ABSTRACT

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In 1854, United States Naval Commander Matthew Perry helped to negotiate a treaty with Japan which opened its doors to the West after nearly 200 years of cultural and political isolation. For the first time in almost two centuries, Western countries began to see Japanese art and culture on a wide scale. Through these influences, Western artists and composers began to create works which represented or emulated aspects of Japan. The resulting style is called *Japonisme* and many examples can be found originating all over Europe around the turn of the century in art and music.

The problem which arises in studying *Japonisme*, however, involves a confusing mixture of terms which are used interchangeably. This thesis has created a system of organization which categorizes different influences in select works of musical *Japonisme*. The categories here are based on similar consistency with which one visual arts source, Michael Sullivan’s *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*, applies three French terms associated with the *Japonisme* movement, *Japonerie*, *Japonaiserie* and *Japonisme*. After explanation of artistic *Japonisme* and how this relates to musical works representing the style, this thesis discusses all three categories of *Japonisme* in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *Mikado*, Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly*, several works by Debussy, Stravinsky’s *Three Japanese Lyrics* and Messiaen’s *Sept Haïkaï*. Finally, it examines how these influences and the resulting works may reflect the overreaching idea of Orientalism and exoticism in music.
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I. Introduction

In 1854, United States Naval Commander Matthew Perry helped to negotiate a treaty with Japan which opened its doors to the West after nearly 200 years of cultural and political isolation. Through this act, along with similar treaties forged with Russia, Great Britain, France and the Netherlands, Japan faced rapid modernization while the rest of the world became enamored with Japan’s artistic and cultural facets. Exposure to Japanese art influenced artists working in Europe before and around the turn of the century (such as Manet, Van Gogh and Whistler) to create works evoking Japanese artistic style and content. This influence is formally referred to as Japonisme and, although it is not a cohesive style, examples span much of European art just before and around the turn of the twentieth century. In addition to the influx of Japanese art, Japanese music was heard by Europeans at several international expositions held in Paris between 1867 and 1900 and from other sources during this period. Composers’ exposure to this music, along with the general European obsession for all things Far Eastern at this time, led them to create numerous works which imitated the Japanese musical style and/or represented some other aspect of Japanese culture through the text/libretto, costumes or characters.

Many studies exist on the individual pieces of music representing Japonisme; comparative musical studies, however, are limited to only a few, short articles. In addition, the terminology associated with both the artistic and musical works is often confusing and vague.

The terms *Japonisme*, *Japonerie* and *Japonaiserie*, French words associated with the movement, are often used interchangeably, sometimes even to describe the same ideas. This is true of sources in both the visual arts and music. Only one major art source, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*, by Michael Sullivan, makes a clear distinction between these three terms and uses them consistently throughout discussion of the works represented by them. Sullivan’s definitions and explanation of *Japonerie*, *Japonaiserie*, and *Japonisme* appear only as a footnote to his chapter “Europe and America: From 1850 to the Present Day.” The consistency he creates, however, by using these terms can be very helpful to our understanding of musical *Japonisme*. By using examples from *The Mikado* by W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan (1885), Giacomo Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* (1904), several works by Claude Debussy (written between 1903 and 1907), *Three Japanese Lyrics* by Igor Stravinsky (1913) and Olivier Messiaen’s *Sept Haïkaï* (1963), along with musical equivalents for Michael Sullivan’s definitions of *Japonerie*, *Japonaiserie* and *Japonisme*, I hope to create a system which parallels Sullivan’s use of these distinct terms for different artistic influences within the generic term *Japonisme*.

In choosing the pieces listed above, I have tried to select works which provide clear examples of each type of *Japonisme*, as outlined in my introductory chapter. Other examples of the generic *Japonisme* style exist, both before and after the pieces I have chosen, including the operas *Le princesse jaune* by Camille Saint-Saëns (1872), *Madame Chrysanthème* by André Messager (1893) and Pietro Mascagni’s *Iris* (1898). All of these operas are, like *The Mikado* and *Madama Butterfly*, based (however loosely) on Japanese literary themes and use Western

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approximations of Japanese musical materials. A major difference between these earlier works and the pieces I have chosen is in the concern which the composer shows toward his source material. In my selections, the composers use some element which is taken directly from Japanese music, creating another level of influence beyond just using Western approximations of Japanese materials.

**History of the Interactions between Japan and the West**

Interactions between Japan and the West began in the mid sixteenth century. By 1549, several Portuguese ships bearing traders and missionaries had visited the shores of Japan. Although missionaries flourished under the protection of the Japanese government for nearly forty years, Japanese authorities became increasingly uneasy over the influence of the Catholicism and the growing dissent between two factions, the Franciscans and the Dominicans. This dissent, along with knowledge of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines, led the Japanese government to decide that the benefits derived from foreign trade were not worth the risk of further Western influence. In 1605, they began brutal persecution of Japanese Christians and European missionaries. Under threat of death, Japanese were not allowed to profess the Christian faith and churches were torn down. Eventually, this persecution led to a 1614 edict evicting all missionaries from Japan. In 1639, fearing further problems, Japan shut itself off from the rest of the world, expelling the last of the Portuguese from their shores. The Dutch, who had arrived by accident in distress on April 12, 1600, were allowed to stay.

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Eastern expansion had been limited to the Indies and they were apparently not seen as a threat to the Japanese. Dutch traders were limited to the small artificial island of Deshima as of 1641 and remained Japan’s only link to the outside world for the next 200 years.\(^9\) Dutch contact with mainland Japan was extremely limited.

After protests in the early nineteenth century from both within and outside of the country, Japanese officials finally agreed that foreign ships in distress could put in to Japanese ports for water and fuel. Despite this, an attempt for a trade treaty in 1839 between Japan and the United States under Commodore Biddle was flatly denied. Americans were eager to establish this agreement so that they could become the primary traders in both Japan and China and this began a race between America and Russia for a trade agreement with Japan. American ships reached Nagasaki several weeks before the first fleet of Russian ships, in July and August of 1863, respectively. An agreement was finally reached in February 1854, when United States Naval Commodore Matthew Perry arrived with seven ships and nearly 2,000 men, convincing the Japanese government that no force would keep out the Americans for very long. At first, trade agreements restricted foreign shipping to the ports of Nagasaki, Hakodate and Shimoda. Additional treaties were signed before the end of the 1850s with Great Britain, France, Russia and The Netherlands.\(^10\) Historians mark the actual date of these agreements, March 31, 1854, as the official reopening of Japan to the West. After over two centuries of near isolation, free economic and cultural exchange could finally begin.\(^11\)

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**Japonisme: Artists and Influences**

The study of *Japonisme* (that is, the broad term used to denote any Japanese influence) is said to have begun with designer and etcher Félix Bracquemond’s discovery of a book of woodcuts by Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) in the workshop of his printer, Delâtre. By 1867, Bracquemond was copying directly from this collection along with others. Encouraged by Perry’s opening of Japan to the West, an expansion of trade in art work led to examples of Japanese art making their way to *curiosité* shops in Paris and London. Artifacts brought from Japan incited excitement, sometimes to the point of violence, with each new shipment. Japan was well represented artistically at the international exhibitions held in London in 1862 and in Paris in 1876, 1878 and 1889. There was often confusion, however, between Chinese and Japanese artifacts as Europeans were not eager to make distinctions between the two countries. The founder of *Le Japon artistique*, Parisian dealer Samuel Bing, gave coverage in his publication to Chinese as well as Japanese art and many of his collector friends built up substantial Chinese art collections along with artifacts from Japan. In the 1860s and 1870s, Japanese prints were available from many sources in Paris, including tea warehouses, *curiosité* shops, candy stores and large *magasins* (larger shops).

In 1872, the term *Japonisme* was coined by French author and collector Phillippe Burty, “to designate a new field of artistic, historic and ethnographic borrowings from the arts of...”

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12 Sullivan, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*, 209.
14 Ibid., 1.
16 Weisberg, *Japonisme*, 3.
Japan.” The greatest Japanese influences on European art came from *ukiyo-e*, or woodblock prints, like Hokusai’s. They achieved dramatic effects through the bold use of color, large, solid areas of color, thick outlines and simple design. Each Japanese woodcut was essentially a team effort. An artist drew the original design, passed it on to an assistant who pasted the drawing on a plank of wood, then a block-cutter cut different blocks for each pigment color, creating a complex, multi-colored work of art. The woodcuts were particularly fascinating to European artists because of their aesthetic qualities which were unlike European art of the time including, as Metropolitan Museum of Art historian Colta Ives states, “elongated pictorial formats, asymmetrical composition, aerial perspective, spaces emptied of all but abstract elements of color and line, and a focus on singularly decorative motifs.”

At first, the artistic style which would eventually become known as *Japonisme* was a fusion of themes. Artists created numerous portraits of Western women in kimonos, which mirrored a similar expression in novels, operas, plays, ballets and in the international expositions, especially in the way people reacted to them. From the 1860s to the 1890s, the themes of *Japonisme* led painters such as James Abbott McNeill Whistler (1834–1903), Édouard Manet (1832–83), and Claude Monet (1840–1926) to create paintings featuring Japanese artifacts or poses, or mimicking the style of Japanese colored woodcuts. Additionally, physical artifacts from Japan were being purchased and recreated within European markets.

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18 See images 1, 2, and 3 in Appendix A, pp. 58-60.
21 Lambourne, *Japonisme*, 54. See also images 4-9 in Appendix A, pp. 61-65.
22 Ibid., 32.
Several artists in France copied Japanese woodcuts in order to study the style. Van Gogh’s interest in them led to several fairly impressive copies of woodcuts, beginning in 1887. His paintings are fairly close to the originals to the untrained eye, although van Gogh’s contemporaries may have been less impressed. American architect and artist Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) said of one of the paintings:

There’s one that Van Gogh has copied ‘after Hiroshige’ he called it—but I couldn’t see it was anything but just an oil painting of the print. I don’t think he did a very good job of it either, the print was so far superior that it was too bad to look at what he did.

Van Gogh added borders around his copies, some containing Japanese kanji characters which, ironically, advertise brothels. Another interesting case of artists copying Japanese prints is more indirect—Claude Monet’s series of paintings of haystacks (1891-92) is visually similar to Hokusai’s Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji (1826-33), another series of woodcuts. Monet may have seen Hokusai’s prints, either in a shop or during the 1890 exhibition of Japanese prints, held at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He also owned a copy of Hokusai’s South Wind, Clear Dawn (c. 1830-2), known colloquially as the Red Fuji, part of this series.

Michael Sullivan, in his book The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art, defines three terms for different facets of Japonisme, relating to how the source material is used. In other sources, these three terms are frequently used interchangeably, with Japonisme used as a

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23 Many full-page photographs of prints and their copies can be found in the book Le Japonisme (copyright Heibon-Sha, 1998; published by IBM), especially on pages 16-17, 24-29, 32-33, and 36-37. This is an exhibition catalogue in Japanese; the images are very well reproduced, although it is difficult to determine titles and artists.
24 Quoted in Lambourne, Japonisme, 44.
25 Kanji is the Japanese word for characters, which in the Japanese written language can represent words or sounds.
26 Wichmann, Japonisme, 42.
generic/all-encompassing term. Sullivan defines *Japonerie* as a word applied to “frivolous” objects (fans, screens, vases, porcelain) made in the Japanese manner. Van Gogh’s copies of woodcuts might also be considered under this category, as they are not unique objects, but instead created after Japanese models. The term *Japoniserie* has to do with the creation of a Japanese effect in a picture by adding fans, kimonos, vases, screens and other “oriental paraphernalia.” Examples of this would be the inclusion of these icons by early artists in the movement, such as Whistler and Monet. 28 For instance, in his *Le Japonaise*, Monet painted his wife, Camille Monet, a clearly European, blonde woman, in a brightly colored kimono against a background of Japanese fans. *Japoniserie* refers to these elements in the context of an otherwise Western painting. Lastly, Sullivan defines *Japonisme* as involving serious concern with Japanese pictorial techniques and may or may not include Japanese accessories. This term refers to art that uses Japanese-style compositional techniques and/or color. 29 Examples include some of Whistler’s paintings in which the subject or subjects are not placed in the center of the painting, as in Japanese woodcuts. 30 Although these paintings include subjects dressed in kimonos and looking at Japanese props, the composition also shows clear influence from Japanese sources. In her painting *The Boating Party*, Mary Cassatt uses broad areas of bold, nearly solid color in imitation of color techniques used in Japanese woodcuts. In addition, her use of framing and the positioning of the figures in the painting, particularly the man whose back faces the viewer, is similar to Japanese compositional technique. An oar cuts across the center of the painting, mimicking a similar framing in *Haneda Ferry and Benten Shrine*, a

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28 See images 4-9 in Appendix A, pp. 61-65.
30 See images 7 and 9, Appendix A, pp. 63 and 65.
woodcut by Utagawa Hiroshige from his series One Hundred Famous Views of Edo. Japonisme can also be used as a generic term describing any Japanese influence, as we have seen. While other sources may use the three sub-categories of Japonisme interchangeably, Sullivan uses them consistently, and this document aims to follow his lead.

Musical Japonisme

These three terms may be applied to musical Japonisme as well, although as with the visual arts, the terms may appear interchangeably and the term Japonisme is often used as a general term in sources. In reference to Michael Sullivan’s terms, in music we can relate Japonerie to visual elements, including costumes, sets and props which produce a Japanese effect through physical objects. Japonerie can also be seen in written elements of a work, such as the title, libretto and/or any descriptive text which may accompany the work. Since Japonaiserie involved using artifacts to create a Japanese effect in an otherwise Western painting, musical Japonaiserie is perhaps the inclusion of generic exotic markers, such as pentatonicism, used to create an exotic sound in an otherwise Western composition. Other such exotic markers, however, come from a long-standing tradition of exoticism in music and may not necessarily represent anything which sounds particularly Japanese. The serious concern given to Japonisme can translate to the use of folk tune(s), sonorities borrowed from actual Japanese music to create an authentic element of Japanese music within a musical work. These distinctions create separate categories for different types of Japonisme in musical works. By using all three terms in their specific context, we can easily differentiate which type of artistic Japonisme may lie behind each piece.

31 For comparison, see images 10 and 11 in Appendix A, p. 66.
Table 1. Musical equivalents to Japonisme visual arts terms. Visual arts definitions taken from Michael Sullivan’s The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art, p. 209.

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<th>Visual Arts Definition</th>
<th>Musical Equivalent</th>
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<td>Japonerie</td>
<td>“A word . . . applied to . . . frivolous objects [vases, screens, fans, etc.] made in the Japanese manner”</td>
<td>Use of Japanese or Japanese-suggestive props and costumes; textual elements evocative of Japanese subject(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japonaiserie</td>
<td>“The creation of a Japanese effect in a picture by adding fans, kimonos, screens and other Oriental paraphernalia”</td>
<td>Generic exotic markers (including pentatonicism) which are specifically used to represent Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japonisme</td>
<td>Implies “serious concern with Japanese pictorial techniques and may or may not include Japanese accessories”</td>
<td>Use of authentic Japanese tune(s) and/or sonorities; use of authentic Japanese text</td>
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Although at first, my definition of musical Japonerie may seem to correlate better with Sullivan’s definition of artistic Japonaiserie, I believe the inclusion of the word “frivolous” in his definition provides some clarity. Artistic Japonerie refers to physical objects rather than images. I propose that paintings, central to the Japonisme artists’ output, are analogous to musical works, the primary product of the composer. Therefore, I equate the “frivolous” physical objects of Sullivan’s Japonerie as physical objects used to support the location in dramatic works or other surface elements of the musical works I have chosen, elements which do not relate to the way the music sounds.

The Repertory Discussed in This Study

Each of the pieces chosen for this study have some connection to Japan through their subject or inspiration. Two are works staged in Japan: Gilbert and Sullivan’s operetta The Mikado (1885) and Puccini’s opera, Madama Butterfly (1904). In several of Debussy’s pieces, such as the piano works Estampes (1903), the two sets of Images (1904-5 and 1907) and the orchestral work La Mer (1905), we can see his relationship to Japanese art. In his Three
Japanese Lyrics (1912-13), Stravinsky uses Japanese poetry about the flowering cherry blossoms of Japanese spring. Finally, as he had visited Japan, Messiaen created his Sept Haïkai (1963) in homage to a country he truly appreciated and admired. Although these pieces span nearly a century, they share elements of Japonisme.

English composer Arthur Sullivan and lyricist W. S. Gilbert’s most popular operetta, The Mikado, came as the result of the general fascination in Europe with Japan and Japanese artifacts. Written in 1884, Mikado was the ninth production of Gilbert and Sullivan’s collaboration. This is one of their so-called Savoy operas, as it was produced for the Savoy Theatre, built specifically for Gilbert and Sullivan’s works by impresario Richard D’Oyly Carte. During this time, Japan was prominently in the London public eye. The story is decidedly a Victorian-Anglican view of Japan from its start. The operetta opens with actors in kimonos and other Japanese garb, comparing themselves to the images on vases and jars as found in British living rooms at the time:

If you want to know who we are,
We are gentlemen of Japan:
On many a vase and jar,
On many a screen and fan,
We figure in lively paint:
Our attitude’s queer and quaint
You’re wrong if you think ain’t, oh!32

Even in these opening lines, Gilbert and Sullivan establish a mocking tone in the opera.

The story itself is quite frivolous; Nanki-poo, son of the Mikado (a high ranking Japanese official), runs away to avoid having to marry the unattractive Katisha. He reunites with his true

love, Yum-Yum, who is betrothed to Ko-Ko, her guardian. Ko-Ko has been sentenced to death under the Mikado’s bizarre anti-flirting law, but is granted somewhat of a reprieve by being appointed Lord High Executioner. In order to keep his life, the Mikado requires Ko-Ko to perform an execution, which Nanki-Poo volunteers for in exchange for Yum-Yum’s hand in marriage. A happy ending comes when the Mikado is convinced of the execution by the Pooh-bah, who holds all public offices except for High Executioner with help from Pitti-Sing, one of Yum-Yum’s sisters. The Mikado discovers that his own son is the victim of the execution (which did not take place) and sentences those responsible, only to withdraw the sentences when he finds out that his son is alive.

In some ways, *Mikado* is not so much an opera about Japan as it is a Japanese picture, painted from an English perspective. English writer G. K. Chesterton wrote that, “There is not, [in] the whole length of *The Mikado*, a single joke against Japan. They are all . . . jokes against England, or that Western civilization which an Englishman knows best in England. . . . *The Mikado* is not a picture of Japan; but it is a Japanese picture.”

*Mikado* premiered at the Savoy Theatre in London on March 14, 1885. It ran for 672 performances during this initial run, making it one of the most successful theater pieces of its time.

Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* is far more serious. The story comes from an 1898 American short story by John Luther Long (*Madame Butterfly*), which was turned into a play by American playwright David Belasco in 1900. Long’s story, as far as we know, was based on an actual

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event: the desertion of a tea-house girl named O-Chô (Butterfly) by an American Naval officer.³⁵

Puccini saw Belasco’s play in 1900 in England. Although he did not understand any English, he was enchanted by the story and begged the playwright for permission to make an opera from the play,³⁶ which was turned into a libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa. Butterfly’s story centers on a Japanese girl, Cio-Cio-San, who falls in love with an American Naval officer, Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton. The two are married, Pinkerton returns to the U.S., Butterfly bears his child and spends much of the rest of the opera waiting for him to return to Japan. When he finally does, it is with his new, American wife and Cio-Cio-San, devastated, commits suicide.

Madama Butterfly premiered at La Scala in Milan on February 17, 1904. The premiere was poorly received, primarily because it seemed too long to Italian audiences. An opening night reviewer stated that “Madama Butterfly literally flopped, flopped irredeemably.”³⁷ Despite this, the opera is now known as one of Puccini’s greatest works and is well-loved by audiences around the world.

Several of Claude Debussy’s pieces written around the same time Puccini was composing Butterfly, can be seen to have some elements of Japonisme. Elements of nature, which feature prominently in the ukiyo-e, provide a link to many of Debussy’s pieces whose titles begin to evoke natural elements. The titles of some of his piano works also seem to point to Japanese influence: Estampes, a set of three piano pieces written and published in 1903, literally translates as “Prints” in English, and in fact this was the French word used for Japanese

woodblock prints. The first piece from this set, “Pagodes,” draws its inspiration from Javanese gamelan which Debussy heard at the Paris Universal Exposition in 1889. Pagodas (the English translation of “Pagodes”) are tiered temples, which figure prominently in Asian landscapes. Additionally, Debussy composed two sets of solo piano pieces called *Images*, in 1904-5 and 1907, respectively, each set containing three unrelated pieces. These pieces may also provide links to *Japonisme*. The title, *Images*, translates as “Pictures” but, more importantly, the individual pieces contain references to natural elements, again reflective of the Japanese woodcuts, and some of their titles translate as follows: “Reflets dans l’eau” (Reflections on the water), “Cloches à travers les feuilles” (Bells through the leaves), “Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut” (And the moon descended on the temple which was), and “Poissons d’or” (Goldfish). Another example from Debussy which may provide connections to *Japonisme* is *La Mer*, an orchestral work composed in the summer of 1905, in the wake of a scandal after Debussy left his wife, Lily Texier, for Mme Emma Bardac. The piece is Debussy’s first major orchestral work and the premiere was given on October 15, 1905 to mixed reviews from the public and critics. For the cover of the original piano score for this piece, Debussy chose a modified version of a famous Hokusai woodcut, “The Great Wave off Kanagawa” (better known as just “The Great Wave”).  

Another composer living in Paris in the beginning of the twentieth century, Igor Stravinsky, also shows some influence from *Japonisme*. Stravinsky’s little-known *Three Japanese Lyrics*, for high voice and chamber orchestra, was written concurrently with *The Rite of Spring*.

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40 See image 1 in Appendix A, p. 58.
during the autumn of 1912 and completed at the beginning of 1913. Sketches for both pieces even appear in the same notebook.\textsuperscript{41} Stravinsky mentions the songs in relation to \textit{The Rite of Spring} in his 1936 autobiography:

While putting the finishing touches to the orchestration of the \textit{Sacre}, I was busy with another composition which was very close to my heart. In the summer I had read a little anthology of Japanese lyrics—short poems of a few lines each, selected from the old poets. The impression which they made on me was exactly like that made by Japanese paintings and engravings. The graphic solution of problems of perspective and space shown by their art incited me to find something analogous in music. Nothing could have lent itself better to this than the Russian version of the Japanese Poems, owing to the well-known fact that Russian verse allows the tonic accent only. I gave myself up to the task, and succeeded by a metrical and rhythmic process too complex to be explained here.\textsuperscript{42}

The poetry Stravinsky used for the \textit{Japanese Lyrics} was taken from a volume of Japanese poetry translated into Russian. In October 1912, Stravinsky wrote to his friend Maurice Delage, a French composer and pianist who was a student of Ravel's. In the letter, Stravinsky reminisces about Delage’s Japanese pavilion, “that little pavilion which silently guards the memories of our compatible life of a year ago . . . that little pavilion with its little rooms which I so wish to see again.”\textsuperscript{43} Stravinsky and other members of \textit{Les apaches}, a group of musicians, writers and artists, had gathered in Delage’s Japanese-themed retreat, which was decorated in the then-fashionable Orientalist style and full of artifacts and art which Delage had acquired on trips with his father.\textsuperscript{44} These memories probably made the Japanese poetry particularly appealing to Stravinsky, and the three songs are each dedicated to other composers who were members of

\textsuperscript{44} Walsh, \textit{Stravinsky}, 186.
the *apaches*, Delage, Florent Schmitt and Ravel, respectively.

*Three Japanese Lyrics* were published in 1913 by Boosey and Hawkes and were first performed in Paris on January 14, 1914. They are scored for soprano, two flutes, two clarinets, piano, and string quartet; an arrangement also exists for soprano and accompanying piano. The text comes from classical Japanese poetry by poets Akahito Yamanobe (who wrote in the eighth century), Masazumi Miyamoto (ninth century), and Tsurayuki Ki no (late ninth, early tenth centuries). Each song is named after its respective poet, “Akahito,” “Mazatsumi” and “Tsaraiuki” (Stravinsky misspelled both the second and third poets’ names). The poems can be found in a volume called the *Kokka Taikan*, collected by Daizaburo Matsushita, a Japanese literature scholar who collected classical Japanese poetry between 1901 and 1925.45

Stravinsky’s versions were translated into Russian by A. Brandt.46 On a later visit to Japan, in 1959, the composer spoke again of his interest in these Japanese poems and the related artwork. During this visit, he also spent a fair amount of time at an exhibition of *Ukiyo-e* (woodcut) prints in Osaka, stating “I have long been fond of Japanese art, and I used to own some prints by Hokusai and Hiroshige about fifty years ago.”47

As an even more modern example, again by a composer living and working in Paris, Olivier Messiaen’s *Sept Haïkaï* was written in 1962, following the composer’s honeymoon to Japan with his second wife, pianist Yvonne Loriod. The work premiered on October 30, 1963, at the Odéon Théâtre of France in Paris, conducted by Pierre Boulez, who had been one of Messiaen’s students at the Paris Conservatoire. The extensive piano solos in the piece were

45 Funayama, “*Three Japanese Lyrics* and Japonisme,” 279-281.
46 Walsh, *Stravinsky*, 544.
undertaken by Messiaen’s wife, Yvonne Loriod. The piece is written for an ensemble of eleven woodwinds (piccolo, flute, two oboes, English horn, E-flat clarinet, two B-flat clarinets, bass clarinet, and two bassoons), two brass (trumpet and trombone), eight violins, xylophone, marimba, solo piano and four percussionists, who play cowbells, crotales (small, chromatically-pitched disks), triangle, tubular bells, Turkish cymbals, Chinese cymbals, gongs and tom-toms. Further discussion of Messiaen’s *Sept Haïkaï* and its relation to *Japonisme* will follow in Chapter Three.

All of the pieces chosen for this study are works which contain different facets of *Japonisme*. The three categories I have created for musical *Japonisme* (*Japonerie*, *Japonaiserie* and *Japonisme*) can be found in each in varying degrees. In the following two chapters, I will provide examples of each category of *Japonisme* as applied to works by Gilbert and Sullivan, Puccini, Debussy, Stravinsky and Messiaen. Chapter Two contains discussion of each category of *Japonisme* with reference to all the *fin de siècle*-era works. As a more modern example of *Japonisme* by someone who was not only interested in Japan but had actually visited there, Messiaen’s *Sept Haïkaï* can be found in Chapter Three.
II. Elements of *Japonisme*

*Japonerie: External Exoticism*

The most obvious inclusion of Japanese elements in *Mikado* and *Madama Butterfly* is in the props, costumes, sets and other visual elements. In a work in which the language, actors, and compositional team are all European, the strongest suggestion of an exotic setting comes, naturally, from visual cues. Props such as fans, kimonos, swords, vases, screens and other artifacts are the audience’s first clue to see the location as exotic. In short, the inclusion of these props and costumes in these works is similar to early *Japonisme* paintings by Whistler and his contemporaries that include these props. A good example of this artistic style is Whistler’s *Caprice in Purple and Gold: The Golden Screen* (1864), which shows a Western woman wearing an elaborate red, black and white kimono in front of a gold-colored Japanese screen, which features buildings and figures as would have been common on such screens. The woman holds a woodcut print in her hand; additional woodcuts are shown on the floor in front of her, along with a Japanese-looking vase and lacquer box. These props suggest the theme of *Japonisme* without the need to necessarily involve anything authentically Japanese. ¹

In the case of *Mikado*, contemporary interest led to the piece being set in Japan. A popular myth tells us that Gilbert came up with the idea for *The Mikado* when a Japanese sword fell off the wall of his study. While this is probably not entirely true, as in later accounts Gilbert did not mention the sword actually falling from the wall, or stated that he did not have

¹ See image 7 in Appendix A, pp. 63.
“a good reason for our forthcoming piece to be set in Japan,” the real reason is clear: topicality. Japan was prominently in the minds of the English at this time and Gilbert and Sullivan did their best to cater to the public’s interest.

A Japanese Exhibition had opened in Knightsbridge, a district in west-central London, on January 10, 1884, the year Gilbert and Sullivan were writing the opera, complete with a native village and its inhabitants. Because of the English fascination with Japan at this time, Gilbert had ready-made publicity for a Japanese show and took full advantage of this. A first-night reviewer of the operetta commented: “We are all being more or less Japanned. Advertisements tell us every morning that we have Japan in London.” The staff at the Knightsbridge Exhibition assisted the women of the cast by teaching them how to dress, make up and move with the proper motion appropriate for wearing kimonos. Both men and women learned how to move large, ornate fans from the village’s inhabitants.

Some of the costumes for the production were made from imported Japanese silk. Others were antique originals or copies of such. For example, Katsiha, the woman whom Nanki-Poo is supposed to marry at the beginning of the operetta, wore a two-hundred-year-old imported gown. Replicas of the Emperor’s official dress and his guard’s mask were created for the production. The opera company purchased some authentic, ancient armor from Japan as well, but later discovered it to be too small and too heavy for the cast members to wear.

Similarly, the costumes and sets of Madama Butterfly were intended to make the

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4 Smith, *The Savoy Operas*, 130.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 130-131.
The opera’s original costume designs by Reece Pemberton show traditional looking kimonos in Japanese textile prints. These costume designs even resemble the woodcuts they were most likely based on. Even the name ‘Butterfly’ gives one the image of a woman in a kimono, with its large, wing-like sleeves. Photographs of the original costume for Cio-Cio-San show what appears to be an authentic kimono, worn by a clearly European singer, carrying a fan or a parasol. The set for the original production is elaborate, designed to look like a European’s dream vision of Japan. Butterfly’s home is surrounded by artwork showing graceful cranes and other birds alongside delicate foliage.

In current performances of the opera, these elements continue. On the visual aspects of the opera in later productions, Ralph P. Locke notes that, “The initial appearance of Butterfly and her friends in Act I is visually spectacular. Dozens of kimonos and ‘brightly colored parasols’ move gracefully up the hill to attend the wedding ceremony in Butterfly’s garden.” In addition, Butterfly’s house, as portrayed in the set of the opera, along with a dramatically placed screen, are additional visual cues to point us toward Japan. Screens were often used in Japanese homes to divide rooms or to provide some privacy; they were also used as canvasses for artistic expression and can be found in many early Japonisme paintings, such as Whistler’s *Caprice in Purple and Gold* mentioned above.

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Puccini also used elements from Japanese theater in his conception of *Madama Butterfly*, thanks to meetings with Japanese actress Kawakami Sadayakko. The “Imperial Japanese Theatre Company” was touring across Europe for a second time in 1902 when Puccini saw them. In their performances, they used elements of a traditional Japanese theater style known as *kabuki* (a theatrical tradition which is highly stylized and known best for the elaborate make-up worn by performers). Through these performances, Puccini met with Sadayakko in Milan in 1902, to gather information about how Japanese women spoke and moved. Her contributions are discussed further in the next two sections.

Cio-Cio-San’s home in the opera, at least from what we know of the original production, was a mixture of Japanese and Western design, which was meant to create a Japanese ambiance but not necessarily to recreate Japanese architecture. As Helen Greenwald points out, “Carlos Songa’s sketch for the second act set . . . reveals the interior of Cio-Cio-San’s house to be a curious mix of turn-of-century opulence and authentically spare Japanese design, not quite true Japanese ambience.” Greenwald continues by explaining that this mix of design was Orientalist in nature and meant to keep the audience contained as outsiders while the opera attempted to convey the feel of Japanese life.

At least one element of *Butterfly’s* set, the *shoji* screen, which appears in all of the major events in the opera, is taken directly from woodcut prints. Many of the prints featured mundane scenes of everyday life and the screens were often included. In the four central ceremonies of the opera (Butterfly’s entrance, her wedding night, her vigil and her suicide) this

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is one of the shared elements, providing both Japanese ambiance and a sense of continuity among the scenes.\textsuperscript{17}

Visual elements are less obvious in non-operatic works. As previously mentioned, Debussy made a point of using Hokusai’s woodcut “The Great Wave” as the cover of \textit{La Mer}; this is an obvious inclusion of Japanese art in an otherwise instrumental piece. In the essay, “Debussy and Japonisme,” included in the exhibition catalogue \textit{Le Japonisme}, Shikiko Tsuruzono makes an interesting comparison between Debussy’s scores and the attention to detail inherent in Japanese artworks. The author states that, beginning with \textit{Images}, Debussy writes his piano scores with three staves instead of two. The idea presented in this essay is that by adopting the three-stave format, Debussy’s music became more detail-oriented and the resulting lines are more independent and easier to follow than in a two-stave format.\textsuperscript{18}

Text is another important element of a work to consider; the title, libretto, or poetry of a piece can also be suggestive of its intended setting. The origin of the text can give clues about its authenticity in relation to the work. In the context of \textit{Japonisme} (in the generic sense), a story which originates in Japan might be considered more authentic than one which is created by the librettist or composer. For instance, both operatic works in this study were created by Westerners. \textit{The Mikado} was created by Gilbert and Sullivan in part to cash in on the European obsession with all things Asian, but also as a social commentary.\textsuperscript{19} In the story of \textit{The Mikado}, Gilbert and Sullivan parody English capital punishment and mock the concept through the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 251.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Derek B. Scott, “Orientalism and Musical Style,” \textit{Musical Quarterly} 82 (Summer 1998): 327.
\end{itemize}
Mikado’s strict insistence that Ko-Ko must execute someone and his list for execution consists entirely of irritating English characters. This social critique is an important component of exoticism: Europeans would use foreign characters to make statements about their own governments or societies. This allowed their statements to be met with less criticism than if they had used a direct approach.

*Madama Butterfly* comes from a supposedly true story. Jan van Rij, author of the book *Madame Butterfly: Japonisme, Puccini, and the Search for the Real Cho-Cho-San*, has spent a great deal of time searching for the person on whom the story is based. The novel’s story comes from an American missionary’s wife, Sarah Jane (Jennie) Correll, who heard of a tea house girl named Cho-san and wrote to her brother, the novel’s author, John Luther Long, to relate the story.

Van Rij also traces two similar incidents of Europeans marrying Japanese women. The first was a medical doctor, Philip Franz von Siebold who went to Japan in service of the Dutch government in 1823. He “married” (in a temporary sense, as Pinkerton does in *Butterfly*) a Japanese woman named Kusumoto Taki, who worked as a *yujo* (pleasure girl) and the two had a child in 1827. Siebold was later expelled from Japan in 1830 following an incident involving his possession of a map of Japan, which was against the Japanese principles of national security at the time. In reality, however, he had planned to leave his wife and child behind prior to his being forced to leave the country. He later married in Europe and had five children. Siebold did return to Japan in 1859, after its reopening to the West. His temporary wife had remarried

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20 Ibid.
twice in that time, an important difference between her story and that of Butterfly.\footnote{Ibid., 19-24.}

Another source story identified by van Rij is that of Pierre Loti, a French naval lieutenant who based his novel, *Madame Chrysanthème*, on his stay in Nagasaki in 1885. During his stay, Mr. Kangourou, a “confidential agent for the intercourse of races,” helps him to find a girl for him to “marry.” He chooses O-Kiku-san, otherwise known as Mademoiselle Chrysanthème. It is clear from his prose that he does not take the marriage seriously, as it involves payment between Loti and the girl’s family, but his account describes the details of the way she lives along with observations of Japanese life. His story is based on his own experiences in Nagasaki in 1885, married to a girl named Kane, although his actual stay was shorter than that in the novel. This time there are no children involved.\footnote{Ibid., 25-31.} Through stories like these along with Mrs. Correll’s first-hand account, it is easy to see where the inspiration for the American novel and play *Madame Butterfly*, which Puccini uses as the basis for his story, comes from.

Another interesting textual element in these works involves the names that the composers chose for their characters. Aside from the Mikado, whose title does exist in Japanese culture, the character names in *Mikado* are parodies. Characters such as “Pitti-Sing” and “Peep-Bo” make the characters sound more child-like. Using a doubled name, such as Yum-Yum or Ko-Ko also reinforces the stereotype that Asian names are simple. The names are nonsense and meant to play into the public perception of Japan at this time. By making the Japanese characters sound child-like, Gilbert and Sullivan are also reinforcing the Orientalist idea that Western culture is dominant and Eastern cultures are inferior.
In writing *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini did take the time to consult with the Japanese ambassador’s wife, Madame Ōyama, about not only the music, as discussed in later sections, but also the plot and character names. Ōyama approved the plot, but found the names for Yamadori and Yaxonpidé (Butterfly’s uncle) objectionable, suggesting that they were feminine and, as Puccini wrote to Giulio Ricordi, “in Japan they are accustomed in their plays to use names which suggest, or are suitable to, the various types and characters.”²⁴ Also, Ōyama felt that it was inappropriate for Suzuki to garble the names of the Shinto deities in her prayer. Puccini appears to have paid no attention to these comments as he retains Yamadori and the names of the deities, although he did change Yaxonpidé—to an equally un-Japanese name, Yakousidé.²⁵

The elements that contribute to *Japonerie* in these pieces are generally external. Visual elements such as props, costumes and sets are an audience’s first clue toward an exotic location, and as such do not necessarily need to be from that location, but merely suggestive of that place. The same holds true for an opera attempting to recreate a different time. It is unnecessary to use antique furniture or costumes, one only needs to have things which look old. In addition to props, costumes and sets, visual elements of a work can include the look of the score, such as Debussy’s inclusion of a woodcut print on the title page of *La Mer* or his attention to detail, similar to that of Japanese art. Textual elements which can contribute to *Japonerie* include the story and its origin along with other text used in the work, especially names. All of these elements are external, but can still provide an audience with a clear

²⁵ Groos, “Return of the Native,” 169-70.
indication of the location, although none relate directly to the sound-world provided by the composer’s music, which instead begins with the tradition of exoticism and is then expanded to include more authentic sources.

**Japonaiserie: Generic Markers of Exoticism**

The general markers of exoticism in nineteenth-century music are well documented. Derek Scott lists many examples in his article “Orientalism and Musical Style” and many can be found in pieces meant to represent or invoke Japan. As Edward Said has stated, “In a system of knowledge about the Orient, the Orient is less a place than a *topos*, a set of references.” In music, these *topoi* are the generic exotic style markers found in pieces set in foreign lands. Scott makes an important point that exoticized music is not meant to imitate another cultural practice, but instead to represent it. In other words, the authenticity of the music itself is unimportant. Instead, through the use of musical signifiers a composer can create something that makes the listener connect with another location, without using anything that is necessarily authentic from that place. The problem with such representation, however, is that it trivializes aspects of the represented society by filtering them through western eyes and ears and further creates and reinforces stereotypes about the Other.

In his article, Scott lists generic markers of exoticism, but he is careful to state that “there is not one Orientalist style.” His list of generic markers includes many elements which can be found within the generic concept of *Japonisme*. Generic musical markers that attempt to

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28 Ibid.
represent the Far East include pentatonicism, augmented triads, gongs, singing in octaves or open fifths. Also, the use of whole-tone scales and repeated notes seem to indicate an Asian connection in some instances. These signifiers are often used interchangeably to represent many Asian locations, including Japan, China, Burma, and even Vietnam (as represented in Alain Boubil and Claude-Michel Schönberg’s hit musical *Miss Saigon*, a relatively recent example of Orientalism).

In terms of general exotic markers, in *The Mikado* we can find unison singing (doubled in octaves to accommodate vocal ranges) in the “Miya Sama,” sung by the Mikado’s troops during his entrance in Act II (see ex. 1).

![Example 1. Unison singing in "Miya Sama," Act II. Ensemble singing, mm. 25-35.](image)

29 Ibid., 323.
The song itself is a Japanese military tune, so it is appropriate to the setting. Gilbert’s text (see ex. 1) is meant to mimic the sounds of the original Japanese; it translates as follows:

Prince! Prince! What is it that flutters there in front of your horse?
(refrain) Tokotonyare, ton-yare-na [nonsense words meant to sound like drumbeats]\(^{32}\)

As Michael Beckerman has noted, the unison singing in this tune was completely at odds with the typical English part-singing, creating an exotic effect to contemporary listeners. \(^{33}\) In addition, two other generic exotic makers are associated with the “Miya Sama” tune, each coming from the list in Derek Scott’s article: the ascending melodic fifth which begins the instrumental introduction and an alternation between a repeated G and A, which becomes somewhat of a Japanese leitmotive in the operetta (see Ex. 2).

![Example 2. Additional exotic figures found in “Miya Sama,” mm. 13 and 11-12. These figures appear frequently in the opening and interlude to the “Miya Sama.”](image)

These two figures also appear in the overture to the operetta. The “Miya-Sama” tune and its origins will be discussed further in the next section.

Pentatonic figures are also present in many places in the work, including the opening figures of the first song, “If You Want to Know Who We Are,” sung by the opening “gentlemen of Japan” just after the overture to the operetta. Similar scalar figures appear in the overture as well (see Ex. 3).

\(^{31}\) See further discussion in the next section of this chapter, pp. 33-34.


The opening figure of "The Sun Whose Rays are All Ablaze," sung by Yum-Yum during the preparations for her wedding in Act II, also contains a pentatonic figure in its opening (see Ex. 4).

Other such examples exist in nearly every song and musical interlude in the work.

In *Madama Butterfly*, the musical signifiers associated with Japan are filtered through Puccini. Although the opera contains numerous Japanese tunes (as discussed in the next section), Puccini uses pentatonicism and the instrumental hues and timbres of impressionism to create an ambiance that is unique. Puccini uses the whole-tone scale when Cio-Cio-San speaks of the necessity which forced her to become a geisha. During the wedding sequence, her relatives are given a primarily pentatonic figure. As Butterfly pulls her father’s dagger from her

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35 Ibid., 52.
sleeve, we hear an augmented fourth.\textsuperscript{36} Again, these signifiers are generic expressions of musical exoticism, and thus belong in the category of \textit{Japonaiserie}.

From the beginnings of musical exoticism, pentatonicism was used to portray the musical Other. In his 2007 book \textit{Pentatonicism from the Eighteenth Century to Debussy}, musicologist Jeremy Day-O’Connell defines two types of pentatonicism: pastoral-exotic and religious. He further defines the pastoral-exotic pentatonicism as either domestic or imported, in relation to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe.\textsuperscript{37} In his description of pentatonicism, he also differentiates between various imported types from Asia. Chinese, Japanese (\textit{gagaku}), and Javanese (\textit{slendro} scale) music each use pentatonic scales, but each with its own collection of relative pitches.\textsuperscript{38} It is important to note that none of these pentatonic scales match the ones commonly used in Western music, since they use pitches which are not found in typical Western scales or temperament.

Day-O’Connell states that “in contrast to many of musical exoticism’s common devices . . . pentatonic exoticism contains no ‘wrong notes’ and therefore holds a special place among markers of cultural difference.”\textsuperscript{39} By this he means that the pentatonic scale used by composers sounds relatively pleasing to western ears, with no glaring dissonances. Although pentatonicism certainly did not sound like typical western music, it was not so far outside of what was common for western listeners that it sounded objectionable or too foreign.

Debussy’s pentatonicism can perhaps be considered more of a reflection of the

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 53.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 2.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 49.
expansion of musical language, rather than exoticism or *Japanisme*. Debussy's exoticism comes from many different sources, and approximations of non-western musical devices are frequent. He uses both pentatonic and whole-tone scales, both of which are related to the more or less equal-tempered Javanese *slendro* pentatonic scale discussed above. His use of pentatonicism and other exotic markers, however, is not necessarily for the purpose of exoticizing the Other. As Day-O’Connell states, “like his contemporary Vincent Van Gogh, Debussy incorporated exotic devices more for their own aesthetic sake than as signifiers *per se.*”\(^{40}\)

Although there is nothing particularly Japanese about the octatonic scale, as used frequently by Stravinsky, it is another example of a scale which is relatively equal-tempered, like the Javanese *slendro* pentatonic scale mentioned above. In his *Three Japanese Lyrics*, Stravinsky uses octatonic pitch collections in the first two songs, “Akahito” and “Mazatsumi.”\(^{41}\) Another exotic marker which can be found in the *Three Japanese Lyrics* is the inclusion of an ostinato pattern in “Akahito” which centers on C.\(^ {42}\) Overall, however, the three pieces do not seem to be musically linked to Japan in any significant way. It has been suggested that Stravinsky may have written these pieces under the influence of Schoenberg’s *Pierrot lunaire*, which premiered in October 1912. The original instrumentation (soprano, two flutes, two clarinets, piano, and string quartet) even somewhat resembles the *Pierrot* instrumentation, although, Stravinsky began work on the *Three Japanese Lyrics* prior to hearing *Pierrot* in

\(^{40}\) Ibid., 60.
\(^{42}\) Ibid., 27.
December 1912.\textsuperscript{43} These songs seem to reflect Stravinsky’s modernism far more clearly than any musical connection with Japan, even on a superficial level.

_Japonaiserie_ involves musical elements which could be considered generic markers of exoticism. In representing the Far East, composers use many conventions including pentatonicism, augmented triads, gongs, singing in octaves instead of harmony and open fifths. Examples of these can be found in many pieces in which the composer is attempting to recreate or represent the Far East, but particularly in the works chosen for this study. These elements frequently reflect the tradition of exoticism within the culture that creates it rather than the musical culture they are supposed to represent.

**Japonisme: Authentic Source Material**

Similarly to artistic _Japonisme_ (as a specific category) which refers to a serious concern with Japanese conventions, musical _Japonisme_ involves serious concern toward source music or text. In this category, Japanese influence comes from actual Japanese songs, popular music and poetry. Some composers in this study have given this concept more consideration than others, but each recognized the importance in using the authentic sources in their works.

_The Mikado_ includes one prominent example of a Japanese tune, despite many early listeners’ assumptions that the tune was created by Sullivan in imitation of Japanese style. Research by Paul Seeley in his article, “The Japanese March in _The Mikado_,” informs us that the “Miya sama” was one of the most popular military songs of the Meiji era (1868-1912). It was sung by soldiers of the Imperial army protesting against the Shogunate, during a period of civil war between the Bakufu or Tokugawa Army, opponents of the ruling Mikado, and the

\textsuperscript{43} Funayama, “Three Japanese Lyrics and Japonisme,” 282.
Restoration Army, who supported the new Emperor, Meiji. Soldiers of the Restoration Army were unable to march in step and the tune was created to solve this problem.

Seeley later explains that it is also unclear how Sullivan found the “Miya Sama” tune. Most likely, it came from his meetings with Algernon B. Mitford, an expert on Japan, who showed him several Japanese songs. Sullivan makes a note of this meeting in his diary: “6 January 1885 – Went to see A.B. Mitford – got some Japanese musical phrases from him.” Sullivan makes changes to the tune for unknown reasons, and it is similarly unclear whether these changes are intentional or not. What is apparent in studying Sullivan’s sketches is that his style was affected by this encounter with authentic Japanese music. Before his January 6 meeting with Mitford, the songs he wrote for _Mikado_ are not distinguishable from the style of earlier Gilbert and Sullivan operas. After this meeting, Sullivan seems to be thinking more in pentatonic or near pentatonic phrases and motifs.

It is also interesting to note how Sullivan moves with ease between this authentic tune and his surrounding English-sounding music. Two main elements make this transition smooth. First, in many of his works, including _H.M.S. Pinafore_, Sullivan’s accompaniments often feature repeated notes, which in the context of the “Miya Sama” sound very “Japanese.” Also, pentatonicism is a feature of English folk music. Pentatonicism is a famous trait of Scottish music as well, with the so-called “Scotch-scale” omitting the fourth and seventh from its pitch collection. In his book, Day-O’Connell continues by stating that English folksong is “similarly

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46 Beckerman, “The Sword on the Wall,” 308.
47 Day-O’Connell, _Pentatonicism from the Eighteenth Century to Debussy_, 84.
pentatonic” although “less alluring than the Scottish variety.” With these two points in mind, one can see how the tune can fit so neatly into an otherwise English work.

Puccini also did his best to collect what he considered to be authentic music from Japan to use in the opera. Early in the creation of Butterfly, in January 1902, Puccini wrote the following to Illica, one of his librettists, referencing his search for materials:

I’ve now embarked for Japan and will do my best to represent it, but more than publications on social and material culture I need some notes of popular music! . . . I’ve looked for and found it, but it’s scanty and not very good.

Some of this early material has resurfaced recently among Puccini’s papers from late 1901. According to Arthur Groos, this material contains four extracts marked “Chants japonais” and include material which was used to create Butterfly’s entrance and an extract with text in the form of a refrain characteristic of a particular type of Japanese dance tune.

Puccini’s further access to Japanese popular music came through his contact with Ōyama Hisako, the wife of the Japanese ambassador to Italy. During her visits in the fall of 1902, she sang and played the koto for Puccini and promised to send him music from Japan. Whether she actually did is unknown, but it seems unlikely, as he later requested records from the Gramophone and Typewriter Company in 1903. Along with her own playing, Madame Ōyama also helped Puccini to study Japanese music through the first commercial recordings of Japanese music and printed editions of both European and Japanese origin. On Ōyama herself, Puccini mentioned only that she was “very intelligent and, although plain, . . .

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48 Ibid, 88.
51 Ibid., 47.
52 Groos, “Return of the Native,” 169.
attractive.\textsuperscript{53}

In addition to his meetings with Ōyama, Puccini may have also gathered materials from the Japanese actress Saddayakko (her name appears in many different spellings depending on the source).\textsuperscript{54} Puccini made a concerted effort to see Saddayakko’s theater troupe, the Imperial Japanese Theater Company, during their second European tour, while he was working on \textit{Madama Butterfly}.\textsuperscript{55} Also, Puccini wrote to his publisher, Giulio Ricordi in April 1902 that “Illica writes me to interview the Japanese Sada Jacco. . . But an interpreter will be necessary; she is sure to speak some European language.”\textsuperscript{56}

\textit{Madama Butterfly} uses at least seven authentic Japanese folk songs, as identified by Mosco Carner in his guide to the opera. The first appears with Butterfly’s Entrance, “Echigo jishi,” sung by Goro, the matchmaker, to announce Butterfly’s arrival. Puccini heard this tune sung by Saddayakko.\textsuperscript{57} Puccini attended performances of Saddayakko’s theater troupe in Milan in 1902 and the piece was included in their repertory in a play called \textit{Kesa gozen}, which was performed on April 25-26, 1902 in Milan.\textsuperscript{58} In the context of the play, “Echigo Jishi” is performed by a newlywed, Kesa, under trees in full blossom. Its poignancy in this scene probably inspired Puccini to use the piece as Butterfly’s entrance with the wedding party.\textsuperscript{59} In \textit{Madama Butterfly}, the tune is somewhat buried within the texture of the scene, but still clearly recognizable as “Echigo jishi.” The “Echigo jishi” tune appears in both the vocal part and the

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Letters of Giacomo Puccini}, 146.
\textsuperscript{54} Groos, “Cio-Cio-San and Saddayakko,” 48.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 49.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 49.
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Letters of Giacomo Puccini}, 144.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 49.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 50.
orchestral accompaniment.

Goro announces the arrival of Butterfly and friends to the tune of “Echigo jishi.”

“Echigo jishi” in Nagai and Kobatake 1891.


Other tunes present in the work include the Japanese Imperial Hymn, used for the arrival of two state officials for the wedding ceremony, “Sakura (The Cherry Blossom),” used during the conversation between Butterfly and Pinkerton in which she shows him the items she is bringing into the marriage, and the congratulatory messages from Butterfly’s friends, which are set to a
melody derived from the Japanese song “The Ninon Bashi.”⁶⁰ According to Groos, many of these melodies were probably taken from published collections such as *A Collection of Japanese Popular Musics/Nippon zokkyoku shū* (published in 1891 by Nagai Ywai and Kobatake Kenpachirō, director and deputy director, respectively, of the military band at Osaka Castle in Japan), as Puccini’s score quotes from this volume.⁶¹ Puccini uses Japanese melodies and motives with Japanese characters (“Miya-sama” is associated with Yamadori), objects (“Sakura” is used for Butterfly’s collection items as mentioned above) and ceremonies (“Suiryō-bushi,” another Japanese tune, is used for Butterfly’s suicide).⁶²

A slightly less direct example of Puccini borrowing from Japanese sources comes from the tune “Lion D’Etigo,” a melody which contains a cadential formula found in many Japanese popular songs.⁶³ Puccini’s cadential formulas in *Madama Butterfly* are similar; this cadential formula contains a melodic descent outlining a tritone and cadences with a falling half step.⁶⁴ The difference between Puccini’s use of this cadence and the cadence in the original, lies in an avoidance of the tritone. Puccini’s cadences use the interval E-C, a major third, instead of the B-F tritone found in Japanese music.

Debussy provides another example of a composer using authentic Japanese source material. In his “Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut,” from the second set of *Images* for piano (1908), Debussy used clusters of notes which resemble those of Japanese sacred court music.

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⁶⁴ Ibid.
music called *Gagaku*.\(^65\) (Olivier Messiaen would also use *gagaku* in his *Sept Haïkai*, nearly sixty years later, as discussed in the next chapter.) Debussy’s use of *gagaku* is limited to chord clusters resembling those published in an 1893 book called *The Music and Musical Instruments of Japan*, as mentioned by Robert F. Waters in his article, “Emulation and Influence: *Japonisme* and Western Music in *fin de siècle* Paris.”\(^66\) The *gagaku* instrument which produces these chords is called the *shō*, a mouth organ which produces vertical sonorities based on a series of fifths compressed into one octave.\(^67\) The sonorities in both the *gagaku* example and the Debussy example contain similar intervals, motion and parallelism (see examples 6 and 7).

Example 6. Shō chords from *The Music and Musical Instruments of Japan* (1893), as reproduced in Robert F. Waters, “Emulation and Influence,” 224. In practice, the two chords appearing in each measure would have been played simultaneously.

Example 7. Debussy’s “Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut,” mm. 1-3. Note also that this is another example of Debussy using three staves when writing piano music.

Note that the chords in Debussy’s resemble the *shō* chords in voicing and pitch content. Waters also states that, although there is no direct evidence Debussy was aware of the *shō* harmonies,

\(^{65}\) Ibid., 222.
\(^{66}\) Ibid., 224.
\(^{67}\) Ibid.
it is clear from comparing the published example to Debussy’s composition that the two are remarkably similar and therefore reasonable to assume he probably knew of the book.\textsuperscript{68}

Another instance of authentic source material is in Stravinsky’s \textit{Three Japanese Lyrics}. As previously mentioned, the songs take their text from Japanese poetry, translated into Russian. The poems’ English translations are provided here:

I. Akahito
Let us go down to the garden
I wanted to show you the white flowers
Snow falls...
All is flowers here, or snows white?

II. Mazatsumi
April comes.
Breaking the ice from their bark,
They leap merry in the foamy floods of the stream:
They want to be the first white flowers of merry Spring.

III. Tsaraiuki
What does one see so white and far?
One would say everywhere clouds between the hills:
The blossoming cherry trees finally celebrate the arrival of Spring.\textsuperscript{69}

The poems describe Japanese cherry blossoms, the well-known marker of spring in Japan. Through the colorful language, one can see a picture of springtime in Japan as clearly as one can in Hokusai or Hiroshige’s woodcuts. In their original language, the poems were \textit{waka} or \textit{tanka}, short poems with thirty-one syllables, broken into lines of 5-7-5-7-7. The form was common in Japanese literature beginning in the eighth century and predates the more well-known (in the Western world) \textit{haiku}.\textsuperscript{70} Each poem is named after a famous Japanese poet.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{70} Funayama, “\textit{Three Japanese Lyrics} and Japonisme,” 279.
Although their sources vary, in each example of Japonisme discussed here, the composer seems to have given his source(s) serious consideration, which is the main difference between Japonisme and the other two categories of Japanese influence, Japonerie and Japonaiserie. As a result, the use of folk tunes and other authentic Japanese sources, creates a Japanese atmosphere with a touch of realism, beyond the external elements and generic markers of exoticism associated with the categories of Japonerie and Japonaiserie. By using authentic sources, composers show closer engagement with the exotic culture and attempt to recreate it in a way that goes beyond mere representation. As in art, all three categories present different ways which European works can be influenced by Japan and offer audiences different layers of auditory and visual influence.

Ibid., 281.
III. Messiaen’s *Sept Haïkaï*: Modern *Japonisme*

Messiaen’s music had been well received in Japan even before his visit there in 1962 during his honeymoon with pianist Yvonne Loriod. Japan, in turn, had great effect on the couple—they said afterwards that they “thought only of sleeping on a tatami and eating sukiyaki and tempura.”¹ Messiaen’s comments to Claude Samuel, as presented in *Olivier Messiaen, Music and Color: Conversations with Claude Samuel*, elaborate further on his love for Japan:

I have all sorts of reasons for loving that marvelous country. Above all, it’s a country where everything is noble: in the streets in Japan, one sees no drunks, no beggars. One passes people whose attitude radiates nobility and a taste for work . . . Also admirable are the Japanese musical traditions, and the No drama and Gagaku immediately carried me away. I consider No the most powerful theatrical expression in existence, and Gagaku, which must date from the eighth century, remains incredibly modern . . . But it wasn’t only the music that struck me in Japan. It was also the beauty of the men and women—their marvelous black hair, which remains black as ebony to the ends of their lives—the extraordinary landscapes, the Shinto and Buddhist temples.²

In addition to *Sept Haïkaï*, Japan’s influence on Messiaen can be seen in his only opera, *Saint François d’Assise* (1975-83), where he used the principles of Japanese *Noh* drama. Messiaen states that the opera was “inspired by the Noh drama—the most beautiful form of theater I know . . . Whenever the angel appears, a melody is heard, then a big glissando on the ondes martenot, then very high notes on the oboe, just as for the entrance in a Noh drama,” in which actors are greeted with a “high, shrill, narrow-sounding flute.”³

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³ Quoted in Malcolm Troup, “Orchestral Music of the 1950s and 60s,” 420.
"Sept" in the title refers to the seven movements; "Haïkaï" refers to the Japanese poetic form of haiku, a simple, miniature form of poetry containing three lines of five, seven and five syllables each. The piece has seven movements, beginning with an “Introduction” and ending with a “Coda.” These movements frame the central five movements of the work, which are almost completely symmetrical in organization. Movements two and five are “sound-pictures,” reflecting and titled after some of the places Messiaen visited on his trip: “Le Parc de Nara et les lanterns de Pierre” (Nara Park and the stone lanterns) and “Miyajima et le torii dans le mer” (Miyajima and the gates by the sea). Torii are the large, traditional Japanese gates found at the entrance to a Shinto shrine; Miyajima, also known as Itsukushima, is an island in the Inland Sea of Japan where one of the most famous torii can be found. Movements three and five consist of Japanese birdsong, although their titles are also place-specific: “Yamanaka – Cadenza” (Lake Yamanaka is at the base of Mt. Fuji) and “Les oiseaux de Karuizawa” (The birds of Karuizawa). Karuizawa is another popular tourist destination in Japan. The ensemble Messiaen chose for the piece is an unusual collection of instruments: solo piano, xylophone and marimba, eight violins, woodwinds, trumpet and trombone, with metallic percussion. Messiaen chose these to imitate the sound of Japanese music, as discussed later in this chapter.

Any scholar of Messiaen would admit that the most important elements or themes in his music are (in no particular order) his use of birdsong, unique conception of rhythm, fascination with color and inclusion of religious themes. One can find examples of three of these four within the Sept Haïkaï. Sept Haïkaï includes many birdsongs which Messiaen transcribed during his trip to Japan. A list from the preface of the score includes twenty-five
different birds whose songs can be heard within the piece.\footnote{Olivier Messiaen, \textit{Sept Haïkaï: Esquisses Japonaises pour Piano Solo et Petit Orchestre} (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1966): Preface. See translations, Appendix B, pp. 67-71.} After beginning serious ornithological studies with Jacques Delmain in 1952, birdsong quickly became one of Messiaen’s signatures. Messiaen biographer Christopher Dingle states that, “from the composition of \textit{Le Merle Noir} in 1952 until his death forty years later, every single work that Messiaen composed included material derived from birdsong.”\footnote{Christopher Dingle, \textit{The Life of Messiaen} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 140.} Messiaen’s unique use of rhythm includes many examples of Hindu rhythms (Messiaen was influenced by Hindu concepts of the separation of râga (pitch) and tâla (rhythm) and an important concept in his use of rhythm is that of asymmetry); in \textit{Sept Haïkaï} Hindu rhythms can be found in the introduction movement, played by the woodwinds and piano.\footnote{Troup, “Orchestral Music of the 1950s and 60s,” 422.}

Also very important to Messiaen’s music is the concept of color, both tone color in instrumentation and actual color, as Messiaen experienced the phenomenon known as synesthesia—that is, he saw colors upon hearing certain chords, tonalities or instruments. He was fascinated by this. Messiaen acknowledged color associations in this work, describing the fifth movement (“Miyajima…”) as a “rich, violent and complex superimposition of colors.”\footnote{Ibid., 427.} He describes the colors here as “green, red, gold and blue” and notes that he has added “violet, lilac, purple (my favorite colors) by combining different sounds and different instrumental timbres.”\footnote{Samuel, \textit{Olivier Messiaen, Music and Color}, 138.}

The central movement, “Gagaku,” the only one in which the piano does not play, is meant to echo the sounds of \textit{gagaku} court music which Messiaen heard during his tour. This is
how Messiaen describes *gagaku* and the traditional instruments used to produce it:

The melodic line is entrusted to the *ryuteki*, a sort of transverse flute, and to the *hichiriki*, a primitive piccolo-ooe with a searing timbre: it remains terribly expressive. Added to these chords and to this melodic line are the *koto*, a large flat-lying cithara; the *biwa*, a kind of lute; and three percussion instruments: the *taiko*, a large drum; the *shoko*, a little gong; and above all the *kakko*, a horizontal drum beaten with two sticks by the conductor...Finally, the last of the Gagaku’s extraordinary elements, extraordinary for us, disciples of accompanied melody: the harmony is not placed under the melody; because, for the Japanese as for the Chinese, the harmony is above the melody as the sky is above the earth.⁹

This description shows us what Messiaen saw and heard in this music that inspired the central movement of *Sept Haïkai*. He uses western instruments to recreate this unique sound. The trumpet, English horn and oboe combine to create the sound of the *hichiriki*; the piccolo and E-flat clarinet imitate the *ryuteki*; eight violins playing near the bridge of their instruments create the sound of the important *shō*, a bamboo mouth organ, which Messiaen does not mention in his description, although it must have been on his mind as he does represent it in the piece. A collection of percussion instruments including cymbals, bells and gongs replace the *taiko*, *shoko* and *kakko*.¹⁰ The movement remains, however, an imitation of *gagaku* rather than a direct representation, as Messiaen uses the full twelve-note chromatic scale instead of traditional, modal Japanese pitch materials.¹¹

Two entire movements are devoted to Japanese birdsong, as previously mentioned. In both movements, Messiaen represents the birds with the woodwind, trumpet, xylophone and marimba in three tutti sections alternating with piano cadenzas. The preface to the score describes not only the songs of these species (as in most of Messiaen’s scores), but also the

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⁹ Claude Samuel, *Olivier Messiaen, Music and Color*, 100.
¹¹ Ibid.
plumage of certain species.

The way Messiaen understood Japanese music, as reflected in the central “Gagaku” movement, was fortified by exposure to live gagaku during his 1963 trip to Japan in addition to recordings and transcriptions available to him, including transcriptions and recordings by composer Yoritsune Matsudaira, who also studied the genre.\textsuperscript{12} Some researchers, such as Malcolm Troup, who wrote on the piece for \textit{The Messiaen Companion}, claim that the resulting movement “provides a triumphant affirmation of the composer’s transcriptive genius.”\textsuperscript{13} Although the piece uses decidedly western instruments, Messiaen uses them in a way which is meant to imitate indigenous instruments found in gagaku.

The “Gagaku” movement contains two distinct melodic lines, one played by the trumpet, English horn and oboe to imitate the hichiriki and the second on flute and clarinet, meant to sound like the ryūteki, both indigenous wind instruments. Harmonic elements come from the eight violins, which create shō chords. Although the shō also has melodic function in true gagaku, Messiaen chooses only to represent the harmonic function of the instrument. In his study of Japanese music, Messiaen seems to have decided that the harmony did not support the melody. In his representation of gagaku, however, we find that the melody is clearly more prominent, even just from the instrumentation. By using violins playing \textit{sul ponticello} underneath melodic material presented by the winds, Messiaen guarantees that the listener hears the melody most clearly.

The authenticity of Messiaen’s gagaku sound is debatable. It is obvious upon listening to


\textsuperscript{13} Troup, “Orchestral Music of the 1950s and 1960s,” 425.
the piece that Messiaen intended to make it texturally close to an original *gagaku* composition, which is difficult to do with Western instruments. Ieda Bispo, author of “Olivier Messiaen’s *Sept Haïkaï,*” asserts that Messiaen succeeds at creating a piece in which the sonorities do not blend; instead, they emphasize the difference between sonorities, an essential feature of Japanese *gagaku.* Elements of rhythm, as discussed above, are one feature which separates Messiaen’s *gagaku* from its source material. The asymmetry of his rhythmic vocabulary might point one toward traditional *gagaku,* although in practice the piece does not resemble Japanese music.\(^\text{14}\)

So, despite his source material, Messiaen’s piece may still fall short of ideal toward representation of this ancient tradition.

In *Sept Haïkaï,* Messiaen uses different aspects of Japan and its sound-worlds to create a piece which is almost an homage to the country rather than a true representation of it. In terms of *Japonerie,* Messiaen’s inclusion of the names of Japanese places and items (such as *gagaku*) in the movement titles is a superficial inclusion of a Japanese element. Also, his inclusion of Japanese birdsong could be considered another element of *Japonerie.* Although the birdsongs he uses are those he transcribed in Japan, to a listener they may sound just like any other Messiaen representation of birdsong. Therefore, they may not be a sound indicator of authentic Japan. His use of Hindu rhythms could be considered a type of generic exoticism or *Japonaiserie,* but it is important to note that Messiaen does this in many pieces, not just ones which could potentially be considered exotic. Finally, in terms of *Japonisme,* our category for authentic source material, Messiaen’s “Gagaku” movement may provide an attempt at an authentic representation of an ancient Japanese musical tradition. Although Messiaen does not

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\(^{14}\) Bispo, “Olivier Messiaen’s *Sept Haïkaï,*” 243.
recreate a particular piece of gagaku, his reaction to and description of the sounds of gagaku is the authentic source. This representation is filtered through Messiaen, as he uses western instruments to recreate these sounds.

The biggest difference between Messiaen’s Japonisme and that of his predecessors is in the source of his inspiration. By traveling to Japan and experiencing the sounds and sights for himself, Messiaen was not restricted to secondary sources in creating his own reflections of the country. Unlike his predecessors, Messiaen’s work is not inspired by images from artistic Japonisme, but instead inspired by his experiences in order to create his own representation. Since he was not limited by this restriction, his work attempts to recreate the texture of Japanese music, unlike others, whose works recreated more external elements or used models of Japanese song to create an exotic sound. Messiaen’s Spet Haikai is a re-creation, rather than a representation.
IV. Conclusion

Beginning with the first category of *Japanisme, Japonerie* in the pieces studied manifests itself in two different ways: visual and textual. Since visual elements of a stage work can vary depending on the director’s vision and other factors (including monetary ones), these elements may not be consistent from production to production. For instance, Anthony Minghella’s 2006 Metropolitan Opera production of *Butterfly* still adheres to many of the Japanese-influenced elements found in the original while also exploring elements of authenticity from a twenty-first century perspective. In general, however, elements of *Japonerie* can be found in both *The Mikado* and *Madama Butterfly*. If directors follow the original costume and set designs for the two works, there are some similarities; the costumes in each case are Japanese styled or influenced robes.¹ Props and set pieces for each performance were also created to mimic Japanese scenery and to suggest the visual world of Japan to the audience. The story of *Madama Butterfly* seems to be rooted in fact, while the plot of *Mikado* is clearly a Gilbert and Sullivan creation, meant to satirize English politics. Debussy’s titles suggest Japanese art to the late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century mind. In addition, his attention to details was influenced by Japanese art. These elements are surface, but are able to create a Japanese atmosphere through visual cues and associations.

The concept of musical *Japonaiserie*, as I have defined it, harkens back to a long-standing tradition of representing a foreign “Other” through generalized musical *topoi*. These

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generic markers of exoticism have been discussed in many books and articles; in this study I have chosen to focus on markers which suggest the Far East, including pentatonicism, singing in octaves instead of harmony, and bare fifths. We can find examples of these in The Mikado and Madama Butterfly, both pieces in which the composers use Western musical material to create a representation of Japan. Because of the long-standing tradition of exoticism, these generic markers can suggest a Japan familiar to western audiences’ ears, even though it may be inauthentic. In his Sept Haïkaï, Messiaen breaks free of these conventions in many ways, since he does not use these markers in a manner which exoticizes Japan in the same fashion as previous composers did.

Japonisme in the works discussed comes from many different sources. In general, the composers who used Japanese tunes or texts found their sources through Japanese natives or people who had travelled to Japan. Both Puccini and Sullivan found authentic Japanese tunes to use in their stage works and by using these tunes created moments in which their sources’ influence can be heard. This particular interaction between Japanese source materials and the resulting Western works suggests Japan to audiences. By using Western instruments and harmony, however, the composers are actually molding these tunes into something that is somewhat familiar to Western audiences. This change again reflects the concepts of Orientalism. By changing the music to suit Western audiences, the composer is reinforcing the idea that Eastern music (and therefore, Eastern culture) is only understood through the mediation of the West.

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An important distinction here is that the tunes the composers used were gathered from Japanese sources, in contrast to materials used in *Japonerie* and *Japonaiserie*, which made no attempt to be authentic. Although no direct evidence exists, it seems likely that Debussy’s “Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut” is influenced by *gagaku*. In his *Three Japanese Lyrics*, Stravinsky uses actual Japanese poetry to create pictures of Japanese spring. Messiaen’s trip to Japan produced the source material leading to the “Gagaku” movement in his *Sept Haïkaï*. Although the instruments he used are Western, Messiaen’s intent seems to be more of an homage to Japan rather than a direct representation.

By studying the concepts of *Japonisme* in a systematic manner, we can determine the relationship between composers and their subject. Even though composers may seek out Japanese sources, the resulting pieces are still often full of negative stereotypes (especially in *The Mikado*) and reinforce the concept of Orientalism. Composers are perpetuating the Western tradition of cultural stereotypes through concepts found in their exoticized music. In his article “Orientalism and Musical Style,” Scott states that Orientalist styles in music may not necessarily need to relate to Eastern musical practices; since the music uses Orientalist signifiers, it is more important to know these."3 In many cases, and especially in the category of *Japonaiserie* as discussed in this thesis, these signifiers are applied in a manner which does not necessarily have anything to do with the country the composers are attempting to represent. As Edward Said writes, “we need not look for correspondence between the language used to depict the Orient and the Orient itself, not so much because the language is inaccurate but because it is not even trying to be accurate. What it is trying to do . . . is at one and the same

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time to characterize the Orient as alien and to incorporate it schematically on a theatrical stage whose audience, manager, and actors are for Europe, and only for Europe.”⁴ Although Said was writing about signifiers of Orientalism, his ideas are applicable to musical exoticism as well. The musical language commonly used to represent the Orient, in this case Japan, is not attempting to be accurate. Instead, it is used to create a picture of Japan which is palatable to European tastes and reflective of European ideals. It is mostly a creation of Western society intended to perpetuate the idea of the East as inferior to the West.

The ideas found in both artistic and musical Japonisme (in its broad sense), however, seem to have been absorbed over time. In examining Mary Cassatt’s painting The Boating Party, an often-cited example of Japonisme, the influence of Japonisme is not immediately apparent. Cassatt’s painting shows three clearly Western figures, dressed in Western fashion and participating in an arguably Western pastime, recreational boating. Upon closer examination, and when comparing Cassatt’s image to the Utagawa Hiroshige woodcut, Haneda Ferry and Benten Shrine (Haneda no Watashi Benten), from the series One Hundred Famous Views of Edo, it is impossible not to see the influence of Japanese framing and color techniques which are absorbed into Cassatt’s painting.⁵ This same subtlety by which Japanese ideas are absorbed into art can be found in music. Messiaen’s Sept Haïkaï certainly does not sound to Western ears like “Japanese” music. Through his exposure to gagaku, Messiaen emulates the style of gagaku without using gagaku tunes or re-creating gagaku directly. Ultimately, it turns out that the natural progression of Japonisme may reflect a move away from re-creation and

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⁴ Said, Orientalism, 71-72.
⁵ See Images 10-11 on p. 66 in Appendix A.
stereotypes toward stylistic emulation. In *Sept Haïkaï*, Messiaen creates a work which absorbs elements of Japanese music without resulting in a Westernized parody. Since the concepts found in *Japonisme* were created by the West to reflect Western ideals, Messiaen’s work seems to challenge existing stereotypes, of the East and of traditional *Japonisme* itself.
Bibliography


Appendices

Appendix A: Illustrations

Appendix B: Translation of “ Debussy and Japonisme ”

Appendix C: Translation of Preface Materials from Messiaen, Sept Haïkaï
Appendix A: Illustrations


Appendix B


Translation by Julian Greening, edited by Amanda Steadman

Famous French conductor Jean Fournet said, “I have conducted several famous orchestras and I have performed a wide variety of music in Japan, and I believe there are some relationships between Debussy and the Japanese people.” When I heard that, I totally agreed.

Between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries in Paris, Japanese art was very famous and many artists took ideas from Japanese artworks. Debussy had close relationships with those artists and learned a lot about Japanese art which he incorporated in his music.

For Debussy, one good thing about Japanese art was their eccentric positioning and rules of perspective. There were lots of composers who may have known about Japanese art, but Debussy had an amazing sense to find unknown things and accept other cultures. These ideas were translated into themes, styles and ideas which were reflected into the music that he wrote.

With his piano pieces, Images, Debussy started writing more scores with three staves rather than two staves . . . . By doing this, it created an expansion in acoustic atmosphere. Also, this makes each line independent, making it easy to see visually. If we look at the two-stave score, “Pagodes” (page 59) and the “Cloches a travers les feuilles” from Images, there are some small differences in how he scores. In the three-stave score, lines rarely mix and this makes them very independent and separates the musical ideas in the background from the main
motive. In the late romantic period, orchestra size became far too large and Debussy’s ideas made orchestras smaller and smarter, making each part sound resonant, instead of overlapping too much. Overall, the dynamics became softer and focus shifted to small details in the music. We can say that Japanese Art has similar characteristics.

In his music, Debussy demonstrated conversation with nature: clouds passing, water splashing, uncertain things like mist and wind fading away. His view of nature is very similar to the views of nature in Japanese art. Also, they both have some similarities in ability to feel nature and learn. Many artists’ views of nature are influenced by Japonisme and Debussy is just one of them.
Appendix C


Translation by Amanda Steadman

IV. Gagaku

Le Gagaku (Gagakou) est la musique noble du 7ᵉ siècle, au Japon. Elle se pratique encore à la cour impériale. Ne figurent ici que les deux timbres principaux de cette musique : le Shô (orgue à bouche), remplacé par un ensemble de 8 violons, le Hichiriki (hautbois primitif), remplacé par la trompette.

Gagaku (Gagakou) is the noble music of the 7th century in Japan. It is still practiced at the imperial court. Only the two principal instruments [timbres] of this music appear here: Shô (mouth organ), replaced by a whole of 8 violins and Hichiriki (primitive oboe), replaced by the trumpet.

[List of birds which appear in the piece]


Misosozai : Troglodyte japonais : *troglodytes troglodytes fumigatus* (Japanese wren)
Aka hara : Grive à flancs roux : *turdus chrysolaus chrysolaus* (Thrush with russet-red sides)
Aoji : Bruant masqué du Japon : *emberiza spodocephala personata* (Masked bunting of Japan)
Ôruri : Gobe-mouches bleu du Japon : *muscicapa cyanomelana cyanomelana* (Blue flycatcher of Japan)
Kibitaki : Gobe-mouches Narcisse : *muscicapa narcissina narcissina* (Narcissus Flycatcher)
Hôaka : Bruant à tête grise : *emberiza fucata fucata* (Bunting with gray head)
Hibari : Alouette des champs japonaise : *alauda arvensis japonica* (Japanese skylark)
Kuro tsugumi : Merle japonais : *turdus cardis cardis* (Japanese Blackbird)
Uguisu : Bouscarle du japon : *cettia diphone cantans* (Japanese Bush Warbler)
Hototoguisu : Petit coucou à tête grise : *cuculus poliocephalus poliocephalus* (Small cuckoo with gray head)
San kô chô : Gobe-mouches de Paradis du Japon : *terpsiphone atrocaudata atrocaudata* (Flycatcher of Paradise of Japan)
Mejiro : Zosterops du Japon : *zosterops palpebrosa japonica* (Japanese white-eye)
Binzui : Pitpit de Hodgson : *anthus hodgsoni hodgsoni* (Olive-backed Pitpit)
Ô-yoshikiri : Rousserolle Turdoïde orientale : *acrocephalus arundinaceus orientalis* (Great Reed Warbler)
Komadori : Rouge-gorge du Japon : *erithacus akahige akahige* (Japanese Robin)
Nojiko : Bruant soufré : *emberiza sulphurata* (Yellow Bunting)
Iwahibari : Accenteur alpin : *prunella collaris erythropygia* (Alpine Accentor)
Sendai mushikui : Pouillot couronné : *phylloscopus occipitalis coronatus* (Large Crowned Willow Warbler)
Hôjiro : Bruant des prés : *emberiza cioides ciopsis* (Siberian Meadow Bunting)
Nobitaki : Traquet pâtre japonais : *saxicola torquatus stejnegerii* (Common Stonechat)
Juichi : Cuoco épervier du Japon : *cuculus fugax hyperythrus* (Fugitive Hawk Cuckoo)
Fukuro : Chouette de l’Oural : *strix uralensis hondoensis* (Ural Owel)
Ruribitaki : Rossignol à flancs roux : *erithacus cyanurus cyanurus* (Red-flanked Bluetail)
Ko-mukudori : Martin aux joues rouges : *sturnia philippensis* (Chestnut-cheeked Starling)
Ikaru : Gros-bec masqué : *eophona personata personata* (Japanese Grosbeak)