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Japanese tourists in Victorian Britain: Japanese women and the British heritage industry

Japanese tourists in Thornfield Hall: heritage tourism

The Eyre Affair (2001), Jasper Fforde's rewriting of *Jane Eyre*, pokes fun at the Japanese enthusiasm for literary heritage tourism to Britain. Literary heritage tourism is a particular kind of cultural tourism that involves visiting places of birth, houses, graves, and other locations associated with famous writers in order to 'experience' the environment that has supposedly given rise to literary genius. Such literature-inspired tourism is a significant part of the increasing commodification of British heritage, as we can see from the crowds gathered at Shakespeare's Birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon, and the plethora of Blue Plaques in London, inviting the passer-by to visit Dickens' home on Doughty Street, Holborn, or the house on Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, where George Eliot died.

Fforde's novel provides a useful starting point for examining Japanese women's engagements with commodified British heritage, especially heritage from the Victorian period (1837 – 1901). The protagonist of *The Eyre Affair* is a detective named Thursday Next, who teleports into the fictional world of *Jane Eyre* to hunt down a master criminal who is 'disrupting' the narrative. While inside the world of *Jane Eyre*, Thursday encounters 'a Japanese couple, dressed in period costume but with one of them holding a large Nikon camera' and 'a Brontë guidebook written in Japanese'.¹ Thursday later discovers that Mr Rochester does tours of Thornfield Hall for the Japanese tourists whom Mrs Nakajima (the female half of the couple mentioned above) brings with her when she teleports into the novel. Rochester explains that he engages in this 'extremely lucrative' business because '[c]ountry houses are not cheap to run [...] even in this [nineteenth] century'.² Instead of depicting Japanese tourists visiting heritage attractions connected to Charlotte Brontë and *Jane Eyre*, *The Eyre Affair* features Japanese

tourists wandering in and out of the fictional world of *Jane Eyre* as if it were a tangible tourist destination.

The absurdity of Japanese tourists walking around Thornfield Hall as if they were visiting a country house in the ‘real’ world makes fun of the idea that ‘there [are] very few places that the tourist business ha[s]n’t touched’.³ It also points to the fact that there were indeed many Japanese tourists in the 2000s visiting heritage sites in Britain associated with famous writers and literary works. The 2007 British Tourist Authority report *Japan Full Market Profile* shows that heritage was one of the top factors that influenced Japanese tourists’ choice of destinations within Britain.⁴ In his 2009 study of Japanese tourism to Britain, Bronwen Surman demonstrates that Japanese tourists in the 2000s were especially active in literary tourism. Their desire to visit places associated with British books, films, and iconic characters such as Peter Rabbit has, according to Surman, made literary tourism one of the most rapidly growing sectors in the British heritage industry.⁵

At the Brontë Parsonage Museum in Haworth, which regularly attracts large numbers of Japanese tourists, the guidebooks are written half in English and half in Japanese.⁶ In his account of his own literature-inspired travels across Britain in 2011, Simon Goldhill describes the crowds of Japanese tourists he sees at Haworth:

Well, this street looks exactly like a Victorian Yorkshire street. [...] Except that [...] in front of us [there is] a tour of 30 Japanese schoolgirls giggling and pointing. [...] it is hard to imagine what Emily would have made of a crocodile of Japanese girls coming up the parsonage path. Haworth is probably the only parish church in Britain with signs in Japanese.⁷

The Japanese tourists wandering around Thornfield Hall in *The Eyre Affair* are an exaggerated representation of these Japanese tourists who come to Britain to visit the Brontë Parsonage

Museum and other historic sites associated with famous writers and literary works. Goldhill speculates that it is ‘our profound need to understand family dynamics, the search for self-expression and creativity, and the conflicts of gender, [t]hat keep us coming back to Haworth’.⁸ Perhaps the Japanese schoolgirls that Goldhill encountered came to Haworth for these reasons. However, a close look at some recent Japanese texts on Victorian Britain reveals that Japanese tourists, especially young women, might be travelling to British heritage attractions (including those with literary associations) for very different purposes.

Seen in the light of Japanese tourism, the British heritage industry is more than a product of national economic decline and more than a producer of national and local identities.⁹ Robert Hewison coined the term ‘heritage industry’ in 1987 to describe how the Thatcher administration in the 1980s transformed public heritage institutions, such as museums and historic sites, into lucrative tourist attractions that would replace Britain’s dying manufacturing sector.¹⁰ As a decidedly transnational industry, the British heritage industry brings people from other nations to Britain, both in person as tourists and as virtual customers who buy (and buy into the idea of) British heritage via heritage films and television dramas, luxury brand catalogues, and neo-Victorian *shōjo* manga (‘girls’ comics’). If Britain’s past is ‘a foreign country,’ as the title of David Lowenthal’s book on the heritage industry puts it, it is one that appeals immensely, and is marketed aggressively, to visitors from foreign countries.¹¹

Japanese women participate actively in British heritage tourism and the wider heritage industry. In *English Heritage, English Cinema*, Andrew Higson departs momentarily from his emphasis on ‘English’ (British) and American involvement in the heritage drama industry to mention a trip organised by a Japanese travel agency to England. In conjunction with the release of the film adaptation of *Mrs Dalloway* (1997), H.I.S. Japan offered a seven-day package tour that included tours of a country house and some of the locations featured in the film, a flower arrangement demonstration, and afternoon tea at the Ritz. The package tour, marketed as ‘The

English Lady Experience,’ promised its participants the opportunity ‘to experience the life of an English lady,’ to sample ‘the atmosphere of the good old England where *Mrs Dalloway* is set,’ and to see ‘the traditional lifestyle, the noble culture, and a Victorian town’.¹² Evidently, the travel agency that devised this package tour, as well as the film studio that made the movie, have completely misunderstood Woolf’s novel. The package tour evokes an idealised image of Britain and its culture of aristocratic ‘Englishness,’ which is marketed specifically to Japanese women.

This article explores Japanese women’s engagements with the British heritage industry in the 2000s by reading two recent Japanese texts concerned with Victoriana. In 2003, the publisher of *Emma*, a *shōjo* manga about a maid-of-all-work in Victorian Britain, published the *Emma Victorian Guide* [*Ema Vikutorian gaido*] to help readers better understand the manga’s historical setting.¹³ In 2010, a Japanese publishing company, Takarajimasha, published a ‘mook’ (*mukku*, short for ‘magazine-book’) on the Harrods department store in Knightsbridge, London.¹⁴ The ‘mook,’ which is part product catalogue and part lifestyle magazine, showcases the store’s long history since its establishment in 1849. What these texts have in common, besides their interest in Victorian Britain, is their participation in the British heritage industry.

Reading these Japanese ‘heritage texts’ reveals that a perceived lack of aristocratic cultural capital, which has grown out of Japan’s encounter with informal British imperialism in the nineteenth century, continues to shape young Japanese women’s avid participation in the British heritage industry. The Victorian setting of these texts prompts us to consider these connections between the present and the past. In the second half of the nineteenth century, British merchants brought material goods and the cultural practices associated with these goods to Japan through trade. On the other hand, Japanese officials and students travelled to Britain to learn from British civilisation at its source. This history has given rise to a longstanding

Japanese ‘aspiration’ (*akogare*) to catch up with ‘Great’ Britain and emulate its aristocratic tastes, manners, and social rituals. The Japanese manga and magazine publishing industry in the 2000s reaffirms these sentiments but also exploits them to its own advantage, by channelling young Japanese women’s desire for aristocratic cultural capital into the buying of both British heritage commodities and the Japanese ‘heritage texts’ that promote these commodities. In other words, the Japanese publishing industry draws on the allure of British heritage to sell its manga and magazines, while facilitating the British heritage industry’s expansion into the Japanese market.

This situation harks back to the forced opening of Japan to Western trade in the second half of the nineteenth century, but this time the Japanese market is opened up to British products through entrepreneurial collaboration rather than gunboat diplomacy and unequal treaties. Whereas Britain in the nineteenth century exported cotton textiles, machinery, and luxury goods to Japan, Britain in the twenty-first century exports the image of ‘Victorian Britain’ to a cosmopolitan audience of young Japanese women tourists and shoppers. By helping to sell this image of ‘Victorian Britain’ and its association with elite forms of cultural capital to young Japanese women, the Japanese publishing industry feeds into the British heritage industry, thereby enriching the British economy long after the heyday of British imperialism in East Asia in the nineteenth century. Whereas Japan then exported silk, lacquerware, fans, and other decorative objects to *Japonisme* enthusiasts in Britain and Europe, Japan today sends Japanese women tourists to Britain on ‘English Lady’ package tours, where, in their pursuit of an unreachable ideal of ‘English’ aristocratic culture, they supply foreign capital in visiting and shopping at heritage attractions such as Harrods.

In her account of the ‘global turn’ in Victorian Studies, Lyn Pykett describes how ‘the resolutely British and monarchist import of the term ‘Victorian’ has [...] limited our capacity to recognise and explore the importance of the relations between nations, and the operations of

empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries'.¹⁵ In a similar vein, the editors of a 2015 special issue of *Neo-Victorian Studies* call on scholars in the field to examine neo-Victorianism as a commodity produced and consumed globally, beyond the boundaries of Britain, the former British Empire, and the English language.¹⁶ This article intervenes in this ongoing project to 'world' Victorian Studies and Neo-Victorian Studies by providing an account of the relations between the British heritage industry and Japan, a country which had come under British influence in the nineteenth century but had never been part of Britain's formal empire. This article also provides an account of Japan's relations with the West that does not prioritise Japan's postwar relationship with the United States.

Japanese tourists in Harrods: acquiring cultural capital

The Harrods department store appears in the *Emma Victorian Guide* and the Harrods catalogue as an icon of 'English' aristocratic culture and a major heritage attraction associated with the Victorian period. Harrods and the West End had actually emerged in the mid- to late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as shopping spaces catering predominantly to middle-class women. Nonetheless, the neighbourhood became known as London's premier shopping district partly because of its older connections with the elite classes.¹⁷ Members of the royal family, the aristocracy, and the landed gentry had made the West End their home since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and had long practised highly public forms of aristocratic consumption and self-display in the neighbourhood.¹⁸ The two Japanese texts draw on these historical associations of the West End with 'English' aristocratic culture to encourage Japanese female consumers to emulate this culture and 'become a Lady' through shopping, in much the same way that British middle-class women did in the nineteenth century.

The *Emma Victorian Guide* establishes Harrods' origins in Victorian Britain and associates visiting Harrods with acquiring 'English' aristocratic cultural capital. In the section

on shopping places and practices in Victorian Britain, a character from the *Emma* manga series named Vivian Jones describes the nineteenth-century Harrods to the twenty-first-century reader. Vivian is the daughter of a nouveau riche merchant family that wants to enter the ranks of the nobility. Seen in the light of her family's attempts to join the aristocracy, Vivian's longing to shop at 'the yearned-for Harrods' (*akogare no Harozzu*) establishes Harrods not only as Victorian heritage, but also as the place to go to if one wanted to adopt the ways of the aristocracy and 'become a Lady' in both the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries. However, informed by a scrupulous commitment to historical accuracy, the guidebook, through the voice of Vivian, tells the reader that Harrods is 'slightly crass' (*sukoshi hin ga nai*) because it puts price tags on its goods and sometimes holds bargain sales.

The Harrods catalogue recuperates Harrods from this accusation of being 'slightly crass' by representing the department store as a mecca of aristocratic 'Englishness' to which the young Japanese woman should make her pilgrimage in order to 'become a Lady.' The catalogue depicts luxury goods as art objects that require the consumer to possess what Bourdieu calls 'the aesthetic disposition' or aesthetic 'taste,' which would enable one to consume these objects in the 'correct' manner without appearing vulgar or ignorant. This kind of taste, according to Bourdieu, privileges the commodity's ability to please the consumer's senses over the commodity's practical function.¹⁹ Those who adopt such an aestheticist attitude towards commodity consumption constitute a 'cultural nobility,' which is able to translate its cultural capital into social power, thereby distinguishing itself from the lower classes in the society it inhabits.²⁰ The Harrods catalogue appeals to young Japanese women who desire to acquire this form of taste and thereby join the ranks of the 'cultural nobility.' Harrods products, the catalogue implies, are not simply very expensive commodities that the buyer can use to demonstrate how wealthy she is. The catalogue repeats, almost ad nauseam, that Harrods

products are ‘elegant’ (*yūga*), ‘refined’ (*jōhin*), ‘of high standing’ (*kōkyū*), even ‘noble’ (*nōburu*).

The catalogue encourages young Japanese women to travel to Harrods in London, and to emulate the ways of the ‘English’ nobility by buying these ‘elegant’ and ‘refined’ Harrods products and immersing themselves on the whole in an ‘elegant shopping experience’ (*yūga na shoppingu*). The catalogue thereby promotes heritage tourism to, and tourist spending in, Britain. The reader’s introduction to Harrods begins with a virtual tour of the department store, with KIKI-san, a Japanese female model in her mid- to late twenties, standing in place of the young Japanese female reader whom the text explicitly addresses (Figure 1).

[Insert Figure 1]

Figure 1: A doorman welcomes KIKI-san and the reader to Harrods. (*Harozzu to Eikoku ryū jōshitsu sutairu*, pp. 4-5)

Over an eleven-page photo spread, the reader follows KIKI-san as she walks around the store. The tour ends at the Gift Shop, which the catalogue recommends as a must-visit destination for international tourists looking for ‘elegant’ and ‘refined’ souvenirs. This virtual tour seeks to inspire the intended Japanese female reader to follow KIKI-san’s example and travel to Harrods to eat, drink, and shop like an ‘English Lady.’ It encourages young Japanese women to consume not only Harrods products, but also the Harrods department store as a heritage tourist destination that epitomises an idealised ‘English’ aristocratic lifestyle.

Japanese travellers in Victorian Britain: learning good manners

Japanese people have in fact been travelling to Britain and in particular, to heritage attractions, in order to emulate aristocratic tastes and customs since the nineteenth century. The Harrods catalogue builds on a longstanding practice of Japanese travel to Britain that can be

traced back to the last years of the Tokugawa shogunate and the early Meiji period in the 1860s and 1870s. In 1862, the shogunate official Takenouchi Yasunori led a delegation to Britain and other Western countries to negotiate delaying the opening of the treaty ports of Hyōgo and Niigata and the port cities of Osaka and Edo (Tokyo). In 1863, five samurai from Chōshū escaped illegally to Britain to study at University College in London.²¹ Two years later, the Satsuma domain illegally sent nineteen samurai to study in Britain.²² Many of these early Japanese travellers to Britain became leaders of the new Meiji state after the shogunate was overthrown in 1868. The Meiji state sent even more Japanese students to Britain in the 1870s as part of its reforms to ‘civilise’ and ‘enlighten’ Japan. By the early 1870s, Japanese students made up the largest Asian community in London.²³

Although most of these Japanese travellers in the 1860s and 1870s were not tourists on holiday, they acquired aristocratic cultural capital by travelling to Britain, in much the same way that the intended young Japanese female reader of the Harrods catalogue is encouraged to do. However, these nineteenth-century travellers acquired cultural capital mostly as a by-product of their visits. The majority of these travellers went to Britain to study practical subjects related to government and industry, and along the way they adopted aristocratic manners and tastes as a means to achieving the commercial and military power that they admired in Britain and its Empire. The diaries of Japanese travellers to Britain in the 1860s and 1870s reveal that the travellers felt pressurised by British people to adopt British styles of dress on board the British ships they sailed in, at ports of call under British rule, and in Britain itself.²⁴ The British exerted such social pressure on Japanese travellers even as late as 1913, when a Keio University professor of English Literature called A. Kawabata wore a *yukata* on board a ship sailing to Singapore en route to Britain. In his diary, written in English and published as *A Hermit Turned Loose* in 1914, Kawabata describes how he ‘read in their [English passengers’] countenances their disapproval of this bold protestation by the smallest minority, and at once remembered

the English idea of uniformity with majority'.²⁵ He foregoes his *yukata* for 'the air-tight European dress which was devised for colder climes of Europe'.²⁶ Despite 'fe[eling] constrained in [his] European suit,' he feels 'easy in [his] heart in company [sic] of those exacting English people' and congratulates himself on his 'anglification'.²⁷ Kawabata's capitulation, as well as that of earlier Japanese travellers in the mid-nineteenth century, suggests that these Japanese travellers were aware that, in order for them to be accepted into British society and for Japan to be recognised as Britain's equal, they had to acquire not only practical knowledge, but also 'English' aristocratic manners and tastes.

Moreover, much like the model Japanese tourist projected in the Harrods catalogue, nineteenth-century Japanese travellers sought to learn 'English' aristocratic manners, customs, and aesthetic sensibilities by visiting heritage attractions in Britain. On the one hand, these Japanese travellers gained practical knowledge of government and industry by visiting new and 'progressive' developments such as coal mines, factories, railways, the Bank of England, law courts, schools and so on.²⁸ On the other hand, when it came to obtaining cultural knowledge, they turned to places where the past was being preserved by the nascent heritage movement in Britain in the nineteenth century. The sons of elite families went to the ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge 'to study the training and character of the English gentleman,' as the meeting notes of the Japanese Club at Cambridge put it.²⁹ This was so that they would know how to interact with the British ruling class when they graduated and took up high-ranking posts in the Japanese government and diplomatic service.³⁰ Japanese women too travelled to historic places in Britain to learn the ways of the aristocracy. Nabeshima Taneko, wife of the last feudal lord of Hizen, followed her husband to Oxford, where, as Andrew Cobbing puts it, she 'devoted her time abroad to learning the social graces of an English lady'.³¹ She also studied art as part of her efforts to cultivate all the 'accomplishments' expected of aristocratic ladies in nineteenth-century Britain.³² Taneko's eldest daughter later

became one of the few Japanese women who knew how to dance at the Western-style balls held by the Japanese government in the 1880s.³³ Kawabata too made a trip to Oxford in 1913, writing in a letter that '[s]treet buses drawn by horses, 'New College' five hundred years old, were deeply interesting to see at the heart of a civilised country'.³⁴ For these Japanese travellers to Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, 'civilisation' clearly was not limited to the newest advancements. It included forms of aristocratic cultural knowledge such as good manners, ballroom dancing, and art creation and appreciation, handed down from the past and embodied in hoary historic places.

Motivated by the desire to catch up with the West, Japanese travellers to Britain in the nineteenth century devoted their time to 'learning from the West.' The Harrods catalogue similarly encourages learning. It does not only encourage its readers to learn 'English' aristocratic etiquette and tastes by visiting the Harrods department store in London. It also teaches its readers these forms of cultural know-how, while intertwining its advice with the marketing of items from the Harrods brand. The catalogue thereby reassures its Japanese readers that even if they are unable to travel to Britain, they can still acquire 'English' aristocratic cultural capital while remaining in Japan, simply by learning from the editorial content in the catalogue and buying the Harrods products that it recommends. In this way, the catalogue draws on young Japanese women's *akogare* ('yearning') for 'Englishness' to promote the sale not only of Harrods products, but also of 'educational' publications like itself, which mediate between Western luxury goods and Japanese female consumers.

In playing this mediating role, the catalogue draws on the widespread understanding in Japan that the department store is an 'acknowledged exper[t]' that teaches Japanese customers about Western goods and the social practices that accompany these goods.³⁵ Japanese department stores such as Mitsukoshi, Takashimaya, and Daimaru first emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as 'display palaces for Western imports, which the

Japanese were eager to see and buy'.³⁶ They played a pivotal role in introducing Western food and dress to the Japanese by offering instruction in cooking, the use of cutlery, and table setting, and by hiring sales assistants to teach customers how to don Western garments.³⁷ Most significantly, they sought to cultivate in their customers the ability to appreciate Western-style art (*yōga*). In 1907, the Japanese state launched the Monbusho Bijutsu Tenrankai, an annual art exhibition designed to 'cultivate a refined artistic sensibility in the viewing public' and to thereby produce appropriately 'cultured' citizens for the nascent Japanese nation-state.³⁸ Department stores capitalised on the public interest in art generated by the state's cultural policy, positioning themselves as 'leaders of fashion and taste' by holding art exhibitions and cultural events³⁹ and by opening new 'departments' for selling artworks.⁴⁰ Japanese department stores today continue to offer classes on Western cooking, languages, art, and handicrafts, and to hold public exhibitions of Western art.⁴¹ By encouraging its readers to learn more about Western aesthetic tastes, and by alluding to the established role of the department store in facilitating such learning, the Harrods catalogue persuades young Japanese female consumers to look to Harrods as an authoritative source of knowledge about 'English' aristocratic culture.

Like a Japanese department store, the catalogue teaches the reader how to consume Western luxury goods (which are, in this case, Harrods products) in an appropriately tasteful manner. The catalogue includes an article entitled 'Welcome to English Teatime: How to Relax with Tea in the English Style' ['Eikoku ryū tiitaimu no kutsurogikata'], which promotes Harrods tea blends by outlining the different times in a day when one can enjoy a cup of tea (Figure 2).

[Insert Figure 2]

Figure 2: The page on the right recommends that the reader have the Breakfast Strong blend of tea with ginger thins for 'Early Morning Tea' at half past seven (*Harozzu to Eikoku ryū jōshitsu sutairu*, pp. 24-25)

One can, of course, drink tea whenever one wants to, but the article teaches the reader that there are specific times in a day when it is appropriate to have ‘English’ tea (called *kōcha* in Japanese). These specific times for consuming tea constitute ‘a tradition of English-style tea-time’ (*dentō teki na Eikoku ryū tiitaimu*). This ‘tradition’, the article implies, is a form of intangible aristocratic cultural heritage that the reader can learn to adopt by drinking tea at these specific times, and by drinking the specific Harrods tea blends that the article recommends. The article ends with a detailed, step-by-step guide that teaches the reader ‘how to make delicious tea, Harrods-style’ (*Harozzu ryū, oishii kōcha no irekata*) (Figure 3).

[Insert Figure 3]

Fig. 3: A guide to ‘making delicious tea, Harrods-style’ (*Harozzu ryū, oishii kōcha no irekata*) with step-by-step instructions and illustrations. (*Harozzu to Eikoku ryū jōshitsu sutairu*, p. 31)

The *Emma Victorian Guide* similarly teaches its readers how to consume Western luxury goods in the ‘correct’ manner, but it does not intertwine its educational function with the marketing of particular products from particular brands. Nonetheless, like the Harrods catalogue, it suggests that the art of making ‘English’ tea is a form of ‘English’ cultural heritage that Japanese women should learn in order to ‘become a Lady.’ The guidebook features a step-by-step lesson on ‘how to make perfect tea’ (*kanpeki na kōcha no irekata*), which looks strikingly like the illustrated guide in the Harrods catalogue (Figure 4).

[Insert Figure 4]

Figure 4: Two young female characters from the *Emma* manga series, one of whom is the daughter of a Viscount, and the other is from an aspiring middle-class family, play the role of instructors, while the narrator urges the reader to learn how to make good tea from these two ‘ladies’ (*redi tachi ni, ocha no tatekata o naraimashō*). ‘The Definitive Twenty-first Century Edition!! How to Make Perfect Tea’ (21 *seiki kettei ban!! Kanpeki na kōcha no irekata*). (*Emma Victorian Guide*, p. 106)

This ‘educating’ of Japanese consumers in effect channels their yearning for cultural capital into the purchasing of British luxury goods (such as Harrods tea) and the Japanese cultural commodities (such as the Harrods catalogue and the *Emma Victorian Guide*) that teach one how to consume these luxury goods.

Japanese housekeepers in Thornfield Hall: managing other people’s heritage

By promoting British heritage brands and the so-called aristocratic traditions that these brands embody, the Harrods catalogue and the *Emma Victorian Guide* effectively take on a ‘managerial’ role in the British heritage industry. At the end of *The Eyre Affair*, Mrs Nakajima and her husband retire to the fictional world of *Jane Eyre* permanently and become the managers of Thornfield Hall while Jane and Rochester live in Ferndean Manor: ‘My husband retired and he and I manage the house these days. None of us is mentioned in the book and Mrs Rochester aims to keep it that way; much more pleasant than Osaka and certainly more rewarding than the tourist business’.⁴² Mr and Mrs Nakajima do not own Thornfield, but they ‘manage’ it on the Rochesters’ behalf. Mrs Nakajima’s new role as manager suggests that Japanese collaboration with the British heritage industry in the twenty-first century takes on a similar form.

This up-keeping of British heritage on behalf of the British requires Japanese ‘managers’ to erase their presence so that British heritage remains, at least in appearance, white and therefore ‘authentically’ British. Mr and Mrs Nakajima take pains to ensure that ‘[n]one of [them] is mentioned in the book’,⁴³ thereby effacing their presence in the narrative world of *Jane Eyre*. Even when she still worked as a tour guide before becoming manager of Thornfield Hall, Mrs Nakajima kept herself and her clients invisible in the narrative: ‘We touch nothing and never speak to Miss Eyre.’⁴⁴ Mrs Nakajima’s discreet housekeeping in *The Eyre Affair* is motivated by the need within the diegesis to avoid ‘disrupting’ the narrative of *Jane Eyre*, but

it also prompts us to ask: Can we think of Japanese ‘heritage texts’ like the Harrods catalogue and the *Emma Victorian Guide* as playing an invisible managerial role in supporting the British heritage economy?

The Harrods catalogue is published by a Japanese publishing company, Takarajimasha, and it appears to have been the initiative of the Japanese publisher rather than a project commissioned by Harrods. The catalogue’s virtual tour of Harrods in Knightsbridge features the Archive Room, which, the narrator explains, Harrods opened to the editorial team only on special request (*tokubetsu ni ojama dekimashita*). The credits page gives special thanks to the staff of Harrods in London and Knightsbridge International, presumably for arranging this special access to the Archive Room and other areas in the store. It therefore seems likely that the Japanese publisher approached Harrods to produce this catalogue, rather than the other way around. The Japanese publisher, however, has downplayed its involvement in marketing the Harrods brand. Like Mrs Nakajima in *The Eyre Affair*, the Japanese publisher plays the role of the tour guide. It actively shapes how the tourist/reader perceives heritage attractions, while seeming to be merely an outsider who is ‘given permission to visit’ (*ojama dekimashita*) the heritage properties that belong to someone else. Harrods in fact no longer ‘belongs’ to the British, as it was sold to the Egyptian-born tycoon Mohammed Al Fayed in 1985 and then sold to the Qatari royal family’s investment company in 2010. The catalogue does not mention these key changes in Harrods’ recent history, thereby effacing not only the Japanese managerial presence, but also the Arab ownership of cultural property in the British heritage industry. It instead foregrounds the long and continuous history of Harrods, tracing its origins to the opening of a small tea shop in the East End in 1834, and to the shop’s relocation to its current site in Knightsbridge in 1849.

In making the publisher's management of the Harrods brand image invisible, the Harrods catalogue fuels the myth that Victorian Britain and the heritage that it has left behind are exclusively white (Figure 5).

[Insert Figure 5]

Figure 5: 'Victorian' Harrods: the front cover of the catalogue shows a horse-drawn cart standing outside the Harrods store front.

On the one hand, the catalogue implies that Japanese consumers, regardless of how much cultural knowledge they learn, will never be able to fully incorporate themselves into this white world of 'English' aristocratic culture. Yet on the other hand, it sets up whiteness as invisible, as a 'transparent [...] signifier'⁴⁵ that transcends race to become a universal culture in which the Japanese can participate.

The reified image of a 'Victorian' Harrods that the catalogue presents is one of exclusivity. The world of Harrods is open only to those who possess aristocratic taste and buying power, as well as those who belong to a certain race. The catalogue creates the illusion that Harrods, and by implication, Victorian Britain and British heritage, constitute a racially exclusive realm of white people. Apart from the Japanese model KIKI-san, the photographs in the 'tour of Harrods' section do not feature anyone who is obviously not white. Japanese consumers, like KIKI-san, can only 'visit' (*tazuneru*) this white world, not inhabit it (Figure 1). If they wish to become 'managers' of British heritage properties like Mrs Nakajima, they must render their presence invisible, so as not to disrupt this illusion of homogenous whiteness. The Harrods catalogue thus feeds into the popular imagination of Victorian Britain and its heritage as exclusively white, thereby sustaining the racial fantasy that prompts Thursday's surprise in *The Eyre Affair* on finding Japanese people in the 'mid-nineteenth-century England' of *Jane Eyre*.⁴⁶

However, the catalogue also implies that this whiteness of Victorian Britain and its heritage is invisible in a different way. Karen Kelsky argues that in the 1980s and 1990s, young Japanese women began to perceive themselves, and to be perceived by the media, as becoming more adept than Japanese men at learning Western languages and cultural practices, and thereby integrating themselves into white Western society.⁴⁷ Whiteness thus functioned in this discourse on Japanese women's 'internationalism' as 'a transparent and free-floating signifier of upward mobility and assimilation in "world culture"; it is the primary sign of the modern, the universal subject, the "citizen of the world"'.⁴⁸ Whiteness in the Harrods catalogue similarly signifies an apparently universal aristocratic culture of good manners and taste, which originates from Britain but transcends race and is accessible to all.

The article in the catalogue on 'traditional English-style tea-time' (*dentō teki na Eikoku ryū taitaimu*) (Figure 2) tells the reader that the 'culture of 'English' tea' (*kōcha bunka*) first flourished in Britain in the Victorian period and gradually spread from the aristocracy to the industrial middle class to people from all walks of life in Britain, then to people around the world today.⁴⁹ Tea-drinking, the article implies, is thus both British heritage and a 'style' (*ryū*) that can be adopted by non-British people outside of Britain. The catalogue teaches the intended Japanese female reader how to adopt this 'style' of drinking tea, and it encourages her to visit the Harrods Tea Salon in Nihonbashi where she 'can savour the atmosphere of Britain while remaining in Japan' (*Nihon ni inagara ni shite Eikoku kibun o ajiwaemasu*). In representing the aristocratic culture that Harrods embodies as a lifestyle that is not racially or geographically delimited (and yet belongs to the British as their heritage), the catalogue implies that the Japanese can freely assimilate into this British-yet-universal culture. Yet the racialised whiteness of this world culture keeps the Japanese on the margins, where they struggle to catch up with a heritage fantasy of a Victorian past that is projected into their future, while never fully achieving the aristocratic cultural capital that fantasy emblematises.

The fact that the Harrods catalogue addresses this fantasy specifically to young Japanese women suggests that they play a significant role in the struggle to catch up with the West. When Japan was forcibly opened up to Western trade in the second half of the nineteenth century, both men and women from the upper ranks in Japanese society adopted Western aristocratic modes of behaviour. This was especially so in the late 1870s and 1880s when the Japanese state sought to revise the unequal treaties Japan had signed, by convincing the Western imperial powers that Japan was as ‘civilised’ as they were. Japanese government officials at the time, particularly those who had travelled to the West, recognised that Westerners often judged how ‘civilised’ Japan was based on the behaviour of Japanese women at Western-style balls and dinner parties.⁵⁰ As the Japanese women’s education advocate Hatoyama Haruko wrote in her autobiography: ‘It was the era of preparation for treaty revision, and for the sake of revision, it was necessary that Japan win recognition that it was civilised in every respect; towards that end, we had to remove every trace of barbarian customs oppressing women.’⁵¹

While Japanese women in the 1870s and 1880s adopted Western dress and etiquette to demonstrate how ‘civilised’ Japan had become, the intended Japanese female reader of the Harrods catalogue endeavours to assimilate into Western aristocratic culture to empower herself. The catalogue is part of the continuing discourse on Japanese women’s ‘internationalism,’ and it draws on the widespread perception that Japanese women are more Westernised than Japanese men. Mass media representations of Japanese women in the 2000s, according to Jan Bardsley, claim that Japanese women have greater proficiency in English; are comfortable with travelling and studying abroad; and have cosmopolitan tastes.⁵² Although Kelsky’s study of Japanese women’s engagement with the West focused on the 1980s and 1990s, her findings seem to apply to the Harrods catalogue. In the same way that Japanese women writers in the 1980s and 1990s wrote books on Britain with telling titles such as *Britain*

the Rich, Japan the Nouveau Riche [Yutori no kuni Igrisu to narikin no kuni Nippon] (1993), the Harrods catalogue exhorts Japanese women to master the manners of the 'English Lady' in order to enter British (and more generally, white Western) society and attain upward social mobility.⁵³ The catalogue plays up the connotations of female empowerment in depicting the young Japanese woman as an independent traveller and shopper. KIKI-san ambles around Harrods on her own, talking to sales assistants, selecting souvenirs, and enjoying tea and cakes, without being accompanied by men. The catalogue implies that young Japanese women, once equipped with the 'English' cultural capital that comes with the purchase of Harrods products, can join the ranks of the cosmopolitan elite based in the West and gain their independence from Japanese men.

The *Emma Victorian Guide* similarly suggests that, if the young Japanese female reader wishes to be part of the cosmopolitan elite, she must be well-versed in the universal culture of English Literature. The guidebook harks back to British imperialism in the nineteenth century, when the study of the English language and English Literature was disseminated as a universal norm to facilitate colonisation and in Japan's case, enforced free trade. Michael Gardiner argues that the body of knowledge we call English Literature emphasises heritage and canonicity and as such appears timeless and universal.⁵⁴ This apparently universal form, he contends, has a political unifying function.⁵⁵ In *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (1989), Gauri Viswanathan demonstrates that the study of English Literature in British India in the nineteenth century performed just such a unifying function, when it inculcated 'English' values in Indian colonial subjects to expedite socio-political control over the Empire.⁵⁶ Although formal colonialism mostly came to an end after the Second World War, English Literature continues to be disseminated globally by publishing houses, universities, and cosmopolitan academics, thereby unifying people around the world under a British literary culture perceived as timeless and universal. This informal cultural empire reinforces English

Literature's disciplinary power to determine what Pascale Casanova calls the 'Greenwich Meridian of literature,' a universally-accepted standard that defines what counts as literature.⁵⁷ Furthermore, it generates interest in historic places in Britain associated with canonical writers and works, thereby promoting literary heritage tourism and enriching the British economy long after Britain lost the colonies that were once protected markets for its goods.

The *Emma Victorian Guide* plays a managerial role in constructing this informal British cultural empire by preserving the heritage of English Literature and marketing it to its Japanese female readers. It reaffirms the idea that, like 'English' tea culture' (*kōcha bunka*), English Literature, unlike Japanese literature or other national literatures, is a universal cultural form open to all to participate in regardless of race, nationality, and geographical location. The guidebook's Further Readings list surprisingly recommends only literary works instead of books on the history of nineteenth-century Britain, even though the book is designed to help readers understand the historical context in which the *Emma* manga series is set. Almost all the works recommended are canonical works of English Literature (specifically novels) written between the early nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century. The list includes familiar 'Great Books' such as Austen's *Emma* (which incidentally has nothing to do with the manga of the same name), *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Great Expectations*.

Jane Eyre, according to the guidebook, is a 'love romance [story] that has been beloved by women around the world for more than a hundred years' (*100 nen ijō mo no aida, sekai jū no josei tachi ni aisarete kita rabu romansu*). Austen's *Emma* is an 'entertaining novel that transcends time to bring enjoyment to the reader' (*jidai o koete tanoshimasete kureru goraku shōsetsu*). The guidebook thus asserts that these novels have timeless and universal appeal, which makes them must-read classics even in Japan in the 2000s. The implied Japanese female reader, the *Emma Victorian Guide* claims, will still be able to sympathise with the characters and situations in Austen's *Emma*, 'while *Emma*'s world of dinner parties and balls is a far cry

from our world in contemporary Japan' (*bansankai, butōkai, paatii nado, gendai Nihon de ikiru watashi tachi to wa kakehanareta sekai no hanashi de arinagara*). It is significant that the guidebook uses the word 'while' (*arinagara*) instead of 'but' or 'despite.' This implies that the difference between the aristocratic lifestyle depicted in *Emma* and the lifestyles of Japanese women readers in the 2000s is not necessarily an obstacle to Japanese women's enjoyment of the novel. The guidebook thereby points once again to Japanese women's *akogare* ('yearning') for 'English' aristocratic culture, while reaffirming the canonicity of Austen's novel.

As texts that preserve and promote British heritage, the *Emma Victorian Guide* and the Harrods catalogue make a specifically Japanese intervention in the wider postfeminist media culture, which scholars often treat as a predominantly Western or Anglo-American phenomenon.⁵⁸ Like many contemporary postfeminist media products, the two texts represent the ideal young woman as an individualistic and empowered consumer and champion the fantasy of self-improvement through consumption.⁵⁹ In these two texts, however, this 'postfeminist sensibility'⁶⁰ has a postcolonial dimension, drawing on young Japanese women's historical desire to emulate British aristocratic culture to extend Britain's new cultural empire in the twenty-first century.

Like Mrs Nakajima in *The Eyre Affair*, the Harrods catalogue discreetly maintains the British heritage economy by marketing British heritage commodities to Japanese female consumers on behalf of their British owners. In doing so, it (re)produces the universalism of an idealised 'English' aristocratic culture tied to the consumption of heritage, thereby contributing to the creation of a cultural empire that fuels the British heritage industry and generates wealth for the British economy. The *Emma Victorian Guide* likewise plays the role of the unseen manager, maintaining the heritage of English Literature and disseminating it to Japanese audiences as universal culture that ultimately reinforces British cultural and economic power. It is perhaps as much the *Emma Victorian Guide* as 'profound' psychological needs that

brought Goldhill's Japanese schoolgirls to the Brontë Parsonage Museum,⁶¹ where they might have spent an afternoon acquiring 'English' cultural knowledge of timeless and universal English Literature, while spending their pocket money on *omiyage* ('souvenirs') at the Museum gift shop.

(Word count: 8,202 words including endnotes)

Endnotes

¹ Jasper Fforde, *The Eyre Affair* (London: Hodder, 2001), p. 324.

² Fforde, *Eyre Affair*, p. 331.

³ Fforde, *Eyre Affair*, p. 325.

⁴ Bronwen Surman, 'The Search for the Real Thing: Japanese Tourism to Britain', in Sylvie Guichard-Anguis and Okpyo Moon (ed.), *Japanese Tourism and Travel Culture* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 193-202 (p. 196).

⁵ Surman, 'Search', pp. 196-97.

⁶ Surman, 'Search', p. 197.

⁷ Simon Goldhill, *Freud's Couch, Scott's Buttocks, Brontë's Grave* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. 72.

⁸ Goldhill, *Freud's Couch*, p. 70.

⁹ See Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (London: Methuen, 1987); Patrick Wright, *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain* (London: Verso, 1985); Bella Dicks, *Culture on Display: The Production of Contemporary Visitability* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2003), pp. 121-25; and James Chapman, *Past and Present: National Identity and the British Historical Film* (London: J. B. Tauris, 2005).

¹⁰ Hewison, *Heritage Industry*.

¹¹ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

¹² Quoted in Andrew Higson, *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama since 1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 61.

¹³ Mori Kaoru and Rico Murakami, *Emma Victorian Guide* [*Ema Vikutorian gaido*] (Tokyo: Entaaburein [Enterbrain], 2003).

¹⁴ *Harozzu to Eikoku ryū jōshitsu sutairu* [Harrods and English High-Quality Style] (Tokyo: Takarajimasha, 2010).

¹⁵ Lyn Pykett, 'The Changing Faces and Spaces of Victorian Studies', *Critical Quarterly*, 55:1 (2013), pp. 9-23 (p. 16). See also Caroline Levine, 'From Nation to Network', *Victorian Studies*, 55:4 (2013), pp. 647-66; and Tanya Agathocleous and Jason R. Rudy, 'Victorian Cosmopolitanisms: Introduction', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 38 (2010), pp. 389-97.

¹⁶ Antonija Primorac and Monika Pietrzak-Franger, 'Introduction: What is Global Neo-Victorianism?', *Neo-Victorian Studies*, 8:1 (2015), pp. 1-16 (p. 1). See also Simon Joyce, *The Victorians in the Rearview Mirror* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007); Elizabeth Ho, *Neo-Victorianism and the Memory of Empire* (London: Continuum, 2012); and Mark Llewellyn and Ann Heilmann, 'The Victorians Now: Global Reflections on Neo-Victorianism', *Critical Quarterly*, 55:1 (2013), pp. 24-42.

¹⁷ Erika Diane Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 3-4, pp. 8-9.

¹⁸ Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1979), trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1984), p. 3, p. 42.

²⁰ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, pp. 22-26.

²¹ Andrew Cobbing, *The Japanese Discovery of Victorian Britain: Early Travel Encounters in the Far West* (Richmond: Japan Library, 1998), p. 24.

²² Ibid.

²³ Cobbing, *Japanese Discovery*, p. 89, p. 110.

²⁴ Cobbing, *Japanese Discovery*, pp. 82-85.

²⁵ A. Kawabata, *A Hermit Turned Loose: An Interesting Account of European Travels* (1914), 2nd ed. (Tokyo: n.p., 1915), p. 51.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ The two most prominent ‘learning missions’ were the 1862 Takenouchi mission and the 1872 Iwakura mission to Britain, Europe, and the United States. See Cobbing, *Japanese Discovery*, p. 96-97; Hikarawa Sukehiro, ‘Japan’s Turn to the West’, trans. Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, in Marius B. Jansen (ed.), *Cambridge History of Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), Vol. 5, pp. 432-98 (pp. 460-64); and Olive Checkland, *Britain’s Encounter with Meiji Japan, 1868 – 1912* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 109-18.

²⁹ Quoted in Checkland, *Britain’s Encounter*, p. 136.

³⁰ Checkland, *Britain’s Encounter*, pp. 134-36.

³¹ Cobbing, *Japanese Discovery*, p. 122.

³² Cobbing, *Japanese Discovery*, p. 136.

³³ Cobbing, *Japanese Discovery*, p. 127.

³⁴ Kawabata, *Hermit*, p. 226.

³⁵ Millie R. Creighton, ‘The *Depaato*: Merchandising the West While Selling Japaneseness’, in Joseph J. Tobin (ed.), *Re-Made in Japan: Everyday Life and Consumer Taste in a Changing Society* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 42-57 (p. 44). See also Penelope Francks, *The Japanese Consumer: An Alternative Economic History of Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 114, p. 121; Brian Moeran, ‘The Birth of the Japanese Department Store’, in Kerrie L. MacPherson (ed.), *Asian Department Stores* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1998), pp. 141-76 (pp. 172-74); and Louise Young, ‘Marketing the Modern: Department Stores, Consumer Culture, and the New Middle Class in Interwar Japan’, *International Labour and Working-Class History*, 55 (1999), pp. 52-70 (p. 56).

³⁶ Creighton, ‘*Depaato*’, p. 43. Many of these department stores had started out as dry goods stores during the Tokugawa period but they began to remodel themselves along the lines of Western department stores in the 1890s and especially after 1900. See Francks, *Japanese Consumer*; Moeran, ‘Birth’; Young, ‘Marketing’, and Oh Younjung, ‘Shopping for Art: The New Middle Class’ Art Consumption in Modern Japanese Department Stores’, *Journal of Design History*, 27:4 (2014), pp. 351-69.

³⁷ Creighton, ‘*Depaato*’, p. 46, p. 48.

³⁸ Oh, ‘Shopping’, p. 351.

³⁹ Francks, *Japanese Consumer*, p. 114; Moeran, ‘Birth’, pp. 152-62.

⁴⁰ Oh, 'Shopping', 352. I wish to acknowledge here that Japanese department stores also sold high-end Japanese-style goods (Francks, *Japanese Consumer*, pp. 113-14; Moeran, 'Birth', p. 162) and promoted Japanese-style painting (*nihonga*) (Oh, 'Shopping', pp. 355-56).

⁴¹ Creighton, 'Depaato', pp. 50-51.

⁴² Fforde, *Eyre Affair*, p. 354.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Fforde, *Eyre Affair*, p. 325.

⁴⁵ Karen Kelsky, *Women on the Verge: Japanese Women, Western Dreams* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 145.

⁴⁶ Fforde, *Eyre Affair*, p. 325.

⁴⁷ Kelsky, *Women on the Verge*, p. 2, pp. 123-24.

⁴⁸ Kelsky, *Women on the Verge*, p. 145.

⁴⁹ This is inaccurate, as British consumers had started out drinking mainly green teas imported from China and later Japan (in the 1860s and 1870s), and had turned increasingly to black teas produced in India and Ceylon only in the 1880s. It is therefore possible to claim that the culture of drinking tea in general did flourish throughout the Victorian period, but strictly speaking, the culture of drinking 'English' tea (*kōcha*), which is made with black tea, did not take off until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Erika Diane Rappaport, 'Packaging China: Foreign Articles and Dangerous Tastes in the Mid-Victorian Tea Party', in Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Making of the Consumer: Knowledge, Power and Identity in the Modern World* (Oxford: Berg, 2006), pp. 125-46; and Robert Hellyer, '1874: Tea and Japan's New Trading Regime', in Eric Tagliacozzo, Helen F. Siu, and Peter C. Perdue (ed.), *Asia Inside Out: Changing Times* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), pp. 186-206.

⁵⁰ Sally A. Hastings, 'A Dinner Party is Not a Revolution: Space, Gender, and Hierarchy in Meiji Japan', in Jan Bardsley and Laura Miller (ed.), *Manners and Mischief: Gender, Power and Etiquette in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), pp. 95-113 (p. 95).

⁵¹ Quoted in Hastings, 'Dinner Party', p. 102.

⁵² Jan Bardsley, 'The Oyaji Gets a Makeover: Guides for Japanese Salarymen in the New Millennium', in Jan Bardsley and Laura Miller (ed.), *Manners and Mischief: Gender, Power and Etiquette in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), pp. 114-35 (p. 115).

⁵³ Kelsky, *Women on the Verge*, p. 124.

⁵⁴ Michael Gardiner, *The Constitution of English Literature: The State, the Nation, and the Canon* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 2-3.

⁵⁵ Gardiner, *Constitution*, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁶ Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (London: Faber, 1989), pp. 2-5.

⁵⁷ Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters* (1999), trans. M. B. Debevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 88.

⁵⁸ See Rosalind Gill, *Gender and the Media* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007); and Yvonne Tasker and Diane Negra (ed.), *Interrogating Postfeminism: Gender and the Politics of Popular Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). For a discussion of national contexts outside Britain and North America as well as transnational contexts, see Rosalind Gill and Christina Scharff (ed.), *New Feminities: Postfeminism, Neoliberalism, and Subjectivity* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

⁵⁹ Gill, *Gender and the Media*, pp. 259-61, 262-64; Tasker and Negra, *Interrogating Postfeminism*, p. 2, 10.

⁶⁰ Gill, *Gender and the Media*, p. 249.

⁶¹ Goldhill, *Freud's Couch*, p. 70.