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The Practice and Meaning of Bonsai, Ikebana, and Tea in Montreal and Abroad: A Case Study of the Processes of Cultural Globalization

Hayley Wilson

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Sociology and Anthropology

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

The Practice and Meaning of Bonsai, Ikebana, and Tea in Montreal and Abroad: A Case Study of the Processes of Cultural Globalization

Hayley Wilson

This study combines the theoretical frameworks and concepts of a number of theorists, to create an analytical perspective that is applied to a case study of the practice and meaning of Japanese traditional arts abroad, or more precisely the development of specialized bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremony courses in North America. The framework proposed is based on theories of cultural globalization, and the idea of culture as an organization of diversity. It illustrates the variety and diversity of ways, in which transnational culture flows, and the processes that determine how these are received, incorporated, and interpreted in new locales at a plurality of levels. Three general questions are adressed: (1) What processes affect the introduction of bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies into new cultural systems, in this case, Montreal and North America? (2) Why has bonsai become popularized, thereby being distributed over a larger amount of the population, whereas the other two remain marginal? (3) How do the various processes involved in the transnational movement and distribution of culture affect the practice and interpretation of Japanese traditional arts abroad?

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1. THE FLOW OF CULTURE

Many studies investigate the transnational movement of cultural practices, meanings, and material culture, such as migration studies, analyses of multicultural societies, and globalization theories to name a few. For the most part, the transnational flow of culture has been analysed from a single perspective. Studies investigate cultural homogenisation, or cultural heterogenization, or appropriation, or creolization, or hybridization, or westernization as distinct issues, in the hopes of providing an ethnographic account of at least one aspect of the increasing interaction between cultures. Only a few theories provide a theoretical framework that incorporates all processes together in order to present the diversity of such flows and their interrelations. However, the resulting analysis is overly abstract, resuming the investigation by stating that transnational cultural movements are complex. In addition, these highly abstract theoretical accounts provide few or no ethnographic examples. Therefore, a second problem arises in view of the fact that almost no ethnographies demonstrate the diversity of ways in which transnational culture flows, and more interestingly, the interconnectedness between the various processes that occur when cultural practices and material culture are received and interpreted abroad.

In these regards, a new perspective would be insightful by examining, through an ethnographic case study, a range of processes that stem from transnational cultural flows, and the links between them. To illustrate the diversity of ways in which transnational culture travels, I propose an analysis of its distribution, or its reception, incorporation,

and interpretation abroad. Transnational cultural products are here understood as any element of a geographical space and/or cultural system that is introduced into another geographical space and/or cultural system, from which it did not originate.

How is transnational culture distributed amongst a given population? Why are certain cultural experiences, objects, practices, beliefs, and aesthetics more popular than others? What processes determine such differences? Why do some cultural products become global commodities, while others remain barely visible, only noticeable in ethnic communities or hard to find places? Why are certain cultural imports believed to represent the form, beliefs, and meanings of their "original practice" and place of origin, while others still are understood as appropriated, or merged with existing cultural forms to create new ones? How do people understand cultural products they are unaccustomed to? Are they assumed to represent the culture of origin? Are they consumed in order to gain a better perspective of the "other"? Are they used to experience something new without the need to travel? Or, do they just blend into new cultural systems, becoming just another element in people's surroundings without becoming representative of something unfamiliar? Who consumes them, and why? Who commoditizes them, and why? These are some of the simple, yet very complex questions that I am interested in examining to provide an ethnographic case study of transnational culture.

"Every man is in certain respects like all other men; like some other men; like no other man" (Hannerz, 1993: 106). This proposition, when "man" is replaced by "culture", demonstrates the type of framework needed to approach the subject of cultural

movement. There is no standard framework. It can not be simple, yet should not be simply characterized as complex. So how do you deal with all three at the same time? By combining the theoretical frameworks and concepts of a number of approaches, I hope to create an analytical perspective that can be applied to the case study of Japanese culture abroad, or more precisely, the development of specialized Japanese traditional art courses in Montreal, Canada. Based on theories of cultural globalization (Hannerz, 1996; Howes, 1996; Robertson, 1992 & 1995; Strang & Meyer, 1993; Waters, 1995; and Wilk, 1995), and the idea of culture as an organization of diversity (Barth, 1987; Hannerz, 1992; Hannerz, 1996; Keesing, 1974; and Schwartz, 1978a & 1978b), my framework examines the diversity of ways in which transnational Japanese traditional arts flow. Furthermore, it enables me to sort out the processes that determine how these are received, incorporated, and interpreted in new locales at a plurality of levels.

Japanese Transnational Culture: The Montreal Venue

The Montreal population has been showing a growing interest in things Oriental over the past years, not merely things Japanese. Martial arts have been popular for quite some time, and now anyone can learn from a number of schools, such as the more popular *Karate*, *Judo*, *Kung Fu*, and *Taekwondo*, or the lesser known *Aikido*, *Budo*, or *Kendo*. A brief walk in any of Montreal's more trendy areas, such as Saint-Laurent street, Saint-Denis street, Westmount, or the Outremont neighbourhood, attests to the increasing popularity of Asian aesthetics and cuisine. Japanese *sushi* restaurants are popping up everywhere, right besides *Szechuan* fast-food noodle stores, or Thai and

Malaysian speciality bistros that sell "authentic" dishes. Home-deco stores are garnished with Oriental inspired dishware, and Asian designs are found on both men's and women's clothing.

As the processes are complex, and the questions many, the ethnographic case study needs to be well defined. Geographically limiting my research would be problematic since even a bounded area of a city is too large for providing a close look at the many progressions of transnational culture. Therefore, rather than examining a certain geographical space, I have decided to focus on specific cultural practices. In this regard, I chose the practice of Japanese traditional arts in Montreal.

There are two major reasons for choosing this case study. First, it presents an interesting instance of transnational cultural flow, because practitioners are mainly French Canadian and Anglo-Canadian Montrealers –i.e. members of the political and social majority group in Canadian society. Instead of examining the practice of Japanese traditional arts by a migrant Japanese population, I focus on an originally Japanese practice, now adopted elsewhere, and mainly exercised by non-Japanese practitioners. Although some Japanese-Canadians and Japanese immigrants participate, most students are non-Japanese, as are at least half of the teachers.

The Japanese community in Montreal numbers approximately 2,315 people, and according to the "Visible Minority Population in the Montreal Census Metropolitan Area", Statistics Canada (1996), it is one of the smallest visible minority groups

(http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/980217/d980217.htm; http://www.statcan.ca /english/Pgdb/People/Population/demo40e.htm). Clearly, the Japanese population of Montreal is quite small, and as previously mentioned, does not actively participate in most of the traditional art courses I chose to examine. Although the Japanese community has had some influence on the introduction of Japanese traditional arts, the interest of local Montrealers can not only be explained as a major consequence of their presence. There must be other reasons that both facilitate and restrict the adoption of these arts by local Montrealers. As such, the practice of Japanese traditional arts in Montreal is an excellent case study for an analysis of the transnational movement of culture.

The second reason for choosing this case study is that it presents an interesting account of the varying nature of transnational cultural movements. The existence of Japanese culture in Montreal provides instances of wide consumption and visibility, as certain elements are easily retrievable in the phone directory, on the Internet, and found within popular areas in downtown Montreal. In fact, the province of Quebec is noted in the Montreal Bulletin (the Japanese community newsletter) as having the highest per capita consumption of Japanese goods in all of Canada (Montreal Bulletin, 2000). However, these popular Japanese goods are found along side with the existence of barely visible and non-accessible Japanese cultural elements, which one must investigate quite seriously in order to find.

Despite the minute size of the Japanese community, Montreal offers a number of possibilities for accessing Japanese culture. For starters, there are numerous

international, national, and local cultural associations. Montreal is home to the Japan Awareness Club, the KAPPA Japanese Youth Club, the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, the Japan-Canada Society, the National Association of Japanese Canadians, Ikebana International, Origami Montreal, the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing[1] Society, the Montreal Urasenke School of Tea, and Arashi Daiko (a group of Japanese drummers). In addition, the Japanese Pavilion at the Botanical gardens, one of the only sites of its kind outside of Japan, offers a plurality of exhibits, activities and workshops. They introduce and promote a number of Japanese traditions, such as tea ceremonies, Japanese flower arranging, Japanese paper-folding, Japanese poetry, Japanese calligraphy, Japanese traditional music, Shiatsu massages, *Kami Shibai* (Japanese fairy tales), *Chikuinkai* (Japanese music), wearing a kimono, and Japanese martial arts. Although only available during the summer season, most workshops are provided by affiliated organizations and associations, which organize monthly reunions and offer courses for seriously interested Montrealers.

As a variety of Japanese cultural forms are available in Montreal, I chose to further limit my research to associations and societies that offer specialized courses in traditional Japanese arts. These provide the best opportunity for researching the transnational movement of culture, as their aim is the promotion and distribution of Japanese arts in Montreal. Participation observation and interviews with the members of such groups allowed for an in-depth analysis of their practice and meaning, as teachers and students alike understand them. Furthermore, my past research on Japanese tea ceremonies demonstrates the importance of Japanese traditional arts as a symbol of

[1] A Penjing is the Chinese equivalent of bonsai, and is discussed further in chapter four.

Japanese cultural nationalism, thereby convincing me that the interpretation of these in the international arena is worthy of attention (Wilson, 1999).

Although a number of Japanese traditional arts are practiced in Montreal, most of the information I collected is based on an investigation of three Japanese traditional arts. For starters, I examined the art of *bonsai*, generally understood as being a tree in a pot, which is miniaturized and maintained so as to present an idealized image of nature. I also studied *ikebana*, or Japanese flower arranging, and Japanese tea ceremonies, which are defined as the ritualized procedure of preparing tea, in order to create harmony, respect, purity, and tranquillity between a host and his/her guests.

I first chose to participate in these three arts, as they were the ones that most interested me. However, as time went by, I realized that each case presents a unique example of the processes involved in cultural globalization. All three are advertised and promoted at the Japanese Pavilion of the Botanical Gardens during the summer, yet Japanese tea ceremonies and ikebana only attract a limited amount of people, whereas the art of bonsai fascinates many. I realized that the practice of these three arts is a perfect example of the unequal distribution of transnational culture, and began to question the rising popularity of bonsai, as compared to ikebana and tea. All three arts were introduced into North America not long after the Second World War. So, why has bonsai become a popular commodity, yet ikebana and tea ceremonies remain foreign and unfamiliar?

All the Rage: Researching the Globalization of Culture

The transnational flow of culture is gaining increasing theoretical importance. Many have attempted to examine the forces that create such flows, in the hopes of understanding both the processes that render culture transnational, and the transformations that occur when culture transcends national borders. In fact, the idea that culture travels dates back to early anthropological theory. As a central idea of historical particularism, Boas pursued the idea of diffusionism in the 1890's, arguing that cultural practices, beliefs, and/or objects "spread from one culture to another, eventually becoming integrated into all of the cultures in a given geographical area" (Barrett, 1996:52). In many respects, Boas' conception of culture as untidy "shreds and patches" resonates with recent research on transnational culture (Barrett, 1996:59). Contemporary studies and conceptualisations of the process are different, however, as they investigate the increased mobility of cultures within a global context of transnational interconnections, and stay clear of the idea of cultural authenticity that is presented in theories of historical particularism (Appadurai, 1996; Arizpe, 1996; Featherstone, Lash & Robertson, 1995; Friedman, 1990; Hannerz, 1987, 1992, 1996; Howes, 1996; Robertson, 1992).

I too hope to understand the nature of transnational cultural flows, however, my focus is on rendering an ethnographic account that incorporates a number of processes linked to cultural globalization, and their interrelations, by examining the reception, incorporation, and interpretation of bonsai, ikebana, and Japanese tea ceremonies.

More specifically, my research anticipates to answering three questions: (1) What processes affect the introduction of bonsai, ikebana, and Japanese tea ceremonies into new cultural systems, in this case, Montreal and North America? (2) Why has bonsai popularized, thereby being distributed over a larger amount of the population, whereas the other two remain marginal? (3) How do the various processes involved in the transnational movement and distribution of culture affect the practice and interpretation of Japanese traditional arts abroad?

In what follows, the notion of culture as an organization of diversity is examined, as the ideas found in this model clarify the existence of diversity and the unequal distribution of culture and cultural meanings (whether local or transnational) amongst a population. They ensure a departure away from the bounded and static notions of cultural essentialism, and the tendency to emphasize the coherence of culture (Abu-Lughod, 1991). This is followed by an examination of some of the more useful concepts linked to processes of cultural globalization, in order to present the theoretical framework I used for my research.

The Culture Concept: Culture as the Organization of Diversity

When first introduced to anthropology, the typical definition of culture one learns goes something like this: culture refers to all of the customs, values, beliefs, and behaviours that are shared by a people, and passed down from one generation to the next in a similar form. In other words, culture is defined as something static and unchanging

that is consistently shared by all members of a group, whether this group be a nation, a race, an ethnic community, and so on. It is an image of culture that creates the impression of something bounded, something territorialized and localized in one place and time.

The idea of culture as shared meaning becomes quite confusing when one attempts to understand the transnational flow of cultural practices, meanings, and material culture, and the increasingly evident multiculturalism to be found in any one place, small or large. The development of diasporas, borderlands, increasing migration, subcultures, and nations within nations, are all evidence that classical notions of culture do not sufficiently define the reality of culture as perceived all around us. But culture is not the only term that is increasingly difficult to define. Concepts, such as tradition, authenticity, essence, origins, identity, nation, and ethnicity are also being criticized for the false representations they maintain. So how can generalized terms, such as culture, still find relevance within anthropological theory today?

For the past forty years, and especially in the past decade, the classical idea of culture has been much criticized and debated (Hannerz, 1996: 30-43). The classical culture concept is problematic because it suggests substance, boundedness, homogeneity, coherence, stability, essentialism, and structure, whereas in truth, cultures present instances of variability, inconsistency, conflict, change, and individual agency (Abu-Lughod, 1991; Appadurai, 1996; Clifford, 1988; Friedman, 1994; Keesing, 1994;

Rosaldo, 1993). Therefore, if culture is to continue being used in anthropological theory, it has to be re-analysed and redefined.

Some theorists have suggested a new culture concept, which recognizes the existence of diversity and variation, even within close-knit communities. This re-conceptualization proposes a distributive model of culture, one in which culture is no longer viewed as a generic phenomenon that is shared by all; but rather as something which is distributed unequally. And it is just such a notion of culture, which will find relevance in the study of transnational cultural movements.

In what follows, a review of works by Barth (1987), Hannerz (1992 & 1996), Keesing (1974), and Schwartz (1978a & 1978b) are presented, to illustrate the development of distributive models of culture and the idea of cultural complexity. Together, they propose a different notion of culture, one which emphasizes its distributive nature as its salient feature, rather than its nature as shared meaning. Their culture concept focuses on the social structure, societal scale, context, creativity, and individual agency as factors influencing the unequal distribution of meaning. Greater attention is allotted to the work of Ulf Hannerz, as he, in *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (1992), presents one of the most complete pictures of diversity and variation within culture.

Dating back to the beginnings of sociological theory, the ideas of Emile Durkheim already demonstrate an understanding of the distributive nature of culture. In a

discussion of the difference between simple and complex societies, he argues that the social structure affects the organization of knowledge and ideas (Schwartz, 1978b: 218). As Barth writes, with regards to Durkheim,

> "It is self-evident that a particular pattern of social organization will produce and reproduce a particular pattern of distribution of knowledge and skills. Equally, a certain distribution of these cultural elements between persons motivates their interactions and exchanges, and thus animates a particular social organization and infuses it with its constitutive qualities (Barth, 1987: 77).

In *Cosmologies in the Making* (1987), Barth also writes of the social structure as influencing the unequal distribution of culture, illustrating the existence of a variety of cultural meanings within a common community. Of importance is the process of "creativity", or the continuous reinterpretation of culture from a multitude of standpoints within the social structure (Barth, 1987: 29). Due to processes of creativity, culture is not shared homogeneously across a population. Rather, it has the potential of being diversely interpreted within different audiences:

> "Meaning is not embedded in the form of an expression alone, ...it can only be interpreted when it is located in a social organization and praxis of communication" (Barth, 1987: 85).

Another attempt at conceptualizing the distributive nature of culture is presented in Schwartz' article, "The Size and Shape of a Culture" (1978). Rather than examining social structure, creativity, and context, Schwartz illustrates the effects of societal scale:

> "...distribution provides a means whereby a society can carry a much greater cultural inventory than it could if it were confined to a degree of likeness as posited by Durkheim for simpler societies. So in both ways –in the distribution of culture over individuals, and in the distribution of functions and cultural constructs of specialized behaviours over an increasing inventory of statuses – culture may be seen as growing in mass while society grows in scale" (Schwartz, 1978b: 218).

In other words, the greater the society, the greater the distribution, the greater the complexity and diversity in meaning.

In later years, Hannerz continues to make known distributive models of culture in *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (1992), which provides a framework for examining diversity. Although social structure and societal scale are elements of his model, Hannerz focuses on three separate dimensions of culture, which he argues require attention in any investigation of the organization of diversity (Hannerz, 1992: 7). The first dimension is defined as "ideas and modes of thought", and accounts for the entire inventory of concepts, values, beliefs, and suggestions that exist within a culture. Within this framework, complexity increases in those cultures that contain larger inventories of meaning. The second dimension, "forms of externalization", refers to the modes by way of which the array of meanings found within the cultural inventory is made accessible or public (*ibid*: 7-9). The final dimension that needs investigation is "social distribution", or the way in which the totality of meanings and meaningful forms (or forms of externalization) are distributed over a common people (*ibid*: 7). Culture is distributed, and includes understandings of distributions. As the author writes,

> "It is easy to say what the least complex instance would be –a total uniformity, where each individual involved with a culture has the same ideas and expresses them by the same means. The more complex instances are those where individuals differ in this regard, and where moreover they have some understanding that this is so" (*ibid*: 9).

Another crucial feature of distributive models of culture is the role of the individual. Individuals are not presented as mere recipients of culture. Rather, they too

are said to create cultural meaning and diversity through reflexivity and individual interpretation:

> "Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behaviour, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the form of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them" (Keesing, 1974: 77).

Hannerz defines this idea as a person's "perspective", or understanding of culture, referring to the fact that people "manage meanings from where they are in the social structure" (Hannerz, 1992: 64-65). He argues that an individual's positioning within society influences his/her "perspective", which in turn influences how he/she organizes and interprets meaning. As Hannerz states,

> "to the extent that people in complex societies have more varying role repertoires, the perspectivation of meaning implies less replication of uniformity, less extensive cultural sharing" (*ibid*: 66).

Perspectivation is by no means the only source of cultural distribution, however, and therefore Hannerz is careful not to limit his understanding to the individual. He includes, within his model, an examination of the cultural apparatus, which refers to:

> "all organizations and milieus in which artistic, intellectual, and scientific works goes on, and of the means by which such work is made available to circles, publics and masses" (*ibid*: 82).

Culture is also produced at the public level, in which small amounts of people are said to control the production of meaning for the rest of a given population. By including the cultural apparatus, Hannerz presents two images of contemporary culture. The first focuses on the individual, emphasising heterogeneity and fragmentation. The second focuses on the public, emphasising homogenisation and massification. It is only when

examined together that the truly complex nature of the distribution of culture can be conceptualized.

A model of culture that takes the private and the public into account is needed, and in this regard, a review of Keesing's distributive model of culture is useful, as it too proposes an alternative that lies between culture as shared and culture as individualistic. The model Keesing proposes is based on linguistic theories, and suggests that an examination of the distinction between competence and performance will enable a theory of culture that is neither too holistic nor too individualistic. In linguistic theory, competence refers to a model of language that is used in order to speak and interpret when spoken to, which in turn refers to performance (Keesing, 1974: 88). In Keesing's model, these ideas are adapted to understand the organization of culture. Competence refers to "culture, conceived as a system of competence shared in its broad design and deeper principles", while performance relates to the fact that culture is "varying between individuals in its specificities" (Keesing, 1974: 89). Every individual has a different understanding of culture, although all refer to the same model when interacting with others, and no one is competent in all aspects of culture. Culture, in this respect, is "an idealized body of competence", which is unequally distributed amongst a population (Keesing, 1974: 89). It is not defined as shared meaning, but as a system of knowledge that individuals draw on to create their own version of culture.

Schwartz presents similar ideas, as he too tries to develop an interesting theory that lies midway between heterogeneous ideas of culture and assumptions of shared

meaning. Rather than using the concept of "perspective", Schwartz introduces the term "idioverse", referring to the multiple individualized understandings of culture that exist within a larger cultural system, and which create an individual's personality (Schwartz, 1978a: 424). The "idioverse" individualizes culture; it is "the distributive locus of culture" (Schwartz, 1978a: 425). However, culture does not exist only within the individual. Therefore, Schwartz introduces the concept of "structure of commonality", which refers to the entirety of "idioverses", including both those instances in which "idioverses" are said to intersect, and those in which the differences between these lie (Schwartz, 1978a: 428).

The ideas and concepts presented above are crucial, as they shift away from classical notions that suggest shared and bounded meaning, allowing for de-authentication of culture. Whether examining transnational culture at a macro-level, or the cultural details of a small community at a micro-level, neither is ever authentic, as cultural meanings, practices, and objects are unequally organized and distributed at all levels of society.

Metacultures and Glocalization: Applying Abstract Theories of Cultural Globalization to a Case Study of the Processes of Transnational Cultural Movement and Distribution

According to Waters, the different theories on globalization have continuously debated the moment the whole procedure began, and the nature of the process. For some

theorists, globalization is an aspect of modernization, and a result of capitalism. Other theorists argue globalization as a recent phenomenon, associating its appearance with post-industrialisation and post-modernization. While others still, including Waters and myself, believe that globalization started way back when, and has only recently accelerated, thereby explaining the current interest and theorization of the process (Waters, 1995: 4). As Hannerz states with regards to cultural globalization:

> "There is some tendency to resort to hyperbole and excessive generalizations, to tell a story of dramatic shifts between 'before' and 'after'. In fact, of course, interconnectedness across great distances in not altogether new... There were always interactions, and a diffusion of ideas, habits, and things, even if at times we have been habituated to theories of culture and society which have not emphasized such truths" (Hannerz, 1996: 18).

For some theorists, the process stems from a globalization of politics, for others, it stems from a globalization of the economy, and for others still, it stems from a globalization of culture. Although a complete review of all globalization theories is impossible, it is important to distinguish the difference between the three. Earlier theorists referred to globalization as based on economic exchange, highlighting the development of a capitalist world-system (Waters, 1995:13). Durkheim and Parsons attempted to explain the globalization process in terms of modernization and convergence. In their view, societies are likely to converge as a result of modernization, in that they will eventually apply the same principles of social organisation homogeneously (Waters, 1995: 13-14). A similar theory was put forth by Marx and Lenin, who emphasised world capitalism, or the idea that the world is increasingly unified due to the domination of capitalism and the capitalist mode of production (Waters, 1995: 12). Theories of political globalization, on the other hand, emphasise

international relations, such as inter-state relations, networks, and other systems that go beyond and eliminate state boundaries. Examples of such relationships are noted as being trade, language, religious groups, ethnicity, and ideology (Waters, 1995:27-28). And finally, cultural globalization suggests a unification of the world due to the development of cultural exchange. Within this framework, theorists emphasise the development of a common mass culture, and the growth of media technology (Waters, 1995: 34-35). In truth, a true understanding of globalization can only be achieved when one examines all of these processes simultaneously. As Waters points out, the process of globalization is noticeable in the economic, political, and cultural spheres of social life, thereby providing a more complete picture of the interrelations between them.

For the purposes of this research, I have chosen to discuss two concepts of cultural globalization that underline cultural exchange, as these coincide with my interest in the movement and unequal distribution of culture. In what follows, I present a critical analysis of these concepts, and the means by which they are applied to my own case study.

According to Hannerz, the notion of culture can be viewed as singular, "as a global pool of meanings and meaningful forms"; suggesting that anything cultural, can therefore move from "anywhere to anywhere, from anybody to anybody" (Hannerz, 1996: 50). But why is it that sometimes cultural movements are rare, restricted, or undesirable, whereas other cultural movements are everywhere, encouraged, and popular? Why is it that a bonsai tree can now be found in most garden stores, nurseries,

flower shops, and even malls, all over Canada, yet only two or three tea groups exist in our country, and accessing them is quite difficult? Ikebana is slightly more popular than tea, but remains unfamiliar to most. There must be certain principles that explain this disparity, and determining these factors is the first step in understanding the greater popularity and distribution of bonsai in Montreal.

One helpful concept for understanding the organization and distribution of culture is the idea of "metacultures", which can be generally defined as hegemonic ideals or concepts that shape the transnational movement of culture. According to Hannerz' interpretation,

> "people tend to draw on some more overarching conceptions according to which the materials of cultural minutiae tend to be interpreted and organized in human life" (Hannerz, 1996:50).

In this regard, he speaks of two major metacultures, which establish the factors that favour and constrain the distribution of transnational culture. A deeper exploration of both, in relation to Japanese traditional arts, is our first objective.

In *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places* (1996), Hannerz discusses sociologists David Strang and John W. Meyer, who propose that the first major metaculture used to organize culture is a metaculture that emphasizes similarities. According to these theorists, a metaculture based on similarity influences the global distribution of culture, as it affects processes of cultural interpretation, both at the micro-level of the individual, and at the macro-level of major institutions and organizations (Strang & Meyer, 1993:500). On an individual basis, theorization, or reflexivity, has

much to do with the organization of culture, since a people's understanding of culture is said to influence its distribution (whether wide or small) amongst a given population. The basic premise behind this idea states that:

> "In order to adopt a practice exhibited by someone else, people have to have some idea of how it would fit into their own life; and this may involve analyzing similarities and differences between their respective situation, and similarities and differences between themselves and the other" (Hannerz, 1996:50).

In other words, Hannerz is suggesting that individuals compare the values, ideas, concepts, and ideals of an unfamiliar practice, with those that they already embody. Because they draw on a metaculture of similarity in so doing, they are more likely to adopt cultural practices that correspond with their cultural context, having some idea of how they can be incorporated into their lives.

Why suggest, however, that only cultural practices, which present a greater number of resemblances, will be adopted and given value? Why not suggest individuals are also interested in the exotic? Why not speak of an attraction for the unique, diverse, and distinct? Cultural complexity increases in large cities, as such areas contain a multitude of individual personalities, organisations, specializations, and subcultures. Furthermore, cities display a larger amount of interaction with wider systems. Due to these movements, the nature of cities is extremely heterogeneous, therefore implying a greater openness to different cultural practices, peoples, and meanings. Perhaps many search for something familiar, but shouldn't a theory of cultural globalization recognize the growing interest in diversity.

With regards to this critique, Strang and Meyer argue that more importantly still, than individual reflexivity and classification, is the influence of a metaculture of similarity at the level of major institutions and organizations (Strang & Meyer, 1993). At this level, a "hegemonic cultural frame" is created, and standards for comprehending culture are formed (Hannerz, 1996:51).

> "This, then, is one major contemporary metaculture: a metaculture emphasizing similarity (*also called a metaculture of modernity, which in Hannerz' view pertains to a type of civilization spreading through the world*). In so far as modern theories favor a universalistic moral order, a scientific and standardized analysis of means-ends relationships and of nature, and a largely ahistorical view of human nature and society, participants are constructed around such views to become more similar" (Hannerz, 1996:51).

But is this not just an overly abstract argument for globalization as homogenization? It does not necessarily have to be. As Hannerz argues, the process of modernization entails a simultaneous "indigenisation of modernity", or

> "appropriating of the imported material and ideational goods what is valuable from one's own point of view" (Hannerz, 1996:53).

In addition, if the idea of metaculture is utilised within a distributive model of culture, it need not imply cultural uniformity and homogenisation, because transnational practices, ideas, information, values, and understandings are distributed unequally, and thereafter prompt different interpretations, by different people, in distinct contexts. One must not forget that the individual is an agent of cultural meaning, not merely a recipient of cultural content.

The second metaculture used to understand the organization and distribution of transnational culture is based on differences. As a result of cultural globalization, "people everywhere are showing a new level of self-consciousness about culture"

(Hannerz, 1996:52). This new consciousness emphasises the unique and distinct, it reinforces the specificity of each culture, and according to Hannerz, functions to insure that "some things should not get here, and some should definitely stay where they are" (Hannerz, 1996:52). Through this new self-consciousness, we see "the formation of a World System of cultures, a Culture of cultures" (Sahlins 1993: 19). However, this tendency to assert differences happens at a different level of organisation. As mentioned above, metacultures of similarity tend to mainly work from the top down. On the other hand, metacultures of difference primarily tend to work from the bottom up (Hannerz 1996:53).

Due to this new level of consciousness, transnational culture is also organized according to differences, a process that constrains the flow of culture. This does not entail an increasing heterogenization of culture, however, as the new tendency to assert difference is based on certain standard categories of what difference is. As Hannerz states,

> "It would seem that there is modernization of indigeneity, a domestication of difference; that is to say, the 'Culture of cultures' also entails a tendency to assert difference along somewhat standardized lines. Since this metaculture is obviously itself an item of diffusion… such a tendency is not surprising" (Hannerz: 1996:53).

Metacultures of similarity and metacultures of difference are two separate, yet interrelated principles that organize the interpretation and distribution of transnational culture. Since metacultures of similarity are said to reign as the hegemonic ideal, and metacultures of difference are used to emphasise the distinctiveness and specificity of

cultural elements, it is safe to assume that metacultures of similarity reinforce transnational movements, whereas metacultures of difference restrain.

With regards to the present analysis, the idea of metacultures is interesting, as long as one does not remain overly abstract. Unfortunately, the processes of analysis and classification that metacultures entail at an individual level are not clear. How are transnational cultural practices and meanings categorised and classified according to these metacultures? What aspects of transnational culture are examined? As Hannerz writes, metacultures are used by individuals to interpret "the materials of cultural minutiae", although he never explains what "the materials of cultural minutiae" refer to (Hannerz, 1996: 50).

The first step, therefore, is to bring the notion of "materials of cultural minutiae" down-to-earth. In my understanding, the "materials of cultural minutiae" refer to the ins and outs, or the finer details of culture, which are used as schemes of understanding when unfamiliar cultural elements are analysed and classified according to metacultures. So what are these finer details? I believe that they are specific to the case study being examined. In my description of Japanese traditional arts, the finer details of culture are who, what, where, when, and how. I argue, that these enquiries function as schemes of understanding to assess similarities and differences, both at the practical level of daily life, and at a more symbolic level of interests, values, and ideals.

In chapter four, I illustrate the finer details of Japanese traditional arts, and their use to assess similarities and differences, by answering a number of enquiries. Who practices bonsai, ikebana, and Japanese tea ceremonies? Who provides the lessons? Who organizes the activities? What are the arts and why do they interest practitioners? What is taught during demonstrations, conferences, and courses? Where are the courses provided? Where can the material equipment be accessed? When are the courses and demonstrations? How are the lessons presented? How much time is required? And, how are the arts situated in the lives of practitioners?

The second process of cultural globalization, which I incorporate as an element of my analytical framework, refers to the "commodification of culture across the contemporary world" (Robertson, 1992:173). It is based on the ideas proposed by Robertson, in *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (1992), and in *Global Modernities* (1995), which clearly explain the processes in way of which the unfamiliar is rendered familiar, bringing the global in conjunction with the local.

In Robertson's view, the globalization of culture entails a process of "glocalization", which in origin stems from business discourse (Robertson, 1995:4). Glocalization entails fitting and marketing goods and services on a global basis to increasingly differentiated locales and markets (*ibid*: 28). Originally a Japanese term for "global localization",

> "Glocalize is a term which was developed in particular reference to marketing issues, as Japan became more concerned with and successful in the global economy; against the background, as we have seen, of much experience

with the general problem of the relationship between the universal and the particular" (Robertson, 1992: 173-174).

So, how to render the unfamiliar, familiar?

Robertson appropriates the concept of glocalization to define the process, in which local practices are more and more dis-embedded and globalized, and in which foreign practices are increasingly entrenched and localized within a variety of particular contexts. He argues that objects, meanings, and practices of local cultural systems are rendered global, by re-constituting themselves to be transnationally interpretable. To do so, they dis-embed themselves and incorporate the cultural values, ideals, and meanings of other cultural systems. As such, the term "glocalization" reflects global/local encounters.

In his discussions of glocalization, Robertson does not provide concrete examples of the process, however, thereby leaving the reader with numerous questions. What aspect of cultural practices and meanings are glocalized, and to what extent? Is the process always the same? Are all cultural practices and meanings glocalized, and are they glocalized to the same extent? Robertson's ideas are interesting, but it seems that the process of glocalization occurs unvaryingly in all cases. This is not so. When the concept is applied to a case study, it is immediately evident that certain products are more glocalized than others are.

The practice of bonsai, as it is experienced in Montreal and discussed on the Internet Bonsai Club (http://www.internetbonsaiclub.org/), has been glocalized to a

greater extent than both ikebana and tea. Bonsai has gained wider recognition and distribution as a North American horticultural hobby, which is practiced more and more by individuals across the continent. Bonsai business is blooming, and Japan is no longer the only source of information, certification, and material. The transnational network between international practitioners and Japan is weaker and weaker. Within this context, the practice of bonsai in North America has dis-embedded itself from Japan, and incorporated a greater number of ideas and elements from the local cultural system. On the other hand, ikebana and tea ceremonies remain embedded in Japanese culture, thereby limiting the possibility of incorporating new ideas. The societies and associations that teach these arts are all chapter branches of international Japanese art organizations. As such, they continue to rely on Japan as a source of information, certification, and equipment. Within this context, the arts can not be dis-embedded from their original geographical and cultural space, as the transnational network between international participants and Japan continues to be of great importance.

In chapter five, I illustrate the process of glocalization, and argue that the extent to which Japanese traditional arts are glocalized, or dis-embedded and localized, is related to the survival or loss of important transnational networks. This is only one, of probably many elements that affect the process of glocalization, but one that struck me as important with regards to Japanese traditional arts.

After illustrating the globalization and dis-embedding of bonsai from Japan, one process remains to be explained. How is it re-embedded into a plurality of local cultures?

Are the arts rendered global, in the sense that they are practiced unvaryingly across the world? The debate between globalization as homogenisation or heterogenization is a long one. I situate myself within the framework of theorists, such as Featherstone, Lash & Robertson (1995), Hannerz (1987, 1992, 1996), Howes (1996), Pieterse (1994), Robertson (1992), and Wilk (1995), who all argue that cultural globalization and glocalization do not result in the creation of a global culture. Once imported and incorporated into local cultures, transnational cultural products are subject to hybridization, appropriation, and creolization, thereby creating diversity (Robertson, 1992: 44). It should be mentioned, however, that these processes are not restricted to the transnational movement of culture. They have forever affected the course of all cultures. Formerly separate cultural elements are themselves already creolized, and therefore, cultural mixture should not be regarded as deviant, second-rate, or unworthy of attention. Cultural hybridity is the rule, not the exception.

Creolization, hybridization, and appropriation, or what I will call processes of transformation, all refer to the same thing, the mis-matching and blending of different cultures. They are concerned with the "in-flow of goods, their reception and domestication", in which individual creativity is understood as playing an essential role (Howes, 1996: 5). According to Howes, the consumer is creative,

> "What the concept of creolization highlights, in other words, is that goods always have to be contextualized (given meaning, inserted into particular social relationships) to be utilized, and there is no guarantee that the intention of the producer will be recognized, much less respected, by the consumer from another culture" (Howes, 1996: 5-6).

For Hannerz, it is as much the local producers, as the local consumers. As he writes, cultural entrepreneurs

> "carve out their own niche, find their own market, by developing a product more specifically attuned to the characteristics of their local consumers" (Hannerz, 1996: 74).

As previously mentioned, his idea of the "indigenisation of modernity" is quite similar, as it entails analyzing and appropriating transnational cultural elements, in order to determine what is valuable from one's own perspective and from within one's own cultural system (Hannerz, 1996: 53).

It should be noted, however, that processes of transformation are limited. As Wilk argues, in "*Learning to be local in Belize: Global systems of common sense*" (1995), cultural appropriations are limited within a framework that determines what is and what is not, in this case, a bonsai. Transnational cultural practices and meanings are interpreted differently in a variety of locales, but such transformations can only go so far, without being re-defined as new cultural practices in and of themselves.

Chapter six presents examples of these processes, by exploring the incorporation of local cultural ideas, meanings, and methods in a number of developments, including: the zone system, effective training methods, a bonsai aid organization, a rebellion against Japanese bonsai, American bonsai, and finally, the development of Italian bonsai. By providing instances of incorporated cultural details, I illustrate how the practice of bonsai has re-embedded itself within local contexts. Ikebana and tea have also been glocalized, at least to a certain extent, although they are not discussed, as the art of bonsai presents

by far the best example. In addition, chapter six provides ethnographic detail on cross-cultural consumption in the "West". There has been much talk of Westernization, and of the exporting of cultural products from North America and Europe to the outside world. However, in this case study, we examine the importing of cultural products from the outside world to North America and Europe, a process which is skimpily described in the literature I found.

When viewed together, and applied to a case study, the ideas proposed above clearly demonstrate the processes that influence the transnational movement and distribution of culture. In what follows, I hope to ethnographically depict the concepts proposed, by presenting a case study of the practice and meaning of bonsai, ikebana, and tea in Montreal, and across North America.

Before embarking on an analysis of metacultures, glocalization, and processes of transformation, however, I begin by contextualizing the arts. In chapter two, the historical background of the arts is presented, in order to illustrate their development in Japan, and subsequent introduction into Western cultures. This is followed, in chapter three, by a discussion of the methodology used throughout my research, describing the organizations I studied with, the information I gathered, and the methods I used.

2. THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF JAPANESE TRADITIONAL ARTS AND THEIR RECENT INTRODUCTION IN NORTH AMERICA

As presented in the introduction, the transnational movement and distribution of culture is complex and varied. No two transnational cultural movements present the same instances of reception, incorporation, and interpretation when travelling from one space to another. Not only are they affected by processes of cultural globalization, they are also subject to the specific contexts between which they move; contexts which differ culturally, socially, economically, politically, and historically. Such contexts influence both the meaning and practice of culture, as they shape individual and institutional understandings and interpretations.

In this chapter, I present the larger contextual circumstances that influence contemporary understandings of bonsai, ikebana, and tea in Montreal, and North America, by situating their practice in a transnational context. After a general discussion of Japanese traditional arts, I briefly introduce the origins of each art, and their popularization, development, and perfection in Japan. I also provide general information on the basic principles of the arts, summarizing the development of rules, styles, and standards. The changing nature of the arts is described, demonstrating how they constantly transformed and evolved according to the time and context of practitioners.

More time is spent on both ikebana and Japanese tea ceremonies, as both are rather unfamiliar as compared to bonsai.

In order to investigate the reception and incorporation of transnational culture abroad, more room has been devoted to the third section, which presents the internationalization of the three arts, and their incorporation in North America. I inquire into the discovery of bonsai trees, presenting their introduction, popularization, and the development of regional, national, and even international organisations. The incorporation of ikebana is also investigated, by examining the role of international organisations, and the histories of three Japanese-Canadians and their life experiences. For both bonsai and ikebana, I illustrate the influence of American occupation forces in Japan at the end of the Second World War, and the role of Japanese immigrants in promoting traditional arts abroad. I continue by looking at the present day organization of tea schools in the United States and Canada, demonstrating the difficulty tea practitioners must face due to a lack of enthusiasts. Finally, by exploring the introduction and development of these three arts in the United States and Canada, I present the means by which Japanese traditional arts were and still are transnationally distributed in a variety of ways and to various degrees.

For the following, and all remaining chapters, certain conversations are presented in italics, indicating that the narrative is a compilation of a plurality of conversations, interviews, and my own recollections. The names of public figures, such as teachers,

presidents, and founders, have been kept intact, however, the names of students have been changed for purposes of anonymity.

Japanese Traditional Arts

When referring to Japanese traditional arts, I include not only the arts of painting and sculpture, "but every form of artistic expression..., which the Japanese have raised to the dignity of an art" (Boger, 1964: preface). This includes a number of arts from painting, to metalwork, to architecture, to gardening, to pottery, to costume, to dance, and of course, to bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies. Therefore, a complete introduction to the arts of Japan is impossible, as the trends and styles from prehistoric times to the present are extremely varied, as are the arts themselves. However, I would like to point out certain general characteristics that most of the arts share. Firstly, the origins of Japanese art are mainly Chinese. Japan has long been greatly influenced by the culture of China, from which it imported many, if not most of its arts. But this transmission has created a uniquely Japanese style, as once imported and introduced, Chinese art forms were subjected to many adaptations (Kawakita, 1963:2).

Throughout these adaptations, Japanese art has been closely connected with the evolution of religious thought and traditions, most noticeable in the influence of Buddhist philosophy (Boger, 1964:14-16). Furthermore, the passing of seasons and the inherent Japanese respect for nature are said to run deep in all artistic expressions. As such, Japanese arts are characterized by being rich in variety, extremely adaptable, simple,

dynamic and decorative, in harmony with nature, of sentiment rather than of intellect, and focused on a single purpose (Kawakita, 1963:6).

The last characteristic of traditional Japanese art that needs a brief introduction is the development of the *iemoto* school system. In pre-modern Japan, artistic knowledge was associated with a certain group of people who occupied a prestigious place in society. Artistic skills and expertise were passed on through the family in hierarchically organized groups (Hendry, 1987:153-154). A Grand-Master of the arts, the *iemoto*, headed these groups. He is the only person that can grant individuals the right to teach the arts, and when he dies, his title is acquired by his eldest son, who follows in his footsteps.

The *iemoto* school system is not only an important manner of preserving the traditional practice of the arts. It also represents a traditional mode of passing knowledge through generations. This system of transmitting knowledge was, and still is sometimes used, in combat, theatre, music, dancing, singing, painting, calligraphy, ikebana, and tea ceremonies. It is characterized by hereditary succession, obtaining knowledge by imitation, a permit system, loyalty, and obligation towards the Master (Hendry, 1987:154). The *iemoto* method of teaching is no longer practised in many of the arts, as it was criticized as feudal, but remains the system of organization used by ikebana and tea schools. With this brief introduction in mind, I will now present the historical development of bonsai, ikebana, and tea, illustrating what characteristics they share, and at what point they differ from one another.

Historical Background of Bonsai, Ikebana, and Tea in Japan: Perfection and Standardization

Almost every guide to bonsai describes the development of the art from its early days in China, to its perfection in Japan. I chose to write the history of bonsai as it is presented in Koreshoff's book, *Bonsai: Its Art, Science, History, and Philosophy* (1984), after this was recommended to me by many informants as a good source for understanding the growth of bonsai as art. It is by far the most descriptive and complete that I came across, and is very similar to the brief history presented in the book I received during a beginner's course (Coiteux & Easterbrook, 1997).

Most people think bonsai stems from Japan. I myself was sure of this fact when I commenced my research, but quickly realized I was wrong. My assumption is quite common, however, as the true origins of bonsai are tending to be forgotten. North Americans often confound the origins of bonsai as Japanese since the art was introduced to the Western world through Japan. However, the art originally developed in China, where the first tree planted in a pot was appreciated beyond its functional and ceremonial value, for its form and aesthetic worth (Koreshoff, 1984:1-2). The cultivation of pot plants became increasingly fashionable over the years. By the late seventeenth century, the hobby then called "*pen-tsuai*", or to plant in a pot, was recognized as the art of growing miniaturized trees. However, these trees were just plants in pots. It was not until the twentieth century that Chinese miniaturized potted plants were actually trained and shaped (Koreshoff, 1984: 4-5).

China has always been a strong influence on Japanese culture, and accordingly, Chinese potted plants were a chief influence on Japanese bonsai. In the sixth century, with the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, miniature potted plants are said to have appeared, although the first authentic record dates back only to 1195. It was only in the early 1800's that the term bonsai developed to signify miniature trees planted in pots, a hobby especially practised by emperors and aristocrats (Koreshoff, 1984:6-7).

Not much progress was made in the art of bonsai until the late nineteenth, early twentieth century. Before this time, Japanese miniature trees were merely collected and potted, much like those in China. With the increasing interest of foreigners, however, and the development of a wealthy merchant class, the demand for bonsai increased, driving the need for improved techniques. Professional collectors began to seek out naturally dwarfed trees on cliffs and mountains. As material became scarce, bonsai nurseries also developed, and the propagation and training of bonsai material became a growing industry. Consequently, technical advancements were made, growing methods were developed, and a variety of styles appeared, which marks the beginning of "modern bonsai" (Koreshoff, 1984: 8). The natural and aged style of miniaturized trees in shallow containers appeared around this time, giving bonsai its distinctive aesthetic, now known around the world as Japanese bonsai:

> "The Japanese favour 'Naturalistic' bonsai and have devised styles to represent trees growing in many different locations, such as the 'broom style' for field-grown deciduous trees or the 'windswept style' for a pine on the seacoast" (Koreshoff: 11).

The period from 1914 to the present day has been named the "golden age" of bonsai, a time that has seen perfection in the art. Public expositions increased, including one in an important art gallery in Tokyo in 1934, which gave bonsai a new status as a respected national art form (Koreshoff, 1984:10). The golden age of bonsai is also the period in which bonsai became part of global culture. The appreciation of bonsai was slowly introduced into foreign cultures, and later adapted by non-Japanese practitioners as a popular hobby.

Unlike bonsai, the art of ikebana developed through the *iemoto* system, and now counts a plurality of schools, each with their own traditions and history. As a description of all schools is far too long, I have chosen to present the history of the Ikenobo School of Ikebana, for it is the oldest School of flower arranging in Japan, and the School that I am a member of. I describe the development of ikebana, as it is told by the Ikenobo headquarters, by my own ikebana teacher, Mrs. Miori Mayeda, and by some of the literature I was recommended.

Two individuals are said to be the originators of the Ikenobo School of Ikebana: Prince *Shotoku*, son of Emperor *Yomei*, and *Ono No Imoko*, a descendent of Emperor *Kosho*. Prince *Shotoku*, a dedicated Buddhist, wanting to establish a Buddhist temple in the sixth century,

> "...entered a forest in search of building materials. He happened on a cool lake where he bathed, removing from his neck a Buddhist image which he wore, and hung it on a nearby tree branch. After bathing, he tried to take the image from the branch and related that the image remained immovable. In a dream that night, the image known as 'Avalokitesvara' instructed him to build the temple at that spot and enshrine the image" (Mayeda, 1981: 49).

The temple that the Prince *Shotoku* created is known as the *Rokkakudo* Temple, and it remains today the headquarters of the Ikenobo School in Kyoto, Japan. When Prince *Shotoku* died, *Ono No Imoko*, his first ambassador, retired to the "priest's hut by the pond" and spent over fifty years of his life at the *Rokkakudo* Temple grounds, where he endeavoured to elevate and venerate flower arrangements for the altar of Buddha (Mayeda, 1981:49).

In 1479, the ruler Shogun *Yoshimasa*, declared the Ikenobo School as the *iemoto*, or the founding school of Japanese Flower Arrangement. The title of *iemoto* also refers to the Head Priest of the *Rokkakudo* Temple, also the headmaster of the Ikenobo School. It is passed on, from one generation to the next, from father to son. The present day *iemoto*, *Senei Ikenobo*, is the forty-fifth generation headmaster since *Senmu* (Mayeda, 1981:49).

From as early as 538 AD, flowers were appreciated for their natural beauty by Buddhist priests, who first introduced the custom of placing flowers on the altar (Rémillard-Desjardins, 1980:21). In the thirteenth century, flowers were increasingly viewed as decorative, and by the sixteenth century, people's attitude towards flowers changed from simply passively appreciating them, to wanting to arrange the flowers in order to define one's thoughts and feelings. It was at this time that the Ikenobo School began to grow in popularity. The basics of flower arrangement developed, as simple methods of setting flowers into vases progressed into a more complicated system, called *Tatehana*, the first style of Ikenobo (Sen'ei Ikenobo, 1975:3). In the late 16th and early

17th centuries, two headmasters of the Ikenobo School, *Senko I* and *Senko II*, completed the methods of *Rikka*, at which time the Ikenobo School is considered to have reached the peak of its development. The formality and severity of the *Rikka* style of Ikenobo is characterized by using seven or nine different materials, each which represent one element of a natural landscape. In the present day, it is still considered to be most representative of the Ikenobo School (Sen'ei Ikenobo, 1985:26).

Senno and *Senko II*, the future successors of the Ikenobo School, established *Shoka* (Sen'ei Ikenobo, 1975:5). It is a simplified version of *Rikka*, designed primarily for use in Japanese homes. There are two main styles of *Shoka*. The first, *Shofutai* of *Shoka*, or the more conventional style of *Shoka*, developed throughout the *Meiji* period (1868-1912). It is composed of three main *yakueda*, or branches, called *Shin*, *Soe*, and *Tai*. The three stems are said to symbolize a cosmic relationship, in which the highest and central stem of the arrangement, *Shin*, signifies man, the second in rank, *Soe*, represents heaven, and the third, *Tai*, symbolizes earth. Traditional *Shoka* is classified into two main styles: *Ishuike Shoka*, which uses only one kind of plant material, and *Nishuike Shoka*, which uses two kinds of plant material. With the development of *Shoka Shofutai*, strict proportions and rules were defined.

Eventually, the Grand-Masters of the *Taisho* period (1912-1926) attempted to break away from the traditions and mannerisms of *Shoka*. *Nageire* and *Moribana* were born as results of this decision, which both allow for individual freedom and creativity (Sen'ei Ikenobo, 1975 & 1985). The development of *Nageire* and *Moribana* was greatly

influenced by the importation of European culture and the Westernization of Japanese life styles, which began during the *Meiji* Restoration in 1868. Unlike the more traditional arrangements, these modern Ikenobo styles needn't be placed in a *tokonoma*; the traditional space or alcove meant for flower exposition and appreciation. Rather, they developed for use in Westernized homes. The *Moribana* style especially suited these needs, as it uses an abundance of flowers, like most Western flower arrangements do, and consequently became the most popular style of the time (Rémillard-Desjardins, 1980:32).

After the Second World War, the Ikenobo School continued to develop more creative styles, resulting in avant-garde ikebana. Arrangers began using wires and other objects within their arrangements, and the Ikenobo School elaborated Free Style or *Jiyuka*, that is free from all of the rules and regulations that lie at the basis of traditional ikebana. Free style is based on "contemporary sensibilities" that "allow for individual freedom in determining the theme, method, and construction of the arrangement" (Sen'ei Ikenobo, 1985:29). *Sanshuike* of modern *Shoka* also developed after the War, and again, due to the influence of Western culture, freedom of expression was the prime reason for its creation. In this style, the arranger has a greater "freedom of choice and opportunity for individual creativeness", which differs from traditional *Shoka*, in which one "must conform to rigid traditional rules" (Mayeda, 1981:51).

Despite the development of modern Ikenobo, traditional styles continue to persevere. In the 70's and 80's, the Ikenobo school experienced a rebirth of the "refined and dignified traditional ikebana, such as *Rikka* and *Shoka*" (Sen'ei Ikenobo, 1975:5).

And today, in Japan and abroad, it is the traditional styles that the student first learns to perfect.

Before embarking on a history of tea in Japan, I want to define what a tea ceremony, also called the way of tea, *chanoyu*, or *chado*, is exactly. Unlike ikebana, tea ceremonies do not have a Western counterpart, and therefore need a more detailed introduction. A tea ceremony is not only about making tea; it is a ritual, a performance. As my main informant, an advanced student who teaches beginners, explained:

"We always talk of tea ceremonies, but in actual fact that is not really how it should be called. It should be defined as a procedure, a procedure that entails the making of tea, which we call 'temae' in Japanese. It is a procedure, a way of doing. And there exists a plurality of different temae, depending on the school, on the season, on the goal of the ceremony, on who are the guests, or on what needs to be valued or emphasised by that particular ceremony. Other terms we use are 'the way of tea', or 'chanoyu', and for most people, the objective of performing tea ceremonies, or should I say learning tea ceremonies, is the hopes of eventually holding a 'chaji'. A chaji is a meeting, between three to five people, which lasts between three to four hours, and which includes a meal, called kaiseki, thick tea, called koicha, and light tea, called usucha. After the meal, the ceremony reaches its peak when the host serves the thick tea. The host arranges the coals in a sunken earth to boil the water. The water is heated until you can hear what sounds like the wind in the pines by listening to the water boil. All is done in silence. Then the thick tea is prepared by the host, and drank by the guest, at which point, the climax is reached. After the thick tea, the light tea is served in a much more

relaxed atmosphere, at which point the first guest can question the host on his choice of tea, of utensils, of calligraphy, of flowers, and so on... And if all the elements are right, and both the host and the guests come prepared and perform the ceremony correctly, then the tea ceremony should lead the participants to a state of peace, harmony, respect, and tranquillity; the four principles of tea. That is what most people practice tea for, especially in Japan. That is the ultimate goal" (January 25th, 2001).

The origins of drinking tea stem way back when, to the practice of tea drinking by Buddhist priests in China, who drank the beverage as an aid for meditation. Tea was brought to Japan in the late twelfth century by the Zen priest *Eisai* as a tool for the propagation of Zen teachings. The drinking of tea quickly spread amongst the *samurai* class, but developed into a means of entertainment for nobles, rather than a tool for Zen meditation. Tea drinking at parties was especially popular amongst the wealthy and the privileged (Hayashiya, Nakamura, & Hayashiya, 1974: 11-15). It was not until the middle of the fifteenth century that tea parties evolved into tea ceremonies, under the guidance of *Juko*, the father and founder of *chanoyu*, during which time the method of preparing and drinking tea became more and more systematized (Hayashiya, Nakamura, & Hayashiya, 1974: 26). The tea ceremony continued to mature into the classical form of the ritual with the influences of *Jo-o* (1502-1555) and *Rikyu* (1521-1591). Both Tea Masters performed ceremonies that were plainer and less luxurious than *Juko's* tea, resembling the simplicity and ruggedness of tea ceremonies as they are known today (Hayashiya, Nakamura, & Hayashiya, 1974: 29).

According to all the literature I have come across on the history of tea (Castile, 1971; Fujikawa, 1957; Fukukita, 1935; Hammitzsch, 1988; Hayashiya, Nakamura & Hayashiya, 1974; Hirota, 1995; Kakuzo, 1923; Kondo, 1985; Mori, 1991; Plutschow, 1986; Sadler, 1962; Soshitsu Sen, 1979a, 1979b, & 1988; Tanaka, 1974; and Varley & Kumakura, 1989), Rikyu is considered to be the greatest Tea Master of all time. He is renowned for introducing many elements of the tea ceremony; he developed the tea room, he introduced the *Wabi* taste for simplicity, plainness, and poverty as the aesthetics of tea, and he formalized many of the movements now used in the procedure of making tea (Hayashiya, Nakamura, & Hayashiya, 1974: 58). Of course, tea ceremonies continued to develop with his successors, including the more famous *Oribe*, who practiced a very glamorous style of tea, and *Enshu*, who is said to have practiced a similar, yet more refined tea to that of *Rikyu's* (Hayashiya, Nakamura, & Hayashiya, 1974: 65-119).

In the seventeenth century, *Sen Sotan*, one of *Rikyu's* grandsons, made an effort to re-focus on the relationship between tea and Zen philosophy, something which remained only an ideal for most practitioners, yet became a way of living for *Sen Sotan* himself (Hayashiya, Nakamura, & Hayashiya, 1974: 124-142). After his death, the *Sen* family split into three different Schools of tea, which evolved according to the *iemoto* school system: the *Urasenke* School, the *Omote-Senke* School, and the *Mushanokoji-Senke* School, all of which continue to exist in the present day (Soshitsu Sen, 1979: 7). Through the *iemoto* school system, the teaching of tea was systematized in the eighteenth century into a program of certification by rank:

> "Distinct schools of tea developed, each a vast hierarchy under its iemoto, or hereditary Grand-Master, who reserved the privilege of certification and of

authorizing teachers nation wide to instruct on his behalf' (Soshitsu Sen, 1988: 33).

By using a system of certification by rank, the tradition of tea was secured, all the while increasing the dissemination and popularization of the art, as certified teachers travelled across Japan in search of pupils, teaching them the way of tea as they had learnt it by their Master's.

In the 1850's and 60's, during the *Meiji* Restoration, the West forced Japan to open its doors to foreigners, and the feudal system was replaced by imperial rule. Within this context, tea ceremonies lost their popularity as a passtime for the rich. Fortunately, the Grand Tea Master *Gengensai* (1810-1877) defended the way of tea. He argued that the spirit of tea makes no distinction between the rich and the poor, and in fact teaches people to obey rules and regulations, qualities viewed as virtues by the new leaders (Soshitsu Sen, 1979: 7). Tea was no longer for the rich. It now had a much more popular basis. The three *Senke* Schools flourished as a result of this, for they had long hoped to bring the way of tea to commoners. Another important development that helped spread the practice of tea across Japan is the participation of women in tea gatherings. Just after the Sino-Japanese war, the thirteenth Grand-Master, *Ennosai*, began instructing tea to war widows and other women. Gradually, tea became an art that all young girls learnt during high school, thereby increasing the influence of the *Senke* Schools of tea in Japan (Soshitsu Sen, 1979: 8).

Japanese Migration and World War Two: the Origins of Japanese Traditional Arts in North America

The North American introduction to bonsai dates back to a few individual discoveries of the art in the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was not until 1876, however, that records of horticultural exhibits in Philadelphia confirm the presence of dwarfed trees in North America, although the term bonsai was not yet in use (Baran, 1992:6). Bonsai trees were also spotted in Chicago, in 1893, where a Japanese nurseryman gave a conference on the dwarfing of trees.

Horticultural exhibits continued to introduce bonsai trees to North Americans throughout the twentieth century, however, on the whole, dwarfed trees were not well known or understood, and most articles or descriptions of the art render the potted plants quite mysterious and exotic. They were viewed as "very young trees tortured into looking old (and thus more expensive) by a still secret Japanese process" (Baran, 1992:6). It seems that earlier generations of Americans had opportunities to view bonsai trees or at least read about them. However, only a handful ever attempted to practice the art themselves:

> "perhaps a few dozen native-born Americans of European or Oriental ancestry had learned the care and training techniques, some from masters while visiting in Japan, others from their fathers" (Baran, 1992:6).

It is the American soldiers and civilians, stationed in Japan just after World War Two, who were the first to see and appreciate bonsai in large numbers. And it is partially due to their return home that the art of bonsai was introduced to North America,

as many brought back with them specimens and an interest in the art. To a large extent, however, it is the Japanese themselves who introduced North Americans to the mysterious art of bonsai. Japanese immigrants were importing bonsai trees into North America long before the Second World War, especially in Hawaii and on the West Coast, where larger Japanese communities exist. As interest in bonsai grew rapidly in the 50's and 60's, Americans began learning the art and technique of bonsai from Japanese Masters and enthusiasts of the art who had immigrated to the United States. On the East Coast, the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens wrote a booklet on the care-taking of bonsai trees and began teaching courses (with the aid of Japanese horticulturists) in response to the many inquiries of returning militaries from Japan. On the West Coast, Japanese immigrants began establishing bonsai clubs and societies. In the beginning, these were made up solely of Japanese immigrants, but as familiarity with bonsai grew, non-Japanese locals soon became members (Baran, 1992:5). It is the development of bonsai societies that truly allowed for a mass-distribution of bonsai across North America, as enthusiasts and members began promoting the art to find new members. What follows is a brief description of the development of one of many bonsai societies in the United States.

I chose to discuss the Phoenix Bonsai Society, as the founder, and for many years president, is John Naka, by far the most popular, respected, and admired bonsai artist in the United States. His talent as a bonsai artist is not only recognized in North America, but all over the world, including Japan, where he was first introduced to the art form as a young boy, by his grandfather. The two books he wrote, *Bonsai Techniques 1* (1973),

and *Bonsai Techniques 2* (1982), are considered bibles for bonsai enthusiasts everywhere, including most of my informants. The following describes the history of his society and his professional life in North America, to exemplify the popularization of bonsai overseas. The growth and development of this particular society clearly illustrates the role of Japanese migrants in the internationalization of bonsai, and the progressive familiarization of the art amongst local North Americans. All information was provided by the Phoenix Bonsai Society (www.phoenixbonsai.com).

John Naka and friends officially formed the Southern California Bonsai Club (later called the California Bonsai Society) with the purpose of promoting and popularizing the art of bonsai in North America. As interest in bonsai was growing, the organization already counted over forty members when it was inaugurated in 1953, including a few Caucasians. Members began participating in numerous garden shows, often winning first prize. Bonsai' became known as stunning horticultural achievements. The classification of bonsai by American audiences as a horticultural activity is evident, not only in the type of exhibits members participated in, but in the T.V. shows that bonsai trees were first introduced through. In 1957, John Naka gave his first demonstration of bonsai on a T.V. show called "Garden Chats".

In the 1960's, Naka also formed a bonsai study group for select practitioners, which would soon become California's, and North America's, greatest talents and leading bonsai experts. In the late sixties, the first issue of the magazine "*Bonsai in California*" was published by the California Bonsai Society, and by 1968, the eleventh

annual exhibit of the society was held, attracting over fifty-eight thousand people. Clearly, the popularity of bonsai was rising, and no longer attracted only Japanese immigrants and Japanese-American citizens.

Of course, the California Bonsai Society was not alone. A plurality of bonsai societies popped up in regions all over the United States. By the late 1960's, bonsai' popularity had gained enough attention so as to form regional, national and even international bonsai organizations and associations, such Bonsai Club International, the American Bonsai Society, and the Golden State Bonsai Federation. All maintained similar objectives: to promote and educate the art of bonsai to the general public.

Throughout the 1970's, Naka presented and demonstrated the art of bonsai on a variety of televised garden shows, and began touring the United States to give lectures, conferences, demonstrations, and workshops all over the country. He wrote *Bonsai Techniques 1* in 1973, to provide North Americans with an English guide to basic techniques and styles. This was shortly followed by *Bonsai Techniques 2* (1982), which goes beyond the technical and horticultural aspects of bonsai, explaining the aesthetic worth of the tree as seen in the styling and shaping of the branches. By now, bonsai was quite popular and familiar to the American public, and audiences' worldwide. By the 1980's, Naka began touring for demonstrations and conferences all over the world, including Europe, South America, Africa, and Australia. From July 6th to July 10th, 1988, Naka was one, among a plurality of featured artists at the American Bonsai Society

Symposium, held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He continued touring until 1997, and continues to inspire bonsai enthusiasts today.

In the present day, it is safe to say that all regions and major cities have a bonsai society. Many websites attest to the growing popularity of the art, listing all North American clubs and societies for interested practitioners: (www.absbonsai.org/ clubs.htm; www.bonsai-bsf.com; www.wwnet.com/~scott13/ clublist.html; www.bonsai-nbf.org/bonsailinks/bcclubs.htm; www.odysee.net/ ~mhcgdd/bonsai/bs-ass.htm). The United States and Canada are also home to numerous bonsai collections, exhibits, nurseries, publications and bonsai professionals (http://www.btinternet.com-colinlewis.bonsai). In addition, North American professional bonsai artists are now a leading source of information and expertise for bonsai enthusiasts around the world.

As most serious bonsai professionals are American, there are a number of articles and books on the development of bonsai in the United States, but unfortunately no available histories of Canadian bonsai or bonsai in Canada. However, as most Canadian bonsai clubs are found in British Columbia and Ontario, where larger Japanese communities exist, one can suppose that bonsai societies began popping up around Japanese migrant populations, and later spread to the rest of the population (http://www.absbonsai.org/clubs.ca.html). Based on the information I gathered at the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society, it seems that in the present day, bonsai in Canada is primarily practiced by a non-Japanese population.

The development and internationalization of bonsai is much like that of salsa. Everyone knows salsa is a Latin American dance, much like everyone knows that a bonsai is a small tree in a pot from Japan. However, not everyone knows how to dance the salsa, as not everyone knows the horticultural knowledge and techniques needed to maintain a bonsai. Ikebana, on the other hand, still remains foreign and unfamiliar to most North Americans. Unlike bonsai, its development across North America and Canada has not been documented to a large extent. I only came across one book that discusses the internationalization of the art abroad, and even then, it only provides fragments of the story. Therefore, the history I have put together stems from bits and pieces that I collected to present the most comprehensive account possible.

It seems that the introduction of ikebana abroad followed much the same path as the art of bonsai, although it never quite gained the same popularity. Ikebana International, an international organisation that promotes the art of Japanese flower arranging abroad, played a major role in introducing ikebana in the United States, Canada, and all over the world. As occupation forces and their families were stationed in Japan, many women became attracted to Japanese flower arrangements, and began taking courses. After the occupation, foreign students returned home, and as such, all contact with Japanese ikebana Schools was broken. Fortunately, among these foreign students was Mrs. Allen, who recognized the need of creating an international organization that would allow for a continued contact between the Japanese headquarters and overseas students. Shortly thereafter, she founded, with the help of many, Ikebana International in 1956. Upon her return to the United States, Mrs. Allen founded the first international

chapter in Washington D.C. (Feretti, 1986:28). Since then, chapters have been popping up all over the place, and now the organization counts 10,000 members in over 50 countries.

The first Canadians to practice the art of ikebana were Japanese immigrants in Vancouver, who brought with them, and attempted to maintain, some of the traditions of their country. Mrs. Miori Mayeda, a second generation Japanese-Canadian, learnt the art of ikebana while growing up, as did many other young Japanese-Canadian girls. At the age of thirteen, she had already begun learning a plurality of Japanese traditional arts, including tea ceremonies, Japanese cooking, and ikebana. She took these courses at a Japanese high school that her father, and three Buddhist priests had founded for the Japanese community. She continued to learn ikebana throughout her adolescent years, however, at this age, she detested the art, and in no way believed she would ever become a teacher herself. (She resumed the art later in life, after settling down in Montreal, eventually becoming the leading Ikenobo teacher of the area).

During the Second World War, most Japanese and Japanese-Canadians were evacuated from British Columbia and ended up in internment camps. It is during these war years that Mrs. Okimura, also a second-generation Canadian, and now Mrs. Mayeda's main assistant, first discovered ikebana:

> "It was in 1942 I guess. We were in these camps, you know, internment camps. I was a young girl, around eighteen or nineteen, and we were in these camps, and there was nothing much to do really, so I decided that I would like to learn something. There was a small Buddhist church in the camp, well it was a house really, and there was a teacher who was a natural immigrant from Japan, and he taught us Ikenobo. I did not know at that time that there were so many

> different schools, but now I feel fortunate that I ended up as a member of the Ikenobo school" (March 12th, 2001).

When the war ended, Japanese Canadians dispersed all over the country, as did the art of ikebana.

A similar story can be told for Mrs. Kuwabara, also an ikebana teacher in Montreal, who grew up in Vancouver. In the mid-thirties, Mrs. Kuwabara was fully aware of the racial discrimination towards Orientals in the Vancouver area, therefore, she enlisted herself at the International Club, where she taught members the Japanese art of flower arrangement, tea ceremonies, and the Japanese language. After being evacuated from British Columbia during the Second World War, and spending some years in an internment camp, Mrs. Kuwabara, like many other Japanese citizens, migrated to Quebec, Canada, where she continued to teach the art to Montrealers (Kuwabara, 1977).

These three ladies, together with numerous other first and second-generation Japanese-Canadians, have been, and continue to be, the leading force behind the internationalization of ikebana. It is they who present exhibits. It is they who provide demonstrations. And it is they who make available courses for interested students.

As for Japanese tea ceremonies, the internationalization of the art has been much harder. Tea ceremonies were strictly practiced by the Japanese for a long time, as they were unknown to the rest of the world. Gradually, the knowledge of tea began to spread outside of Japan. In 1906, Kakuzo Okakura wrote *The Book of Tea* in the United States for Western audiences, introducing the principles of *chanoyu* to North Americans. The

fourteenth Grand-Master of the Urasenke School also did much to spread tea ceremonies outside of Japan. He was the first Grand-Master to truly think of introducing *chanoyu* to the West, and he travelled to North America and Europe for demonstrations and lectures. In 1940, he restructured the Urasenke foundation, creating an organized system of local branches affiliated with the central headquarters in Kyoto. In 1946, he founded the International Chado Cultural Foundation, and in 1962, he established a full-time school for the study of *chanoyu* in Kyoto (Soshitsu Sen, 1988:50).

It is not until quite recently, however, that a real interest in the art developed in the West. The fifteenth Grand-Master of today's Urasenke School has given himself as a mission to internationalize *chanoyu*:

> "I myself have travelled abroad widely promoting the study of tea, as have many members of the Urasenke, and our school is rapidly establishing branches in major cities around the world. Through these activities we have found that many foreigners are eager to study the way of tea" (Soshitsu Sen, 1979: 8).

I was unable to find much information on tea in North America, and therefore began asking informants about their personal experiences, in the hope of making sense of the present day organization of tea groups in the United States and Canada. I asked the members of a *chanoyu* chat group on the Internet (http://group.yahoo.com/ group/chanoyu) if they were aware of its development outside of Japan, or if they knew of any sources on the matter. Unfortunately, they were unable to provide much information, but did manage to describe the basic distribution of tea schools across the United States and Canada during a conversation that took place in February and March of 2001.

From what I gathered, tea schools are not as well organized and dispersed as the bonsai societies and ikebana organizations I examined. To a large extent, tea is taught privately in the teacher's home:

> "Like many of the traditional arts from Japan, most of the teachers are still mainly Japanese women, who aren't doing effective promotion of their programs, demonstrations, and courses offered, and who, for the main, would feel most comfortable teaching the courses to middle age, Japanese speaking women. This is not scientific research, but based on what I have observed over 17 years of practising tea and trying to promote tea to a larger public. Learning tea in North America is not very easy. There are a few publicly accessible opportunities, such as the Urasenke Foundation 'branches' in New York City, Washington, San Francisco, Honolulu, Seattle, and Vancouver in Canada, where the public can come in and take classes, in English, and experience a tea gathering. There are some places where tea is taught in the schools. It is even taught at some universities in the USA" (March 2001).

My informants ask me where I am learning *chanoyu*. I tell them I am not sure if it is an official Urasenke School, but that I am taught by some of the teacher's older students in a small Japanese store downtown. They continue to explain the international organisation of the Urasenke School,

> "The use of a commercial unit as a tea space is a practice only previously seen used by Urasenke Branches. In Canada, there is only one Urasenke Branch, which is in Vancouver. In Toronto, there is a Shibu, or chapter, and in Halifax and Montreal there are Dokokai, or study groups. I hear that in Edmonton there are people studying with a teacher who visits from time to time. There are only a handful of Urasenke Branch schools in the United States and Canada. The rest are private teachers, who are mainly members of Chapters and Dokokai. In areas such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle, where there are branches, the groups are quite large, whereas in other areas, like Montreal, the groups are very small. Whether big or small, all groups are related to the Urasenke headquarters in Japan. All schools of tea are organized so that the student, through their teacher, applies and is granted a license to study various procedures. These are granted only by the iemoto, or Grand-Master, the backbone of the school, at the headquarters in Japan. Of course, there is a fee involved" (March 2001).

There is no equivalent organization to the Urasenke foundation amongst the other schools of tea. As one informant wrote,

"I am a member of the Northern California branch of Omote-Senke Domon Kai. We do have a few folks about the continent, including a group in Canada around Calgary. There are also some in Chicago, New York and New England. We have no one in or about Montreal. This means it is unlikely that you will find anything but Urasenke in your area. The Urasenke Foundation is certainly a unique organization. Its usefulness in bringing tea to new corners of the world is unquestionable. I suspect that the results will be very favourable, but only time will tell" (March 2001).

The response of my informants clearly illustrates that tea schools are not as well organized or developed as bonsai societies and ikebana organizations worldwide. There are not enough teachers or practitioners, and therefore, tea ceremonies remain rather marginalized, unfamiliar, and barely visible.

Japanese Traditional Arts in Montreal

Individual practitioners have probably exercised the art of bonsai in Montreal for some time now. I know of at least one enthusiast who began to study bonsai trees as early as 1943. However, since Canadian bonsai is still in its infancy, as compared to American bonsai, there is no documentation on the subject as of yet. The growth of bonsai enthusiasts in Montreal probably only truly began twenty-five years ago, when David Easterbrook, who studied the art in Japan, decided to found the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society with six or seven of his friends in 1978.

In 1980, the Montreal "Floralies", an international horticultural exhibit that displayed flowers, shrubs, and trees from all over the world, also did much to introduce

and popularize the art of bonsai to horticulturists. This was the first exhibit in Montreal that presented bonsai trees from China and Japan to the Quebec population, and was therefore probably the first time many laid eyes on such specimens. At the end of the "Floralies" exhibit, both countries donated their trees to the Montreal Botanical Gardens. After receiving a collection of thirty bonsai from the Nippon Bonsai Association in Japan, the Montreal Botanical Gardens developed the Japanese Garden and Japanese Pavilion in 1988-1989, which is now renown as the largest collection of miniature trees outside of the Orient (Coiteux & Easterbrook, 1997:17). The collection is now permanently exposed at the Montreal Botanical Gardens, where hundreds of people, everyday, catch a glimpse of ancient trees, varying from 25 to 350 years of age. This permanent exhibit has done much to promote and render available the art of bonsai to thousands of Montreal inhabitants, some of which pursued the art more seriously.

As Montreal's bonsai collection grew, so did the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society, which quickly developed into an important study group for bonsai enthusiasts. As a growing community, the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society was supported by the generous donations of Mr. Hu. He donated 10,000 U.S., requesting that the money be used to hire bonsai experts from abroad to teach Montreal practitioners some of the more advanced techniques. With this generous donation, Montreal is slowly developing its own professional bonsai artists, and continues to hire experts from around the world twice a year. Since its beginnings, the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society has welcomed over one thousand nine hundred members, and presently counts over three

hundred. It is the main source for all local bonsai practitioners, from beginners to experts.

Much like bonsai, the practice of ikebana in Montreal revolves around the existence of organizations, societies, and schools. In what follows, I have put together the histories of Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura, whose stories present both the role of Japanese practitioners in promoting ikebana in Montreal, and the development of the Montreal Ikenobo Society.

After the internment, many Japanese-Canadians moved to Montreal, including Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura. Mrs. Okimura, being of Buddhist faith, decided to continue learning about her traditional culture, and began studying some of Japan's traditional arts; including cooking, sewing, and ikebana.

> "I started taking ikebana courses with some ladies in 1971. And then for eight years, I studied with a private teacher, until in 1994, my husband and I moved back to Japan for three years, where I took up flower arranging at the headquarters" (March 12th, 2001).

At around the same time, Mrs. Mayeda also joined an ikebana study group, which was taught by a Japanese immigrant for members of the Japanese community.

> "In 1967, I started with my teacher, who was studying at McGill. She was a student and she needed some money, so she started teaching Ikenobo at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre. That was the beginning of the Ikenobo School in Montreal. There was about six or seven of us, only Japanese people. And in 1970, we started the Montreal Ikenobo Society. Every year, we would get a professor to come from Japan and teach us new styles and methods. We learnt from over 39 teachers. When our sensei left, after graduating, she left the society for me, because she knew I had learnt traditional Ikenobo when I grew up, and my flowers were good" (January 20th, 2001).

Of course, since then, the Montreal Ikenobo Society has grown:

> "You see, before we only had Japanese students in our class. The first person that came, and that was not Japanese, was Chantale, because her husband is a Kawasaki. She was the first non-Japanese to start ikebana. After that, there were more non-Japanese, because the Japanese weren't coming. The Japanese do not live here anymore, and my children are not interested. That is why the Japanese students are only old Japanese" (January 20th, 2001).

The Montreal "Floralies" also helped introduce Japanese flower arrangement to a large amount of people in Quebec. Ikebana was literally translated as "living flower", and it is precisely the living nature of flowers that was said to distinguish Japanese flower arrangement from Western forms of arranging, which was defined at aiming towards artificiality (Gouvernement du Québec, 1981:17). Ikebana was characterized by its simplicity, one of its most important qualities, and by the complex set of artistic and mathematical rules that structure the arrangements. At the "Floralies", local Montrealers and visitors caught a glimpse of numerous schools, including *Takeya* ikebana, *Kado Takeya* ikebana, *Ohara* ikebana, and *Ikenobo* ikebana. The numerous arrangements introduced a plurality of styles, from the more traditional *Rikka* and *Shoka* of the *Ikenobo* School, to modern *Moribana* as mastered by the *Takeya* and *Ohara* Schools.

The inauguration of Ikebana International's Montreal Chapter must also be mentioned. The organisation provides numerous conferences, demonstrations, and workshops, which teach and promote the art of ikebana. Due to the development of these exhibits and organizations, more and more locals are slowly discovering the art. The Montreal *Ikenobo* Society now counts 60% of its members as non-Japanese, whereas Ikebana International counts approximately 90% of its members as non-Japanese.

As for tea ceremonies in Montreal, the only society that I was able to find is the Urasenke Tea School of Montreal, founded some twenty years ago by Mrs. Kagemori, an immigrant from Japan[2]. Similar to bonsai and ikebana, Japanese tea ceremonies can be discovered at the Montreal Botanical Gardens, where performances are given twice a week at the Japanese Pavilion. These demonstrations introduce the art of tea and the Montreal branch of the Urasenke School. However, judging from the minute size of the organisation, which only has approximately twenty members, tea ceremonies have not caught on as a popular hobby. Although they may intrigue many visitors to the Botanical Gardens, they certainly are not something that most continue to investigate seriously.

Conclusion: Contextualizing the Arts Transnationally

After a discussion of Japanese traditional arts in general, I situate bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies transnationally, to present the particular contexts between which they travelled, and the effects of these on their historical development in Japan, and on their incorporation abroad.

A brief glance at their history in Japan demonstrates the ever-changing nature of the meaning and practice of the arts, thereby negating static, bounded, and authentic definitions of what they "originally" were. In addition, this section allows me to introduce some of the basic principles, concepts, and ideas that lie at the basis of each art.

[2] In October 2001, I was introduced to a second Urasenke teacher based in Montreal, who also provides private lessons at home.

Next, I begin to examine the processes that affect the introduction and incorporation of bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies in new cultural systems. Using the North American example, I illustrate the role of the American military occupation in Japan, and the growth of Japanese communities, especially on the West Coast. My investigation also demonstrates the importance of societies, clubs, organizations, and schools that promote and propagate the arts, without which present-day practice in the United States and Canada would probably be impossible. In the last section, I conclude with a brief history of bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies in Montreal. I present the schools, organisations, and societies that I examined for my case study, and the role of Japanese-Canadians in rendering the arts available to local Montrealers.

Although the introduction to Montreal-based societies and organizations is brief, a more in-depth description is presented in the following chapter. In a discussion of my methodology and research activities, I describe my own discovery of Japanese traditional arts, and the fabulous societies and organizations I was lucky enough to work with. I present the activities I participated in with the Montreal and Lanaudière Bonsai & Penjing Society, followed by a summarised description of the lessons I joined with the Ikenobo School and Ikebana International. And lastly, I provide a brief look at the tea ceremony courses I attended with the Urasenke School of tea.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

I search the Internet and the telephone directory for days, and at first find nothing but advertisements for martial arts courses. Distressed, I decide to visit the Japanese Pavilion at the Montreal Botanical Gardens, hoping to find some clues as to where Japanese traditional art fanatics, like myself, get together. I follow the guided tour around the Japanese gardens twice, to the surprise of my host, who asks me if I have any additional questions. After telling her about my research, she leads me to her booth, disappears beneath the desk, and hands me a half dozen pamphlets, which advertise a number of organisations and societies affiliated with the Japanese Pavilion. Among these are, The Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society, Ikebana International, the Montreal Ikenobo Society, and the Urasenke School of Tea of Montreal, which became the four major organisations I focused on for my study.

In the above, I describe the history of the arts, and their introduction and incorporation across North America. In this chapter, I present my own introduction to bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies, situating them within my research. After a brief summary of my methodology, there are three separate segments, one for each art, which describe my research activities, in order to familiarize the reader with the scope of my fieldwork, the type of data collected, and the analysis I anticipate producing. These sections further situate bonsai, ikebana, and tea in the local Montreal context, as well as

in global networks of international practitioners. I have also included a section on calligraphy and additional research, since further information was collected by taking courses with Montreal's Japanese Calligraphy School, and by researching the accessibility of a number of other Japanese arts.

General Methodology

I began my fieldwork on Japanese traditional arts in the city of Montreal, Quebec, Canada, during the month of September 2000, and continued collecting the bulk of my data through to June of 2001, prolonging my fieldwork sporadically until the end of August 2001. My research on the practice of bonsai, ikebana, and tea is primarily based on the courses and meetings provided by four organizations. The data I gathered mainly focuses on the manner in which the arts are presented, the teaching methods used, and the interpretations of practitioners. It must be pointed out that the opinions described do not represent the understanding of all Montrealers. They illustrate the experiences of practitioners, and moreover, they represent the opinions of practitioners that I spent more time conversing with. Whenever possible, as many activities involve hands-on participation, I collected notes, jotting down who the participants were, conversation topics, presentations, teaching methods, reactions, and elements of Japanese culture mentioned. Furthermore, I occasionally used a tape-recorder to record lessons and discussions.

I conducted interviews with members of the various societies, including teachers, organisers, and students. Extensive interviews with teachers and organisers provided me with information on their background, their status in Montreal, their reasons for providing the courses or organizing activities, their methods of teaching, and their own interpretation of the arts. Interviews conducted with participants allowed me to examine their reasons for taking the courses, their interpretations of the courses, and their understandings of Japanese traditional arts. Key themes included discovering how participants define the art they practice, why they chose to participate in the activities they do, how they perceive the teaching methods used, and how they understand the practice of the art in comparison to its practice in Japan.

Learning the Art of Bonsai: The Montreal/Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Society and the Internet Bonsai Club

I began my research on the art of bonsai at the Japanese Pavilion of the Botanical Gardens, where I came across publicity for the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society. In September 2000, I became a member. During my research, I met with the group once a month for various conferences, demonstrations, and workshops on bonsai design and creation. Throughout the year, the group met nine months out of twelve. Of the nine get-togethers I attended, six were devoted to invited guests speakers, who teach member new techniques for bonsai design and creation, one was a conference on the history of bonsai, and the last two were a Christmas supper and a bazaar.

Participant observation was based on my attendance to these three-hour monthly conferences and demonstrations, which took place on the last Tuesday of every month. During meetings, I took down notes, whenever possible, on the surroundings, the participants, the teaching methods, and the meaning and practice of bonsai. The data collected was mainly provided by the guest speaker or demonstrator, although I did gather some information by jotting down conversations topics between members, who conversed in small groups at the beginning of meetings and during breaks.

I enrolled in the workshops following the conferences and/or demonstrations, which allow members to practice what they have learnt with the help of guest speakers. Through these, I was able to experience more individualized teaching methods, as the attendance is limited to between ten and fifteen participants, and the workshops are designed to allow for more in-depth lessons, one-on-one practice with trees, and lots of individual attention and expert advice. As most workshops entail quite large fees, and are usually meant for more advanced bonsai enthusiasts, I participated in only two workshops; the first was on bonsai design and creation, and the second introduced the art of *suiseki*, or the Japanese art of stone appreciation. In both cases, the lecture presented during the monthly meeting was summarized, after which time participants practised the techniques and methods introduced. During the workshop on bonsai design, students learnt to draw trees, in order to create draft images of future bonsai creations. In the second workshop on *suiseki*, all students were asked to bring in rocks, which we examined with the aid of specialists, and worked on to create miniaturized landscapes. In addition to the workshops, the society also offers courses for beginning, intermediate, and

advanced bonsai practitioners twice a year. I enrolled in the beginner's course, which commenced in early May 2001. The course entails three-hour lessons for five weeks, which are divided into two hours of theory, and one hour of demonstrations. On the sixth week, all students participate in a morning workshop, during which time we work on the creation of our own bonsai, based on the techniques we learnt during the course.

To further my research, I became a member of the Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Society, an affiliated organization that meets on the outskirts of the city. Unfortunately, as my membership began in January 2001, I was unable to attend most activities, although I did decide to join a one-day beginner's workshop on bonsai design and daily care. The first half of the day focused on the theoretical elements of the art, and after a brief lunch and tour of the teacher's collection, the rest of the day was spent working on a bonsai tree with the help of the teacher.

My participation in the demonstrations and workshops provided by both societies allowed me to meet and converse with some of the members, although these relationships rarely developed, as attendance is not regular. Getting to know members and their interest in bonsai was mainly accomplished by examining and partaking in the discussions taking place on the bonsai forums, provided by the societies websites for members and non-members alike (http://pages.infinit.net/sbpm/; www.welcome. to/sbpl). Through these forums, I met the owners of a bonsai nursery, the organisers of the Montreal and Lanaudière Society, two members of Montreal's professional study group, a *suiseki* enthusiast, and a number of bonsai enthusiasts. I got together with some of

these people for interviews, volunteer work, and a guided tour of a specialized bonsai nursery. These relationships allowed me to have more or less continuous discussions with the members of both groups via e-mail, with whom I discussed a variety of issues relating to the philosophy, meaning, and practice of bonsai in North America.

My research activities also included a survey of members from both societies on the role, meaning, and significance of the art, alongside a description of members' individual interest in and practice of bonsai. My questionnaire was sent out to all members of the Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Society (approximately 70), with the help of the society's president, who printed copies and sent them off with the monthly bulletin. Unfortunately, only a half dozen of the questionnaires were returned. A similar incidence occurred after mentioning my survey on the Montreal society's forum, since only a small number of members contacted me with an interest in filling it out. Therefore, although the information gathered with the surveys provided me with additional data on the significance and practice of bonsai, it will not be used to define the general meaning of bonsai for practitioners in Montreal.

As both societies only meet once a month, I continued to gather information by examining the literature members have access to, hoping to analyse the type of information presented, and the discourse used to discuss bonsai in Montreal, and in most of North America and Europe. By examining the books (Chan, 1993; Coiteux & Easterbrook, 1997; Jeker, 2000; and Noelanders, 1998), and magazines (*Bonsai Today, Bonsai Clubs International Magazine, Bonsai: Journal of the American Bonsai Society,*

International Bonsai magazine) that were recommended to members, I discerned the major topics of interest and concern. I also assembled all monthly Bulletins' published by the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society from 1999 to 2001, and those by the Lanaudière Society for 2000 and 2001, as they illustrate the importance of horticultural information and the focus on technique during activities and monthly meetings. I examined the websites of both societies, analysing their description of bonsai, the representation of the societies, the type of information provided on bonsai design, creation and daily care, the recommended literature, the web links, the structure of both organizations, and the use of discussion forums as a means of talking about bonsai between meetings.

In continuation with my research on websites and the use of chat groups, I examined the Bonsai Internet Club, a listserv and international study group for the discussion of all things relating to the art of bonsai. Research through the archives and active participation in the discussions with members allowed me to collect important information on the practice and meaning of bonsai in North America and Europe. Although many of the participants in the forum are beginners, the members also include professional bonsai artists, mainly from Europe and North America, many of whom have been mentioned by members of the Montreal and Lanaudière societies, and who, in the past, have even been guest speakers.

I completed my research on the Internet by surveying Canadian and American websites that discuss bonsai. My assessment included a look at personal webpages,

organizations, societies, forums, chats, listservs, nurseries and bonsai guides (http://duktine.free.fr/bonsai/f_bonsai.html; http://pages.infinit.net/squall; http:// members.home.net/derond/; http://members.aol.com/IASNOB/index.html; http:// www.absbonsai.org; http://www.bonsaienthusiast.com; http://www.international bonsai.com; http://www.bonsai.bci.com; http://www.phoenixbonsai.com; http://www.icangarden.com/bsoc.htm; http://www.victoriabonsai.bc.ca; http://sites.netscape.net/bonsaiedmonton/homepage; http://204.50.57.220/home/asp; http://www.geocities.com/PicketFence/Garden/1208/; bonsai-l@list.dolist.net; http://www.thebonsaiguide.com; http://www.bonsaiweb.com; http:// www.microtec.net/mhcgdd/bonsai.htm; http://www.microtec.net/~mhcgdd/ bonsai/bse.htm; http://www.pandore.qc.ca/~grosbec/;http://www.sympatico. ca/jardinjp).

Together with my analysis of the Montreal and Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Societies, my research on the Internet allowed me to determine how Montrealers in particular, and North Americans in general, define what bonsai is, what bonsai signifies, and what elements of the art attract them to its practice. By examining the interpretation and significance of bonsai in the West, in comparison to Japan (as it is understood to signify in Japan by practitioners that I conversed with), my research activities helped me determine the implications of the development and increasing popularity of bonsai in Montreal and abroad. The North American understanding of bonsai is decidedly different from the Japanese perspective (as it is understood in books and by my informants), mainly because most North Americans make a distinction between Japanese bonsai and North American bonsai. This distinction is based on a plurality of elements,

such as the difference between rules, proportions, styles, and materials used for Japanese bonsai, in comparison with those used in North American bonsai.

North Americans use indigenous species, and therefore, have created their own rules to preserve the natural growth patterns that are characteristic of North American trees. Although the importance of maintaining traditional Japanese rules remains controversial, most bonsai artists in North America resist copying the designs developed by the Japanese, preferring to adopt the rules that coincide with the natural landscape. North American enthusiasts also perceive a difference in the aesthetic qualities of Japanese bonsai, as compared to North American creations. The Japanese are characterized as seeking to produce idealized images of nature, whereas North American artists tend to prefer naturalized images of trees. The result of this variation is evident in how bonsai artists talk about bonsai, view bonsai, style bonsai, and judge bonsai.

The distinction between Japanese and North American bonsai illustrates the aspects of the Japanese practice that continue to influence North American bonsai, as compared to the elements that have been appropriated according to North American culture. The main difference lies in the manner in which bonsai is taught. In Japan, the main learning method is based on a full-time lengthy and gruelling apprenticeship with a Master, where one learns the techniques and art of bonsai through timeless observation and repetition (Noelanders, 1998). However, as North Americans view bonsai as a hobby rather than a profession, this system has not been adopted. The learning method is based

on courses, conferences, demonstrations, and workshops, and, for most, involves only a few hours per month.

A deeper understanding of the North American perception of bonsai is also understood by examining the information gained through discussions, interviews, and questionnaires, which analysed how people discover bonsai, what attracts them to bonsai, what is expected of a bonsai artist, and what activities appeal to enthusiasts. In general, beginners to the art consider bonsai to be a hobby, and are much more interested in the horticultural and technical aspects of the art, whereas more advanced practitioners seem to give greater importance to the artistic and philosophical elements. The data collected during discussions and interviews also illustrates the progression from bonsai hobbyist to bonsai professional, and the distinction between the two.

My research also allowed me to collect information on a number of additional topics. I determined the type of practitioner; mainly older men in their fifties and beyond. I studied the subject matter of courses, which explored horticultural technique, the classification of bonsai, and its historical and philosophical background among other things. I enquired into the preparation of exhibits, the type of activities provided, and the classification of these according to bonsai styles, species, and international guest speakers. I was introduced to the art of *suiseki*, which I came to realise was as a newly introduced Japanese practice. I noted the type of representation and publicity used by societies to attract new members. And finally, I determined the interpretation of bonsai

as a "global art", and the role of networks between Montrealers and bonsai artists at large.

Learning to Appreciate the Natural Beauty of Flowers: the Montreal Ikenobo Society and Ikebana International

I mainly researched the art of Japanese flower arranging by conducting participant observation as a member of the Montreal Ikenobo Society and Ikebana International. As hands-on participation was often expected during the activities offered by these groups, I only took notes when a demonstration or written lesson was given, and therefore, information on members participation, conversation topics, teaching methods, techniques and styles learnt, were all recorded upon my arrival at home.

I signed up for ikebana lessons at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre of Montreal in September 2000 and May 2001, and became a member of the Montreal chapter of the Ikenobo Society of America. The organisation is a small group, which comprises the teacher, a Japanese-Canadian, her two assistants, a Japanese-Canadian and a French Canadian, and between four to twelve students, depending on the week. The students are mostly non-Japanese, save two, and mainly women, except for the vice-president of the society, and a young man who joined the group in late May. Some students have been practising for years, others are just starting, but all participants learn together. As the group is quite small, I got to know all members quite well and recorded numerous conversations that took place. In addition, I conducted interviews with most

students, the teacher, and her assistants, about the significance and practice of Ikenobo ikebana.

Lessons begin at 7:30 p.m., at which time all students are expected to arrange the flowers as best they can, based on the instructions of the teacher. One-by-one, the flower arrangements are examined and corrected by the teacher and her assistants. The teacher mainly focuses on teaching students the styles and techniques of the Ikenobo School. As a new student, I was also supplied with a number of books to read, including *The Book of Ikebana: Part I* (1985), an introductory book on the history, philosophy, etiquette, and techniques of the Ikenobo School, as written by the headmaster. It is given to students upon reception of their first grade certificate.

To improve my skills and learn more about the art over the winter period, I chose to pursue private lessons at my teacher's home. Each week, I went over to her place at one o'clock in the afternoon and drove my teacher to the florist's, where we chose the flowers together. For the lesson, my teacher demonstrated an arrangement, which I then tried to copy. She asked me to watch as she corrected all the mistakes in the arrangement, and asked me to start again. After class, I would sit down with the teacher for some Japanese tea and cookies, while she told me about her life growing up in Vancouver.

As a member of the Ikenobo Society, I did volunteer work at a bazaar in November 2000, and again in late April 2001, during the annual exhibit held at the

Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre. During the bazaar, I helped sell second-hand ikebana material with two or three of the women in my group, which enabled me to get to know them and their interest in ikebana a little better. For the exhibit, all students met over the winter to discuss fund-raising, dates, times, demonstrations, and the possibility of a tearoom. The day of the exhibit, I was asked to help the vice-president of the society gather tickets and money at the entrance. Although I could not always see the exhibit, I walked around every so often to jot down how people were talking about the Japanese style of arranging flowers. I also watched the demonstrations that took place, and gave a guided tour to two of the students that take tea ceremony lessons with me.

Beyond being a member of the Ikenobo Society of Montreal, I also joined Ikebana International; a non-profit organisation that promotes ikebana as a "global art" that creates friendship and understanding between the Japanese and non-Japanese. The organisation presently has sixty-one members. Only eight women are Japanese or Japanese-Canadian. The rest of the members are mainly Anglo-Canadian and French-Canadian. With the exception of one, all members are women, between the ages of thirty and eighty. Members meet once a month at the St-Andrews Dominion-Douglas Church in Westmount, a well-to-do area of Montreal, for demonstrations, workshops, and a cup of tea.

I first introduced myself to the members of Ikebana International by attending a workshop and the annual exhibit they organize each year at the Japanese Pavilion of the Botanical Gardens, allowing me to examine the promotion and representation used to

gain new members. Throughout the year, I attended monthly meetings for demonstrations, conferences, bazaars, and workshops, and aided in the volunteer work that needed to be done. As a volunteer, my job was to contact the women every month and figure out who could bring snacks for the meeting. I always had difficulties since most of the women were usually away, either in hospital or on vacation. Similarly to my research activities with both bonsai societies and the Ikenobo Society, I examined the literature that members of Ikebana International receive, including monthly bulletins and three magazines from the Japanese headquarters.

As my ikebana teacher is the representative of the Ikenobo School at Ikebana International, I was invited to join in the private lessons she provides for members of the association. They also meet once a week in the autumn and spring, and the procedure is similar to the courses I took at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre. The four women meet the teacher at her home, where she provides the lessons around her dining room table. After Christmas, I was invited to join the Ikenobo members of Ikebana International for a traditional New Year's meal. Our teacher prepared the whole meal herself, and we spent the entire afternoon discussing various elements of Japanese culture, such as tea ceremonies, ceramics, and Japan's modernization, while looking at photographs of Mount-Fuji.

My participation in courses, demonstrations, conferences, and workshops mainly allowed me to determine what ikebana enthusiasts learn. The main focus during courses is on the rules of ikebana, such as the proper proportions, the placement of branches, and

the different styles that exist. One also learns the difference between traditional and contemporary Ikenobo; the later resembling Western flower arrangements to a greater extent.

By participating in a number of courses with the Ikenobo School, I noticed a difference between the private courses, the courses for members of Ikebana International, and the courses for members of the Ikenobo society. As my private courses and those provided for Ikebana International members were at the teacher's home, there were less students, the courses were much longer, and there was more time for theory and individual attention. At the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, many of the students are advanced, and there is no time for theory. As a beginner, I spent most of my time trying to figure out what I was supposed to do by copying the member sitting next to me.

Unlike other schools of ikebana, the Ikenobo School is said to be more "traditional", and since our teacher concentrates much more on the classical styles of the school, most students have come to appreciate these styles over others. In contrast, as noticed at Ikebana International meetings, other schools emphasise more contemporary freestyle arrangements, which might explain why only four members of Ikebana International chose to study with the Ikenobo School. Attending the meetings and lessons provided by Ikebana International and the Ikenobo Society also allowed me to gain a better perspective of the international value of ikebana as "global art". How is it publicized and represented? What type of information is found to be important during demonstrations? How are the organizations structured? What is the history of each

organization? And, what types of people attend meetings? I came to realize that both organizations are affiliated with the headquarters in Kyoto, Japan. Due to this relationship, they depend on the headquarters for material and information, and are expected to follow certain guidelines.

Participant observation also allowed me to analyse my own experience in learning ikebana, and the frustrations and joys that come from learning an art through observation and replication. Barely any theory or notes are presented during courses (probably due to the fact that beginners, intermediates and advanced students are all learn together), and most is learnt through emulation. Students are expected to learn other elements of the art, such as the history, philosophy, terms, techniques, and tools, by reading the literature proposed by the teacher.

Although differences do exist between the teaching methods used in Japan and in Montreal (as determined through readings and the personal experiences of some students), many of the values, methods, and subject matter of the art, as it is practised in Japan, are respected. The headquarters in Kyoto provide manuals for the course, and much of what is said during class is found in the literature. As teachers and students often converse, much is taught about the Japanese practice of ikebana, such as proper etiquette in class, correct posture, and the importance of nature and seasons. However, other aspects of the practice of ikebana have been adapted to North American culture, despite their being defined as appropriate behaviour in *The Book of Ikebana: Part I* (1985). In Montreal, one is not expected to sit in *seiza* (on one's feet) during lessons.

You are allowed to talk to others. You can ask the teacher questions. And you can leave before the course is over. In Japan, such behaviour is non-acceptable.

Finally, interviews with students and teachers of the Ikenobo School allowed me to determine personal interpretations of ikebana. I assessed how people discovered ikebana and when, why they chose to take courses, and what attracted them to the art. I determined what aspects of Japanese ikebana practice were kept intact, such as rules, history, and styles, and what aspects of the art were re-interpreted, such as the philosophy, which is not really associated with Zen Buddhism, but rather with a love and respect of nature.

The Ritualized Act of Preparing Tea: Temae as Taught by the Urasenke School of Montreal

Unlike bonsai, and to some extent ikebana, Japanese tea ceremonies are quite unfamiliar to many. Most areas of North America do not even have certified teachers. In Montreal, there is only one Japanese tea ceremony school and not many students. Promotion for the school is rare, and it took some time before I finally contacted one of the teacher's more advanced students, who gives courses and demonstrations for beginners twice a month. My participant observation with the Urasenke School was rather limited to my attendance and involvement twice a month in demonstrations and two-hour lessons, during which time I was not allowed to take any notes, save when they instructed me to. I was unable to record with precision any of the conversations we had,

or the lessons we were taught, and was therefore forced to rely completely on my memory.

We met at seven o'clock p.m. for the demonstration, and then learnt the various procedures of Japanese tea ceremonies from eight till ten. On occasion, guests came to watch the demonstration, although on most days, the extra time allowed students to observe the teachers' performance. The course was never on the same day, but rather depended on the schedule of teachers and students. The group is very small, six teachers and four students. The students are all non-Japanese: two women, one male, and myself. The teachers, on the other hand, are made up of three men and three women, two of which are Japanese. Most of the instructors I met at the beginning of my fieldwork stopped coming just before Christmas, therefore, I only got to know two of them quite well. I conducted interviews with both teachers, focusing discussions on their discovery of tea, and their understanding of the philosophy. After one year of training, I am now a certified member of the Urasenke tea school, and helped out over the summer at the Botanical Gardens, where tea demonstrations are presented every Tuesday, and Saturday.

In addition to the courses I joined with the Montreal Urasenke School, I participated in a North American *chanoyu* chat on the Internet (http://group.yahoo. com/group/chanoyu). Created by North American members of the Urasenke and Omoto-senke Schools of Tea, the *chanoyu* chat is an international discussion and study group, much like the Bonsai Internet Club. It is the only one of its kind, according to members of the chat, and seems quite popular amongst tea practitioners in North America. There

are, however, only approximately seventy members, fifty of which barely write at all. One of my teachers used to be a member, and knows of many tea enthusiasts that continue to learn with this forum when they are not in Japan and can not access a study group. As the chat group is only two years old, I have collected and summarized all pertinent conversations from the archives to determine the interests of North American tea practitioners.

Most of the information I collected during lessons and on the Internet focuses on what is learnt during courses and how it is taught. In comparison to bonsai and ikebana, tea ceremony lessons do not resemble what North Americans are accustomed to, as is evidenced in the courses I took in Montreal. The teacher of the Urasenke School is an immigrant from Japan, and her more advanced students, who studied in Japan, told me that she teaches her courses in much the same manner as they are taught in Japan. Although somewhat adapted to North American culture, the head teacher and her students continue to use Japanese methods of teaching. For example, no notes are given, and students are not allowed to take notes. The method of learning tea ceremonies is based on observation and learning with one's body, rather than learning with books and the written word. Although demonstrations prior to class are really for observers, most of the time, it is the students that come and observe the teachers, and when observers do come, they are expected to respect the proper etiquette. All movements are learnt according to traditional methods, in which the *temae*, or procedure, is broken down into parts, and then practised time and time again. For each lesson, a new aspect of the procedure is learnt. Students are expected to come prepared, having practised at home,

and bringing the material needed for proper procedure and etiquette. If one is consistently corrected about something, the teachers become impatient, as they are not supposed to repeat a correction more than once. We must arrive prior to the beginning of class, to help teachers prepare the material needed. And no one leaves until all is cleaned up and put away.

Every time we met, something new was learnt about the history, philosophy, and artistic elements of the tea ceremony. Students always had questions, and inquired as much about technique and procedure, as they did about tea spirit and tea masters of the past. Japanese terms were used for all objects used, and students were expected to recall which was which without help.

I also collected information on how and why people began tea ceremony courses, based on the interviews I conducted with practitioners of the Urasenke School and the conversations I recorded from the *chanoyu* chat. I determined what attracts them to the art, what their ultimate goal was, how they understand the philosophy, and what aspects of the art are harder to achieve in Montreal, and North America in general. This information allowed me to determine what type of experience Westerners have with *chanoyu*, how they learnt the art, how they practice it, and to what extent tea ceremonies have been re-interpreted by North American participants. Through active participation in demonstrations during the summer, and based on the information and questions asked on the *chanoyu* forum, I collected additional information on how Westerners, who have few

or no prior experiences with the art, view and experience tea ceremonies through demonstrations. What understanding do they gain, what questions do they ask?

Additional Activities

In addition to participating in the courses, activities, and discussions provided by the above mentioned organizations, my data includes information on the teaching methods, practice, and meaning of calligraphy, based primarily on twelve private courses that I took. I met with my teacher once a week for two-hour private lessons at her home near Westmount. I examined in detail the teaching methods she used, which, similarly to tea ceremonies, are based mainly on observation and learning with one's body. I noted what was mainly taught during courses, including rules, technique, proportions, the classification of styles, correct body posture, and the meaning of characters. In addition, when the teacher described the philosophy and history of calligraphy, I examined what she underlined as most important.

Similarly to the ikebana and tea ceremony organisations, conversations with my teacher demonstrated that the calligraphy school is affiliated with headquarters in Japan, and certificates are handed out to Montreal students following the same rules applied to Japanese students in Japan. Also discussed were the internationalisation of the art, and my teacher's perception of calligraphy in the West. As with the other societies and schools, I collected as much information as possible on promotion and representation.

I also met with my calligraphy teacher on Friday afternoons, at which time additional information on teaching methods was collected during a calligraphy course provided at Montreal University for students in East Asian studies. As her teaching assistant, I helped translate from English to French, and when not needed, I discussed calligraphy and Japanese culture in general with the students. My data includes a description of the problems encountered during the semester due to teaching methods, such as the teacher's disregard for giving students grades. As I was unable to meet the other participants that take private lessons with my teacher, I asked all students at the University of Montreal to fill out a basic questionnaire, which focused on their understanding and experience of calligraphy. I passed them out at the beginning of class to all twenty-five students, who immediately filled them out and returned them to me.

As many other traditional Japanese arts are offered in Montreal, and participation in all would have been impossible and costly, I chose to become a member of Montreal's Japanese community monthly bulletin, which summarizes all Japanese cultural events in Montreal every month. Furthermore, wherever I went, I collected pamphlets, articles, brochures, and so forth, on all art organizations that relate to Japan.

Conclusion: Researching the Transnational

Throughout the year, I conducted research in numerous courses, demonstrations, workshops, conferences, exhibits, bazaars, and discussion groups devoted to the promotion and understanding of bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies in North America

and abroad. My exploration of bonsai included participant observation with the Montreal and Lanaudière Bonsai Society, with whom I took courses, interviewed participants, and conducted a discourse analysis of the literature and websites. I furthered my analysis by examining the discussions between bonsai enthusiasts' worldwide on the Internet Bonsai Club. My research allowed me to discover the development of "North American bonsai", and the increasing departure away from "Japanese bonsai". By studying with Montreal's Ikenobo Society, and Ikebana International, I came to understand the many principles and rules behind the art of ikebana. As fewer participants were involved, I gained further insight into the meaning and interpretation of ikebana abroad. I realized the importance of transnational networks, and the link between these and the safeguarding of "traditional" styles, teaching methods, and values. My analysis was furthered by my participation with the Montreal Urasenke School of Tea and the *chanoyu* chat. As the Japanese art of preparing tea is much more marginalized and unfamiliar than ikebana and bonsai, I quickly realized that the presentation, practice, teaching, and understanding of the art was more akin to the Japanese practice.

As is evident in the above discussion of my research activities and findings, no two Japanese traditional arts are the same, and no two have been adopted, incorporated, and interpreted according to the same principles. Each case study presents different instances and new evidence of the means by which transnational cultural practices and meanings are rendered international, and adopted in new locales.

One can not expect all transnational cultural movements to present similar instances of cultural globalization. However, we can attempt to figure out the basic principles of such processes. At a very basic level, I realized that bonsai, and to some extent ikebana, is much more popular and practised than tea ceremonies. I began questioning the factors and processes that favour the distribution of bonsai and ikebana, and the factors and processes that limit the propagation of tea ceremonies. In the following chapter, we begin to inquire into the unequal distribution of Japanese traditional arts by comparing bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies to the local cultural context of Montrealers. To do so, I present an examination of their practice and interpretation, as these are understood by the participants, and perceived in the specialized courses and activities offered by the four organizations I joined.

4. METACULTURES OF SIMILARITY: A CASE STUDY OF THE PRACTICE AND DISTRIBUTION OF THREE JAPANESE TRADITIONAL ARTS IN MONTREAL

Chapter two identified the development of the arts in Japan and abroad, while chapter three presented the main organizations, associations, schools, and societies, which render these arts accessible to the general public. In continuation, this chapter provides an in-depth description of the present-day meaning and practice of the arts in Montreal, as teachers, students, and myself understand them. It illustrates and explains their unequal distribution amongst Montreal's population, by describing a number of elements that influence their popularity and consumption. In addition, it provides the unfamiliar reader with a better understanding of what bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies actually are.

I explore the unequal distribution of Japanese traditional arts within a framework of metacultures, which are generally defined as hegemonic ideals that shape the transnational movement of culture. I focus on the meaning and practice of the arts, providing ethnographic detail on who, what, where, when and how, arguing that these enquiries are the finer cultural details used by practitioners as schemes of understanding to examine, analyse, asses, and classify the arts, which in turn, invariably influence their popularity and distribution. As the reader goes through the descriptions, he/she will understand why bonsai, in its present form, is more popular, because it is more similar to

what Western participants are accustomed to. In contrast, ikebana and tea lessons present a greater number of differences. I begin with an example of an introductory bonsai workshop, followed by a description of my personal advancement in ikebana, and conclude with a presentation of my lessons in tea ceremonies.

I chose to depict the courses I attended, as they provide the best opportunity for examining the meaning and practice of bonsai, ikebana, and tea. I survey who the participants are, where and when the courses are given, what participants learn, how they are taught, what the basic ideas, principles, and concepts are, and how people discuss the arts. In addition, I present three perspectives on the meaning of the arts. First, I use my own understanding. Secondly, I examine the perspective of specialists, or teachers, both Japanese-Canadian, and non-Japanese-Canadian, who have been practising the arts for quite some time (many at the headquarters in Japan), and who, through their teachings, have had a large influence on the meaning of the arts for local practitioners. And finally, I note the interpretation of students, both beginners and more experienced, who attempt to further themselves in the arts, while deciphering the function of these practices in their lives.

I have put together, in narrative form, a summary of my observations throughout the year. I use the same writing style as Smadar Lavie in *The Poetics of Military Occupation* (1990), however, my goal is not only to hide the identity of my informants, but to include as many voices and opinions as possible, thereby incorporating the importance of individual agency in the practice and meaning of Japanese arts abroad. By

presenting a narrative account of the courses, demonstrations, conferences, workshops, interviews, and conversations that I participated in, I incorporate the viewpoints and opinions of a number of participants, including; organizers, producers, teachers, students, and myself.

Learning the Art and Technique of Bonsai in Just One Day: an Introductory Workshop on Bonsai Design and Creation

Every month, I meet with the members of the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society at the Botanical Gardens for conferences, demonstrations, and workshops. I really enjoy my bonsai meetings because they are only five minutes away from home, and I do not need to dress up. Everyone is casual and friendly. We usually just hang around, talking about trees and insecticides, waiting for the presentation to begin.

As I am a "newbie", I find it hard to follow along on occasions, and enquire into joining a beginner's class. The organization provides a six week introductory course, but unfortunately, the autumn session is already completely full. The members tell me that I can check out some of the local bonsai nurseries, which provide introductory workshops for beginners. I am told of one superb nursery in particular, La Pépinière du Gros-Bec Errant, which I call up and ask to register.

I arrive at the bonsai nursery early Saturday morning. It is in Saint-Alphonse, about an hour's drive from Montreal. It is situated in a beautiful wooded area, on the

edge of a lake. The two owners, Robert and Suzanne, live there with two golden retrievers, Chokkan and Moyogi, who immediately greet me when I arrive. I knock on the door, and Robert, a forty-five year old man, with a shaved head, a bushy beard, and dirty jeans, greets me kindly. Like most of the bonsai enthusiasts I have met so far, he looks like a down-to-earth, generally relaxed, outdoors type of guy who enjoys nature. We spoke on the phone, prior to the workshop, and he told me how eager he was to tell me all about his passion, and teach me everything he knows about the art for my research.

In the entrance, there stands a beautiful two-level bamboo bonsai stand, overflowing with miniature bonsai trees, called *shohin*, which never grow above nine inches tall. To my left, I see a small room, filled with a beautiful selection of bonsai pots, big and small, and tiny ornaments, used for the creation of minuscule landscapes. I follow him up the twisting stairs to the second floor, and into the kitchen, where Suzanne is waiting for us with fresh coffee. She welcomes me with a large smile, and tells me to go and join the two other women, who have already arrived. Nicole and Martine, two women in their forties, dressed in their best jogging suits, are drinking coffee, and smoking cigarettes. I notice a stick of incense burning in a large plant, which fills the room with a relaxing odour that blends with the soothing Japanese music playing in the background. I immediately feel quite at home; the entire atmosphere is truly warm and welcoming. I sit down on one of the couches and join the conversation.

"*This is a gorgeous tree*", says Martine admiring a bonsai that stands at least three feet high, "*how old is it?*"

"*Oh, that one is around twenty years old*", Robert replies.

"*Why do you need fluorescent lighting over the bonsai trees? Do not they get enough light just being in front of the window?*" I enquire.

"*Well, bonsai trees really need anywhere between twelve and sixteen hours of light, and in the winter time, when they are not outside, you need some sort of artificial lighting to replace what's missing*".

"*So, how long has this nursery been open?*" Nicole asks.

"*Oh, we have been open a little over two years now*"

"*What made you think of opening up a bonsai nursery?*"

"*Well, I wanted tranquillity in my life*", he explains, "*and I have always liked nature, so when I discovered the art of bonsai, around five years ago, I immediately knew that I wanted to put all my energy and the rest of my life into its practice. So I opened the nursery with Suzanne. It is not going to make me rich, but I have just enough to get by, and that is all I really want. It is great though, we get up in the morning, whenever we feel like it, and if I feel creative, I work on my trees. If I do not, I take the day off. Would you ladies like to visit the tropical greenhouse we have upstairs?*"

We follow Robert to the third floor, into a humid tropical greenhouse. He turns on the lights, and two enormous lampshades slowly appear atop tables and tables of small potted plants. The lamps are attached to electric tracks on the ceiling, which they move across slowly to expose all plants to the rays they let off. I examine the different species displayed on the tables. The plants are called "pre-bonsai" trees because they have not yet been worked on, and range in price from around five to ten dollars for the smaller ones, to seventy-five dollars and above for the larger ones.

We walk to the back of the tropical greenhouse, and into a small conference room. Robert switches on the radio, slides in a cassette, and plays some "Zen music", while we wait for the other students to arrive. As passionate as ever, Robert starts to talk about the art of bonsai he so loves:

"*The art of bonsai is the art of horticulture. The cutting and grooming of the tree are only the artistic elements. But they mean nothing if you can not master the art and techniques of horticulture. If you can not keep it alive, why make it. I have seen so many people buy bonsai trees at the mall, or in large nurseries, and every time, it makes me sick, because I know that they have no idea of what to do with them. Even the people selling the trees are ignorant. They sell indigenous trees in the middle of winter, instead of tropical bonsai. They are totally unaware that indigenous species are supposed to spend the winter season outside in hibernation. When the customers get home, they place their bonsai on the top of the T.V., or by the fireplace, like it is a decorative trinket. They water it sometimes, but do not really have any clue of the bonsai' real needs. Within a month or two, it dies, and people say 'bonsai are nice but they are impossible to maintain'.*

With bonsai, it is a question of discipline and responsibility. Bonsai' grow in a minute quantity of soil, so really, only someone with horticultural skill can keep them going. Twice a day, you have to check on them, see if they need watering, get rid of unwanted weeds, trim excess branches, and kill off insects and illnesses that the tree might have. If you neglect the tree, it will perish and eventually die. But if you persevere, and improve on your horticultural techniques, the experience is extremely

gratifying. For me, I love the relationship I have with my trees; it is a relationship of dependency. I depend on my trees, because they are my source of livelihood, and they depend on me for water and light."

It is already close to ten-thirty, and Suzanne tells Robert that he should probably begin. There are now nine students in all, four of whom are only there to observe. Apart from Martine, Nicole, and myself, the other six students are couples: three men, and three women, who joined the class because they have bonsai trees at home that are dying. We start talking about people's interest in the art. Two participants say they received the bonsai as gifts, and now want to learn how to care for them. Most enjoy nature, art, and horticulture in general. The philosophical elements of bonsai are secondary. A typical answer, which I noticed many a times in the questionnaires I handed out. Of the ten responses I received, seven chose horticulture and/or art as their primary interest.

Robert finishes his coffee, and hands out our books, *Les Bonsais: Techniques et entretiens, pour créer des bonsais à partir d'essences rustiques ou indigènes du Québec* (1997) (Bonsai: Technique and Daily Care, for the production of bonsai with rustic or indigenous species from Quebec). Two members and founders of the Montreal society wrote it, David Easterbrook and Jean-Philippe Coiteux. He begins the course by introducing us to Montreal bonsai:

"*So, what is a bonsai? There are a variety of perspectives. I am a student of the Montreal Society, where I learnt with David Easterbrook, the caretaker of the collection*

at the Botanical Gardens. So I will be teaching you bonsai the way David understands bonsai, and the way I was taught bonsai.

As everyone knows, a bonsai is a miniaturized version of a tree. I get calls here every week by people asking if I sell bonsai seeds. There are no bonsai seeds. Any tree can be a bonsai, as long as you use the proper techniques. Let me begin by saying that to develop into a good bonsai artist, one needs an artistic sense to design and trim the tree, but above all, a good understanding of horticulture and nature. A good bonsai artist tries to imitate nature, not control it. You can not make the plant adjust to your expectations. Rather, your expectations must adapt to the natural elements of the plant.

By imitating nature, your bonsai will look natural, and therefore, successful. The most beautiful bonsai trees you will ever see are found in nature, on the edge of a cliff, high up in the mountains, or in the desert. Trees that live under such harsh conditions represent the aesthetic that we hope to achieve in cultivating bonsai trees. They have succumbed to nature; half of the tree is dead, and the rest is crooked and very old looking. Their growth has been stunted, and their branches are withered and weighed down. But they resist, they stay alive, they represent energy. You will never find more beautiful bonsai than those that have been worked on by Mother Nature.

The bonsai we are accustomed to originate from Japan. The Chinese also collect miniature trees, but they call them penjing. There are important differences between the two. The Chinese prefer landscapes, rather than solitary trees, and they add little

ornaments and rocks on the surface of the soil. Japanese bonsai is simply a tree in a pot. There are no rocks, and no ornaments to decorate. The Chinese method of training trees is suppler, less rigid. The Japanese method is formal, with many rules and regulations."

To provide a detailed understanding of the rules that govern the art, Robert goes over the essential elements used in the classification of bonsai:

"*When the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society holds their exhibit every year in September, I am usually one of the judges. I look at the proportion of the tree, its position in the pot, the placement of the branches, the roots, and so on... There are many rules and regulations that artists must adhere to if they want their tree to be considered a successful bonsai. There is no deep mysterious or philosophical meaning behind these rules. They are mainly based on the fundamental principles of horticulture. They follow the laws of nature. As you ascend to the apex* (tip) *of the tree, the branches must grow shorter and denser. You do not want the branches to criss-cross, or to grow on top of one another. When you design a tree, you do so in order to allow for the most amount of photosynthesis possible. You also try to achieve a natural looking tree, so you must maintain the same proportions as found in nature. The roots must look well grounded, and the width of the trunk must be largest at the base. The lowest branch must begin a third way up the trunk, and it must be the thickest of all branches. There are also a number of rules that stem from the aesthetic ideal of an old and withered tree. The branches must be weighed down, not growing upward like on young seedlings. There are a number of techniques that can be used, especially if the tree is still quite young. You*

can artificially hollow out a trunk, or create jins (broken branches) *and shari* (dead limbs), *by ripping of the bark.*"

"*But does that not kill the tree?*" asks one of the students.

"*Not at all. The sap of a tree runs between the trunk and the exterior portion of the core. A tree has lifelines. Like the veins in our body, each root is the beginning of a lifeline, which brings nourishment, through the trunk, to specific branches in the tree. If you skin the bark of an entire tree, it will perish. However, if you only carve into part of the tree's bark, you only cut a single lifeline. By intentionally doing this, you can kill a part of the tree, while letting the rest of it live. It will produce an image that is truly inspired by nature*".

In addition to the above-mentioned rules, there are a range of standards and ideals, according to which bonsai trees are categorized into various shapes.

"*There are over two-hundred and fifty shapes according to Naka*", Robert explains, "*but we will only look at the basic forms*".

The first is called formal upright, or *chokkan*, in which the apex of the tree must be in exact opposition to the base of the trunk. The second shape is called *moyogi*, or informal upright, in which the trunk is rather sinuous. The third style is *shakan*, or slanting style. Trees in this category are not vertical as the apex is always to one side of the base of the trunk. Then, there is *han-kengai*, or semi-cascade, meaning that the branches of the tree go downwards below the edge of the pot, but never beyond the extremity of the pot's base. Only in *kengai* style, or cascade, can the branches fall beneath the base of the pot.

Another basic form is the broom style, which as the name describes, is shaped like a broom.

"*Do not try to create a different style than the tree naturally tends to do*" he explains. "*If a tree's branches are always straight in its natural environment, and you try to twist them and bend them, it will not look natural. If you are working on a tree that naturally takes on the shape of a broom, then there is no point in trying to force it to take on a cascading image.*"

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Prior to lunch, Robert briefly summarizes the basics of bonsai training and daily care, including: How to grow bonsai? How much light they need? When to water? When to re-pot? When to trim? How and when to fertilize? And how to get rid of unwanted insects? Students are very enthusiastic and ask many questions.

"*Re-potting bonsai trees is extremely important, especially for young bonsai, which need to be re-potted every year*", says Robert.

"*Every year! Why?*"

"*Because they are in such small pots, and their roots are continually growing, so if you do not re-pot your trees, and trim the roots, they will eventually suffocate*".

"*And when is the best time to do this?*"

"*The best time to do it is in the spring, just before the buds open, from mid-April, to the beginning of May. But of course, it changes every year, depending on what kind of winter we have*".

"*Can you do it any other time?*"

"*Well you can, but you might lose your tree. You see, two thirds of the roots of your tree grow between mid-April to mid-June. The roots stop growing during the summer. Then, from mid-August to mid-September, the other third of the roots grow. So, if you trim when the roots will not grow back, chances are your tree will not be capable of sufficiently nourishing itself*".

"*Do you plant the trees in ordinary soil? Because at the store, they come planted in rocks*".

"*Well, what goes into the soil is a little controversial. The Japanese say you have to put large rocks at the bottom of the pot, medium grains in the middle, and very fine material on the top. But Nick Lenz, an American bonsai artist, says that it is not like that in nature, so he does not do it that way. The one I make is composed of one-third small rocks, granite if possible, one third of cooked clay, and one third black soil. Not many bonsai artists use soil in their combination, but I find it helps, and a lot of the experts that I have met use it too. But each artist has his own thing. Some say you have to sift the mixture. I personally think it is a waste of time.*"

"*When you have just re-potted your tree, it is important to water them regularly, but do not use any fertilizers, cause the roots are still repairing themselves, and they are covered with scars*", he explains.

"*When is the best time for watering?*"

"*It is always best to water in the morning, because if done at night, you risk causing mushroom formations. Rainwater is best, but tap water will do if you let it rest*

twenty-four hours before use. The water will be at room temperature, and you will eliminate most of the chlorine".

"*Do you water them every day?*"

"*Not always. In the wintertime, it is usually once every two days, and during the summer, it can be two to three times a day. You want to keep the soil slightly humid.*"

"*What kind of fertilizer did you say we should use?*"

"*There are different types of fertilizer, each with their own purpose. All fertilizers are made up of Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium. Nitrogen feeds the leaves, Phosphorus nourishes the flowers, and Potassium strengthens the roots. But they are chemical fertilizers, so I recommend using only a half of the dose, but more often, to avoid burning the roots* ".

"*What about insecticides, are they harmful?*"

"*You can use them, but not the strong ones. Unlike fertilizers, however, you have to use the full dose required. If not, the strongest insects will survive and develop antibodies* ".

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After lunch, it is time to put theory into practice. Robert presents the tools needed for basic bonsai design, "*which can be purchased at the Pépinière du Gros-Bec Errant, or any other hardware store*". The tables in the conference room are separated, and each student is told to pick a tree. We are now ready to begin trimming:

"*First, let us begin by choosing the main branch of our bonsai, which must be the thickest branch, and a third way up the tree. It can be to the left or the right of the tree,*

but not in front and not behind. Then, we will choose the second branch, which is slightly higher than the first, and on the opposite side. The third branch is slightly higher still, and in the back. Repeat this pattern to the top. You can place a twist-tie or a piece of rope on the branches you are keeping, because if you accidentally cut one off, there is no turning back, and it will take two or three years before you get a replacement."

I sit quietly, observing my tree, trying to imagine the final product in my head. The first three branches are easy to choose, since there are only five or six choices anyway. But the higher you climb the denser the branches, and choosing becomes a difficult task. Like most students, I do not dare begin, in fear of cutting the wrong branches without Robert's approval. "*It is fine, it is fine*", he tells me, so I slowly begin trimming my tree. One by one, the branches fall to the ground. I make my way up to the top, choosing one on the right, one on the left, one in back, and a couple of frontal ones near the top. Robert comes by, and after briefly examining my tree, cuts off half of the remaining branches.

My so-called tree is now looking really skimpy. It has six or seven branches, and only a couple of leaves. To add to its pathetic allure, we begin the second step; wiring the branches:

"*When wiring, you can do one of two things. Either you begin at the base of the trunk and wire upwards. Or, begin at the extremity of one branch and wire to an opposing extremity a little higher up. The wire is always winded at a forty-five degree angle. You might have to wire a branch twice, which is fine, as long as the wires are*

parallel and not too close together. Once every single branch is properly wired, use your imagination, and bend the branches to create an old twisted tree".

Not as easy as it sounds! The wire keeps on moving while I attempt to secure it to one of the branches. I get totally confused, and my wires criss-cross. I can not get them parallel, and not many are at a forty-five degree angle. I call Robert over, who ends up wiring the whole tree. Styling the branches is fun, however. I twist them and turn them, trying to make my tiny bonsai look one hundred years old. Oups! Maybe a little too much. I just snapped off one of my remaining six branches. Oh well, I will have to wait a couple of years to replace that one.

Once everyone has finished wiring, we begin the final procedure, re-potting in a bonsai container. We place a plastic grid over the holes in the bottom of the containers, to ensure that the soil can not trickle out. We slowly urge our delicate trees out of their nursery pots, and with a fork, untangle the roots. Two thirds of the roots are cut off, leaving only a small clump just beneath the trunk. The tree is placed in the pot, not quite centred and towards the back, and secured into place with wires. After filling the container with soil, chopsticks are used to insure no air holes remain throughout the roots. Finally, our tree is placed in a basin of water for twenty minutes, while we all go downstairs and buy supplies.

Everyone buys something in the nursery. We all want the better scissors, the lamps, the soil, the fertilizers, the pots, and extra wiring. Some of the students end up with a tiny bonsai, barely alive, and two hundred dollars worth of equipment. Everyone

leaves with a business card in hand, and we are told to come back anytime we want material. The nursery truly is beautiful, and the owners wonderful. I guess that is why many enthusiasts that live in Montreal travel an hour away from home to get their material here, even though most everything can be purchased in their neighbourhood home renovation store, or at meetings with the Montreal society.

With a mere fifty dollars, I purchased all the basic material needed to practice, including two trees. Bonsai is truly a hobby that can be enjoyed at home without the need for weekly lessons and practice. One or two minutes everyday will suffice to enjoy the beauty of nature in your own home. All of my friends continually admire my little bonsai tree, and at Christmas, I have ten pre-bonsai to design as gifts for their parents. I really enjoy bonsai, and want to slowly build up a collection. At least bonsai trees are permanent, unlike the ikebana arrangements I make.

Ikenobo Ikebana: Practice and Patience

It is seven o'clock in the evening on the Tuesday following Labour Day. I drive to the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre of Montreal, situated in the North of the city, for my first ikebana course, and my first real day of fieldwork. I park my car, and slowly walk towards the tiny building, stopping at the entrance to examine the numerous advertisements pinned to the wall. As I walk indoors, I ask a young Japanese woman where the ikebana course is being held. Without a word, she directs me to her right, where I follow an older Japanese woman down a twisting staircase. "*This is great*", I think to myself, "*everyone is going to be Japanese*". When I arrive downstairs into the small room, four women are sitting around a bunch of tables stuck together and covered with a plastic cloth. There are two Japanese women, and two non-Japanese, all of them above the age of fifty. I soon realize that I needn't worry about being the only non-Japanese, but rather of being the only participant under the age of forty.

The oldest of the two non-Japanese women, a small lady, with white curly hair, dressed in a brown skirt and white top, wearing large round glasses, and bright pink lipstick, comes over to greet me.

"*Hello*", she says, a little abrupt, "*what can I do for you? Are you the new student?*"

"*Yes*" I reply, "*I am Hayley Wilson. I called and registered for the course*".

"*Ah, yes. I am Mme. Bolduc. I help out Mrs. Mayeda. Mrs. Mayeda? Mrs. Mayeda, come over here, we have a new student. This is Miss Wilson*".

"*Oh, Hayley*", says Mrs. Mayeda, a Japanese-Canadian woman in her late sixties, early seventies. She smiles and introduces me to the other women. "*This is Mrs. Okimura. She helps me out during the courses, cause there is so many people, you know, and I can not be everywhere. And you met Mrs. Bolduc. She helps me out too sometimes. And that is Diane*".

"*Welcome Hayley*", says Mrs. Okimura. "*You can go and sit over there if you like*". She points to the end of the table, "*that is where the beginners are asked to sit, so that you can be closest to the teacher. Alright?*"

I go over, sit down, and wait. I watch the three ladies divide two boxes of flowers into twelve separate bunches, which I assume are for the students. I can not wait to get started. After seeing a demonstration at the Botanical Gardens a few weeks ago, I know that the style of arrangements is very simple. It reminds me of the same aestheticism ones finds when buying Japanese style decorations in the trendy home deco boutiques. The whole Japanese aesthetic is really quite fashionable these days and the flower arrangements will look great with the other accessories I already have in my apartment.

"*Is this the first time you are going to do Japanese flower arranging*" asks Diane, a woman in her forties who only comes to class once in a while.

"*Yes. I have never done it before. I saw it at the Botanical Gardens for the first time. Have you been taking the course for very long?*"

"*Yeah*", she grins, "*well, I have been taking it now for about ten years, but it feels like I have been doing it all my life. Right, Mrs. Mayeda? Do you feel like you have been doing it all your life? I know I do*" she continues, looking away from Mrs. Mayeda, who hasn't responded to her question.

Slowly, the other students begin to filter in. The first to arrive is Mrs. Jackson, a proud new grandmother. Being third-generation Japanese-Canadian[3], Mrs. Jackson started taking the course a few years back to learn about her traditions, as did her mother and aunt in the past. She is quite involved in the Japanese community. She volunteers at the Montreal Bulletin, and is always present at community events, such as bazaars, the casino nights, the Christmas dinners, and so on. Susie, a second-generation Japanese-Canadian, soon comes in and greets the group. Like Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura, Susie learnt Japanese flower arranging as a little girl, but stopped after high school due to lack of interest. She started taking courses with Mrs. Mayeda a couple of years ago, wanting something to do after retirement. She joins Mrs. Jackson and looks at photographs of the new baby with Mrs. Okimura.

At the other end of the table, there is Maria, an Italian woman in her forties, with bright red hair and bright red lipstick, wearing three-quarter pants and a white blouse. She started taking ikebana lessons because she just loves flowers and all styles of flower arrangement. She sits with Michelle, another Italian woman in her forties, whose seven-year-old son always comes to class. Michelle joined the course a few years ago, after quitting her job to become a florist. She thought it might be interesting to learn about

ikebana, hoping that one day, when she has her own store, she will be able to create new forms of bouquets, rather than always making the one's you find in most florists. Julie, a woman in her thirties and one of the youngest of the bunch, soon joins them. She loves all flowers, but unlike Maria, who developed an interest in things Japanese after taking lessons in Japanese flower arranging, Julie started ikebana lessons due to her interest in things Japanese. She has already taken calligraphy lessons at the Botanical Gardens, and loves bonsai. Together, they chat with Mme. Bolduc about dieting, cooking, and jam making amongst other things.

Then there is Mrs. Kawasaki, a seventy-year old non-Japanese woman, married to a Japanese man, and the first non-Japanese student that Mrs. Mayeda ever had. She sits with Pauline, a younger woman in her late thirties, whose interest in Japanese culture stems from the year she spent living there. Finally, Mrs. Lachance arrives, a forty-year old woman, who drives to Montreal from Repentigny (around forty-five minutes away) each week to arrange flowers, with Eric, the vice-president and only male of the society, who was first introduced to the art by his brother.

The members of the Montreal Ikenobo society, and my experience with Ikebana International, clearly illustrates that Japanese flower arranging attracts mainly women. Most choose to participate in ikebana lessons because they enjoy working with flowers. By taking the course, the women meet up and share their interest with others, returning home every week with beautifully arranged flowers for their home. Whenever I asked the non-Japanese ladies why they developed an interest in ikebana, the answers were

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[3] An individual who's grandparents were born in Japan, and later immigrated to Canada.

almost always the same: they love flowers, they love the simplicity of ikebana, and they wanted to try something different from Western flower arranging:

> "Because I like flowers. I find that the ikebana style is much more to my liking. I like simple things. I do not really like the Western style. That is why I keep coming. I like simple lines, and I like flowers" (Marie, March 29, 2001).
>
> "I belong to four other flower clubs. It is all horticultural. I belong to the bonsai clubs, the African Violet, and Ikebana International" (Georgia, March 25, 2001).
>
> "It was a style of flower arrangement that I was not accustomed to, and it interested me because of its simplicity" (Mme. Bolduc, March 18, 2001).

For the Japanese-Canadian women, they wanted to learn ikebana to learn a little more about their Japanese origins, traditions, and culture. Ikebana was chosen over the other arts because of their love of flowers.

> "My first encounter with ikebana, actually, was when I was a little kid, and at that time, it was my aunt who used to take ikebana lessons, and I thought is was beautiful. It was a really nice art. When I came to Canada, a Japanese girl told me about the Ikenobo Society. I found out that it is the most traditional, the very first ikebana school. I said, good, I want to learn something, the very traditional one" (Susie, March 22, 2001).
>
> "It reflects our Buddhist religion. That is my particular interest, I find it has so much meaning to me. We live with nature" (Mrs. Okimura, March 12th, 2001).

By now, it is forty-five minutes past seven. Class is already fifteen minutes behind schedule, although no one seems to care. As students continue to chat in their respective groups, Mrs. Okimura comes over to see me:

"*Next time you come, bring a pair of scissors, some newspaper and a vase. For today, I will lend you my scissors, and you can borrow this vase. It belongs to the society*".

She places the newspaper beneath the vase, which has been half filled with water.

"*Miori san*", she cries out to Mrs. Mayeda, "*do you have any extra kenzan's for Hayley?*"

"*Sure I do*", replies Mrs. Mayeda, who walks over to me holding a round object with thick metal needles all over it, which they use to stick the flowers into.

"*It is forty dollars for the kenzan. I know it is expensive, and I feel really bad taking your money, but I have to get them from Japan. Everything we need for ikebana comes from Japan, so when I travel, I try to pick up as much stuff as possible. But with the exchange rate and everything, it is hard to keep the prices low. But at least you do not have to buy Japanese flowers. You can work with any flowers you get your hands on, although sometimes I like to use the more traditional flowers. I also think you should get this book. I give it to all my new students. It is really just an introduction to Ikenobo, but it explains all the basics, so you can read it if you like*".

Of course I purchase the kenzan, and the book, which I end up using every week to figure out what I am doing. I am the only beginner, and I do not know anything about ikebana. I find my lessons quite confusing and frustrating because I have to remember numerous Japanese words, rules, and principles for every style that I am taught. Although Mrs. Okimura takes me aside and explains the basics of every new style to me, I review my book during lessons, or at home, trying to determine what style we are doing, and what rules I must follow.

When Mrs. Mayeda begins to distribute the flowers to the students, Mrs. Okimura asks me to go with her to a small chalkboard, where she teaches me the basics of the Ikenobo School of ikebana.

"*Ikebana means to arrange flowers in a vase*" she explains, "*and Ikenobo is only one school of ikebana. It is the oldest and most traditional school. When you do flowers the Ikenobo way, your arrangement is always composed of three main yakueda* (branches)*: shin, soe, and tai*".

She draws a diagram on the board, showing me how the three main branches must be placed in the vase (see Appendix 1). She draws a line down the middle of her sketch, and explains:

"*On the left side of the arrangement, you have what we call 'yo', or the sunny side of the arrangement. That is where your shin goes. That is where there should be the most leaves, and that is the direction they should be facing. On the other side, we call it 'in', or the shady side of the arrangement. That is where the tai is*".

I am told that in the Ikenobo School, *Shin* symbolizes man, whereas in other schools, it symbolizes heaven. The spirit of Ikenobo flower arrangement lies in this very difference.

"*Sometimes, students from other schools come to take lessons with us because they want to learn something traditional, but they always have a hard time fitting in, and they usually stop coming. Once you start with one school, you have to stick with it. We have had students come from the Sogetsu School, and they couldn't get used to Ikenobo. In the Sogetsu School, they do not really have many rules for how many flowers, what*

heights, what proportions, and how the flowers need to be positioned. So when we tell them that their flowers do not look right, they say 'but Mrs. Okimura, I like it like that'. They can not separate themselves from the Sogetsu spirit. It is not that the other Schools are not as nice, but it is not the same spirit, we do not have the same essence, we do not arrange our flowers in the same way. The Sogetsu School makes huge arrangements. I personally do not like them, but it does not mean that they are not good."

My introduction to Ikenobo ikebana was very brief, and once explained, we go over to the table, where Mrs. Okimura demonstrates the arrangement we will be doing today, while I watch and learn. While crafting the arrangement, she goes over the different steps, telling me where each element needs to go.

"*Today we are using lilies. It is not the best for Shoka, but it will do. So first, you choose the Shin. Shin does not have be a big flower, but it should be straight.* (She picks out a tall straight stem and places it in her hand.) *Then you choose your Soe. This one is perfect for Soe.* (She picks out another long stem, which has a slight curve that naturally bends towards the left and backwards, and cuts it so that it measures two thirds of the *Shin*.) *This one will be Tai. The biggest flower is always Tai.* (Again the stem is cut, so that it measures only a third of *Shin*)."

She places the flowers in the *kenzan*, urging me to remember the rules she lays down. When placing flowers, the most important rule of Ikenobo is the formation of the *mizugiwa*, meaning that all stems have to be placed in order to give the impression that all branches develop from a central limb, much like how they grow in nature. To do so,

all branches are placed directly one in front of the other in a straight line, and inserted into the *kenzan*. When you look at the arrangement from straight on, the first couple of inches of the branches, from the vase upwards, give the impression of a single stem (see Appendix 2).

Mrs. Okimura finishes my arrangement, and tells me to try on my own. I am to take all the flowers out of the *kenzan* and attempt to copy what she has shown me. During this time, Mrs. Okimura goes around the room to help out the other students. I think to myself, "*well this is easy, all I have to do is put them back in the same place*", and after a brief two minutes, I am ready for my correction. I have arranged the flowers exactly as she did, and already consider myself knowledgeable in the art. Mrs. Okimura comes back to assess my arrangement, and politely says that it is not perfect, but pretty good for a first try. She sits back down and re-arranges my flowers, sometimes pointing out what she's adjusting, other times leaving it up to me to understand on my own.

"*I would take this off if you want it in this position*" she says, referring to a lily bud on the *Tai* that drooped to the left of the arrangement.

"*You should never have anything on the left side that is below the Soe. Remember these kind of rules. They are very important, and people often neglect them, so their flowers never look right*".

I do not quite understand the mistakes I made. I thought I had placed the flowers in the exact same position. In fact, I am sure I did. Yet, that one flower was not right, and after she took it off, the arrangement was much nicer.

Every week, Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura sit down and adjust the arrangements of every student, even the oldest; sometimes moving branches, sometimes shortening them, sometimes simply cutting off certain leaves that do not seem to fit in properly. While they do this, the rest of the students follow the teachers around, questioning the corrections.

When everyone's arrangements are final, the students begin to clean things up. The cut branches, leaves, flowers, and so forth are placed in a garbage bag, and the water in the vases is thrown out in the kitchen. Some of the students help Mrs. Mayeda pick up the remaining flowers that have not been used. Others help Mrs. Okimura clean the table. Most, including myself, not knowing what to do, thank the teachers and leave.

When I get home, I sit down with my roommates, and attempt to explain the meaning of my arrangement. "*Shin, Soe, and Tai, represent the universe. There is a light side and a dark side, and you can not go beneath the Soe*".

****

For my fourth lesson, I learn modern *Shoka*. Today's course is special, as Mrs. Mayeda has prepared notes:

"*O.K. girls. I want to go over the difference between Shoka Shimputai and Shoka Shofutai. You are all too young to learn it, but we will do it anyway because we always do Shoka Shofutai, and I do not want you to get bored*".

Shoka Shimputai is the freestyle of Ikenobo. It is a modern style that was developed in 1977-1978. Mrs. Mayeda was in Japan in 1979, when it was first introduced to Ikenobo students, and she took courses with the headmaster himself. Although the style has barely any rules, it is one of the hardest to learn. Not many of the students in Montreal are truly prepared for freestyle, since you really need to excel in the more traditional styles in order to arrange the flowers according to the Ikenobo spirit. But Mrs. Mayeda is teaching a Canadian audience. She is a businesswoman after all, and knows that students will get bored if they are asked to do *Shoka Shofutai* with lilies for six months, or until they are perfect.

She continues the course by explaining the major differences between the two styles. Both are *Shoka*, but are very different from one another.

"*Traditional Shoka Shofutai*" she explains, "*is composed of three things: Shin, Soe, and Tai. But Shoka Shimputai is composed of only two things, Shu and Yo. Shu is the main or major branch, and Yo is the minor branch. Ashurai (*the helpers*) are also used in Shimputai, but they play a more important role than in Shoka Shofutai, since they are use to finish or complete an arrangement. Shimputai is less rigid than Shoka Shofutai, because there are not as many rules to follow. Shimputai comes from the heart; it represents each person individually. No Shimputai should be the same*". From her notes, she reads, "*Your own sense or feeling becomes the central theme. Well, we should not really be all using the same material since part of that feeling comes from the material you use, but that would be too hard in this course. But do not worry, you will all make something different anyway.*"

While Mrs. Mayeda presents the principles of *Shoka Shimputai*, all of the students take out little note pads, and copy down what Mrs. Mayeda is explaining. I try to follow along, but find the lesson too confusing, and therefore, refer my notes in the introductory book. Interestingly, the notes that Mrs. Mayeda has brought to class are taken directly from the literature. Her explanations replicate word for word the teachings of the Ikenobo headquarters in Japan.

When the lesson is finished, I try to arrange the flowers to the best of my abilities, but have absolutely no clue of what I am doing, or where to start. So, as usual, I let the women around me begin, and then copy what they are doing. Despite my tardy start, I am the first to finish my arrangement. Mrs. Okimura comes over for my final correction. As she snips the leaves, and moves the flowers around, Maria and Mrs. Jackson watch in amazement.

"*Wow, she is so graceful when she does her arrangements*", Mrs. Jackson points out.

"*I know*", exclaims Maria, "*it is so natural for her*".

"*Of course*", adds on Mme. Bolduc, "*we do not see flowers the same way they do. They have a Japanese eye for it; they have a vision of flowers that we do not. I have been doing this for years, and my flowers still never have the right proportions. I forget things, even if they repeat it to me every time. Last week, I made such a stupid mistake. But I could not concentrate. Everyone is talking all the time. Anyway, I made a huge mistake, completely non-excusable. I took all the leaves off my chrysanthemum, which*

was totally stupid on my behalf, because I needed the leaves for my Tai. But what can I say. You never know everything about Ikenobo, there is always something to learn".

****

I start to arrange my *Moribana*. I have been following the courses now for almost a year, and I know what my weaknesses are. I know that I always rush my arrangements. So this time, I try to pay attention, and place every single flower and branch with care. The new guy, Han, a young Chinese man, only about twenty, starts to arrange his flowers at the same time. He quickly assembles his arrangement, ripping the flowers off the branches without hesitation, and jamming them into the *kenzan* without a thought. When he finishes, after all of two minutes, Mrs. Okimura goes over to correct his flowers, and to my surprise, tells him how good it is.

"*Are you sure this is your first class?*"

"*Of course*", he replies, "*but I have read a couple of books*".

After adjusting a few elements, Mrs. Okimura asks the whole class to take a look at "*our beginner's first arrangement*". I was a little frustrated to say the least. I try so hard to get these arrangements right, and I never receive such praise.

After finishing with Han, Mrs. Okimura comes to see me. I stand there proudly, and allow her to sit in my place, waiting to be told how much I have improved over the past year. Instead, she says, "*Can I tell you something?*" We go to the blackboard, where she again shows me the basic principles of *Moribana*. We then return to my arrangement, and Mrs. Okimura points out the many inaccuracies.

"It is too high. And for there, I would prefer you to have a brighter flower. I would think pink is better than purple, cause purple is too dark. If you find a flower is too small, you can press on the centre very lightly and it will open up a bit. Use a pink one for the highest stem, and with a lot of flowers if possible. I showed you how to break carnations, right? Always break it, never cut it, because they will die faster if you do. But do not cut it like that, cause you might need the other flowers. There are rules for cutting. See the difference? Now you have two stems instead of one. You are also bringing everything down. It looks too droopy. You are supposed to make a valley effect. See how Mrs. Lachance has shorter branches in the middle and then some longer in the back and slightly longer in front. That makes it look like a valley. See? You could have a longer one right here. And you do not have to use all the flowers you know?"

Even after one year, I still have no clue why Mrs. Okimura placed a pink one here and a tall one there…

I sometimes wonder if the other women in my class feel the same frustrations as I do. If so, they rarely express them. I suppose they are not learning ikebana to excel and become masters. Ikebana is, after all, just a hobby, something they do for enjoyment. This was even more obvious when I started attending the meetings offered by Ikebana International.

Ikebana International: a step-by-step Guide to the Wonderful World of Flower Arranging with Pumpkins

There are no signs for Ikebana International when I arrive at the Dominion Douglas Church, so I wonder inside, and follow the sound of voices down a corridor, where to my left, I see a bunch of women talking in groups in a large gymnasium.

Two women are at the entrance, welcoming members inside. Mrs Tanaka, the president of the organization, is also there.

"*Hi*", she says, "*your name?*"

"*Hayley Wilson*".

"*Alright then, Miss Wilson, just look in the black plastic box for your name tag, and please place it around your neck. Do not forget to put it back when you leave though.*"

I stroll around the gymnasium, and notice Mrs. Kordich, a woman I had contacted via e-mail to get some information on the organization and application forms. I walk over and introduce myself. She looks at me, as if confused:

"*Oh, you are Hayley Wilson. I was expecting a sixty-five year old woman. Well then, I am a little busy right now, so you go and sit down, and I will try to come see you later so that we can discuss what School you want to take lessons with*".

Not really knowing what to do with myself, I take a seat in the rows of chairs lined up in front of the stage, and begin taking notes on the surroundings:

"The demonstration has not begun yet. All of the women are gathered in circles of three or four around the gymnasium, although I can not gather what they are talking about. How will I ever introduce myself? Directly in front of me there is a stage, and in the middle, a long table covered with a plastic sheet. That is probably where the demonstration will take place. To my left, there is a sales table, covered with books, vases, kenzan's, and some flowers. Not many of the women are checking out the goods though. I imagine they are not interested or too busy catching up. Oh, there is Georgia from the Ikenobo Society. I still have not seen Mrs. Mayeda though. In the back of the room there is a tiny kitchen; I can see a couple of women, and one man, the only man, Mario Turgeon, who is preparing the cookies, snacks, and tea for after the demonstration. In the back of the gymnasium there is a table, and on it, some baked goods for sale (profits go to the organisation). On the wall behind the stand, there are some paintings, made by the master who is demonstrating today.

All of the women are wearing nametags around their necks. I recognize their names from the exhibit held by Ikebana International at the Botanical Gardens in September. Amongst these, there is Andrée Kordich, Nilofar Husain, Sandra Frisby, Cornelia Singh, and Nicole Durand; all members of the Board of Directors. I also recall seeing the works of Jutta Turcotte, Kazuko Tanaka, and Diane Martin, alongside the arrangements of certified students and teachers, such as Mme. Bourbonnais, Cam Ly Le Thi, and Diane Eggleton.

I probably should have dressed up a little. The women keep on glancing at me. I am at least thirty years younger than most members are. The women here seem to belong to the upper echelons of society; all are very well dressed, what with their fur jackets, leather pants, and huge rings covering their fingers. They must all be retired, or just not working, if they can afford to spend Tuesday afternoons watching an ikebana demonstration. Almost every woman is wearing dress shoes. Their hair is coifed with precision; nicely brushed, puffed up with hair spray, and styled with stone-covered pins on the side of one ear. Even the oldest women have make-up all over their face, and every time a woman walks past me, a strong scent of perfume enters my nostrils. I am feeling a little awkward. I definitely should not have worn sneakers."

Once all members are seated, Mrs. Tanaka welcomes everyone, in French and English, and introduces the guest speaker. Mr. Kikuchi, a Japanese Master of the *Ohara* School, who lives in Ottawa, will perform a demonstration with the help of his three assistants: Sharon, Jessica, and Adrienne.

As Mr. Kikuchi begins his first arrangement, "*a slanted colour scheme, which uses multiple types of flowers*", Adrienne introduces the development of the *Ohara* School. She briefly goes over its history and the influence of Western things on Japanese art.

"*In the 1890's, Japan opened itself to the Western world, and started to import a variety of Western ideas and materials. As these were so different from what the Japanese were accustomed to, ikebana schools that wanted to integrate these, needed to*

introduce a new way of arranging flowers. This need developed into what we now know as Moribana. In the past, it was customary to use tall vases, and a Y-shaped fork was used to balance the flowers into the chosen composition. With a wide vase, like the ones used for Moribana, there is no way of balancing the flowers with a Y-shaped fork, so the Japanese developed a type of metal tool, that looks like a star, which can hold flowers more solidly. Of course, later they came up with the kenzan, which is nowadays the most common instrument used".

When the first arrangement is finished, everyone claps, and Adrienne exclaims,

"*This really is a lovely coffee table arrangement. It is a wonderful example of the new design of the Ohara School; it is very low, and very colourful. It really would look just perfect in my home, a great arrangement for any coffee table*".

The second arrangement is composed of oak and roses. Just placing the oak branch took some five minutes. Unlike myself, who gives up when flowers are uncooperative, Mr. Kikuchi had an image in his mind, and made the branches do exactly as he wished.

"*It takes quite a while to get a branch right*", says Adrienne, "*but when you do, what a beautiful arrangement it creates*".

When the arrangement is complete, a very simple, yet exquisite ikebana stands before us. One oak branch surrounded by three luscious red roses.

"*This small, yet beautiful piece of work would fit in anyone's home*", Adrienne contemplates.

Many of the women take photos and whisper in each other's ears. I am not the only one to find this piece quite remarkable.

For the third arrangement, Mr. Kikuchi does a landscape, a style the *Ohara* School is renown for. What starts off as an empty vase, soon turns into a miniaturized image of a river, surrounded by a cluster of trees. To complete the arrangement, the master introduces lilies, however, to the surprise of most women, he discards all fully grown flowers. They all moan in disappointment when he trims off the largest and most beautiful flowers on the stem, leaving only tiny unopened buds to place within the arrangement.

"*It is so hard to get used to cutting off the main flowers*", sighs Adrienne, "*all ikebana teachers know this is one of the hardest steps for new students to do. But you must learn to cut off unnecessary shoots and flowers*".

Everyone laughs.

"*When you are working with lilies, I suggest that you rip off the little tentacles on the inside of the flowers, because these stain awfully, and it is really hard to get off. Also, if you take them off, your lilies will last longer. But if ever you do stain your clothes, do not put water on it, because it just makes it worse. Just let it dry and then brush it off*".

"*The fifth arrangement that Mr. Kikuchi will do for us today is very seasonal*", says Adrienne, while the he prepares to continue the demonstration. He pulls out a huge pumpkin and lays it on the table. The crowd's enthusiasm rises when they realize that the pumpkin is going to be used as a vase. Adrienne smiles, "*finally, here's something new*

to do with a pumpkin at Halloween." The pumpkin is filled with long stems of grass-like material, mismatched with a couple of branches covered in red berries. Coincidentally, the material used in this arrangement is also the material being sold at the sales table to raise money, and as soon as Mr. Kikuchi finishes guiding the women through the steps of pumpkin ikebana, many of them race to the sales tables to buy the material. "*How Martha Stewart is this?*" I think to myself, imagining the home deco shows on television, "*I bet there will be a bunch of pumpkin ikebana vases all over Westmount this Halloween*".

When the demonstration ended, the women regrouped to discuss how beautiful the Master's arrangements were, while enjoying a cup of tea and some sandwiches that had been prepared by volunteers. The relaxed atmosphere I encountered at Ikebana International strongly contrasts the rigidity I came to enjoy in my Japanese tea ceremony courses, where I sometimes had the impression of truly experiencing traditional arts the "Japanese" way.

Learning to Perform Tea Ceremonies: Warigeiko, Warigeiko, Warigeiko...

I am really excited to begin my tea ceremony lessons. I already know so much about the art, and can not wait to experience the ritual myself. I have read all of the literature written in English for Western audiences, and think back to their descriptions of tea while driving to my first lesson. The overall impression gathered from these books is one of a religious ritual, which contains many of Japan's traditional values and beliefs

(Kakuzo, 1906; Castile, 1971; Tanaka, 1974; Kondo, 1985; Anderson, 1987; Hammitzsch, 1988; Varley & Kumakura, 1989, and Hirota, 1995). I remind myself that much of the literature represents idealized interpretations of tea as a means to reach Zen enlightenment. Most do not take into account the role of tea as a form of entertainment, a political tool, a status symbol, and a means for women to escape social norms (Wilson, 1999). Nevertheless, I head off with a rather romantic image, and expect to experience a unique, and "Japanese" experience.

Demonstrations begin at seven o'clock p.m., followed by two-hour lessons from eight till ten. Each three-hour demonstration/lesson costs twelve dollars. Most of the time, everyone meets on Tuesday's, twice a month, unless the students and teachers are busy and decide otherwise.

When I enter the store, I am a little surprised with what I see. Rather than entering a beautiful tearoom with gorgeous architecture, I walk into a tiny show room that is jammed-pack with Japanese goods. My tea ceremony courses are held at R. Uchiyama Articles Japonais, a Japanese goods store in downtown Montreal. The owner of the boutique, Mrs. Ritsuko, sells most of the equipment needed to perform tea ceremonies, alongside some of the material needed for ikebana, origami, and other Japanese arts. In a small corner, I notice three *tatami* mats lying on the floor, surrounded by a skimpy paper-like folding wall. An electric wire runs down the mats to a large boiling pot, which sits across the so-called *tokonoma*; traditionally an alcove where one places a *chabana*, or flower arrangement for tea ceremonies, and a piece of calligraphy to

set the mood. Instead of a *tokonoma*, I find a small wooden stand with plastic flowers in a pot, and a fake calligraphy hanging over it. Needless to say, this is not what I was expecting. I knew, of course, that the tearoom would not be surrounded by a tea garden, and that the architecture would probably not resemble the classical style presented in the literature, but still, I remained a little disappointed with the set-up they proposed.

There are four people waiting for me: Line, Mamiko, and Gaetan, the three instructors (and students of the headmaster), and Maurice, the only other student. Line, a woman in her late thirties, is the main instructor. She has been training with the Master of the Montreal Urasenke School of Tea for over ten years, and even spent one year training in Japan at the headquarters. Mamiko, a Japanese woman who migrated to Montreal as an adult, has been a member of the Urasenke School from its beginnings twenty years ago. Although she is an excellent practitioner, she barely speaks any French or English, and therefore, does not take over the lessons. On many occasions, however, Line refers to Mamiko when unsure about certain movements. Gaetan, a man in his fifties, started to learn tea ceremonies some ten years ago, in order to find peace and tranquillity, despite his busy days at work. Like Line, Gaetan was first introduced to the art during a business trip to Japan. Unfortunately, he is a very busy and nervous man, which forced him to stop teaching after a couple of months due to stress. Maurice, the only student, is also a man in his fifties. He started the lessons a couple of weeks prior to my introduction. Much like myself, he had read much literature on the topic, and was thrilled to discover the existence of the Urasenke School in Montreal.

I am immediately told to take off my shoes. Line takes my coat, and politely asks if she can place it on the ground. As this is my first lesson, she goes over the basics of *chanoyu* with me, briefly summarizing the history and spirit of the art:

"In Japan, the mundane act of serving tea has been perfected and rendered an art. Chado, or the way of tea, is the term used to signify the art of preparing green powdered tea for guests. The whole ritual stems from Zen Buddhist priests, who first introduced the art to Japan. As the drinking of tea became more popular, a series of masters, the most renown being Sen Rikyu, contributed to the development of the art by formalizing the method of preparing and drinking tea with great aestheticism.

When invited to drink a bowl of tea, one to five guests gather in a special room, the tearoom, whose architecture has been specifically conceived to perform tea ceremonies. The guests not only have the chance to meet with others, but also to relax peacefully, forgetting the troubles and stresses of everyday life. The host has prepared the room for his guests. There is a flower arrangement and a work of calligraphy set in the tokonoma, used to present the atmosphere he/she intends to pursue. The host has purified the tearoom, and prepared a light kaiseki meal for all guests to enjoy. After the meal, the host prepares a thick green tea for his guests in silence. This is the climax of the ceremony. An informal preparation of thin tea follows, during which time the main guest and the host have the opportunity to discuss the tea ceremony and the utensils used.

Chado, or the way of tea, is much more than drinking tea. It is a way of life. Four principles define the fundamental spirit of tea: Wa, Kei, Sei, and Jaku. Wa signifies

harmony: harmony between the host and his guests, harmony with the seasons, and harmony with the utensils. Kei signifies the respect that one feels vis-à-vis the utensils used throughout the ceremony. Sei represents purity, honesty, and serenity. And finally, Jaku signifies a state of mind, a state of peace and tranquility, that can only be reached when the host and his guests are capable of truly achieving Wa, Kei, and Sei together".

My introduction to the way of tea is followed by a demonstration of a simple *temae*, the procedure during which one prepares tea for the guests.

"*Would you like to join us?*" Line asks. "*You can be the third guest. Just sit next to Mamiko and Gaetan, and try to follow what they do*".

"*Sure*", I reply, and attempt to walk onto the *tatami* mats.

"*Wait!*" she says, "*you must bow first before entering the tea room*".

I kneel at the edge of the mats, and try to imitate the way both Mamiko and Gaetan had entered the tearoom. I am immediately corrected.

"*No, that is not right. You look like a frog or a crab. Do not keep your head up, and try to keep your arms closer to your body. There, much better, that is a lot better, now you look much more graceful*".

I feel rather silly, but continue to proceed, crawling towards the two instructors on my knees, the way they had. As the ceremony begins, I take out my note pad to jot down the placement of the utensils, and the movements made by the host, but Mamiko stops me, "*watch first, then make notes*".

During the ceremony, a number of movements are carried out, all of which are regulated by formalized rules and actions. In brief summary, the host enters the tearoom and bows together with the guests; the *temae* has begun. The host exits the tearoom and returns with the sweets, which he/she, on this day she, places in front of the first guest. Then, in a specific order, the host brings in the tea container, the tea bowl, the tea whisk, the teaspoon, the tea ladle, the container of clean water, and the container for old water. These are placed in front of the host, who sits facing the kettle, and sideways in front of the guests. The host prepares herself mentally, breathing in and out deeply, while the guests await the performance. I feel like giggling. I am a little uncomfortable not knowing what to do. I have to cough, but refrain because the atmosphere is so serious, and I do not want to insult the participants.

The host gracefully takes her *fukusa* (a silk cloth used to purify the utensils) from the left side of her kimono, and without a thought, gently folds it to purify the tea container and the teaspoon. Next, the tea bowl and tea whisk are examined and purified according to certain standards. "*Okashi o dozo*", she whispers to the first guest, who gently nods. He may now enjoy the sweets placed in front of him. The host continues the procedure while the guest eats his sweets, again following tea etiquette and rules. The tea container is opened, and green powdered tea is scooped up and softly placed within the tea bowl. Mamiko giggles since the sweets Gaetan is chewing on are crunchy and making too much noise.

The water in the kettle is now hot enough. I am told that the sound of the water is reminiscent of the sound of the wind in the pines. One must listen carefully though, since the sound of music in the room next door, and the cars going by on the street below override the whispers of the kettle. The host peacefully fills the tea ladle with hot water, and pours it over the tea. The tea is whipped, so as to form frothy green bubbles on the surface, and placed to the right of the host. Now the focus of the ceremony is on the first guest. He crawls over to the bowl, and quietly brings it back with him to his corner of the room. Placing it to his left, between himself and the second guest, he whispers "*osakini*", in apology for drinking first, then, placing the bowl in front of him, he nods to the host and quietly mumbles "*gosho dan itashi masu*" in thanks for the tea. He picks the tea bowl up in both hands, bows slightly and turns it around, clockwise, ensuring not to drink from the front of the bowl. This is done out of respect for the potter, I am told. He drinks the tea in three sips and one half, ensuring to produce a loud slurp at the end, signalling that the tea is excellent. With his right thumb and fore-finger, the guest wipes the edge of the bowl, from left to right, turns it back around, and returns it to the host, who recommences the procedure for both the second guest and myself. Of course, while I attempt the procedure, the silence is broken, as they instruct me on every single movement I make. When everyone has drunk, the first guest whispers to the host that she can now end the ceremony. She slowly cleans up her material and exits the tearoom with all utensils, before entering one last time to bow in respectfulness with the guests; the *temae* is finished.

The whole ceremony was quite beautiful, although I do not think any of us achieved the four principles of tea. At least I did not. I was too focused on the tingling of my toes, and the movements I needed to perform.

"*It is hard to follow the first time*", Geatan says to me, and grabs a sheet off the floor. "*This is what we will use to show you the various steps, they are called warigeiko, which means that the whole ceremony has been broken down into parts*".
The sheet is a list of movements, such as bowing, cleaning the teaspoon, examining the tea whisk, and entering the tearoom.

"*A student of tea must begin by studying a series of basic elements. This study gives the student the basic techniques that are combined and performed in succession to make up the tea ceremony*".

The introductory course teaches participants the various elements of the ceremony by breaking the *temae* into distinct movements, called *warigeiko*, which are taught one at a time. For each movement that one makes, there is a specific set of guidelines and rules that must be respected, down to the most intricate details. Each movement is practised during three lessons, under the guidance of a teacher, until finally, the student is ready perform a very simple *temae*.

The *warigeiko* are learnt through observation and repetition, lots of repetition. Even the simplest of movements, such as sitting down, can be repeated for over twenty minutes, because there are so many rules and details to be observed.

"*Let us begin with doing seiza*", Gaetan says to me. "*Sei means correct and za means place*". He stands next to me on one of the *tatami* mats, and demonstrates the movement.

"*When you sit down, imagine you are wearing a kimono. If you have ever worn one, you know how much they restrict your movement. This is especially true for women, because when they wear kimonos, they must pay attention, so as not to open their legs too widely. Traditional male kimonos are not as bad, because they are sometimes wrapped with large skirts that allow more movement*".

He places his left hand just below his pelvis to hold down the kimono, and kneels. As he goes down, his right hand guides the kimono under his knees, and he rests on the tip of his toes. Slowly and gracefully, he lays his feet out flat, and acquires the correct position.

"*You are supposed to have your right toes resting on your left ones*", he points out, "*but Americans aren't used to sitting in seiza, and since we are not as formal as in Japan, we allow students to find a position for their feet that is most comfortable. When you are sitting down, you also want to make sure that there is no more than a fist between your two knees. It is one fist for women, two fists for men. Your hands must be on your knees, the right hand overlapping the left* ".

He breathes in deeply, eyes closed.

"*What else should I tell you. Also, your knees have to be sixteen lines from the heri, or edge of the tatami mat. But since we have longer legs than the Japanese, sometimes you will find that your toes will be over the edge on the other side*".

After practising for over fifteen minutes, we sit in *seiza* for quite some time. Geatan often pauses, as if thinking what to say. He seems completely relaxed. All I can hear is the sound of his deep breathing.

"*The entrance to the tearoom is called the nigiriguchi. Nigiri means to crawl, and guchi means mouth. In the past, the doorway was only knee high. This forced samurais, who in the past were the main practitioners of tea, to take off their swords and crawl through the entrance in humility. The fan, which we use during the ceremony when we bow, replaces the sword. It is tucked into the kimono, on the left, as symbol of humility. You know, women have only been allowed to enter tearooms and perform the ceremony in the past one hundred and fifty years. With the Meiji restoration, the Grand-Master Ennosai of the Urasenke School, or was it Gengensai? no... Ennosai, realized that an interest in traditional arts was declining with men. The West had much influence on Japan at this time, and Japanese men were much more interested in Western things, so the Grand-Master decided that tea ceremonies should be taught in high school, and that women should also be allowed to participate. Nowadays in Japan, women are the main practitioners*".

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Over the course of my lessons, I went over all of the different *warigeiko* needed to perform a tea ceremony numerous times, and slowly began to remember all of the finest details. Each and every movement is precise, and you must perform them with care. After my first lesson, much less was explained, but was rather demonstrated. The only

way to learn is through observation and practice. Students are expected to remember all of the movements, and are encouraged to rehearse at home for the next lesson.

"*Learning tea ceremonies in Montreal is a little different than in Japan*", Line explains to me, "*because Mrs. Kagemori* (the headmaster) *has adapted her method of teaching to Western lifestyles. But it is still like the Japanese. She will show us what to do, and she will always correct the particular order of things, or the particular moment when movements need to be done. She will correct our form in a general manner, but she will not repeat herself. So if you do not get it the first time, you will continue to practice tea with the same mistakes, until a couple of months later, when she might again, in a general manner, correct the mistakes you are doing. We* (North Americans) *want everything to be explained, but they just show you, and you must find the meaning. Of course, this is the introduction, and we are not with Mrs. Kagemori, so it is not as strict. But that is how you will learn when you are better*".

"*Okay everyone*", she continues, "*let us go over the folds of the chakin again* (white napkin used to purify the tea bowl). *Maurice, stand next to Mamiko. Manon, go on her other side. Louise and Hayley, come and stand next to me please.*"

We all stand next to one another in a straight line, and watch the instructors as they demonstrate the *warigeiko*. They repeat, this time very slowly, and we copy each step of the movement over and over again. If the movement is not executed perfectly, we recommence. Line and Manon, two new students and fanatics of Japanese culture, grab a note pad and begin listing the various movements required.

"*Take notes when you get home*" says Line, "*but not during class, please. With Mrs. Kagemori you have to watch, not write. She would never allow you to bring in a note pad. When I was in Japan, it was the same thing. I would go home after every class and write the procedures down. I found it much easier to remember that way. Oh, and practice too! You have to practice at home. At least practice the movements that do not require too much material*".

I want to make sure that I remember the steps next time I go, so when I get home, I make a list of the procedure called for when folding a *chakin*. Or at least, I write down what I remember:

"*First, I rinse the chakin in water and wring it out in a special manner, which I do not recall. Then, I place the chakin in front of my chest, so that the stitches on the one side are facing me. I fold the first third, from the top, towards me (I think), and then fold it over again, so that it is folded into three equal parts. I move the chakin into a vertical position; my right hand is on top, and I hold the chakin with my thumb and forefinger. My left hand is at the bottom, and the chakin is seized between my thumb and four outstretched fingers, palm towards my body. My left hand travels to the middle of the chakin, I slightly tighten my grip, and fold the chakin in half. For the fourth fold, I tuck my four outstretched fingers under the now horizontal position of the chakin, so as to mark the centre. My right hand then folds the chakin in half for a second time. With my right hand, I again fold a third of the napkin, from right to left. My left thumb, still within the creases of a prior fold, is pulled out, leaving an empty hole to the left of the final fold. The chakin can now be placed in the tea bowl*".

Although not quite like what I read in the books, my experience with the Montreal branch of the Urasenke School is definitely unique. Although I am a consumer, paying a person to teach me, I have many rules and regulations to obey. Tardiness is unacceptable, and total awareness is a must. One learns to be silent, to watch and learn, and most importantly, to remember; do not make teachers repeat themselves. The behaviour expected is unlike any other course I have taken throughout my life, which probably explains why, out of a mere four students, only two made it to the end of the year: Louise (a latecomer), and myself.

Conclusion: Who, What, Where, When, How, as Schemes of Understanding for the Analysis and Categorization of Three Japanese Arts

Why is it that most people know what I am talking about when referring to bonsai trees, yet frown when I mention ikebana and tea ceremonies, not knowing what the arts are, and not knowing why I chose to pursue them as an interest? In the above, I presented an ethnographic description of the arts, to illustrate the factors that contribute to their uneven distribution amongst Montrealers. In the remainder of this chapter, I argue that the who, what, where, when, and how of the arts are in fact the finer cultural details, which practitioners use as schemes of understanding for assessing and categorizing bonsai, ikebana, and tea according to a metaculture of similarity. As such, I argue that individual practitioners use these enquiries, both consciously and unconsciously, to decipher similarities and differences between the practice of Japanese traditional arts in Montreal and their own lives. As similarity reigns as the hegemonic ideal, the arts that

present a greater number of resemblances with the local cultural context, in this case bonsai, and to a certain extent ikebana, are more popular and widely known.

In addition, I demonstrate the process of interpretation and classification that occurs when practitioners assess bonsai, ikebana, and tea, by analysing the finer cultural details of the three arts presented above. I remain at the level of individual reflexivity, rather than organisational interpretation, however, as my fieldwork and analysis are based on the experiences of individuals. In addition, metacultures of difference are not examined, as such an analysis would require participant observation and field research in Japan to decipher if the arts are presented as instances of Japanese uniqueness.

Time and Energy (Where, When, and How Much Time?)

The first set of cultural details that I incorporated into my ethnographic description is time and energy, or the amount of time required per week to practice the arts and advance at a reasonable rate. The time and energy required must be considered reasonable, and comparable, to the time and energy needed to practice and advance in other hobbies that practitioners might have. In this regards, five questions are considered: Where are the courses held? When are the courses held? What is the frequency of the courses? How long do the courses last? And what is the rate of progress in the arts?

Bonsai enthusiasts need not follow courses throughout the year to practice and advance in the art, and the rate of progress depends on individual devotion. On the other hand, to practice and advance in both ikebana and tea requires attendance to weekly or bi-weekly lessons, without which it is almost impossible to practice. Furthermore, the ikebana and tea require years and years of training to achieve the same level of mastery as teachers.

Learning to create bonsai trees is fairly easy. Either one picks up a step-by-step guide at a library, or he/she becomes a member of a bonsai society. The headquarters of the society I joined are in the East-end of Montreal at the Botanical Gardens, a tourist attraction that can be easily accessed by car, bus, or metro. New members are incited to take an introductory course, which the society offers twice a year to provide members with the basic knowledge and skills needed to practice the art at home. The society also offers intermediate and advanced level courses, which individuals register for at their own pace. In addition, members are invited to attend three-hour meetings, demonstrations, and conferences once a month.

The time and energy required to practice and advance in the art of bonsai is completely up to individual practitioners. As bonsai trees demand daily attention, enthusiasts choose the number of trees they purchase based on the time and energy they have to expend on the hobby. A person can have one tree, or two hundred, and can therefore spend a couple of minutes to three hours a day verifying the needs of each plant. Necessarily, practitioners who dedicate much of their spare time to the art will

advance much faster than individuals who care for only two or three bonsai trees at a time.

To practice and move forward in ikebana, practitioners must regularly attend weekly lessons. The art can be practiced at home, however, unlike bonsai, not much step-by-step literature is available. As a result, practitioners depend on the expertise of teachers to learn the techniques and skills necessary for advancement. The courses provided by the Ikenobo Society are held at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, which is situated in the North of the city, in a residential area that is most easily accessed by car. Lessons are held on Tuesday evenings for twelve weeks in autumn and in spring. Ikebana International holds meetings once a month, on Tuesday afternoons, from one to four o'clock, during which time members are invited to attend demonstrations, conferences, and workshops.

As Mrs. Mayeda often reminds us, ikebana requires years and years of constant practice to perfect. Most students never achieve a level of mastery, as their attendance at lessons is irregular. The same is true of Ikebana International members, who only attend a few of the meetings provided each year. As advancement depends on access to certified teachers, and practice is quite sporadic, progress in the art is not fast-paced, and requires more patience.

The practice of tea is akin to the practice of ikebana. Practitioners are obligated to follow courses to learn the techniques and skills necessary for advancement.

Furthermore, tea ceremonies are near to impossible to learn alone, due to the many utensils involved, and the need for multiple participants. Regular attendance and practice is expected of serious devotees. Yet despite constant training, advancement is slow and tedious, requiring much patience and time.

Teaching the Arts (Who, What, and How)

The time and energy needed to learn and practice bonsai, ikebana, or tea is specific to each art. One of the main reasons behind this disparity is the subject matter of the courses, and the manner in which they are taught. Therefore, the second set of cultural details is the who, what, and how of the courses: Who provides them? What do they teach? And how are they taught?

The bonsai courses and workshops are all taught by non-Japanese hobbyists, who mainly learnt from non-Japanese experts. They are all French-Canadians, who most probably learnt in a Western school environment, a fact which seems reflected in the way they teach, and what they teach. Most people in Montreal are used to having a teacher explain everything to them, step-by-step. That is how we learnt in primary school, that is how we learnt in secondary school, and that is how we expect to learn when taking courses. It is also the method used by bonsai experts in Montreal to teach newcomers the basic techniques and skills required. On the other hand, Japanese immigrants, Japanese-Canadians, and non-Japanese practitioners that learnt from teachers of Japanese origin, provide ikebana and tea ceremony courses. The focus during lessons is on practice and

observation, and the method of teaching is based on emulation and repetition, a method most local Montrealers are not accustomed to.

The bonsai workshops and courses I attended allotted much more time to lecturing about theory, than putting theory into practice. During the introductory workshop at the bonsai nursery, our teacher spent the entire morning and a good part of the afternoon lecturing about the history and theory of bonsai. We spent what was left of the day rushing through the design. The same is true of my six-week course with the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society. For the first five weeks, I went to the Botanical Gardens every Wednesday at seven o'clock in the evening, where for three hours, I sat on a chair in a classroom, listening to lectures. The teacher stood in front of the class and lectured, while the students sat quietly, taking notes and asking questions. A demonstration was given during the last forty-five minutes of class to revise the techniques and theory we just went over. On the sixth week, we met one last time for a three-hour workshop on Saturday morning. We were all provided with a pre-bonsai, which we designed, trimmed, wired, and re-potted, according to the methods learnt over the past month.

This same method of teaching is used during demonstrations and conferences. Each three-hour conference and/or demonstration focuses on providing the basic techniques and theory for a given style of bonsai or type of tree. On most days, two hours are allocated to lecturing, during which time the members write down the technical information provided, followed by a brief visual demonstration of the techniques.

Mrs. Mayeda is a second-generation Japanese-Canadian woman, who grew up in Vancouver, where as a young girl, she learnt a number of Japanese traditional arts. Neither she, nor her assistant, Mrs. Okimura, were particularly attracted to the arts as young girls, and only truly began to seriously learn ikebana later in life, after moving to Montreal. As Japanese-Canadians, accustomed to the Canadian way of living, their understanding and presentation of ikebana is influenced both by their Japanese origins, and their experiences living in Vancouver and Montreal.

> "You know, I learnt from a Japanese teacher in Vancouver when I was only thirteen. He had a flower arrangement on the table every time we walked in. It was already there. He does not tell you what he did, or what it is, you are supposed to look and learn for yourself. Then he comes and corrects it, but he does not say why he corrected it. You want to know why he did it, but that is the way Japanese teach. In fact, it is not only for ikebana, it is for any art in Japan. Teachers do not say anything. Even for tea ceremonies, I had to watch for days and days, watching them do it. They do not explain anything. Teaching in Japan is you learn by watching your teacher. Here, I try to teach everything I know so that you learn faster. But you see, the Japanese do not believe in that. They figure that if you are interested enough, you will try to learn. It is a different concept of things. That is what I think" (Mrs. Mayeda, January 20th, 2001).

I asked her why she does not use the Japanese method of teaching here in Montreal, and she quickly replied,

> "I do not think so. I would have all my students leave! Why would they stick around? I mean, they pay money to learn. It is a different kind of life, and the way they think. It is the thinking that is different. When I teach, I want them to learn, I want them to know everything" (Mrs. Mayeda, January 20th, 2001).

The method of teaching used by Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura stands mid-way between the "Japanese way of teaching" as described by Mrs. Mayeda, and the lecturing as observed in my bonsai courses. The rules, techniques, and proportions are always taught to newcomers, and the more advanced students are welcome to question anything they are unsure of, however, observation and practice are most important. You are told

what to do, and you attempt to do it. You watch what the teacher does, then try to copy what she's done. Once completed, either Mrs. Mayeda or Mrs. Okimura corrects your arrangement. If no questions are asked, explanations for the changes are rarely given, especially to the more advanced students. They might explain certain elements, such as a correction made to the proportion of a branch, or its placement in the kenzan. But they never explain why a leaf should be bent slightly, or a flower exchanged for a larger one. It is the way both Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura learnt, and it is the way they continue to teach, partially because of their background, and partially because that is what Montreal practitioners expect.

Most of the students want to learn the proper techniques, rules, and proportions, but are not necessarily interested in why the three main branches represent the universe. Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura realize that they are teaching ikebana to a non-Japanese audience, which is evident not only in the method of teaching, but the subject matter they teach. There is much philosophical theory and meaning behind ikebana, which determines the rules used to regulate the arrangements. However, according to my teachers, Montreal practitioners are not necessarily interested in learning the theory of ikebana. Even Mrs. Okimura, when first taking lessons as a young woman, hated learning the theory. Her teacher spent half of the class teaching theory, and she always thought to herself, "What does she keep talking about? I do not want to learn all that, I want to learn how to arrange flowers " (March 12th, 2001). With time, Mrs. Okimura realized that ikebana is not just about arranging flowers:

> "My teacher really focused on the theory of Ikenobo. So for me, that is more important than the actual arrangement. There is much more meaning to the

> actual arrangement than we think. We mostly do it because it is beautiful, but there is a lot more meaning than that" (March 12th, 2001).

For most Montreal practitioners, ikebana is just that, however, it is about arranging flowers. Therefore, the teachers do not spend much time on theory. They simply teach students how to arrange flowers the Japanese way.

Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura are aware that not all aspects of ikebana are compatible with the cultural context of Montrealers, and therefore, have adapted their way of teaching to the expectations of students. On the other hand, the method of instruction used to teach tea ceremonies is only slightly adapted to suit Montreal enthusiasts. The courses are taught by Japanese immigrants and non-Japanese Canadians, who have either travelled to Japan to learn tea, or studied with Mrs. Kagemori, the headmaster of the Urasenke School, herself a recent immigrant to Canada. They have learnt and continue to teach tea according to Japanese methods.

The teachers expect respect. During my first lesson, Gaetan taught me the golden rule "the teacher is always right" (October 31st 2000). Students are expected to be attentive; to watch, learn, and mimic what they have seen, in silence as much as possible. Through mere observation, you can always learn something new by determining the differences between performers. Learning to perform tea ceremonies is also largely based on emulation. For each *warigeiko* that we learnt, we were expected to imitate the movements of our teachers.

Unlike bonsai and ikebana lessons, there are no manuals or guides that present the theoretical or technical elements of tea ceremonies. I did find a couple of English sources on the matter, which illustrate the various movements, however, I was told that these alone will not teach a practitioner to perform a *temae*, or understand the spirit of tea. This must be done by oneself. Although teachers can demonstrate the various movements over and over, it is up to the student to decipher the meaning of the art. You can question the proper method of holding a spoon, but you can not be taught to reach a state of peace and tranquillity.

Metacultures of Similarity and the Distribution of Transnational Culture

In the above, I presented an ethnographic description of how three Japanese arts are analyzed, classified, and incorporated by Montreal practitioners, in order to present the processes and principles by way of which such an organisation of diversity occurs that "everything is not everywhere" (Hannerz, 1996: 50).

In doing so, I used Hannerz' idea of cultural minutiae, which I argued as certain finer cultural details used as schemes of understanding for the classification and analysis of transnational culture. As the above illustrates, the cultural details of bonsai are more akin, or similar, to the values, habits, and ideas of local Montreal practitioners. As such, bonsai becomes classified, according to a metaculture of similarity, as something familiar. Consequently, the adoption and practice of the art is more widespread, thereby

explaining its greater distribution amongst the Montreal population, as compared with ikebana and tea, which both present lesser instances of similarity.

It must be mentioned, however, that my analysis stems from the present-day practice of the arts. The North American practice of bonsai has not always presented such similarities. When first introduced, people found the art to be grotesque. It was not widely known, and mainly practised by Japanese immigrants. Why is it that bonsai transformed into a hobby that is more easily accessible than ikebana and tea ceremonies? A theory of metacultures alone does not explain the unequal flow of transnational culture. Therefore, in the following chapter, we explore a second aspect of cultural globalization, called glocalization, in which the processes of transformation that affect transnational culture are described, by illustrating the dis-embedding of bonsai from its Japanese origins.

5. GLOCALIZATION, TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS AND THE DIS-EMBEDDING OF BONSAI FROM ITS JAPANESE ORIGINS

In the previous chapter, an ethnographic description of the activities and courses provided by the Urasenke tea school, the Ikenobo Society, Ikebana International, and the Montreal/Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Societies was provided. I demonstrated why bonsai is interpreted as more similar to the North American cultural context, than are ikebana and tea, thereby securing its wider distribution and practice. Now that we have positioned the arts within a metaculture of similarities, the question remains, why is it that bonsai has been better incorporated as an element of North American culture? What processes of transformation have rendered the art more familiar? The art of ikebana also has a North American equivalent, so why has it not been incorporated and adapted in the same manner?

In this chapter, we explore a second aspect of the globalization of culture, which entails the process of glocalization. As discussed in chapter one, Robertson (1992, 1995) appropriates the concept of glocalization to define the process, in which local practices are more and more dis-embedded and globalized, and in which foreign practices are increasingly re-embedded and localized within a variety of local contexts. Due to processes of glocalization, elements of local cultural systems are rendered global, in the

sense that they re-constitute themselves transnationally by dis-embedding themselves and incorporating ideas from other cultural systems.

In what follows, I explore the process of glocalization, arguing that the extent to which Japanese traditional arts are glocalized, or dis-embedded and localized, is related to the loss or survival of transnational networks. This is only one, of many elements that affect the glocalization of Japanese traditional arts, but one that struck me as important.

I compare the practice of bonsai, ikebana, and tea in North America, by examining the existence of transnational networks between practitioners abroad and Japan, and the effects of these on the process of glocalization. To illustrate their role, I compare the certification of students, the representation of the arts, the literature they provide, the material culture used, and the language preferred.

Certificates from Kyoto Headquarters

When I first signed up to take ikebana and Japanese tea ceremony lessons, I did not realize these organizations were actually branches of the main headquarters in Japan. I only noticed a network between the two existed when I began questioning the method used in both Schools to evaluate a student's advancement in the art. Both the Ikenobo Society and the Urasenke Tea School of Montreal grade practitioners by rewarding them with certificates provided by the headquarters in Kyoto. In comparison, the Montreal and Lanaudière bonsai societies use a different grading system, which is akin to the methods

of grading used in other popular activities. Unlike ikebana and tea organizations, they need not rely on the Japanese for approval.

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It is the second week of November. I have been attending ikebana lessons for two months, and still have much to understand.

"*Are you coming next week for the last class?*" asks Maria.

"*Last class!*" I repeat, "*You mean we do not meet again until January?*".

"*No, not until late April. The society only offers courses in the Autumn and Spring*".

"*How come?*" I ask. "*The society?*" I wonder.

"*Because of the philosophy of ikebana*", explains Mrs. Jackson, "*you create flower arrangements to represent the seasons. You can not do flowers in the middle of winter. Plus, the Canadian winters are too cold, the flowers would die*".

"*I will be teaching the girls from Ikebana International next week at home if you want to join us*", says Mrs. Mayeda. "*You are a member of the organization, and you are an Ikenobo student, so you are one of us now. It is the last class with them too. But I will be giving private lessons to Julie all winter. She is a student in tourism. She is preparing for a competition in Korea. So I am teaching her Ikenobo. You are welcome to join us, but it is a bit more expensive because I can not buy the flowers in bulk*".

I decide to join Mrs. Mayeda and the girls from Ikebana International the following week, and continue taking private lessons with Mrs. Mayeda and Julie after

Christmas. For three months, we meet at Mrs. Mayeda's home on Tuesday afternoons, from one till four. After class, we always have green tea and cookies, while Mrs. Mayeda tells us everything she remembers about growing up in Vancouver, living in Japan, and learning ikebana.

One day, Mrs. Mayeda, Julie, and myself sit talking about the next Ikenobo world convention.

"*I want to go with Mrs. Okimura*", Mrs. Mayeda explains, "*but we will not be able to take the classes together, since she is two certificates lower than me*".

"*Two certificates?*" I ask.

"*Yeah, the certificates we get from the headquarters in Kyoto. Which reminds me, while we are on the subject of certificates, do you want me to get you the first two diplomas for the first level. It is thirty-five dollars American*".

"*Two diplomas?*"

"*Yeah, one is just for registration with the Ikenobo headquarters. Most of the girls* (at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre) *already have the registration and first level diplomas, although not many have the second level. I can not give it to them anyway, because I gave them the first level last year. You do not give them away easily. You have to count how many lessons they have taken. But when you come here, I count it as two lessons, because we usually do two arrangements, whereas at the centre we only do one. Some might think I am not being fair to people, but I only count the people who do the work. I have to, because the school does have set rules*".

"*How many lessons do you need to do?*" I ask

"*The first one is twelve*", she explains, "*then it goes to sixteen, then it gets to twenty, because the higher you go the harder it gets, so it takes a while to advance. It took me thirty years to get to where I am. Now I am in the highest class, and Josie is only two behind me. I have fourteen certificates, but I do not want to get the last one*".

"*Why not?*"

"*Oh no! It would cost me one hundred and eighty dollars American. No way! I am not paying that money. What for? What will I do with that certificate? It is not going to do me any good. And I have to take a special exam. They are supposed to get somebody to look at my arrangements. So if one of the professors from Japan comes to Montreal, I could, but I do not want to. In Japan, you have to pass a test to get all your diplomas, but not here. Here, the teacher recommends you, that is all*".

Judging from Mrs. Mayeda's experience, I can not imagine many of the students have reached the same level she has. Only some of the older women, who have been practising once a week, consistently, for over twenty-five years, have managed to achieve the level of accredited teacher.

"*It seems pretty long to get the certificates*", I tell the students.

"*Oh for sure*", says Marie, "*my friends say 'you are crazy, five years! I think you are already a Master'. I say, 'No way, I am only in second grade'. You know, Mrs. Mayeda says it takes twenty-five years to become a master. My friends always laugh at me. They say, 'by the time you are a master, you will be walking with a cane'*".

"*Well if you do not come consistently, she can not recommend you to the headquarters*", explains Mme. Bolduc, slightly upset. "*If you only come a couple of*

times a year, do not expect to get your certificates very fast. It will take so time to complete the number of courses required. You know, the teacher is not strict, but there needs to be some kind of follow-up. You have to improve before she can give you the next certificate. I could have received my accredited teacher certificate, but I did not want it just yet. No, because I think I still have a lot to learn, and so when the teacher said that she thought I was ready for the teaching certificate, I told her that I did not think I was. She bases her judgement on the number of courses that you take".

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Whereas the Ikenobo school relies on Japan for certificates, the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society has developed its own method of evaluation. While talking to Ghyslain Gauthier, the vice-president, I am told that most novices kill their bonsai trees after a matter of months, not having the horticultural knowledge needed to take care of them:

"*The main difference between practitioners is that some of the members know all of the horticultural techniques, and the names of the different kinds of trees, but they do not have an artistic sense, and therefore, can not make beautiful bonsai. On the other hand, most members are very artistic, and although they are not too good with horticultural technique in the beginning, they have a greater sense of observation and create beautiful bonsai*"(November 2nd 2000).

As horticulture is essential, students learn horticultural principles throughout the beginner's course. That is what the members expect from the course, and that is what

they primarily need to learn. They also gain information on the techniques needed in bonsai design and creation, such as how to trim, how to wire, how to re-pot, and so forth, along with a brief introduction to the history and philosophy of bonsai. The intermediate level course is conceived to improve the participant's comprehension of the aesthetic and artistic aspects of bonsai, as well as expand the abilities of each student on an individual basis. The advanced course consists of six one-day courses, once a month, with David Easterbrook, the founder of the society and caretaker of Montreal's Bonsai collection at the Botanical Gardens. Each advanced course deals with different topics, such as a particular style, or a precise species. At the advanced level, one can say bonsai practitioners specialize themselves.

As Mr. Gauthier told me, there are different kinds of members at the club. There are those who come because they are intrigued by the mystery of bonsai trees (how do they get them so small). There are those who already practice bonsai and come to discover new styles and species. There are a few that come due to an attraction to things Japanese (including the artistic and philosophical aspects of the art). And then, there are many that come because they love nature, trees, and art, and need to learn more about horticulture. There is one thing members have in common, however, the desire to advance and succeed. Most members want results fast. They take the beginner's course, then three months later, the intermediate course, and then the advanced course a few months after that.

"*The members want to become good quickly*", explains Mr. Gauthier, "*they try to become experts within three years. The right way to do it, if you truly want to advance, is*

to take the beginner's course, then wait and practice what you have learnt for two or three years, before advancing to the next level. If not, you forget everything. The art of bonsai is also the art of being patient, but of course, most members are not, and therefore, many end up quitting. Only around seventy-five members are truly faithful to the society. Most hobbyists do not stick around for too long. They aren't that serious about the art. They come looking for something new, something beautiful, something unique, and something they can place in their home to decorate. It is also a status thing. You invite friends over, they look at your bonsai, and you talk about your passion for the art of sculpting miniaturized trees" (November 2nd 2000).

Despite the aim of most members in becoming experts within three years, and despite the possibility of doing so, the Montreal society does have certain regulations that they use to classify practitioners during exhibits. These rules regulate the advancement of bonsai hobbyists, and slow down the so-called genius advancement of participants. Rather than creating categories based on course level, they judge participants based on how many years he/she has been practising the art. There is a beginners category, which includes all members with less than seven years of experience; an intermediate category, which includes all participants with over seven years of experience, and a professional category. Of course, to be classified within the professional category requires more than a couple of courses, but we will get back to that later on.

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Needless to say, when compared to the Ikenobo School, the grading system used by bonsai societies is more akin to North American methods, and does not depend on the approval of Japanese experts. Advancement is not actually granted, so to speak, but rather bought, in the same manner as one pays to learn the techniques of many other similar activities. With the growing popularity of bonsai, a dependency on Japanese bonsai Masters has thinned out. The art of bonsai has been dis-embedded from Japan, thereby allowing North American hobbyists to develop their own method of evaluation.

In comparison, the Montreal Ikenobo School illustrates a much deeper network with the Japanese headquarters. The grading system requires the approval of Japanese Masters in Kyoto, and therefore, international practitioners rely on Japan for certification and advancement in the arts. The Montreal Urasenke School of Tea uses the same method. The grading system is based on the recommendations of local headmasters, and the approval of Japanese headquarters.

The influence of transnational networks between practitioners abroad and in Japan is also evident in how the arts are introduced and represented to the unfamiliar in Montreal. Whereas ikebana and tea organizations emphasise tradition and Japanese origins, the bonsai societies advertise elements that are tailored to the interests of Montreal consumers.

Pamphlets, Demonstrations, and Representation

To further determine the influence of transnational networks on processes of glocalization, this section examines how each organization promotes the arts. As is illustrated, where the transnational link is weakest, one finds a separation of the art from its Japanese origins, which in turn allows organisations abroad to determine and advertise their own meanings. Where the link is stronger, one finds that methods of representation emphasise the idea of "tradition", promoting the arts as authentic. They are quick to point out, however, that the uniqueness of the arts does not limit their interpretation and practice and abroad.

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The Ikenobo society of Montreal holds a Japanese flower arrangement exhibit at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre every year at the end of May, in the hopes of promoting a better understanding of the art outside of the Japanese community. As each visitor enters the exhibit, pamphlets are handed out, which describe the origins, philosophy, and styles of the school.

The first piece of information guests receive is an official colour pamphlet, printed by the Ikenobo Ikebana Society headquarters in Japan, with the help of the Ikenobo Ikebana Society of America (see Appendix 3). In the introduction, *Sen'ei Ikenobo*, 45th headmaster, writes "the history of ikenobo is the history of ikebana", immediately securing the image of Ikenobo as being one of the more traditional Schools

of the art. Ikenobo is the origin of the art, and is said to cherish the classical styles of ikebana, used mainly for ceremonial purposes. The School has evolved with time, however, and now includes many modern styles.

In a description of the various styles, emphasis is placed on the symbolism, rather than on the proportions, rules, and material used to create the arrangements. For instance, *Shoka Shofutai* is described as forming

> "...a unity which expresses life's perpetual change and renewal. We present our impression of a plant's essence simply and beautifully. Shoka rises gracefully from the water's edge ("mizugiwa") filled with our feeling of the life hidden in each branch, leaf, and flower".

The pamphlet describes the spirit or essence of ikebana, its symbolism and meaning, as this is understood in Japan, or at least as this is defined by the masters and the *iemoto* of Ikenobo.

The Ikenobo School of ikebana promotes a respect for nature, a characteristic which is often emphasized as traditional and unique in Japanese culture (Wilson, 1999). The "Japanese" understanding and respect for nature, which one learns to cherish when practising Ikenobo, is emphasised with such phrases as;

> "We sense plants' unspoken words and silent movements... Ikebana should suggest the forces of nature with which plants live in harmony –branches bent by winter winds... a leaf half-eaten by insects... Ikenobo considers a flower's bud most beautiful, for within the bud is the energy of life's opening toward the future".

Ikebana is not only for the Japanese, however, it can be practised by international participants the world over. "Ikenobo's spirit has spread not only in Japan but throughout

the world", explains the *iemoto*, who maintains, however, that its origins and centre remain in Kyoto,

> "The Headquarters is home for communication, ongoing study, and workshops for Ikenobo's professors and students from throughout Japan and the world. Here at the center of Ikenobo's rich tradition students receive both classical training and encouragement to explore ikebana's most modern forms".

The second pamphlet guests receive is a black and white photocopy, written by the members of the Montreal Ikenobo chapter (see Appendix 4). Written in both French and English, the introduction begins by defining ikebana for the unaccustomed, defending its title as an art and giving it value in North American culture:

> "Ikebana is more, much more, than a simple agility in the presentation of flowers gracefully in an appropriate vase… One must, through practice and concentration, pick material transcendent in its beauty: this is the art of using one flower to symbolize all flowers. Ikebana is also the taking of a moment of peace, of tranquillity. It is at the same time a pleasant pass-time and an act of creative art".

The Ikenobo society of Montreal also emphasises tradition by discussing the history and philosophy of ikebana. A belief in Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism is said to have resulted in the development of a distinctive Japanese culture, within which evolved a "great respect among the populace for the in-depth study of flowers, of their essence and habit". Again, tradition, continuity, and Japanese uniqueness are used to present and define ikebana as an authentic Japanese art.

Throughout the afternoon, guests had the chance to witness demonstrations, the first of which was performed by our teacher, Mrs. Mayeda. After being introduced by the Consulate General of Japan, and Eric (the Vice-President of the society), Mrs. Mayeda

stood before a crowd of approximately fifty people, and arranged a traditional *Shoka Shofutai* with three gladiolas. No words were spoken during the demonstration, save when Mrs. Mayeda carefully set her flowers within the *kenzan*, whispering "*Shin*", "*Soe*", and "*Tai*". Ikebana, as represented by Mrs. Mayeda, seemed very mysterious, unique, and incomprehensible to the unaccustomed. Only later were the three flowers explained as symbolizing man, heaven, and earth, when Georgia did her demonstration. While she arranged the flowers, Mrs. Mayeda and Mrs. Okimura complained continually that she was talking too much.

The week following the exhibit, only two new students appeared, Han, a younger Chinese man, and Mrs. Hibayashi, a non-Japanese woman, married to a Japanese man. Had ikebana not been represented as traditional and unique, and its origins as Japanese not as emphasised, perhaps more of the over one hundred and fifty visitors that attended the exhibit would have been recruited.

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Ikebana International does most of its publicity by offering weekly demonstrations and an annual exhibit at the Japanese Pavilion of the Botanical Gardens. A pamphlet, prepared and printed by the Japanese headquarters, is available for interested viewers (see Appendix 5). It describes Ikebana International as a worldwide organization, founded in Japan, in 1956, by a non-Japanese woman. Its members,

> "...are dedicated to promotion of the mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and other countries through ikebana (*the art of Japanese flower arrangement*) and other related arts of Japan".

The objective of the organization is to promote "friendship through flowers", between Japan and all nations by rendering Japanese flower arrangement a global art. This use of ikebana asserts that Japanese traditional arts capture the essence of Japanese culture and identity, and that furthermore, practising the arts will lead to a mutual understanding of Japanese culture by international participants.

Although the pamphlet introduces the art and the organization, most of the publicity and promotion is done during demonstrations, which the various schools provide to present the spirit and principles of ikebana. The following example stems from a half-hour demonstration offered by three women of the *Ohara* School (August 31st, 2000). It illustrates how the art is often discussed as representative of Japanese culture.

When the demonstration begins at one o'clock in the afternoon, an African-American woman, Enid, commences the arrangements, while the other woman, Colette, recounts the history of ikebana, and the development of the *Ohara* School. Mrs. Tanaka, a Japanese woman and the president of the society, stands to the one side and watches. Colette informs us that the *Ohara* School is only one hundred years old, and was developed in the hopes of revitalizing some of the more "traditional" forms, or naturalized forms of flower arranging.

"The choice of material is very important, it defines the arrangement. And you do not just put anything anywhere. There are rules to follow, which determine how the

flowers are placed. You always begin by placing three main branches, which symbolize the sky, the shadow, and earth".

Mrs. Tanaka steps in and explains.

"*In all Ohara flower arrangements, there are three main branches, which symbolize the principles of life. The sky is always the highest of the three materials, since it dominates over the other two. Without the sky, there is no shadow. The shadow is the second branch, as without a shadow, earth does not exist. The material that symbolizes earth is always the lowest. Earth is the most subordinate of the three branches. This principle lies behind all Ohara ikebana*".

When the second arrangement is completed, Colette points out the main elements of the final product,

"*There is a huge difference between Japanese flower arranging and Western flower arranging. Western arrangements always try to make things big, and very complex. In Western flowers, everything is stuffed all together, without concern for the natural growth of plant material. Japanese arranging is much more natural. It is irregular and very simple. I know it looks easy to do, but it is actually very hard and requires a lot of practice*".

"*This is a wonderful example*", says Mrs. Tanaka, "*Well done Enid, it is very Japanese. It is irregular, simple, and very natural*".

"*Can anything be done with the broken flower?*" asks one of the ladies in the audience, pointing to a flower bud on the table.

"Of course. In ikebana, there are no limits. The only limits are the ones you set for yourself. Free your mind", replies Mrs. Tanaka.

With this, Enid grabs the only vase left. Both the broken flower and torn leaf are placed in the empty vase within seconds. As she turns it around to show the audience, everyone sighs in amazement.

****

Much like the Ikenobo school and Ikebana International, the Urasenke tea school of Montreal also provides demonstrations at the Japanese Pavilion of the Botanical Gardens. As a member, I am asked to help out a couple of times during the summer. I choose to volunteer on one of the days that Mr. and Mrs. Kagemori are there, hoping to finally meet the headmaster of the school. I arrive at the pavilion at twelve o'clock to prepare for the demonstration. I find Line, my teacher, who introduces me to Mr. and Mrs. Kagemori, two Japanese immigrants, who barely speak any French or English. Mrs. Kagemori is exactly as I had imagined; an older lady, in her seventies, dressed in a kimono. I am also introduced to three of her students, Mieko, Keiko, and Setsuko, three young Japanese women, in their twenties, who immigrated to Montreal from Japan in the past seven years. Their French and English are a little better, although they talk to each other in Japanese.

Line tells me to follow the girls to the changing room, where I begin the elaborate process of being dressed in a traditional kimono for the demonstration. After layers and

layers of clothing and string have been wrapped around my waist, I can no longer breath, I can not slouch, and I am boiling hot.

Line asks me to sit at the entrance to the tea room, where together with Mieko, I collect the entry fee of interested participants, hand out tickets, and present the school's pamphlet (see Appendix 6). During the first demonstration there are eighteen guests. For the second, twenty-five. When the demonstrations start, the three girls and myself go to the kitchenette area behind the tearoom, where we prepare the sweets and tea bowls for the guests. I am a new member, and will not be performing the whole ceremony. I only help out when it is time to serve tea to the audience.

The ceremony begins, and Mieko tells me to join the audience, "*come back when it is over to help us serve the tea*". Mrs. Kagemori is acting as main guest. Keiko is host, and Setsuko is her assistant. While they perform the tea ceremony, Line introduces the main elements of the tea ceremony, sometimes stopping to let people enjoy the performance in silence. She begins by introducing Mrs. Kagemori, and the Montreal branch of the Urasenke School. The tea ceremony is defined as a national tradition in Japan, a tradition that encompasses many of Japan's traditional art forms. She talks of the tearoom, tea architecture, the utensils used, the role of the *chabana* (flower arrangement for tea), the calligraphy, the *kaiseki* meal, and so on.

"*Chado is not just about preparing tea, it is also the art of ceramics, the profound knowledge of literature, the art of architecture, gardening, and much more*".

She presents the meaning of tea, introducing the history of *Chado* and its origins as a Zen Buddhist practice.

"*Buddhist priests established the spiritual basis of Chado as understanding the meaning of life through quiet contemplation*".

Each and every movement of the ceremony is emphasised, illustrating the importance of ritual throughout the performance. The four principles of tea (*Wa, Kei, Sei, and Jaku*) are explored, as is the ultimate objective of a tea ceremony, reaching peace and tranquillity, and for some Zen enlightenment. She concludes stating that,

"*With the stress of modern life, it might seem pointless that such a mundane act, such as serving tea, has been rendered an art. However, a cup of tea prepared according to the principles of chado is a ritual destined to re-establish individual tranquillity, a fundamental need for all people. It is a simple and sober ritual, in which all may find peace in a bowl of tea*" (Tuesday, August 28th, 2001).

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Whereas the representation of ikebana and tea focus on Japaneseness and tradition, the promotion of bonsai underlines elements that the local population are accustomed to. On the website of the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society (http://pages.infinit.net/sbpm), bonsai is identified as a pass-time, a hobby for people of all tastes and all budgets, which anyone can learn and perfect by becoming a member of the society and taking an introductory course. A summary of the benefits of a membership are listed; including monthly reunions and conferences, visiting experts,

workshops for bonsai design, courses for beginners, intermediates, and advanced practitioners, an annual exhibit, and social events, such as a Christmas party, and a bazaar. In addition, one gets free access to the Botanical Gardens, and the Botanical Gardens library, plus discounts at the societies bonsai store, many other horticultural stores, and the restaurants and boutiques inside the Botanical Gardens. In a similar fashion, the Lanaudière society describes the organization as a club that brings together individuals, who share a similar interest in horticulture, particularly bonsai and penjing (see Appendix 7). Membership with the society allows bonsai enthusiasts to increase opportunities for improving their methods and techniques in bonsai art, by accessing a plurality of experts, conferences, workshops, and so on... New members can learn all they need to know about lighting, watering, temperature, wiring, trimming, potting, and fertilisation.

The Montreal society holds an annual exhibit at the Japanese Pavilion of the Botanical gardens every September, during which time demonstrations are offered to entice interest and recruit new memberships. I unfortunately was unable to attend, however, judging from the demonstrations that I caught at monthly meetings, and based on the discussions held on the Bonsai Internet Club, the promotion of bonsai does not emphasise the same aspects as do promoters of ikebana and tea. Rather than promoting the Japanese origins and traditions of the art, bonsai is presented as fun, pleasurable, and most importantly, a horticultural pass-time and hobby. The representation of bonsai not only differs in what is emphasised, but in how it is presented. The following example stems from a discussion between members of the Internet Bonsai Club, on the subject of

demonstrations. They debated the elements that make a demonstration interesting, and the pressure on bonsai professionals to present a full bonsai design, in the shortest time possible, without boring the audience. The goal of bonsai professionals is not only the promotion of bonsai, but also the promotion of themselves and their services:

> "Where shall I begin? Each Spring, I invite members of my society to come and watch me do my thing (wiring, trimming, and re-potting...). I even invite them to help if they want to. It takes me at least a month to re-pot, wire, and redesign my trees. Do they come? Rarely... When I do a demonstration, they are all eyes and ears. I can see them saying, 'what is that guy going to do with that non-descript tree?' The problem is that we are trained from babyhood to seek instant gratification –now! So, after boring more audiences than I care to enumerate, I learned that the way to their hearts is to do as much preparation ahead of time as possible. Of course, it is better to wire as you go, but to save time, I wire every branch before time. I also prepare the pot in advance. In addition, I draw several pictures depicting a number of solutions to the styling of the tree. In short, I do everything possible to complete my work as quickly as possible. I find that the attention span of most audiences is an hour to an hour and a half, and then, only if I pepper my lecture with a number of jokes. As a bonsai person, this framework could be disheartening, but we have to accept people the way they are. To most people, bonsai is peripheral in their lives" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 11th, 2000).
>
> "I agree. I do not think I could sit for hours and watch someone wire. In my demos, I show slides of the tree's development, because people understand what I am doing much better that way. To make it faster, I prefer to work with an assistant, who does all the wiring while I speak. There is no need for demonstrations to be boring. One must not forget that this is not only for education, it is a show as well" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 11th, 2000).

Bonsai, like most things, is a business. And demonstrations have been adapted in order to satisfy North American customers. Whether for the advanced, the beginner, or an audience that knows nothing about the art, demonstrations are also shows, they need to be interesting, with fast results, in order to gain the audiences interest. As one member writes,

> "There is a big difference between a bonsai demonstration and a bonsai class. A class is for teaching. This takes time. Demonstrations are mainly for

entertainment. They entice interest, motivate and inspire" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 11th, 2000).

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When I first began my field research, I was not as enthusiastic about learning to create bonsai trees. No longer embedded within Japanese culture, the practice and meaning of bonsai has evolved and glocalized. Bonsai societies, in North America at least, have incorporated elements of their own cultural system to tailor their goods and services to a North American population. Rather than promoting bonsai as a traditional Japanese art, the Montreal/Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Societies emphasises its horticultural elements. In comparison, ikebana and tea advertisements represent an overall image of Japanese uniqueness and tradition. The representation they use during exhibits and demonstrations is still largely influenced by how the Japanese headquarters understand the arts. This same distinction is noticeable when one examines the literature provided or recommended to practitioners.

Provided Literature

Much like the pamphlets handed out at exhibits and demonstrations, the literature recommended by the Ikenobo School is printed in Japan, and written by the Japanese headquarters. On the other hand, the Montreal and Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Societies propose the works of international bonsai experts, including two of Montreal's own. The Urasenke School of Tea does not provide any books for the students, unless

one inquires (at which time teachers mainly recommend books that describe tea ceremonies as they are ideally represented in Japan), and is therefore not discussed within this section.

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Every so often, Mrs. Mayeda comes to class with Ikenobo Ikebana books, which she purchases during her trips to Japan and San Francisco. During my first lesson, I receive *Introduction to Ikenobo Ikebana: Japanese Flower Arrangement* (1975), written by the 45th headmaster. In the preface, the *iemoto* speaks of the recent international interest in ikebana, stating that the book addresses "such people who are interested in traditional Japanese flower arrangement". It provides "basic knowledge of Ikenobo ikebana, and thus does not describe the more highly complicated techniques of this School". The book introduces the Ikenobo school by describing its philosophy, which is said to rest upon "*shussho*", the inherent nature or character of plants that determines its growth. The rest of the book describes the material used in ikebana, the basic techniques, and the principles of *Nageire*, *Moribana*, *Shoka*, *Rikka*, and Freestyle.

As I continue to progress during the year, Mrs. Mayeda asks if I am interested in the four volume series written by the headquarters, a must for all serious practitioners. The four books, *An Invitation to Ikenobo: Shoka Shofutai I* (1988a), *An Invitation to Ikenobo: Shoka Shofutai II* (1988b), *An Invitation to Ikenobo: Shoka Shimputai* (1988c), and *An Invitation to Ikenobo: Nageire, Moribana, Introducing Freestyle* (1990), all describe the proper manner of arranging flowers according to the Ikenobo tradition.

Much like the introductory book I received, they are basic how-to manuals, which present international audiences with the rules and regulations of the Ikenobo school. At the end of each volume, the afterword mentions that the books are merely a helping hand,

> "No matter how many diagrams are used or how long a printed explanation is attached, *shoka shofutai* cannot be studied except under the guidance of a qualified *Ikenobo* teacher. Spatial concepts, use of *ashirai*, and the beauty of the *mizugiwa*, among other aspects, can only be hinted at in the photos or printed words" (Ikenobo Headquarters, 1988a: 44).

When students become an official member of the school, and receive the first certificate, they receive an additional book, *The Book of Ikebana: Part 1* (1985), also written by the 45th headmaster. However, this book is not a how-to guide. It is much more than an introduction for international practitioners. It does not write of the proper proportions and composition that must be respected. Rather, it describes proper training and practice, proper etiquette during lessons, proper methods of flower appreciation, proper classification of ikebana, proper techniques for using plant material, and proper use of material and equipment. As a guide for members of the Ikenobo school, this book presents the official behaviour expected of students:

> "As a student, you will naturally develop a feeling of respect and politeness toward your teacher. Ikenobo Ikebana is not only arranging flowers; it also means being aware of the total process involved in arranging. The essence of the Spirit of Harmony is to seek beauty in all its aspects. Through ikebana, closeness of communication and a feeling of respect and affection for your teacher will come with increasing devotion to your studies. This process begins as soon as you enter the classroom: your greeting to your teacher and your manners, the relaxed conversation with your fellow students, and the natural care which accompanies all your actions...
>
> Before your teacher looks at your completed arrangement, you should gather up any small clippings or other debris and put the surrounding area in order. By carefully observing the points your teacher corrects, how the floral materials are handled, and watching how your teacher uses his or her hands and tools, you will begin to sense a high level of technique which words themselves

> could not convey. There is no simple way to teach you the techniques which your teacher has learned through many years of rigorous training. You must have the deep desire to learn, observing all you can on your own. After your arrangement has been corrected you may, with the permission of your teacher, look at the work of other students" (Sen'ei Ikenobo, 1995: 13).

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The literature recommended to bonsai practitioners is quite different than those written by the Ikenobo headquarters. It does not present bonsai according to Japanese definitions of the art, but rather, relies on a North American interpretation. All students of the Montreal/Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Society receive an introductory book on bonsai in Quebec, written by David Easterbrook and Louis-Philippe Coiteux (1997). David Easterbrook, as previously mentioned, is a professional horticulturist, who studied bonsai in Japan. Mr. Coiteux is a long-time bonsai enthusiast. He is one of the oldest members of the Montreal Society, and co-founder of the Lanaudière Society. Due to his many years of experience, he has gained prestige in the Montreal bonsai community, often being invited as guest speaker.

They wrote the book to present the techniques and methods needed to work with indigenous plants from Quebec. The first chapter briefly describes the history of bonsai and the Japanese classification of major styles. However, the remainder of the book provides information on a number of issues, such as where to find bonsai in Quebec, how to create and design bonsai using indigenous species, what daily care do bonsai need in Quebec, and how to expose bonsai. This book uses the notions developed by the

Japanese, but adapts them to the climate, culture, and plant material available in our geographical area.

In addition to this one book, the bibliography that is provided on the Montreal website lists several books by international authors. Amongst these, one finds four books written by popular Japanese artists, alongside three other sources, written by North American or European practitioners. The Montreal Society completes the bibliography every so often in the "Bulletin Mensuel", a brief newsletter handed out each month. In the instances that I witnessed over the year, the recommended literature was European or American, rather than Japanese. The works of Francois Jeker (France), *Esthétique et bonsai: Guide Pratique* (2000); or Marc Noelanders (Belgium), *Bonsai Art* (1998), are examples of the reading introduced. They clearly suggest that there is a shift away from Japanese sources, as practitioners' abroad are gaining recognition at an international level.

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The literature provided by the Ikenobo School of Montreal is all written by the headquarters in Japan. Written in English, the books are meant for an international audience, and therefore, can be interpreted as the official understanding of Ikenobo, as determined by the headquarters for international practitioners. The books provide information on the history, philosophy, and how-to of ikebana, alongside presenting the proper etiquette expected of students. They secure the maintenance of Japanese traditions, and strengthen the network between organizations abroad and the

headquarters, by insuring that the practice of ikebana remains embedded in its Japanese origins.

On the other hand, the literature provided by both bonsai societies is based on the practice and interpretation of bonsai in Quebec. There is a shift away from Japanese sources, and towards international experts, which reflects a shift away from a two-way network between Japanese experts and practitioners abroad, towards a truly transnational network of global bonsai hobbyists. Slowly, we see the development of expertise outside of Japan, and a literature that contextualizes the techniques of bonsai within the climates and cultures of various regions. Japan is no longer the only source of information. It is only one source. As bonsai is growing in popularity, so is bonsai business. International experts are developing their own literature, as well as producing their own bonsai paraphernalia, as we will see in the following section.

Material Culture: Bonsai, Ikebana, and Tea Paraphernalia

Unlike the Montreal/Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Societies, the Ikenobo School of Montreal relies completely on Japan for books and information. The strength of this network is furthered still, as ikebana practitioners everywhere must rely on Japan as a source of material culture. Both ikebana organizations and the Urasenke School of Tea rely on Japan for all equipment needed in the arts. In contrast, much of the material used for bonsai is now produced locally.

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In Montreal, even the most basic ikebana material is rarely found, apart from the occasional imported *kenzan*, which can sometimes be purchased in one or two specialized Asian boutiques, such as R. Uchiyama Articles Japonais, or at exhibits, demonstrations, and meetings. Since North American equivalents are extremely rare, and local producers of the material do not exist, most equipment is imported from Japan.

The advancement of students is limited by the lack of material. Although many tools might not be useful for a beginner, the more practitioners progress, the greater the need to equip themselves with the proper tools. Unfortunately, most of the material and tools that are presented in the books are not imported overseas, and are therefore extremely expensive, and very hard to come by. Organizations abroad must rely on Japan as the only source that produces such material, and for this reason, most practitioners only ever own, and therefore practice, the basics.

Some of the material needed for ikebana does have North American equivalents, such as vases; however, they remain extremely hard to come by, despite their commonality. The vases used for ikebana have quite particular forms, which are rarely produced for Western style arrangements. In addition, for each School, there are particular styles, and for each style, a particular vase. The Ikenobo School uses three main shapes; tall vases are used for *Nageire* and Freestyle, wide-mouth vases are used for *Shoka* and *Rikka*, and flat vases are used mainly for *Moribana*. The tall thin vases, used mainly for Freestyle, resemble the shape of vase commonly used in the West for flower

arranging, however, locally produced vases are often inappropriate, not due to the form, but due to the material used to create such vases. Much like the rules and regulations that exist for the shape of vases, such standards exist for the type of material as well. For example, glass, which is most common in North America, can not be used for Ikenobo ikebana.

The second shape used by the Ikenobo school is the wide-mouth vase, which has a large opening at the top that slowly thins out towards the bottom; resembling an upside down cone. The wide-mouth style, because of its peculiar form, can only be found in Asian boutiques that specialize in selling imported material needed for Japanese arts. And when one does come across the appropriate form, the cost of a vase is quite high, ranging from sixty dollars, to well over one hundred. Lastly, the Ikenobo school also uses flat vases, which basically look like a deep dish. Unfortunately, North American-made flat vases do not exist, since their use for Western flower arranging would be impossible without the use of a *kenzan*. Since Japanese flower arranging is not yet as established as the art of bonsai, there is no need to market the material used. Students of the Urasenke School encounter the same problem.

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The tea used during tea ceremonies is not the dried crushed green tea leaf we are accustomed to. Rather, it is a much-valued green powdered tea.

"*My uncle produces tea*", explains Ritsuko. "*He has many tea fields in Japan. The first tea picked every year has much value and importance. To be invited to a tea*

ceremony that offers first tea is very honourable. By the end of April, beginning of May, all the Japanese wait for the first tea to be picked and prepared, and they pay quite a fee to have some. Of course, the taste and smell of freshly picked first tea is far better than other teas. Most farmers only have three harvests of tea, since the fourth harvest, apart from being lots of work, does not bring in much money. Although it still tastes good, it does not have the same value as first tea, and it sells really cheap. It goes by supply and demand. In the beginning of the season, there is not much tea, and everyone wants it, so it is really expensive, and by the end of the season, there is a lot of tea, which nobody wants, so it is sold very cheaply" (November 7th 2000).

Fresh tea, or first tea, is impossible to come by in North America. Even the cheaper forms of green powdered tea are hard to find. Montrealers are lucky that Ritsuko imports the tea from her uncle, since, from what could be gathered on the *chanoyu* listserv, not all North Americans have it that easy. The following is a summary of a discussion some of the members had on the non-availability of tea products in North America, and their solutions. The discussion focuses on green powdered tea, although on other days, members spoke of the many other sourcing issues they deal with.

"*There is no good, easy source for matcha* (powdered tea) *in the USA, unless one happens to be near a large Japanese community. And even in the speciality stores, the matcha might have been on the shelf for years. In some cities there are occasionally high-end tea shops which may sell better matcha. But matcha has to be fresh, really fresh. Sandra*" (*chanoyu* listserv, May 24th 2001).

"*Try the Aiya and Koyamaen brands. These people store and ship tea properly. Vacuum packed, combined with refrigeration, equals tea that is as good as all but the freshly ground. JLL*" (*chanoyu* listserv, May 25th 2001).

"*At the Santa Fe program we discussed the matcha sourcing issue and agreed it is a problem. But, there are several internet sites, including a few new entrepreneurs who will deal in English, which have online catalogues where you can buy tea. Barbara*" (*chanoyu* listserv, May 24th, 2001).

"*Can we grow tea in the USA? Can we commission Mexican charcoal makers to make sumi* (special charcoal used during ceremony to boil water) *to specifics? Are there any exceptional craftspeople that will be able to make a chasen* (tea whisk) *or a kama* (kettle) *soon? Stay tuned and keep the conversation flowing. Jim*" (*chanoyu* listserv, May 24th 2001).

"*I heard of some folks who thought that some of the "micro-climates" here in California were similar to Uji* (tea producing region in Japan), *and were trying to grow tea. I doubt if this will be commercially viable for the immediate future. Too much competition for the land and not enough market or experience. JLL*" (*chanoyu* listserv, May 25th 2001).

"*Respected Friends. We can grow Japanese rice and French grapes in the United States, so I assume that we can grow Japanese tea. The problem is how to establish enough of a market to make it a profitable enterprise for the grower. Remember that the end result is a delicious bowl of tea and the process should be a studied rusticity. I do miss my favourite tea store in Japan quite a bit. I still treasure a can of tea that I bought*

there years ago. Yes, I do buy and use the inferior stuff available locally, but I treasure that can of tea. Barbara" (*chanoyu* listserv, May 25th 2001).

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Although tea remains unfamiliar to most, the art of bonsai seems well established in many countries. As one author on the subject writes,

> "A number of large wholesale nurseries grow and distribute bonsai and partially started bonsai plants. Japanese containers and tools are imported and distributed in large quantities. An increasing number of specialized retail bonsai nurseries offer bonsai as well as tools, containers, and plant material. Many general nurseries, garden centres, and mail order firms also sell bonsai and related materials" (Young: 11).

Even large stores like Réno Dépot, a large hardware and renovation centre, sell bonsai. Unfortunately, the plants they keep are often very unhealthy and do not follow the specifics of bonsai design. Newcomers to the art are advised to buy their bonsai at specialized nurseries, which, quite surprisingly, are not that uncommon. In the Montreal area, there are four large bonsai nurseries, and two speciality stores that specifically deal with the art of bonsai. All nurseries stock a variety of bonsai trees for all tastes. They have tiny seedlings for the more patient hobbyists. They have pre-bonsai trees, for those who want to design the trees themselves. They have ready-made bonsai, some as old as one hundred years. They have imported trees from Japan, and indigenous trees from all over Canada and the United States. Local bonsai nurseries also sell the tools and materials needed for bonsai, such as scissors, pots, wire, drills, etc., some of which are imported from Japan, some which are manufactured in North America.

Not only do these nurseries sell all the material needed to practice bonsai, but they also take on the same responsibilities as Japanese nurserymen do in Japan. They baby-sit bonsai, give advice, and care for trees when they are sick. During the winter, when indigenous trees need to be left outside to hibernate in specific containers, these nurseries take care of them, for a fee of course, until the spring, when they can come back outside. The nurseries also offer courses and conferences at all levels, to teach interested buyers the basics of the art.

At the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society, there is a small boutique, which sells all the material needed for bonsai, apart from the trees. Most of the instruments sold are imported from Japan, but all students are reminded that North American equivalents can be found in most hardware stores for half the price. In fact, a bonsai enthusiast can find everything he/she needs to create a bonsai in any garden store, without needing to seek out specialized instruments from Japan. All one needs in the beginning is a good pair of scissors for trimming, and a pair of pliers to work with during wiring. Any tree can be transformed into a bonsai, and any shallow pot will do for the container.

Of course, as each enthusiast gains experience, his needs and equipment will grow alongside his collection. A more advanced practitioner might seek his instruments in Japanese import, however, whether imported from Japan or not, most accessories used in the art of bonsai are quite easy to come across.

In addition, as time advances, North American bonsai practitioners are producing their own tools and material, thereby alleviating the use of Japanese imports, and the relationship bonsai hobbyists have with Japan. The Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Society held it is first conference on bonsai pots this year in February. The conference dealt with the how-to aspect of bonsai containers, after briefly introducing the history of ceramics. The society now offers courses for hobbyists who want to produce their own bonsai pots, according to their own taste and aesthetics, and with their own material.

This phenomenon seems to be happening in the United States as well, as illustrated in the First North American Pot Competition that was advertised on the Internet Bonsai Club (March 8th, 2001). Pots were judged either as traditional or modern. As certain members pointed out, many North American bonsai enthusiasts are interested in the modern styles, as they cater to North American taste and aesthetics.

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Ikebana practitioners have a hard time finding most of the equipment they need to practice the art, and must rely on transnational networks with Japan to ensure that it is imported. This dependency on Japanese imports is especially true with regards to tea. The relationship between international practitioners and Japanese producers is continuous and on-going, not only because all utensils are fabricated by the Japanese, but also because they are the sole producers of the green powdered tea used during ceremonies. As the demand in North America is not big enough, the material is not produced locally.

In comparison, both my experiences with bonsai enthusiasts in Montreal, and members on the Internet Bonsai Club, illustrates a shift away from Japanese products, and towards North American material. Any visit to a local nursery confirms the establishment of bonsai as an element of North American horticulture. Just as there are sections for cacti, and sections for orchids, one now finds a separate section for bonsai. Because most of the tools needed are either horticultural tools, or tools for wood-working, they are available in North America, either as Japanese import, or as North American equivalents.

Language

After comparing methods of certification, representation, literature, and material culture, the last element I propose as an illustration of the transnational link between Japan and the international community of practitioners, and the influence of these networks on the process of glocalization, is the language used by participants. As bonsai business is booming, and practitioners are popping up everywhere, so is a North American means of speaking about bonsai, which no longer relies on Japanese concepts. In Montreal, all the terms used to discuss bonsai have been translated into English and French. In contrast, the discourse used in both ikebana and tea lessons retains the Japanese terms.

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Bonsai trees are classified by examining their general silhouette. They are categorized into various shapes, which reflect the general growth pattern of the species and the natural conditions of these in varied environments. The Japanese worked out a number of basic forms, which North Americans continue to use as guidelines for the classification of indigenous trees. As the practice of bonsai is popularizing, however, the names of each style have been translated into English. The same is true with regards to other elements of the art. The English terms have been agreed upon and standardized, and are now used by practitioners internationally, as is noticeable in the discussion of bonsai on the Internet Bonsai Club.

In Montreal, the French equivalents of the terms are still in their beginnings. As is written in the introductory book received at the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society, both the Japanese and the English terms are exact, well-known, and now the norm. The French terms are still new, and there is no agreement on the translation as of yet, therefore practitioners should not be surprised if they come across different names. In the book, for each Japanese term, there is the one standard English translation, and sometimes up to six French translations. Obviously, there is no consensus on the matter as of yet, but this example clearly demonstrates that participants are searching for their own dialogue about bonsai.

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Unlike the classification of bonsai trees, the various ikebana styles arranged, and the equipment required, are defined using Japanese terms. English translations do not exist, and teachers express the importance of using the Japanese discourse.

"*You have to learn Japanese words, like 'Shin', 'Soe', 'Tai'*", explains Mrs. Mayeda. "*You have to learn them yourself. We will tell you the meaning of it, and after that you have to know them, so that when I say 'ashurai', I want you to know that means a helper. There are words you have to learn. At first it is hard, but I can not say 'the thing that looks like a pin-holder for the flowers' every time I refer to a kenzan.*"

The second ikebana course I attend is presented by a *sensei* (master). All I remember from the first week is that a *kenzan* is the metal thing you stick your flowers into, and the three main branches of most arrangements are called *Shin*, *Soe*, and *Tai*. The *sensei* giving the course is a Japanese man, who lives in Japan, and speaks only Japanese. Mrs. Mayeda introduces him,

"*Last time the sensei came to Montreal, he taught us Rikka. This time he will show us Shoka*".

I, at this point, already have absolutely no clue of what she is talking about. The *sensei* begins, and Mrs. Mayeda translates all he says into English, save the Japanese terms used in ikebana.

"*I am very disappointed that we started this evening at a quarter past seven because you all arrived late. I have wasted much of my time. If you want to be good students, you need to be punctual*".

He asks us if we know what *Shoka* means, and continues to introduce the different styles of *Shoka* that exist.

"*Today, we will learn Shoka Shofutai. In traditional Shoka, there is Ishuike Shoka, and Nishuike, which you practice often. Today I also want to show you Sanshuike of modern Shoka, which means to mix different materials together, but not in just any order. There is a particular way to do it. When doing Shoka, you should always commence with one of these three styles. From there, then you add your ashurai, to make shin ashurai, soe ashurai, and tai ashurai.*"

Lucky for me, I sat next to Susie, an older Japanese woman, who explains that *Ishuike* means one kind of material, *Nishuike* means two and the use of two plant materials, and *Sanshuike* means three, or the use of three plant materials to form *Shin, Soe,* and *Tai.*

It took me many months, and much reading, before I finally got used to the Japanese terms, and was able to decipher the difference between *Shoka Shimputai* and *Shoka Shofutai.* I remember, Mrs. Okimura came to see me that day, and said:

"*Oh Hayley, I feel bad for you since this is only your second class and it is very advanced. Write down everything he says, and later, when you are better, you can look back on what you learnt and say, oh, now I understand.*"

I went back over the notes I had wrote that evening, time and time again, realizing to what extent it is hard for the unfamiliar to follow a course that uses a language one is unaccustomed to.

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The difficulty I experienced as a beginner during my ikebana courses is doubled when introduced to Japanese tea ceremonies. There are many more Japanese terms to learn and all of them are important, as they indicate the various procedures to be performed, and one's responsibilities during the ceremony. For instance, during my first class, I learn that there are four guest positions that one can take: *shokyaku* (main guest), *jikyaku* (second guest), *sankyaku* (third guest), and *makkyaku* (fourth guest). Many of the words have English equivalents, which are used during the first lesson, but from that time on, however, I have to know my role as a *jikyaku*, and understand that I need to pick up the tea bowl when the teacher refers to a *chawan*.

During a typical lesson, while attempting to perform a *temae*, a good knowledge of the Japanese terms is indispensable and the teachers continually reinforce our memory of the terms by never using English translations. If you do not remember the terms, you will have a hard time following instructions, much to the teachers disdain:

"*Take your fukusa* (silk cloth used to purify utensils)", said Line to Manon, "*now fold it. In your left hand, not the right one! Place it to the left of the tray. Now take the chashaku* (tea scoop)... *Not the chawan* (tea bowl), *the chashaku... Now pick up the fukusa again, and purify the chashaku. Now you want to examine the chasen* (tea whisk). *No that is the chawan! Examine the chasen. Take the hishaku* (water ladle) *and pour some water from the kama* (kettle) *into the chawan. No! You only take the water from the mizusashi* (water container) *at the end of the ceremony.*"

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When you talk about bonsai, you can use Japanese, English, or French, although most choose to use English. When you talk about ikebana, you can only use Japanese, as English translations do not exist. When you talk of tea, you can use either Japanese or English, although most prefer Japanese. Why is it that international ikebana practitioners have not translated the terms, and international tea practitioners continue to prefer Japanese? I argue that both arts are still embedded in Japanese culture, and are therefore still largely influenced by the Japanese practice, such as the use of Japanese for discussion and instruction.

The strength of this network, and its influence, is most noticeable with regard to international tea practitioners. The objection to translating tea terms into English is also evident on the *chanoyu* listserv I examined. In a discussion on the translation of the term *chaji* (formal three-hour tea ceremony), members argued that a *chaji* was usually interpreted as "a real or complete tea gathering" (*chanoyu* listserv, November 15th, 2000). However, they are "never comfortable translating these terms or using them in English", (*chanoyu* listserv, November 13th, 2000).

In contrast, the language used to discuss bonsai demonstrates the process of glocalization, and the efforts made, probably unconsciously, to dis-embed the art from its Japanese origins, allowing for greater innovation, and the adoption of English, French, or any other language.

Conclusion: Levels of Glocalization

In this chapter, I question why the art of bonsai is now more accessible and familiar to practitioners' abroad, and why ikebana and tea have not evolved in the same manner. Due to the processes of glocalization, bonsai has been more and more globalized and dis-embedded from it origins in Japan. Furthermore, it has increasingly entrenched itself into North American culture, by incorporating aspects, meanings, and practices of the local cultural system. In comparison, ikebana and tea have not been glocalized to the same extent. They continue to be embedded in Japanese origins and traditions, thereby limiting the possibility for change and development.

In Robertson's view of glocalization, it seems that the process occurs unvaryingly in all cases. However, as my case study illustrates, the movement of transnational cultural practices does not always entail a consistent process of glocalization. In this regard, I propose that the existence or loss of transnational networks have much to do with the extent to which Japanese traditional arts are glocalized. I argue that bonsai has been dis-embedded from its origins in Japan, because international practitioners do not have an important transnational connection and reliance upon Japanese bonsai organizations. The loss of this two-way network has allowed bonsai enthusiasts abroad to adapt the practice to their own cultural system. In contrast, the transnational network between Japan and international ikebana and tea practitioners is strong, thereby reinforcing the embeddedness of the arts in Japanese traditions, and limiting the possibility of incorporating new ideas.

Advancement in ikebana and tea is quite regulated in Japan. According to my informants, practitioners are required to pass exams, in order to receive the certificates needed to advance to a higher level. The same certificates are provided to international practitioners, however, whereas Japanese students have to take exams, international students merely receive certificates upon recommendation of their teachers. Advancement in the arts is slow, however, and requires the approval of the headquarters in Japan. In contrast, the method used to grade practitioners in bonsai societies is much more akin to a hobby than the previous two. Participants practice the art of bonsai as a passtime, for the fun of it, not to become professional bonsai artists. Rather than receiving the approval of experts in Japan to advance, bonsai hobbyists merely pay to learn the techniques and skills needed to create more complex trees. They advance on their own terms, according to their own pace.

The difference between the three arts is also quite evident in the type of representation used. On the one hand, ikebana and tea attempt to give the arts value by focusing on Japaneseness; emphasising Japanese culture, origins, history, and tradition as important characteristics of the arts. Montreal's Ikebana International chapter, the Montreal Ikenobo Society, and the Montreal Urasenke School of Tea are all affiliated to Japanese headquarters. As such, when recruiting new members, they rely on the representation of the arts, as they are proposed by the Japanese. On the other hand, bonsai societies do not have an important relationship or network with bonsai organizations in Japan, and therefore, they have no official introductions or presentations. They present horticulture as the main element of the art, tailoring the meaning of bonsai

to the interests of Montrealers. The origins of bonsai as Japanese are all but forgotten, and the philosophical elements are downsized. Bonsai is a passtime, a hobby, and demonstrations are a form of entertainment.

The literature chosen for students by the Montreal Ikenobo School also reinforces the continuous network between practitioners' abroad and the headquarters in Japan. Meant for non-Japanese practitioners, the literature lays down the basic principles, proportions, and composition of every style, as these are traditionally practised in Japan. As Japan is the only source of information on the art, practitioners abroad depend on the Japanese for instruction and practice. In contrast, the literature proposed by both bonsai societies contextualizes the art, and its practice, within the geographical and cultural systems of Quebec. Some Japanese literature is presented, but not to ensure that the art remains faithful to Japanese ways. Rather, an emphasis is placed on those books, some of Japanese origin, which best express and illustrate the techniques and methods needed to practice bonsai in Quebec.

The transnational network between international participants and Japan is also noticeable with regards to material culture. A brief glance at the accessibility of material and equipment illustrates that both tea and ikebana practitioners can not dis-embed themselves from Japanese origins, as Japan is the sole provider and producer of most products. Since the material needed is harder to access, and often does not have a North American equivalent, practitioners depend on Japan for importing material. In contrast, the material needed to create a bonsai is readily available in Montreal. Almost all

instruments or tools have North American counterparts, and therefore, bonsai hobbyists need not rely on Japanese producers.

In addition to the above-mentioned elements, it seems that the existence of important transnational networks has done much to secure the use of Japanese terms. Both my ikebana and tea ceremony teachers emphasise the importance of using Japanese terms, even when English translations exist. In comparison, as the art of bonsai has been dis-embedded from its Japanese origins to a much greater extent, the use of Japanese terms, although still in practice, is not as common as the use of English, and even French translations.

Practitioners are aware of the dis-embedding or embedding of Japanese arts, and the effects of this process on their international practice. As one author on tea writes, although tea attracts the interest of Westerners, it is

> "...doubtful that the art will ever detach itself successfully from its traditional Japanese setting to become a universal art... The various Japanese teahouses in Western cities and parks all testify that the tea ceremony, as Westerners understand and practice it, remains not an international but strictly a Japanese art. Thus, one can safely predict that the tea ceremony will never be divorced from its Japanese background, lose its Japanese identity, and become international. Something about the tea ceremony may be fundamentally non-Western, difficult for us to understand and incorporate into our daily lives" (Plutschow, 1986: 196).

In contrast, the president of the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society affirms that although bonsai has its origins in Asia, it has evolved quite a lot through time and in each country, especially with regards to the shape and styling of indigenous trees. Each individual practitioner has his or her own interpretation of bonsai, which renders the art

characteristic of their own context. Of course, bonsai remains Japanese in origin, a fact that no bonsai enthusiast can ever deny or forget. However, its practice abroad does not entail a close copy of the Japanese.

Before continuing, I should remark that although transnational networks were an important factor in determining the extent of glocalization in my case study, it remains to be examined in other instances. Perhaps ikebana and tea were not glocalized to the same extent as bonsai, merely because they are both affiliated with international organisations that promote the arts as these are practiced and understood in Japan. Furthermore, one must not forget that both ikebana and tea are practiced and organized according to the *iemoto* system, which among other things secures the continuity of tradition within the arts.

In the following chapter, I continue to explore the process of glocalization, however, my focus is on the re-embedding of the arts. I explore the re-interpretation of bonsai, to illustrate the processes by way of which North American bonsai hobbyists transformed the meaning of the art, to include some of the ideas, practices, and meanings that they consider representative of their own instances.

6. AMERICAN BONSAI: "...NOT TO BECOME MORE LIKE US, BUT MORE LIKE THEMSELVES..." (SAHLINS 1993:17)

As perceived with regards to tea and ikebana, the existence of a link between the Japanese headquarters and international participants helps secure the continuation of the arts as they are practiced in Japan. In contrast, bonsai has been dis-embedded from it origins in Japan, and has developed into a global art that is practiced distinctively in a number of locations.

In this chapter, we continue to explore the notion of glocalization. However, our focus is on the second part of the process, that of being re-embedded, or appropriated, creolized, hybridized, and indigenised in a plurality of new locales. Through these processes, it is said that the meanings, beliefs, and practices of Japanese traditional arts re-constitute themselves by incorporating ideas from other local cultural systems, thereby becoming transnationally interpretable. As will soon be evident, bonsai, as it is practiced in Japan, and as it was at first imported to North America, has been re-interpreted according to these processes of transformation, by incorporating elements of North American culture.

Unlike ikebana and tea ceremonies, the art of bonsai abroad slowly grew in popularity, as is evidenced in the number of societies, clubs, organisations, and nurseries.

With this growing popularity, the art of bonsai increasingly entrenched itself into North American culture, by incorporating aspects, meanings, and practices of the local cultural system. This chapter presents examples of these incorporations, by examining a number of developments, including: the zone system, effective training methods, a bonsai aid organization, a rebellion against Japanese bonsai, American bonsai, and finally, the development of Italian bonsai. Although ikebana and tea have also glocalized, at least to a certain extent, the art of bonsai presents by far the best example of the transformation that occurs, both at the level of practice and meaning, when transnational culture is re-interpreted and localized.

The Zone System

Bonsai enthusiasts classify trees into two main groups: tropical bonsai, which includes all trees that must be kept inside during the winter; and rustic bonsai, which includes all trees that are kept outside during the winter, as they go through a period of hibernation. Their classification varies all over North America. A tree considered rustic in Florida, is a tropical plant in Montreal.

While chatting on the Internet Bonsai Club, I notice that whenever a member asks a technical question on bonsai daily care, they always include the zone system they are situated in. At first, I do not understand the meaning, or use of the zone system, and begin to research the archives for some extra information. I presume the Japanese developed the system, but am quickly corrected. The zone system was developed by the

United States Department of Agriculture in the 1970's, as a general tool used by gardeners to estimate the cold-hardiness of plants, primarily fruits and ornamentals.

Bonsai enthusiasts across North America and Europe now use the zone system to determine the type of care required of trees in varying environmental conditions. The zone system is basically a scale, divided into climatic zones. The low zones refer to colder temperatures. When a tree is classified within the zone system, it is defined according to the lowest temperature in which it can survive. Therefore, as Montreal is a zone 5b, all trees classified as zone five or below live outside during the winter. Consequently, any tree that is classified as a zone six or above, must be kept indoors.

Bonsai enthusiasts in North America adopted this system because of the different climates that exist across the continent. Without adopting the zone system, bonsai enthusiasts across the United States and Canada, would not be able to share information on bonsai care. Although not originally used by bonsai Masters in Japan, North American practitioners incorporated the zone system as a horticultural classification method for bonsai, to ensure their advancement in the art. If North American bonsai enthusiasts are to create a network and share information and advice on bonsai trees, such a method is needed to ensure that bonsai literature can be interpreted across the country.

The zone system is not the only element of American bonsai that is unlike the Japanese practice. To render the practice more interpretable in North America, and

ensure the advancement of enthusiasts, bonsai practitioners also developed a new teaching method, which is akin to what North Americans are already accustomed to.

Developing an Appropriate and Proficient Method of Teaching

According to my informants, the art of bonsai is taught and learnt in Japan by using a strict apprenticeship system. Through the apprenticeship system, bonsai enthusiasts become bonsai professionals, experts or masters in the trade.
They gain professional horticultural training, acquiring a high degree of skill and artistry, and their status as bonsai masters. Once completed, they continue their professional lives as owners of a bonsai nursery, providing "all the plants, tools, containers, supplies, instructions, and services that their clients may require" (Young: 11).

The Japanese apprenticeship system requires years and years of practice, and much patience. An example is give in Noelanders book (1998), a European bonsai Master, who learnt the techniques and skills of the art by enrolling himself as an apprentice. His experience is described as gruelling. To learn the Japanese way, he submits himself to the hierarchical demands of Japanese society, in which his *sensei* is to be respected and held on a pedestal. For the first months of his apprenticeship, Noelanders is expected to clean and maintain the *sensei's* garden twelve hours a day, seven days a week, until he finally receives the *sensei's* authorization to begin learning horticultural and bonsai design technique. His knowledge of the art and technique of bonsai is acquired through constant contact with a plurality of Japanese Masters, visits to Japanese gardens, and of course, endless study and practice of newly attained techniques (Noelanders, 1998:8-9-10).

Despite the harsh conditions of the apprenticeship system, this method of teaching is viewed by many as a successful means of training bonsai practitioners. It has produced many remarkable Japanese artists for centuries, as well as some of today's leading North American and European experts, including Ernie Kuo, Salvatore Liporace, and Marc Noelanders.

Although the apprenticeship system is viewed as the traditional and authentic way of learning bonsai, and although many hobbyists would jump on the occasion to learn according to such methods, North American bonsai practitioners are not all convinced that it is the best and only way to learn. Whereas certain hobbyists argue that the traditional methods are best, others view the less-disciplined North American approach to learning as a contribution to bonsai. As one informant on the Internet Bonsai Club writes:

> "My suggestion is not that of changing bonsai, nor how it is done, nor what is learned. It is however, to suggest that we find a practical replacement for the education that was once available through an intense apprenticeship (a means of bonsai education unavailable to most of us). I see a great advantage of not having the Asian-Japanese apprenticeship method to learn. Even if one had the possibility to go through a Japanese apprenticeship, I would not recommend this" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 11th, 2000).

The subject of Japanese apprenticeship systems versus North American teaching methods is a much-discussed topic, both for Montreal bonsai hobbyists, and members of the Internet Bonsai Club. In what follows, the general opinion of bonsai practitioners is summarized, illustrating the worries of North American practitioners with regards to the Japanese apprenticeship method, and the need of developing a North American replacement that is more practical, yet still as proficient. Stemming from a conversation

that took place on the Internet Bonsai Club, between January 12th and January 14th, 2000, it illustrates how members view and define the Japanese system, and how they believe the North American method of teaching to be more advantageous.

The main problem associated with the Japanese training program, is its impracticality for the majority of bonsai practitioners. The Japanese system demands the full-time commitment of bonsai hobbyists. It is a full time job, which was developed in Japan to produce full-time bonsai professionals. In North America, practitioners already have full-time jobs, kids, a spouse, friends, and other hobbies. They simply do not have the time required to devote themselves entirely to learning bonsai for a couple of years. Bonsai, for most North Americans, is a pass-time. It is one of many elements of "our culture of leisure", and as such, there are not many enthusiasts who learn the techniques and artistic skills of bonsai in the hopes of becoming professionals or Masters (Internet Bonsai Club, January 14th, 2000). As presented above, the North American teaching method is not based on a lengthy apprenticeship. It includes participation with a bonsai society, attendance to conferences, demonstrations, and workshops on the art of bonsai, assisting courses that specifically deal with bonsai techniques, and most of all, individual practice with one's bonsai at home. The North American system of teaching allows participants to provide the number of hours they are willing to sacrifice.

One member of the Internet Bonsai Club asked whether or not it is coincidental that three of the leading Western bonsai artists all learnt according to the Japanese tradition. It is the question posed by many North American bonsai artists: does one really

need to go through the Japanese apprenticeship system in order to gain bonsai expertise? Can one gain the same technical proficiency by learning the North American way? Most will say you can, as they believe North American bonsai artists have learnt the same techniques as the Japanese, "without being bothered by a Master" (*ibid*). North American bonsai artists, who did learn the Japanese way, might well have been as good, or even better, had they learnt bonsai the North American way. As one artist put it, "The argument is not that of which is better, but what formula should be used in today's world for today's student and teacher" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 12th, 2000).

In addition to the impracticality of the Japanese system, some practitioners believe that North American bonsai artists are uninterested due to their cultural background and values. For starters, an intense apprenticeship is unfamiliar to what North Americans are accustomed to. In Japan, you do not sit in a classroom listening to a teacher. In fact, the teacher is said not to even teach.

> "If someone, like me, was raised in a liberal western culture, it would be unbearable and frustrating to learn according to the Japanese apprenticeship system. Just think about how you are treated, which is really a bit like a dumb juvenile without his own will. It is also just cheap labour. The Japanese system of teaching is not teaching of the master, but learning of the student. You have to find out yourself by observing" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 12th, 2000).

The Japanese system is said to emphasise humbleness, a virtue that is not valued in the Western world according to one member, "some people might say it is, but they really mean it should" (*ibid*). North Americans are raised as individualists, "we are raised to never do something just because an authority told us to, but to always ask why" (*ibid*). If students ask a Japanese bonsai Master why he is doing something, the *sensei*

will reply, "because that is the way we do it". In the Japanese system, one does not question the Master's teachings, one observes. There is only one Master, and he will always remain the only Master: "you do not dare to look left and right, only to the Master" (*ibid*). In contrast, members believe that North Americans are "raised to be better than our Masters" (*ibid*). This is noticeable in the teaching methods used, which encourage individuals to look at, and question, the many possibilities.

As compared to the Japanese system, one disadvantage of the North American method of learning is that it takes much longer. However, and many agree, it presents a number of advantages, including freedom of expression. Most North American practitioners believe that the Japanese method of apprenticeship limits the development of good bonsai artists,

> "I believe that the old-fashioned Japanese system, as I understand it, will not allow myself to develop into a free creative artist, but will rather limit my freedom. Chances are that a very creative person will not make it through a Japanese apprenticeship, because creativity is not a virtue in the Japanese learning process. I firmly believe that the Western system of training bonsai artists is much more flexible, and will create more and better artists than the Japanese system in the long run" (*ibid*).

Much like Judo and Sumo, says one member,

> "Eventually there will be Westerners who are better than the Japanese in their own art because of the inherent shortcoming of the traditional Japanese system" (*ibid*).

Most North American enthusiasts agree that the apprenticeship system is incompatible with their cultural system, as they view the art of bonsai as a hobby. For the Japanese, it is a profession, and one that is widely recognized. In Japan, bonsai trees, and the knowledge needed to maintain them, are passed on from one generation to the

next as inheritance. As bonsai abroad remains, overall, a hobby, it is interesting to note that North American practitioners are attempting to figure out their own system for transmitting knowledge and safeguarding bonsai, once their primary care-takers have passed away.

Caring for Bonsai after One's Death

While following conversations on the Internet Bonsai Club, during the months of January through till April, I came upon one thread, which discusses the subject of caring for bonsai after the death of an artist. I have decided to include the message[4], as it clearly depicts the processes of glocalization that occur when transnational cultural practices and meanings are appropriated to suit the local context. The message was sent out to all members of the Internet Bonsai Club, in March 2001.

"Some time ago, British bonsai artist Dan Barton expressed to me his concern about the continuity of bonsai in the Western culture when their primary caretaker no longer can provide care. I assembled his thoughts into a proposed program and presented them to the bonsai organization with which I have affiliation.

Last year, the Bonsai Societies of Florida, an umbrella organization in a State with many quality bonsai and relatively elderly population, adopted the program. Now, I am pleased to report that the American Bonsai Society also adopted the program. For those interested in the program's content and possible adoption by their organization, I quote the American Bonsai Society program below. At a minimum, some minor editing of administrative details would need to be done to make it applicable to your organization.

[4] Certain parts of the message were deleted, as they were not pertinent in the discussion.

Bonsai for the 21st Century and Beyond

INTRODUCTION

The life of bonsai in Japan often is perpetuated by being cared for by successive generations, by nurserymen or others. In the West, we do not have the luxury of reliable generations to care for our trees when we no longer can. Bonsai should be preserved for the whole of their natural lives in order that future generations will be able to enjoy and to appreciate them in just the same way that we are able to enjoy and marvel at the great and ancient bonsai of Japan.

The American Bonsai Society's contingency program to cater for bonsai in need is called "Bonsai for the 21st Century and Beyond" and is designed to be executed on a member society or individual member basis.

The program provides immediate help in the event of a bereavement, emigration, or in any other situation when the bonsai may be under threat. It can often be embarrassing and a bit tricky knowing just how to offer help without appearing to be a vulture on the fence waiting to snap up the bonsai when the owner can no longer be a care giver. But without this offer, nothing may be done and the bonsai are neglected or die to revert to type and lose their bonsai form. This of course is tragic.

THE PROGRAM

1. Bonsai owners are encouraged to make prearrangements concerning the disposition of their bonsai when they no longer are able to take care for them.
2. The family of a seriously ill bonsai owner is encouraged to contact an American Bonsai Society member or club to request assistance in arranging for the caring of the bonsai until the owner's illness is resolved or until a decision is made on the disposition of the bonsai.
3. The family of a recently deceased bonsai owner is encouraged to contact an American Bonsai Society member or club to request assistance in arranging for the caring of the deceased owner's bonsai until a decision is made on the disposition of the bonsai.
4. American Bonsai Society members, who become aware of a bonsai owner's incapacitation or death, are encouraged to contact the family to offer assistance in arranging for the caring of the bonsai and, if necessary, to advise on and to assist with appropriate disposition of the collection. Advice and assistance can be obtained by contacting the ABS Executive Secretary.
5. The family of a seriously ill or recently deceased bonsai owner, who does not know of a local bonsai enthusiast, is encouraged to contact the American Bonsai Executive Secretary for assistance.
6. The American Bonsai Executive Secretary has a list of resource volunteers who have agreed to coordinate the providing of whatever assistance is necessary. When a request is received it will be forwarded to a resource volunteer.

SOME OPTIONS

There are various options available to local clubs or individual members who volunteer to help when the primary bonsai caretaker is no longer available:

1. The collection can be left in place and cared for by local members until final disposition.
2. The collection can be dispersed amongst members in the local area who will care for them until final disposition.
3. The collection can be moved to a nursery for care pending final disposition
4. All or part of the collection can be:
   a. Left in place and sold by the owner in a yard or estate sale.
   b. Given by its owner to family members and bonsai friends.
   c. Given to the custody of the local bonsai club to be auctioned or sold with all or part of the funds going to the club.
   d. Disposed of by donation to regional, national, or international bonsai organizations for auction or raffle.
   e. Consigned to a bonsai vendor/nursery for sale.
   f. Donated to a permanent collection" (March 21st, 2001).

The development of a bonsai continuity program clearly demonstrates that certain elements of Japanese bonsai need to be appropriated in local contexts, to ensure that the art can be practised internationally. In Japan, it is customary for one's successor to take care of the family bonsai collection after one's death. Unfortunately, the same is not true in all contexts. As this example illustrates, North Americans are fully aware that bonsai does not have the same worth as it does in Japan. Leaving a bonsai collection to one's relatives will most probably be perceived as a burden, rather than a valuable inheritance.

Bonsai continually takes on more value with age, and therefore, if North American bonsai artists are to gain the same status and praise as Japanese artists do, they need to develop a program that will allow for the protection of bonsai trees. If the program is adopted, North Americans will be in a position to safe-guard some of their older species, and create a North American collection of bonsai masterpieces, without

needing to import the trees from Japan. In doing so, the status of North American bonsai, and bonsai artists, will be improved, and so will the value of bonsai as art.

Re-interpretations of transnational culture, as seen above, do not just happen over night. They develop, over time, through processes of glocalization, in order to render practices and meanings appropriate in varying locales. The fact that bonsai enthusiasts are suddenly beginning to wonder about the continuity of North American bonsai probably has much to do with the fact that bonsai gained popularity in the 1950's. Many of the earlier bonsai practitioners have reached a certain age, and must begin to question what they will do with their bonsai after passing away. To ensure the continuity and development of precious bonsai collections, North America must create its own experts and professional care-takers, which as the following section illustrates, is a process already underway.

North American and European Experts

For most members of the Lanaudière and Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society that I met, and many of the enthusiasts that chat on the Internet Bonsai Club, bonsai is a hobby, a passtime, something to be enjoyed. For others, however, the aim of practising bonsai goes beyond interest and leisure. For some, the goal is to become an expert, a professional in the field. In Montreal, the Karamatsu group, made up of ten bonsai enthusiasts, is an example of this. They are a study group, who meets once a month, and pays bonsai professionals from around the world to teach them, in the hopes of eventually

becoming Montreal's leading experts in the field. If for any reason a member leaves the group, the nine remaining choose who the replacement will be. The members of the Karamatsu group are already recognized in Montreal and surrounding areas as the leading experts in Quebec. The Montreal/Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Societies often call upon the Karamatsu to present their expertise during conferences and demonstrations. Furthermore, they are the ones who teach the various courses provided by the societies.

Where the art of bonsai is popularizing, one finds that bonsai enthusiasts are slowly developing into bonsai professionals. In the present day, Japan no longer remains the leading source of experts. As time passes by, organizations everywhere are seeking experts from around the world. One look at the guest speakers invited by the Montreal Society immediately demonstrates this trend. The activities of the 1999-2000 year include a visit by Jerry Vlcek of Ontario, a conference on Brazilian rain trees by Mary C. Miller from Miami, and a conference by Marc Noelanders from Belgium. In September 2000, they had Walter Pall from Germany teach members about the use of *taxus* species in bonsai. In January, Dr. Thomas S. Elias, director of the US National Arboretum, presented the history of bonsai in North America. And in May, Francois Jeker, from France, gave a conference about *genus gentiana* species.

As previously mentioned, practitioners in Japan must survive a rigorous training program through the apprenticeship system before being labelled a Master. As such a system does not exist in North America, I wondered how the title of Master was re-interpreted. North American bonsai enthusiasts do not go through an apprenticeship,

therefore, how are they judged as experts? There are no official exams, courses, degrees, or certificates in North America, which practitioners must take before attaining the title. So what qualifications should a bonsai enthusiast possess to adopt it? Obviously, I am not the only one to question the qualifications of bonsai Masters. The need to develop standards for experts, professionals, or Masters is also a subject of concern for members of the Internet Bonsai Club. As one member sarcastically writes,

> "My goal is to become a 'Master'. Well, what exactly is that then? What smaller goals and milestones must I establish for myself? Can I just hang out my sign and say 'Jim Stone, Bonsai Master'?" (Internet Bonsai Club, September 9th, 1999).

Many of the more experienced members, considered experts or professionals in the field, write that they did not have the option of learning in Japan, and therefore, a number of credentials have been unofficially determined, although by no means unanimously. Some believe that a level of mastery is achieved when their talents and skills are recognized,

> "A bonsai Master is someone who has achieved a commonly recognized level of artistic merit rather than someone who has passed a prescribed level of study. The proof of the Master is in his product rather than in his training history" (Internet Bonsai Club, September 8th, 1999).

Over the years, the members of the Internet Bonsai Club have debated the subject more than once. The following summarizes the opinions of practitioners on the matter of bonsai professionals outside of Japan. All answers stem from a compilation of members' responses to the question over the years:

> "A bonsai Master is one who knows everything there is to know about the species of tree being worked on: its horticultural habits, growth patterns, plant requirements, and so forth. He or she not only knows how to design the tree as a

bonsai, but also knows how to teach others how to create a bonsai. A good Master teaches because he or she loves the art and shares it freely" (*ibid*).

Other replies define more precise needs, such as

> "Having published a book which is over fifty pages long; having created a bonsai that has endured at least twenty-five years of torture or overzealous care; having one of your creations exhibited in the U.S. National Arboretum; having your picture published in one of the major bonsai magazines; and having taught a seminar during an international bonsai convention or having marketed some kind of video seminar (over one hour long)" (*ibid*).

In other words, the title of Master must be earned, not just chosen or bought. As the list owner states jokingly, but with some truth, bonsai Master wanted:

> "Recent, hands-on experience with bonsai trees, must be a scientist, an artist, may have learnt from book (please document degrees and certificates), both formal and informal training important, admired by a number of bonsai enthusiasts, have considerable longevity as a practitioner (minimum of 25 years), have your own tools, have dirt under your finger nails, and some knowledge of the Japanese language is useful" (*ibid*).

Some practitioners believe that a Master is one who is passionate, who furthers the art and innovates:

> "Someone who has thoroughly learned every aspect of his art and continues to learn more. He pushes back the frontiers of his art and leaves the mark on it that will outlive him. He has gained the ability to lose himself in his art, and become one with it" (*ibid*).

For others still, it is a Mastery of what those before him have done, and a respect of these works and the rules that they have set down:

> "A master is one who truly understands the rules, and therefore knows when it is appropriate to break those rules and make new ones" (*ibid*).

In summary, a bonsai master must have technical and horticultural skill. He/she must teach and enjoy teaching. He/she must be passionate about the art. He/she must innovate, but only when appropriate, and must have an inherent artistic sense.

Like many other aspects of bonsai, new methods were adopted in order to judge the expertise of bonsai enthusiasts. In this case, we notice that much of the criteria stems from the methods used in North America in a number of fields to judge the expertise of individuals. It includes sufficient knowledge of the techniques and skills required, sufficient experience and training, recognition by others, passion and sense of innovation, always pushing the art further, bringing something knew, rather than stagnating or replicating what has already be done, and learning from those that preceded.

As we advance through this chapter, it will become increasingly evident that in North America, Japanese bonsai no longer exists. It exists only partially, as one element of a new bonsai practice, a North American bonsai practice, which blends Japanese meanings, aspects, practices, and ideas, with new ones. Of course the Japanese elements of the art are not forgotten, nor are the origins of the art. Newcomers learn the basics, as the Japanese teaches these. With practice, however, most enthusiasts eventually find their own style, which sometimes, although not always, is unlike what is expected of bonsai according to Japanese norms.

Breaking Away from Japanese Bonsai

As one learns the art of bonsai, most agree, and I can attest to, that introductory courses include an extensive examination and practice of the "classical or traditional Japanese concepts, rules, techniques, and designs" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 11th, 2000). From this point on, however, bonsai artists in North America enjoy a greater

freedom, as they, unlike the Japanese, are not forced to study the art under "excessive rigidity and repetition" (*ibid*). For these reasons, many practitioners argue that North American teaching methods have led bonsai artists away from predictable Japanese bonsai designs, and towards the

> "unpredictable elements of contemporary design, that nonetheless stem from classical or traditional forms, but which produce some of the best bonsai" (*ibid*).

Bonsai practitioners will continue producing traditional or classical forms of bonsai, however, the possibility of creating new creative designs is out there. By incorporating classical or traditional forms with North American aesthetics, a new style of bonsai design has been created, which is not better than the Japanese, but which should not be ignored as second-rate. The opinions presented below, with regards to North American bonsai design versus Japanese bonsai, represent a good number of artists on the Internet Bonsai Club. Although, it should be mentioned that for other bonsai hobbyists, it is considered wrong to go against the rules defined by the Japanese.

Most members of the Internet Bonsai Club, however, argue that bonsai enthusiasts abroad need not continue to replicate bonsai as it is designed and styled in Japan. The only thing that truly matters to most is that they enjoy bonsai, and have fun styling them. The rigidity of Japanese forms, and of constantly reproducing the same design is not valued in North America. The main reason for this distinction between Japanese replication or emulation and North American freedom of creativity is viewed as stemming from certain inherent differences in how each culture values art. It is said that

in Asian traditions, imitation "and outright forgery" is considered the highest form of flattery:

> "The cultures of Japan and some other Eastern areas are known as replicating cultures. The reason behind this, as I understand it, has to do with the way they have in their culture of showing their veneration of certain things, such as art, by copying them" (*ibid*).

In contrast,

> "In our Western thought, we do not call replicated work original, and originality is the keynote of our art. In Japan, not quite so... replication is accepted, it abounds" (Internet Bonsai Club, November 28th, 2000).

Bonsai practitioners differentiate Japanese bonsai from North American bonsai based on these different cultural values; Japan is viewed as a replicating society that sticks to conventions and rules, whereas North America is considered a non-replicating society, which values originality in its art. In the present day, certain Japanese artists are said to create bonsai trees that do not replicate classical forms. However, members on the Internet Bonsai Club argue that they do so because of "the present easy acquaintance between their replicating and our non-replicating (or originality-prone) societies" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 11th, 2000). It is argued that North American bonsai artists, in their originality, have produced new forms of bonsai design, which are now influencing Japanese bonsai artists. Rather than North Americans always looking to Japan for inspiration, bonsai enthusiasts in Japan are said to now look at North Americans.

Despite the development of North American bonsai designs, the common denominator of all bonsai practitioners is Japanese bonsai. Japanese bonsai trees

represent the form of "classical bonsai"(*ibid*), and give direction to the modelling and styling of all bonsai. One must not forget that the origins and development of bonsai remain Japanese. It is they who laid down the basic guidelines that define what is and what is not a bonsai. To overlook these basic guidelines completely, would be to speak of something other than bonsai.

In the international arena, participants appropriate other elements of the art according to their own values and culture. This is not to say that a complete transformation of the art is entailed, but rather, aspects of local cultures are blended with certain aspects of bonsai, as it is practised in Japan, thereby creating a type of bonsai practice among many practices. In the following section, we continue to explore North American bonsai, or the development and recognition of what bonsai enthusiasts on the Internet Bonsai Club now call "American bonsai".

Naturalized American Bonsai: Regional Styles

When I began my research, I met with the vice-president of the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society, with whom I sat and discussed a number of topics, while looking at some of his favourite bonsai books. We look at one particular photograph of a Japanese masterpiece, and Mr. Gauthier states:

"*Japanese bonsai trees are not my favourite. They have no soul and they are not natural. When Japanese artists choose a tree, they already have an image in their head, and they impose it upon the tree. I do not like the final product it creates*" (November 2nd, 2000).

He compared the Japanese masterpieces with the works of North American artists, showing me why American bonsai is much more natural. This comment surprised me at first, as I was under the impression that the Japanese are the main source of inspiration for bonsai enthusiasts everywhere. I dismiss the comment as personal taste until later on during the year, when I examine the Internet Bonsai Club. The members of the listserv also fancy what they call "natural style bonsai" or "American bonsai". I come to realize that Ghyslain' comments are more than personal taste. They reflect an actual movement in the global art of bonsai, a movement towards regional styles of bonsai, each which reflects the natural landscape of the artist.

Throughout the later part of my research, I began noticing discussions of regional bonsai styles in a variety of contexts. During my introductory course with the Montreal Bonsai and Penjing Society, my instructor handed out a photocopy of an article that

appeared in "La Presse", an important French newspaper that is distributed in Montreal and surrounding areas. Written in September 2000, the article is an interview with David Easterbrook, who speaks of the development of bonsai in Montreal. Mr. Easterbrook introduces the art as having ancient Asiatic origins, however, he argues that although the techniques might be Japanese or Chinese, the trees used by Montreal bonsai enthusiasts are mainly from Quebec, and represent Quebec culture. We learnt from the Japanese and Chinese, he insists, but our bonsai now has a Quebecois personality. They are indigenous trees, which represent, through their shapes and colours, a little of the Eastern Townships, or the North Coast, or the Laurentians, just like Japanese bonsai represents the natural landscapes of Japan.

In the literature I read, both by Japanese and non-Japanese enthusiasts, I realized that the recognition of different bonsai styles, especially American bonsai, dates back to the 1970's.

> "In America bonsai is still in its infant stages and you have not had the experience of long years of cultivating bonsai as we have had in Japan. This, I feel, is a great advantage, for just as a pet takes on the disposition of its owner, so bonsai in the United States will reflect the personality of American enthusiasts. When the American personality becomes expressed in bonsai, it will be the turn of American bonsai to go abroad with the ambition of being recognized for both its reputation and its beauty. This, I am sure, will take place in the near future" (Kawasumi, 1975: 12).

I came across a second book, entitled *Outstanding American Bonsai: A Photographic Essay on the Works of Fifty American Bonsai Artists* (Clark, 1989), which specifically features the work of American artists. As the book states, although interest in bonsai across the United States and Canada is relatively new, practitioners are producing excellent quality bonsai that reflects American culture. As the author writes,

> "The term American Bonsai can be a little confusing for those becoming acquainted with the art. As a society, North Americans have been conditioned to think of bonsai as a Japanese art form. This view is not really adequate. Although the beginnings of bonsai are firmly rooted in the Orient, like any art form, it is amenable to adaptation, change and interpretation to reflect American values and concepts of beauty" (Clark, 1989:15).

Bonsai is no longer an exclusively Oriental art form, it has become globalized, and localized, to reflect an increasing amount of differentiated contexts.

As previously mentioned, there is a desire among North Americans to be original in their art, whether it be painting or bonsai. However, this is not the main reason for transforming bonsai styles. Regional styles are appearing as a result of the changing environmental contexts of artists. American bonsai is not an outright rebellion against classical or Japanese bonsai; it is a result of the type of trees used by North American bonsai artists.

When the Japanese developed the art of bonsai, they developed it with their own indigenous trees. As they were trying to replicate nature, they created rules, proportions, and styling criteria that could be applied to the trees in their environment. However, North American bonsai artists do not always use the same trees as the Japanese. Although some Japanese species are imported, most bonsai artists use indigenous trees, as these are much easier to maintain than the tropical species imported from Japan. The use of indigenous trees has become the basis of North American bonsai styles. As bonsai enthusiasts began using native material, the designs they created began to change, in order to reflect the idealized forms of indigenous species, and the geographic regions in which they are found.

The importance of reflecting the natural landscape of one's environment is basic to the practice of American bonsai. As one informant wrote on the Internet Bonsai Club,

> "This maple is a very good bonsai. It may well be one of the best maples in Europe. I spent considerable time and skill to design it. It is not an example of art. It is not art. It is handicraft, good, probably even very good, but just handicraft. Why? Because good alone is not good enough. Because this design is not unique, it is not original. It is a cliché. It repeats (very well) what has been seen so often. It tries to be the ideal bonsai. The ideal bonsai is a pine tree (based on Japanese design). This maple desperately wants to be a very good pine bonsai. It does not succeed and it can not succeed. It is a citation of a pine bonsai. It does not have a soul, only an outside. It does not move my soul (anymore). If this were a bonsai that desperately wants to look like an old maple tree it would be art. It would have character, soul, and charisma. It is very good, but not art" (Internet Bonsai Club, November 28th, 2000)

The key to this statement, and the philosophy which bonsai artists in North America are adopting, is the need to keep in mind, when designing a bonsai, what each species "wants" to do. Not all species can be designed according to the rules and proportions that the Japanese laid down to create classical forms.

The ideal or classic bonsai is defined as the pine. But whose ideal is this? It was developed by the Japanese, but cannot be adopted by bonsai enthusiasts everywhere. Therefore, as new species are being used in different regions, new styles are emerging, ones that represent the ideal in their own regions. The forms and styles developed by the Japanese will probably remain ideal if working with a Japanese pine, or native species with similar growth patterns. But when working with differing indigenous species, bonsai artists will have to develop their own styles according to the natural growth pattern of the species in their own environment.

Slowly, bonsai teachers and experts in North America are trying to popularize the "natural style" of bonsai that is characteristic of the practice in North America. As one bonsai artist put it:

> "Junipers grow like shrubs, however, they are invariably styled as if they were a pine tree. When I was re-styling a juniper in a nursery, the owner looked at it and said, but Walter, junipers do not grow like this! He had about fifty junipers prepared by a Japanese nurseryman to look like a cliché pine tree. I pointed this out to him, that what he thought was a natural look of a juniper is really a transvestite that we got used to" (*ibid*).

In order to create idealized images of nature, international bonsai artists must break the rules, standards, and guidelines established by the Japanese. For example, the Bald Cypress, found in the Southern regions of the United States, naturally forms a large flat-topped tree when really old. The natural growth of this tree does not fit into any category as defined by the Japanese, therefore, in order to represent a naturalized representation of the Bald Cypress, one must turn away from classical bonsai design to create a new style. Vaughn Banting, one of America's leading artists, spent twenty-five years studying the natural growth patterns of the Bald Cypress, before identifying the 'Flat Top' style for Bald Cypress trees, which is now recognized, accepted, and preferred, as the style to be used (http://lcbsbonsai.org/ NL_LOSB_1.htm).

The appearance of regional styles is not only happening in North America. From what can be grasped on the Bonsai Internet Club, regional styles are appearing in other areas of the world. One member, living in Australia, mentioned the following in relation to the style and form of the ideal bonsai:

> "I have always had a problem with the way Ficus tend to be styled following the main trunk with the first branch left or right, followed by second and third branches up the one and only main trunk, etc, etc, making it look like a

pine tree, whereas most of the figs I have seen in Australia and Southeast Asia have a short, thick main trunk for about ¼-1/3 of the height, which then divides into three, four, five, or even more main very thick branches at roughly the same level with a very wide apex (tip of tree) over the top, rather than the little pointy things seen on pines. I guess many others have noticed this, and therefore, the 'Banyan' style has emerged to emulate natural figs. As I once wrote in a previous thread, if Japan, Korea, and China had Eucalypts, Mallees, and Banksias instead of pines, pines, and more pines, then we'd all be shaping our bonsai very differently, Zen or no Zen" (November 29th, 2000).

Obviously, to some degree, the creation of regional styles implies defining a new set of rules. However, international bonsai artists do not believe they are attempting to radically change what is defined as classical bonsai. Rather, they are using classical bonsai and the philosophy it entails, as inspiration to create styles that are appropriate to their environments. These new styles continue to maintain the principles of balance, rhythm, and harmony, as developed by the Japanese, which members of the Internet Bonsai Club state create a sense of beauty understood cross-culturally; not needing to be transformed.

North American bonsai artists are creating new styles, not because they think that Japanese forms and styles are wrong, but because they are conscious that the rules defined by the Japanese developed as a result of the growth habits of indigenous trees. These rules are not to be disregarded; yet they need not be adhered to all the time. They must be appropriated, in order to represent the natural growth patterns of North American indigenous trees. Japanese rules, it is said, should not keep bonsai artists from expanding, learning, or experimenting. Adherence to these rules will only stifle the growth and development of bonsai as global art. Bonsai must be allowed to represent the

cultural systems in which it is practiced, thereby creating individual, regional, and even national styles.

American Bonsai Vs Italian Bonsai: National Styles

In the above, I discussed regional styles of bonsai, especially American bonsai, as an example of how the art is re-interpreted, or re-embedded within a locality. Of interest in this section is the development of national styles, and how national culture influences the perception, interpretation, transformation, and practice of, originally, a primarily Japanese art. The topic of national styles was discussed on the Bonsai Internet Club, especially due to the recent rise and appreciation of Italian Bonsai. In the following discussion, which summarizes a thread between May 2nd and May 4th 2001, the national re-interpretation of bonsai is illustrated, demonstrating that whereas bonsai in Italy is considered a fine art, in North American, it is a hobby.

"The styling of a tree is based on the artist's interpretation of the material, which in turn reflect one's nationalism (geography/cultural) or ancestry. To illustrate, if we look at attitudes one encounters nationalistically, Americans have a 'can-do attitude'. This makes them perhaps more likely to dive into the art and make their own unique attempts but much less 'coachable'. It is my general feeling that we also tend to be the less serious (fewer schools, professional artists...) than, for example, the Japanese, who

have a very formalized controlled culture. They exhibit less innovation but greater attention to fine detail".

"*Another example of national style is the Italians, who I FIRMLY believe is Europe's #1 Bonsai country. I seems to me that Italy has a very enthusiastic base of bonsai artists and quite an organized "bonsai scene". There is at least one large school for bonsai (maybe 2), and an organizational infrastructure that appears similar to Japan. Granted, these are just my observations and perceptions, but in any event, bonsai is big and well organized there. So, why is it that bonsai is so strong and organized in Italy, whereas in the U.S., there does not seem to be any focused cohesion? I have begun to form my own opinions, and the relative size of the two countries is certainly a factor, as is, in my own opinion, the American 'be my own boss –start my own thing' tendency. But that is not the whole story.*"

"*You are right about one thing, bonsai artists in Italy are extremely enthusiastic. Italians by and large are either enthusiastic about something or just do not do it. There are at least three large schools of bonsai in Italy, which are fighting against each other with fierce hostility. Bonsai seems to be an extremely competitive thing in Italy. It is not for fun; it is for beating the enemies. Does this sound terrible? This has always been the case in Italian art. This competitiveness is the main reason for Italy having the lead in bonsai. In Italy, there is no debate whether bonsai is art. It is art, and art is not a hobby. In Italy, an artist is a better human. It is someone with a better soul, who deserves special attention. It is someone who can get away with more than the rest.*

In consequence, there are more bonsai artists in Italy than in the rest of Europe. Italians celebrate their artists, they treat them like heroes, and they call them maestro –Master. They have a scheme of Masters, upper-masters, lower-masters, would-be-masters etc... In Italy, there are two or three organizations for bonsai Masters. One can smile about all this, but it produces results. So what's the main difference? The Italian bonsai scene considers bonsai as art, not a hobby. Bonsai is all about producing the very best that one can and is not just about fun. Bonsai means to produce something that will win a trophy –an art trophy. And so it does. In America, bonsai is treated as a hobby and it is just a hobby - to a very large extent at least."

"*For the sake of improvement, of "raising the bar", Italian bonsai is excellent. However many would agree (especially here in the U.S.) that it misses the point –that it is for the enjoyment of the beauty, the art. It is just a hobby after all...*"

"*I agree! Most Americans, myself included, treat bonsai as a hobby; not as fine art*".

"*I am a proponent for competition in nearly any endeavour and believe that it leads to excellence. However, since the prevailing idiocy of U.S. political correctness says that competition 'only makes poor performers feel bad' and is therefore to be eschewed, that ideal would never fly here. Sad but true*".

"*In Germany, an artist is someone who has failed in life. People ask "what is your real profession". It is the same in the U.S.?*"

"I do not know the American reality, but you have many good bonsai professionals, and many people attend workshops and demonstrations. So, why is American bonsai less structured and able than Italian bonsai?"

"Because it is a hobby. I am not saying that Americans are not able or not gifted. I am trying to explain that there is a cultural difference, not a genetic one. The Italian culture breeds art and artists by competition and by taking bonsai very seriously –much more than a hobby, something to excel in. American culture tends to breed nice people who play with nice little trees and have fun together".

With the transnational movement of culture, the meaning of bonsai is appropriated and transformed to incorporate the ideals and values considered representative of national cultures. This is not to say that bonsai means one thing for all Americans, or one thing for all Italians. Such ideas might have an influence on the meaning of the art in general, but for practitioners, individual free will and creativity continue to shape the meaning of bonsai, thereby adding yet another layer and complexity to the meaning of bonsai.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I present the processes of transformation that occur during glocalization. Due to the dis-embedding and globalization of bonsai, the art has been localized and re-embedded. As a result of processes of transformation, the art of bonsai has been given new meaning, and is now practised according to North American cultural

systems, as is evidenced in the numerous examples of local appropriations presented above.

I demonstrated the appropriation, creolization, hybridization, and indigenisation of bonsai at the level of practice, by discussing the adoption of the zone system, the development of proficient teaching methods to replace the apprenticeship system, aid organizations for bonsai trees after death, and the development of international expertise. All these elements of North American bonsai practice suggest that bonsai, as it is understood and practiced in Japan, can not be incorporated as is in North America. It must be re-interpreted, transformed, and appropriated to suit the context of North American culture. Bonsai, in North America, is a hobby, not a profession. Re-interpretation, adaptation, and change are also noticeable at the level of meaning. This is illustrated above with regards to controversies surrounding Japanese design and styling, the development of American bonsai, and a comparison between the meaning of bonsai in North America as compared to bonsai in Italy. Many of the values and ideals of North Americans have been incorporated, illustrating the re-embedding of bonsai within the cultural context of practitioners.

Although there is a distinction between traditional Japanese bonsai and North American bonsai, certain resemblances do remain. Bonsai has been appropriated and glocalized to render the art form valuable, interpretable, and practical in the global world, yet it remains bonsai. As one informant states:

> "We are in the process of creating our own traditions, but this tradition can not be detached from the roots of the art, the historical culture. No matter what

> we in the US, or others in Japan, Germany, Italy, France, or any other geographical location do with the art, certain undeniable characteristics must be inherent within the creation, in my mind and the mind of many artists, to be true bonsai" (Internet Bonsai Club, January 12th, 2000).

In this way, the art of bonsai, despite its many local practices, continues to have a homogenized global meaning.

7. THE MEANING AND PRACTICE OF JAPANESE TRADITIONAL ARTS IN MONTREAL AND ABROAD: A STUDY OF THE PROCESSES OF CULTURAL GLOBALIZATION

"Last Friday, I went to '*Dreaming of Tea*'. The owner was interviewed on two local TV shows in January, but no address was given and it was long before I found him via Canada 411. It is a rather small shop, some steps to go down from the street level. Bare floor, almost bare walls except for framed newspaper clips (interviews with the owner) or little framed tea art. All tea-related items displayed on big tea chests from various origins. No price tags. Big metal tea tins on shelves behind the counter.

The young lady who acts as a salesperson asked me if I went there on purpose or by chance, I answered that it was voluntarily, having searched high and low after the first TV show which Gaetan Doyon has been on. She immediately corrects me: MONSIEUR Doyon, no first name for him. I was determined to inquire so I swallow this "lesson" without a word and gladly accepted the tour she offered me. 255 teas; many blends took as long as one year for MONSIEUR Doyon to be satisfied. Bla bla bla… about his experience and select clients. I discovered that the great man was back there, behind curtains, when the young lady went to ask him about the dragon teapot with a spinning ball in the spout. She made several back and front walks to ask him but he never came in front of me...

I was determined to inquire to the bottom of this barrel so when she asked me if I wanted a particular tea, for a particular moment or state of mind, I answered "Darjeeling Makaibari, to drink alone"… I took 50 grams that she put in a double-ply bag. I then was asked what size and style of teapot I will use; MONSIEUR Doyon would personalize brewing instructions accordingly. I replied that I would proceed as usual then adjust by myself. She came back with her hand-filled sticker, stuck it to the closed bag, and put it in a brown bag with a paper that I thought was the invoice.

I admit I did not like this man when I saw and heard him on TV. My visit seems to confirm that he wants to be the master and clients have to follow. I like suggestions for brewing tea as a starting point, I do not want prescriptions, and I do not want therapy questions before buying a tea. Perhaps it would have been

different if I had showed off my knowledge of tea (I will never pretend that I am a tea expert, but I think that I have gone far enough with the two Darjeelings). I will send tea novices, warning them that the prices are high, just to learn how they are briefed, just to discover if it is me who am allergic to men like him.

For those who want to believe, MONSIEUR Doyon is there to guide" Mme. Hardy, (http://www.catteacorner.com/reviews5.htm#songepq).

Unlike most businesses, Mr. Doyon's business is not about the customers. He does not adapt himself to the expectations of Montreal tea-drinkers; rather, he expects tea-drinkers to adapt to his way of doing. However, as the above illustrates, not everyone is prepared to accept the unfamiliar. And because of this, I am quite positive that of the many tea shops in Montreal, this one is probably the less likely to attract regular customers, apart from perhaps a few individuals, who enjoy new and different experiences.

A number of theorists have already examined and ethnographically portrayed the transnational flow of culture. Unfortunately, most examine only one of many processes, focusing on cultural homogenization, heterogenization, appropriation, creolization, hybridization, or westernization. To truly understand the complexity of cultural globalization, however, these processes must be examined as a whole, to illustrate the diversity of such flows and their interrelations. As of yet, those who do provide a more complete picture do so with abstract theorizations, and end up summarizing the whole process as complex. No ethnographies that I have come across present the range of processes that stem from transnational cultural flows, and the links between them.

With this dissertation, I propose a new and insightful framework for examining the complexity and unequal distribution of transnational culture, which when applied to a case study, ethnographically illustrates the diversity of ways in which transnational culture flows, the processes that affect such movements, and the interrelations between these. Using a distributive model of culture, I examine the classification of transnational culture according to metacultures, the process of glocalization, or the dis-embedding and re-embedding of transnational culture, and the re-interpretation that results from processes of transformation, including creolization, appropriation, hybridization, and the indigenisation of modernity. Together, these concepts form the basis of my theoretical framework, which I apply to a case study of the unequal movement and distribution of Japanese traditional arts in Montreal and abroad, or more precisely, bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies. To ethnographically present cultural complexity and transnational cultural flows, I aimed to answer three general questions. What processes affect the introduction of bonsai, ikebana, and Japanese tea ceremonies into new cultural systems, in this case, Montreal and North America? Why has bonsai popularized, thereby being distributed over a larger amount of the population, whereas the other two remain marginal? And how do the various processes involved in the transnational movement and distribution of culture affect the practice and interpretation of Japanese traditional arts abroad?

To examine these three questions, I chose to investigate the reception, incorporation, and interpretation of bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies in Montreal and across North America. By exploring the reception of Japanese traditional arts abroad, I

examine how transnational cultural products are introduced, by whom, and for whom. By analysing the incorporation of Japanese traditional arts, I illustrate how transnational cultural products are presented and included within local cultural systems. Lastly, by investigating their interpretation by international practitioners, I illustrate the classification, categorization, analysis, and re-interpretation of the arts, determining the transformations that occur at the level of meaning and practice when transnational cultural products are adopted and appropriated within new localities.

In chapter two, "The Origins and Development of Japanese Traditional Arts and their Recent Introduction in North America", I situate the practice of Japanese traditional arts abroad. I discuss the historical development of bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies in Japan, demonstrating how they constantly transformed and evolved over time. I continue to present their introduction and reception in United States, Canada, and Montreal, illustrating the role of American occupation forces in Japan at the end of the Second World War, and the influence of Japanese immigrants and large Japanese communities. The following chapter, "Methodology and Description of Research Activities" presents my own discovery of the arts, as well as providing in-depth descriptions of the societies and organizations I studied, the activities I participated in, the research methods I used, and the information I collected.

After contextualizing the arts abroad, I begin to inquire into the unequal distribution of Japanese traditional arts abroad in chapter four, "Metacultures of Similarity: an Ethnographic Case Study of the Practice and Distribution of Three

Japanese Traditional Arts in Montreal". I examine the practice and interpretation of bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies, as these are perceived in the specialized courses and activities offered by the four organizations I studied, and the participants I came to know well. I question the increasing popularity of bonsai, as compared to that of ikebana and tea, and apply the notion of metaculture, in order to decipher the reasons for which "everything is not everywhere" (Hannerz, 1996:50).

The term metaculture refers to overarching conceptions, which people draw upon to analyse and classify the unfamiliar. Globalization theorists list two main metacultures, however, my research only allows for an examination of the first major metaculture, which is said to emphasise similarity. By examining the finer cultural details of transnational culture, individuals are said to decipher the similarities and differences that exist between their respective situation and the other, thereby classifying the unfamiliar, and interpreting it according to their own cultural context (Hannerz, 1996:50-51). Furthermore, familiarity is said to reign as the hegemonic ideal, as metacultures of similarity are understood as metacultures of modernity, in that they pertain to a type of civilization spreading through the world. Therefore, the movement of transnational cultural practices, meanings, and material culture that present greater instances of similarity is said to be facilitated, as it is more easily interpretable, and therefore adopted by people to a greater extent, whereas the movement of transnational culture that presents a number of differences is restrained.

By presenting narrative accounts of the experiences of local practitioners, I focus on who, what, where, when, and how, which I argue are the cultural minutiae used by practitioners as schemes of understanding for the analysis and classification of traditional Japanese arts. I illustrate the finer cultural details of Japanese traditional art courses that individual practitioners examine to determine similarities and differences both at a practical and symbolic level. Who practices bonsai, ikebana, and tea ceremonies? Who provides the lessons and who organizes the activities? What are the arts and why do they interest practitioners? What is taught during demonstrations, conferences, and courses, and where are the courses provided? Where can the material needed for the course be accessed? When are the courses and demonstrations, and how are the lessons presented? How much time is required to practice, and how will I situate the arts within my own life?

In so doing, I illustrate why bonsai, as presently practiced in Montreal, is more similar to what Western participants are accustomed to and find appropriate. Men and women, young and old, practise it. It is provided by large organizations that are easy to access. It emphasises horticulture as the main element of the art. It is taught according to Western teaching methods. It requires as much time as one is willing to give. It is generally understood as a hobby, and can be easily practiced at home. As the cultural details are more akin to what Montrealers are habituated with, bonsai becomes classified, according to a metaculture of similarity, as something familiar. Consequently, the adoption and practice of the art is more widespread and distributed amongst Montrealers, as compared with ikebana and tea, which both present a greater number of differences.

The question remains, however, why has bonsai been better incorporated as an element of North American culture? What processes of transformation have rendered the art more familiar?

The concept of a metaculture of similarity is used to explain the forces that facilitate and restrain the transnational movement of culture. However, alone, the ideas proposed by this framework do not answer all questions. The notion is too black and white. Transnational cultural products can not be merely classified as either similar or different, as is evident in the case study I examined. Not all aspects of bonsai are familiar to North American practitioners, and not all aspects of tea are foreign. There needs to be certain in-betweens. Ikebana, for instance, is a great example, as it incorporates a number of similarities and differences with the local cultural system. In this regards, a further concept is included within my theoretical framework, in order to determine the processes that transform transnational culture from unfamiliar to familiar practices, meanings, and objects.

The second notion I focus my attention on is the idea of glocalization. In "Global Modernities" (1995), Robertson proposes a constructive approach for understanding the transnational movement of culture. In his view, globalization entails a process of increasing "glocalization" that in origin stems from business discourse. It means to tailor and advertise goods and services on a global basis to increasingly differentiated locales and markets (Robertson, 1995:28). Robertson appropriates this concept for understanding the wider cultural dimensions of globalization, or the process in which

local practices are more and more dis-embedded and globalized, and in which foreign practices are increasingly re-embedded and localized within a variety of local contexts. Basically, Robertson is arguing that due to glocalization, aspects of a local cultural system are rendered global, in the sense that the meanings, beliefs, and practices of local cultures re-constitute themselves in order to be transnationally interpretable, by incorporating ideas from other cultural systems.

With regards to my own research, I realized that although the art of bonsai seems to have been largely influenced by the process of glocalization, both ikebana and Japanese tea ceremonies remain hardly affected. I began to examine what aspects of transnational culture are glocalized, and to what extent. Is the process always the same, or are cultural practices and meanings glocalized to varying degrees?

While doing my research, I realized that transnational networks exist between the Japanese headquarters of organizations and practitioners around the world, which have much influence on the interpretation, meaning, and practice of the arts. The presence of such networks is used to examine the construction of meaning abroad, as their nature helps explain the interpretation of the arts. When a network between international practitioners and Japan was weak, I perceived a distancing of the arts from their practice in Japan. On the other hand, when the two-way link was strong, the arts were embedded in Japanese culture and traditions to a greater extent.

The loss or survival of two-way transnational networks, and the effects of these on glocalization, became the subject of chapter five, "Glocalization, Transnational Networks, and the Dis-embedding of Bonsai from its Origins in Japan". By exploring the loss or survival of transnational networks between international practitioners and Japan, I discuss the dis-embedding of bonsai from its origins in Japan, as compared to the embeddedness of ikebana and tea ceremonies. I compared the certification of students, the representation of the arts, the recommended literature, the use of material culture, and the language preference, in order to illustrate the effects of transnational relationships on processes of glocalization. By discussing the role of networks, I demonstrate one element, among many, that affects the dis-embedding and glocalization of transnational culture.

In chapter six, "American Bonsai: '...not to become more like us, but more like themselves...' (Sahlins, 1993:17)", I continue to explore the process of glocalization. However, I focus my attention on the localizing and re-embedding of the arts, illustrating that their dis-embedding and globalization does not result in the homogenization of culture, or the creation of a global culture. Once imported and incorporated into local cultures, these cultural products are subject to hybridization, appropriation, and creolization, or processes of transformation, thereby creating diversity.

Although both ikebana and Japanese tea ceremonies are subject to processes of glocalization, bonsai presents the best example, and was therefore chosen to illustrate the processes of transformation that occur when transnational culture is re-embedded and

subjected to change, interpretation, and creative transformation. I explore the processes by way of which North American bonsai hobbyists transformed the meaning of the art, to include some of the ideas, practices, and meanings that are more suitable to the practice of bonsai in the United States and Canada. I illustrate these processes of transformation, by examining a number of developments, including: the zone system, effective training methods, a bonsai aid organization, a rebellion against Japanese bonsai, American bonsai, and finally, the development of Italian bonsai.

In each chapter, we looked at the processes separately; however, I have yet to define the relationship between these. When I began working on this dissertation, I hoped to determine a definite structure, or a pattern of sorts; a plan that could be followed step-by-step. However, as I worked my way through the processes, I realized that it was not possible to define the order in which processes of cultural globalization affect transnational culture. I was attempting to answer an age-old question: what comes first the chicken or the egg? In other words, is bonsai classified as familiar according to a metaculture of similarities because it has been glocalized (or dis-embedded and re-embedded), or is the art of bonsai glocalized, because it has been classified as familiar according to a metaculture of similarities?

When viewed with regards to transnational networks, the complexity of the question is clear. Bonsai is defined as something familiar, because the cultural details are considered appropriate within the North American context. It would seem that this is due to processes of glocalization. As bonsai was dis-embedded from Japan, no longer relying

on Japanese masters as the only source of information, material, and certification, the transnational link between international practitioners abroad and Japan was negated, thereby allowing for the art to be re-embedded in local contexts by incorporating local cultural elements. It seems clear that there is a cause and effect relationship. Transnational culture is defined as familiar, as it has been dis-embedded and globalized, and re-embedded and localized. However, by examining the influence of transnational networks on the process of glocalization, one begins to question how transnational culture can begin the process of dis-embedding if it has not yet been classified as familiar, according to a metaculture of similarities. With regards to our example of bonsai, if the art is not considered familiar, it will not be widely distributed amongst a population. Therefore, the network that exists between the enthusiasts abroad and Japan will not be eliminated, and Japan will remain the only source of expertise, material, and certification. As such, bonsai would remain entrenched in the traditions and culture of Japan, thereby eliminating the possibility of incorporating a number of the values, ideas, and practices of local cultures abroad.

In truth, the interrelation between these processes is not one of cause and effect, but rather a continual relationship, in which each process continuously effects the other, and is in turn continuously effected by these. Transnational culture is determined as familiar, according to metacultures of similarity, because it presents instances of glocalization. Transnational cultural elements glocalize because they are increasingly defined by the other as familiar.

Throughout this dissertation, I identify the processes of change that occur, both at the level of practice and meaning, when elements of one cultural system are adopted and utilized in new value systems. In so doing, I advance theories of cultural globalization by providing an ethnographic account of cultural complexity. Not only do I present an ethnographic case study that incorporates the many processes that effect the transnational movement of culture, but I demonstrate that the relationship between these, and the process of cultural globalization itself, can not be defined as following a certain structure or pattern. It is a continuous process, continually changing and evolving. However, it can not be simply characterised as complex. One can identify the processes and the interrelations between these when applying the theories to ethnographic examples. By applying the notions of globalization theorists to a case study of Japanese arts in Montreal and North America, I illustrate the working of these interrelations. In addition, I provide an ethnography of Japanese traditional arts in America. Some anthropologists have already examined Japanese tea ceremonies in Japan, however, none have investigated ikebana or bonsai, and none have evaluated their practice abroad.

In continuation with this project, further research could entail a more elaborate investigation of the internationalization of Japanese traditional arts. In this dissertation, I examined the process from one point of view, however, my research leaves many questions unanswered. What results would be found if applied to a different case study? Or what if using the same case study, I simply applied the theoretical framework to another context, such as San Francisco, or Vancouver, where larger Japanese communities exist? Furthermore, to examine the process in its entirety would require

field research in Japan as well. What is the role of Japanese practitioners in the production of meaning abroad? What type of discourse do international organizations, such as Ikebana International, the Ikenobo Society, and the Urasenke School of Tea, produce, and for what purposes? Furthermore, how is this discourse transformed and re-interpreted after being integrated into the cultural systems of international practitioners, and what is the significance of these transformations in relation to the international representation of Japanese culture and identity? These are the many questions that I hope to investigate in the future, in order to provide cross-cultural ethnographical account of transnationalism.

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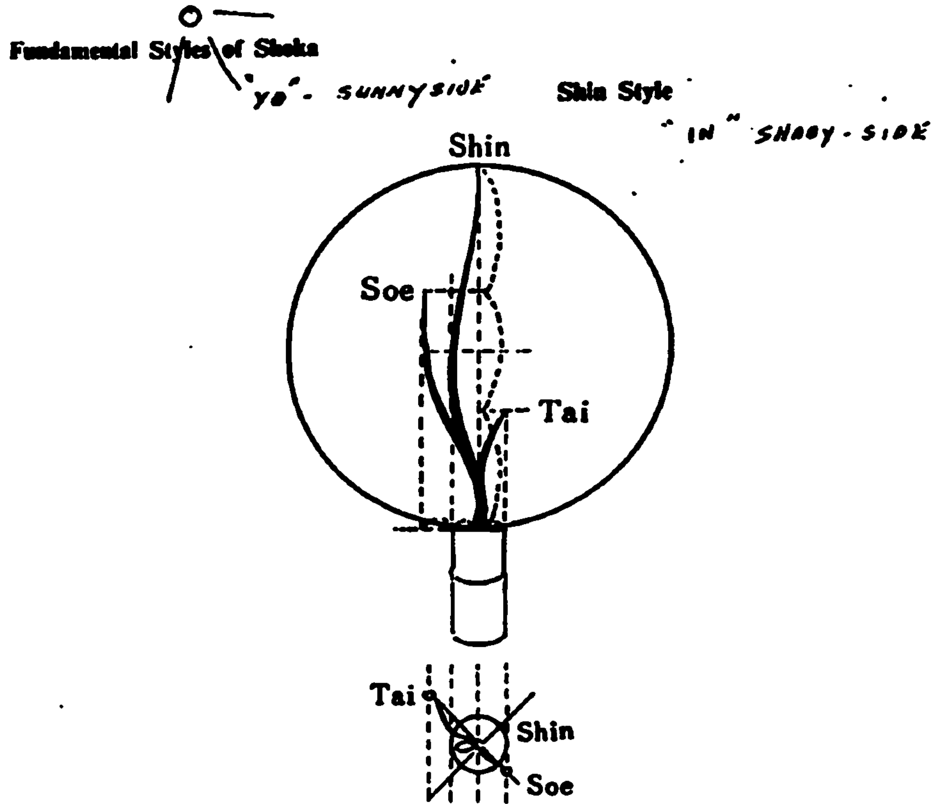
APPENDIX 1

Basic Composition of Shoka



APPENDIX 2

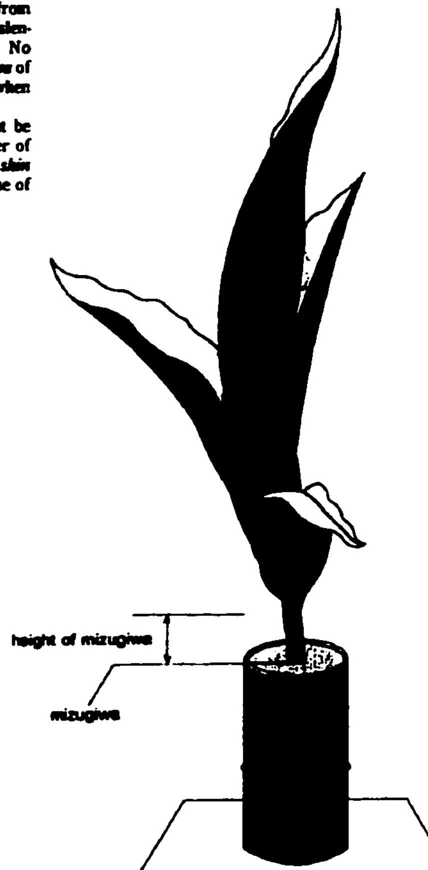
Mizugiwa

Mizugiwa

Mizugiwa literally means "water's edge." In *shoka*, *mizugiwa* refers both to the place at the center of the vase where stems emerge from the water, and to the portion of the stems between the water surface and a height of between three to seven or eight cm. above the water. This distance above the water is said to be about the same as that covered by a clenched hand. In this portion there are no attached stems or leaves.

The *mizugiwa* in *shoka* has developed from the *mizugiwa* of Ikenobo *rikka*, presenting a slender, smooth impression as it rises upward. No matter how many stems comprise the *mizugiwa* of *shoka*, the impression is of a single stem when seen from the front.

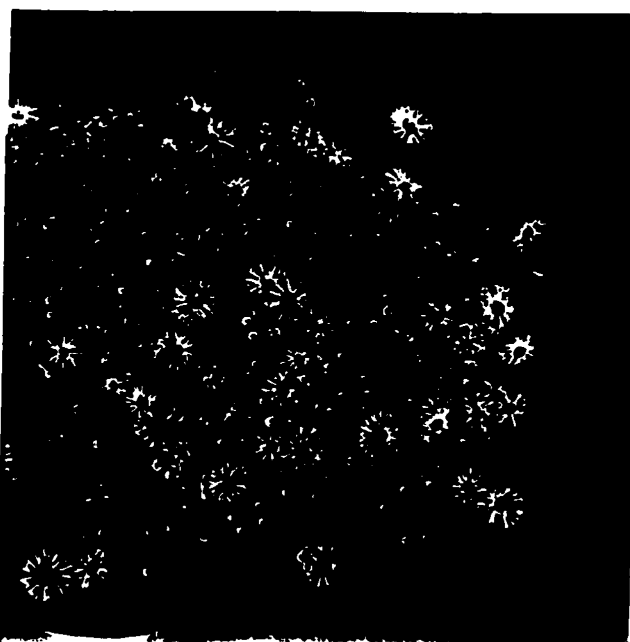
The mechanics of the arrangement must be such that the *mizugiwa* appears at the center of the vase. In *shoka shofutai*, the tip of the *shin* should return to a point directly over the base of the *mizugiwa*.



APPENDIX 3

Official Pamphlet of Ikenobo School

THE SOUL OF IKEBANA



free style

The history of Ikenobo is the history of ikebana. Ikebana began with Ikenobo and although over 500 years other schools have branched off from Ikenobo, Ikenobo is said to be the origin of ikebana. Ikenobo's history encompasses both the traditional and the creative, the two continually interacting to encourage new development in today's ikebana.

People in every era have loved flowers, but our predecessors in ikebana felt that flowers were not only beautiful but that they could reflect the passing of time and the feelings in their own hearts. When we sense plants' unspoken words and silent movements we intensify our impressions through form, a form which becomes ikebana.

We arrange plants cut and removed from nature so that they are filled with new beauty when placed in a new environment. Rather than simply re-create the shape a plant had in nature, we create with branches, leaves, and flowers a new form which holds our impression of a plant's beauty as well as the mark of our own spirit.

Ikebana should also suggest the forces of nature with which plants live in harmony – branches bent by winter winds . . . a leaf half-eaten by insects.

Ikenobo considers a flower's bud most beautiful, for within the bud is the energy of life's opening toward the future. Past, present, future . . . in each moment plants, and humans, respond to an ever-changing environment. Together with plants, humans are vital parts of nature and our making ikebana expresses this awareness.

Like a poem or painting made with flowers, Ikenobo's ikebana expresses both the beauty of flowers and the beauty of longing in our own hearts. Ikenobo's spirit has spread not only in Japan but throughout the world. It is my deepest hope that the beauty of Ikenobo will increasingly serve as a way of drawing the world's people together.

Sen'ei Ikenobo
45th Headmaster of Ikenobo

IKENOBO'S IKEBANA

Changes over the centuries in customs and living environments are reflected in the evolution of Ikenobo's ikebana styles. Each age has brought new challenges for ikebana to express the spirit of the time. Today's styles include "rikka," "shoka," and the especially modern "free style."

RIKKA

Rikka's origin lies in the 16th century tatehana style. Reaching full flower in the 17th century under Headmaster Ikenobo Senko II, rikka is the source of all later Ikenobo styles. Study continues today of both traditional and modern rikka forms.

To construct rikka's seven or nine basic parts, many contrasting but complimentary materials are arranged in a single vase to express the beauty of a natural landscape. Hidden within the principles of this most representative of ikebana styles is surprisingly fertile ground for variation and adaptation to contemporary environments.

SHOKA

Shoka's origins are in the simpler ikebana of the 18th century. Shoka came fully into flower in the 19th century under Headmaster Ikenobo Senjo.

Shoka shofutai's three main branches, shin, soe, and tai, form a unity which expresses life's perpetual change and renewal. We present our impression of a plant's essence simply and beautifully. Shoka rises gracefully from the water's edge ("mizugiwa") filled with our feeling of the life hidden in each branch, leaf, and flower.

Shoka shinputai, a new style developed by the present headmaster, Ikenobo Sen'ei, presents a bright, modern feeling. The two main parts, shu and yo, respond to each other with contrasting yet harmonious qualities. A third part, ashirai, is often added as a finishing touch.

FREE STYLE

Free style is the most recent to emerge from Ikenobo's long tradition. As a more personal expression it is suited to contemporary environments and tastes. Free style is sometimes broadly divided into a naturalistic style and a more abstract style. Both styles use plant materials in new ways, yet respect the beauty and essential qualities of each material. Flowing from the arranger's inventiveness in using materials to convey an effect or mood, free style's possibilities are unlimited.

As a continuing center in the world of ikebana the Ikenobo Headquarters in Kyoto stands adjacent to the Rokkakudo temple where ikebana began over 500 years ago. The Headquarters is home for communication, ongoing study, and workshops for Ikenobo's professors and students from throughout Japan and the world. Here at the center of Ikenobo's rich tradition students receive both classical training and encouragement to explore ikebana's most modern forms.

Ikenobo Headquarters, Kyoto, Japan

Pilotis

Ikenobo lessons at the Kyoto Headquarters

Outside and Inside Views of the San Francisco Office

Tel. 462-2741

Printed in Japan

Ikenobo

• ORIGIN OF IKEBANA •

IKENOBO IKEBANA SOCIETY

HEADQUARTERS

IKENOBO IKEBANA SOCIETY OF AMERICA

APPENDIX 4

Montreal Ikenobo Society Pamphlet

Ikenobo Ikebana: A Living Art

Ikebana is more, much more, than a simple agility in the presentation of flowers gracefully in an appropriate vase.

The artist confronts the vase within its empty aura. It is this space, heavy with meaning, that he must use in such a way as to best display his flowers and branches.

One must, through practice and concentration, pick material transcedant in its beauty: this is the art of using one flower to symbolize all flowers.

Ikebana is also the taking of a moment of peace, of tranquility. It is at the same time a pleasant pass-time and an act of creative art.

The "Rightness" of an arrangement, or, more correctly, a floral sculpture, forms first in mind and heart of its creator, and then, in the eye of the beholder.

It is not too much to say that the true role of Ikebana is to bring Nature indoors, into the rooms where we spend most of our lives. In its freshness, Ikebana retains for us the sense of Nature when we cannot be with Her.

At the beginning of the Sixth century, Ono-no-Imoko, the Ambassador of the Imperial Court of Japan's Prince Regent Shôtoku to the court of China, retired from public life to serve at Rokkaku-do, a Buddhist temple in Kyoto. He became the Abbot, adopted the name of Senmu, and settled into a small cottage he called "Ike-no-bô", the hut by the pond.

During his travels he had brought back, among other things, the Chinese practice of arranging flowers as a votive offering. At this same period of History, the blending of the original Shinto of Japan, of Buddhism, and of Confucianism from China created an idea of Man and Nature as Unity, a continuum whereby our lives and the life of flowers are indivisible. One of the results of this belief – which was very important in the development of a distinctive Japanese culture – was great respect among the populace for the in-depth study of flowers, of their essence and habit.

Thus it was that over the years, the "Ikenobo" where Senmu and his descendants lived (and still live today) became a centre of great reknown for Ikebana, and gave its name to the oldest school of floral art in Japan.

It was in 1462 that Senmu's descendant, Ikenobo Senkei, considered the true founder of the School, elaborated precisely in writing the principles of Ikebana. Shortly afterwards, Senjun greatly advanced the Art and in 1479 the Shogun Yoshimasa conferred the very honourable hereditary title "Dai Nippon Kado no Iemoto" meaning "Founder of the Japanese Sensibility of Flowers" on the Ikenobo line in perpetuity.

Even now, Ikenobo Ikebana still teaches all the great classic styles, but it is also open to modernization. Tradition is modified by new inventions. The present Iemoto, Sen'ei, 45th in direct descent from Shemu, believes that the conceptions and techniques of our School are as valid today as in previous eras but that these old styles can, and ought to, be re-interpreted for the present. He sees his role as that of a mediator between our times and a tradition that is 14 centuries old.

APPENDIX 5

Ikebana International Pamphlet

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP?

The Ikebana International Magazine: Three issues per year; richly illustrated with color plates of ikebana arrangements and related art.

[illegible] Chapter Activities Newsletter: Informs members of chapter, headquarters, and regional ikebana activities.

[illegible] Conferences and World Conventi[illegible]: Regional Conferences are held for educational and cultural purposes throughout the world. A World Convention is held in Japan every five years.

[illegible] Workshops where I.I. members can study ikebana under the direction of flower masters.

[illegible] Chapter M[illegible]: These meetings provide a regular forum for members to study, exhibit, and participate in ikebana demonstrations. Luncheons, special tours and lectures on related arts are other typical monthly activities. Visiting I.I. members of other chapters are especially welcome.

[illegible] Membership: A member may transfer from one chapter to another upon presentation of a current membership card.

IKEBANA INTERNATIONAL

"Friendship Through Flowers"

"L'Amitié par les Fleurs"

"Freundschaft Durch Blumen"

"Amistad a Traves de las Flores"

花を通じての友好

HOW CAN I BECOME A MEMBER?

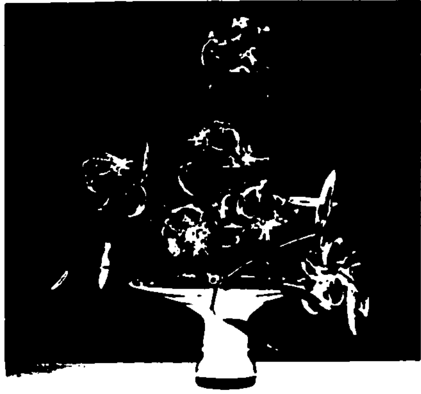
Contact the representative of the chapter nearest you, or write to the International Headquarters in Tokyo.

CHAPTER MEMBERS are members of a Prospective or fully Chartered Chapter of I.I. who pay their dues to their chapter treasurers.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE are an important part of I.I. because they provide the foundation for new chapters. Headquarters keeps these members informed through regular publications. MALs pay their yearly dues directly to the Headquarters in Tokyo.

IKEBANA INTERNATIONAL is a worldwide organization founded in Tokyo, Japan in 1956 by the late Ellen Gordon Allen. Its members are dedicated to promotion of the mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and other countries through ikebana *(the art of Japanese flower arrangement)* and other related arts of Japan. Ikebana International (I.I.) is a "Shadan Hojin", a nonprofit cultural organization in Japan and today boasts over 10,000 members in more than 50 countries.

Ikebana International is administered by enthusiastic volunteers of many different nationalities and ikebana schools. Some of the ikebana schools stress classic styles; others focus on creative, contemporary forms, and some blend the two — each school different, yet each openly sharing its inspirations, styles, philosophy, history and techniques. Membership is open to all persons interested in the art of ikebana and the ideals of I.I., regardless of their previous experience.



Your chapter cont. ..

______________________Chapter

Mrs.______________________

Phone: 514-363-3329

Please visit Ikebana International Headquarters when you are in Japan. Our professional office staff is available weekdays.

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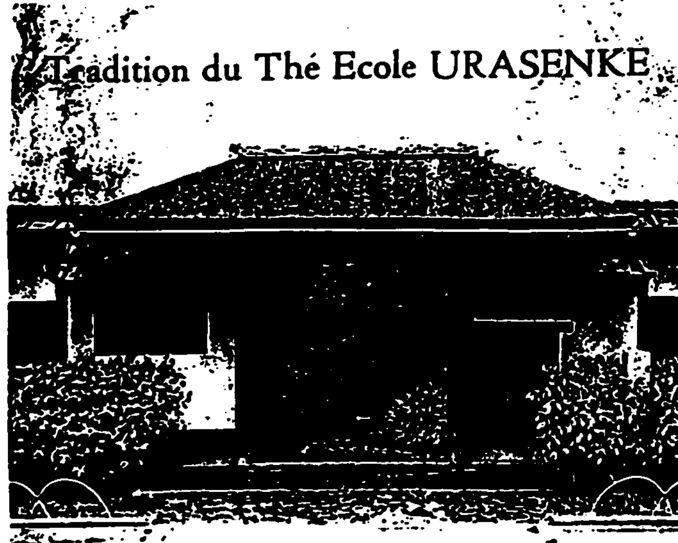
APPENDIX 6

Urasenke Tea School of Montreal Pamphlet



Dans le monde entier le thé a une vaste popularité, mais aucun pays ne possède autant de richesse culturelle sur le thé que le Japon. Au Japon la manière, dont on prépare une tasse de thé a été particulièrement raffinée par le développement culturel et esthétique.

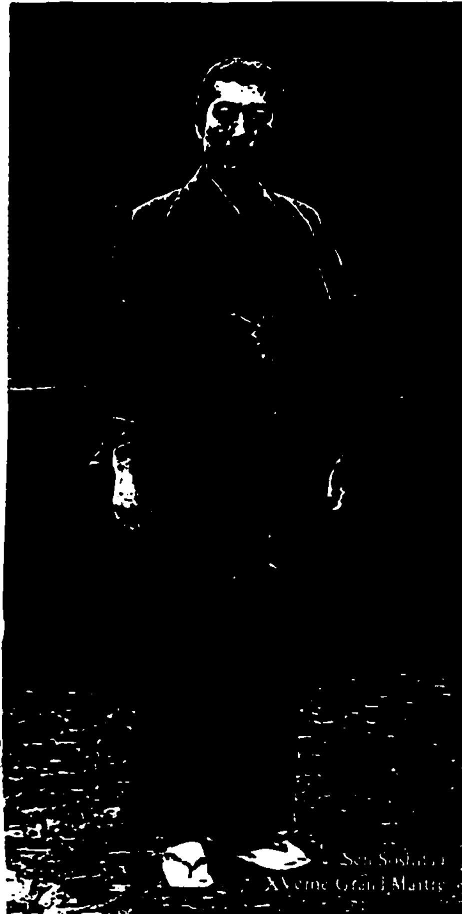
Quant on est invité à goûter une tasse de thé vert, les invités se réunissent dans une pièce conçue pour la Cérémonie du thé; ils ont non seulement la joie de se réunir mais aussi de se détendre et d'exclure les soucis quotidiens. C'est l'hôte qui prépare lui-même les lieux par un nettoyage total; il met une calligraphie, prépare de petits repas pour l'agrément des invités selon les occasions. Pour réaliser cette sorte de réunions, il faut être initié et connaître la discipline du *Chado*, terme qui signifie la voie du Thé. Le Chado est un terme relativement récent puisqu'il est apparu au cours du 15e siècle. Cette manière de boire le thé vert en poudre fut transmise par un moine Zen revenu de Chine au 12e siècle. A cette époque là, le thé était considéré comme un stimulant pour l'étude et la pratique religieuse.

A partir de là, plusieurs maîtres contribuèrent au développement culturel japonais grâce au Chado. Parmi ceux-ci, Sen Rikyu (1522–1591) accomplit une synthèse des différentes manières de boire le thé avec un grand génie esthétique et une dévotion remarquable pour l'accomplissement du Chado. Le Chado est conçu comme un mode de vie, aboutissant à une véritable oeuvre d'art, contribuant au développement artisanal du Japon, mais aussi faisant évoluer la manière dont on vivait dans la vie quotidienne.

Quatre caractères *Wa, Kei, Sei, Jaku* donnent l'esprit fondamental du Chado désignés par Sen Rikyu. *Wa* signifie l'harmonie, harmonie entre l'hôte et l'invité, harmonie avec la saison, harmonie des ustensiles. *Kei* signifie le respect qui naît dans les sentiments de chacun et aussi vis à vis des objets. *Sei* exprime la pureté, l'honnêteté et la sérénité du coeur. Enfin *Jaku* signifie l'état d'esprit, que l'on pourrait traduire par bonheur et la paix du coeur dès lors qu'ont été réalisés *Wa, Kei* et *Sei*.

Les moines qui apportèrent le thé établirent les bases spirituelles du Chado, à savoir: poursuite de la réalité et du sens de la vie par une recherche fondamentale de soi, le dépassement du Bouddhisme Zen qui donne une aisance psychologique au maître de thé pour développer l'esthétique du Chado. Le Chado n'est pas seulement une méthode de préparation du thé, c'est aussi l'art de fabriquer des ustensiles, la connaissance profonde des arts et de la littérature, de l'architecture, de la construction des maisons de thé, de l'art des jardins, et de bien d'autres domaines encore.

Presque quatre siècles se sont écoulés depuis Sen Rikyu, mais la ville de Kyoto (capitale de l'ancien Japon) préserve encore autant de richesses qu'autrefois. Aujourd'hui, deux descendants directs de Sen Rikyu résident tout près du Palais Impérial de Kyoto. L'un d'eux est M. Soshitsu Sen XVème Grand Maître de la Cérémonie du Thé de l'Ecole Urasenke à Kyoto. La résidence du Grand Maître d'Urasenke est composée de plusieurs pièces de Cérémonie du Thé. L'une d'entre elles "Konnichian", fut conçue par Sen Sotan, le petit



fils de Sen Rikyu, et symbolise la tradition du Chado de Urasenke. "Yuin," "Mushikiken," "Totsutotsusai" sont les noms des autres pièces qui sont classées par les autorités japonaises comme monuments historiques importants.

De l'autre côté de la rue se trouve le bâtiment moderne Chado Kaikan où la plupart des pratiques quotidiennes de la discipline du Chado sont accomplies par les élèves qui viennent du monde entier pour le Chado. A l'ouest se trouve un bâtiment de cinq étages qui comporte une galerie d'exposition, un auditorium, une bibliothèque pour les recherches, une salle de méditation et les bureaux de la Fondation Urasenke.

Maintenant que les progrès modernes et la mecanisation évitent à l'homme les tâches les plus rudes, le temps et l'énergie pris pour la préparation d'une tasse de thé pourraient paraître inutiles. Mais une tasse de thé préparée suivant les principes du Chado est un rituel déstiné à rétablir la tranquillité intérieure qui est un besoin fondamental de l'homme. C'est un rituel de simplicité et de sobriété dans lequel chacun peut trouver "la paix d'une tasse de thé."

La Fondation Urasenke a des [illegible] et [illegible] du Japon dans les pays suivants: Australie, [illegible] Canada, France, Grande-Bretagne, Italie, [illegible] Pérou, Etats-Unis d'Amérique et Allemagne [illegible]. De plus amples informations [illegible] à la Fondation Urasenke du Japon [illegible]

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Edition Française

[illegible]
La porte d'entrée principale de la Fondation Urasenke

APPENDIX 7

Lanaudière Bonsai and Penjing Society Pamphlet

Société de Bonsaï et de Penjing de Lanaudière

La "**Société de Bonsaï et de Penjing de Lanaudière**" est une société à *but non-lucratif* qui réunit des individus de la région de Lanaudière et d'ailleurs, partageant un même goût pour l'horticulture et particulièrement pour le Bonsaï et le Penjing.

La société se donne pour but de procurer à ses membres des opportunités de rencontre pour échanger et approfondir leurs connaissances sur l'Art du Bonsaï et du Penjing. Et ce par des activités tel que :

- Des conférences présentées par des personnes réputées dans ces domaines.
- Des ateliers d'introductions et de perfectionnements sur les différents aspects de la culture du Bonsaï et du Penjing.
- L'organisation d'expositions de Bonsaïs et de Penjings dans les divers secteurs de notre région pour promouvoir notre Art, et des sorties en pleine nature pour la récolte d'arbre (Yamadori).
- Des cliniques de soins à intervalle régulier , avec une intervention directe pour procéder sur place à rétablir la situation déficiente de nos arbres miniatures.
- La parution d'un bulletin trimestriel le "**Larix**", qui informera nos membres de nos activités et de toutes autres activités horticoles. En plus naturellement, d'une pléiades d'articles et d'informations pertinentes.

Je vous invite donc à faire partie de notre société, si ce type d'activités correspond à vos besoins et à vos goûts.