar.⁹⁹ US clipper ships sailed from New York or Boston to San Francisco, where they took on chiefly Mexican dollars, as well as Spanish dollars and silver bars for Hong Kong. In August 1856, the clipper *Young America* loaded Mexican \$12,000 and sailed directly to Hong Kong in forty-four days. In December of that year, *Golden City* and *Joseph Peabody* together loaded approximately Mexican \$16,000 for Hong Kong. In May 1859 the clipper *Sweepstakes* left San Francisco with Mexican \$75,000, arriving in Hong Kong forty-seven days later; in July of the same year *Whirlwind* carried just over Mexican \$100,000 across the Pacific.¹⁰⁰ The cargoes of these ships illustrate the significant amount of treasure flowing through San Francisco to China in the 1850s and 1860s, estimated to have totalled nearly US \$25 million in the period from 1854 to 1863.¹⁰¹

95 John Cameron, *Our tropical possessions in Malayan India: being a descriptive account of Singapore, Penang, Province Wellesley, and Malacca*, London: Smith, Elder, 1865, pp. 180–94.

96 Ishii and Harafuji, *Bakumatsu ofuregaki shūsei*, p. 569.

97 A trend chronicled in JM, In-correspondence (unbound) Japan, Nagasaki 1859–64, letters 1–310; 'Business Letters: Nagasaki, 1859–1886', B10-4.

98 David J. St. Clair, 'San Francisco's Pacific exports: 1850–1898', in Flynn, Giráldez, and Sobredo, *Studies in Pacific history*, p. 41.

99 Lin, *China upside down*, p. 112.

100 JM, 'Invoices from the United States, 1837–1877', packet 1, A8/62/1, invoices, all from San Francisco: *Young America*, 4 August 1856; *Golden City*, 17 December 1856; *Joseph Peabody*, 30 December 1856; *Sweepstakes*, 25 May 1859; *Whirlwind*, 9 July 1859; Details of ships' voyages after leaving San Francisco are taken from Octavius T. Howe and Frederick C. Matthews, *American clipper ships, 1833–1858*, Salem, MA: Marine Research Society, 1926, vol. 1, pp. 225–7, 320–2; vol. 2, pp. 646–9, 690–1, 734–43. All monetary figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

101 St. Clair, 'San Francisco's Pacific exports', p. 43. St. Clair notes that US records do not distinguish the amounts of silver and gold in treasure exports. Jardine records, however, indicate that ships destined for China overwhelmingly carried silver.

The 1860s also witnessed the opening of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company's regular line between San Francisco, Yokohama, and Hong Kong, as well as the completion of a transcontinental railway in the United States. In February 1871 a prominent trade paper proclaimed the 'eve of a great revolution in the course of the vast trade which is carried on with China, India, and Japan'. This was proven, it argued, by the arrival in San Francisco of the steamship *Great Republic*, carrying tea and silk from China. The paper noted that the transcontinental railway would carry the tea to Chicago and Boston, and the silk to New York:

This is but one of the multitude of indications of the revolution to which we have referred and of the rapidity with which new bonds of commercial union between the Orient and this country are developing by means of the Pacific [transcontinental] railroads. The monopoly so long enjoyed by the old great routes for the rich commerce between Asia and Europe is disputed.¹⁰²

What is more, the United States and western European nations were steadily expanding their shares of global manufacturing, a trend revealed, for example, in the aforementioned increased trade through Singapore in British cotton goods.

However, it was national and imperial agendas as well as market trends, rather than technology and manufacturing output, that brought about the weakening and eventual disappearance of the reciprocal demand dynamic that had shaped Pacific trade since the mid eighteenth century. This is illustrated in the case of Japan, where a new central government, after gaining power in 1868, championed Western social practices and fashions. By 1877, Western-manufactured woollen and cotton cloth, along with miscellaneous clothing, made up just over half of all imports (by value).¹⁰³ The government also espoused Western medicine, creating a medical institute that employed German physicians to teach on the subject. The institute established quality standards for medicines and regulated their sales on the domestic market.¹⁰⁴ With such government measures, quinine, a drug developed by Western medicine, soon became the largest import (by value) among medicinal goods, outpacing, for example, rhubarb, a mainstay of the previous, China-centred, trade.¹⁰⁵

More significantly, Japanese and British initiatives led to the creation of tea export industries that challenged China's position as sole supplier to the world market. Japan's new central government shepherded the development of tea and silk exports centred on the US market. By 1877 in export columns, tea (occupying 20% of all exports produced in Japan) ranked second behind silk (at 47%) with kelp, abalone, sea cucumbers, and shark fins totalling just over 3%.¹⁰⁶

102 'Old and new routes for commerce', *Commercial and Financial Chronicle and Hunt's Merchant Magazine*, 12, 295, 18 February 1871, p. 197.

103 Japan Department of Finance, *Returns of the foreign trade of the empire of Japan for the thirty-two years from 1868 to 1899 inclusive*, Tokyo: Hōyōdō, 1901, p. 210.

104 'Gaimushō shokan: Doitsu kōshi (Foreign Ministry documents: German ambassador)' 1870/02/14 (15 March 1870 on Gregorian calendar), reel number ME 183-0179; 'Tokyo-fu kaitōsho: daigaku tōkō', 1870/12/20 (10 January 1871), reel number ME 206-0747 in 'Dai-Nihon ishin shiryō kōhon (Manuscript of historical materials related to the Meiji Restoration of Japan)', Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo.

105 Japan Department of Finance, *Returns*, pp. 141–2.

106 Tōyō Keizai Shinpōsha, ed., *Nihon bōeki seiran: sōritsu 80-shūnen kinen fukkoku (A complete index of Japanese trade: a reprint commemorating 80 years of publication)*, Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shinpōsha, 1975, pp. 2–151.

By fostering the development of tea plantations in India, Britain carved out an even larger share of the world's tea trade and in so doing eliminated its dependence on Chinese tea. In 1865, Britain imported 97% of its tea from China but thereafter the steady growth in production of Indian tea meant that in 1871 it made up 11% of all tea imports. The share climbed to 28% by 1880 and became a majority (51%) in 1887.¹⁰⁷ Overall, with more options for acquiring tea, British and US merchants could move beyond the reciprocal demand dynamic that had long shaped their commerce with China, and by implication their activities in Pacific trade. The United States developed exports of kerosene, and by the 1880s it was a leading export to China and Japan. Oil was not, of course, discovered in the United States until the 1850s and a subsequent domestic glut contributed to the growth of the trade.¹⁰⁸ But, importantly, oil was a domestic product, unlike previous mainstays of Latin American silver or Pacific forest and marine products.

In addition, Indian tea represented the success of the plantation model being more widely adopted throughout the Pacific. In 1857, when the whaling industry began to taper off, Hawai'i had just five sugar plantations.¹⁰⁹ Over the next three decades, plantation production grew steadily and the US–Hawai'i Reciprocity Treaty of 1875 helped to expand US consumption of Hawaiian sugar. Chinese and later Japanese contract and free labourers augmented the Hawaiian workforce.¹¹⁰ By 1887 sugar amounted to 94% (by value) of all Hawaiian exports to the United States. In contrast to the earlier entrepôt trade, bilateral US–Hawai'i commerce dominated, totalling more than 90% of Hawai'i's foreign trade in 1887.¹¹¹

With US demand playing an increasing role and China ceasing to be a fountainhead of goods such as medicines and tea, traders in both Asia-Pacific and Western nations became less beholden to Chinese demand. In turn, those harvesting forest and marine products moved to meet burgeoning western European and US demand. For example, Taiwanese peasants harvesting camphor in mountainous areas began to sell to purchasing stations established by British merchants in the island's interior. British merchants sought more camphor, a commodity previously shipped mainly to China, as Westerners increasingly used it in the production of early plastics and photographic film.¹¹² In Sitka in the decades after Alaska came under US control in 1867, Tlingit and other Native Americans began to work as wage labourers in mines, on docks and ships, and in salmon canneries feeding US demand for canned fish. The Tlingit used their new-found monetary incomes to purchase US manufactured

107 J. Berry White, 'The Indian tea industry: its rise, progress during fifty years, and prospects considered from a commercial point of view', in *Foochow General Chamber of Commerce, correspondence referring to the decline of the China tea trade, and suggested remedies, 3rd November 1887*, Appendix F, 'The jubilee of tea', Foochow (Fuzhou), 1887, p. 18.

108 Robert Lloyd Webb, 'Shipping light: the case-oil trade to Asia, 1870–1915 and the origins of the supertanker', *New England Journal of History*, 53, 1, 1996, pp. 32–47.

109 'Statistics of agriculture, the agriculture of the Hawaiian Islands, sugar cane', *Hunt's Merchant Magazine*, 37, 1, 1857, pp. 117–20.

110 Katherine Coman, *The history of contract labor in the Hawaiian Islands*, New York: for the American Economic Association by the Macmillan Company, 1908, p. 64.

111 United States Department of Agriculture, *Hawaiian commerce from 1887 to 1897*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1897, pp. 3, 7.

112 Antonio C. Tavares, 'The Japanese colonial state and the dissolution of the late imperial frontier economy in Taiwan, 1886–1909', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 64, 2, 2005, p. 363.

goods, including ready-made clothing and windows for their homes. They also jealously guarded their jobs when mine and factory owners attempted to replace them with Chinese workers.¹¹³ Beginning in the 1860s, Western Pacific Islanders were increasingly recruited, often forcibly or through deception, to work not only as seamen and fishers of marine products but also in Australian agriculture. Many travelled to other Pacific islands, where they toiled in plantations producing copra and tropical products destined for Western markets.¹¹⁴ All told, in their labour pursuits, Taiwanese, Tlingit, and Western Pacific Islanders participated in a new socioeconomic chapter of Pacific history that was more strongly defined by Western demand.

Conclusions

This article has provided minimal discussion concerning the role of Western technological innovations, such as more advanced weaponry and sailing ships, in the course of integration. Instead, it has presented Pacific integration as an ocean-wide west-to-east process driven by common silver-substitute strategies, entrepôt trading systems, and demand. In turn it has shown that the advent of Western technological advantages of the industrial age, notably the introduction of steamships and the growth of Western industrial capacity to produce consumer goods, proved only partially responsible for the birth of a new Pacific era around 1875. The decline in the power of Chinese demand that began in the 1850s created a two-decade transition during which Western demand asserted increasing influence. Ports around the Pacific consequently assumed new profiles as emporia for goods destined not for Chinese but rather western European and US consumers. The period also marked the end of an era for peoples throughout the Pacific who experienced integration through their economic mobilization for the China market, as well as their increasing consumption of products, often from China, obtained through intra-Pacific trading channels. While space permits only the limited examples above, many of these peoples would, after 1875, become wage employees in industries driven by Western demand, while also becoming consumers of Western-produced manufactured wares.

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113 Victoria Wyatt, 'Alaskan Indian wage earners in the 19th century: economic choices and ethnic identity on Southeast Alaska's frontier', *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 78, ½, 1987, pp. 44–5, 48.

114 Howe, 'Tourists, sailors, and labourers', pp. 28–35; From the mid nineteenth to the early twentieth century, over 400,000 Melanesians and Micronesians worked as seaman and on plantations. Adam McKeown, 'Global migration, 1846–1940', *Journal of World History*, 15, 2, 2004, p. 162.