

Travel Writing from Post-Perry Japan: Visitors, Residents and Globetrotters

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Introduction

To coincide with the centenary of Perry's historic visit to Japan, *Monumenta Nipponica* published a series of articles by Japan scholar William Baty over a four-year period, 1951–54. At that point, the articles were the most comprehensive summary of books about Japan written for the European public, significant in their scope of languages (French, German, Russian), which have been invaluable to scholars ever since. However, in the past 50 years, many more books have come to light, some frivolous but some important, and the context of travel writing, too, has come into critical revision. This article aims to augment Baty's work by putting post-Perry travel writing into context and adding to his list of "literary introductions to Japan." Although books about Japan continued to be written through the 20th century, the scope of this article ends with the end of the Meiji era, in 1912. After that point, travel to Japan was not unusual, and the fewer books had less new places to discover or observations to report. At the same time, a world war in Europe and its resulting geopolitics made globetrotting travel a luxury that few had time or interest in pursuing.

Getting to Japan

Written accounts by travelers have a long tradition, dating back perhaps to Herodotus, who, by realistically commenting on what he observed, formed the basis for all subsequent travel writing. Traders and explorers, from Marco Polo to Christopher Columbus left accounts of their travels abroad, but through the 18th century, traveling was primarily for business, and traveling for pleasure or education was primarily the prerogative of the upper class. The Grand Tour of Europe was a staple of the British gentleman's education into the 20th century, where "the potential dangers of world travel kept even them [upper class] within the well-work paths of continental Europe. Travel was dirty, tiring, and time consuming, not to be undertaken without serious commitments of money, time, and energy" (Brothers and Gergits, 1996, xi). Most traveling and writing in English up to the late 19th century was based in Europe with excursions from there. Until then, America was busy welcoming Europeans to come settle their continent with them, where there was enough within the continent to occupy the most intrepid entrepreneurs and travelers.

Several factors simultaneously occurred which changed world travel from the uncomfortably formidable to the accessibly enticing—and spawned a niche market for travel books. The first was the rise and outreach of the British Empire. With outposts established in the more remote parts of Africa and Asia, it was now possible for travelers to journey from one British base of civilization to the next, armed with letters of introduction and generally welcomed by lonely diplomatic, economic or proselytizing missions in the field. Underlying the establishment of the outposts was the commonly held belief in the benevolence and necessity

of the imperial project, bringing civilization (and God) to the uneducated and unconverted masses. In this pursuit, the various missionary societies in England of all denominations sent enthusiastic young men and women to the far corners of the globe to convert the heathen. As the paths of the tourists became more accessible, they changed the landscape. "Tourists were powerful colonialist forces: their existence altered economies, cultures, and political systems, and tourism gained momentum as the British Empire spread its military, political, and economic tendrils" (Brothers and Gergits, 1997, xiii)

The second development was the 19th century rise of scientific inquiry, which encouraged the exploration of geographical areas (rivers, mountains, islands, continents), archeological unearthing of ancient cultures (Egypt, Mesopotamia, Crete, Greece, Rome), the collection of flora and fauna or the study of ethnic groups. The tendency to observe, map, collect and catalogue was a very Victorian trait that found its broadest expression in the unexplored parts of the globe. These pursuits were encouraged and often funded by the Royal Geographical Society (RGS), Royal Asiatic Society (RAS) and Royal Archaeological Institute (RAI). These societies formed a network of scholars and researchers which excluded the observations and reports from the field of the untrained, uneducated, unelected—and women. Membership (and funding) of these societies were exclusive of women until very late in the day, when travelers like Mary Henrietta Kingsley and Isabella Bird were permitted to present their findings directly, not through proxies.

A third reason for the rise of travelers' accounts was the concurrent rise of the middle class and literacy. In Britain, the Education Act of 1870 set up a national system of primary schools for children up to age 12, which had the sweeping effect of creating a mass reading population, which in turn spawned hundreds of popular newspapers and magazines.

The freshly-educated lower or middle classes were drawn more to sensationalistic stories at home and exotic stories from abroad, creating what Matthew Arnold would term "cultural anarchy," but for which there was a willing market. There seemed to be undiminished interest in stories about the dangers faced, adversities overcome and exotic customs observed by travelers. These stories served to both perpetuate the superior role of Empire or America and satisfy the vicarious longings of the armchair traveler. Travelers' accounts were not necessarily well-written, as authors often apologized for in their introductions, but editors were content to publish the bulk of these enhanced travel diaries and let the reader browse as he wished. Middleton (1995, xxiv) quotes a study that 19% of books charged by men and 15% charged by women at the New York Society Library in the 1840s were travel books. This only increased as more books became available.

Professional journalists joined the travel book industry, either sent by newspapers or magazines (Stanley, Bly, Bisland) or free-lancers converted to journalists for their reports from the field. Novelists, too, tried their hand at travel writing, which by the late 1800s still had not become a clearly discernible genre. Robert Louis Stevenson was as well known as a travel writer as novelist. Others included Samuel Butler, Edward Lear, *Charles Dickens*, *W. H. Hudson*, *Rudyard Kipling* and the Americans Mark Twain, Henry James and Edith Wharton.

The fourth factor encouraging world travel was the simultaneous enhanced means of transportation in the mid-19th century. The invention of the steam railroad opened up the byways of England, then the centers of Europe to the willing traveler, replacing ships to the ports and coaches to the interiors. In America, the transcontinental railroad and its many tributaries opened up the country and made the journey across the continent a matter of safe days instead of harrowing months braving

hostile elements, diseases and natives. Steamships replaced sailboats as a more reliable and faster way to cross the oceans. Journeys across the Atlantic Ocean were a matter of competitive pride with steamship companies, cutting the time from weeks to days by the end of the century. The steam-powered gunboats used by Perry in his courtesy call to Japan soon transformed into the steam-powered travel liners used by Cook in his all-inclusive tours to Europe, Egypt, the Levant and then the East.

While these factors were developing independently, they also converged to create an environment that encouraged travelers to Asia, and to Japan especially. While interest in explorations and travel in Africa, India and China had its colonial or economic subtexts, the special interest of travelers toward Japan in the latter half of the 19th century was piqued by two events. The first, of course, was the opening of Japan to the outside world, as a result of Perry's gunboat diplomacy. The establishment of the treaty ports occurred about the same time as the other trends noted above, which created a terra incognita waiting to be explored comfortably. Japan was non-tropical, a smaller area to cover in a relatively short time, where areas permitted to visit were limited and Western-friendly hotels were rapidly available, all of which made Japan a must-see destination.

The second event was the cultural interest in Japan culminating in the rise of *Japonisme*. With the restoration of the Meiji Emperor, the battle of whether to open up to the West or to return to seclusion was decided, and the new government launched a series of initiatives to interact with the West. One scheme was participation in the series of World Fairs and Expositions in the 1860s and 1870s. The ones in Dublin (1865), Paris (1867), Vienna (1873), Philadelphia (1876), Paris (1876, 1878) sparked an interest in things Japanese and created the image of a highly cultured hidden beauty hiding behind a fan waiting to be

unmasked.

By the mid-1880s, *Japonisme* has reached its peak of excitement and interest. At Knightsbridge in London in 1885, a complete Japanese village was on display, complete with 100 villagers, working and playing in five blocks of Japanese-built houses, the men selling their crafts and the young ladies selling a cup of tea for sixpence. The commercial response was the opening of Japanese boutiques in the fashionable areas of New York, London and Paris, where upper-class customers could find Japanese bric-a-brac, prints and accessories for their interiors. As Ewick states:

The earliest Japanese influences in the West were not textual because so few in the West could read the texts. The popular imagination was stirred, however, by the curios—fans, kites, combs, parasols, sword guard, porcelains, dolls, kimonos, and the like—that constituted the first Japanese cultural exports of the modern period, and by ukiyoe—the ‘pictures from the floating world’...

The second initiative was to invite foreign specialists from Britain, Germany, France and America. These *oyatoi gaikokujin* were engineers, architects, naval designers, military specialists, scientists and educators. They helped build Japan’s railroads and modern steamships, taught Western-style construction techniques for Western-style buildings, modernized the army and navy, and introduced Western style education, art, music, medicine and agriculture techniques. Included in this last mix were missionaries, either sent from England or America or transferred from China.

Early Works to 1868: Histories and Descriptions

Thomas Baty's "Literary Introduction of Japan to Europe," appeared in four yearly installments in *Monumenta Nipponica* from 1951–1954. Much of this summary comes from his work. His first installment was about the early writers, prior to Perry. He only mentions in passing Marco Polo, St. Francis Xavier, William Adams, Richard Cocks, the Rev. Arthur Hatch, and other Dutch traders, whose accounts of their visits to Japan were "concerned much more with their own trade, their own religion, their own relations with the authorities, than with the Japan scene" (Baty, 1951, 27).

The first important work about Japan was Engelbert Kaempfer's, the German medical advisor to the Dutch East India Company, who was stationed in Japan from 1690–92. During that time, he was able to make short journeys around the Nagasaki area and one trip to Edo and recorded the first authentic source of information. His manuscript was sold to an Englishman and only published in 1728, 12 years after his death. Titled *The History of Japan, Giving an Account of the Ancient and Present State and Government of that Empire; of Its Temples, Palaces, Castles and Other Buildings; of its Metals, Minerals, Trees, Plants, Animals, Birds and Fishes; of The Chronology and Succession of the Emperors, Ecclesiastical and Secular; of The Original Descent, Religions, Customs, and Manufactures of the Natives, and of Their Trade and Commerce with the Dutch and Chinese*, it contained most of the information about pre-Edo Japan that would form the basis of most other histories and descriptions for more than 100 years.

Another early account was by Charles-Peter Thunberg, a Swedish botanist who, like Kaempfer, was the surgeon to the resident Dutch

Trading Company. The description of his two years in Japan from 1776–1777 forms only a part of a 10-year journey around Africa and Asia, but adds more information about the Japanese landscape and flora and includes a description to Edo on a company-sponsored courtesy call to the “Tycoon.” This account came out in German and French before the English translation in 1795.

Vasily Golovnin was commander of a Russian sloop of war, charged with surveying the coasts of the Northern Pacific, including Japan’s Kurile Islands. Captured within territorial waters in 1811, Golovnin was held prisoner for two years in Yezo in Hokkaido. During that time, he learned the Japanese language and observed Japanese culture and customs. He was released and repatriated to Russia, where his *Captivity in Japan* came out in English in 1818. Although limited to what he could see, his book is credited with sharp observations of daily life and culture.

Philip Francis Baron von Siebold was sent by Holland to be surgeon at Dejima, serving from 1823–1827. He seemed to be more interested in compiling information about Japanese geography and plant and animal life, which were later published as *Flora Japonica* and *Fauna Japonica*. Straying from the prescribed areas, and trying to smuggle out maps and books, he was arrested and eventually expelled. His observations of Japan’s natural history, though, have remained valuable. He maintained an interest in Japan and returned several times in 1859 and 1861. Other books, by Wild (1839), Rundall (1850), Macfarlane (1852), Frassinetti (1853), Hildreth (1860) were more compilations of predecessors, relying on Kaempfer and von Siebold, than original first-hand accounts.

First-hand accounts picked up again with the Perry expeditions. Although all notes and diaries by Perry’s crew were strictly held by the admiral and considered property of the government, J. W. Spalding’s *Japan and Around the World* (1855) predates Perry’s own account and

shows Perry in command and his crew in a less-than-flattering light. Dr. Wells Williams, who served as an interpreter for the Perry mission wrote his own unflattering account, *Journal*, published much later, in 1910. Perry turned over all his diaries and officers' notes to his friend Rev. Dr. Francis L. Hawks for editing and publication. The subsequent *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan* appeared in 1856. The Perry book was filled with illustrations by the artist, Dr. William Heine, who accompanied the mission and published his own account of the journey in 1859. According to Baty:

Heine's narrative not being a mosaic, but the report of an eye-witness, strikes one as being more vivid and interesting than Hawks'...Heine's artistic temperament and keen eye make him give very good—perhaps the first good—descriptions of the exterior aspect of things and of social intercourse. (Baty, 1952, 18)

Following the Perry mission, American and British ships began regular contact with Japan, resulting in a wave of books. Capt. Sherard Osborn's *A Cruise in Japanese Waters* originally appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1858–9. Kinahan Cornwallis published *Two Journeys to Japan* in 1859, based on his visits to Shimoda, Heta and Hakodate in 1856. Also in 1859, J. M. Tronson's *Voyage of the "Barracouta"* reports the lesser-known visit to Japan by British Adm. Stirling, who followed Perry in 1854, 1855, and 1856, seeking trade agreements for England. In 1857, Lord Elgin was commissioned to visit China and Japan from India, and the unremarkable account of that month-long stay in Japan, *Lord Elgin's Mission to China and Japan*, was written and published by his private secretary, Laurence Oliphant in 1859–60. Rev. Dr. George Smith, Lord Bishop of Victoria, recounted his *Ten Weeks in Japan*, which he passed in

1860. By that time, a foreign community was beginning to form and he was familiar with the British consul Rutherford Alcock and several missionaries already settled in.

The first account of Japan by a woman was a series of letters inserted to C. Pemberton Hodgson's *A Residence at Nagasaki and Hakodate in 1859-1860* (1861). Recounting her arrival in the new land, Mrs. Pemberton's two letters to her mother describe a very personal orientation to life in Japan, including early encounters with snakes, centipedes, rats and mosquitoes, but also the sensation caused by her two daughters when they ventured into the streets of Nagasaki.

As a group, most of these early first-person accounts, based on short-term stays 1) use existing materials in their sections about Japan's history and culture, 2) make disparaging observations about the foreign community insinuating itself in treaty ports, 3) paint the Japan as a paradise "resembling Arcadian scenes of innocence, simplicity and bliss" (Smith, 29), and 4) predict the dissatisfaction of the government with the unfair treaties imposed upon them, which would later lead to several assassinations and reprisals. While most accounts paint the Japanese as friendly and amiable, Hodgson saw a different side, "The foreigners they have to meet with have disappointed and wounded them in their pride, their sensibility, their institutions, their habits, their hopes and their desires...Japan has gained nothing, politically, socially or morally, from the Treaties with foreigners" (Hodgson, xxxi).

Sir Rutherford Alcock's *The Capital of the Tycoon* (1863) was the first comprehensive modern description of the history and customs of Japan, based on his first three years residence as the first Plenipotentiary in Japan. Within the limited confines of his official position, the book combines descriptions with personal narratives, politics and philosophy.

Anna D'Aguilar arrived with her husband in 1862 on a pleasure

cruise from Manila. They spent seven weeks in the summer of 1862, disembarking in Nagasaki. They transferred to Yokohama, made the requisite side trips to Kamakura and Edo and returned to Nagasaki before sailing off again. The account, *A Lady's visit to Manilla and Japan* (1863), while incomplete due to the brevity of the visit, is significant as the first book entirely written by a woman recording her experiences in Japan.

Walter G. Dickson wrote several books about Japan through the years, but his first was a "Sketch of the History, Government and Officers of the Empire" (1869), which described the background and players involved in the battle for the restoration of the emperor. Limited in scope to governmental description and daimyo/shogun intrigue, it nonetheless provides valuable contemporary background to the tumultuous events that were occurring in Japan at the time.

By 1873, Samuel Mossman could write about *New Japan*, which gave a year-by-year history of the major social and cultural events of each year from 1853–1872. Borrowing from Hawks, Alcock, Oliphant and Dickson, it focused on the foreign community's sometimes violent relations in settling in Japan. Although there is little original here, Mossman's book celebrates the 20th anniversary of Perry's visit and frames his chronology as the "New Japan," emphasizing Japan's transition to modernization.

Francis Ottiwill Adams served with Ernest Satow under Sir Harry Parkes and wrote a *History of Japan* (1872), describing the diplomatic issues of his tenure from 1869–1872. This dovetails with Sir Ernest Satow's own description in *A Diplomat in Japan*, which covers his first assignment here from 1862–1869 and efficiently subtitled, "The Inner History of the Critical Years in the Evolution of Japan When the Ports Were Opened and the Monarchy Restored" (1921).

The Doors Open: Resident Writings and Traveler Tales

When these ports were opened and the monarchy restored, the Imperial Charter Oath of 1868 encouraged an accelerated program of Western-style development. Young Japanese were sent abroad to study modern techniques of law, literature and technology. Simultaneously, Westerners were invited to Japan to teach and train. As Benfey explains:

The Japanese were in a hurry. They were determined to establish an educational system comparable to the best schools in Europe and the United States.....They wanted it immediately, and they were willing to pay. During the early years of the Meiji Era, one-third of the Imperial budget went to the Ministry of Education, or Mombusho. The Mombusho developed a sophisticated strategy whereby foreign advisers would be imported to Japan for a limited period of time to help set up institutions and train Japanese experts. (Benfey, 57)

By the 1880s, there were more than 3,000 of these *oyatoi gaikokujin* or “hired foreigners” plus thousands of others employed privately, creating quite a sizable ex-pat community. Not limited to Yokohama and the treaty ports, they were sent into the countryside to work with local governments as well. David Murray was invited to set up a nationwide education system. He in turn recruited Edward Morse to teach zoology and set up a museum of natural history. Morse hired Ernest Fenollosa came to teach Darwinism and philosophy. Colonel William Clark set up the first agricultural school in Hokkaido, modeled after the one he helped found in Amherst. William Elliot Griffis was sent to Fukui Prefecture to set up a school system. The *oyatoi gaikokujin* system helped open the

country to foreigners beyond the beaten tracks. Many of these foreigners lived in Japan for extended periods of time, learned the language, and had access to a wider range of Japanese society beyond the business or political. Consequently, the books they wrote covered a wider range of social topics and appealed to a wider audience.

That other audience was the one provided for by the increased frequency of steamship travel between San Francisco and Yokohama. The first steamship service began in 1867, on the cusp of the Meiji restoration. By the 1870s there were four steamship companies—two British, one American and one French, making the journey to Yokohama. This influx of tourists, in turn, created a dichotomy between the residents and the travelers.

Recognizing a golden opportunity when he saw one, Thomas Cook offered the first round-the-world package tour in 1872. Putting together the trans-Atlantic steamboat, the U. S. cross-continental railroad, the recently opened San Francisco-Yokohama steamer service and the newly opened Suez Canal, Cook could build onto his already successful ports of calls in India, the Middle East and the Mediterranean. Eight people joined Cook himself on this first round-the-world tour. The tour took 222 days, and the sheer idea of traveling around the world may have inspired the French writer Jules Verne, who had seen Cook's prospectus, to write *Around the World in 80 Days*, published the next year.

It also gave rise to the neologism "globetrotter," coined by Japanese resident William Elliot Griffis, to describe the wave of tourists which arrived in flocks through Yokohama from the U. S. and Nagasaki from China and beating down tourist trails for a few weeks. As Hockney describes:

In the 1870s Japan emerged as a favorite destination for a new breed

of tourist. Globetrotters, as they were called, arrived in the treaty ports in ever increasing numbers, stayed in new hotels built especially for them, visited scenic spots and famous places that they had read about in guidebooks, newspapers, or accounts written by other traveler, then moved on to other ports of call...The nature of globe-trotter travel—short stays with limited exposure to indigenous culture—required that excursions from the treaty ports be convenient, above all else.

By the time Basil Chamberlain wrote his definitive guide, *Things Japanese*, in 1889, the number and nature of the traveler had proliferated so much that he could include a satiric classification of several sub-species of globetrotters that he had observed through the years.

The influx of travelers changed the nature of writing about Japan. On the one hand, it spawned the personal travelogue style of book by visitors passing through, often rehashing details from sources at hand and adding their own personal experiences and liberally sprinkled with photographs, the new image recording medium. Very often these photographs were staged and purchased in specialty shops in Yokohama.

The second type of book that appeared was guidebooks, written by the residents for these travelers. These books added to the previous accounts with updated geographic, historical and political information. The residents could also add information about domestic life and manners through their personal contacts. The classic guidebook written exclusively for tourists suggested where to go and what to see, sometimes with background chapters on geography, language, shopping and etiquette.

One of the first of these guidebooks was William Elliot Griffis' *The Tokio Guide* and *The Yokohama Guide* (1873). Griffis had been in Japan

for several years when he wrote this and it was aimed at the globetrotting tourist he encountered. His later work, *The Mikado's Empire* (1876) is filled with his observations, which were one of the first by a non-governmental, diplomatic or military sojourner. Hired by the Japanese government, Griffis wandered more freely than the diplomatic corps and had contact with a wider range of Japanese people. *The Mikado's Empire* and the fictional *Honda the Samurai: A Story of Modern Japan* (1890) were influential works for decades. Griffis would subsequently write a hagiography of Matthew Perry (1887), edit the papers of first American consul Townsend Harris (1895), write biographies of missionary/educators to Japan, Guido Verbeck and James C. Hepburn, publish collections of Japanese folk tales and proverbs, and champion Japan as a modern nation in other works—for all of which he was awarded several decorations by the Japanese government.

Besides guidebooks, by 1874, there were enough small pieces written for the ex-pat newspaper, *The Japan Weekly Mail*, that T.A.P. (Theobald A. Purcell) could collect them into *Our Neighborhood Neighbourhood or Sketches in the Suburbs of Yedo*, published in Yokohama.

Another missionary/educator was S. Warren Clark, whose *Life and Adventure in Japan* (1879) was one the first targeted to young readers, also one of the early works filled with photographs rather than lithograph drawings.

Julia D. Carrothers' *The Sunrise Kingdom* (1879) is noteworthy as the tip of a tidal wave of books written by missionaries and published by one of several religious publishing houses. Based on her eight years in Japan (1869–1877), it is:

perhaps the first of that long series of works on Japan from the standpoint of feminine and domestic affairs, produced by ladies possessed

of an intimate acquaintance with Japanese families....she gives agreeable glimpses of Japanese life and manners...the remaining portion is a chronicle of missionary journeys and strivings. (Baty, 1953, 74)

Carrothers would write three more missionary-tinged books based on Japan over the next 20 years.

J. R. Black, former editor of the *Japan Herald*, the *Japan Gazette* and the *Far East* magazine, wrote *Young Japan* in 1880. Like Mossman's, it was another 20-year history, from 1858–1879, ending just before the Satsuma rebellion. As a long-term resident and journalist, Black had greater access to and familiarity with the events he recorded and could put Japan's "young" history in perspective.

In 1880, W. E. L. Keeling came out with the useful, popular and portable *Tourists' Guide*. Besides giving background information about climate, geology, history, and the sites it described, it was useful for its information about distances between sites, roads, hiring guides and *jin-ricksha* drivers, ordering food, pronunciation and money. The beaten track laid out by Keeling included sites around Yokohama, day-trips to Yokosuka, Kamakura and Tokyo, overnight trips farther afield to Hakone and Nikko, and longer excursions, usually by steamer to Kyoto and Osaka.

It was against the tide of the tourists' well-worn paths that Isabella Lucy Bird, the veteran adventurer, arrived in Japan in 1878 and set off by herself and a guide on *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*, the title of her 1880 book. Earlier chronicles of her adventures in remote parts of the world made her a popular travel writer even before she set her sights on Japan. Although she only spent seven months in her travels, including a month in Hokkaido among the Ainu, she wrote one of the most popular, readable and well-observed of all accounts about Japan to date. Her sorties into

the uncharted countryside were broken by warm baths and British meals at the homes of missionaries and diplomats, where she would have also received much background information. Hers is still considered one of the best early books about Japan because:

... her own indefatigable industry, piercing acumen and keen powers of observation went far beyond official and semi-official platitudes. She saw Japan steadily and saw it whole. She did not blink unwelcome facts: neither did she look at facts through any distorting mist of prejudice. More than that: she wrote with such a friendly grace, that she carries the reader willingly along with her. (Baty, 1953, 77)

She returned to Japan several times from 1894–1896, but did not write much about her explorations here.

Another resident teacher, W. Gray Dixon, was in Japan for four years and published the 700-page *The Land of the Morning* in 1882 in Scotland. Drawing on his experiences as a railway engineer, E. G. Holtham wrote *Eight Years in Japan, from 1873–1881* (1883). Another long-term resident, Henry Faulds, was a medical missionary from 1873–1881, wrote *Nine Years in Nipon* (1885). Arthur Collins Maclay, another resident English teacher, wrote *A Budget of Letters from Japan* (1886). All four of these books represent the discursive personal narrative popular with arm-chair travelers back home at that time.

The last important work to be mentioned is Basil Hall Chamberlain's *Things Japanese: Being Notes on Various Subjects Connected with Japan* (1889 and subsequent editions into the 20th century). Rather than a history or guidebook, *Things Japanese* was more of a handy reference book arranged by topics in alphabetical order from "Abacus," "Abdication," and "Acupuncture" to "Yezo," "Yoshiwara" and "Zoology." Chamberlain was

part of the first wave of hired foreigners, teaching in Tokyo from 1874–1882 and subsequently becoming the first professor of Japanese at Tokyo Imperial University from 1886. Besides translating the *Kojiki* and Ainu folk stories, he co-wrote with W. B. Mason *A Handbook for Travellers in Japan* (1881), a more traditional popular guidebook.

Late Meiji Deluge of Travelers

From the late 1880s to the end of the Meiji Era (1912), the floodgates opened and even more tourists than ever traveled to Japan. Japan was still an alluring travel destination in Europe and America, where one could enjoy the rich culture that its art had introduced, while enjoying the hospitality of a friendly people in a paradisaical setting that the early travel writers had written home about. For Americans, getting to Yokohama from San Francisco took only a few days longer than the trans-Atlantic journey to the well-worn tourist spots of Europe.

From the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *The Mikado* (1885) to Sydney Jones's *The Geisha* (1895), Japan was portrayed in a frivolous way, but tapped into an interest that refused to die. During this period, the French seaman and travel writer, Pierre Loti wrote a short comical story, *Madame Chrysantheme* (1887), about his temporary marriage to a young Japanese girl during his stay in Nagasaki. Philadelphia lawyer John Luther Long changed the heroine from calculating to tragic, adding imperial and moral overtones to his short story, *Madame Butterfly*. The Broadway producer, David Belasco, searching for a short play, rewrote the story for the stage, which had a short run on Broadway in 1900. The London version was being performed at the same time that the Italian composer, Giacomo Puccini was in town supervising the Covent Garden production of *La Boheme* and he immediately wanted to write an opera

based on the story. Eventually his *Madama Butterfly* of 1904–1906 would freeze the image of Japan in the popular imagination, and both *The Mikado* and *Madama Butterfly* continue to be perennial favorites on stages worldwide.

It seemed that every visitor, no matter how short his stay, wrote a book about his time here. Rudyard Kipling wrote about Japan in his *Letters From the East* (1890). The British explorer, G. J. Younghusband took a few months off from India to write about his time *On a Short Leave to Japan* (1894). *Three Rolling Stones in Japan* (1904) by Gilbert Watson was a British romance of two-month stay in Japan. There was *Japan for a Week* (1911) by A. M. Thompson, who accompanied Robert Courtneidge, the British producer of *Madame Butterfly*.

Christopher Benfey's *The Great Wave* describes a tight network of "gilded aged misfits," mostly from the Boston-Amherst area, who came to Japan in the 1880s-1890s. Many of these were inspired by Edward Sylvester Morse's lectures at the Lowell Institute, where they heard:

something in Morse's lectures that spoke to their own most intimate needs. It wasn't simply the possibility of escape, though certainly escape was part of the appeal. But Morse sketched out a country of simplicity and taste, of good manners and aesthetic contemplation....Morse made Japan seem the right destination for a pilgrimage. It was a place where one could open oneself to powerful new (and age-old) influences and make oneself whole. (Benfey, 66)

Morse invited Ernest Fenollosa to join the faculty at Tokyo Imperial University, and collaborated with Dr. William Sturgis Bigelow on a collecting trip around Japan, accompanied by Fenollosa and his student and

interpreter, Kakuzo Okakura. Bigelow, in turn, invited Henry Adams and the painter John LaFarge to visit, guided by Okakura in 1886. David Lowell, a friend and neighbor of Captain Clark was an astronomer from Amherst College, who came to Japan twice to observe solar eclipses. He was accompanied by his wife, Mabel Loomis Todd, who was the first editor of their reclusive neighbor, Emily Dickenson's, poems. Percival Lowell, brother of the Harvard University president and the poet Amy Lowell, spent almost 10 years in Japan, writing several books about its esoteric side and hidden personality. Later Okakura would in turn be invited to curate the Boston Museum of Fine Arts collection and consulted with Isabella Gardner who had also heard Morse's lectures and had come to Japan in the 1880s.

Separate from this collection of travelers was a misfit of another kind—Lafcadio Hearn. Hearn was a Greek-born, Ireland-raised journalist who was covering the 1884 World's Fair in New Orleans for the *Times-Democrat* and fell in love with the Japanese exhibition. But what propelled him to go to Japan was reading Percival Lowell's *The Soul of the Far East* in 1889. Armed with a book contract from *Harper's Magazine*, he arrived in Japan in 1890, knowing that Old Japan had disappeared but prepared to find remnants of the traditional. Coming for a few months as a visitor, he decided to stay, was recommended by Basil Chamberlain for a teaching position in Matsue, married a samurai's daughter, moved to Kumamoto and eventually Tokyo, and wrote an annual stream of books about the Old Japan that had passed before he arrived. Soseki Natsume, who had recently returned from his studies in England, replaced Hearn as Professor of English Literature in 1904 and Hearn died the following year.

The late-Victorian period saw the increase in women travelers coming to Japan and writing home about their experiences. Birkett, Hamalian,

Middleton, Robinson, Schriber, Sterry, and others have written about the particular motivations of Victorian and American women travelers. A more detailed account of these women will be the subject of a subsequent study, but they merit brief mention here as representing the new type of traveler. The books they wrote are almost entirely of the visitor category. Except for missionaries, educators and wives, few women were prepared to stay in Japan, but a review of the literature shows about 50 women did come to Japan as travelers.

Some of these women mention Japan as one stop in their round-the-world adventures. Alice M. Frere's *The Antipodes and Round the World* (1870), F. D. Bridges' *Journal of a Lady's Travels Round the World* (1883), Millicent Stafford's *How I Spent My Twentieth Year: Being a Short Record of a Tour Round the World* (1889) or Mrs. Harriet E Clark's *Our Journey Round the World* (1895) were representative of wealthy and well-connected women who could take several years to travel in relative comfort, staying well on the beaten tracks laid down before them by other more intrepid travelers. Other globetrotting accounts were by Annie Brassey (1881), Lucy Bainbridge (1882), Margaretha Weppner (1884) and Ethel Colquhoun (1902).

Other women, with less time or money, came to Japan as part of a shorter voyage either from America, Australia or other parts of Asia. These included Katherine Bates (1889), Mrs. Lazenby Liberty (1889), Katharine Baxter (1895), Natalie Grinnell (1895), Catherine Bond (1898), Gertrude Fisher (1900), Marian George (1900) and Emma Trawick (1902).

Some came for scientific study. American Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore (1891) reported for the *National Geographic* magazine. Marianne North (1894) came to paint, and many of her paintings are on view in the Kew Garden Museum. Mabel Loomis Todd (1899) accompanied her hus-

band on his astronomical missions but was the one to write the book about it. Paleo-biologist Marie C. Stopes (1910) took time out of her laboratory work to record her observations of daily life in Japan as well as a book about Noh plays. Social scientist Beatrice Webb stopped by Japan with her husband in 1911 on a sabbatical from their work on labor relations in England.

But of all these women travelers, the one who is most remembered is Nellie Bly, who only spent five days in Japan. Nellie Bly was a reporter for the sensationalistic *New York World* newspaper, who had made her journalistic mark posing as a mental patient for 10 days to run an expose of the institution she stayed at. She was Joseph Pulitzer's natural pick to break Jules Verne's fictional *Around the World in 80 Days* journey. Once her trip was announced for November 14, 1889, John Brisben Walker, publisher of the monthly *Cosmopolitan* magazine, decided to create a race and turned to his associate editor, Elizabeth Bisland, a former colleague of Lafcadio Hearn's in New Orleans, to leave on the same day, two hours later. Bly's itinerary had her going east, across the Atlantic, while Bisland first went overland to San Francisco and then to Yokohama. It was estimated that both routes would take approximately 75 days, with delays factored in. Bisland arrived in Japan earlier than Bly and both spent several days waiting for onward transport—Bisland to Hong Kong, Bly to San Francisco. In the end, it was Bly who returned first—in 72 days, six hours. The fanfare that she created, pumped up by the newspaper which sponsored her trip and printed daily accounts of her adventures, excited millions. Jules Verne cabled his congratulations. A single woman traveling solo around the world was previously unheard of, and Nellie Bly became a household name with soap, songs and fashions named after her. Recognizing a fad when they saw one, the American News Company sent the young Lilian Leland on

her tour around the world and her book, *Traveling Alone: A Woman's Journey Around the World* came out the same year.

Conclusion

The Meiji Era ended almost 60 years after Perry visited Edo harbor. During that tumultuous time, Japan had not only emerged from its isolation, but had gone through rapid modernization. Its army and navy were able to defeat both China and Russia in wars and extend its empire beyond its once forbidden borders, from Taiwan to Manchuria. The image of Japan, however rested with the original impressions created by its arts:

a vision of delicate beauty in the shape of flying cranes, and "Fujiyama," and blossoming branches, and bamboo sprays, and lacquered cabinets, and primeval pine trees—all grouped with consummate skill and understanding. That was the true introduction of Japan to the West. (Baty, 1954, 79)

Although other Asian countries were more familiar to the West, notably China and India, none held the same fascination as Japan. Perhaps because of its isolation, Japan still held onto its cultural identity, but that soon gave way to modern ways. The early travelers to Japan were on business or diplomatic missions, usually limited to the treaty ports open to them. Consequently, the accounts they wrote were more technical treatises of geography and history than personal interactions. Through the early 19th century, many of these accounts continued to rely on the earlier writings of Kaempfer, von Siebold and Alcock. It was only with the Meiji Restoration in 1868 that Japan opened more completely, inviting

Westerners to teach and welcoming travelers to visit. The steam-powered boat and railroads made travel easier and Japan more accessible. As the Western-style hotels sprang up in locations described in guidebooks, so did the souvenir photo albums. In terms of forming an image of Japan:

...the hurried pace of globetrotter travel precluded any development of deep or extended personal relationships...globetrotter engagement with native Japanese was primarily a visual experience....[which] empowered globetrotters with an opportunity to re-inscribe these images with meanings, associations, and sensibilities that often were far removed from the lived experience of actual Japanese....One need only compare globetrotter photographs with woodblock prints documenting Japan's rapid modernization to see two coexisting but radically different visions of Japan. Print artists avoided tradition as much as globetrotter photographers avoided modernity. (Hockney, "People")

Yokoyama (167–168) categorizes the Meiji writers into three groups: 1) residents who lived in Japan for extended periods and had time and language ability to write more perceptively about Japanese society; 2) visitors who came for several weeks or several months but felt enabled to relate their experiences; and 3) those who wrote about Japan but had never been here. This was possible because of all the other books written, which contained a wealth of background information and personal observations.

The same year that Lafcadio Hearn died, Basil Hall Chamberlain, one of the longest residents and most knowledgeable Japanese authorities, prophetically wrote in his introductory chapter to the 1905 edition of *Things Japan*:

Old Japan is dead, and the only decent thing to do with the corpse is to bury it. Old Japan is dead and gone, and Young Japan reigns in its stead, as opposed in appearance and in aims to its predecessor as history.... The steam-whistle, the newspaper, the voting-paper, the pillar-post at every street-corner and even in remote villages, the clerk in shop or bank or public office hastily summoned from our side to answer the ring of the telephone bell, the railway replacing the palanquin, the iron-clad replacing the war-junk, —these and a thousand other startling changes testify that Japan is transported ten thousand miles away from her former moorings. She is transported out of her patriarchal calm into the tumult of Western competition, —a competition active right along the line, in diplomacy and war, in industries, in shipping, possibly even in colonisation. (Chamberlain, 6–7)

Many of these post-Perry travelers came looking for the paradise earlier writers had described and that their experience of *Japonisme* arts and crafts had reinforced. Probably no other country inspired such an outpouring of travel books as Japan, no matter how poorly written or frivolous an account. While the Meiji Era Japanese were focused on modernization, the Meiji Era travelers focused on the vestiges of the Old Japan. They were not disappointed with what they found, since they only looked for the exotic, while taking for granted the modern amenities that made their stays so comfortable. By the time the Meiji Emperor died, the airplane had replaced the steamship, cars the *jinrickshas*, and Japanese teachers their Western mentors a generation before. Europe was on the verge of a great war, and New Japan was ready to take its place in the League of Nations representing Asia. Travelers would continue to visit Japan, but the world was very different and Japan's place in it

not as alluring as before.

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