

## Exorcizing Clark: The Drag Queen?<sup>1</sup>

Tomasz Kamusella  
University of St Andrews

The most unexpected distinguishing feature of the University of Hokkaido that I noticed on my arrival in Sapporo in Japan was the presence of the name and figure of 'Clark'. It seemed to be an incongruously un-Japanese name to find in such a place, like that of the northern island of Hokkaido itself. Hokkaido still lies outside *Naichi* – the maritime mainland or core of the 'real Nippon' in the other three main islands. Today the term *Naichi* is used only unofficially; why the term is now avoided in Japan may become clearer in this essay. Except for the diminutive archipelagic prefecture of Okinawa far to the south, and some other tiny outlying Pacific islands, Hokkaido is the last remnant of *Gaichi* – the 'outlying territories' of Japan - in a very real, though now unofficial, sense. It was the last remaining frontier region still available to adventurous Japanese men and women after World War II, when Japan was stripped of its overseas empire.

Prior to Japan's decisive defeat by the United States, this large northern island had constituted a geopolitical stepping stone to Japan's Asian empire in *Karafuto* (the southern half of the island of Sakhalin), Manchuria and Korea. To prevent Russia from taking over the island, the Edo Shogunate that then ruled Japan had formally annexed Hokkaido in the early nineteenth century. Colonial practices of a kind detailed in this essay were first trialled there, before they were imposed in the conquered territories that were later incrementally added to *Gaichi*. Such colonial practices were later occasionally applied even in *Naichi* itself when this was considered expedient. This first Japanese experiment in colonization close to home was pivotal in preparing the ground for Japan to secure its colonial empire. Through the application of colonialist governance techniques, in concert with the use of other administrative and military measures, this new empire grew in scale until, in the last years before its ultimate collapse, it had ballooned into the eerily and euphemistically codenamed 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.'

---

<sup>1</sup> I thank Dr Michael O Gorman and Professor Jerzy Tomaszewski for their advice, and the former also for his invaluable help with editing this essay. A word of thanks also goes to Dr Akiyoshi Nishiyama for his advice on Japanese terms. Obviously, I alone remain responsible for any infelicities.

This Clark, whose aura is so evident in Sapporo, was William Smith Clark, a nineteenth-century American professor of chemistry and agriculture, who worked initially in Amherst College before becoming president of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, also in Amherst. He left this town otherwise only to pursue a doctorate at the University of Göttingen in the (German) Kingdom of Hanover, and later to serve in the Union Army in the American Civil War, in the course of which he gained the rank of colonel.

An American expeditionary fleet under the command of Commodore Matthew Perry spearheaded the Western semi-invasion of Japan. In 1853-4 Perry 'opened up' Japan by presenting the Edo shogunate with a proposal of a treaty, or else ..., meaning the palpable possibility of a violent military incursion. This was the first lesson in colonialism that Japanese officialdom learned from the West. (It is remarkable the ease with which such orientalizing terms as 'the West' went down well in Japan, even though they placed America quite illogically in 'the West' and located *Nippon*, if I might use this rather emotionally-charged name, in the incongruously named 'Far East', despite the fact that it lay far to the west of the United States. The topography of the mind often flies far away from that of the globe, with ideological needs taking precedence over facts on the ground.) Not surprisingly, the burning need for Japan to change in order to secure its continued independent existence was dubbed 'modernization' or 'westernization' by Japan's foreign role models; hence, the colonization of new territory as already practiced by the Western powers was soon seen by the Japanese ruling elites as a necessary component of the process of modernization of their own society that they were then pursuing so energetically.

The Japanese ruling class adopted the means and methods of colonization from the United States, which was geographically the closest Western country to Japan that did not itself constitute an immediate threat to Japan's independence. American and Japanese interests did not initially appear to be in conflict, since their policy objectives were different. Washington wanted access to Japan's ports and markets, but did *not* have designs on acquiring Japanese territory. In this, America was quite different from Russia. In its imperial thrust eastward Russia seemed hell-bent on seizing, initially, territories adjacent to Japan, before proceeding to occupy the country itself as just another Russian colony, to be added to St Petersburg's empire in Asia. The Edo Shogunate wanted to forestall this worrying prospect; it shrewdly identified America as the power that it

could play off against Russia, while simultaneously forging a political alliance of interest with America. This proved to be a prudent Japanese stratagem, and Washington responded to it by sending advisors into an Asian country in large numbers for the first time, bringing American ways, expertise and technology to Japan. The merger of US know-how with Japanese geopolitical interests and with Japan's intention to emulate Western colonialism was first actualized through the administrative policies applied in Hokkaido.

Nowadays Sapporo, with its population of two million, looks like a New York City in writ small. The urban center is dotted with skyscrapers, and is surrounded by a suburban sprawl of family houses laid out on a regular street grid, interrupted occasionally by Spartan-looking blocks of concrete apartments. All these buildings exhibit the subtle decoration of webs of cracks sent up their walls by the frequent earth tremors that shake Hokkaido.

The relics of the colonial period, of what was a 'Wild West' in the Far East, or Japan's 'Far North,' have now been conveniently gathered together near Sapporo in the Historical Village of Hokkaido. Houses, offices, government buildings, newspaper headquarters, a school, restaurants, an inn, a forge, factories, a sake brewery, stables, farms, a fishing quarter, merchants' houses, a Shinto shrine, a Protestant church and shop buildings, all originally erected elsewhere in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had been transported here from all over Hokkaido. The collection has been turned into a faux frontier town served by a dusty tramline with wagons drawn by lethargic horses. It strangely reminds one of a stereotypical outpost settlement from an American Western. Among the few intimations that one is in Japan are the insistence on taking one's shoes off upon entering most of the buildings, the use of traditional Japanese *tatami* mats and *futons* in the houses and inns, and the sight of paddy fields here and there. Otherwise there is scant evidence of distinctively Japanese features, other than the *sake* that is available to drink, the inscriptions in Japanese characters and the Shinto shrine. Even these have to be sought out; the overwhelming feeling is of being in a town somewhere in the American prairies, with 'redskins' lurking behind the nearby hills.

Modernity as it was perceived and aspired to by the Japanese at the turn of the twentieth century was unmistakably American in concept and form. Japan clearly drew on the experience of the United States' drive westward in pursuit of the assumed American 'manifest destiny' to command the

entire span of the North American continent from sea to shining sea. Drawing on what they had diligently learned, the Japanese applied their knowledge to the hands-on practicalities of pursuing their 'internal colonialism' in Hokkaido. It was Japan's 'promised land', supposedly uninhabited, uninhibited and full of opportunities that they were intent on ensuring did not fall into the hands of the 'Red Ezo', as they called the Russians. The 'real Ezo' themselves, meaning Hokkaido's indigenous *Ainu* people, were a minor irritation. They could not quite be overlooked, of course, but the government in practice did not treat Hokkaido as anything more than a *terra nullius*, a land empty of people and without any preexisting sovereign authority over it. In the official view, the *Ainu* did not amount to 'real inhabitants,' much as was the case also in Australia, where the Aborigines were not recognized as possessing rights to the land they had inhabited from time immemorial. If the civilized British could disregard the latter in their pursuit of imperial modernity, the Japanese could treat 'their Aborigines' likewise, as little more than some curious fauna in this northern land, which was so different from *Naichi*, the real Japan that began across the Tsugaru Strait that divided it from Hokkaido.

In Japan today, those who do not succeed in the overcrowded 'mainland' can have a second chance in Hokkaido. However different their speech or dialect may be, reflecting their place of origin, here they become simply otherwise uncategorizable Japanese, like all the other Hokkaidans. Those tiny differences in the precise movements of the tongue with which the Japanese inadvertently disclose so much about themselves in *Naichi* do not mark individuals out or differentiate them one from another in Hokkaido. In 'Japan proper' you become an alien when you move from one community to another if you do not quickly accommodate to the new area's speech. People know about one another's pedigree for many generations back, who is 'old money' and who is *nouveau riche*. They keep tabs on the untouchables of yesteryear, the *Burakumin* ('hamlet people') – formerly known as *Eta* ('filthy mass'), or even *Hinin* ('non-humans') – whom you do not want your children to marry. (In the late nineteenth century there was a plan – eventually abandoned – to expel all the *Burakumin* in other parts of Japan to Hokkaido. Indeed, beginning in 1890 and on the model of Australia's history as a penal colony, Hokkaido had become the place where all kinds of 'undesirables' and criminals serving long-term sentences were exiled from *Naichi*. The expellees were sent to northern Hokkaido, the island's most inhospitable section. Here, across 40 kilometers of the La Pérouse Strait, they faced the similarly inhospitable island of Sakhalin, at that time Russia's infamous penal

colony, immortalized by Anton Chekhov in the novella *The Murder* and in the fact-finding treatise, *A Journey to Sakhalin*, which was for the author singularly the most difficult work he ever wrote.)

Hokkaido is a different story from the rest of Japan; there you are what you have made of yourself and for yourself. This tradition started with *samurai* who were made redundant as a class by the modernizing reforms of the last decades of the nineteenth century. In 1868 the emperor was restored as the actual ruler of Japan, replacing the Tokugawa Shogunate, and there commenced the period of Meiji, or 'Enlightened Reign.' In an attempt to prevent the rise of this new political order, *samurai* loyal to the old Tokugawa regime seized control of Hokkaido and proclaimed it a Republic of Ezo, independent of the imperial government at Tokyo (as Edo had been renamed at the time of the imperial restoration). In the summer of 1869, the imperial forces defeated the rebels, but instead of incarcerating or annihilating them, Tokyo shrewdly turned the disgruntled warrior class into paramilitary pioneer farmers, allowing them to settle across Ezo, which was now renamed *Hokkaido*, meaning the 'Northern Sea Region' in *Ainu* (one of the very few nods to the island's original inhabitants in terms of placenames).

A new beginning, indeed. *Naichi* was rid of the more politically troublesome *samurai* and of the danger of recurring rebellions. In the 'Wild North' these same *samurai* brutally exploited the *Ainu* as slaves or serfs, similar to the mistreatment suffered by Central and Eastern European peasants before their emancipation in the mid-nineteenth century. The *Ainu*, at the peril of their very lives, were corralled to work for nothing in *samurai* fisheries, farms, mines and factories. This left them with hardly any time to gather adequate provisions for the winter, so many of them suffered malnutrition, starvation and death. The land, which they had until then been free to roam and live off, was now divided among *samurai* owners, who jealously guarded 'their' property against any traditional *Ainu* use.

The *Ainu* were pressed into the worst areas for which the *samurai* and the government had no use. Their access to rivers and to the coast was increasingly limited; their way of life, so strongly dependent on salmon, was gradually broken. In 1899, a new law redesignated the *Ainu* as 'former aborigines,' compelling them to abandon their language in favor of Japanese, which was now the only language used in schools and offices. The last traces of evident 'Ainuness' were expunged from the social landscape when Japanese names were imposed on them. But,

regardless of how indistinguishable in their 'Japaneseness' from 'real Japanese' the *Ainu* have become, to this day they remain second-class citizens. The same methods that keep *Burakumin* at arm's length from the rest of 'respectable society' throughout Japan are also at play here when it comes to winnowing the *Ainu* out the mainstream of society, which is reserved for 'real Japanese.'

Our Professor Clark stepped into the very midst of these momentous human changes. At the invitation of the Japanese government, he spent eight short months in Sapporo in 1876-7, busying himself with organizing a replica of the Massachusetts Agricultural College that he presided over at home. Thus, Sapporo Agricultural College – the forerunner of today's Hokkaido University – was founded. Clark, with five other local faculty members, taught the first class of 24 students, obviously in English. At that time, Japanese modernizers were convinced that their own language was not up to the task of describing the modern world. In their view the modernizing reform project could not be furthered through the medium of Japanese. Many of the students ended up writing copiously in English and becoming Christian, because, despite the government's explicit prohibition on proselytizing, Clark was unable to resist his evangelizing compulsion and he had his students read the Bible in class.

Perhaps this holy book concerning Near Eastern farmers and shepherds, extolling their back-breaking way of life, imparted to the students an appropriate ethos of 'workaholism'; such an ethos might have rendered outmoded the *samurai* aristocratic disdain for manual labor. Could one be modern, as the general yearning was at that time among the aspiring Japanese youth, without also becoming a Christian? At that time opinions were divided. The earlier Japanese tradition of religious syncretism, seamlessly melding Shinto and Buddhism, was replaced with Western-style sharp lines of divisions between religions. This followed the Meiji administration's decision in 1868 to separate the two faiths (in a process known as *shinbutsu bunri*, or the 'separation of *kamis* from buddhas'), often with the encouragement of force. Tokyo sidelined Buddhism for not being Japanese enough, while traditional Shinto beliefs were modified by political action into a new so-called State Shintoism, a central feature of which was the official worship of the emperor as an *akitsumikami*, or 'living god.' The Ministry of Rites, which oversaw this system of emotional and ideological indoctrination, equated the deification of the emperor with that of the state in a decree issued in 1890, the Imperial Rescript on Education. This required students to swear an oath compelling them to

offer their lives unconditionally for the empire and to pledge to protect the imperial family. It took defeat in World War II and the American invasion before the emperor was obliged to lay aside the assertion of his divine attributes in 1946, to the sincere shock of many of his subjects.

But Clark's sowing of Christianity in Sapporo took place at a time when there was still room available for other religions. Protestantism had particular attractions. It offered a not entirely licit, but seemingly effective, route toward rapid modernization for a narrow educated elite brave enough to take the risk of adopting that religion. Under the influence of Sapporo Agricultural College, beer brewing and dairy farming were introduced to Hokkaido, the first time these had been practiced on a large scale in Japan. Other Western customs, products, inventions and machinery followed the same path, first tried out experimentally on the island, and later, if they proved successful, implanted in *Naichi* itself. Not that it was always good for the average Japanese; many people lacked the enzymes which allow Westerners to digest milk or to metabolize alcohol without undesirable physiological consequences.

The encouragement of the consumption of milk and of new forms of alcohol, as well as of beef and pork, which had until then been almost unknown and shunned in Buddhist Japan, was not in itself an intrinsic element of the process of social and economic modernization. The purpose was more subtle. The adoption in Japan of arbitrary elements of Western civilization, such as new religious beliefs and dietary practices, was so much removed from anything previously known in the Japanese home, that it functioned as an outward sign of modernity, signifying widespread acceptance of the government's unshakable decision to modernize Japan by westernizing it. With modernization being equated with westernization, the adoption of the superficial trappings of some western cultural practices formed the visible index of the more profound transformation of Japanese through modernization that was under way, though perhaps out of sight. The decision was like Atatürk's order that men in the new secular post-Ottoman Turkey had to wear hats, instead of the fez, as if wearing a specific headgear or eating new foodstuffs like cottage cheese could ensure success at the production of steamships, telephones and locomotives. (Christianity was subsequently largely rejected by Japanese society. This rejection provided the possibility of using it as a mark of distinction that could be adopted in the colonial *Gaichi* by the Korean masses, in order to differentiate themselves from

the Japanese, while simultaneously publicly aligning themselves as a group with West.)

Tokyo ran Hokkaido as a colony through the Hokkaido Colonization Commission that it established in 1869. The terms 'colonization' and 'development' were used interchangeably in the multi-year development plans that were drawn up for this island, as can be learned from the main exhibition in the ultra-modern and overbearingly large Historical Museum of Hokkaido, located just a ten-minute walk from the Historical Village. In the museum today, similar language is used without apology; the *Ainu* feature there just as 'primitive hunter-gatherers' who had been in urgent need of development, with which they were 'benevolently' endowed by the *samurai* landed class and by the government. The implication in the museum's organizing narrative is that their 'Japanization' was completed at the close of the nineteenth century, so the *Ainu* as a distinct group disappear at that point from the exhibition's narrative. Organizational names and titles that grate or embarrass today have been sanitized, but the underlying situation remains similar. To this very day, the Hokkaido Bureau, a unit within the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, affords the government as much direct influence on the island and on its inhabitants as the Colonization Commission had in the past.

Clark, as is true of a long list of historical figures, achieved lasting fame while having no intimation in his own lifetime that so much would flow from what he started during his brief gig in Hokkaido. Whereas in Amherst he is completely forgotten, every inhabitant of Sapporo and Hokkaido immediately recognizes his face and can readily quote, in Japanese-sounding English, Clark's supposed parting words to his students, 'Boys, be ambitious!' He has almost gained the status of a Japanese national hero. Tourists flocking to Hokkaido University at weekends take pictures of each other at the bust of Clark located at the central crossroads of the campus. Beyond Clark's back sprawls the imposing main cafeteria named after him, and to the left of it stands the tall student co-op which also bears the name of this inventor of Japanese modernization-cum-colonization. Lastly, but even more tellingly, Clark, in the form of a five-meter-tall statute on a hill on the outskirts of Sapporo, in his flowing cloak looking like a Catholic patron-saint or a Buddhist temple's *Niō* (benevolent king) protector, symbolically guards the city against the backwardness looming across the waters in the – well, yes, the Russian – West. His extended right hand shows the boys the direction to and of the future.

When I began my fellowship at Hokkaido University, I was invited to a welcoming lunch at the Clark Center restaurant. My host commented in the typically understated way of the Japanese on the bust of Clark as a sign of the colonization of Japan by the West. It is hard to disagree with this interpretation, even though today Clark's image is a beloved logo of the university and of Sapporo itself. It appears that the Japanese tend to like this logo as unreflectively as they like cute (*kawaii*) and beautiful things, *tatami* mats or *ryokans*. Clark has become part and parcel of Hokkaido's Japanese culture, indistinguishable from endogenous cultural artefacts, almost a Shinto kami, an everlasting *tamagotchi*. Instead of having to be nurtured, this Japanese 'Clark' itself nurtures modern-day Sapporo urbanites through their cherished memories or fantasies of him. Memories of this latter-day myth were created and propagated by Japanese officialdom in Hokkaido. Little did Clark know that in 1907 his 'baby,' his Sapporo Agricultural College, would form the kernel of one of the new Imperial Universities into which it was transformed. It was the first ever imperial university in *Gaichi*; only one more was founded, that in Keijō, or today's South Korean capital of Seoul, in 1924.

Yes, if you bear in mind Clark's role in the growth of Sapporo and his influence on the history of Hokkaido, there is no denying that he was an agent and a medium of colonization. But who was colonizing whom? Was the West colonizing Japan, or was Japan colonizing Hokkaido, or were the Japanese colonizing the *Ainu*? The period of the West's direct if informal colonial (or, perhaps, 'quasi-colonial') influence on Japan ended abruptly after Tokyo's resounding naval victory over Russia in 1904. The country joined, with the status of an 'honorary westerner,' the hitherto exclusively Western club of imperial powers as their equal, and unabashedly embarked on its own project of territorial aggrandizement. In 1905 Korea was declared to be a Japanese protectorate, and five years later Tokyo formally annexed it. Simultaneously, rivers of beer and milk, alongside transports of beef and pork, streamed south from Hokkaido to *Naichi*, helping to change the stature, physical appearance and attitudes of the Japanese, as a consequence of the addition to their diet of considerable quantities of Western-style high-calorie, high-protein foodstuffs.

Previously these and similar foods had freed the West from the fear of hunger and the scourge of malnourishment; they made westerners first chubby and fat, and, ultimately, obese. It is surprising to see that thus far, the Japanese, for the most part, seem to have avoided the deleterious consequences of this vicious nutritional cycle of plenty and

excess, and appear to the Western traveler's eye to be slim, skinny, and even 'healthily anorectic.' In this respect Clark-inspired colonization-Westernization has failed in Japan: the collusion of tradition and the biology of digestive enzymes in the population at large gained the upper hand over the snares of dietary modernization.

Meals served in Japanese restaurants come in portions that look tiny or too small – take your pick – but they bring to mind for me the size of dinner dishes traditionally served in Poland before the end of communism in 1989. The bloating of food portions elsewhere can be revealingly indexed against the surprising growth in the size of the regular cup of coffee. Until the twenty-first century, it did not hold more than a quarter of a liter of black liquid. In the following decade the 'regular' cup jump-grew to 0.35-0.45 liter, and was rebranded as 'small,' allowing for the supersizing of the new 'regular cup' to well over half a liter, and of the 'big one' to just shy of the liter mark. In Japan the regular cup of coffee is still the one I knew from pre-1989 Poland, whether served at Starbuck's or at a local Japanese café. The lattification of coffee, so widespread elsewhere in the developed world, did not succeed in Japan, though nowadays soya milk, digestible by all Japanese, is pushed the way of their *hotto kofi*. No luck here either, though; they prefer their coffee cold, black and on the rocks.

In 1945 the 'Empire of the Rising Sun' had gone with the divine wind of *kamikaze*, like gun smoke dissipating rapidly after a misfired shot. But the internal colonization of the *Ainu* and of their island of Hokkaido continued unabated. The American occupation administration chose not to intervene in such 'inter-Japanese' matters. Only when self-conscious groups of well-educated *Ainu* emerged in the late twentieth century did some strive to reverse the tide of the unreflective Japanization project that had been pursued in the name of an eternal ethnolinguistic homogeneity of the Japanese and of their state, a homogeneity that had never existed before 1945.

The *Gaichi* of the Japanese Empire, extending from Manchuria to Java, from Burma to Polynesia, was visibly diverse and non-Japanese speaking. (The only trace of this imperial past remaining to this day is the use of Japanese as a regional language in the island polity of Palau in the south Pacific.) Scholars of *kokugaku* (national studies, literally 'the study of the fatherland,' coined on the model of the German equivalent terms *Landeskunde* and *Heimatkunde*) scoured their minds for a credible and intellectually respectable model for how to marry the enlarging and

increasingly un-Japanese *Gaichi* with the Japanese national ideal. The lowest common denominator they settled on was the compulsory worship of the emperor. It did not go down well with many freshly acquired subjects (leading, for instance, to millions of Koreans choosing Christianity instead). Grudgingly, the non-citizenship status of 'people, inhabitants of *Naichi*' (paradoxically, denoting here the empire) was extended to them. A success of a kind came later. Firstly, in the wake of the American occupation of Japan, these 'non-citizens,' as *sangokujin* ('third country persons') were excluded from the political and social commonality of postwar Japan. Secondly, *Kokugo* or the 'national language,' meaning Japanese, is taught as a school subject to Japanese children, but it becomes *Nihongo* ('Japanese language') when it is offered to foreigners (*gaijin*, or even more politely, *gaikokujin*, the seemingly innocuous contemporary term suggesting 'barbarians' and 'enemies'; the modern connotation was in earlier times expressed rather more openly in such terms as *nanbanjin* or 'southern barbarians' for the Portuguese and the Spanish, or *kōmōjin* 'red-hair people' for British and Dutch people).

Foreigners not being Japanese are supposedly incapable of mastering *Kokugo*, lacking either the appropriate national identity or even the 'Japanese brain,' believed by some proponents of a strong theory of *kokugaku* to differ in its physiology from the brains of other humans. As once the emperor was an *akitsumikami*, still today some Japanese see themselves as different from the rest of humanity. This is a line of thinking strikingly reminiscent of wartime Germany's ideology of *Übermensch*, the 'race of lords,' the title reserved for 'purebred Aryan' Germans and Germanics, like the Nordic peoples and those living in the Low Countries. Since 1945 it has been next to impossible to voice such an opinion publicly in Germany. In 1962, apartheid South Africa, seeking to attract Japanese investment, accorded the status of 'honorary whites' to the Japanese. Tokyo did not protest; business is business, after all. By this inclusion of the Japanese in another category of *Übermenschen*, Pretoria's decision may have tickled the national vanity, then nursing the still-fresh humiliation of the defeat and subsequently the American occupation of the country.

In 1997 the Japanese Diet repealed the 1899 homogenizing law, and again acknowledged the cultural difference of the *Ainu*. However, it took eleven years more for Tokyo to recognize the *Ainu* as 'an indigenous people with a distinct language, religion and culture.' Such recognition was by then 'nationally safe,' as not a single *Ainu*-speaking community

remains in Japan or outside it. The Japanization of the people has been achieved and is irreversible. In the 1980s no more than fifteen people used *Ainu* as the language of everyday life. I dare say no one speaks it as a living language any longer. *Ainu* customs and their way of life have been cautiously revived, mostly as a tourist attraction, in a clutch of 'Ainu villages' and *Ainu* cultural centers scattered across Hokkaido. But in the Historical Museum of Hokkaido, there is to date no reflection or comment on why the *Ainu* are represented in the displayed scrolls and paintings as hirsute and swarthy in opposition to the hairless (with the exception of the topknot on the head) and deathly white Japanese. In reality there is no clear boundary between the Japanese and the *Ainu* in terms of skin color or hairiness. Indeed, it takes all kinds.

Clark, oh Clark! What have you achieved, what have you done unto Hokkaido, during these eight short months that went so quickly, months spent working, Bible preaching, socializing, partying and drinking? (His writings in his notebooks, lovingly preserved in the university's museum, seem incongruous in this city. They are in many places indecipherable, preventing – you would think – their publication. The unfailing sign of a difficult hand, or of a curious but intoxicated mind?) No peace for you, you had become an eternally living Lenin decades before the Bolshevik Revolution even took place. And all that under the sign of Hokkaido's official and splendid red seven-pointed star; the Bolsheviks had to settle for a poorer variant with two points less. Under your caring gaze Hokkaido remains true to its colonial ways, though the empire has gone, and the American frontier has closed. *A belle époque*, miraculously transported from the close of the long nineteenth century, continues in Sapporo as if the twentieth century never happened. In confectionary shops, packages and gift paper insulating tiny chocolates painted in meticulously executed landscape and bucolic scenes or exquisitely crafted cookies boldly vie for sole attention with their contents, and the decorated packaging always wins the contest. Classical music, seeping from the ubiquitous designer shops, and performed by artists from all around the globe at Sapporo's Pacific Music Festival, constitutes a becoming backdrop for Clark's unquiet ghost to enjoy his posthumous fame. He and his boys are destined to carry the white man's elegant burden through space and time to the earth's new ends, to the new worlds, dynamically charted by *manga* creators and Haruki Murakami's spaced-out novels.

Maybe it is time, high time, to rest, to take a break, to forget about the never-ending modernization that spawned first modernity, then

postmodernity, and now the end of economic growth. The two last decades of zero growth in Japan, dubbed 'lost decades' in the West, now look fittingly 'post-post-modern,' and the Japanese proleptically arrived at this point twenty years earlier than the 'rest of the West,' which is now sailing into the same harbor. 'A tragedy' or even 'the tragedy' is what the newspapers and television scream, unnerved by the sudden prospect of their own demise. But why? Contented life in safe and stable communities which are lacking nothing should not appear frightening. Real worries are limited to the usual *conditio humana*, known to everybody; illness, accidents, fate and death interrupting this bliss. There is no heaven on earth, despite what the communists mendaciously promised, but the Japanese in general do not believe in heaven; they want to live in harmony with nature and with other people(s), here and now.

Clark was their Moses in Hokkaido, but it is time, high time, his rhetoric, philosophy and example were laid to rest and consigned to the past. The past has no knowledge of or useful guidance for the future, and Clark never had any advice to dispense, apart from how to build and maintain a model dairy farm, the belief that milk and beef are good for everyone, and that it was essential to read the Bible. His extended arm pointed nowhere and was not indicating any direction. The gesture was misinterpreted: he was waving a goodbye – *God Bless Ye* – to his students, his sweet boys (did he have a thing for them?). It is time, high time, that the Hokkaidoans stopped haunting Clark's ghost, gentle, confused and forever slightly hungover.

It is time, high time, to begin this overdue exorcism:

*When shall we three meet again  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?*

*When the hurlyburly's done,  
When the battle's lost and won.*

*That will be ere the set of sun.*

*Where the place?*

*Upon the heath.*

*There to meet with Clark.*

Just joking: no need for a *kwaidan*! The question, however, is how to lay Clark to rest. Nothing really can be done about his misquoted or fabricated exclamation '*Boys, be ambitious!*' We have no living witnesses or recordings to attest to what he really yelled. In the spirit of his times,

he excluded women from the ambit of education, progress and modernization (as later those listening to his valediction address would continue to exclude them); women were to stay at home and keep the flame of tradition ablaze. When you are a man, it is comfy to fall back on a premodernly accommodating wife, who attends without murmur to the needs of the tired *paterfamilias* after his night of *sake*-fuelled male-bonding with colleagues from work. But do Clark's words really have to serve as the motto of Hokkaido University? Traditions die hard, I know, in Japan too, especially when these traditions come from the West; this may explain why Japanese tourists flock to Paris and Venice, treasuring such western cities over Beijing or Kolkata. But what about, at the very least, a small addition: '*Girls and Boys, be ambitious!*' Is it too much to ask?

Information plaques across the Hokku (Hokkaido University) campus are invariably in both Japanese and English. Both are colonial languages in Hokkaido. Japanese, implanted here from *Naichi*, erased *Ainu* words with the sharp tips of rusting *katana* (*samurai* swords). English initially dropped a lifeline to Japan so that it could join the world of the white and western powers, before it contained Japan's ambitions territorially to what remains of the atomically vanquished Empire of Japan. Hitler's sardonic remark of August 1939: 'Who still talks nowadays of the extermination of the Armenians?', is perhaps is not the wisest line to follow. Memories denied, repressed and denigrated may return with a vengeance. Why not at least add information in *Ainu* to Hokku's already bilingual signage? Why not assimilate the university more perfectly to the true spirit of its location, so that in more than just its name it could become the University of Hokkaido, the land of the *Ainu*?

Two weeks into my sojourn in Sapporo, in the middle of June, I was scheduled to travel to Tokyo, in order to deliver lectures there at Aoyama Gakuin University (another foundation of foreign origin, in this case a Methodist implantation of 1874). To look presentable I urgently needed a trim to my beard. For several days I wandered around downtown Sapporo, fruitlessly inquiring about such a service at hairdressing salons. I was invariably refused by the sign of an 'X' made in the air with two crossed forefingers. In a dumbshow of explanation, the hairdressers I approached pointed to their pates, meaning that they would cut hair only there. A Japanese acquaintance volunteered that beard hair is too intimate, or perhaps too polluting, to be handled by others, by 'real Japanese.' Well, it leaves me wondering how, in this hair-shy *Nippon*, Clark could groom his bushy beard and unruly whiskers, growing in the

best Austro-Hungarian style of Franz-Josef. At the very last moment, thanks to the quiet persistence of a lady from the Tourist Information Office at the gigantic Sapporo railway station, a salon located in the deepest underground level of the Esta mall agreed. In this netherworldly underbelly of the skyscraper were exquisitely elegant hairdressers, without a word of English to their name and looking like they had been transported from the Vienna of the *belle époque*. They stooped low and discreetly attended to the beard that already looked as if it belonged more to Santa Claus than to me. Perhaps they were *Burakumin*, so that, being culturally 'undefilable,' they could?

Had it not been for that salon, I would have spoken in Tokyo looking something like an *Ainu* elder; I would have needed only a traditional *Ainu* robe for the resemblance to be perfect. With the temperature at 35 Celsius in the shade, however, that would have been too stiflingly hot. But such a robe is appropriate in Hokkaido, with its short and moderate summer, like a zipper opening briefly between two long winters before and after. The landscape and the rigors of harsh weather are those of Siberia rather than of *Naichi*. Had Clark worn an *Ainu* robe, he would have been indistinguishable from the *Ainu* slaving away in the Japanese fisheries when he visited this island. So much for the American 'civilizational superiority' that so impressed Clark's Japanese hosts!

If this previously overlooked *Ainuness* of Clark's appearance were rediscovered, it could be celebrated by dressing Hokku's bust of this tired role model in the robe of an *Ainu* minor chief; a bow to the specifically Japanese tradition of *kosupure*, or 'cosplay.' Brussels has its famous *Manneken Pis*, which, on special days, is draped in various show-off costumes. Tourists – many a Japanese among them – flock to take pictures and to laugh. Reading between the lines for what was left unsaid in the high age of Japanese Victorianism, we know that Clark liked his fun and that he hit the bottle hard. Today he must be bored stiff, standing upright on his plinth, while students and their parents have their pictures taken with him in the middle. Wouldn't Clark rather follow the picture snappers for a ramble across the leafy campus, a ramble suitably rounded off with a raucous night out, than continue his lonely ghostly guard, in hail, rain or snow? Of course he would; and yes, I know it is 'only' a stone bust. But we are in Japan, where every inanimate object is alive and may be home to a *kami*. Clark is no different in this respect. We don't have to live by *Hokubei's* (America's) customary limits to the imagination; *Hokubei*, that land from which he briefly emerged to haunt Hokkaido.

I see you doubt my sincerity, but the *post-post-post-post-post...-modern* and otherworldly charm of Haruki Murakami's fiction has conquered the West. It moved the game from the twentieth century's tired confines of narrow and frequently murderous rationality to the realm of the word, where light and lightness rule. Why kill one another over a small patch of land which is all that the earth is in the end, when there is all this multiplicity of earth-like planets circling other suns, not to mention all the parallel universes there may be?

Let Clark play, as it may be his only chance to be freed from the never-ending *samsara* of continuous reincarnations. Buddha preached that every creature has a chance to reach *Nirvana* or, even more altruistically, to become a *bodhisattva* helping others to pass through the gate to blissful non-being. I hope Clark may follow the latter path, because that would create a chance for Hokkaido to liberate itself from its bad *karma* by allowing memories to flow. How? By remembering the *Ainu* and giving their shadows their deserved place in the present-day culture of the island. 'Cosplay' as redemption for the sins of the past is an attractive proposal. One day Clark could play a *geisha* in order to make up for his male chauvinism, on another he could proudly impersonate a *Burakumin*, and later a gay, a *sarariman* (salaried man), or a *Zainichi* (an ethnic Korean from Japan's lost *Gaichi*, who has not yet been granted Japanese citizenship, even though six generations of his ancestors have lived under the rule of the *Tennō*, or 'Heavenly Sovereign'). All of these are Hokkaido's people; there is a place for each of them in Japan. A man who went fully native and who has been celebrated as a local hero, now as a *bodhisattva* Clark could welcome back the excluded, so that the island might be whole again.

*October-December 2011, Dundee and St Andrews*