

# A Canadian Pilgrimage to Japan

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## Preamble to a Prelude

Many Canadians have made a pilgrimage to Japan, usually in the guise of temporary employment, but, in reality, to see for themselves what the fuss is all about.<sup>1</sup> By “fuss,” I am referring to the kaleidoscopic mix of Western and indigenous cultures that makes the heads of most Westerners spin.<sup>2</sup> The prospect of a work-related immersion assures the explorer that they will be able to circumvent the usual traps and deceptions of the tourist trade. But the experience can also result in shock and awe, sometimes within 24 hours of arrival.<sup>3</sup> A few have even found the experience traumatic, calling upon sociologist Paul Pedersen’s five-point strategy for distressed individuals in the throes of transculture shock.<sup>4</sup> His therapy resembles the Kübler-Ross bereavement model, where the object of demise is one’s cultural home as all the minutiae and big-picture desires of the West are refracted through the lens of Japanese enculturation.

In 1853 Japan adopted Western modernist culture with a singular passion after witnessing the might of industrial America’s “Black Ships”. The smoke-belching warships carried American demands for open trade and free access to the country, regardless of Japan’s sovereignty and foreign policy of isolation.<sup>5</sup> They threatened and seduced the power brokers outside and inside the Japanese government with the allure of mechanical progress and military prowess. Now, a hundred and fifty years later, Japan is the second largest economy in the world. And the presence of the West, particularly the United States, is ubiquitous and alarmingly privileged.

And yet, Western symbols and icons often seem to be “Lost in Translation,” as Bill Murray would have it.<sup>6</sup> Examples abound, beginning with the apocryphal legend of a smiling Santa Claus hanging from a cross in a Japanese department store window at Christmas time.<sup>7</sup> Then there are the T-shirts that revel in Japlish.<sup>8</sup> Justin Timberlake clones. The long list goes on.<sup>9</sup> And if the wholesale adoption of the ways of the West were not disarming enough, the seeming indifference to indigenous culture, far beyond the usual secularisation of the First World, adds to the alarm.<sup>10</sup>

Some Western pilgrims are alerted to the whirlwind of dissonant cultural symbols well before they embark on their journey, thanks to Asian Studies courses in college or university, Google, or the trave-

logues of Lonely Planet writers.<sup>11</sup> But the actual, exhilarating experience simply doesn’t measure up to the stories told and re-told around the coffee table or in the classroom. Most returnees are at a loss for words, or they rehearse their fleeting impressions over and over again, collaring friends like the Ancient Mariner and forcing the reluctant wedding guest to sit down and hear all twenty pages of testimonial from beginning to end.

After Japan’s precipitous fall from excess wealth in the late 1980s, you might think that the mythical land of *Kenta’kii* (Kentucky Fried Chicken – the dinner of choice at Christmas time) and *Makudonordusu* (MacDonalds) would have lost its sheen. But no. Its culture still bustles along 24/7 with all its intense Western oddities and kitschy hybridities in tandem, still mystifying and astounding outsiders, even as Japan muddles through yet another decade of recession (or is it a depression?). In fact, it has become a major exporter of Euro-American hybrid pop culture throughout East Asia, even rivalling American pop culture sources, and, most astoundingly, rebounding back to the West, as evidenced by the likes of Hello Kitty and Pokémon.<sup>12</sup> Of course, I’m not taking into account the precious cultural treasures gifted to the West such as, for example, Zen Buddhism, or the spectacular acculturations symbolized by the Japanese success in Western technology. A case can even be made for the success of cultural hybridisation as evidenced by the comfortable feelings evoked by the indigenous side of many modern cultural hybrids in many Japanese. No, I’m describing the day-to-day surface seen by the everyman and the everywoman in Japan, from the moment they wake up to a breakfast of Crunchy Pops all the way to the late-night Conans.

My own particular close encounter of the Japan kind is not that unusual.<sup>13</sup> However, my memories do have a few twists and turns that are uniquely Canadian. I confess that nostalgia is one of the prime motivators for writing this little memoir. Having recently pushed and shoved my way through to the finish line of a Ph.D., I find myself looking back at many exhausting years spent in classrooms, libraries, and field trips. But the real spark that fuelled my past reckoning was Google Maps. Thanks to Google’s astounding ability to provide photos of each and every street in the world, I recently was able to revisit my old dormitory outside Kyoto.<sup>14</sup> Using the

magic of their virtual reality, I once again marched up the steep one-lane road to the hilltop residence of my old student housing, which in Google Mapland is still basking in the same glorious light of a summer's day.

### **Prelude to an Adventure**

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Some background is in order. In my youth I was a fast-fingered flautist with a penchant for sight-reading. Time spent in national youth orchestras and a Bachelor of Music degree in flute performance hinted at a career as a professional. But what followed the intoxication of student life as a hot-shot musician was a kind of morning-after hangover. Breath-taking inspiration was replaced by the numbing life of a temp in professional orchestras. Alarm bells began to ring in my head. Instead of the usual sweeping reverence for orchestral soundscapes and Olympian conductors, orchestral work was all about stifling workplace conditions founded on autocratic leadership and dead quiet obeisance.<sup>15</sup> Blinding boredom was interspersed with heart-pounding solos in concerts and even in rehearsals. But that's just me, I suppose.

Like others, I could have adapted, but there was another troubling aspect to the world of stage performances. Something seemed to be terribly awry in the relationship of the performer to the listener. What was it exactly that the listeners were experiencing? Were they really following the labyrinthine exploration of the sonata form, puzzling over the quixotic transformation of the *leitmotif*, or marvelling at the inversion of the principal theme in retrograde? Maybe one in a hundred. Or one in a thousand. Almost everybody else was either in awe of a concerto soloist impersonating a highwire act, or lost in a reverie of unison violins and golden-voiced horns, of daydream images of scudding clouds or warriors on galloping horses, all the while doing battle with what seemed to be Attention Deficit Disorder. For my own part, on my side of the proscenium, I looked out at meditating statues who did not dare to cough, so unlike the parallel world of popular music.<sup>16</sup>

When I began teaching Music Appreciation classes, I discovered that almost all my students arrived at the first class with profound feelings of guilt. "I am in the company of sonic greatness; how dare my consciousness wander away from the recital hall like some sort of delinquent child?" Others were upset at their mind's waywardness when it focused on the hemline of the outside third desk of the violin section, or the sullen expressions of the back row of brass players, who looked like benched hockey players in tuxes. They laid the blame for their confusion on a previously undiagnosed ADD of the musical kind. Explanations about the return of the secondary

theme at the tonic only gave temporary relief from the feelings of inadequacy.

The troubled relationship between the mute performer of classical music and the stone-body gaze of the audience has since been illuminated by authors such as Christopher Small.<sup>17</sup> But at the time of my aesthetic crisis there were no guidelines, no signposts, and no help in the university where I was immersed in my music studies.

Left to my own devices, and being a child of the late 1960s, I fell deeply, madly in love with the writings of Allan Watts (1915-1973), and then his mentor, Daisetsu Suzuki (1870-1966). Their lives and aesthetic awareness had been illuminated and transformed by Japanese Zen Buddhism.<sup>18</sup> So began a series of coincidences in my life that verged on the unbelievable.

### **The Grand Adventure**

First, I discovered that my university actually had a department of Buddhist Studies which included a very sanguine Japanese scholar, Shotaro Iida, who worked in four ancient languages, including Sanskrit, taught seminars and classes with inexhaustible energy, and shamelessly flirted with the women students. He embodied Zen Buddhism's earthy humour, its iconoclastic anti-intellectualism, and its predilection for vast amounts of exegesis. His understanding of the full pan-Asian spread of Buddhism and its mind-boggling expressions of impermanence and evanescent enlightenment was breathtaking.<sup>19</sup> When I confided to him my troubled musical relationship with my listeners, he responded with a haiku by Basho – "Should I take it in my hand, it would melt in my hot tears, like Autumn frost."<sup>20</sup> How could I resist?

Enter, the next coincidence. I discovered a flute whose music and performances are founded on the aesthetics of Zen Buddhism – the Japanese shakuhachi. And if that were not enough, the shakuhachi made its way into my life via Elliot Weisgarber, a composition teacher at UBC's School of Music who spent almost all his free time in Japan, revelling in the rarefied world of their traditional musicians. He had discovered the shakuhachi only a few years earlier, so I caught him during the golden age of his exploration and deep satisfaction. Like my Buddhology teacher, he was full of puzzling contradictions and aggravating eccentricities. I quietly slipped into his care within a graduate studies program, along with Iida-san, without even bothering to attend my undergraduate baccalaureate ceremonies. Goodbye Western Art Music; hello ethnomusicology. Even though Weisgarber's heart was in composition, he did write articles, including the first essay ever written about

the shakuhachi in a modern Western music journal.<sup>21</sup> His no-holds-barred love of Japanese traditional music was a bit different from my own Zen-inspired infatuation. He gravitated to a global appreciation of Japanese aesthetics, including the secular and even the profane, whereas I was looking for the musical components of everything that I had learned in Buddhism. Our common ground was *mono no aware*, a melancholy fatalism that pours from the heart of traditional Japan and the “heart” sutra, declaring 50 different ways that “everything is impermanent.”<sup>22</sup> I went straight to the heart of the matter – the sacred music of the shakuhachi, called *Honkyoku*. My plan was to link the music to the writings of Zen Buddhism with the Peak Experience phenomenon theorized by Abraham Maslow.

After a couple of years in the company of my two inspiring eccentrics, I was off to Japan in a cargo container freighter. Not actually in a cargo box, but on one of the uppermost decks with a first-class stateroom that looked out on the grey sea in one direction and acres of industrial storage in the other. Ten days and one typhoon later, I arrived in Kobe on a sun-drenched and moist summer afternoon. Then, as fools are wont to do, I rushed down the gangplank and into the unknown. As I strode along the wharf towards the dock gate and then the heart of the city, I heard less and less English. When I arrived at an interurban train ticket booth several blocks inside the heart of the city, well away from the harbour and its bilingual signs and conversation, the ticket agent asked where I was going in rapid-fire, colloquial Japanese. It was then that I realized I was way out of my depth. It had never occurred to me how to get from Kobe to my new home in Kyoto, 665 kilometres to the northwest, let alone how to ask in Japanese.

I glanced back at the wharf and the freighter. My inner voice shouted, “Go back to the ship, you idiot, explain how it was all a terrible mistake, and beg them to let you back in the same cabin for the trip home.” Earlier, the captain had told me that they were only tying up for 24 hours, so speed was imperative. Instead, I purchased an interurban train ticket for who knows what, where, when and why. The train was standing room only, headed in the vague direction of Kyoto. Above the sea of heads, I saw a foreigner. Some polite pushing and shoving brought me face to face with a Caucasian businessman only slightly older than myself, in a standard two-piece suit. I quickly learned that I had bought a first class ticket, with wine service and my own seat. Oh well, at least I was headed in the right direction. He was an old hand, just making his way home, with plenty of sympathy for my dilemma, so he scribbled instructions for my necessary train connections.

Hours later, I marched up, up, up a narrow winding suburban road lined on both sides with shoulder-to-shoulder nondescript condo-looking houses to my new abode, the Kyoto Area International Student Residence, and surprisingly, a return to English. I had discovered the first of several facts of Japanese life. Everybody wants to practice their English on you. That truism, combined with the sombre reality that it is impossible to speak Japanese without making a ghastly mistake within two minutes, set the tone for my adventure in Japan’s version of bilingualism.<sup>23</sup>

## My Music Lessons in Japan

Within a month, I was in the brilliant company of not one, but two, teachers of shakuhachi, a cultural faux pas but also an amazing stroke of luck.<sup>24</sup> A music student can probably relate to this impossible conundrum if they’ve ever studied the same Chopin prelude with two piano teachers simultaneously. But the difference in approaches is vastly greater in Japan. Music teaching lineages and branches widely diverged over the centuries, so much so that techniques and even music notation of the same piece of music are strikingly different. Many lineages and branches from one music-teacher founder become self-contained schools of their own, each with its own complex family tree of aural instruction and revered sensei instructors. I was musically nurtured not just by two different teachers, but by two very different schools of musical instruction, the *Kinko-ryu* and the *Taizan-ryu* within the *Meian-ha*, the common moniker of choice.<sup>25</sup>

The members of my two schools saw each other’s school in a very opposite light. The Kinko school claimed that the Meian school’s performance practices were simplistic and unimaginative, the stuff of amateur hobbyists with no spine for complex technique and aesthetic struggle. Kinko teachers demanded virtuosic manipulation of timbre and pitch as each melody restlessly moved from one note to the next in a sinewy path of constantly changing tone and colour. The more demanding the effort, the more puzzling the reason why; a perfect musical *koan* from the world of Zen Buddhism. In the spirit of the question “What is the sound of one hand clapping?”, the player is required to make near-impossible demands on his embouchure and attention to simply move from point A to point B in the slowest time possible.

The Meian players see themselves as ascetic, stripped down to essentials. They shun virtuosity. They saw the rival school’s performance practices as flamboyant and garish, indulging in profuse ornamentation and fidgety sonic manipulations to the detriment of the spiritual meditation inherent in the sacred shakuhachi music. The rival school’s complex

musical technique only served to enhance the ego of the player, rather than transcend it.

Participation in both schools, so opposite in their aesthetic demands, allowed me to triangulate my outsider's point of view and gain insights into Western music. However, my personal Western musicological revelations were not shared by my shakuhachi teachers; they had zero interest in my Western worries, because their lives were filled with an urgency to keep alive the musical flames of their intangible cultural heritage (ICH).<sup>26</sup> Although their musical interests were respected by some, others accused my teachers of being archaic and irrelevant, labelling their music as *furukusai*, "stinks of being old".

### Tanaka (Yūdo) Motonobu (1922-)

My lessons with Tanaka Motonobu (who had received the honorific Shakuhachi title of Yūdo), were tempered by the fact that he was the manager of the student union building of a major university just outside Kobe.<sup>27</sup> He was also a unique Japanese soul because of his long history as a labour union activist, ready to stand up to "the man", an extraordinary personality trait in a land that values *giri* (obligation) above *ninjo* (personal needs). His respect for the student activists he encountered during the troubles of the late 1960s motivated him to translate Robert's Rules of Order into Japanese, possibly the first such translation in Japan.

He knew what university education and foreign researchers were all about, so he decided to give me two different kinds of lessons for each assignment, back to back once a week. The first lesson was strict and traditional. The template for this style of instruction is found in Zen Buddhism, where the search for enlightenment follows a rigorous path (*dō*) of strict imitation and cryptic instructions laid out by *rōshi*.<sup>28</sup> It was held in a small teaching studio that resembled a tea room with its tatami mats and wooden beams, all muted in tan, browns and greys. But instead of drinking tea, we sat in humble silence, awaiting our one-on-one group lessons. "We" was my singular non-Japanese self and about ten local university boys who seemed to be killing time between classes. Like all the students in the tiny, almost claustrophobic room, I patiently waited for my turn, and then was called to the front of the room, taking my place directly facing the teacher (*sensei*). I proceeded to wordlessly mimic his music phrases, one painstaking note at a time, first played by him, then copied by me.<sup>29</sup> The young bucks in the room always had a laugh at my expense after I finished each lesson. Because they were conducted in traditional kneeling fashion (*seiza*), my legs would always go completely numb after ten or so minutes of tingling and com-

plaining. Standing afterwards was a tragicomedy farce involving teetering like a drunk while masking the pain from my legs screaming bloody murder.

The rite of passage over, off he and I went to grab a quick dinner at a traditional stand-up noodle shop filled with commuters grabbing a snack before continuing on their long train rides home. We then went back to the campus and the privacy of his office for a second unofficial lesson. At our first meeting, he had announced (in so many words), "I know you're here as a research student, and I also know you are a *gaijin* (foreign) student, so ask your (impertinent) questions, and I'll do my best to answer them, even though it rubs across the grain of my tradition." What could I say but "Thank you, thank you, thank you!"?

My questions often provoked answers he didn't know he had. I asked why his fingers were used to create so many melodic embellishments. He said, "I do?". He was entirely unaware of his melodic ornamentation. It was after some confusing discussions that we both realized that his profuse ornamentations were not ornaments, but musical devices to articulate and separate one note from the next. I looked at him and asked, "Why not begin each note with a tongued consonant, as we do in the West?" I then pulled out my Western flute and played the music back to him in a starkly plain form he had never heard or imagined. His jaw dropped. He demanded that I record each piece of music I learned on the shakuhachi in this Western manner, on the Western (Boehm) flute.<sup>30</sup>

I was a flautist with a sophisticated technique, so I could learn each sacred melody in less than an hour, instead of the usual time of several months, if not years.<sup>31</sup> But the style of instruction was predicated on the intensity and frustration of the learning process; the struggle and toil required for each piece of music *is* the point of the learning experience, not the finished product, the completion of yet another study on the road to a recital or music conservatory exam. The final perfect performance, the "product," is a dénouement, a mere formality, almost a let-down.<sup>32</sup> But, unlike most shakuhachi students whose musical pilgrimage takes place on the back of the lumbering bull seen in the 'Ten Ox Herding Pictures', I was inside a Beemer barreling effortlessly down the Autobahn.<sup>33</sup> Fortunately I could fill in the missing struggle of my training with my background understanding of Buddhism. And much to my surprise and delight, my teacher also intended to fill in those holes with a ton of Buddhist-inspired explanations and exhortations.

After each private lesson my teacher took me to yet another hole-in-the-wall restaurant and this time we drank sake from bottomless thimble cups. Thanks to his ambition to show me his world, he ordered one mysterious snack-food dish after another. You may

already know, or have heard, that warm sake, combined with the late night ambience of a noisy corner-street diner, and the exhaustion of a long day of work, can create some difficulties in concentration and attention. But that didn't stop my teacher from roaring and laughing his way through the dinner. The sushi chefs across from us, behind the diner counter, were wryly amused, sharing in his delight, shouting out encouragement. I smiled gamely through the fog of my increasingly addled brain, barely following the humour and lectures drenched in his rough Kobe dialect. He enthusiastically and emotionally explained one Zen Buddhist concept after another, scribbling their Chinese characters on food-soiled paper napkins. As he moved on to the next dish, or topic, I surreptitiously stuffed the table napkins into my pockets.

Eventually he would look at his watch with surprise and alarm, and shout "Five minutes!". We would run through the streets, weaving through all the other drunks, and grab me a ticket for the last commuter train back to Kyoto. Then, as we stood at the station platform, a long line of commuter train cars would emerge from the black hole of the night like a jet plane landing on a tarmac. After a solemn bow from me, and a gentle push from Tanaka-san through the door of the train, off I shot, into the dark of the night. Bleary, with many transfers ahead, I struggled to stay awake like all the "salarymen" in the half-empty train cars. Late, late, later that night, after a miracle of successful train changes, I would fall off the one-car tramcar at my modest stop and stumble up the same steep slope to my monk's cell in the student residence.

Sunday morning I awoke with a pounding headache. As the glaring light of day poured into my tiny cell window, I stared out at the Japanese summer landscape of lush hills and plains dotted with nondescript apartment blocks and ancient temples engulfed in Kyoto's forests. Then I would suddenly remember, reach into my pockets, and pull out the jumbled mess of riches from the previous night, each precious document covered in soy sauce and sticky finger food. Down to the front desk I would go to ask my new friend for help with the identity of the scribbles. Once I knew what they were, I could translate them and make sense of their telegraphed meaning, then spend hours researching their meaning in my many books on Japanese Buddhism. My friend would read my teacher's notes with a mix of wonder and incredulity, declaring him to be a very, very old-fashioned sensei. A *meishin*. A shining mentor.

This routine happened every Saturday and Sunday for the whole time I was in Japan. Even then, I managed to lose twenty pounds.

### **Kojima (Issui) Toyoaki (1928-)**

My second teacher, Dr. Kojima Toyoaki (with the shakuhachi name of Issui), was not nearly as dramatic, but he was equally passionate about the shakuhachi. He was, thankfully, as amenable to my role as a foreign research student as Tanaka-sensei. It helped that he was a doctor of medicine at a famous hospital located in the northeastern hills of Kyoto.<sup>34</sup> I had my lessons with him in yet another modest little Japanese tea room, this one on the grounds of a hospital which was located on the slopes of a forested hill leading up to Mount *Hiei* and *Enryakuji*. If that wasn't inspiration enough, the walk to the lessons took my breath away each and every week, because the most direct route was along the famous Philosopher's Walk (*Tetsugaku no Michi*) named after the Japanese philosopher Kitaro Nishida (1870–1945), who wandered along its pathway, trying to make sense of the East and the West, on his way to Kyoto University. The walkway runs parallel to a modest canal that is crisscrossed with footbridges at almost every turn. So beautiful, so simple, so elegant. The lessons were in private, so I was also given the blessed opportunity to ask questions and make comments without offending the ritual designed for group lessons.

I never compared or discussed the music and instruction of one school with another during my lessons. They were kept absolutely separate.

Kojima-sensei was also one of the senior administrators and teachers of an organisation of shakuhachi players called *Meian Kyokai*, headquartered in a temple called *Meian-ji*, located on the grounds of *Tofukuji* temple complex in the southeast section (*Higashiyama-ku*) of Kyoto. Recently he became the 41<sup>st</sup> head of that very venerable organisation. I had several precious opportunities to hear and see the performances of almost the complete membership of the *Meian Kyokai* at a single sitting, a process that would take twelve or so hours. The concerts of soloists and groups of players began at 10:00 a.m. and would end at 10:00 p.m. I would be seated with Kojima-sensei and his other students, all Japanese except for my good friend David Satterwhite. At one such performance, I encountered Andreas Gutzwiller and Riley Lee, who went on to become noted scholars of the shakuhachi.

Both Kojima-sensei and Tanaka-sensei were rare examples of generous practitioners with a passion and zest for their musical interests. Although they may have had an all-too-human side to their personalities, all I saw was the spirit and commitment of a beautiful obsession founded on a philosophy of practical inquiry and spiritual discovery. They have been my role models throughout my life. I wrote my Mas-

ter's thesis on the three most sacred pieces of the shakuhachi, as performed by the *Kinko Ryū*, (leaving my study of the same titles in the *Meian-ha Taizan-ryū* for another day), and eventually became a Governor of the International Shakuhachi Society. I even portrayed a fully dressed *Komusō* at Expo 86 in Vancouver, during my position as artist in residence.<sup>35</sup> But that's a story for another time.

## The Canadian Experience

The title of this little piece, "A Canadian Pilgrimage to Japan", raises an interesting question. In what way was my adventure "Canadian" and not merely Australian or American, or even Western? Two answers, or at the very least, responses, come to mind.

### Canadian Representation

First, there was my experience in the upstairs hall of an old-fashioned restaurant in Kobe, one Saturday in November. It had been booked by Tanaka-sensei for a day-long student concert. And I mean "day", as in 24 hours. It started at 9:00 a.m. and continued until sun-up the next day at my teacher's miniscule house. The in-house concert consisted of dozens and dozens of dead-serious performances by 40-some amateur shakuhachi players. The program consisted of a few sacred solo pieces, but almost everybody chose to play selections from the *sankyoku* trio repertoire, which features shakuhachi, koto (a kind of horizontal harp) and shamisen (resembling a banjo), with the koto or shamisen player also singing. The latter two stringed instruments were played by bemused and demure professional female musicians who were only too well aware of the boys-night-out atmosphere in the room.<sup>36</sup> Finally, as midnight drew near, the concert came to a close and the large group of middle-aged men undid their ties and called for food and drinks to be served at the newly-placed bench-like tables, given that we were all sitting on the floor the entire time. Now that the heavy responsibility of playing well was lifted from each player's shoulders, each player took his place around the communal tables arranged in a square and loudly declared, "Let the party begin!". Food, glorious food, a forest of sake and beer bottles, loud chatter from a dozen simultaneous conversations, and peals of bellowing laughter. The party was looked upon with even more bemusement by the two women musicians who were invited to eat and drink. They were definitely not there as menial hostesses, but rather as equals around the table, and in fact were paid handsomely for their talent and time.

Then the singing began. This kind of DIY entertainment existed in Japan long before karaoke, its successor.<sup>37</sup> Each shakuhachi player in turn showcased a folk song (*minyo*) from a real or imagined village of their ancestors. Others chose to perform a favourite *enka*, a genre of 1950s MOR song that combines the best (or worst?) of Western crooning and Japanese melodrama.<sup>38</sup> So much pathos, so much melancholy, then a wide grin for a job done to personal satisfaction, and another bottle of Kirin beer.

It slowly dawned on me that I might be expected to crank out a song at some point in the night. Then, my nightmare happened. Ruddy faces fuelled by much drinking shouted almost in unison for me to sing "something from Canada". My face drained. Then their faces drained. Instead of singing with gusto I was paralyzed with inaction. At the same moment, they realized to their horror and disbelief that (1) I had no song to sing, and (2) they had accidentally placed me in the most humiliating position possible in their society. Each mind silently groaned, "Oh my God, we're embarrassing the foreigner, our guest. Who knew foreigners had no songs from their land?!" For one awful moment, the air hung heavy with shock and disbelief. I stared blankly inside my head, and suddenly, out came a verse of "Frère Jacques"! (Thanks, grade 3 teacher.) After my last wavering note, a huge, audible sigh of relief washed over the assembled. Life returned to normal; all was well with the world again. "More sake!" Fortunately the room was so tipsy that the incident was quickly forgotten. But not quite before many a head made a mental note to self: never, never under any circumstances ask foreigners to sing a song.<sup>39</sup>

Thanks to Phil Thomas and his discovery of a song from my end of Canada entitled "The Grand Hotel" ("there's a place in Vancouver we all know so well..."), I am now fully equipped. I was never able to use that fabulous song in Japan, but I sang it many times in England in the company of carousing morris men.<sup>40</sup>

It's likely that the same song circle exists among shakuhachi players in Japan today, but it would consist of X or even Y generation types who would likely be more interested in karaoke. Given the huge popularity of "Forever Love" (X Japan) and "Oyoge! Taiyaki-kun" (Masato Shimon) for older Japanese men, I would probably be asked to sing something by Celine Dion. "My Heart Shall Go On." Gulp.

### Canadian Identity

My second answer to the question of my use of the word "Canadian" in the title of this article has occupied me ever since I returned to Canada.

Japan's national character is vivid and homogeneous. Never mind that it is a kaleidoscopic hybrid of East and West on its surface; its general character is cut from one cloth. Its identity stands robust and unself-conscious.<sup>41</sup>

When I returned, I looked at Canada with the new eyes of an outsider (perhaps like many an immigrant). I quickly saw that Canadian identity was a chimera, maybe even an illusion. Was Marshall McLuhan right when he said "Canada is the only country in the world that knows how to live without an identity"?<sup>42</sup> Before my trip to Japan, I had never thought about Canadian identity, always assuming it was a simple fact of life that came from being raised here. Of course, there were those vast differences between my prairie roots and almost everywhere else in Canada, but I blithely assumed those contrasts were overlaid by some sort of common ground. Occasionally that *common ground* provoked a Cultural Cringe, so brilliantly described in Wikipedia, but the source of those feelings of inferiority, cringe-worthy or not, still suggested a core of culture.

Not wanting to fall back on the usual and useless cliché of Canadian identification – "we are not American" – I vacillate between two points of view. On the one side, I wonder if McLuhan is right; there is no such thing as a "Canadian," except in some sort of legal passport kind of way.<sup>43</sup> And then, on the opposite side, is the hope held out by writers like Richard Gwyn who tease out the markers of identity, presumably between the cracks of the cultural mosaic. He even makes the case that the search for the Canadian identity is itself a key marker of Canadian identity.<sup>44</sup>

### The Argument Against a Canadian Song

The nation-state as an entity has been subject to intense criticism and is found to be deeply flawed. If the concept is not being hammered into dust by authors such as Benedict Anderson, it is being squashed under the weight of globalisation.<sup>45</sup> The arguments that deny the viability of monolithic nation-states are persuasive, coincidentally reinforcing McLuhan's vision of a Global Village. Canada is one of the most welcoming of countries to world citizens, given its porous nationalism. No wonder it is rated first in the world for accepting the greatest number of immigrants, successfully engineered and managed by the world's first Ministry of Multiculturalism.

Another nationalist landmark due for burial is assimilation, and its near cousin, acculturation. Even in the US, the Melting Pot model has been completely discredited.<sup>46</sup> It is only a matter of time before America becomes officially bilingual, Spanish and English, and by extension, bicultural, and, by further exten-

sion, a fully recognized multicultural mosaic. Whiteness Studies are adding to the transition by declaring matter-of-factly that "White Culture" is rapidly evaporating.<sup>47</sup>

The multiculturalisation of Canada has created a paradox in which there is no single cultural expression, including music, which can represent Canada's identity as a whole. For example, the Jannies, a perfect intangible cultural heritage in Newfoundland and Labrador, are unknown and irrelevant outside of the province.<sup>48</sup> Further, Jannies, ballads, broadsides, and a host of other bits of folklore and folk song originate in England or France. Elevating them to the status of Canadian Intangible Cultural Heritage threatens to privilege English and French ethnicity over all others, no matter how long-standing. Further yet, the maintenance of customs like the Jannies can also be seen as an unconscious obeisance to British neo-colonialism. No doubt the same arguments can be made in Quebec vis-à-vis France. John Ralston Saul articulated these dilemmas when he said that Canada has turned its back on the notion of a "single national myth".<sup>49</sup> Add to this Samuel Johnson's famous 1775 quote, "patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel," and you find yourself shrinking away from any discussion of a national representation that would reflect a national identity. This seems to be the reaction of the governments of Canada, the US and Great Britain, who have all declined to support UNESCO's 2003 Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Another marker of identity has also joined the scrap-heap – hyphenation. A closer examination of the left side of a Canadian individual's hyphen causes endless confusion.<sup>50</sup> In the same garbage dump you will find the remnants of the cultural theory that Canada is a mosaic in contradistinction to the melting pot of the United States.<sup>51</sup> Both terms have been accused, in their own ways, of harbouring a hidden agenda of assimilation into a largely Eurocentric view of the world.

Finally, even the notion that Canada is a community of ethnicities and hyphenated nationalities is eroding. Although this idea is theorized by Will Kymlycka, Canada's go-to academic for theories of multiculturalism, it is being labelled *old school* by the likes of Anne Philips, who uses female gender to highlight the fallacy of monolithic "cultures" within a nation-state.<sup>52</sup> Authors such as Walter Benn Michaels (*The Trouble with Diversity: How We Learned to Love Identity and Ignore Inequality*) have added fuel to the fire by declaring that multiculturalism as an end goal is distracting government and the people from addressing greater issues of economic inequality.<sup>53</sup> In the end, questions of identity seem to have become concentrated on civil society, without regard to eth-

nicity, gender, etc. And these markers of society aspire to be global.

## The Argument For a Canadian Song

So, having talked myself out of any notions of Canadian Identity, and hence a representative song or repertoire, I see that the search for the quintessential Canadian identity is still going on. There are all sorts of interesting attempts to breathe life into that shibboleth. To cite just a few examples, David Tara's review of Nelson Wiseman's new book *In Search of Canadian Political Culture* (UBC Press, 2007) confidently asserts that, "For those interested in the puzzle of Canadian identity, it doesn't get any better than this." Michael Adams, the founder of Environics and one of Canada's most prolific demographers, found Canadian identity markers sifted from thousands of questionnaires sent to Canadians and Americans. They are available for view in his first book, *Fire and Ice: The United States, Canada and the Myth of Converging Values* (Penguin Canada, 2004). In his latest book, *Unlikely Utopia: The Surprising Triumph of Canadian Multiculturalism* (Penguin Canada, 2008), he even holds out hope for a successful hybridization with a distinct Canadian stamp on it.

## Conclusion

Perhaps a case can be made that regional folk songs such as "Farewell to Nova Scotia" can act as metaphors for Canada as a whole, but that case would have to be made by recently-arrived immigrants for it to stick. I fear the search for Canadian Identity in the realm of traditional music (and maybe even popular music) is an uphill battle, without interest or support from a key player – the Ministère du patrimoine canadien/Department of Canadian Heritage or any other Canadian government department. A part of me also feels sorry for our new Canadians, as they arrive to find their new country empty of a national culture, with no sense of national cultural community with which to bond.<sup>54</sup> Of course, they may be equally glad about the vacuum, knowing that they can forego the struggle to "fit in," because there is nothing to fit in to (aside from the requirements of civil society and the demands of speaking English or French, which is ready and waiting patiently for the forces of creolisation to emerge).

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> One of the most vivid accounts is the 2000 National Film Board documentary *Tokyo Girls*. Other great commentaries are found in the academic and anecdotal observations of

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Canadian and American English-language teachers working in Japan's popular and massive program of English language instruction called JET (Japanese Exchange and Training). See David McConnell, *Importing Diversity: Inside Japan's JET Program* (University of California Press, 2000), and the first-hand stories and essays edited by David Kootnikoff and David Chandler, entitled *Getting Both Feet Wet: Experiences Inside The JET Program* (JPGS Press, 2002). Eric Sparling gives us a distinctive Canadian spin in his book *Japan Diary: A year on JET* ([Lulu.com](http://Lulu.com), 2005). My personal favourite memoir of life in Japan is by Will Ferguson (*How to Be a Canadian, Why I Hate Canadians*), who wrote about his Japanese experiences in a book he called *Hitching Rides with Buddha* (Canongate US, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> These days, ESL industries in other East Asian countries are more attractive in light of the collapse of the economy, referred to as Japan's Lost Decade (失われた10年, Ushinawareta Jūnen), which now is extending to twenty years.

<sup>3</sup> For the most recent discussions about cross-cultural adaptation in the context of the reception of Western culture in an Other, see *Cultural Adaptation*, edited by Albert Moran, Michael Keane (Routledge, 2009), and *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, edited by Timothy McGee (M.E. Sharpe, 2000). In an interesting commentary on East Asians performing Western Art Music, the authors contend that the WAM canon has been successfully assimilated without suffering the baggage of neo-colonialism or the collapse of personal identity. See Mari Yoshihara, *Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Temple University Press, 2007), and Mina Yang, "East Meets West in the Concert Hall: Asians and Classical Music in the Century of Imperialism, Post-colonialism, and Multiculturalism", in *Asian Music*, volume 38, number 1 (Winter/Spring 2007), pp. 1-30.

<sup>4</sup> Pedersen, Paul, *The Five Stages of Culture Shock: Critical Incidents Around the World* (Greenwood Press, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> The three-masted ships were powered by the latest industrial aid, coal-burning engines that spewed black smoke from funnels that stood between their masts. If that were not enough, their hulls were painted black, resulting in an indelible image imprinted on the Japanese national consciousness. Kosaku Yamada (1886-1965), one of Japan's pioneer composers in Western style, composed a Wagnerian opera in 1940 entitled *Black Ships (Kurofune)*. The opera features a conflicted *geisha* caught between a Japanese nationalist samurai and an American consul. Sound familiar? It was premiered some 40 years after Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* in Milan (1904), and just four years after the Japanese première of *Madama Butterfly* in a complete version in 1936. For a detailed examination of the reception of Puccini's opera *Madama Butterfly* in Japan, see Mari Yoshihara, *Musicians from a Different Shore* (Temple University Press, 2007), pp. 23-33, and Arthur Groos, "Return of the Native: Japan in *Madama Butterfly*/*Madama Butterfly* in Japan," in *Cambridge Opera Journal* (1989), 1:167-194. I know of no commentary in English on the *Black Ships* opera.

<sup>6</sup> *Lost in Translation* is a 2003 American comedy-drama film starring Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson. The un-



balanced love affair between the Western middle-aged star and the dislocated ingénue is set against improbable Japanese translations of Western popular culture kitsch.

<sup>7</sup> See “Cinderella Christmas: Kitsch, Consumerism and Youth in Japan,” by Brian Moeran and Lisa Skov, in *Unwrapping Christmas*, edited by Daniel Miller (Oxford University Press, 1993). Further stories of the hybridization and confusion around the theme of Christmas by non-Western cultures are documented in *Christmas, Ideology and Popular Culture*, edited by Sheila Whiteley (Edinburgh University Press, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> See Steven Caires, *The Joys of English* (Penguin, 2005). Not to be outdone, the Chinese side of the coin is known as Chinglish. Read *Chinglish: Found in Translation* (Gibbs Smith, 2007), which includes a very sympathetic and sensitive commentary by the author and collector, Oliver Lutz Radtke.

<sup>9</sup> One of my favourite list items is the essay by Carolyn S. Stevens, entitled “‘Love Never Dies’: Romance and Christian Symbolism in a Japanese Rock Video”, in *Refashioning Pop Music in Asia: Cosmopolitan Flows, Political Tempos, and Aesthetic Industries*, edited by Allen Chun et al. (Routledge, 2004). The first sentence reads, “Christian symbols are commonly used in Japanese popular culture to express ideals of modern romanticism and Occidental exoticism.”

<sup>10</sup> According to the author Marilyn Ivy, writing in her book *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan* (University of Chicago Press, 1995), the penchant for benign neglect may be catching up to and even overtaking the Japanese. To quote the back cover, “Japan today is haunted by the ghosts its spectacular modernity has generated. Deep anxieties about the potential loss of national identity and continuity disturb many in Japan.” Other deeply troubling views of Japan’s eroding traditions in the light of modernity are described in a set of essays entitled *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Japan*, edited by Stephen Vlastos (University of California Press, 1998).

<sup>11</sup> Lest too much cultural weight be given to travel book genres such as Lonely Planet series, Santo Cilauro, Tom Gleisner and Rob Sitch have written a travel-guide parody called *Molvania: A Land Untouched by Modern Dentistry* (Penguin, 2003). In the spirit of the Rough Guides to World Music, the authors summarize the folk and popular music of the imaginary country (pp. 90-91).

<sup>12</sup> See *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*, by Koichi Iwabuchi (Duke University Press, 2002), *Globalizing Japan: Ethnography of the Japanese Presence in Asia, Europe, and America*, edited by Harumi Befu and Sylvie Guichard-Anguis (Routledge, 2001), and *Japan Pop: Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, edited by Timothy Craig (M.E. Sharpe, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> See *Blowing Zen: Finding an Authentic Life*, by Ray Brooks (H.J. Kramer, 2000) and the singularly poetic and richly detailed *The Single Tone: A Personal Journey into Shaku-hachi Music*, by Christopher Yohmei Blasdel (Printed Matter Press, 2005).

<sup>14</sup> 28 Ike Tsutsumi Cho, Misasagi, Yamashina Ku, Kyoto Shi. International Student Residence, Kokusai Gakuyukai Kyoto Ryugakuseiryō.

<sup>15</sup> These issues, and more, are eloquently and thoroughly reviewed by Stephen Cottrell in his book *Professional Music-Making in London: Ethnography and Experience* (Ashgate, 2004). He draws attention to the paradox of classical musicians who possess astounding cultural capital, poverty-stricken monetary capital, and an inability to convert the former into the latter, following Pierre Bourdieu. This paradox acts like a corrosive agent to the spirit of the musicians, aggravating already demoralizing conditions.

<sup>16</sup> One of the few authors to critically examine the fixed gaze of the classical music audience is Matthew Riley. See his book *Musical Listening in the German Enlightenment: Attention, Wonder and Astonishment* (Ashgate, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> See Christopher Small’s *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Wesleyan, 1998), and *Music, Society, Education: a Radical Examination of the Prophetic Function of Music in Western, Eastern and African Cultures with its Impact on Society and its Use in Education* (Calder, 1977). Christopher Small’s philosophy and pragmatism is eloquently illuminated by Robert Christgau, the “dean of American Rock critics”, in interviews for Perfect-SoundForever online magazine.

<sup>18</sup> Allan Watts and Daisetsu Suzuki are best known in music circles for the profound effect they had on John Cage. Suzuki inspired Cage between 1949 and 1951, when he gave a series of lectures about Zen Buddhism at Columbia University in New York. Surprisingly, Cage had a disagreeable encounter with Watts, who could not fathom Cage’s music, despite being grounded in the same Zen Buddhist aesthetic as Suzuki. Barbs were exchanged, first by Watts, in his book *Beat Zen, Square Zen, Zen* (1959: 11-14) and then by Cage, who responded in his book *Silence* (1961:xi). Watts clarified his befuddlement in his biography *In My Own Way: An Autobiography* (New World Library, 1972: 218-20). A follow-up interview with Cage about the controversy was provided by Paul Cummings in 1974, available only online.

<sup>19</sup> Zen Buddhism, like everything else, has been radically reassessed in the light of postmodernism. The current generation of Zen scholars do not have the same reverence for Zen Buddhist commentators as the children of the 1960s, so their examination of Japan’s Zen Buddhism is unflinching and disarming. See Dale Wright, *Philosophical Meditation on Zen Buddhism* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), and anything written by Steven Heine, especially his *Zen Skin, Zen Marrow: Will the Real Zen Buddhism Please Stand Up?* (Oxford University Press, 2008), and his co-edited book, in cooperation with Dale Wright, titled *Zen Ritual: Studies of Zen Buddhist Theory in Practice* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> “Te ni toraba, Kien namida zoatsuki, Aki no shimo.” See R. H. Blyth, *Haiku* Vol. 1, p. 82 (Hokuseido Press, 1949).

<sup>21</sup> “The Honkyoku of the Kinko-ryu: Some Principles of its Organization,” in *Ethnomusicology*, volume 13, number 3 (1968), pp. 313-44.

<sup>22</sup> *Shogyo mujo*, from the Prajñāpāramitā Hrdaya Sutra.

<sup>23</sup> Lafcadio Hearn made a somewhat similar observation in the late 1800s when he had settled in Japan, one of the first foreigners to do so. In his delightful book *Japan: An Interpretation*, he said, “No inexperienced foreigner can converse for one half hour...and avoid saying something that

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jars upon Japanese good taste or sentiment” (Tuttle Books, p. 433).

<sup>24</sup> For those who know about these things, here are the particulars. My *Meian* teacher was *Issui-sensei* from the *Tai-zan ryu* (school) of the *Myoan-ha*, aka *Meian-ha* association, founded in 1883 in Kyoto, following the lineage of *Tanikita Muchiku* and *Koizumi Ryoan* (aka *Shizan*), circa 1880. My other teacher, *Yudo-sensei*, was in the *Kinko ryu* via the *Domon Kai* association, founded by *Notomi Judo* in 1973, following the *Araki kei* lineage to *Kinko I* (1710-1771).

<sup>25</sup> For a detailed examination of the traditional Japanese system of instruction between student and teacher, and the evolution of these pairs of relationships, see *Learning in Likely Places: Varieties of Apprenticeship in Japan*, by John Singleton (Cambridge UP, 1998).

<sup>26</sup> The concept of ICH has been a much-debated topic since the 2003 founding of the Convention for Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. Canada chose not to be a signatory to the Convention, partly because it was unable to identify a Canadian national ICH, particularly in the light of multiculturalism. The Japanese government has had a distinguished history in recognizing its cultural heritage heroes, which they identify as Living National Treasures, *Ningen Kokuhō*.

<sup>27</sup> *Kwansei Gakuin Daigaku*, Uegahara, Nishinomiya Shi, Hyogo Ken. I followed in the steps of Elliot Weisgarber, who had been his first non-Japanese student. Tanaka Sensei honoured me with the title *Yūshin*.

<sup>28</sup> For the most recent account of this form of mental and spiritual discipline, see *Eat Sleep Sit: My Year at Japan's Most Rigorous Zen Temple* by Kaoru Nonomura (translated by Juliet Winters Carpenter; Kodansha, 2009).

<sup>29</sup> The primacy of the physical action is encapsulated in a single term, *kata*, which means “gesture” or “pose,” most often seen in the context of Zen Buddhist martial art. All *kata* are learned in a very mechanical manner at first; then their true significance is revealed later, when the student is ready. The procedure was amply illustrated in the 1984 movie *Karate Kid*. Daniel LaRusso, the young apprentice, was instructed to simply “wax on, wax off” without asking “why.” It was the first *kata* in his repertoire of hand combat gestures. An interesting discussion about this form of instruction is entitled *Kata: The Key to Understanding and Dealing with the Japanese*, by Boye Lafayette de Mente (Tuttle: 2003).

<sup>30</sup> My discovery of cross-cultural wind performance practices has given me many occasions to pause and wonder. For example, the sensuous melody in Debussy’s *Syrinx* can take on a whole new meaning if one considers its profuse ornamentation as a form of exotic fingered articulations. And the vast world of French Baroque ornamentation can be related to the fingered articulation of the popular courtly bagpipes called *musettes*. I wrote about this in an article entitled “Ornamentation in 18th Century Japanese and French Flute Music,” in *Continuo*, volume 7, number 3, pp. 8-11 (December, 1983).

<sup>31</sup> There is a shakuhachi repertoire that is particularly difficult, even for experienced players and technical virtuosi like myself. It comes from a secular genre called *Sankyoku*, which are trios for shakuhachi, koto, and shamisen plus the

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addition of a singing part for the player of the shamisen or koto. See Ingrid Fritsch, “A Comparison of *Tozanryu* and *Kinkoryu Shakuhachi* Arrangements for *Sankyoku Gassou* made from Identical Originals,” in *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, Volume 15 (1983), pp. 14-30, and Nogawa Mihoko, “Chamber Music for *Sankyoku* Ensembles,” in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: East Asia*, pp. 715-17.

<sup>32</sup> The contrast between a music “product” and “process” is passionately described by Christopher Small in his book *Music.Society.Education* (Wesleyan University Press, 1996) p. 29, 92. See my footnote 13.

<sup>33</sup> The Ten Ox Herding Pictures were first codified in the twelfth century by the Chinese Buddhist monk Kuoan Shiyuan (Jp. Kakuan Shien). They came to international attention when Paul Reps and his collaborator, Nyogen Senzaki, included them in their book, *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones* (Tuttle, 1957). For an interesting Western take on the illustrations, see Maureen McClure’s essay “Did an Ox Wander By Here Recently? Learning Americanized Zen,” in *Learning in Likely Places: Varieties of Apprenticeship in Japan*, edited by John Singleton (Cambridge UP, 1998), pp. 304-317.

<sup>34</sup> Kyoto Japan Baptist Hospital. Yamanomoto cho, Kitashirakawa Sakyo-ku, Kyoto-shi.

<sup>35</sup> The *komusō* were Zen Buddhist monks who specialized in playing the shakuhachi to attract attention as they gathered alms from householders during their peregrinations. Their most unusual feature was the upside-down-basket-like hat which they wore over their heads, as a form of disguise. There are several visual examples of *komusō* on YouTube, and there is also a rare, and very odd, brief appearance of a *komusō* playing a shakuhachi while strolling through a Japanese garden, in the 1975 film *The Yakuza*, starring Robert Mitchum.

<sup>36</sup> This recital scenario was in contrast to the recital I described in my discussion of *Kojima-sensei* earlier. The latter was quite formal from beginning to end, and only featured the sacred solo music called the *honkyoku*. Nevertheless, it was equally lengthy and dominated by middle-aged men.

<sup>37</sup> Unlike in Japan, karaoke in the US has become a competitive sport, which completely rubs across the grain of Far Eastern karaoke. In the movie starring Gwyneth Paltrow and Huey Lewis, called *Duets* (2000), the intense competition is the backdrop to the troubled relationship of the father and daughter. The contrast between the American and Japanese experience of karaoke is systematically reviewed by Hiro Shimatachi in his essay entitled “A Karaoke Perspective on International Relations,” in *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, edited by Timothy Craig (M.E. Sharp, 2000), pp. 101-108.

<sup>38</sup> *Minyo* and *enka* are the preferred vocal genres of older Japanese people, and even a fair number of youth. They are ably described in “Popular Music Before the Meiji Period” (Gerald Groener), “Folk Music: from Local to National to Global” (David Hughes), and “Popular Music in Japan” (Christine Yano and Hosokawa Shuhei), in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Japanese Music*, edited by Alison McQueen Tokita and David Hughes (Ashgate, 2008). Each of these topics addresses nostalgia for a lost way of life,

called *furusato* (the old village). See Jennifer Robertson, "Furusato Japan: The Culture and Politics of Japan," in *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Summer, 1988), pp. 494-518, and Christine Yano's full-length exposition of the relation of *furusato* to *enka*, *Tears of Longing: Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song* (Harvard UP, 2002). If you believe David Matsumoto (*The New Japan: Debunking Seven Cultural Stereotypes*, Intercultural Press, 2002), they have good reason to pine for the "old days", whether they existed or not.

<sup>39</sup> Almost exactly the same situation was described by Edwin Reischauer, the great doyen of Japanese studies, on page 151 of his epic book entitled *The Japanese* (Harvard UP, 1978).

<sup>40</sup> During my three visits to England, I learned that one of the most popular group songs among English Morris dancers is *Northwest Passage* by Stan Rogers.

<sup>41</sup> When the Japanese study themselves, they call it *Nihonjinron*. Gregory Shepherd illuminates the influence of *Nihonjinron* on the study of Japanese music by the Japanese people, available online. *Nihonjinron* scholars are even beginning to question the idea of a monoethnic Japan. See John Lie, *Multiethnic Japan* (Harvard UP, 2001), and *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*, edited by Michael Weiner (Routledge, 1997).

<sup>42</sup> Wilson-Smith, Anthony, "A Quiet Passion." Maclean's. July 1, 1995, p. 23.

<sup>43</sup> The Canadian Citizenship Test consists of 20 questions that can be completed in less than 30 minutes. In contrast, Japanese citizenship is virtually impossible to attain, partly because the complexity of the society requires decades of experience to fathom.

<sup>44</sup> Richard Gwyn, *Nationalism Without Walls: The Unbearable Lightness of Being Canadian* (McClelland and Stewart, 1996, now out of print!).

<sup>45</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, in yet another new edition (Verso, 2006).

<sup>46</sup> For an exhaustive critique of assimilation, see *The New Immigration: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, edited by Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, Carola Suárez-Orozco, Desirée Qin-Hilliard (Routledge, 2005), and *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, And Politics*, edited by Virginia Yans-McLaughlin (Oxford University Press US, 1990).

<sup>47</sup> Hua Hsu, "The End of White America?" in *The Atlantic* (special state of the union issue), January/February, 2009, pp. 45-55. "As a Purely Demographic Matter, 'White America' May Cease to Exist in 2040, 2050, or 2060, or Later Still. But Where the Culture is Concerned, It's Already All But Finished."

<sup>48</sup> The term "Intangible Cultural Heritage," or ICH, is a buzzword (or humbug, if you are from Dickens' time) that comes from UNESCO. Their attention directed to specific cultural Intellectual Properties follows the same concern they created for physical properties called World Heritage Sites. One of the best commentators on the new and vast literature regarding ICH is Laura Jane Smith. See her books *The Uses of Heritage* (Routledge, 2006), and *Intangible Heritage* (Key Issues in Cultural Heritage; Routledge 2008). *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and*

*Identity*, edited by Brian Graham and Peter Howard (Ashgate 2008) and *Pluralising Pasts: Heritage, Identity and Place in Multicultural Societies*, edited by Gregory Ashworth, Brian Graham and John Tunbridge (Pluto Press, 2007), provide necessary links between multiculturalism and the question of a nation's heritage.

<sup>49</sup> *Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the End of the 20th Century* (Viking, 1997), p. 8.

<sup>50</sup> Verhoeven, W.M., "How Hyphenated Can You Get?: A Critique of Pure Ethnicity," in *Mosaic* (Winnipeg), Vol. 29, 1996; Mahatani, Minelle, "Interrogating the Hyphen-Nation: Canadian Multicultural Policy and 'Mixed Race' Identities," in *Social Identities* (2002), Volume 8, Number 1; *Asian North American Identities: Beyond the Hyphen*, nine essays edited by Eleanor Rose Ty, Donald C. Goellnicht (Indiana UP: 2004).

<sup>51</sup> The concept of the Canadian mosaic originates in a 1937 book written by John Murray Gibbon. John Porter countered the idealism of Gibbon by coining a new term, "the vertical mosaic", in his book called *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Power and Class in Canada* (1965). After his demographic analysis he found that those with British backgrounds were at the top of the mosaic. This theme was picked up by Neil Bissoondath in his book *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada* (1994). Phil Ryan has assessed the pros and cons of the mosaic in his provocative book *Multicultiphobia in Canada and Abroad* (University of Toronto Press, 2010).

<sup>52</sup> Will Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, Citizenship* (Oxford UP, 2001). Anne Philips, *Multiculturalism Without Culture* (Princeton UP, 2007).

<sup>53</sup> Walter Benn Michaels, *The Trouble with Diversity: How We Learned to Love Identity and Ignore Inequality* (Picador, 2006). This is my personal favourite, a critique by an Americanist.

<sup>54</sup> It is interesting to look at Canada in the light of the SCI (Sense of Community Index) formulated by McMillan and Chavis in 1986 (see *Journal of Community Psychology*: 14/1, and also 27/6). We seem to fit four of the attributes of community, boundaries, emotional safety and personal investment, but are at a loss to provide "a sense of belonging and identification" and "a common symbol system."



Canadian Society  
for Traditional Music

Société canadienne pour  
les traditions musicales