THE FOLK MUSIC REVIVAL THEN AND NOW: POLITICS, COMMERCIALISM, AND AUTHENTICITY IN FOLK MUSIC COMMUNITIES IN THE U.S. AND JAPAN

BY

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INTRODUCTION

During the late 1950s and the early 1960s, folk music enjoyed an unprecedented popularity in the United States. *Time* magazine announced, in 1960, that "the U.S. is smack in the middle of a folk-music boom." According to the article, the enthusiasm for folk music allowed some 50 professional singers to make a decent living performing folk music. At folk music festivals, audiences brought guitars and banjos and played their own instruments as well as listening to the professional performances.[1] Around the same time, *Newsweek* reported that folk music concerts featuring such popular folk music artists as the Weavers, Theodore Bikel, Pete Seeger, and Odetta attracted so many people that halls with capacities of from 1,000 to 4,000 were easily filled by ardent audiences, many of whom were college students or urban dwellers.[2]

The folk music boom also spread overseas. American revivalist folk singers such as Pete Seeger and the Brothers Four visited Japan in the early 1960s and encouraged young Japanese to perform folk music. In 1965, *Heibon Punch Deluxe* magazine reported that there were over three hundred folk song groups in high schools

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[1] "Folk Frenzy," *Time*, July 11, 1960, 81.
[2] "It's Folksy…It's Delightful, It's a Craze," *Newsweek*, June 6, 1960.

and colleges across Japan, including the male student bands, the Broadside Four and the Modern Folk Quartet.[3] These groups modeled themselves after American revivalist singers and learned their songs and musical arrangements.

This dissertation examines how writers, singers, and fans of folk music, both in the U.S. and Japan, used, or failed to use, the concepts of "folk" and "authenticity" during and after the folk music revival. Folklorist Neil Rosenberg, in the introduction to an anthology of articles on the folk revival, described the popular and academic folklorists' concern for authenticity as "The Shifting Sands of Folk Authenticity."[4] This dissertation shows that the definitions not only changed over time but also were different from one community to another. Further, the process of definition was so complicated that many people never defined the term. Even though books written on the folk revival portray revivalist folk singers and serious fans engaging in fierce debates over authenticity, many fans documented in this dissertation avoided such disputes.

Authors on folk music and the folk revival agree that authenticity has been a central concept in the history of folk music. Folklorist Regina Bendix argued that authenticity "was variously used as an agent to define this subject [folklore], differentiate

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[3] "Kyanpasu no naka no ongaku" [Music on Campus], *Heibon Punch Deluxe*, September 1965, 187-188.
[4] Neil Rosenberg, "Introduction," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 10.

it from other cultural manifestations, develop methods of analysis, critique competing theories, or create new paradigms."[5] She continues, "Folklore has long served as a vehicle in the search for the authentic, satisfying a longing for an escape from modernity. The ideal folk community, envisioned as pure and free from civilization's evils, was a metaphor for everything that was not modern."[6] Historian Benjamin Filene illustrated the ways in which folk music collectors, folklorists, producers, and performers constructed authenticity. While showing the malleability of authenticity, Filene emphasized that the concept itself was at the core of folk music.[7] As he wrote in the introduction to *Romancing the Folk*,

> [J]ust as isolated cultures became harder to define and locate in industrialized America, the notions of musical purity and primitivism took on enhanced value, even in avowedly commercial music. Twentieth-century Americans have been consistently searching for the latest incarnation of "old-time" and "authentic" music.[8]

Folklorist Sheldon Rosen recalled, "The traditional folksong revival created an environment in which performers vied with one another in being 'folkier than thou,' and audiences judged them on the same terms."[9] Jeff Todd Titon agreed, writing, "Among

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[5] Regina Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 5.
[6] Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity*, 7.
[7] Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
[8] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 3.
[9] I. Sheldon Posen, "On Folk Festivals and Kitchens: Questions of Authenticity in the Folksong Revival," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 132.

enthusiasts in the folk revival, debates were held about 'authenticity' and 'selling out.' Who was 'more ethnic' (as the saying went) than whom?"[10] Ronald Cohen described the members of the Folklore Society at the University of Michigan during the 1950s as follows: "Folk music at the university combined performance and activist politics, as the members quarreled about authenticity, generally disparaging the Kingston Trio and their ilk."[11] Gillian Mitchell went further in noting that "the concern with authenticity remained central for the revival, and it was a controversy that would never be resolved, since the quest for, and explanation of, personal and community identity was so vital to the movement."[12] Finally, folklorist Ellen Stekert recalled that "people put one another down or approve of a performance by using charged (but never defined) terms such as "authentic," "popular," or "ethnic."[13]

This dissertation shows that the quest for authenticity had varying importance and meaning to different participants in the revival. Despite the fact that most scholars

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[10] Jeff Todd Titon, "Reconstructing the Blues: Reflections on the 1960s Blues Revival," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 221.
[11] Ronald Cohen, *Rainbow Quest: The Folk Music Revival and American Society, 1940-1970* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 149.
[12] Gillian Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival: Nation and Identity in the United States and Canada, 1945-1980* (England: Ashgate, 2007), 94.
[13] Ellen Stekert, "Author's Introduction" to "Cents and Nonsense in the Urban Folksong Movement: 1930-66," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil V. Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 86.

agree that folk music fans focus on authenticity, many fans both in the U.S. and Japan interviewed in this dissertation were reluctant to define folk music or authenticity. They could not come up with an inclusive and exclusive definition of folk music that would encapsulate their idea of the music, and as Stekert pointed out, authenticity was a value-laden term that they found difficult to articulate or agree on a definition. However, that did not mean that they accepted any music as "folk" or that they were less serious about the music than the scholars and revivalist musicians who attempted to define it. Even if these fans did not articulate what authentic folk music was, they had an idea of what it should be like. The Cornell Folk Song Club members in the 1960s, for example, believed that authenticity constituted adherence to tradition; yet they accepted newly composed folk songs as long as they did not sound like popular music. In contrast, Japanese fans of folk music were not concerned about authenticity, and folk singers and activists in the late 1960s, who did discuss authenticity, developed a different standard of authenticity from their American counterparts. While agreeing that authenticity meant political idealism and anti-commercialism, they did not share with American revivalist singers their quest for tradition or appreciation of different cultures, both foreign and domestic. A transnational consideration reveals the contested nature of folk and authenticity.

Folk music fans found it difficult to define authentic folk music partially because they looked for cultural values more than for musical characteristics in folk music. As will be shown in Chapter 1, during the folk revival, authenticity meant political idealism, anti-commercialism, and embracing cultural diversity. When critics denounced certain musicians for being commercial or popular, they rarely examined whether these musicians actually made profits; they wanted folk singers to express anti-commercialistic values. As Dick Weissman reflected, certain folk superstars who were commercially successful such as Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Judy Collins, and Odetta could avoid criticism for being commercial because of their sincere attitude toward traditional folk music and their resistance to commercial music industry; in the case of a non-white folk singer, her racial background itself marked authenticity:

> Baez looked like a 'folk chick,' Dylan dressed like a hobo and talked like a Woody Guthrie clone, Seeger constantly referred to traditional people whose work had influenced him, Collins projected a certain dignity and class, and so did Odetta, who is African American. None of them told jokes written by New York or Hollywood writers, they did not run onstage, and they all projected an aura of sincerity.[14]

Groups like Peter, Paul and Mary compensated for their commercial popularity and popular musical arrangements with their commitment to political causes. Even though a commercial music producer created the trio and controlled their image and music, and

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[14] Dick Weissman, *Which Side Are You On?: An Inside History of the Folk Music Revival in America* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 155-156.

while many critics and fans still dismissed them as "pop" singers, Peter, Paul and Mary managed to appear "credible" as serious musicians. In contrast, the Brothers Four performed with similarly popular musical arrangements but lacked political involvement, and therefore, were uniformly condemned as commercial and inauthentic.[15] Further, revivalist folk singers needed to disguise their middle-class backgrounds in order to earn respect in the folk community. Bob Dylan attempted to efface his Jewish middle-class origins and adopted Woody Guthrie's mannerisms to appear authentic. He fabricated stories about his past – including that he was an orphan who travelled extensively – until *Newsweek* magazine exposed his true identity in November 1963.[16] Pete Seeger displayed his humility and respect toward source musicians like Guthrie and Leadbelly and insisted that he was simply a "singer of folk songs," not an authentic folk singer. Again, the Brothers Four, who did not hide or apologize for their true background, were scorned as "commercial" and hence, inauthentic.[17]

American revivalist folk singers and fans located authenticity in the marginalized groups and opposed mainstream America by associating themselves with the disenfranchised and the underprivileged. As Robert Cantwell put it, folk music

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[15] Weissman, *Which Side Are You On*, 81.
[16] David Hajdu, *Positively 4th Street: The Lives and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Farina, and Richard Farina* (New York: North Point Press, 2001), 193.
[17] Weissman, *Which Side Are You On*, 156.

inspired middle-class Americans to "search out and lionize authentic folk musicians, and finally to dress, groom, speak, comport themselves, and even attempt to think in ways they believed compatible with the rural, ethnic, proletarian, and other marginal cultures to whom folksong was supposed to belong."[18] Fans and revivalist folk singers not only located source musicians from these marginal cultures and glorified them but also attempted to adopt these cultures to replace their own. Folklorist Ellen Stekert argued that American folk music fans and revivalist singers were white middle-class young people who appreciated the music of "noble savages": Southern white mountaineers and African Americans.[19] In his account of the blues revival in the U.S., Jeff Todd Titon pointed out that the white, middle-class revivalists romanticized African-American blues singers: "Rejecting conformity to middle-class values, blues revivalists embraced the music of people who seemed unbound by conventions of work, family, sexual propriety, worship, and so forth."[20] American revivalist folk singers and fans perceived folk music as rightly belonging to minorities, as demonstrated by the use of the word "ethnic" to describe authentic folk music and musicians.

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[18] Robert Cantwell, *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 2.
[19] Ellen Stekert, "Cents and Nonsense in the Urban Folksong Movement, 1930-1966" in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 94.
[20] Titon, "Reconstructing the Blues," 225.

American revivalist folk singers and fans incorporated not only domestic minorities but also non-Western foreigners into the category of folk, and romanticized them. American folk revivalist singers and fans' opposition to segregation went hand in hand with their attempt to embrace non-Western cultures. As Chapter 1 shows, in an attempt to criticize Americans for being provincial and to promote racial equality at home and abroad, American revivalist singers and fans eagerly sought musics from the non-Western world, lumping these different types of music together as folk. Their views of non-Western music and people differed from the way non-Westerners, including the Japanese, viewed themselves and their musics.

U.S. Folk Music Revival in a Transnational Perspective

The Japanese folk music boom had a different standard of authenticity than that found in the U.S. folk revival. In contrast to American folk revivalists, who rejected their white, middle-class backgrounds, Japanese college students during the early 1960s adored the image of a middle-class white America that American revivalist folk singers projected. Japanese protest folk singers of the late 1960s, in contrast, shared with their American counterparts disdain for commercialism and sympathy toward political causes, but they did not think of folk music as a medium through which to understand

marginalized cultures; they accepted American folk music as a universal medium that they could use without much cultural knowledge to serve their purposes.

American revivalist folk singers, who at home believed they simply imitated authentic source musicians, looked authentic outside the country. John Cohen, member of the New Lost City Ramblers, recalled that the "revival gave a distinct representation of American traditional music to the rest of the world." A Peruvian man Cohen met in 1964 defined American folk music as follows: "It is two beards and a blonde singing about a Negro with a chain on his legs, and he is *very* far from home."[21] To the outside world, Peter, Paul and Mary singing "Stewball" represented American folk music. As will be shown in Chapter 2, the Brothers Four, who were often accused of being commercial and inauthentic in the U.S., served as role models for novice Japanese amateur folk singers.

This dissertation shows that American revivalists' view of the folk and of Japanese audiences differed from that of Japanese folk singers and fans. American singers believed that the Japanese were part of the marginalized population of the world whose non-Western cultures should be recognized and valued. Pete Seeger, in particular, urged his Japanese fans to revive Japanese traditional music. In contrast, Japanese folk

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[21] John Cohen, *"Wasn't That a Time: Firsthand Accounts of the Folk Music Revival*, ed. Ronald D. Cohen (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995), 26.

singers and fans identified with white Americans and by partially using their familiarity with Western tonality as a justification, regarded themselves as legitimate performers of American folk music. Further, young elite Japanese in the 1960s regarded American folk music, as performed by white revivalist American musicians, as more suitable for their self-image than the Japanese popular music that was available to them. The difference in American folk singers' reception at home and abroad showed that folk music could embody contrasting values.

The Folk Revival Today

Forty years later, the folk revival has become an object of nostalgia both in the U.S. and Japan. In his account of the folk revival, Ronald D. Lankford, Jr. wrote that few people remember the folk revival well today, despite the overwhelming popularity of folk music between 1958 and 1963, because they feel distanced from an era characterized by idealism and naïveté.[22] In Japan, the reunion concert of the Brothers Four in Tokyo on November 30, 2008 attracted a large crowd of Japanese baby boomers who spent their youth listening to American folk music performed by professional musicians.[23]

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[22] Lankford, *Folk Music USA*, xv.
[23] "Brothers Four 2008 Tokyo Concert," *2008-2009 Nenmatsu nenshi tokubetsu bangumi [2008-2009 Holiday Special Programs]*, NHK, December 21, 2008.

Japanese folk singers, who modeled themselves after, and then replaced, American revival folk singers as the authority figures in the genre in Japan during the 1970s, have also come to evoke nostalgia. In its August 16 and 23, 2007 issues, weekly popular magazine *Shukan Bunshun* carried an article entitled "When We Were Young" that looked back on the 1970s by interviewing Japanese folk singers from the 1970s, showing the singers' pictures from then and today.[24] An American mockumentary *A Mighty Wind* (2003) not only relegated the folk revival to the past but also associated it with silliness and romanticism. The film portrayed the son of a folk music manager who organized a retrospective nostalgic folk concert to pay tribute to his deceased father. The concert showcased three folk groups from the 1960s long past their prime. The protagonist and the folk groups were all portrayed as eccentrics who were not only out of date but were also eternally immature, having failed to become responsible and respectable adults. The folk concert that the protagonist organized was the only occasion when the aging folk singers received attention again. The movie ended with scenes that showed each group member going back to his or her old life characterized by boredom and obscurity.[25] In the popular mind, folk music evokes the naïve, idealistic past.

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[24] "Seishun! 70 nendai foku kashu taizen" [When We Were Young: A Collection of Folk Singers of the 1970s], *Shukan Bunshun*, August 16 and 23, 2007, rotogravure pages.
[25] *A Mighty Wind*, directed by Christopher Guest, 2003.

Writers on the folk revival, both academic and popular, and those who actively participated in the revival, object to the view that folk revival was a momentary craze. They acknowledge that the revival peaked around 1963 and declined in 1964 or 1965; but they then argue that folk music never died out after the revival.[26] They cite the folk singing at the March on Washington and the Newport Folk Festival in 1963 as events that symbolized the climax of the revival, where folk singers embodied political idealism and a respect for tradition. The Beatles' rising popularity and Bob Dylan's turn to electric music signaled the decline of the folk revival. In particular, Dylan's performance of "Maggie's Farm" at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival, which reportedly enraged folk purists has become a legend in folk music history. Pete Seeger's biographer David Dunaway wrote that Dylan's performance of electric music in Newport in 1965 was the turning point for Pete Seeger's career. Coupled with the decline in freedom and topical movements, Dylan's change in direction disappointed Seeger to the point where he decided to withdraw from the folk scene to reflect on his music.[27] Many writers believe that the Newport incident has become overly mythologized.[28] For example, Filene

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[26] See, for example, Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 2.
[27] David Dunaway, *How Can I Keep from Singing: Pete Seeger* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1981), 246-249.
[28] Hajdu, *Positively 4th Street*, 258-262. See also Weissman, *Which Side Are You On*, 158-159.

argued that Dylan continued the folk tradition even after his Newport performance.[29] Ronald Cohen also ended his historical account of the folk revival with a chapter entitled "The 1960s End (But Not Folk Music)."[30] Writers on the folk revival stress the continuity of the folk revival and its relevance today.

This dissertation shows that both American and Japanese fans and writers of folk music also disagree with the view that the folk revival was simply a momentary fad; they see folk music as a tool to build a community. After the revival, folk music fans in the U.S. turned their attention away from authenticity while the Japanese fans turned away from the concept of folk when building communities using folk music. The Cornell Folk Song Club members today, unlike the members from the 1960s, do not engage in dogmatic debate over authenticity; to them, authenticity is not an important concern. They see folk music as a medium through which to communicate with one another and stress the continuity of folk music, perceiving themselves not as inauthentic imitators of folk music but as active participants in the folk process. The Japanese Peter, Paul and Mary Fan Club members today, many of whom are hard-working amateur musicians, agree that they are reliving their past but refuse to think of their activities as retrospective. They form a community of old friends from high school and college using Peter, Paul and

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[29] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 215-232.
[30] Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 263.

Mary, as the trio has become a familiar figure who reminds Japanese baby boomers of their own youth and their shared memories from the 1960s Japan. But they disassociate themselves from both the U.S. folk revival and the Japanese folk singers of the 1970s by claiming that the music is more universal than folk. They believe that PPM's music is similar to Western classical music because it requires diligent practices and even though it was originally performed by white people, Japanese have successfully mastered it. As Chapter 2 shows, Japanese fans of folk music and amateur musicians regarded American revivalists, not the traditional musicians they drew from, as the source musicians, thereby interpreting folk music as the culture of white middle-class Americans.[31] They concentrate on faithfully reproducing the sound of Peter, Paul and Mary and are not interested in debating authenticity or try to agree on a definition of folk music. Japanese fans of Bob Dylan today also disassociate themselves from the concept of folk music by regarding him more as a rock musician and a unique artist than as a key participant in the folk revival. By disassociating American musicians from their historical and cultural contexts, Japanese fans have made the music their own. In both the U.S. and Japan, folk music fans today have come to own and embrace the music.

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[31] For Japanese reception of Western classical music, see Mari Yoshihara, *Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2007).

The dissertation consists of four chapters analyzing the folk revival in the U.S. and Japan from the 1950s to the present. "Chapter 1: Politics, Commercialism, and Internationalism in *Sing Out!* and *Broadside* Magazines in the 1950s and 1960s" examines the articles, advertisements, and the histories of two major magazines that circulated songs and included heated discussions during the folk revival. It shows that while folk music embodied values that challenged dominant American culture – anti-commercialism, political idealism, and cultural diversity – writers never agreed on how to define folk music. Contributors to both magazines also faced contradictions regarding how to contain and resist commercialism; disagreed on how to reconcile politics and music; and treasured world cultures without challenging their own world views.

"Chapter 2: From Commercialism to Politics: Domesticating American Folk Music in Japan in the 1960s" analyzes the changing meaning of folk music as the Japanese folk music scene evolved from the "college folk period" (1960-1967) to the "underground folk period" (1967-1970). During the first period, Japanese college students performed American folk songs while depoliticizing the music; singing folk songs in English was a fashion statement for affluent middle-class young Japanese. In

contrast to the American revivalists who were apologetic about their affluent background, Japanese folk fans celebrated their privilege. During the second period, professional folk singers began to write songs of protest addressing Japanese political and social issues, modeling themselves on American revivalist folk singers who wrote protest songs. Japanese folk singers and political activists, using their songs, replicated debates similar to the ones conducted in *Sing Out!* and *Broadside*; they resisted commercialism and adhered to political idealism while facing the contradictions of having to work within the capitalist system and disagreeing on how to reconcile politics and music. Unlike American revivalist folk singers of protest, who espoused internationalism and attempted to overcome ethnocentrism through an appreciation of folk music, Japanese folk singers were interested only in Japanese issues even as they appreciated American folk music.

"Chapter 3: The Cornell Folk Song Club and the Ithaca Folk Community, 1950s to the Present" demonstrates the different ways in which the members negotiated the meaning of folk music and used it to build a community. The CFSC during the 1950s illustrated the complex nature of folk music as a fledgling academic discipline; music with left-wing association in the days of McCarthyism; and music for dissenters who opposed dominant American culture. During the folk revival in the 1960s, the CFSC members criticized commercialized folk music and looked to marginalized groups for

authenticity, while managing the difficult logistics of concert organizing. After the revival, members criticized singer-songwriters and valued traditional folk songs and communal aspects of folk music. Today, the CFSC and its community members adhere to Pete Seeger's definition of folk music as a process and regard themselves as participants in the folk music tradition, instead of identifying the folk as the racial other. Folk music embodies their anti-commercial lifestyles and values, which they reaffirm through their community.

"Chapter 4: The Reception of Peter, Paul and Mary and Bob Dylan in Japan" examines the ways in which the Japanese media, fans, and critics from the 1960s to the present used these iconic American folk singers to advance their own careers. In the 1960s, the Japanese media portrayed Peter, Paul and Mary as the role model for Japanese amateur college folk singers while calling Dylan the "the god of folk" and the leader and role model of anti-war protest singers. The media refused to change this dichotomous perception in the following decade because Japanese musicians built their careers using these opposing images and because critics used American revivalist singers whom Japanese musicians, fans, and journalists perceived as the source musicians to narrate Japanese folk music history and to boost Japanese national pride. Today, both Dylan and Peter, Paul and Mary – once the icons of American folk singers in Japan – are no

longer “American” or “folk” to their Japanese fans, who decontextualize the American musicians from their history and culture and instead use them to enjoy music, boost their national pride, and to build a community. Both in the U.S. and Japan, folk revivalists and serious fans took in music outside of their tradition, and eventually made it their own.

This dissertation lets ordinary people who were participants in the folk revival in the U.S. and Japan speak for themselves on what folk music meant to them. Their voices were never homogenous: some cared deeply about what authentic folk music was and should be, while others never cared; still others cared about authenticity but were unable to articulate what folk music was. This dissertation captures some of these voices of American and Japanese musicians and fans from the 1950s, 1960s, and today by focusing on four different sets of communities.

CHAPTER 1: POLITICS, COMMERCIALISM, AND INTERNATIONALISM IN *SING OUT!* AND *BROADSIDE* MAGAZINES IN THE 1950S AND 1960S

Introduction

A cartoon from *The New Yorker* magazine reprinted in the February-March 1966 issue of *Sing Out!: The Folk Song Magazine* showed bourgeois parents asking their teenage daughter: *"Why should we buy you a guitar just so you can sing against our way of life?"*[32] The parents in respectable middle-class attire sat on a couch challenging the daughter who stood in front of them, with a stubborn frown of frustration on her face and her fists clenched. This cartoon, while mocking the folk revival as a spoiled middle-class teenager's hobby, illustrated the countercultural value associated with folk music and the irony of consumption offering a means to join the counterculture that folk music symbolized.

As the cartoon illustrated, folk music fans during the revival perceived folk music less as a musical genre and more as an antithesis to the white, middle-class American lifestyles and values characterized as materialistic, conformist, and ethnocentric. This made folk music eclectic in repertoire and ambiguous in definition.

[32] *Sing Out!* 16 (Feb-Mar 1966), 1.

Any music that was not commercially made for white middle-class Americans could be folk music. *Sing Out!* and *Broadside*, two of the major magazines that circulated songs and discussions during the folk revival, promoted anti-commercialism, political idealism (opposing racism and war), and cultural diversity (both domestically and internationally) as the defining characteristics of folk music, which combined as a critique of the dominant American culture. However, editors and writers for the magazines faced contradictions and limits of the values associated with folk music. The founders of the magazines and the young readers and musicians all believed in the social responsibility of folk singers but disagreed on how to incorporate politics into music. While editors and writers agreed that folk music was anti-commercial, they came up with different arguments about how to contain and resist commercialism in the face of the commercialization of folk music. Finally, while American revivalist singers and writers in the magazines insisted on learning foreign (especially non-Western) cultures as a means to criticize American ethnocentrism, they ultimately failed to challenge their white middle-class American privilege when they portrayed the non-Western world.

During the folk revival, *Sing Out!* and *Broadside* demonstrated not only the countercultural value of folk music but also how that value developed and diversified folk music. Scholars have pointed out that young, white, middle-class Americans'

discontent with the Cold War ideology of conformity and commercialism was manifest in the beat movement in the 1950s, which also led to the Sixties movements including New Left activism, the student movements, and the counterculture.[33] According to Susan Douglas, music was instrumental in shaping the identity of those young Americans:

> Contemptuous of the commercialization that seemed to infuse and debase every aspect of American culture, and hostile to bourgeois values and the profit motive, members of that loose yet cohesive group known as the counterculture were revolutionizing almost every aspect of American culture. And music was central to their individual and generational identity, their sense of having a different, more enhanced consciousness about society, politics, and self-awareness.[34]

Folk music provided a means to resist those values as an alternative to commercialized American culture. Robert Cantwell defined the folk music revival as young

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[33] Wini Breines has portrayed the discontent of white middle-class young women with conformist domestic ideals and their search for "authentic," "real," or "genuine" experience. See Wini Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 136. Elaine Tyler May has argued that consumerism was a strong Cold War ideology. See Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 163. Doug Rossinow argued that "new left radicals launched what many have called a 'postscarcity' radicalism, directing their basic criticism at the 'affluent society' itself, which they, along with many liberals and conservatives of the 1950s and the 1960s, considered an achieved fact." According to Rossinow, authenticity was the remedy for alienation in a society characterized by abundance, mass consumption, and bureaucratization. See Douglas Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 2. According to Ronald Cohen, the Greenwich Village by the mid-1950s was a countercultural center, hosting both beat writers and folk musicians. There was a "surprising overlap" between the folk and the beat worlds, but as Dave Van Ronk recalled, "the real Beats" preferred cool jazz to folk music and despised folk enthusiasts. Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 108.

[34] Susan J. Douglas, *Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination from Amos 'n' Andy and Edward R. Murrow to Wolfman Jack and Howard Stern* (New York: Times Books, 1999), 268.

middle-class Americans' identification with a marginalized population:

> …folksongs, and original songs conceived and performed as such, enjoyed an unprecedented commercial popularity, inspiring thousands of young middle-class men and women to learn songs, to accompany themselves on folk instruments, particularly guitar and banjo, to search out and lionize authentic folk musicians, and finally to dress, groom, speak, comport themselves, and even attempt to think in ways they believed compatible with the rural, ethnic, proletarian, and other marginal cultures to whom folksong was supposed to belong.[35]

As this definition suggested, participants in the folk revival imagined folk music as part of the cultures of others; folk music belonged to a variety of minorities. As Benjamin Filene argued, the folk revival audiences measured folk singers' authenticity by how much the singers differed from the audiences' middle-class American background.[36] *Sing Out!* and *Broadside* during the folk revival showed that the definition of folk as anti-white, and anti-middle-class broadened the scope of folk music; folk music came to include not only music of domestic minorities but musics from abroad. While editors and writers scrutinized domestic folk music in an attempt to maintain the anti-commercial and political quality of folk music, they lumped together folk and non-folk musics from abroad without much scrutiny, accepting them as contributing to cultural diversity.

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[35] Robert Cantwell, *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 2.
[36] Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 63.

1. The Political Origins and Transformation of *Sing Out!* and *Broadside*

Sing Out! and *Broadside* magazines served as major print media that circulated songs and discussions during the folk revival.[37] Folk music fans learned songs from these magazines while professional folk singers launched their careers by publishing their work in *Broadside*. Folklorist Sheldon Posen, for example, recalled that *Sing Out!* was his bible during the revival; he learned not only the music but also social awareness from the magazine.[38] Both magazines demonstrated a generational conflict between the founders and the younger readers and musicians. In addition, while the magazines shared anti-commercial values and opposed racism and war, they disagreed on how to incorporate politics into music. The founders were older activists who intended to

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[37] *Little Sandy Review*, a "fanzine" mimeographed by two University of Minnesota students from 1960, was also an influential folk song periodical. Paul Nelson and Jon Pankake wrote opinionated, subjective reviews of folk song records denouncing commercial singers such as the Kingston Trio and Limeliters while praising traditional and traditionally oriented singers. In order to maintain their freedom in expressing their opinions, Nelson and Pankake refused to accept free samples from record companies and did not have advertisements in their magazine; they even mocked advertisements by inserting fake ads in the magazine. Unlike *Sing Out!* and *Broadside*, which had left-wing origins, neither Nelson or Pankake saw themselves political and their main purpose was to express their opinions and aesthetics on folk music. See Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 164-168 and Jon Pankake's memoire in *"Wasn't That a Time!": Firsthand Accounts of the Folk Music Revival*, ed. Ronald D. Cohen (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995), 105-114. I analyze *Sing Out!* and *Broadside* in detail as major print media during the folk revival because they introduced songs including the recent compositions to the readers and because the magazines documented debates over politics and commercialism that dated back to the pre-war folk song movement led by the Old Left.

[38] Sheldon Posen, "On Folk Festivals and Kitchens: Questions of Authenticity in the Folksong Revival," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 130.

promote political songs for collective action, regarding folk music as only one type of the music they promoted. They even attempted to avoid having to define "folk" music by employing the terms "people's music" (*Sing Out!*) and "topical songs" (*Broadside*) when they launched the magazines, but these new terminologies did not solve the problems associated with the complex meaning of folk music. Young readers and musicians still expected to find folk music in the magazines and came to believe that political songs were self-expressions of songwriters rather than tools of collective action.

Sing Out! began in 1950 as the periodical of People's Artists, a group founded in July 1949 to succeed the organization People's Songs, Inc. (1945-49), which had had its own periodical, *People's Songs Bulletin*. People's Artists had served as a booking agency of People's Songs and organized hootenannies and concerts. People's Song members, including Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Lee Hays, Paul Robeson, Alan Lomax, Irwin Silber, and Earl Robinson, conceived of the group as a "service organization to create, promote and distribute songs of labor and the American people," with the aim of creating a "singing labor movement."[39] Ironically, while the *People's Songs Bulletin* contributed to the rise of topical song making, it alienated labor unions who, at the beginning of the Cold War, sought to distance themselves from groups of intellectuals

[39] Richard Reuss, *American Folk Music and Left-Wing Politics, 1927-1957* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000), 186-187.

suspected of being Communists.[40] People's Songs went bankrupt after supporting Henry Wallace during the 1948 presidential election, where the resources of *People's Songs* were directed to his candidacy and the Progressive Party.[41]

The main members and the political agenda of People's Artists remained the same as those of the People's Songs. Both groups advocated peace, civil liberties, and racial equality, believing that the labor union movement and communism would improve the society.[42] They also shared anti-commercialism as a defining characteristic of their music. A People's Songs recruitment document exemplified this idea:

> People all over the world and all over this country have always been making up songs about the things that were on their minds. Work songs, play songs, nonsense songs, religious songs and fighting songs. Put them all together — that's what we call "People's Songs." There's only one thing wrong — or maybe right — with them — they're not commercial. They don't have love-dove, June-croon in them, they're not commercial.[43]

The first issue of *Sing Out!* stated that the magazine's mission was to circulate "people's music," which it went on to define:

> What is this "Peoples Music?" In the first place, like all folk music, it has to do with the hopes and fears and lives of common people—of the great majority. In

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[40] Roger Deitz, "'If I Had a Song…' A Thumbnail History of Sing Out!," in reprint of the first issue of *Sing Out!* (Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out! Corporation, 1995), 17.
[41] Deitz, "If I Had a Song," 20.
[42] Lieberman, *My Song Is My Weapon*, 140, 143; Irwin Silber's memoir in "*Wasn't That A Time!,": Firsthand Accounts of the Folk Music Revival,* ed. Ronald Cohen (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995), 96.
[43] Quoted in Robbie Lieberman, *"My Song Is My Weapon": People's Songs, American Communism, and the Politics of Culture, 1930-50* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 68.

> the second place, like that other music of which we have spoken – call it "composed," "concert music," or whatever – it will grow on the base of folk music. We propose that these two hitherto divergent lines of music shall now join in common service to the common people and that is what we will call "Peoples Music." No form – folk song, concert song, dance, symphony, jazz – is alien to it. By one thing above all else will we judge it: "How well does it serve the common cause of humanity?"[44]

"People's Music" was not so much a musical genre as a music characterized by political purposes. As Richard Reuss has noted, by employing the term "people's songs," People's Artists managed to integrate folk and art music into the common purpose of political activism.[45] According to Reuss, the concept of "people's music" dated back to the 1930s, when emerging "Left-wing folk song enthusiasts seldom cared to make any distinction between being 'of the folk' and 'for the folk.'"[46] The music *Sing Out!* wanted to promote included traditional folk songs (music of the folk) and compositions by contemporary artists written for the promotion of ordinary people (music for the folk). Instead of changing the definition of folklore to include the latter, People's Artists employed the term "people's music."

Sing Out! from the beginning had a dual nature of being a periodical of a political organization and a song magazine, leaving room for the possibility of audiences

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[44] "The First Issue," Sing Out! 1-1 (1950), 1.
[45] Richard A. Reuss with JoAnne C. Reuss, *American Folk Music and Left-wing Politics, 1927-1957* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000), 232.
[46] Reuss, *American Folk Music and Left-Wing Politics*, 19.

attracted to one but not the other. Irwin Silber, founding editor of the magazine, emphasized the primacy of songs in these periodicals, which included tunes and guitar chords in addition to lyrics. When *People's Songs Bulletin* began publication in 1946, no other song magazines existed.[47] Further, even though People's Artists specifically distinguished themselves from academic folklore by avoiding the term "folk songs," *Sing Out!* could not escape readers' expectation that the magazine dedicate itself to folklore.[48] Silber recalled that People's Artists' magazine received criticism from academic folklore, partially on aesthetic grounds.[49]

Sing Out! was not widely read during the early 1950s, perhaps because of its overt political outlook. Silber remembered that the magazine was a "hand-to-mouth operation" to the extent that they would not have objected to taking advertisements in the early days. However, the circulation was too small to attract advertisers; in addition, "in the McCarthyism years, most 'commercial' advertisers did not want to be seen as associating with us."[50] The readership was also limited geographically and demographically. The magazine had difficulty attracting audiences outside of

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[47] Irwin Silber, in *"Wasn't That a Time!": Firsthand Accounts of the Folk Music Revival*, ed. Ronald Cohen (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995), 89.
[48] Deitz, "If I Had a Song," 18.
[49] Silber, 97.
[50] Irwin Silber, e-mail message to author, June 3, 2003.

Manhattan, in contrast to the *People's Songs* bulletin, which had organized branches nationwide. Further, the magazine's worldview became increasingly sectarian in the early 1950s as Silber became responsible for both editing the magazine and running the organization.[51] Historian Robbie Lieberman argued that "People's Artists was more overtly ideological and dogmatic than People's Songs had been" because they needed to solidify under the strong anti-Communist pressure. The editors chose songs to publish based on politics rather than aesthetics.[52] With the Old Left shrinking at the height of anti-Communism, *Sing Out!* was not successful in expanding its readership.

During the folk revival, *Sing Out!* went from an obscure left-wing periodical to a popular magazine for the general public, while the producers attempted to control commercial influence on their magazine. In the late 1950s, *Sing Out!* attracted young, college-educated audiences whose "collective energy would soon be aimed for social change and humanitarian causes."[53] As Pete Seeger recalled, middle-class young people turned out to energize the folk music revival, contrary to the 1930s intellectuals' prediction that the revival would emerge from the working-class.[54] Circulation rose

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[51] Reuss, *American Folk Music and Left-wing Politics*, 229-230.
[52] Lieberman, *My Song Is My Weapon*, 143.
[53] Deitz, "If I Had a Song," 21.
[54] Pete Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, ed. Jo Metcalf Schwartz (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), 24-25.

dramatically as folk music boomed in the late 1950s, and the readership rose from 500 in 1951 to 1,000 in 1960, then growing to 20,000 in 1964, and 25,000 in 1965.[55] A new commercialization was most evident in the increased number of advertisements in the magazine. In the first several years, advertisements resembled announcements. However, by the early 1960s, advertisements for guitars, banjos, instruction books, songbooks, and records became more common and, by the mid-1960s, advertisements "represented nearly every folk record label and instrument manufacturer."[56] For example, the September 1965 issue of *Sing Out!* has thirty-two pages of advertisements, which made up nearly half of the volume.[57]

The rise in circulation was also due to the change in the producers and their policies. In 1959, as the magazine was going through a financial crisis, Moses Asch of Folkways Records became a partner and began to run the magazine as a business. From the Summer 1959 issue, the subtitle of the magazine changed from "A People's Artists Publication" to "A Folk Song Magazine." As Robert Cantwell argued, the magazine started to disassociate itself from its political predecessor, and by the early 1960s, "its

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[55] Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, 24; Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 280.
[56] Silber, e-mail message.
[57] *Sing Out!* 15-4 (September 1965).

credo was that of a global youth movement without an articulated politics."[58] The magazine catered to young folk song enthusiasts who did not share ideologies with the Old Left. *Sing Out!* started to attract advertisers who regarded the magazine's audience as a potential market for folk-related music products. Silber and others in *Sing Out!* accepted ads on the grounds that they "promoted products – instruments, records, artists – that were clearly of interest to the readers." However, he recalls, "as the boom peaked and as our circulation grew, some of the ads took on a more commercial tone. Many of the ads that came in were designed by professional agencies."[59] Silber regarded advertising agencies as being incongruous with the principles of the magazine. Roger Deitz reported in the 45th anniversary reprint of the first issue of *Sing Out!* that "corporate America was devouring folk music as we knew it, and regurgitating it in its own image, and *Sing Out!* got a boost from the movement."[60] The editors had mixed feelings about the commercial success of the magazine, perceiving corporate interest in the magazine as a potential threat.

The editors of *Sing Out!* made a conscious effort to maintain the magazine's anti-commercial identity during the height of folk music's popularity. The editorial

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[58] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 280.
[59] Silber, email message.
[60] Deitz, "If I Had a Song," 24.

board of *Sing Out!* began regulating advertisements in the July 1965 issue, which announced a "*Sing Out!* Advertising Policy" on the opening page and listed six guidelines for advertisements. The guidelines emphasized the importance of truthfulness and appropriateness in advertising. For example, the second rule stated, "All advertising shall be subject to the same rules of good taste that the editors apply to articles and songs that appear in SING OUT!" Although there was no definition of what constituted "good taste," the policy insisted that the ads should conform to the atmosphere of the magazine. In terms of the truthfulness of the ads, the policy stipulated that "All ads shall be truthful" and that "the editors reserve the right to ask advertisers to submit advertised products and/or premiums for examination before accepting the advertising."[61] According to Silber, the advertisers also "understood that typical commercial hype would be counter-productive to them" and so tailored their advertisements to fit in the magazine. Silber recalled how he attempted to reconcile folk music with commercial activity by being "dependent on remaining small – on the fringes of standard business. Attempts to stand totally clear of such things as advertising in a magazine such as ours was – and still is – inevitably futile."[62] Silber regarded commercialism as a necessary vice that should be contained and controlled but could not

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[61] "*Sing Out!* Advertising Policy," *Sing Out!* 14 (January 1964), 2.
[62] Silber, e-mail message.

be entirely avoided. The advertising policy also suggested that the editors make conscious effort to control advertising as a way of reconciling their principles with commercialism.

During the Silber-Asch co-editorship, Silber, the political activist, and Asch, the businessman, disagreed on how to reconcile commercialism and the political mission of the magazine. Silber insisted on maintaining a political stance and refused to soften the magazine's politics in order to attract advertisers. He believed that the magazine lost some potential advertisers because of its politics.[63] On the other hand, Moses Asch, the founder of Folkways Records and the co-owner of *Sing Out!*, was in favor of reaching a wider audience by making the music more eclectic and softening the magazine's politics. Ironically, however, Silber was more tolerant of commercial advertisements than Asch, who had his own record company but could not afford to employ professional advertising agencies.[64] The producers of the magazine were not monolithic; they had come from different backgrounds and had different agendas.

In reaction to *Sing Out!* magazine's shift toward depoliticized, traditional folk songs, *Broadside* magazine began publication in February 1962 to distribute topical songs of contemporary songwriters. Influenced by the rise of the topical song

[63] Silber, e-mail message.
[64] Silber, e-mail message.

movement in Britain in 1961, folk singer Malvina Reynolds proposed and Pete Seeger seconded the idea for the new magazine. Gordon Friesen and Agnes "Sis" Cunningham, a husband-and-wife journalist and music educator with a radical activist background, mimeographed the magazine in their public housing apartment in New York. Using a recording machine they borrowed from Seeger, the couple recorded and transcribed songs from fledgling songwriters including Bob Dylan and Phil Ochs.[65] Those who launched the magazine were similar to those who launched *Sing Out!*, including Seeger and Cunningham; Cunningham had written and performed songs for People's Songs during the 1940s.[66] *Broadside* was a renewed attempt by Old Left activists to publish a periodical of political songs.

Just as *Sing Out!* in the 1950s employed the term "people's songs (music)" in order to include compositions in the art music tradition in their publication, *Broadside* employed the term "topical songs" to publish compositions by contemporary artists without threatening the definition of folk music as traditional songs. In the first issue, Friesen and Cunningham explained the concept as follows: "BROADSIDE may never

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[65] Ronald Cohen, *Rainbow Quest: The Folk Music Revival and American Society, 1940-1970* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 179-180; Ronald Cohen, "*Broadside* Magazine and Records, 1962-1988," in *The Best of Broadside 1962-1988: Anthems of the American Underground from the Pages of Broadside Magazine*, produced, compiled, and annotated by Jeff Place and Ronald D. Cohen (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings SFW CD 40130, 2000), 11-16.

[66] Cohen, "*Broadside* Magazine and Records, 1962-1988," 12.

publish a song that could be called a 'folk song.' But let us remember that many of our best folk songs were topical songs at their inception."[67] Friesen and Cunningham emphasized the distinction between topical and folk songs while justifying the former by linking them to the latter. However, even though *Broadside* did not specify the musical genre of the songs they published, the songs that appeared on *Broadside* were primarily in the acoustic, folk music style.

Friesen and Cunningham faced financial difficulties even as *Broadside* increased circulation and songwriters crowded their apartment for recording and publication of their songs during the height of the topical song making in the 1960s. The couple relied on friends and relatives for financial help to pay their living expenses even as they moved into a larger apartment to accommodate the expanding work associated with the magazine.[68] *Broadside* also released records from Folkways, but the record company's owner Moses Asch was reluctant to pay royalties, which increased the editors' financial difficulties.[69] Instead of discussing whether to resist commercialism, the editors of *Broadside* struggled financially.

One important moment when the two magazines again struggled with the

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[67] "Introducing…Broadside: A Handful of Songs about Our Times," *Broadside* 1 (February 1962), cover page.
[68] Cohen, "*Broadside* Magazine and Records, 1962-1988," 14.
[69] Cohen, "*Broadside* Magazine and Records, 1962-1988," 15.

definition of folk music was when *Sing Out!* and *Broadside* both addressed Bob Dylan's turn to electric guitar and depoliticized song making in the mid-1960s. Irwin Silber famously criticized Dylan's performance at the 1964 Newport Folk Festival in his "An Open Letter to Bob Dylan" published in the November 1964 issue of *Sing Out!* Silber criticized Dylan for having become a "celebrity" who had "lost contact with people." According to Silber, "any song-writer who tries to deal honestly with reality in this world is bound to write 'protest' songs. How can he help himself?"[70] Paul Wolfe wrote a similar commentary in *Broadside* that year, decrying Dylan's recent work, which had "degenerated into confusion and innocuousness." Wolfe condemned Dylan's performance at Newport Folk Festival for having abandoned topical-song writing in favor of "free-verse, uninhibited poetry." Wolfe further contrasted Ochs and Dylan and contended that "the difference between the two performers became manifest: meaning vs. innocuousness, sincerity vs. utter disregard for the tastes of the audience, idealistic principle vs. self-conscious egotism."[71] By comparing two artists, Wolfe illustrated his view of the folk singer as a servant to society, singing with a clear message understood by the audience.

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[70] Irwin Silber, "An Open Letter to Bob Dylan," *Sing Out!* 14-5 (November 1964), 22-23.
[71] Paul Wolfe, "The New Dylan," *Broadside* 53 (December 20, 1964), n.p.

Some readers and young folk singers disagreed with Silber and Wolfe's view. Bob Cohen expressed his discontent with the narrow definition of topical songs set by the founders of *Sing Out!* and *Broadside*:

> Dear Broadside: -- I found Paul Wolfe's article 'The New Dylan' sad and depressing. It brought me back to the old sectarian days of SING OUT! – when a song was 'male chauvinist' or 'racist' if it didn't hew to the left wing line. I understand from reading Pete Seeger that a topical song is not restricted to the political events of the day; but that love songs and jokey songs belong in that category too."[72]

Citing Seeger as a source of authority, Cohen called for broadening the definition of topical songs to include songs without specific political agendas. Cohen also accused Wolfe of lacking knowledge about Dylan: even before 1964, Dylan had written "*all* kinds of songs *all* the time" including those that were not "topical in the narrow political sense of the word." Cohen further criticized Wolfe's comparison of Dylan and Ochs: "Why do we need to make this dichotomy? Why is it necessary to compare and pit one creative artist against another? Phil Ochs is Phil Ochs." Cohen supported Ochs' view of folk singers as artists who work independently to express themselves in music without thinking of possible criticism.[73]

Phil Ochs agreed with Cohen and criticized Wolfe and Silber for dictating that young folksingers write songs for social movements. He defended Dylan's decision as

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[72] Bob Cohen, letter, *Broadside* 54 (January 20, 1965), n.p.
[73] Cohen, letter.

an artist to "be honest to himself and the work he was doing at the time." Ochs admired Dylan's new pieces including "It Ain't Me Babe" for expressing his own concerns.[74] Ochs stressed personal freedom and self-expression for folk singers.

While stressing personal expressions, Ochs also believed that folk singers needed to address social issues, but with a different method from Silber's. In an interview with *Broadside* editors Sis Cunningham and Gordon Friesen in 1965, Ochs outlined his view of topical songs as socialist realist art:

> I'm struck with the art form of movies, and I've seen a number that bear out my idea that great art can be achieved in the use of social realism. There's the Italian movie of the forties, OPEN CITY – an anti-fascist movie – a great movie – and it's a social realism movie. In America THE DEFIANT ONES compares to it, and that is also a great movie of social realism. There is no reason why this can't also be done in song. HERE'S TO THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI becomes – in performance – a very moving, an overpowering, a punching out form of social realism.[75]

Ochs viewed his anti-racism song, "Here's to the State of Mississippi," as a piece of art that illustrated society as it should be. Ochs further called for "an uncompromising artistic sense of quality rather than a view of music that borders on the functional."[76] Ochs envisioned a similar transition in the American folk music scene.

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[74] Phil Ochs, "An Open Letter From Phil Ochs to Irwin Silber, Paul Wolfe and Joseph E. Levine," *Broadside* 54 (January 20, 1965), n.p.
[75] Phil Ochs interview with Sis Cunningham and Gordon Friesen, Broadside 63 (October 15, 1965), n.p.
[76] Ochs, [no title given], 11.

The differences between Silber and Ochs lay in their definition of the political. While Silber assumed that topical songs should emerge from the collective will of the people, Ochs believed that the personal could be political. In 1967, Silber criticized folk singers for having separated themselves from the society. He wrote: "there are very few places in the world where the intellectual has the luxury to decide that the contemplation of his own navel is anything more than an exercise in euphoric masturbation."[77] In contrast, Ochs insisted that self-knowledge was the key to improving artistic capability of a folk singer:

> In order to grow to my greatest capacities, I feel I must understand myself to the fullest and express my deepest emotions regardless of where they stand in the political and social spectrum.[78]

Ochs thus integrated the personal and the political in his understanding of topical songs. Further, in 1968, Ochs told Friesen in an interview that both political and non-political songs addressed the same issues:

> Political songs are in a sense a misnomer, because the Vietnamese war reflects a spiritual crisis here at home, and Dylan, after renouncing so-called political songs, was writing newer songs that reflected the same spiritual crisis.[79]

Using Dylan as an example, Ochs negated the assumption that topical songs addressed explicit political issues. He contended that the kind of introspective songs denounced

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[77] Irwin Silber, "Fan the Flames," *Sing Out!* 17-2 (April-May 1967), 33.
[78] Phil Ochs, [no title given], *Sing Out!* 15-4 (September 1965), 10.
[79] Phil Ochs interview with Gordon Friesen, *Broadside* 90 (April 1968), n.p.

by Silber as "contemplation of his own navel" nevertheless addressed issues of the day.

Tom Paxton, a leading topical folk singer of the time, made a similar point. He contended that folk singers' primary responsibility was self-expression rather than building solidarity with the audience. In his *Broadside* interview in February 1966, Paxton stated: "I feel a responsibility to myself to think about something before I write about it. I wouldn't even say I have a responsibility to my audience, but to myself, and I know when I've blown it." Paxton considered that even protest songs did not call for political action but reflected the artists' personal views: "protest songs, at least the kind that are being written in the North, are simply self-expression. It's 'Hey, here's what I think.' A song should be sung at any pertinent time."[80] In his view, folk songs could persuade the audiences only when they succeeded in affecting them on a personal level: "You have to make an appeal. You have to write songs that show people how their own self interest can be served by supporting integration. How they hurt themselves by in the slightest way blocking integration."[81] Thus, Paxton insisted that both the artist and the audiences should focus on their own personal views and ideas.

The shift in emphasis from activism to personal expression was also evident in Ed Badeaux's "A Statement from the New Managing Editor" in the January 1966 issue of

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[80] Tom Paxton interview, *Broadside* 67 (February 1966), n.p.
[81] Tom Paxton interview, *Broadside* 67 (February 1966), n.p.

Sing Out!. Badeaux defined folk music as "the personal music of people expressing themselves within one or more of the traditional musical forms…people whose motives are genuine personal expression and not those of wide and instant public acceptance."[82] Badeaux also presented his view modestly by stating that this definition was "for my own use (and my own use only)" and acknowledged that other definitions would also be valid. Badeaux's message presented a departure from the mission of the early days of *Sing Out!*.

Silber and other editors at *Sing Out!* attempted to return the magazine to its original intention of circulating music of social relevance after Asch resigned in 1966, a moment which coincided with the decline of the folk revival.[83] When Silber resigned the editorial board in 1967 as a result of an internal sectarian fight, an editorial entitled "A New Chapter Begins" restated the role of *Sing Out*:

> *Sing Out!* was never viewed as a magazine designed to make a profit for its owners. Nor is it now. It has always been a journal of ideas, dedicated to people's music of the United States and the world. It has always been more concerned with home-made culture than mass culture, because the mass-produced art so seldom has had relevance or meaning to the lives of most people. It has been a magazine equally devoted to do-it-yourself music and social justice with a belief that you can't have one without the other.[84]

The new editors attempted to reclaim the anti-commercial characteristics of the magazine

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[82] Ed Badeaux, "A Statement from the New Managing Editor," *Sing Out!* 15-6 (January 1966), 91.
[83] "A New Chapter Begins," *Sing Out!* 17-4 (August-September 1967), cii.
[84] "A New Chapter Begins."

as well as their mission to work for "social justice" while making only a slight connection between social justice and self-made music. However, the magazine lost readers and finally shut down due to lack of funding in 1967. When the magazine was resumed in 1968 with a new editor, it refashioned itself as a guide to making personal songs, further dissociating itself from both politics and commercialism.[85]

Broadside also lost readership as the folk revival waned, which demonstrated the close connection between topical song-making and the folk revival. Friesen recalled that subscriptions declined as the creation of protest songs shifted from folk to rock music around 1967 and 1968. The magazine further lost even more readers around 1970 as Friesen "chose to become more radical."[86] Despite the disclaimer by the editors in the first issue that they would not publish any folk songs, they mostly published songs in the folk music style. Readers responded to the music without necessarily sharing the editors' political views. Young folk singers, while agreeing with the editors' political idealism, offered a different interpretation of topical songs as personal expression rather than as functional songs of collective action. While the older activists adhered to the definition of folk as traditional music and offered different terms for contemporary compositions, younger folk singers broadened the definition of folk music by

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[85] Deitz, "A Thumbnail History of Sing Out!," 25.
[86] Cohen, "*Broadside* Magazine and Records, 1962-1988," 16.

incorporating contemporary compositions. The latter, more eclectic approach to folk music, made the definition more ambiguous.

2. Debates over Commercialism, Advertising, and Authenticity in *Sing Out!*

As *Sing Out!* enjoyed commercial success during the folk revival, editors and writers discussed how to resist and contain commercialism. They debated not only the positives and negatives of commercialization but also how to position commercialism within the folk revival. They agreed that the central defining characteristic of folk music was that it was not commercial. However, with the rise in mass media and the increased professionalization of folk music, the definition of folk music as non-commercial music had become fragile. Writers expressed their anti-commercial sentiment not only by stressing the non-commercial aspect of folk music but by using the word "commercial" as an epithet to denounce revivalist folk singers whom they found objectionable.

The relationship between folk music and commercialism was not entirely antithetical and the commercial popularity of folk music could not be reduced to the simple narrative of folk music fans' rejection of commercialism or the corporate cooptation of folk music. As Timothy Miller demonstrated in his study of the

counterculture, rock music enjoyed commercial popularity at the same time that hippies regarded the music as representing anti-commercial values.[87] Further, advertisements in *Sing Out!*, which increased during the folk revival, appropriated the language of anti-commercialism and anti-conformity, selling products related to folk music by stressing their authenticity and pre-modern aspects. As folklorist Regina Bendix pointed out, authenticity in folklore has long been located in the pre-modern past: "folklore has long served as a vehicle in the search for the authentic, satisfying a longing for an escape from modernity."[88] The folk revival also coincided with the Creative Revolution in the advertising industry, which produced countercultural ads with anti-establishment, anti-conformist, and sometimes, anti-advertising messages. Folk music, with the countercultural values associated with it, provided a useful subject for advertising during this period, allowing advertisers to portray themselves as anti-commercial and "authentic" while they continued selling.

This section examines advertising not as a simple reflection of what an audience or the consumers thought, but as a cultural text that indicates the ways in which advertisers, and other participants in the culture, shaped a set of ideas. Scholars of the

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[87] Timothy Miller, *Hippies and American Values* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991).
[88] Regina Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 7.

history of advertising have shown that advertising did not simply sell products; it also critiqued contemporary society and culture. As Roland Marchand demonstrated, advertisers in the 1920s and the 1930s regarded themselves as "apostles of modernity" and advised consumers through advertisements on how to cope with the anxieties associated with adjusting to the society that was going through rapid modernization.[89] Advertisements revealed how producers of the ads viewed the society and the role they should play in it. In some cases, advertising did not increase the sales of products, as sociologist Michael Schudson demonstrated in his assessment of the effectiveness of advertising; contrary to the common belief, advertising followed, rather than created, sales. Schudson also argued that advertising should be read as capitalist realist art, an art form that depicted the ideal world under capitalism, rather than as a simple tool to increase the sales of specific products.[90] Advertising professionals also critiqued the very industry that they were in. In her analysis of the advertising novels prominent during the 1950s, Susan Smulyan showed how advertising professionals criticized mass culture, mass media, conformity, and consumerism. The novels, written by insiders of

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[89] Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 51.
[90] Michael Schudson, *Advertising, the Uneasy Persuasion: Its Dubious Impact on American Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

the industry, depicted the negative way mass culture impacted the individuals.[91] Advertisers' self-criticism and dissatisfaction with conformity and corporate culture of the 1950s led to the Creative Revolution in the 1960s, as Thomas Frank demonstrated. The Creative Revolution produced anti-establishment ads with anti-advertising messages that spoke to the public's fear of conformity and consumers' skepticism of advertising. Far from a static antithesis to the counterculture, the advertising industry was in the process of rejuvenating itself through its own counterculture.[92] Contrary to the common perception of advertisers as the epitome of commercialism and advertisements as tools with clear purposes and results to sell products, these scholars have shown the complexity and fluidity of advertising as well as its importance as a cultural text.

The relationship between the advertisers and *Sing Out!* readers and serious fans of folk music cannot be reduced to a simple dichotomy of the greedy, corporate, establishment duping consumers, or of anti-establishment folk singers and enthusiasts rejecting commercialism altogether. The business side spoke to the anti-establishment sentiment shared by both the advertisers and the readers, while the serious fans of folk music, including those who wrote for the magazine, found some aspects of the

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[91] Susan Smulyan, *Popular Ideologies: Mass Culture at Mid-Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), Chapter 4.
[92] Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

commercialization of folk music compatible with their anti-commercial principles, in part because some advertising of the time grew out of the same principles.

Sing Out! writers criticized commercialization in different ways, denouncing certain aspects of commercialism while accepting others so as to justify their favorite folk singers. In an article entitled "Commercialism and the Folksong Revival," Ron Radosh wrote: "Today, in 1959, America is enjoying its largest 'folksong revival.' It is a revival, however, devoid to a large degree of any of the content or understanding of the folk tradition which characterizes the art form."[93] What characterized the art form, according to Radosh, was the "sincerity and meaning that have distinguished it from the contrived music of Tin Pan Alley," a dichotomy he borrowed from folklorist Alan Lomax.[94] According to Radosh, commercial folksingers had lowered the quality of folk music and folklore. Radosh wrote that he did not denounce commercial success itself; for example, the Weavers' commercial success was justified because they remained true to the spirit of traditional folk culture. The Kingston Trio, however, according to Radosh, had brought "good folk music to the level of the worst in Tin Pan Alley music." He concluded his impassioned article by warning that serious appreciators of folk music

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[93] Ron Radosh, "Commercialism and the Folk Song Revival," *Sing Out!* 8 (Spring 1959), 27.
[94] Radosh, "Commercialism and the Folk Song Revival," 27.

should stop "patronizing prostitutes of the art who gain their status as folk artists because they use guitars and banjos."[95] He believed that "tradition" made folk music authentic and that tradition should be defined against the commercial music industry. Radosh's criticism of "commercial" folk singers and his call to respect "tradition," which lacked any factual analysis of the impact of commercialism or constructive definitions of the terms, in fact revealed how he used these words simply as labels to denounce or praise musicians.

Gershon Legman also attributed problems associated with the folk revival to commercialism.[96] In his article entitled "Folksongs, Fakelore, and Cash," Legman criticized music professionals and scholars who coopted folk music with greedy motives and on the basis of dubious qualifications. Legman lamented that the "development of folk-arts into commercialized frauds is getting to be standard." The major enablers of these frauds were "folksongers" who indiscriminately sang songs from exotic places in the world without any belief or knowledge in them and "folklore-fakers" who plagiarized folksongs collected by others and published them under their own names. Legman summarized the situation by claiming that they "*are all out for the money*, plus a goodly

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[95] Radosh, "Commercialism and the Folk Song Revival," 29.
[96] G. Legman, "Folksongs, Fakelore, Folkniks, and Cash," *Sing Out!* 10 (October-November 1960), 29-35.

bit of cheap public attention and acclaim." Describing the folk music boom as "this new infestation of entertainment-industry leeches and lice," he insisted that the "quick buck" trend in contemporary folk boom would undermine serious folklore. Legman attacked both revivalist singers and academic folklorists on the grounds that they had commercial motives.

In response to Legman's attack, in particular, regarding the fake folklore scholarship that Legman criticized, folklorist D. K. Wilgus defended folklore scholarship by arguing that "the noisy surface of the revival is on the one side hardening into hysterical cult, and on the other being commercialized for the mass market. The serious remnant is quietly capturing the academic bastions and will soon speak for itself far better than I can."[97] Wilgus therefore contended that folklore scholarship avoided taking either of the two extreme arguments and remained above the debates. He disagreed with Legman's claim that the threat of commercialism affected both the music industry and the folklore scholarship. The two writers expressed different assessments of the effect and scope of commercialism on the folk revival.

Folklorist Alan Lomax and revivalist singer John Cohen exchanged opinions in the Summer 1959 issue of *Sing Out!*. Lomax criticized urban, middle-class folk singers

[97] D. K. Wilgus, "All Is Not Nonsense and Hard Cash," *Sing Out!* 11 (Feb-March 1961), 26.

for pandering to the commercialized music industry. He argued that the folk-song revival "that began back in the thirties as a cultural movement, with overtones of social reform" was gaining college-educated middle-class audiences as well as a profit-motivated attention from business in the late 1950s.[98] Lomax criticized urban folksingers who "translate folk music in ways that make it more understandable and acceptable to their market – an urban middleclass group, with a college background," because they left out the "singing style" and "emotional content" of the original folksongs.[99] According to Lomax, urban folksingers learned songs from books and spent only a short time on music techniques. Lomax identified rural folk singers as authentic and accused urban ones of not working hard enough to learn from these authentic folk singers.

In response, John Cohen, a member of the urban folksinging group, the New Lost City Ramblers, wrote "In Defense of City Folksingers" and challenged the authenticity attached to rural folksingers.[100] Cohen argued that city folksingers had contact with traditional folksongs through first-hand research and Library of Congress recordings, not just from books. Cohen also contended that urban folk singers had an

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[98] Alan Lomax, "The 'Folkniks' – and the Songs They Sing," *Sing Out!* 9 (Summer 1959), 30.
[99] Lomax, "The 'Folkniks"—and the Songs They Sing," 30, 31.
[100] John Cohen, "In Defense of City Folksingers," *Sing Out!* 9 (Summer 1959), 32.

advantage over rural folk singers because the former were free from the constraints that tradition imposed on rural folk community members. He claimed that what Lomax perceived as "artistic tradition" was nothing more than "limitations" which rural folks uncritically accepted and from which urban folk singers were free. As such, urban folk singers should not be obligated to inherit such rural traditions. He wrote: "In the city, each individual is constantly in search of values – from which there are many to choose. This search for values is becoming the tradition of the city."[101] Cohen thus stressed the freedom that allowed urban folk revival singers to extend and make their own folk tradition. Lomax tied commercialism to the middle-class, college-educated folk singers whom he saw inauthentic, while Cohen made a case to show that urban folk singers, such as himself, were authentic.

Irwin Silber, who otherwise objected to commercialism, commended certain commercial folk singers for performing "people's music." In a record review in 1964, Silber praised Peter, Paul and Mary and the Chad Mitchell Trio for having brought new elements to the pop music world, while condemning such groups as the New Christy Minstrels, the Brothers Four, Valentine Pringle, the Journeymen, and the Big Three for having "accommodated themselves to the dollar standard and joined in the general

[101] Cohen, "In Defense of City Folksingers," 33.

disfigurement of the inherent beauty and dignity of folk music."[102] In his review of Peter, Paul and Mary's album *In the Wind*, Silber identified the trio as the legitimate successor to the Weavers and praised their sincerity and their integration of tradition and contemporary sensibility:

> Their achievement, it seems to me, is in the richly inventive qualities they bring to both traditional and recent songs – creating an expression and a sound with roots in the past, but very much of our time and place. Mostly, they seem to care about their songs, and they combine this with an ability to involve the listener in the emotional moment of the performance.[103]

Silber found that Peter, Paul and Mary's "people's music" fit with the founding principle of the magazine, which involved connecting traditional folklore with contemporary compositions. Similar to the way Armstrong stressed hard work in learning folk music, Silber emphasized the extent to which folk singers invested themselves into the songs and shared that passion with the audiences. Folk songs and singers who did that could be authentically non-commercial, no matter what their background.

As the folk revival progressed, some defended commercialization as the new tradition. In 1962, Stephen Fiott argued that collegiate, commercial folksingers should be given credit for bringing folksongs to the wider American public.[104] He contended

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[102] Irwin Silber, "The 'Pop-Folk' Music Scene," *Sing Out!* 14-2 (February-March 1964), 63-64.
[103] Silber, "The 'Pop-Folk' Music Scene," 63.
[104] Stephen Fiott, "In Defense of Commercial Folksingers," *Sing Out!* 12 (December-January 1962), 43-45.

that contemporary commercial folksingers created tradition rather than destroyed it, given that any folk song was newly made at some point and tradition had always been recreated: "And after all, folk means people. People make traditions – maybe the [Kingston] Trio has started a new tradition."[105] He criticized folk music purists who called commercial folksingers fake: "Traditions, songs, and styles are born every day. Today's tradition in folk music is commercialization; the folk want it [that] way."[106] Thus Fiott argued that commercialism had a positive effect on folk music, viewing it as a force that created tradition.

Fiott's optimistic view of commercialism as a new tradition was met with criticism by Dan Armstrong in his article, "Commercial Folksongs – Product of 'Instant Culture,'" which appeared in the subsequent issue.[107] Armstrong's criticism of "commercial folk songs" was strongly tied to his criticism of dominant American culture. Armstrong believed that the folk tradition consisted of hardship, hard work, and travel. The tradition set by Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Jimmie Rodgers, and John Lee Hooker was: "men working and building and trying to get along in hard times and singing to make it all a little easier and meaningful." In contrast, the Kingston Trio belonged to the

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[105] Fiott, "In Defense of Commercial Folksingers," 44.
[106] Fiott, "In Defense of Commercial Folksingers," 45.
[107] Dan Armstrong, "'Commercial' Folksongs – Product of 'Instant Culture,'" *Sing Out!* 13 (February-March 1963), 20-22.

"established tradition" of "Instant Culture" that had come to characterize America. They "prettied up," "watered down," and made folk songs "safe" and "unoffensive." Further, Armstrong contended that far from starting a new tradition, the Kingston Trio introduced conformity into folk music, in contrast to Woody Guthrie, who "was never crazy about being accepted by Society." He suggested that in order to truly carry a folk tradition, the revivalists should follow in the footsteps of Pete Seeger—travel and empathize with the folk in order to uncover tradition. Armstrong regarded commercialism as a negative force in the development of folk music, tied to a sense of conformity that folk music had initially opposed.

These articles showed that the writers, who ranged from popular and academic folklorists, to revival folk singers, and from journalists to activists, defended their personal positions in debating how commercialism impacted the folk revival. None of the writers categorically denied the commercial popularity of folk music, but used the term "commercial" as a label to describe inauthenticity, while identifying "tradition" as the source of authenticity. Stephen Fiott's attempt to justify commercialism by claiming that commercialism was the new tradition illustrated this point. Commercialism also described whatever the critics found problematic about the dominant American culture. They tied commercialism to conformity to the establishment, thereby attempting to keep

folk music countercultural.

The magazine also documented how folk music became increasingly commodified for some participants during the revival, as evidenced by the advertisements of folk-related products and articles reporting on the prominence of these commodities. While some critics mocked the commodification of folk music as the debasement of the music, others saw certain products as compatible with their anti-commercial principles. As scholars have pointed out, consumption sometimes provided a means to resist commercialism. Sociologist Simon Frith, who presented the concept of "music-as-commodity" as a twentieth century phenomenon, pointed out the irony of rock fans who would "treat record-buying as an act of solidarity" so as to reconcile their anti-commercialist position and their acts of consumption.[108] Frith thus contended that consumption could be a force to drive anti-commercialism. Robert Cantwell also wrote that the folk revival revealed "the sad contradiction inherent in a process that can grow off commercialism and other forms of hegemony only by means of them." Cantwell further contended that the revival "would ultimately evaporate in its own commercial medium."[109] An act of consumption cannot be interpreted as simply giving in to

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[108] Simon Frith, "Rock and Politics of Memory," *Social Text* 9/10 (Spring-Summer 1984), 66.

[109] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 332-4.

commercial principles, as commodities allowed folk enthusiasts to become participants in the folk revival; even serious fans of folk music needed to obtain folk instruments, for example, to learn the music.

Consumption provided folk enthusiasts with a means to learn folk music as early as in the early 1950s. In 1953, Pete Seeger held a concert at Swarthmore College and converted at least two students who would later become important folklorists, Ralph Rinzler and Roger Abrahams. Rinzler and Abrahams were so moved by Seeger's concert, particularly by his sense of authenticity, of the "coming together of ideology and musicianship," that they decided that folk music "was what [they] wanted to do for the rest of [their] lives." Rinzler and Abrahams went out to buy banjos immediately and "in a few years both were well established as revivalist musicians."[110] These serious fans of folk music purchased the banjo so as to accompany themselves and participate in the folk revival. Young enthusiasts who dedicated themselves to learning folk music invested on expensive instruments. Purchasing commodities helped serious fans appreciate music that opposed commercialism.

At the height of the folk revival, certain young folk music enthusiasts accompanied themselves with expensive instruments, which amazed adult observers.

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[110] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 243.

Editors of *Broadside* magazine reported in August 1962 on the popularity of bluegrass music among young people who congregated every week in Washington Square. The editors were particularly "overwhelmed" by the "kids" with $350 banjos, who focused on acquiring techniques without much concern to the lyrics.[111] The older editors thus interpreted the bluegrass fans as affluent young people who enjoyed music differently from older fans – they saw the young generation's use of luxurious instruments as a sign of insincerity.

Jazz critic Robert Reisner regarded the greater availability of cheap folk instruments as an indicator of the low level of the music. He ridiculed the ease with which people became folksingers simply by purchasing guitars: "Folk music is the shortcut to becoming an 'entertainer' these days… You buy a guitar, learn three chords, and you are set."[112] Reisner thus described folk music as requiring less skill and training than other genres, possibly jazz; he believed that purchasing the guitar gave mediocre musicians a pathway to becoming entertainers.

In contrast, revivalist folksinger Barbara Dane interpreted the commodification of folk music as aiding the folk revival. In her report of the convention of the National

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[111] "Whither American Folk Music? (A Few Comments)," *Broadside* 11-12 (August 1962), n.p.
[112] Quoted in David Dunaway, *How Can I Keep from Singing: Pete Seeger* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1981), 248.

Association of Music Merchants in Chicago in 1965, Dane pointed out that musical instruments had become a big business due to the popularity of folk music. The business targeted folksong enthusiasts as potential customers and provided products for all levels of amateur musicians, for example, a "'Chordomonica' with a 'built-in harmonic structure which makes discords impossible and permits chords that were previously unavailable.'" In other words, "people are trying to spend money for music and there is really something for everyone."[113] Dane noted a huge shift from when she "had to tramp many a mile to find decent strings, when the average music store never heard of an autoharp or a guitar other than Hawaiian, orchestra, or cowboy."[114] The popularity of folk music brought mass production, diversification of commodities, and a wider distribution of the things needed to make folk music.

Dane believed that people should actively play music by themselves rather than passively listening to professional musicians, encouraging amateur musicians with the call of "Up with homemade music." She clearly agreed with the opinion of one of the wholesalers at the convention that "there remains a substantial desire on the part of Americans *to be entertained* rather than entertain themselves," nonetheless "people must

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[113] Barbara Dane, "The Music Merchants' Show: A Folksinger's Report," *Sing Out!* 15 (November 1965), 53.
[114] Dane, "The Music Merchants' Show," 49.

have the opportunity to play for enjoyment."[115] Obviously, there were different motives behind the support of amateur musicians and the "do-it-yourself" position encouraged by folksingers; while the instrument wholesaler wanted to gain more consumers, the folksinger wanted to promote music-making as a reaction against a passive mass culture.

An advertisement in *Sing Out!* promoted a short-cut to becoming a folk singer, in a similar vain to "Chordomonica." The "Elektra Folk Song Kit" made the process of becoming a folk singers something anyone could purchase. The "beautifully boxed" folk song kit included an LP that provided "step-by-step instructions" and 20 examples of folk songs as well as a 52-page manual.[116] This advertisement showed that some products helped folk fans become active participants in folk music.

In the face of a mass production of instruments, some advertisers incorporated anti-mass culture sentiment and the desire to make things for oneself into their products. Macaldo Guitars had a two-page ad in the December-January 1967-68 issue of *Sing Out!*, which read: "Don't buy a guitar! Make one." The advertisement claimed that the guitar "kit" enabled consumers to make a guitar with the same qualities as an expensive one. It stressed the ease with which one could make a guitar and personalize it: "In fact, the hardest thing about building this guitar yourself is convincing your friends that

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[115] Dane, "The Music Merchants' Show," 53.
[116] "Electra Folk Song Kit," *Sing Out!* 9 (Summer 1959), 27.

you've actually built the guitar yourself. So, to help you out, there's a space for your name on the label." While the advertisement wrote that "we've done all the hard parts for you," it also assured the consumers that "[b]est of all, you've done it all yourself"[117] Instead of offering uniform, mass-produced products, the advertisers sold the process of making individualized instruments.

The mass production of guitars and banjos helped achieve the anti-mass cultural goals of the folk music revival. "Do-it-yourself" was a central credo of the folk music revival. Endorsed most typically by Pete Seeger, this idea encouraged enthusiasts of folk music to play and make music instead of simply listening to professional singers. Even at concerts, audiences were encouraged to "sing along," a practice for which Seeger became especially famous. Seeger and other folk music leaders encouraged the audiences to play (and preferably compose) music on their own, accompanied by guitars or banjos. Every participant needed a guitar. Folk instrument sales increased dramatically, with the folk music boom. As early as 1956, Seeger remarked that annual guitar sales exceeded half a million.[118] In less than a decade, the guitar industry had become a multi-million dollar business. A 1965 *Business Week* article, entitled "Guitars

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[117] "Don't Buy a Guitar, Make One," *Sing Out!* 17-6 (December-January 1967-68), 36-37.
[118] Dunaway, *How Can I Keep from Singing*, 189.

hit a cashbox crescendo," reported the dramatic increase in guitar sales: "The music of $100-million a year in sales is sweet to the ears of manufacturers. So great is the boom, some dealers are pleading for instruments and imports are finding a big market." According to the article, between 1960 and 1965, guitar sales increased from 420,000 units to 1,065,000; $22 million retail sales to $95 million, while an estimated 150,000 used guitars were sold in 1964.[119] In the meantime, banjo sales also increased by five times between 1959 and 1960.[120] As some folk music critics suggested, in order to become part of the folk music revival, consumers needed to purchase folk instruments.

Mass-produced instruments helped music-making but critics were still suspicious of those who purchased guitars as a symbol of their participation. Besides writing that buying an instrument helped people become active, rather than passive, consumers of music, critics came up with additional arguments to justify consuming. For example, Moses Asch suggested that consumption of recorded music did not necessarily contradict the anti-commercial spirit of folk music. He argued in his article "Is Cash Killing Folk Music?" that the serious folk music enthusiast should listen to folk records "in a quiet corner" rather than immersing himself in festivals and coffeehouses.[121]

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[119] "Guitars Hit a Cashbox Crescendo," *Business Week*, May 8, 1965, 155.
[120] "Folk Frenzy," *Time*, July 11, 1960, 81.
[121] Josh Dunson and Moses Asch, "Is Cash Killing Folk Music?" in *The American Folk*

Asch contended that the apparently passive act of listening to recordings was also an authentic part of the folk music revival.

The advertisements placed in *Sing Out!* reflected the changes that took place in the mainstream commercial world during the 1960s. Furthermore, the development recapitulated the history of mainstream advertising outlined by historian Roland Marchand in his study of advertising in the 1920s and the 1930s.[122] According to Marchand, American advertising went through a dramatic change at the turn of the century, moving from advertisements which explained products rationally to those that employed extensive visual images and stressed the impact of products on consumers. Modern advertising assumed the role of an advisor, teaching consumers how to cope with changes brought by modernity. This change in advertising style was apparent by the 1920s; however, the older style survived and coexisted with the newer style. Similarly, advertising in *Sing Out!* also made the transition from announcement ads to producer-oriented ads to consumer-oriented ads that offered consumers solutions to the problem of living with social changes in the 1960s. Mainstream advertising and folk advertising in fact proceeded in similar ways.

Scene: Dimensions of the Folksong Revival, eds. David A. DeTurk and A.Poulin, Jr. (New York: Dell, 1967), 310-313.

[122] Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

The ads in *Sing Out!* also reflected the changes that took place during the 1960s in the advertising industry. In his study of the relationship between the counterculture and advertising, Thomas Frank argued that contrary to the common assumption that all businesses embodied the conformity that the counterculture opposed, advertising agencies were in the forefront of breaking out of the conformity that had characterized the 1950s. According to Frank, during the 1960s, "the makers of American advertising would rank among the country's most visible critics of the mass society."[123] The new ads for Volkswagen provided a prime example of anti-mass culture, anti-conformity advertising that nevertheless encouraged consumption of mass produced goods.[124] The ad campaign left Volkswagen with a hip image. Frank argued that advertising agencies went through their own counterculture, the Creative Revolution. By 1965, advertising styles had changed dramatically from "square" to "hip." As a result of the Creative Revolution, advertisements became self-referential, cynical, and stressed individuality. Advertisers during this period made ads on the assumption that the readers would not take the ads at face value.

In the early 1950s, *Sing Out!* contained few advertisements, with the exception of the occasional appearance of announcements of the upcoming publication of

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[123] Frank, *The Conquest of Cool,* 76.
[124] Frank, *The Conquest of Cool,* 67-68.

songbooks. Advertisements from the 1950s resembled announcements and were closer to the type of early advertisements discussed by Marchand — small, inconspicuous boxes with companies' names. For example, Terminal Music company in New York posted a small, modest, and straightforward ad, about 1/4 of the page, simply stating what they had: C. F. Martin guitars, recorders, and the folk guitar ("good tone").[125] The ad did not tell a story, did not include an image that the audience identified with; it simply gave pertinent information about the products.

Over the next decade, especially after 1958, advertisements filled the magazine. Advertisements often occupied the whole pages, with pictures and elaborate explanations of the product. By 1965, advertisements comprised almost half the pages of the entire magazine. More elaborate advertisements first appeared in 1961.[126] A Guild Guitar ad stressed brand identification, a tactic typical of the new advertising which flourished in the 1920s. In addition to listing the company's name and address at the bottom, as the earlier ad did, this ad had the company's name in big letters, thus reinforcing brand identification. Anti-mass culture sentiment was expressed in the phrase "Traditional Craftsmanship!" on the top of the ad. In the body of the ad, a picture showed a man making a guitar. Underneath it says, "Guild. Two months in the making, from

[125] "Everything for the Folk Guitarist," *Sing Out!* 10 (Oct-Nov 1960), 31.
[126] "Traditional Craftsmanship," *Sing Out!* 11 (April-May 1961).

craftsman's hands to yours…the new Guild Classic Guitar inspires, excites, commands your audience… reserve your copy of our Classic brochure now, without obligation." In addition, the slogan, together with the picture of the guitar being hand-made, suggested that the guitars made by this company were not mass-produced and therefore more suited to the spirit of the folk music revival. As in the earlier ads, the emphasis was still on the product.

Other advertisements also stressed the "craftsmanship" of the producers of the instruments. For example, the Ode Company's banjo advertisement insisted that their banjos were handmade and that they were sold to the customers without intermediaries. The ad reads: "The Exciting Revival of 'CRAFTSMANSHIP' ODE 'Hand-Crafted' Banjos SOLD DIRECT FROM FACTORY TO CONSUMER. From $79."[127] Although it is not clear what the quotation marks around the words "craftsmanship" and "hand-crafted" were supposed to mean, the ad's selling point lined up with the anti-corporate, anti-commercial sentiment of folk music fans.

Some ads had celebrities endorsing their products. For example, the Vega company showed Pete Seeger's portrait beside a picture of a banjo to advertise the

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[127] "The Exciting Revival of Craftsmanship, Ode Hand-Crafted Banjos," *Sing Out!* 11 (Dec.-Jan. 1961-62).

banjo.[128] Instead of explaining the product's inherent quality, the ad sold the product through association with famous professional singers. While the focus of the ad is on the product rather than the consumer, the rhetoric changed from description of the products to celebrity endorsements.

An advertisement for Oak Publications' music theory book distinguished between the audiences and the traditional singers of folk songs, insisting that while the latter did not need music theory to be better performers, the former would benefit from such knowledge:

> If you're Leadbelly or Woody Guthrie or Mance Lipscomb or Doc Watson, all the music theory in the world wouldn't make you a better guitar player. In fact, it might do you more harm than good.
>
> But if you are a young person, interested in a great variety of styles of music, playing the folk guitar for fun and as a means of self-expression, a working knowledge of the rudiments of music can be most valuable.[129]

The ad suggested that traditional folk singers naturally possessed musical knowledge while the young audiences of folk music should take a different, more commodified, pathway to learn folk music.

Advertisements also expressed the anti-mass culture sentiments associated with folk music by stressing the individual. The October-November 1961 issue included a

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[128] "Folk Banjos by Vega," *Sing Out!* 11 (Summer 1961).
[129] "But I Can't Read Music!," *Sing Out!* 16-5 (November 1966), 36.

"New York Martin" guitar advertisement which showed young people on the grass in the background with their guitars and banjos while a young woman played the guitar, sitting comfortably on the grass apart from the crowd.[130] In the lower right-hand corner was a close up of the guitar itself. The ad did not explain much about the product except for the price and the note that said the guitar was used in the May Wind Gap Folk Festival. The major appeal of this ad was the picture which revealed the contrast between the crowd and the individual – the woman sitting alone with a guitar was potentially part of the crowd while maintaining her individuality. Further, the ad promised a way of life through the idyllic picture showing young people surrounded by nature; the possibility of maintaining individuality while still being part of a crowd and the possibility of being part of nature while also belonging to society. The ad clearly illustrated the tension between the individual and the mass and showed that it was possible to assert individuality through consumption, sending a message similar to that of the Volkswagen campaign cited by Frank.[131]

After folk music turned electric in 1965, advertisements became even livelier and more "hip." For example, the February-March 1966 issue included an ad for

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[130] "Introducing the New York Martin," *Sing Out!* 11 (Oct-Nov 1961).
[131] Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, 67-68.

electric guitars with pictures of young men and women dancing.[132] In addition to reflecting the turn of the folk music revival into folk-rock, the ad illustrated the way of life that the product would provide. The word "play" and the use of colloquial language exemplified the shift of advertisements from "square" to "hip." A guitar company even used the decline of the folk music revival as an opportunity to target the serious musicians. A Martin Guitar ad read: "The folk boom is over (or so somebody said). Now don't you think those of you who are left over should have a really fine guitar?" The ad acknowledged the decline of the popularity of folk music among the general public; it then identified the readers as the real connoisseurs of folk music who deserved "a really fine guitar," unlike the majority of folk fans who were just following the crowd during the revival.[133]

Articles and advertisements from *Sing Out!* showed that commercialism and folk music had a contested and complex relationship. While editors and writers, some of whom were revivalist folk singers, shared an anti-commercial sentiment and attempted to contain and resist commercialism in the face of the commercial popularity of folk music and the magazine, they did not agree on the definition of commercialism. In fact, the label of commercialism was a simple way for the critics to denounce the folk singers that

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[132] "The Free Riding' Beat of Folk-Rock," *Sing Out!* 16 (Feb-March 1966), 88.
[133] C. F. Martin & CO. Guitar, *Sing Out!* 15-4 (September 1965), 120.

they suspected of being inauthentic while justifying the commercial success of folk singers that they found authentic. Further, some writers justified certain aspects of commercialism as aiding the folk revival, such as the availability of folk instruments that helped serious fans learn the music. Advertising, when read as a cultural text rather than a reflection of consumers' thoughts or a tool to increase sales, revealed the way advertisers interpreted the folk revival and the audience as sharing the countercultural values that pervaded both the advertising industry of the time and the folk revival.

3. Internationalism and the Middle-Class Audience in *Sing Out!* and *Broadside*

Debates over commercialism and the definition of folk music coincided with a criticism of ethnocentrism and provincialism that pervaded the capitalist-driven commercial music industry and the dominant American culture; folk music embodied the voice of the non-Western, non-white population. American revivalist folk singers and editors defined the folk in contrast to middle-class white America, thereby incorporating both domestic minorities and non-Western foreigners into the category of "folk." Their criticism of domestic racism and segregation went hand in hand with their criticism of American provincialism, mass consumption, and ethnocentrism. *Sing Out!* and *Broadside* introduced young, white, middle-class American readers to the music and

cultures of the world and promoted cross-cultural understanding. While revivalist folk singers and critics debated the authenticity of American folk singers, they did not examine world music with the same standard, assuming that the non-Western world had different music and cultures from white, middle-class America. Despite their good intentions, they portrayed the world, especially the non-Western world, in a way that did not threaten white American superiority and middle-class privilege.

In *Broadside*, Irwin Silber called for an understanding of the rest of the world, especially the Third World, while critiquing American provincialism. In his report on a meeting of the Cultural Congress of Havana in Cuba, where Silber and his wife Barbara Dane had joined other delegates from 70 countries to discuss the role intellectuals should play in the Third World, Silber criticized American provincialism:

> We Americans really have a narrower, more provincial view of the world than almost every other people. We think that "what's happening" is either right here or an extension of our own interest. But what's really happening, and especially in that seething neo-colonial, on-the-verge-of-revolution third world is the growing physical and ideological isolation of the United States.[134]

Further, Silber tied ethnocentrism and provincialism to his criticism of American capitalism and the commercial music industry. In his *Sing Out!* article, Silber wrote that "the cancer of America is Ethnocentricity," and further asserted that just as the Peace

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[134] Irwin Silber, "Cuba Revisited," *Broadside* 90 (April 1968), n.p.

Corps was "really sugar-coated imperialism," so Americans' appreciation of music from other parts of the world was nothing more than treating it "as source of supply for our amplified music mills."[135] Silber regarded the capitalist-driven American music industry as exploiting the Third World at the same time it was promoting an ethnocentric world view.

As a remedy to ethnocentrism, *Sing Out!* promoted cross-cultural understanding through world music with the beginning of an "international section" in May 1965. The new section, edited by Bobbi Rabinowitz with Moses Asch as a consultant, began with the following statement:

> This international section of SING OUT! will be devoted to the folk music and idiom of the many different peoples and culture on this constantly shrinking planet. It will include news and act as a place to exchange information about folk music of all countries. We hope that this column will help increase understanding between peoples of different backgrounds and permit the appreciation of the rich musical heritage this opens up.[136]

The editors believed that each country equally had its folk music and that an appreciation of folk music would lead to cross-cultural understandings. In addition to committing themselves to embracing different cultures, the editors of the magazine considered it their mission to educate their audience about world cultures.

The readers of *Sing Out!* also expected to learn about foreign cultures from the

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[135] Irwin Silber, "Fan the Flames," *Sing Out!* 17-2 (April/May 1967), 33.
[136] "International Section," *Sing Out!* 15-2 (May 1965), 47.

magazine. One reader from Pennsylvania wrote a letter requesting that the magazine include Greek folk songs, with "words and music please."[137] The author assumed that the magazine was open to incorporating international folk songs and saw the magazine as a source of learning about other cultures. Writers and readers agreed that *Sing Out!* should promote world music.

When it came to music from other parts of the world, the distinctions among folk, art, and popular music were not important. Henrietta Yurchenco compiled and commented on folk music recordings from abroad in the January 1965 issue of *Sing Out!*. Yurchenco emphasized the diversity of cultures based on the assumption that American readers had a limited knowledge of world cultures: "The listing below includes popular and classical music as well as folk music from India and Africa. It is hoped that this will aid the reader in achieving a comprehensive view of unfamiliar musical cultures."[138] This suggested a definition of folk music as that which was unfamiliar to the American audiences.

The theme of young middle-class white men rejecting their upbringing pervaded the magazines during the 1960s. *Broadside* editor Gordon Friesen portrayed revival folk singers in his articles in *Sing Out!* using such narrative. Eric Andersen "left his

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[137] Letters, *Sing Out!* 16-5 (November 1966), 57.
[138] Henrietta Yurchenco, "International Folk Music," *Sing Out!* 14-6 (January 1965), 81.

middle-class suburban Buffalo, N.Y., home at 18 a couple of years back to ride the freight trains to the west coast," where he learned blues from "the legendary country blues musician, J.C. Burris."[139] Phil Ochs "allowed his comfortable, middle-class parents to ship him off to military school in Virginia," where he received his diploma from Barry Goldwater at the graduation ceremony. Ochs began to reject this conformist environment and "[o]nce he got going, however, he went all the way; among his 200 songs, anti-war, anti-discrimination, anti-hypocrisy, are some of the bluntest that any songwriter has written in the sixties."[140] Friesen thus commended these folk singers for rejecting the values of mainstream America, implicitly encouraging the young readers to challenge their own upbringing.

An article that appeared in *Sing Out!* in 1962, entitled "Understanding the World Through Folk Music," portrayed young, white, middle-class American folk singers traveling to the Third World to learn different cultures and peoples through exchanging music. Folksinger Bill Crofut reported on a three-year trip to Asia and Africa he had made with a fellow folksinger Steve Addiss, under the partial sponsorship of the State Department and the United States Information Service.[141] In addition to exchanging

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[139] Gordon Friesen, "Eric Andersen," *Sing Out!* 16-1 (February-March 1966), 4.
[140] Gordon Friesen, "Phil Ochs," *Sing Out!* 16-1 (February-March 1966), 3.
[141] Bill Crofut, "Understanding the World Through Folk Music," *Sing Out!* 12-5

music, Crofut and Addiss "had bouts with dysentery and parasitic diseases" after eating local foods and learned to understand the reasons behind the development of customs that appeared strange, including female circumcisions in Africa.[142] This experience taught them the value of cultural relativism, which they believed would improve America's reputation in the world. The world trip also made them authentic as folk singers, as they traveled and experienced some hardship as well as immersed themselves in different cultures, as critics of folk music preached.

While respecting different cultures, Crofut also assumed white, middle-class American readers and presented the non-Western world in a way that did not threaten them. He assumed that "us" meant Westerners, for example, when noting that "the Africans and Easterners" tended to be more familiar with "our ways than we are with theirs."[143] Pictures inserted in the article showed the white, male American folk singers performing to the attentive children and young women of the non-Western world. The opening picture showed Cofut teaching gestures to young Japanese children while standing, in contrast to the children who sat on the floor and copied him with smile on their faces. Another picture showed a smiling Kenyan woman closely watching Cofut

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(December-January 1962), 38-40.

[142] Crofut, "Understanding the World Through Folk Music," 40.

[143] Crofut, "Understanding the World Through Folk Music," 39.

and Addiss playing the guitar. The pictures demonstrated the hierarchy between the white American singers as teachers and the Third World audiences as students. Crofut also assumed that music had an organic relationship with place. He wrote: "both the classical and folk music of every country we visited seemed to fit, in its technical construction, instrumentation and spirit, the atmosphere of its surroundings."[144] Even though American folk singers separated folk music from classical and popular music when discussing American music, they did not apply that distinction to music they found in foreign countries. Crofut concluded the article by encouraging young readers to travel abroad instead of taking a job at home:

> I would recommend such a venture to all people young enough to stand the change of climate and travel. Don't worry about having a job. You can always look for work after you get there. Something invariably crops up.[145]

He offered an empty promise to the young readers by insisting that learning cultural relativism was more important than settling down. He assumed that the readers led an affluent and comfortable life that would allow them to suspend working. Crofut promoted cross-cultural understanding while maintaining middle-class privilege.

Crofut and Addiss's trip, as well as their belief that cross-cultural understanding would lead to better diplomacy, conformed to Christina Klein's concept of Cold War

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[144] Crofut, "Understanding the World Through Folk Music," 38.
[145] Crofut, "Understanding the World Through Folk Music," 40.

Orientalism. According to Klein, American political and cultural leaders of the 1950s encouraged cross-cultural understandings between Asians and middlebrow Americans, as exemplified by the prominence of travel writing and fictions that emphasized personal mutual understanding between Americans and Asians. Unlike prewar Western travel writings on Asia, postwar American travel writers encouraged Americans to appreciate local cultures and customs instead of assuming that Asians were an incomprehensible and inferior Other.[146] The American tourist symbolized "America's benign, non-imperial internationalism."[147] However, the "middlebrow cultures' ability to shape the popular perception and representation of Asia" had limits, as photographs shown in *Saturday Review* demonstrated, which all showed Asia as different, "old, traditional, feminine, poor, crippled, and exotic."[148] Crofut's portrayal of Asia and Africa showed similar limits.

Sing Out! also portrayed the Japanese music scene as traditional, feminine, and different from the West. John Kelly reported on the 10th Anniversary Festival of *Utagoe* (Singing Voice) Movement, a left-wing singing labor movement, of Japan in 1961.[149] Kelly began the article by describing a "pretty and demure young woman" who greeted

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[146] Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 88.
[147] Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 109.
[148] Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 115-116.
[149] John Kelly, "'Singing Voices' of Japan," *Sing Out!* 11-1 (Feb.-March 1961), 35-37.

customers all day at the foot of the escalator in a major department store, who "transformed" by singing anti-war songs with "a great virile sound" during the festival. The audiences there also sang along with equal vitality and precision. Kelly ascribed this vigor to post-war generational and ideological shifts: the "nation-wide Singing Voice Movement arose out of the youthful ferment of Japan's post-war new democracy," which Kelly explained was provided by the United States as symbolized by the "McArthur Constitution."[150] Kelly made factual errors in his attempt to emphasize the post-war transformation. He wrote: "Everything is new – songs, western tonality, the collective spirit, freedom from feudal bowing and scraping, contact with the outside world, equality of sexes, the new democratic rights of the people and the prospect of world peace."[151] Contrary to Kelly's assumption, Japan had been a modern nation with a Constitution and contacts with other countries for a century. Japanese familiarity with Western tonality also dated back to the late 19th century.[152] However, Kelly regarded Western music as a new culture brought by the Americans and embraced by Japanese women as a sign of a rejection of a militaristic and feudal past.

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[150] Kelly, "'Singing Voices' of Japan," 35-36.
[151] Kelly, "'Singing Voices' of Japan," 36.
[152] For the importation of Western classical music to Japan, see, for example, Ury Eppstein, *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan* (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1994).

Kelly's report emphasized the role women played in the folk movement as exemplified by a picture of a mixed chorus led by a woman conductor. Kelly described women in detail but ignored men entirely: "Another 'Kasa-Odori,' a rhythmic traditional farmer's dance with drums, and beside that a lovely mother with one infant on her back and another in her arms – the mother's voice raised in praise of motherhood." He also pointed out that "a number of the young Japanese men and women of their late teens and twenties are fatherless," presumably because of the number of Japanese men killed during the war.[153] Thus, Kelly portrayed the singing movement in Japan in a way that was not threatening to the Western audience. The old militaristic Japan was dead, as symbolized by the deceased fathers of the young singers and the absence of men in Kelly's report. Instead, young Japanese women, demure by day and exuberant by night when singing, embraced the new American value of democracy as symbolized by a vibrant yet orderly singing of peace songs.[154]

An article that reported Seeger's visit to Japan in the December-January 1963-64 issue also stressed women and children. One picture showed Seeger with a banjo and

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[153] Kelly, "'Singing Voices' of Japan," 36.

[154] In his analysis of *Sayonara* (1956) and *Flower Drum Song* (1960), Robert Lee demonstrated the ways in which Asian women were domesticated and assimilated into dominant American society through marriage and consumption of American products. Lee, *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1999), 162-179. Films and popular media portrayed young Asian women as agents of Westernization and modernization.

microphone in his hands talking to Japanese children who sat in a concert hall and looked at him curiously.[155] The three adults pictured, including two elderly women in kimono, gazed at Seeger's back and at the children. This picture emphasized children as a symbol of the new generation of Japan embracing American culture.

While portraying Japanese women and children as receptive to Western music, *Sing Out!* also emphasized the traditional, and very different native Japanese culture. In an international section of *Sing Out!* in 1966, Ryotaro [misspelled Ryotoro] Hatobe, who had compiled traditional folk songs of Japan, stressed the variety and richness of traditional Japanese folk music. He wrote from the perspective of a Japanese native informant writing to the Western audiences, whom he called "Foreigners." Hatobe explained that contrary to the common Western perception that Japanese folk songs "all sound the same – sorrowful and melancholy," they had a rich variety in "tune, meaning and rhythm" as well as having regional differences.[156] Hatobe cited "The Coal Miner's Song in Kyushu" from southern Japan and "The Song of Rice-husking" from the northern area to illustrate regional differences. At the same time, Hatobe stressed the uniqueness of Japanese folk music by pointing out the differences between Korean, Chinese, and

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[155] "News and Notes," *Sing Out!* 13-5 (December-January 1963-54), 5.
[156] Ryotoro [sic] Hatobe, "Folk Music of Japan," *Sing Out!* 16-1 (February-March 1966), 55.

Japanese musical characteristics such as rhythm and scale. He also claimed that:

> "Bon" dance of Japan is of such unique character that a similar dance type is found nowhere else in the world. The same is also true of the "Bon" songs which accompany the dances. The "Bon" dances and songs which came into popular favor in feudal times are still being danced and sung from generation to generation.[157]

Hatobe thus asserted the continuity, tradition, and uniqueness of Japanese folk music all at the same time. A picture of two men dancing in farmer costumes with bamboo baskets accompanied the article. The article stressed the quaint pre-modern aspect of Japanese folk music as reported by a Japanese native informant.

The editors' assumption that each country had a different folk music was manifest in the "international letters" section as well. The February-March 1966 issue of *Sing Out!* published two letters from Japanese men, written in poor English, detailing how the correspondents hoped to see the revival of traditional Japanese folk music. They believed that even though American folk music was popular among the Japanese, the Japanese should focus on the indigenous music of Japan. Shuji Ishikawa of Shinagawa, Tokyo, wrote:

> I am interested in American folk songs. Of course I am interested in Japanese folk songs. Nowadays folk songs are fashion [sic] in Japan, especially American folk song. But perhaps folk fans in Japan are not thinking about Japanese folk songs. Japanese folk songs are very simple and beautiful. Mr. Pete Seeger advised us to revive Japanese folk songs when he visited Japan. I desire to revive Japanese folk

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[157] Hatobe, "Folk Music of Japan," 56.

> songs.[158]

The same letter, with some grammatical editing and without the last two sentences, was reproduced four months later in a different issue under the headline "Japanese Revival" in the "International Letters" section.[159] The editors deleted the passage about Seeger from this letter to so as to create the impression that the Japanese actively wanted to revive their own traditional music, when in fact, most Japanese were interested in American folk music and showed an interest in Japanese material only because an American folk music authority suggested it. The editors of *Sing Out!* wanted to impress upon the readers not only that the magazine reached an international audience but also that the folk revival was a worldwide phenomenon to preserve the international diversity of folk music.

Another former enemy country, West Germany, received a different treatment. Instead of assuming cultural differences, Barbara Dane emphasized the transformation in political climate in her report of the singing peace movement in West Germany in 1967. Dane marveled at how West Germany had transformed itself from a Nazi-dictated militarist country to a peace loving democracy by counter-posing the images of the SS and the contemporary German youths who attended the march:

> Over this Easter weekend, people have been marching again in the streets of Germany…150,000 people or more. But instead of polished boots goose-stepping,

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[158] "International Letters," *Sing Out!* 16-1 (February-March 1966), 57.
[159] "International Letters," *Sing Out!* 16-3 (July 1966), 61.

> the costume is blue jeans and ponchos; instead of bristling army haircuts the style is long, flying curls for boys, ironed-straight hair for girls. And this time, the cause is PEACE![160]

In contrast to the very different Japanese culture, Dane presented the Germans as sharing culture with Americans. The German peace workers sang American folk songs, some in English and others in German translation. Dane considered a concert of peace songs with German performers at Burgerbraukellar in Munich, a place that marked Hitler's ascendancy to power in 1923, as "symbolic of something new in Germany – and a portent of things still to come."[161] Unlike Seeger, who lectured the Japanese to revive their own folk traditions, Dane did not expect Germans to revive traditional German folk music; she celebrated the new generation of peace-loving Germans embracing American folk music.

The folk revival expanded the scope of folk music to include music from abroad, especially from the non-West, as a reaction against white, middle-class American culture. *Sing Out!* and *Broadside* attempted to overcome ethnocentrism by encouraging young readers to embrace cultural differences based on the assumption that folk music of the world would teach Americans the value of cultural relativism. However, folk singers and writers portrayed the non-Western world without fundamentally challenging white, middle-class privilege. Embracing the cultures of others educated and authenticated

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[160] Barbara Dane, "Singing for Peace in West Germany," *Sing Out!* 17-3 (June-July 1967), 14.
[161] Dane, "Singing for Peace in West Germany," 15.

American folk singers more than they promoted mutual understanding.

Conclusion

Sing Out! and *Broadside* did not simply carry songs but explored the ambiguous definitions of folk music; anti-commercialism; political idealism; and embracing cultural diversity, all core values of the folk revival that resisted white, middle-class American culture. But all of these terms had complex and sometimes contradictory meanings. Both magazines began as periodicals for political song making; People's Artists, who started *Sing Out!*, proposed the term "people's music" while the founders of *Broadside* claimed to circulate "topical songs" in order to avoid the conflict between traditional folklore and recent compositions. However, the distinction between those categories remained unclear, and the founders of the magazines and young topical folk singers held different views on the role of political folk songs.

While advocating anti-commercialism, magazine editors, folk singers, and writers neither rejected nor blindly accepted commercialism; they negotiated with commercialism and looked for ways to live with commodification as well as with the commercialism necessary for the success of the folk revival. They regarded commercialism as a sign of inauthenticity, while at the same time, defended the

commercial success of authentic folk singers and supported the commodification of folk music. Editors attempted to contain and resist the commercialization of a folk music magazine, while advertisers addressed anti-commercial, anti-mass sentiments central to the folk revival.

The magazines also incorporated music from abroad as an antithesis to white, middle-class American culture, which expanded the meaning of folk music. In contrast to the way folk singers and writers debated commercialism and political idealism in folk music, they agreed that folk singers should embrace world music and that doing so would lead to cross-cultural understanding. However, the internationalism espoused by folk singers and writers had limits in their failure to challenge their world view centered on white, middle-class America. The folk revival represented folk singers' negotiations with rather than rejection of dominant American culture.

CHAPTER 2: FROM COMMERCIALISM TO POLITICS: DOMESTICATING AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC IN JAPAN IN THE 1960S

Introduction

American folk music and its derivations flourished in Japan in the 1960s and the 1970s, first among young college students, and eventually spreading to high school students, young blue-collar workers, and activists. Unlike the U.S. and British folk revivals, which featured the transformation of indigenous traditional folk music, the folk music boom in Japan took the form of importing and domesticating contemporary American folk music available through commercial media instead of reviving Japanese traditional folk music.[162] By the end of the 1960s, the domestication had proceeded so far that major folk music singers became almost exclusively Japanese; American folk

[162] As Toru Mitsui pointed out, because Japanese music education since the late 19th century stressed Western concepts and features, Japanese traditional folk music sounded (as it does today) quaint and unfamiliar to most Japanese. Few Japanese enthusiasts of American folk music were interested in reviving Japanese traditional music and as a result, "the folk 'revival' had no visible influence on or relevance to Japanese folksongs." Toru Mitsui, "The Music of American Southern Whites in Japan," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 284. Japanese traditional folk music is called "min-yo" (Japanese word for "folk song") while American folk music from the revival period and its Japanese derivatives are called "folk." The two musics are different musically and have different performers and audience.

singers of the 1960s remained important historical figures to narrate the Japanese history of folk music, but Japanese folk musicians established themselves as the authoritative artists of the genre. Japanese musicians, fans, and critics claimed to have made American folk music their own, even replicating debates over commercialism and political idealism conducted among Americans in the Japanese context.

Japanese folk music historians divide the boom into three periods. The Tokyo-based "college folk period" lasted from approximately 1960 until 1967, during which college students copied the fashion and music of American contemporary folk singers without paying much attention to political meanings. The Kansai-based "underground folk period" lasted from approximately 1967 to 1970, when folk music became more Japanese, proletarian, and political; Japanese folk singers composed songs in Japanese on Japanese political and social issues.[163] Between 1970 and the middle of the decade, folk music was commercialized and depoliticized until it dissolved into the "new music," a term employed by singer-songwriters who did not want their music to be associated with the politics, poverty, protest, and bad hygiene of the preceding period, paralleling the movement in the U.S. from folk music to depoliticized singer-songwriter

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[163] Hirotake Maeda and Koji Hirahara, *60-nendai foku no jidai [The Era of 60s Folk Music]* (Tokyo: Shinko Music, 1993). The Kansai region is located in the Southern Central region of the main island of Japan, Honshu and includes three major cities: Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe.

music.[164] This classification suggests a simple narrative of Japanese folk singers and audiences gradually domesticating foreign music until it merged with Japanese popular music. In particular, the transition from the college to the underground folk period appears as though the Japanese had developed a deeper appreciation of the music and reclaimed their national identity. I argue instead that in each period, Japanese audiences negotiated the meaning of folk music in order to become active participants of the music rather than passive consumers of a foreign culture.

Particularly during the underground folk period, Japanese folk singers and writers addressed some of the same issues that their American counterparts did, including the commercialization of folk music and how to incorporate politics into music. However, they did not share American folk enthusiasts' belief that learning folk music helped them understand the world and overcome ethnocentrism and provincialism. They perceived folk music as a musical form that the Japanese could learn and develop without cultural knowledge. Further, in contrast to the majority of American folk singers and fans, who perceived of their white, middle-class background as inauthentic while locating authenticity in the cultures of the marginalized population, Japanese folk

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[164] Tadasu Tagawa, *Nihon no foku & rokku shi: kokorozashi wa doko e [The History of Folk and Rock in Japan: Where Has the Aspiration Gone]* (Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo sha, 1982), 119-120.

singers and fans, many of whom also came from the middle-class, were free from this authenticity question and enjoyed more freedom in developing their career and musical skills.

While American folk singers considered the Japanese to have an essentially different culture from the West, as shown in Chapter 1, Japanese folk singers identified with white Americans and did not see themselves different. Cultural anthropologist John Russell, in his analysis of the Japanese perception of African-Americans, argued that Japanese audiences internalized the white-centered view of Americans while domesticating American popular culture during the 1960s and 1970s. The Japanese audience learned to identify with white Americans, whom they perceived as their role models, while looking down upon blacks, who were subjugated to the whites.[165] According to Russell, the Japanese reaction to African Americans dated back to the sixteenth century, when they initially encountered blacks as the servants and slaves of Europeans, which gave the impression that blacks were inferior to whites. They understood the racial hierarchy by an analogy with the Japanese caste system, equating blacks with the untouchables. While the Japanese looked down upon Europeans from

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[165] John G. Russell, *Nihonjin no kokujin kan: mondai wa Chibikuro Sanbo dake dewa nai [The Japanese Reception of Blacks: Beyond the Chibikuro Sanbo Controversy]* (Tokyo: Shin Hyoron, 1991), 54-55.

the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century as inferior to the Japanese, they came to regard Westerners as superior starting in the late nineteenth century, as Japan went through modernization and Westernization. However, as the Japanese accepted Europeans and white Americans' racial views, their negative views of blacks remained.[166] The Japanese internalized the subject position of white Americans, which explains the high social status accorded to American folk music during the college folk period and the ease with which Japanese folk singers regarded American folk music as an appropriate musical form to address Japanese issues.[167] In contrast to American folk fans, who perceived folk singers as "ethnic," Japanese fans and critics assumed that American folk singers were white and treated non-white singers as exceptions to the rule that needed explanations.

The College Folk Period and the Authenticity Debate

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[166] John G. Russell, *Henken to sabetsu wa dono yoni tsukurareru ka: kokujin sabetsu, han yudaya ishiki o chusin ni [The Construction of Prejudice and Discrimination: The Cases of Racism against Blacks and Anti-Semitism]* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1995), 14-15.

[167] The history of folk music in Japan is contrasting to the history of jazz, music originating from African Americans, in Japan. Ethnomusicologist E. Taylor Atkins argues that the American jazz legacy continued to have hegemonic power over Japanese jazz musicians and aficionados, even decades after jazz first arrived in Japan. E. Taylor Atkins, *Blue Nippon: Authenticating Jazz in Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

Music critics Hirotake Maeda and Koji Hirahara wrote that the Brothers Four concert in Japan in April 1962 triggered the Japanese folk music boom. The group looked and sounded exactly as Japanese audiences expected from American folk singers:

> Modern folk was first received in Japan as college music, as symbolized by the Brothers Four: the foursome was a group of college students at the University of Washington in the West Coast city of Seattle, and they all projected the image of clean-cut, good-mannered boys from decent middle-class American families, which, together with their soft harmony, perfectly met the expectations of young Japanese.[168]

To the young Japanese audiences of folk music, American folk singers' middle-class background marked their authenticity, in contrast to American folk fans, who regarded folk music as embodying the cultures of marginal populations in the United States.[169] Japanese audiences associated folk music with educated white middle-class American youth.

American folk singers not only embodied the middle-class American life to which the Japanese aspired, but also inspired the Japanese audience to become folk singers themselves. Maeda and Hirahara wrote: "The most important message that the Brothers Four delivered to the Japanese audience [at the 1962 concert] was that we could

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[168] Maeda and Hirahara, *60-nendai foku no jidai*, 23. Japanese writers use the term "modern folk" to refer to contemporary folk music. The original text was in Japanese, which I translated into English. Unless otherwise noted, all quotes from Japanese magazine articles and books in this chapter are my translation.

[169] See Robert Cantwell, *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 2.

all do the same."[170] American folk singers served as accessible role models for young Japanese. The Japanese audiences perceived folk music as distinctly American and yet they believed that their high socio-economic status and educational level would allow them to transcend national boundaries.

Heibon Punch, a weekly magazine for young men that began publishing in 1964, illustrated the association of folk songs with middle-class American youth whom young Japanese emulated. The magazine provided information about folk music in the 1960s, when American folk music was available from only two sources: FEN (Far East Network), the radio station for American military bases in Japan, and record shops that specialized in foreign imports.[171] It introduced readers to folk music through sheet music, guitar lesson advertisements, copies of American Billboard charts, record and concert reviews, and reports on the recent activities of American folk singers including Joan Baez and Peter, Paul and Mary. The magazine also offered fashion advice, dating tips, entertainment guides, world events, and described what was popular in the United States. The headline on the advertisement for the first issue of *Heibon Punch Deluxe*, a run-up to the weekly *Heibon Punch* that started in 1966, captured the essence of the magazine's target audience and their assumed interest: "Cars, Folk Songs, and Girls."

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[170] Maeda and Hirahara, *60-nendai foku no jidai*, 24.
[171] Maeda and Hirahara, 9-12.

Heibon Punch taught young Japanese men how to become a sophisticated urbanites, with folk songs as an integral part of that process.

From the beginning, *Heibon Punch* reflected the founding editor's adoration of American and Western culture. Tatsuo Shimizu modeled the magazine after *Playboy*, a magazine specifically targeted at young men with colorful pictures and advertisements. Shimizu even went on a tour of the United States and Europe two years prior to the launching of his new magazine. He visited *Playboy's* headquarters in Chicago, where he was welcomed with a tour of the photo studio by vice president and art director Arthur Paul, and *Seventeen* magazine headquarters in New York.[172] Shimizu attempted to emulate *Playboy* magazine in particular by inserting nude color pictures in *Heibon Punch*, which were not found in other Japanese magazines of the time. He was determined that the nude models should be "gaijin" (white) women and that he would publish "artistic, classy, beautiful nude pictures."[173] He believed that by using white models, he could elevate pornography into art. The founder of *Heibon Punch* admired American and Western culture, conflated it with whiteness, and accorded it high social status.

The magazines emphasized folk music's collegiate and intellectual basis.

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[172] Yoichi Akagi, *Heibon Punch 1964* (Tokyo: Heibon-sha Shinsho, 2004), 38-39.
[173] Tatsuo Shimizu, *Futari de hitori no monogatari: Magazine House de no zasshi zukuri [Two People Making One Story: Making Magazines at the Magazine House]* (Tokyo: Shuppan News-sha, 1985), 192.

Heibon Punch ran an article entitled "The Reason Why Baez Is Popular on College Campuses" in January 1967 just before her visit to Japan. The author explained that "the real audiences of Joan Baez who appreciate her music and think of it as their own are college students who had inherited a strong intellectual tradition in the United States." By quoting several American magazines, including an "upscale review," the article explained that college students liked Baez because she had a sense of integrity: Baez was anti-commercial and politically aware and thus one should not dismiss her as simply a protest singer.[174] By 1967 the folk boom in the U.S. was over and Baez was strongly identified with the anti-Vietnam War movement, but Japanese journalists continued to portray her as a folk singer and downplayed the importance of her political activities.

The magazine also identified Japanese folk music audiences and amateur musicians as collegiate. A *Heibon Punch Deluxe* article reported in 1965 that Japanese high schools and colleges had some three hundred amateur folk groups and that this meant that "campus music" had emerged in Japan. It explained that as Japanese students grew out of "jazz and Liverpool sounds," country and folk music gained new popularity as the music that resonated with young intellectuals.[175] The writer thus

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[174] "Jon baezu ga daigakusei ni moteru riyuu" [The reason why Joan Baez is popular among college students], *Heibon Punch*, January 16, 1967, 35.
[175] "W & F tokushu: kyanpasu no naka no ongaku" [Special Feature of Western and Folk

suggested that folk music was more suitable than rock for mature and intelligent audiences. Another writer in the same feature article reiterated the differences in the folk and rock audiences: while the former catered to late teens and twenties (college and senior high school students), the latter had followers in their mid-teens (junior and senior high school students). The writer downplayed the political meanings of American folk music and claimed that the most important feature of folk songs lay in their "simple melody that originated from American frontier spirit, bright and fresh harmony, and lighthearted rhythm." He hoped that "someday many young people will be connected to each other through the enjoyment of music by forming a wholesome student organization like the Ivy League in America."[176] He regarded folk music as American (tied to the frontier spirit), collegiate (Ivy League), and "wholesome," all attributes which Japanese students could share and replicate. These writers believed that both in the U.S. and Japan, that American folk music belonged to young intellectuals, helping them build a community through active participation in the music.

Both the weekly *Heibon Punch* and the monthly *Heibon Punch Deluxe* provided information that helped the Japanese readers perform folk songs as well as listen to them.

Music: Music on Campus], *Heibon Punch Deluxe*, September 1965, 187.

[176] Kaoru Fujii, "Atarashii wakamono no uta" [New music of the youth], *Heibon Punch Deluxe*, September 1965, 190-191.

Heibon Punch Deluxe distributed instruction leaflets that outlined the accompaniments to such popular folk song pieces as "Dona Dona" and "Blowin' in the Wind" and techniques on how to play arpeggios on the guitar.[177] *Heibon Punch* included the "Punch Weekly Hit," which introduced one American folk song per week to the readers with lyrics (sometimes with Japanese translation), melody in staff notation, and a chord progression.

Commercial commodities also allowed Japanese folk music fans to become active participants. In a *Heibon Punch* article in 1966, a shopkeeper at the Yamano Gakki music store in Ginza, Tokyo, was quoted as saying:

> We have never seen such a boost in the sales of instruments, either before or after the war. We knew that the earlier electric music boom would not last long, and so we were worried how we would survive after the boom was over. But then came the folk boom. Any products that are related to folk music – guitars, records, music scores – are flying off the shelf.[178]

Instead of regarding this phenomenon as a commercialization of folk music, the writer of the article explained that these products were necessary for the mastery of folk music:

> When electric music was in full bloom, electric guitars and amplifiers sold well. However, in case of folk, the music requires diligent practicing in order to express the unique taste of folk music, and instruments, records, and music scores must be sold as a "set."[179]

Despite the simplicity of the music, the writer believed that folk music required more

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[177] Maeda and Hirahara, n.p.
[178] "Kodo seicho o shimesu 20-dai no ongaku seikatsu repoto [Report of the Music Life of People in the Twenties That Shows the Rapid Economic Growth]," *Heibon Punch*, 19 September 1966, 18.
[179] "Kodo Seicho o Shimesu 20-dai no Ongaku Seikatsu Repoto."

rigorous training and discipline to perform than rock music, thereby justifying the purchase of additional products.

The magazines tied American folk songs to the visual images of American folk singers, as shown in the pictures of them accompanying "Punch Weekly Hit." Important songs highlighted in this way were "Blowin' in the Wind" as sung by Peter, Paul and Mary, "The Cruel War," another Peter, Paul and Mary song, "Greensleeves" by Brothers Four, and "Hush Little Baby" as sung by Joan Baez.[180] The editors of the magazine presented American folk songs not simply as words and music for the readers to learn to perform, but as closely tied to the image of white American folk singers.

Heibon Punch attempted to maintain the association of folk songs with their American originals. The articles that advertised or documented the visits of American folk singers to Japan included close-up pictures of the singers as well as passages written in English, inserted with the intent of creating an American flavor for the Japanese audiences. In the January 16, 1967, issue, *Heibon Punch* announced the upcoming visit of Joan Baez to Japan with five pages of pictures and articles. The first page was a close-up picture of Baez singing, with a headline that introduced her as "the queen of

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[180] "Blowin' in the Wind," *Heibon Punch*, January 16, 1967, ; "The Cruel War," *Heibon Punch*, October 17, 1966, 72; "Green Sleeves," *Heibon Punch*, February 6, 1967, n.p.; "Cruel War," *Heibon Punch*, January 23, 1967, 142.

folk" whose charm the article promised to explore. Underneath this Japanese headline was a block of English text that read:

> JOAN BAEZ IS COMING
> Joan Baez, a world famous singer called "Folk Queen", is coming to Japan on *[sic]* middle January. She'll have concerts at Tokyo, Osaka and some major cities during eer *[sic]* two weeks staying.[181]

As the grammatical error suggests, a Japanese writer had written this text for Japanese readers of the magazine. As James Stanlaw wrote, "most of the English words used in Japanese are homegrown for domestic consumption" and so English words and phrases that are found in Japan should not be expected to "help much in cross-cultural communication."[182] The pictures in the following two pages showed Baez singing "Blowin' in the Wind" hand in hand with Peter, Paul and Mary, Bob Dylan, the Freedom Singers, and Pete Seeger; relaxing in the beach in a bikini with her friends and family; and performing with Mimi and Richard Farina.[183] The emphasis on the visual image of the singers and the English language texts accompanying them served as racial and cultural markers of the American folk singers.

The writers of the articles assumed that authentic American folk singers were

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[181] "Foku no Joo Bumu no Naka no Jon Baezu [The Queen of Folk Joan Baez in the Boom]," *Heibon Punch*, 16 January 1967, 3.
[182] James Stanlaw, "'For Beautiful Human Life': The Use of English in Japan," in *Re-Made in Japan: Everyday Life and Consumer Taste in a Changing Society,* ed. Joseph Jay Tobin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 73, 75.
[183] "Foku no joo bumu no naka no Jon Baezu," 4-7.

white Americans and so when a folk singer did not look typically white, they came up with unsubstantiated explanations to make meanings out of the difference. Baez's perceived dark complexion was an issue for many Japanese writers, who never failed to mention her Mexican heritage to explain her difference. A woman's magazine *Josei Seven* reported in 1967, just before her visit to Japan, that Baez' social consciousness stemmed from her own experience of facing racial discrimination as a young child growing up in California; because of her dark complexion, she was taken as black. Japanese observers found her both exotic and familiar. Japanese folk singer Mike Maki was quoted as stating that he would "gaze at her [Baez's] strangely beautiful face on the LP jacket" while listening to her songs. Baez's multi-ethnic background also suggested there was room for non-white musicians including the Japanese to become folk singers. The writer of the article described Baez's "almond-shaped face" as "emanating a mysterious aura peculiar to a person of mixed race" and commented that she had "a somewhat Oriental familiarity."[184] The *Heibon Punch* article also attributed her "somewhat Oriental face" to her Mexican father.[185] Japanese writers had internalized white normalcy and felt the need to explain her difference at the same time as exploring

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[184] "Jon Baezu ga 1 gatsu 11 nichi ni rainichi!," [Joan Baez Visits Japan on January 11] *Josei Seven*, January 11, 1967, 54-57.
[185] "Jon Baezu ga daigakusei ni ukeru riyuu," 37.

the possibility of challenging the assumption that authentic folk singers should be white.

The writers also tied Baez's physical characteristics to her supposed closeness to nature, as music critic Toyo Nakamura wrote:

> Someone called Joan Baez the "modern miracle." Indeed, it was a miracle that it was in the United States, of all places – a country where every single thing is smeared with material civilization and polluted with commercialism – that a singer like Baez, who embodies the great wild nature, appeared, and is strongly supported by many young Americans.
>
> Her pure singing voice may make you imagine a delicate girl with a fair complexion – you will be disappointed to see the real Baez if you have such a preconception. As she is of Mexican heritage, she is naturally tanned. She has been under the strong Californian sun, which has made her skin even darker. You should learn to find her beautiful as she is.[186]

Nakamura thus likened Baez to uncivilized wild nature while suggesting the image of Baez running around in the sun in California. He also presupposed that the Japanese audiences would think that her physical characteristics did not match her clear soprano voice; such a voice would rightly belong to a woman with a fairer complexion. Further, he assumed that Japanese audiences expected that women with whiter skin were more American and beautiful. Nakamura assured the readers that even though Baez deviated from the Japanese expectation of an American woman, she was still an authentic folk singer.

Other writers also tied Baez to nature by emphasizing that she refused to wear

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[186] "Foku no joo bumu no naka no Jon Baezu," 4-6.

makeup and liked the outdoors, especially walking barefoot on the grass. The *Josei Seven* article on Baez wrote that her hobby was to stroll barefoot in the meadow and forest.[187] A *Heibon Punch* article reporting Baez's arrival in Japan for a concert read: "the reason why she is so unpretentious is probably because she has been living freely without resisting nature and surrounded herself with birds and little animals." The picture that accompanied this passage showed her sitting on a chair in a mini skirt with bare legs and feet.[188] Another *Heibon Punch* article reported that she had refused to go through professional voice lessons, as she found such training confining.[189] All these articles portrayed Baez as singing and living naturally, inspired by nature.

In contrast, writers for magazine articles described Peter, Paul and Mary as intelligent and sophisticated artists from New York. A *Heibon Punch* report on Peter, Paul and Mary concert in Japan described the three folk singers as "real artists" from Greenwich Village who painted and wrote poetry in addition to singing. According to the article, Peter, Paul and Mary demanded the highest quality in music, even spending hours tuning the microphones before concerts. The writer used superlatives such as "the

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[187] "Jon Baezu ga 1 gatsu 11 nichi ni rainichi!," 56.
[188] "Fanii na ichimen: Jon Bezu ga yatte kita" [She has a funny side: Joan Baez has come to Japan], *Heibon Punch*, January 30, 1967, 138-139.
[189] "Jon Baezu ga daigakusei ni moteru riyuu," 38.

best" and "highest quality" to characterize their performance.[190] A writer for the *Asahi Journal* who reviewed their Japanese concert praised the singers' sense of humor and their keen observation of world events. The writer added, "their intelligence made them look classy even when they made fun of themselves on stage" and noted that they successfully "delivered an important message to the intellectuals as well."[191] In contrast to the way they described Baez, writers portrayed Mary Travers as a young blonde woman with intelligence and urban sophistication without questioning her background. The January 23, 1967 issue of *Heibon Punch* reported described Peter, Paul and Mary as "[embodying] the Greenwich Village spirit," as they captivated all of Japan with their music. The caption for a picture of their performance read: "Peter and Paul wearing navy blazers and Mary in a pink dress with her beautiful blonde hair touching her shoulder, sang enthusiastically during their two-hour concert."[192] In contrast to the pictures that accompanied the stories about Baez, which showed her barefoot and in a bikini, Travers was shown fully dressed with a sweater, jacket, skirt, and boots in a hotel

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[190] "Gurinijji birejji no seishin nihon o seifuku," *Heibon Punch*, January 23, 1967, 136-138.
[191] "Baezu to PPM no kyokun" [The lesson we should learn from Baez and Peter, Paul and Mary], *Asahi Journal*, February 5, 1967, 50.
[192] "'Gurinijjibireji no Seishin' Nihon o Seifuku [The Spirit of Greenwich Village Captivates Japan]," *Heibon Punch*, 23 January 1967, 136.

lobby and signing an autograph.[193] In his article on the American perception of Peter, Paul and Mary, TV producer Ichiro Takasaki wrote that the group was especially popular among college students; one student commented that Travers was "a nymph." Takasaki agreed and wrote, "If you hear her singing and see her in the picture, you will certainly understand how she is a nymph."[194] He did not see any disparity between Travers' physical appearance and her singing voice. In the U.S., critics rarely praised Peter, Paul and Mary's musical and vocal skills; the trio's appeal was in their sincerity and commitment to political causes. Japanese critics and fans had a higher opinion of their music than their American counterparts.

Amateur critics also interpreted white folk singers as sophisticated and those with darker skin as more earthy and closer to nature. *Kabuki* actor Somegoro Ichikawa commented as follows:

> One of my favorite vocal groups, Peter Paul and Mary trio, sings American folk songs with modern sensibility and intelligence. Indeed, folks like Belafonte sing calypso as a local native of Central and South America, which has its own charm. However, Peter, Paul and Mary attracts me more because they are unpretentious intellectuals arranging folk songs with modern sensibility and sing the songs with an urban sophistication.[195]

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[193] "'Gurinijjibireji no Seishin' Nihon o Seifuku," 137.
[194] Ichiro Takasaki, "Poppusu hotto nyusu PPM ga kotoshi nidome no rainichi, hansenka de kyanpasu konsato" [Pops Hot News: PPM Visits Japan Second Time This Year: Anti-War Songs at Campus Concerts], *Heibon Punch*, 12 June 1967, 100.
[195] Somegoro Ichikawa, "Gaikoku Pureiya Sukecchi [Foreign Player Sketch]," *Heibon Punch*, 22 June 1964, 123.

Ichikawa's comment reveals the extent to which Japanese audiences categorized folk singers by race.

The racial connection between the physical characteristics of a singer and her music is also apparent in the articles about the folksinger, Odetta. "Punch Weekly Hit" introduced readers to Odetta's rendition of "Shenandoah" with a score and a picture of Odetta playing the guitar. Instructions about how to sing the song included the following sentence: "Black folker Odetta expresses her feelings by maneuvering the way she breathes while singing." She was not presented as an "American" folk singer but as a "black" singer. The article emphasized Odetta's more "natural" skills in contrast to white singers such as Peter, Paul and Mary and the Kingston Trio, who were known for their instrumental and vocal techniques that produced elaborate harmonies. In addition, the magazine explained that this song was a "traditional folk" song that dated back to the Civil War era. Unlike white American singers, this African-American singer was tied to premodern, "natural" culture.

While whiteness was considered an aesthetically desirable trait that also marked high social status, race had a more malleable meaning in Japan than in the United States. Japanese advertisers acted as if the Japanese could obtain whiteness through consumption. *Heibon Punch* during the 1960s included advertisements for cosmetic surgery clinics that

promised or suggested that the operations would help patients obtain physical characteristics that were associated with Caucasians—high noses and double-folded eyelids. The Hiraga Seikei cosmetic surgery clinic had an advertisement in *Heibon Punch* with the title "Introduction to Cosmetic Surgery," describing a happily engaged couple:

> What attracted her to him primarily was of course his smartness; but that was not all. His manly high nose, together with his gentle eyes that were marked with double-folded eyelids that gazed at her as he escorted her gently with the "Ladies First" mentality, assured her that she would feel safe and secure for the rest of her life. We offer the following cosmetic surgery procedures that assure you a happy marriage: nose elevation, upper blepharoplasty, opening of the end of the eyes, etc…[196]

According to this ad, surgeries gave the physical traits of whiteness (high noses and double-folded eyes). These physical characteristics were tied to a mastery of Western chivalry leading to a successful romance and a happy marriage.[197] This ad showed the conflation of race and culture as well as the malleability of race.

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[196] *Heibon Punch*, 18 April 1966, 110.

[197] William O'Barr commented on Japanese advertisements with the same message that appeared during the 1990s. O'Barr interpreted such advertisements as showing Japanese "adoration of Western ideals of beauty" which "reach(ed) an extreme form in the many contemporary advertisements for ways to make Japanese eyes look more Western." William M. O'Barr, *Culture and the Ad: Exploring Otherness in the Worlds of Advertising* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 187. Traise Yamamoto proposed that the alteration of eyelids does not mean an internalization of Western standard of beauty. Yamamoto argued that Asian women alter their eyelids in order to defy racial stereotypes, as nearly half of Asians actually have double-folded eyelids and yet single-folded small eyes are located as racial marker. Traise Yamamoto, *Masking Selves, Making Subjects: Japanese American Women, Identity, and the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

Advertisers told young Japanese that they could purchase not only whiteness but also the Japanese advertisers' vision of American elite culture, symbolized by the Ivy League. In 1964, *Heibon Punch* showed pictures of Harvard University campus and students in a feature entitled "Ivy Country," accompanied by a list of items that Harvard students supposedly possessed, including a button-down shirt, a blazer, cotton slacks, and metal buckle belt. A picture and price accompanied each item, with a note that the entire set could be purchased for ten thousand yen.[198] Instead of documenting how students actually lived and studied at Harvard, this report provided the readers with pictures of the campus and of white American students. It also suggested that the Japanese readers could obtain the experience of Harvard student life by purchasing Japanese-made consumer products.

A Japanese clothing company, VAN Jacket, Inc., led by Kensuke Ishizu, further helped to perpetuate the Japanese fascination with the Ivy League as the breeding ground of elite, "WASP" Americans wearing button-down shirts and ruling their country. VAN introduced the "Ivy fashion" line of clothing in 1960 as they shifted their target customers from middle-aged men to young adult men. Similar to the way Shimizu toured Europe and the U.S. prior to the publication of *Heibon Punch*, Ishizu traveled to the U.S. in 1959

[198] "Ivy Country: aibii no furusato haabaado [Ivy Country: The Hometown of Ivy, Harvard]," *Heibon Punch*, 3 August 1964, front pages.

in preparation for launching his Ivy fashions. The trip included visits to Ivy League schools to observe students' clothes and a stop at Brooks Brothers to purchase samples, which, upon return, he showed to his awe-struck coworkers.[199] In 1965, a group from his company went on another tour of the United States to visit and film all eight Ivy League universities and their students, which they edited into a documentary film, "Take Ivy." Toshiyuki Kros, who directed the film, had fantasized about Harvard University so much for years that he felt weakness in his knees when he actually stepped on Harvard Square. He "almost went insane" with excitement as he shopped at the COOP.[200] The crew documented their fantasy of the Ivy League campus and student life in the film, which they played at the company's promotion event in Tokyo. The event also included a performance of folk music, demonstrating the perceived connection between folk music and American college life.[201] Their fascination with the Ivy League did not lead to an understanding of American culture; they were content with perpetuating their preconceptions and used them for commercial purposes in the Japanese context.

This new line became successful with the same audiences that read *Heibon Punch* and listened to folk music. In the mid-1960s, the media observed and reported as

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[199] Udagawa, *VAN stooriizu*, 138-139.
[200] Toshiyuki Kros, *Aibii no jidai: Days of Ivy* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 2001), 80, 82.
[201] Kros, *Aibii no jidai: Days of Ivy*, 95.

a social phenomenon a number of fashionable young men who roamed the Miyuki Street of Ginza, the fanciest district in Tokyo, with VAN shopping bags and copies of *Heibon Punch* in their hands.[202] Maeda and Hirahara recalled that VAN clothing and folk music provided a short cut for young Japanese men in the 1960s to experience a sense of leading an American college life.[203]

The executives of VAN Jacket Inc. incorporated (or invented) Ivy League fashion not simply for aesthetic reasons but because they saw it as the culture of the American ruling class and race. Ishizu's fascination with the Ivy League began when he encountered a Princeton-educated U.S. Marine Corps officer, Lieutenant O'Brien (who was only known by his last name by Ishizu's family and friends; they were probably not aware that O'Brien was an Irish name that suggested he may not be Anglo-Saxon or Protestant). They met in the formerly Japanese-occupied city of Tianjin, China, immediately after World War II, where Ishizu had lived with his family during the war years. O'Brien told Ishizu about the values and fashion sense of Ivy League-educated men like himself, including that Ivy Leaguers "valued tradition, keep good maintenance of clothes that they could wear for many years, never fall prey to short-term fashion

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[202] Satoru Udagawa, *VAN stooriizu: Ishizu Kensuke to aibii no jidai [VAN stories: Kensuke Ishizu and the days of the Ivy]* (Tokyo: Shuei-sha Shinsho, 2006), 144-145.
[203] Maeda and Hirahara, *60 nendai foku no jidai*, 53.

trends, and wore clothes that would reaffirm and boost their sense of pride and prestige."[204] According to his biographer, Ishizu predicted that Japanese elite students would share the same sentiment as the "WASP-type American" and would embrace Ivy fashion.[205] Ishizu racially understood the American elite as Caucasian and yet believed that elite students in Japan could transcend the racial and national boundaries and make American fashion their own.

An advertisement in the December 1966 issue of *Heibon Punch* symbolized the perceived association between folk music, college students, American elite culture, whiteness, fashion, and consumption. Japanese amateur folk singers and a white American endorsed cars and clothes. The advertisement featured the words of a Japanese observer who described the endorsers rather than the products.[206] The two-page ad showed a white man standing between two cars on the left page and three young Japanese men with folk instruments surrounding a car on the right page. The narrator explained that the white man, his next-door neighbor, was a pilot who lived in Japan with a Japanese wife. The American owned two Japanese cars, one of which was

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[204] Udagawa, *VAN stooriizu*, 88-90, 142.
[205] Udagawa, *VAN stooriizu*, 141.
[206] "Second Car, Car and Fashion," *Heibon Punch*, 5 December 1966, 65.

a Honda that cost 689,000 yen.[207] When he played golf on weekends, he wore a wool cardigan and a brown turtle-neck sweater, which were available at 8,000 yen and 2,700 yen respectively. This "gaijin" (foreigner) was so enamored with things Japanese that he even took rice balls for lunch (presumably prepared by his Japanese wife) when he went to the golf course, which made him "a weird foreigner, indeed." The narrator quickly added that this man bought a Honda car not simply because he was a "weird foreigner" who liked anything Japanese but because he appreciated Japanese technology and also the car had a large enough space for him to extend his long legs. The advertisement presented the white man to the readers both as a Westerner (presumably American) who embodied material prosperity and as a lovable next-door neighbor who, despite being a foreigner, attempted to learn Japanese culture and appreciated Japanese technology. This gave the Japanese a flattering image of themselves. Cultural anthropologist William O'Barr pointed out that Westerners with an imperfect understanding of Japanese culture, have often served as favorable characters in Japanese advertising.[208]

The Japanese amateur folk singers on the right page of the ad—three young men

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[207] "Hen na gaijin" (weird foreigner) is a set phrase commonly used to refer to Westerners (particularly men) who have a liking for things Japanese. Although this is a racialized and somewhat derogatory phrase, the implication is generally favorable.
[208] O'Barr, *Culture and the Ad*, 187.

carrying a banjo, a guitar, and a bass, respectively, owned a Mitsubishi Colt that allowed them to travel freely with their instruments. The narrator revealed that one of the three men was his younger brother "who just entered college and formed a folk song group, and he practices fussily everyday." The "bulky light gray crew-neck knitted sweater" worn by the bass player was sold at 2,900 yen while the guitar player's "double-breast knit jacket" was 4,900 yen, and the banjo player wore a "V-neck wide stripe sweater" that cost 3,200 yen.[209] These two endorsers of cars and clothes in this advertisement, a Westerner and a folk group, represented two groups of people who young Japanese readers presumably sought to emulate by purchasing the advertised products. Further, by juxtaposing the two as endorsing similar products, the ad evoked the proximity of Japanese folk singers to white Americans.

Men's clothing and folk music continued to have a strong association in advertising. An advertisement that appeared five months later in *Heibon Punch* used a folk singer as a ploy to sell products. The ad read: "Folk Festival Sale. If you want to sing with Judy Collins, you should shop at Mitsumine by May 20."[210] The clothing company promised to invite 6,000 people from among those who bought clothes to attend the upcoming folk festival starring Judy Collins. Underneath the illustration of two men

[209] "Folk Group, Car and Fashion," *Heibon Punch*, 5 December 1966, 64.
[210] "Folk Festival Sale," *Heibon Punch*, 3 April 1967, 145.

in suits was a picture of Judy Collins accompanied by her profile, which labeled her as the "forerunner of town folk with her urban sophistication."[211] The "urban," "sophisticated" American folk singer was used as a lure to sell clothes.

Not only folk singers but also folk fashion sold unrelated products. Morinaga chocolate company promised to give out VAN T-shirts to 5,000 people every week for fourteen consecutive weeks to customers who bought their chocolate.[212] The advertisement pictured a man singing and playing a guitar, surrounded by a group of admiring young women, all wearing VAN T-shirts. Advertisers considered folk singers and fashion as doubly appealing to young readers.

Yet, at the height of these advertising campaigns, some observers criticized the consumption of American folk music as a means to identify with white Americans. *Heibon Punch* magazine documented a debate between a middle aged doctor and young amateur folk singers in 1966. Yasushi Narabayashi, a medical doctor and an ardent folk music fan, expressed his disgust with the Japanese folk boom in an article he wrote after having attended an atrocious concert by amateur folk singers.[213] Narabayashi criticized

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[211] "Folk Festival Sale."
[212] *Heibon Punch*, October 24, 1966, n.p.
[213] Yasushi Narabayashi, "Nihon no foku songu taikai wa yuryo gakugeikai da!?" [Japanese folk song concerts are school theaters with admission fee], *Heibon Punch*, 26 September 1966, 98-101.

young folk singers for their poor musicianship and command of English, lack of social awareness, and for forming an inner-directed, exclusive community of middle-class young men and women. In his view, young Japanese folk singers had taken folk music out of its American context and merely regarded it as a status symbol, instead of as an expression of political views.

Narabayashi had learned folk songs at the anti-segregation demonstrations and sit-ins he had participated as a student in the U.S. This experience led him to believe that folk songs emerged from a strong social awareness and a "sharing the sense of living this moment" with other people.[214] He felt that Japanese amateur folk singers failed to share this sensibility and instead turned their backs on society. He found it particularly problematic when young Japanese folk singers justified their lack of social awareness by claiming that racism and the Vietnam War were American problems that had nothing to do with the Japanese; neither racism nor the draft existed in Japan and the war was already long over.[215] Narabayashi pointed out that these "American" problems were indeed strongly tied to the Japanese by mockingly addressing an imagined daughter of a corporate executive who played folk music:

Hey, banjo-playing young lady. Perhaps the company that your daddy runs

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[214] Narabayashi, "Nihon no foku songu taikai wa yuryo gakugeikai da!?," 98, 101.
[215] Narabayashi, "Nihon no foku songu taikai wa yuryo gakugeikai da!?," 100-101.

> produces goods that are helping the Americans who are killing people in Vietnam. Have you thought about your fellow students living in Okinawa? You say there is no racism in Japan, but we have discrimination against the *buraku* people, which is even more hideous than racism.[216]

Narabayashi believed that American folk songs should lead young Japanese to focus on these domestic issues and to learn to see the world with a critical perspective. Instead, young folk singers depoliticized folk music and used it simply as a prop to build a social community of middle-class youth who shared privileged backgrounds and celebrated their comfortable lives. American folk music was so fashionable and depoliticized that corporate mothers gleamed with pride as their sons and daughters sang songs in English on an acoustic guitar instead of joining one of radical student activist groups so prevalent on college campuses at the time or playing an electric guitar, which was associated with juvenile delinquency.[217]

Narabayashi also observed that the folk singers looked pathetic because of their terrible accents and diction when singing in English and yet fooled themselves into thinking they looked stylish. Their musicianship also needed much improvement and did not deserve the admission fee they charged the audience.[218] Narabayashi considered

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[216] Narabayashi, "Nihon no foku songu taikai wa yuryo gakugeikai da!?," 101. Okinawa was under the U.S. occupation when this article appeared. Buraku were formerly outcasted people in the feudal caste system.
[217] Narabayashi, "Nihon no foku songu taikai wa yuryo gakugeikai da!?," 99-100.
[218] Narabayashi, "Nihon no foku songu taikai wa yuryo gakugeikai da!?," 98, 100.

the Japanese amateur folk singers as inauthentic imitators of American folk music who had mastered neither its style nor meaning.

The following issue of *Heibon Punch* published the opinions of five young Japanese folk singers who were offended by Narabayashi's article, including Ryoko Moriyama, Hajime Okamura, Ichiro Motomaki, and Mineo Yamamoto.[219] These folk singers misinterpreted Narabayashi's points to mean that he wanted young Japanese to make and sing protest songs in Japanese. They stressed personal freedom as they defended their amateurism, indifference to politics, and ownership of American folk music. Their testimonies validated Narabayashi's observations rather than refuted them.

In the article, the young Japanese folk singers sought to avoid thinking of the political meanings of folk music. Moriyama, who became a professional singer and was dubbed "the Japanese Baez," and Okamura agreed with the young Japanese folk singers that Narabayashi criticized: racism and the Vietnam War were American problems that did not affect the young Japanese. Moriyama believed that Dylan and Baez were responsible for reducing folk songs to serving only the anti-racist and anti-war movements.[220] Okamura felt that since Japanese politicians would be smart enough not

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[219] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru" [Protesting Narabayashi's comments], *Heibon Punch*, October 17, 1966, 90-93.
[220] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru," 90.

to lead Japan into another war, so the Japanese should not worry about it. Unlike "Vietnam and Africa, which are less advanced nations and victimized by the advanced nations," Japan would be strong enough to avoid a foreign invasion.[221] By setting Japan above Third World countries, Okamura asserted the safety of Japan, giving him an excuse to avoid addressing politics. Moriyama and Okamura also claimed that they could not authentically sing protest songs because they did not suffer from any oppression.[222] Another young folk singer who was a member of the collegiate band, PPM Followers, claimed that protest songs should emerge from those who actually had reasons to protest, such as miners, poor students who had to work their way through college, and radical student activists.[223] Contented youth such as Moriyama and Okamura sympathized more with love songs than protest songs; Okamura thought that personal struggles of an individual were more important to him than the war.[224] They defended their lack of political awareness by reasserting their privileged background and validated Narabayashi's point that young Japanese who led comfortable lives lacked a critical perspective.

The young singers justified amateurism by citing anti-commercialism and

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[221] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru," 92.
[222] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru," 90, 91-92.
[223] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru," 92.
[224] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru," 92.

personal freedom. Motomaki claimed that "the essence of folk song is to express one's feelings and ideas" and that "if many people sing a song, that's a folk song. It does not matter how poorly they sing" or how they mispronounced English words.[225] Another folk singer believed that folk singers like her were "elitist" in the sense that they enjoyed the freedom of "not singing when we don't feel like it; we sing only when we liked to." She and others insisted on amateurism and rejected becoming professional singers because the music industry would deprive them of this freedom.[226] In many ways, they accepted Narabayashi's criticisms and turned them upside down, claiming that their faults were, in fact, their strengths. In so doing, they proved Narabayashi's claim that they were inner-directed.

Further, even though Narabayashi never criticized young singers for imitating Americans (his criticism was that they did not imitate American folk singers enough), young folk singers justified both their performance of American folk music without learning its context and their indifference to traditional Japanese culture. Yamamoto suggested that it was not necessary to understand folk music in the American context because the Japanese developed original music at the same time as they imitated American folk music:

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[225] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru," 91.
[226] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru," 92.

> Since the Meiji period, Japan has taken in foreign culture, without which there would have been no progress… Yes, we do imitate Americans. We don't mean to deny that, because what we do is "American folk." It's our choice and freedom to pick American folk music. Besides, as we grew up after World War II, it is natural that we feel more familiar with things American rather than with Japanese traditional cultures. If we master American folk songs, eventually, uniquely Japanese songs will emerge. Furthermore, imitating American folk is very much like playing Beyer lesson books on the piano.[227]

He claimed ownership of American culture by citing a generational difference; American culture was more familiar to younger Japanese than to the older Japanese. Further, he asserted the universality of American folk music by comparing it to Beyer lesson books, which were (and are to this day) standard textbooks for entry-level piano players in Japan. He refused to understand the meanings of folk music in the American context by claiming the universality of the musical form.

Young folk musicians in Japan differed from their American counterparts in their rejection of politics. On the surface, the exchange of opinions between the two groups resembled the generational conflict between Irwin Silber and Phil Ochs as documented in *Broadside* during the same period in the U.S. As discussed in Chapter 1, Silber and his cohort wanted topical folk singers to write functional songs of social relevance while Ochs' valued personal expressions in folk songs. These young Japanese folk singers similarly stressed personal choice and freedom as they rejected protest songs. However,

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[227] "Narabayashi hatsugen ni purotesuto suru," 93.

Ochs regarded personal songs as having political meanings and sharing the same sensibility as protest songs. He wanted to incorporate social realism into his folk songs while defending Dylan's introspective songs. In contrast, Japanese amateur folk singers believed that their privileged social status exempted them from being politically aware. They sought to preserve their freedom to selectively incorporate American folk music.

Even as Japanese amateur folk musicians and fans claimed that they were free to depoliticize and consume American folk music in any way they liked, it was not always possible. This became clear when TV producer Ichiro Takasaki, who served as an interpreter and MC at Baez's concerts during her visit to Japan in 1967, was allegedly pressured by a CIA agent not to convey Baez's political messages to the audiences at her concerts.[228] According to "Tokyo Mystery," an article in a major national newspaper *Asahi Shinbun*, Takasaki's mistranslation first caught the attention of a large number of Japanese audience members when her concert on January 27, 1967 was recorded and televised live. Japanese audiences who understood English were perplexed by the idiotic inaccuracy of Takasaki's translation while even those who did not speak English could still sense that his translation was incomplete. When Baez mentioned Hiroshima and Nagasaki in her spoken introduction, Takasaki simply stated that the show was going

[228] "Tokyo Mystery," *Asahi Shinbun*, February 21, 1967, 15; "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," *Heibon Punch*, February 27, 1967, 12-19.

to be televised. When Baez explained that she refused, as an act of protest, to pay the sixty percent of her taxes that would go into funding the Vietnam War, Takasaki simply told the audience that taxes were steep in the United States. Takasaki told the *Asahi Shinbun* reporter that he was approached by a man named Harold Cooper, a bald American man apparently in his mid-forties who claimed to be a CIA agent, first by phone and then in person. Cooper told Takasaki that his future entry into the U.S. would be denied if he did not cooperate with the CIA. Fearing for his career, which depended on his frequent visits to the U.S., Takasaki decided to comply. He later became skeptical when he called the American Embassy in Japan to reach Cooper and was told that no such agent existed. However, Cooper called Takasaki afterwards to commend him for his cooperation in mistranslating Baez on stage, leaving Takasaki filled with fear and bewilderment.[229]

In both the newspaper article and a more detailed account of his story published in *Heibon Punch*, Takasaki portrayed himself as an unfortunate victim of political conflicts in which he had no part. He criticized the CIA for "being too nervous" because, as he told the *Asahi Shinbun*, even without Cooper's pressure, he had planned to deemphasize Baez' political comments since he thought her music was more important

[229] "Tokyo Mystery," *Asahi Shinbun*, February 21, 1967, 15.

than her politics.[230] In an extensive essay in *Heibon Punch*, Takasaki recalled that he felt both scared and indignant after talking with Cooper on the phone as to why he "had to be told what to do by this weird foreigner" when he had "done nothing wrong" except that he just happened to preside over her concert.[231] At the concert, he wished he could have listened to her singing without being involved with politics and was annoyed when antagonistic anti-left wingers in the audience accused him of being a communist and told him to "go to Vietnam" at the end of the concert as they left. He did not understand why he was blamed for simply being an interpreter and an MC.[232] He realized that he could not avoid politics as he had wished.

In his accounts, Takasaki also attempted to diminish Baez by portraying her as an unprofessional ordinary girl with a beautiful singing voice whose unhealthy interest in politics would hurt her career. He thought that a talented singer like Baez should not "make politics her selling point," and regarded Baez' political idealism as a market strategy rather than her sincere belief.[233] In the *Heibon Punch* article, Takasaki wrote that he had initially declined the offer to become Baez' interpreter because he was busy and disinterested in folk music. He changed his mind because he hoped he could

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[230] "Tokyo Mystery," 15.
[231] "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," 14.
[232] "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," 19.
[233] "Tokyo Mystery," 15.

convince Baez to make an LP entitled "Joan Baez in Japan" with his company, which would certainly sell. His friends and colleagues warned him after he accepted the offer that Baez would be hard to deal with because of her political involvement and her unprofessional behavior.[234] Takasaki detailed how he was frustrated by Baez' capriciousness during the concert tour, including her refusal to tell him in advance what songs she would sing or discuss the procedures of the concerts with him. She allegedly told Takasaki she had become sick from overeating oysters in Hiroshima because they tasted better than those in the U.S. (on the contrary, Baez wrote in her autobiography that oysters were the only food she refused to eat while in Japan).[235] Takasaki suspected that she simply pretended to feel ill because she did not want to work.[236] Their relationship deteriorated further as Baez grew suspicious of him because he obviously did not translate her properly on stage and even made the audiences laugh with his own ad hoc jokes instead of conveying her serious, earnest message of peace.[237] Takasaki further criticized her for having brought not only her manager, secretary, and promoter but also her sister and boyfriend, all of whom "did not do anything but were just hanging

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[234] "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," 15-16.
[235] Baez, *And a Song to Sing With*, 143.
[236] "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," 17.
[237] "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," 15.

around."[238] He especially disliked the boyfriend, who "needed to be replaced with someone a little better" and whose constant company "made Baez look sadly pathetic." Takasaki added that even amid this animosity, he and Baez had a great time together once when they dined together after a concert, when he inadvertently spoke English with fluency (he had pretended to speak English poorly so as to mask his mistranslation on stage.) This led him to believe that "deep inside, Baez is a sweet and cute ordinary girl despite her claim to be a politician."[239] Even after his experience of being involved with Baez and the CIA agent, Takasaki concluded by depoliticizing Baez and defending his fluency in English.

Throughout her visit to Japan, Baez experienced intense confusion and frustration, both of which were heightened by Takasaki's bizarre behavior. In contrast to the way Japanese writers found "Oriental familiarity" in Baez, the American folk singer regarded Japan as a culturally distant country: prior to the trip, she "was particularly phobic about non-Western or Asiatic countries because the food was unfamiliar and would no doubt make me sick."[240] Her sense of distance and cultural gap only increased

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[238] "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," 18-19.
[239] "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," 17.
[240] Joan Baez, *And a Voice to Sing With: A Memoir* (New York: Summit Books, 1987), 133.

during her stay in Japan, as she was literally lost in translation.[241] Takasaki's mistranslation and refusal to translate, obvious even to Baez and her American entourage, kept her from connecting with the audiences at her concerts. Takasaki also mistranslated off stage: when she asked how to say "chopsticks" in Japanese, Takasaki taught her the Japanese word for "lamb chops."[242] Frustrated Baez, who attributed Takasaki's behavior to his incompetence in English and lack of cultural knowledge, inadvertently insulted Takasaki by talking to him after one of the concerts "painstakingly, in pidgin English, drawn-out syllables, and sign language" explaining to him "the few political points that I wanted to make and the jokes that I thought were translatable."[243] On stage at the next concert, she further humiliated him by putting her arms around him in assurance between songs as she assumed he was nervous, a gesture that she later learned was the most insulting thing to do to a Japanese man.[244] Further, her contact with Japanese was limited only to her promoter, interpreters, the press, and older Japanese who assumed important positions in the local government and organizations but had no interest in her music or her political idealism. She could not talk to ordinary

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[241] Baez' accounts of her stay in Japan strongly evoke the recent film, *Lost in Translation* (2003), directed by Sofia Coppola.
[242] Baez, *And a Voice to Sing With*, 142.
[243] Baez, *And a Song to Sing With*, 136.
[244] Baez, *And a Song to Sing With*, 137.

Japanese people and children with whom she might have connected better. She was also totally dispirited as representatives of Hiroshima and Nagasaki disputed how to distribute the revenue from Baez' concert in Hiroshima. Baez left Japan wondering "[w]hat had gone wrong" in "the country [that] was known for being beautiful, its people for being gracious."[245] It was only when she began writing her autobiography that she learned about the censorship. As Baez suspected, the Japanese promoters simply regarded her as a singing machine that would benefit them.

Both *Asahi Shinbun* and *Heibon Punch* reported this strange form of censorship as a fascinating conspiracy theory and a "mystery" that did not affect the regular Japanese. Instead of raising concerns about government infringement on the freedom of expression and personal liberty, they treated this incident as emerging from American problems. *Heibon Punch* commented in the headline that this "mystery" occurred because Japan was located at the "key point" between the Soviet and the U.S. during the Cold War. It also claimed that Baez was surrounded by "organizations with political motives," suggesting that she invited that problem.[246]

In contrast, a *Sing Out!* editorial criticized the Japanese media for succumbing to CIA pressure. The editor suggested that the Japanese television should reinvite Baez

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[245] Baez, *And a Song to Sing With*, 143.
[246] "Jon Baezu nihon koen ni nobita nazo no choho kikan," 13.

and redo the concerts with a proper translator or at least rerun the taped program with an accurate subtitle and apologies, which were owed not only to Baez but also to "those of us in this country" whom she represented. The editor stressed that the "Tokyo mystery" was not an isolated incident but it affected the entire American folk music community.[247]

The alleged CIA agent and the U.S. folk song magazine had taken the political power of folk singers more seriously than did the Japanese media. Japanese audiences already knew about Baez' involvement in the peace movement, as magazines had reported on her refusal to pay sixty percent of her income taxes and her establishment of the Institute for the Study of Nonviolence.[248] Cooper's alleged pressure on Takasaki merely kept Baez from conveying the message that the Japanese audiences had already associated with her.

The "Tokyo Mystery" or the Baez controversy revealed how the meaning of Baez and her music differed between the U.S. and Japan. The alleged CIA agent and the *Sing Out!* editor, despite their opposing political positions, agreed on the significance of Baez' political involvement. They both thought that folk singers encouraged political change. Cooper and Takasaki, who both wanted to depoliticize her, disagreed on

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[247] "Baez vs. 'Cooper,'" *Sing Out!* 17-2 (April/May 1967), 1.
[248] See, for example, "Jon Baezu ga daigakusei ni moteru riyuu" [the reason why Joan Baez is popular among college students] *Heibon Punch*, January 16, 1967, 37-38.

whether Baez would politically influence her audiences. Takasaki believed that the CIA involvement was unnecessary because he and the Japanese audiences would be able to filter politics out of Baez' songs. Takasaki and the young Japanese folk singers who reacted to Narabayashi in their article in *Heibon Punch* shared the same belief that even if they listened to political folk music, they could still selectively pick and choose the elements of the music that they liked, rejecting its political messages.

The Underground Folk Period and the Debate over Authenticity

Not all Japanese folk music audiences wished to depoliticize American folk music. Starting about 1967, a group of Japanese artists began to sing and make protest songs in Japanese as a reaction against the depoliticized, bourgeois college folk scene. This new type of folk music spread through a late night radio program in the Kansai area catering to a younger audience, including high school students studying in preparation for the college entrance examination.[249] Folk singers wrote and sang protest songs about international problems, such as the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and the Vietnam War, as well as about domestic issues like political corruption and the social problems of high school students in Japan. These songs provided political activists and demonstrators

[249] Maeda and Hirahara, 60 nendai foku no jidai, 69.

tools with which to build a community. Folk singers from the underground period emulated American folk singers by incorporating a political awareness associated with the U.S. folk music revival and applying it to the Japanese situation.

The rise in political folk music in Japan went hand in hand with the escalation of political activism in Japan in the late 1960s, with frequent demonstrations and riots in the streets and communist and New Left activism widespread on college. The activists wore color-coded helmets for different sects and competed against each other while agitating protest on campuses.[250] Student activism heightened during 1968 and 1969, when the All-Campus Joint Struggle Committee (Zenkyoto) built barricades and occupied the Yasuda Hall, the main administration building of the University of Tokyo. The university cancelled classes for more than one semester in 1968 and called off the entrance examination in 1969. In late January of that year, riot police broke in with tear gas and disbanded the barricade, events which were televised live. The Zenkyoto and other New Left activists opposed the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (Anpo), which had been ratified in 1960 and was considered for revision in 1970. As the Vietnam War escalated, Japanese activists accused the Japanese government of being an accomplice to the atrocities. Led and joined by the New Left activists, college students, workers, and

[250] Shigeru Kashima, "Seishun no Michishirube: 'Shigatsu no Omoide' [Milestones of My Youth: 'The Memories of April'],'' *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, 9 October 2006.

citizens joined the demonstrations, which became part of the everyday scene in Japan in the late 1960s.[251]

Anti-Vietnam War demonstrations developed into a singing movement with the emergence of the Folk Guerrilla during the period between February and July 1969. The Folk Guerrillas consisted of young members of the Citizen's Federation for Peace in Vietnam (*Beheiren*). They sang folk songs during a demonstration in February, which developed into a weekly ritual. They held a singing gathering every Saturday evening in the concourse of Shinjuku Station in Tokyo. They sang anti-war and other protest songs on the guitar as well as discussing the Vietnam and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty with the audience, which increased in number and included ordinary citizens coming home from work. Despite the police's attempt to ban the gathering in early to mid-May, the audiences only increased, with 5,000 people gathering before the event even started on May 24, and the number rising to 7,000, on June 28, with 64 people arrested. Finally, on July 19, 25,000 riot police contained the gathering, and the authorities relabeled the "concourse" as a "passage," thereby making the sing-in illegal.[252]

The emergence of underground folk music in the late 1960s also coincided with

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[251] Maeda and Hirahara, *60-nendai Foku no Jidai*, 142, 152.
[252] Maeda and Hirahara, *60-nendai Foku no Jidai*, 145-147; Tadasu Tagawa, *Nihon no Foku & Rokku Shi*, 66-69.

the post-war rapid economic growth of Japan and an increased sense of confidence among the Japanese toward the Americans. Sociologist Ezra Vogel observed in 1969 a growing sense of national pride among the Japanese who resided in a representative Japanese town of Mamachi on the outskirts of Tokyo, where he had done ethnographic work between 1958 and 1960. Vogel noticed that the Mamachi residents displayed more confidence in incorporating Western cultures into their lives in 1969 than they did during his earlier period of research. Vogel wrote in a paternalistic language:

> Ten years ago when Mamachi citizens compared Japan with America it was with uncertainty and it usually ended with a question about America. Now when they make the comparison, they are more sure of themselves. In a sense, ten years ago they were still part-time pupils of the west; now they have not only completed their training with flying colors, but they have finished their apprenticeship also. Where they have kept Japanese customs it is not because they have not yet learned Western patterns, but because they prefer Japanese.[253]

Vogel testified to the rapid rate at which the Japanese turned away from imitating American culture. Instead of learning American folk music as it was, Japanese folk singers used American folk music to address Japanese themes.

Even as underground folk singers directed their attention toward Japan, they still regarded American folk singers as source of music and values. The leaders of the underground folk movement emulated the American folk singers' ideas about folk music,

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[253] Ezra Vogel, *Japan's New Middle Class: The Salary Man and His Family in a Tokyo Suburb*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 271.

espousing anti-commercialism, political idealism, and song composition. While they employed Japanese lyrics and addressed domestic issues, they continued to use American tunes for some of their music. Their initial inspiration to become folk singers came from the U.S. and they looked to American folk singers for direction when they discussed folk music.

Japanese folk music historians identified Tomoya Takaishi as the leading figure in domesticating American folk music of protest by translating it into Japanese and singing it in a way that sounded naturally Japanese. American folk songs that Takaishi sang included "Masters of War" by Bob Dylan and "Little Boxes" by Malvina Reynolds.[254] Singing these songs in Japanese helped the audiences understand the message and political meaning inherent in folk music. Music critic Tadasu Tagawa recalled that Takaishi "crystallized the essence of American folk music" as he conveyed political awareness in folk music by translating it into Japanese.[255] Takaishi further composed songs of social commentary following the examples of American folk singers, including his debut song, "The Blues of a Bird in a Cage," a song he wrote in 1966 as a

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[254] Tadasu Tagawa, *Nihon no foku & rokku shi: kokorozashi wa doko e [The history of Japanese folk and rock: where the aspiration is]* (Tokyo: Ongaku no tomo sha, 1982), 32-33; Maeda and Hirahara, *60 nendai foku no jidai*, 79-80.
[255] Tagawa, *Nihon no foku & rokku shi*, 31.

part-time student working his way through college.[256] Takaishi criticized Japanese popular songs for "having no future, no rhythm, and pentatonic" and regarded American folk songs as a more viable musical form.[257] Takaishi set an example for Japanese folk singers by using American folk music to convey his own message, as opposed to consuming the music as a foreign culture.

Takaishi's performance and underground folk also marked an aesthetic shift in folk music from highbrow to lowbrow. Folk singer Kenichi Nagira's conversion to underground folk music illustrated this transition. Nagira, who grew up in the lowbrow, working-class, *shitamachi* (low-town) area of Tokyo, attended a concert by Takaishi as a teenager. The concert featured songs that emphasized social protest through Japanese lyrics, which Nagira found more authentic than the college folk music that he had listened to: "Up until then, folk concert meant a parade of copies of American folk songs or refined, nice-sounding songs that lacked vulgarity. At the concert that night, there was not a single song in English language and all the Japanese songs sounded vulgar." He further realized that "songs and folk songs must have a message to send to people."[258]

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[256] Nagira, *Nihon Foku Shiteki Taizen*, 81.
[257] Tomoya Takaishi, Nobuyasu Okabayashi, and Goro Nakagawa, *Foku wa mirai o hiraku: minshu ga tsukuru minshu no uta [Folk determines the future: songs by and of the people]* (Tokyo: Shinpo Shinsho, 1969), 44.
[258] Nagira, *Nihon Foku Shiteki Taizen*, 24-25.

From that time on, he never sang songs in English and immersed himself in the world of underground folk. Nagira regarded the English language, a sense of cultural refinement, and "nice sounds" – the very elements that middle-class Japanese college students found appealing about folk music – as markers of inauthenticity. Instead, Nagira regarded "vulgarity" as an authentic attribute of folk music. In contrast to how college folk singers and audiences defined folk music as middle-class and culturally refined, those who opposed these values including Nagira claimed the ownership of folk music by redefining folk music as authentically lowbrow.

Takaishi assumed that American folk music was relevant to the Japanese and that he could apply both the style and content of folk music to the Japanese situation. Takaishi emulated Pete Seeger at a concert on January 12, 1968, in Osaka, as he sang "We Shall Overcome" with the audience. He sang in English until the second verse, when he encouraged the audience to sing in Japanese, the translation of which was "Until the day of victory, we will continue to fight. We will work together toward victory." Between songs, he spoke to the audience, explaining how American folk singers had inspired him: "I've been singing this song for two years – There is Pete Seeger, an extremely charismatic folksinger, and I met Joan Baez, a great folk singer, and I thought that we could also do something in Japan. There are all these great singers [in the

United States] but I thought I, too, could do something here in Japan. So everyone, please sing along with me." Takaishi incorporated not only the music – melody, tempo, and the chord progression – but also the delivery of the song in singing Seeger's rendition of "We Shall Overcome." He fed words to the audience so they could join in, and he inserted a spoken message during the performance, explaining how he related to the song personally.[259] Just as the Japanese audiences at the Brothers Four concert believed that they could replicate the American folk group, Takaishi believed that he could replicate the work of Seeger and Baez in Japan. He did not question whether a Japanese singer like him could authentically perform American folk music in the Japanese context.

In contrast to the young college folk singers that Narabayashi criticized, underground folk singers developed critical analyses of Japanese society in their music. Goro Nakagawa wrote songs depicting problems he found in the daily lives of his middle-class family. As a high school student in Osaka, he composed the "Jukensei Blues," which satirically depicted the agony of a high school student under pressure to secure admission into a prestigious university, set to the tune of Bob Dylan's "North Country Blues." The narrator of the song was a high school student who woke up every

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[259] Tomoya Takaishi, *Jukensei Buruusu Takaishi Tomoya Foku Arubamu Dai 2 shu [Jukensei Blues: Takaishi Tomoya Folk Album no.2]*, Victor VICL-61859 (CD), [1968], 2006.

morning sleep deprived, feeling weak from staying up late the previous night. He always skipped breakfast to make it in time for school, where he "devoured a bento lunch" in the mid morning during break between classes. His mother gave him unsolicited advice including that he should not only work hard but also needed to deceive other students by pretending he did not study at all. The mother wanted to gain social recognition by getting her son into a prestigious university instead of caring for his future.[260] As historian Kenneth Pyle noted, university entrance examinations "assumed special importance in Japan because a steep hierarchy of prestige was recognized among the universities" and since the prestige of the university determined the student's job prospects, both the students and parents were under strong psychological pressure as they attempted to secure entrance to a prestigious university.[261] Nakagawa addressed this issue using an American folk song.

Nakagawa also challenged the conventional gender roles of the Japanese middle-class of his parents' generation. "Housewife's Blues" depicted a woman in her fifties who looked back on her life with disillusionment. When she was "young and most beautiful," she followed her parents' advice and entered an arranged marriage to a

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[260] Liner notes to *Kansai Foku no Rekishi [The History of Kansai Folk]* 1, Avex, 2003.
[261] Kenneth B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, 2d ed. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Health, 1996), 258.

man of no particular merit or fault, giving up the idea of pursuing a man with whom she was in love. She survived the war and post-war poverty, and since she was not connected to her husband in the first place, devoted her entire energy and time to her sons' education. As a typical Japanese woman, she had an antagonistic relationship with her intrusive mother-in-law. Her eldest son, after all the support she gave him during his preparation for the college entrance exam, including making night snacks for him, joined the radical student movement and found a girlfriend as soon as he got into college. The son got married, and she was left with nothing but watching television all day. She looked back at her life and asked herself, "There has been no real tragedy in my life, and I've aged in peace. But I ask myself, was it really the way to live?" And she concluded: "Oh life is just full of sorrow; there is nothing fun in my life. I have become an old woman without ever falling in love. Is housewife the way of life for women? Have I really lived a life?"[262] In an essay in 1969, Nakagawa explained that he had written this song to criticize the Japanese ideology prevalent at the time where everyone concentrated on building a house and raising a family at the expense of personal ambition.[263] Nakagawa was inspired by Seeger's performance of an Irish folk song on television and took its tune for his song. Nakagawa believed that women of his

[262] Liner notes to *Kansai Foku no Rekishi 1966-1974 (2)*, n.p.
[263] Takaishi, Okabayashi, and Nakagawa, *Foku wa mirai o hiraku*, 188.

mother's generation led a boring life but his own mother disagreed with him and did not like his song.[264] Nakagawa's songs demonstrated that even the middle-class youth who seemed to be content maintained a critical perspectives on the world.

Both the media and record companies muffled the message inherent in Nakagawa's songs. "Jukensei Blues" and "Housewife Blues" became commercially popular as Takaishi covered them, in more comic versions, through a major record company, Victor. Takaishi's version of "Jukensei Blues" sold 230,000 copies in one week in February 1968.[265] As Maeda and Hirahara noted, Takaishi's comical rendition of "Jukensei Blues" deviated from Nakagawa's original intention. Also, the audiences perceived the "Housewife Blues" as a sarcastic comic song despite Nakagawa's serious intention of asking his mother's generation to critically reflect on their lives.[266] Japanese *Playboy* magazine reported that Nakagawa attended a high school with a second rate academic standing in the middle-class neighborhood outside of Osaka. Unlike the narrator of "Jukensei Blues," Nakagawa and other students enjoyed their high school life without the pressure of studying hard for college entrance examination. His school vice principal and his classmates received the song mildly, seemingly neither enthusiastic nor

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[264] Takaishi, Okabayashi, and Nakagawa, *Foku wa mirai o hiraku*, 169, 188-191.
[265] "Jukensei buruusu to Neyagawa koko no bimyo na hanno" [Jukensei Blues and the lukewarm reaction by Neyagawa High School], *Playboy*, March 12, 1968, 38.
[266] Maeda and Hirahara, *60 nendai foku no jidai*, 82.

antagonistic to its message. The article concluded that the fact that Nakagawa could write this song during class (he wrote the song while he was attending a boring history lecture) at school proved the point that he in fact led a carefree high school life.[267] Thus, the magazine downplayed the song's significance.

Folk singer Nobuyasu Okabayashi shared with Narabayashi the idea that racism was far from an American problem; Japan also had a deep-rooted problem of discrimination. As the son of a Protestant minister, Okabayashi attended the School of Theology at Doshisha University in Kyoto when he dropped out of college after developing doubts about religion. He became a folk singer and activist working with minimum-wage workers and the buraku people.[268] In his introduction to the composition he published in the first issue of *Uta Uta Uta*, Okabayashi explained that racism in the U.S. and the feudal caste system in Japan both benefited the ruling class. In both cases, oppressed groups of people (poor Southern whites in the U.S. and the poor farmers in Japan) found comfort in despising those who were below them (blacks in the U.S. and the buraku people in Japan) instead of fighting against the real oppressors.[269] Okabayashi thus perceived a strong connection between the U.S. and Japan in his

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[267] "Jukensei buruusu to Neyagawa koko no bimyo na hanno," 38-41.
[268] Maeda and Hirahara, *60 nendai foku no jidai*, 118-119.
[269] Nobuyasu Okabayashi, "Buraku sabetsu ni tsuite" [On discriminations against the buraku people], *Uta Uta Uta: Folk Report*, January 1969, 24-25.

analysis of the structure of discrimination. Such similarities helped him justify the use of American folk music in addressing Japanese issues.

*Uta Uta Uta (*later renamed as *Folk Report),* which began publication in January 1969, served as a forum where folk singers and critics discussed the roles of folk singers in political activism and debated how to reconcile the increasing commercial popularity of political folk singers with their serious messages. The first issue of *Uta Uta Uta* had articles addressing the definition of folk music in contrast to popular music and the ways in which folk singers could resist commercialism. The writer for the opening article, Masaru Hirose, defined folk as songs that "emerged from the hurt feelings of oppressed people facing contradictions in society" and wrote that these songs "had a strong resonance with the entire population even though they may have emerged from individuals.[270] Similar to Irwin Silber, who believed he could resist commercialism by maintaining *Sing Out!* as a small business, Hirose cited minor record labels in the U.S. and asserted that folk singers could resist commercialism by preferring minor labels instead of major record companies, which "was exactly what Seeger, Baez, and Bob Dylan did to be known in the world."[271] Thus, Hirose proposed a way to resist

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[270] Masaru Hirose, "foku songu to kayo kyoku no tanima" [the differences between folk songs and popular songs], *Uta Uta Uta: Folk Report*, January 1969, 3.
[271] Hirose, "foku songu to kayo kyoku no tanima," 4.

commercialism by referring to American folk singers as role models.

Even though leaders of underground folk music stressed political awareness and advocated for the oppressed, they had to work with commercial principles. Event organizer and manager Masaaki Hata established a management company using Takaishi's name, "Takaishi Jimusho," in 1967, where Okabayashi joined in 1968. Hata also established a publishing company (which published *Uta Uta Uta: Folk Report*) later that year and a record company, Underground Record Club (URC) in 1969.[272] Hata managed the folk singers' concert schedule, released records, and made underground folk music profitable. Takaishi and Okabayashi had to work under Hata's control.

In reaction to the commercialization of underground folk music, musicians and critics developed an increasingly anti-commercialistic attitude, which led them into a more political direction. In the opening issue of *Uta Uta Uta*, television producer Teruo Kawamura criticized the manner in which certain folk singers and groups of college students sang "cool" anti-war, anti-discrimination and satiric songs in order to gain approval of "screaming young teens and girls." Kawamura questioned the authenticity of these folk singers and groups and suggested that they should develop an understanding of the "folk spirit" and a strong awareness of the message that they wanted to convey

[272] Maeda and Hirahara, *60 nendai foku no jidai*, 93-95.

through folk music. He also insisted that folk songs should encourage the audiences to critically analyze aspects of everyday life, such as considering the potentially political meaning of so many Japanese having to commute on crowded trains. Kawamura also suggested that the folk song movement, led primarily by students, and the Utagoe (Singing Chorus) movement, supported by workers, should unite toward a shared goal.[273] He thus believed that folk music promoted political awareness and encouraged young folk singers to embrace it.

Underground folk singers developed a complex relationship with the political activists and workers for whom they advocated. While they provided songs to sing at demonstrations and thus helped unite activists and workers, they disagreed with activists and workers on the relationship between music and politics. In the worst case, folk singers regarded activists as a simple-minded mob while activists doubted the sincerity of folk singers and wished that they were more politically active instead of simply singing songs. Takaishi and Okabayashi frequently sang at *ro-on*, a labor movement organization with nationwide regional branches which offered concerts that disseminated songs for the working people. In an article entitled "The Leading Figures in Underground Folk," *Asahi Journal* wrote that ro-on exploited underground folk singers

[273] Teruo Kawamura, "Foku songu undo o susumeyo" [Let's carry on the folk song movement], *Uta Uta Uta: Folk Report*, January 1969, 56-57.

by demanding that they appear in concerts too frequently. Okabayashi expressed his contempt toward people at ro-on for lacking critical perspectives: "ro-on was the gigantic group of single-cell people… They would be happy if they could get a television set and a car."[274] He criticized labor leaders for internalizing the principles of capitalism that oppressed them. Soon after this comment, overbooked and overworking Okabayashi left a note and ran away on the day when he was supposed to appear in a ro-on concert. He confessed in the note that he felt like a "singing machine," traveling from one concert to another without much rest or remuneration. The members of the ro-on regarded him as one of them and demanded that he attended post-concert discussions and dinner, and when he refused, accused him of being pretentious and "acting like a star." When he attended these discussions, they criticized his songs and told him that he should be more directly involved in politics.[275] In his memoir, Nagira sympathized with Okabayashi, stating that he did not like post-concert discussions at ro-on either.[276] Underground folk singers believed that they were victims of both commercialism and political activists, as their management company overbooked them

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[274] "Angura Foku no Ninaite Tachi [The Leaders in Underground Folk]," *Asahi Journal*, 7 September 1969, 82.
[275] Nobuyasu Okabayashi, "Torikai san, geri o naoshi ni tabi e demasu!" [Mr. Torikai, I am on a trip to cure of my diarrhea], *Folk Report*, November 1969, 10-11.
[276] Nagira, *Nihon Foku Shiteki Taizen*, 40-41.

and their audiences had different expectations from their own.

Okabayashi developed an interest in Dylan's electric music as he faced the contradictions in his career. Dylan had taken up electric guitar and faced criticism from audiences and critics who expected him to continue making acoustic folk songs. Nine years later, when Dylan visited Japan, Okabayashi recounted the key moment in his career by referring to Dylan:

> It was in 1969 that I really took Dylan's music seriously and listened to it intensely. That was when I was set up as the leader in protest folk and was the super star of the ro-on and the *minsei*. I had despised electric guitar, thinking that was something an idiot would do. But I was taken aback [by Dylan's use of electric guitar] to find out that electric rock was so good. After that, I broke the contract and ran away, taking Dylan's records with me.[277]

Critics also explained Okabayashi's career by an analogy to Dylan, claiming that Okabayashi experienced a contradiction similar to that of Dylan. They claimed that both Okabayashi and Dylan could not stand being labeled as the "god of folk" voicing social movements and disappeared from the public performing scene.[278]

Takaishi also looked to American folk singers for direction when he faced contradictions and criticism. In 1969, he took a break from his work and visited the U.S. to stay with an American anti-war minister in San Francisco, a man who introduced him

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[277] "Idai naru Otoko Bobu Diran ga Yatte Kuru [Bob Dylan, the Great Man Is Coming]," *Shukan Myojo*, 9 January 1977, 45.
[278] Nagira, *Nihon Folk Shiteki Taizen*, 39-41; Maeda and Hirahara, *60 nendai foku no jidai*, 121.

to folk singer and the author of "Little Boxes," Malvina Reynolds. Reynolds encouraged Takaishi to "continue being a folk singer" in Japan. He also learned old time music during his stay in the U.S. and decided to incorporate that musical idiom into his protest folk songs. After his six months' stay in the U.S., Takaishi resumed folk singing, writing songs that critiqued and depicted problems in Japan.[279] A reader of *Folk Report* compared an outdoor folk concert in Hibiya Park, Tokyo, in 1969 with the Newport Folk Festival in 1965, where Dylan performed with an electric guitar to booing audiences. At the Hibiya Park concert, a member of Folk Guerrilla (a singing anti-Vietnam War activists group) interrupted the concert and accused Takaishi of "being at the mercy of commercialism." The Guerrilla member believed that Takaishi's frequent appearance on television and magazines indicated his degeneration into a commercial singer. The writer disagreed and asserted that Dylan and Takaishi were "great because they are true to themselves, not because they are anti-establishment singers."[280] As in the case of Okabayashi and the role of Dylan in his conversion, Takaishi and his supporter referred to American folk singers to justify trends in Japanese folk music. Further, this writer shifted the measure of authenticity for folk singers from political involvement to personal freedom.

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[279] Nagira, *Nihon Foku Shiteki Taizen*, 29-30.
[280] Haruo Miyake, "Newport, Hibiya," *Folk Report*, November 1969, 49-51.

Folk Report in 1969 documented political activists who accused folk singers of simply commenting on issues without taking direct action and for singing protest songs without actually meaning them. Okabayashi and music critic Kazuo Mihashi criticized the Folk Guerrilla for using mass media to gain public attention and to attract a large audience. They argued that it was the media that named them the Folk Guerrilla, without which the Guerrilla sing-in would not have been as successful.[281] Taku Murata analyzed the unique role of folk songs in political movements, arguing that the folk song movement should remain independent from political activism while remaining an integral part of it. Murata quoted a young man attending an anti-war symposium who stated that he joined an anti-war group because he was dissatisfied with the folk song movement, which simply commented on issues from the perspective of an observer. Murata objected to this comment and insisted that folk songs were, and should be, written from the perspective of those who were directly involved in and affected by the issues. He regarded folk songs as crystallizing the feelings, worldview, and actions of the oppressed people, which should not be reduced to tools for political movements.[282] Folk singers

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[281] "Ware ware no foku undo o dou susumeru ka" [How should we proceed with our folk movement], *Folk Report*, November 1969, 46; Kazuo Mihashi, "Tokyo foku gerira shimatsu ki?" [A final say on Tokyo Folk Guerrilla], *Folk Report*, Nobember 1969, 55.
[282] Taku Murata, "Minshu no kokoro sonomono no hyogen o" [expressing people's heart], *Uta Uta Uta: Folk Report*, January 1969, 44-46.

and their supporters distinguished themselves from political activists in their definition of folk music.

Political activists also contemplated the relationship between politics and music and debated how they should use folk music. The Folk Guerrilla sing-in that lasted for six months in 1969 and a subsequent publication of *Who Are the Folk Guerrillas*, a collection of essays by four Guerrilla activists accompanied by their songbook that published twenty-seven American and Japanese folk songs, demonstrated that folk music played an important role in political activism and that activists continually re-examined the effectiveness of folk songs.[283] In many ways, the young Folk Guerrilla members ironically resembled the young college folk singers who depoliticized American folk music. They came from middle-class families and took for granted their familiarity with American culture. They also claimed their freedom to interpret songs for their own purposes and disregarded the American context and origin of folk music.

At the sing-in, the Folk Guerrillas sang songs by American and Japanese folk singers to build a community with ordinary citizens. A reporter from weekly magazine *Shukan Sankei* wrote that people had lively discussions on various issues at the sing-in:

I went out there in early May. As soon as I got out of the ticket gates at the station,

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[283] Shinobu Yoshioka, ed., *Foku Gerira towa Nani mono ka [Who Are the Folk Guerrillas]* (Tokyo: Jiyu Kokumin-sha, 1970).

> I heard people singing. Nearly a thousand people sat around Mr. Gorilla and Mr. I. to sing. Among such songs as the "Riot Police Blues" and "Let's Join the Self Defense Force" were short speeches. What I found most interesting was that there were numerous small groups among the crowd who discussed seriously such issues as what they could do to get Okinawa back, the issue of political parties and ordinary citizens, the problem of an organization… -- all problems that can't be solved easily… My first impression was that people want to talk to each other. Businessmen, factory workers, owners of small stores, all met for the first time, and were eager to have a discussion.[284]

Takaishi's version of "Jukensei Blues" provided the music for the "Riot Police Blues," which detailed the miserable life of a riot police member who, just like the jukensei, had to wake up every morning sleep deprived to go to work while other young people were having a good time.[285] Folk singer Wataru Takada had composed "Let's Join the Self Defense Force," a mock recruitment song criticizing the remilitarization of Japan, based on the tune of "I Want to Go to Andorra" by Reynolds and Seeger.[286] As Konaka observed, audiences from different backgrounds sang folk songs and joined discussions.

While some people attended the sing-in to discuss politics, others went for recreational purposes. When Konaka went to another sing-in a week later, a young man in the audience stated that he worked six days a week in a factory looking forward to

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[284] Yotaro Konaka, "Shinjuku Nishiguchi Hiroba ni Moeta Foku Gerira Shutsugen no Shiso [The Thought Behind the Appearance of the Folk Guerrilla at the Concourse of the West Exit of Shinjuku Station]," *Shukan Sankei*, 15 June 1973, 41-42.
[285] "Kido-tai buruusu," *Foku Gerira hen purotesuto songu senshu [Anthology of Protest Songs Edited by the Folk Guerrilla]*, reprinted in *Foku Gerira to wa nanimono ka [Who Were the Folk Guerrilla]*, ed. Shinobu Yoshioka (Tokyo: Jiyu kokumin sha, 1970), 252.
[286] Maeda and Hirahara, *60 nendai foku no jidai*, 83.

attending the Folk Guerrilla sing-in every Saturday. He was indignant when Konaka asked him whether singing protest songs would bring about an actual change and improvement. This factory worker felt that such a question would only spoil his "only pleasure" of singing after work for two hours.[287] While the Folk Guerrillas successfully attracted a large audience who actively participated in discussion and singing, individual members of the audience interpreted the event differently.

The young Guerrilla members regarded folk songs as an important tool to build a community. Suguru Hotta observed that music served as a catalyst to transform the audience from "a crowd" into "a group with a purpose." Hotta realized that although the audiences initially came to the sing-in to enjoy music, they eventually regarded music as subsidiary to politics. He concluded that the political power of music was limited to its role in transforming a crowd into a group with purpose. Another student activist Shinnosuke Izu recalled that singing "We Shall Overcome" together with five hundred people made him realize that "this was the true cry of humanity and that this was what made folk song what it is."[288] The Guerrilla members identified the unique quality of

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[287] Konaka, "Shinjuku Nishiguchi Hiroba ni Moeta Foku Gerira Shutsugen no Shiso," 42.

[288] Shinnnosuke Izu, "Kenji Chosho teki na Watashi no Kokuhaku [My Confession Which Resembles Prosecutor Investigation]," in *Foku Gerira to wa Nanimono ka,* 101-102.

folk songs as their power in fostering solidarity among the participants.

The members regarded American folk songs and singers as already familiar to the Japanese and disregarded the music's American roots and context. Hiroshi Oguro identified Malvina Reynolds' "It Isn't Nice" as a "real" folk song without examining whether this American folk song was relevant to the Japanese situation. He quoted the Japanese lyrics for the song and remarked: "Yes, that grandma Malvina Reynolds is so right! She tells the truth.[289] The Guerrilla members wrongly acknowledged certain American folk songs as either anonymous or by a Japanese author in their songbook. "What Did You Learn in School Today?" by Tom Paxton and "The Times They Are A-Changing" by Bob Dylan were cited as "anonymous" while only the Japanese author of the Japanese lyrics for "One Man's Hand" by Alex Comfort was listed in the songbook.[290] This showed that the Guerrilla members lacked an in-depth knowledge of American folk music.

The Guerrilla members justified their disregard for the original contexts of folk songs by asserting their freedom to interpret songs. After debating how the Guerrilla members could authentically sing folk songs, Oguro concluded: "The most important

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[289] Hiroshi Oguro, "Fokubando kara Gaito e [From a Folk Band to the Street]," in *Foku Gerira to wa Nanimono ka,* 83-84.
[290] Yoshioka, *Foku Gerira to wa nanimono ka*, 214-215, 230, 246.

thing in singing a folk song is to interpret for yourself what the song means and sing as such, even if that may differ from the author's intended meaning of the song."[291] Another Guerrilla member Haruko Yamamoto also stressed the role of the performer in defining folk music: "The point of folk songs is that they are different from popular songs; even if we sing the same song many times, we have to sing with new meanings each time."[292] By emphasizing the interpretation while deemphasizing the authors' intention or contexts, the activists asserted their legitimacy to sing folk songs.

Coinciding with the decline in political activism in Japan after the unsuccessful attempt to end the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1970, underground folk music became depoliticized again. *Folk Report* reduced its number of publications in 1971 and by 1972, the magazine degenerated into an inner-directed periodical with sporadic writings on irrelevant topics and those that addressed a narrow folk music community. For example, the summer 1972 issue included an article that depicted personal details of twenty Japanese folk singers written from an insider perspective, a sixteen-page article on sex and contraception, and a two-page novel.[293] In the same issue, three music critics lamented on this trend and identified commercialism as the force that ruined the folk

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[291] Oguro, "Fokubando kara Gaito e," 86.
[292] Yamamoto, "Tatakau Onna Kisiruto sha," 117.
[293] *Folk Report*, Summer 1972, 2-5, 17-32, 86-87.

music movement and referred to Pete Seeger to support their claim. They believed that once folk singers became professional, they would lose the freedom to express their views and be subject to capitalistic record companies who would sanitize their music and deprive them of power.[294] Just as Japanese folk singers and political activists appropriated American folk songs and folk singers to address domestic issues and build their career, critics also used American folk singers to analyze problems in the Japanese folk music scene.

Conclusion

During the 1960s, American folk music transformed from exotic, white American commercial music for college students to perform and consume, to political music that Japanese folk singers and activists cultivated. The role of American folk singers also changed from a fashionable role model for Japanese to emulate to a reference tool to address and analyze Japanese political and social issues and to improve the career of Japanese folk singers.

In the process of domesticating American folk music, Japanese folk musicians

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[294] "Tokushu foku songu kai o kiru san nin no ongaku hyoronka foku o kataru" [special feature: an analysis of the folk song world: three music critics talk about folk], *Folk Report*, Summer 1972, 12.

and fans defined folk music in a way that justified their performance of the music. Instead of regarding American folk music as a foreign culture, they devised a method to claim it as their own. During the college folk period, Japanese amateur folk singers depoliticized American folk music and defined it as middle-class and collegiate so as to maintain its value as a status symbol and to participate in folk music. They misappropriated American folk music to shape their class identity in Japan. Writers and advertisers conflated American culture with whiteness and encouraged Japanese young readers to simultaneously obtain Americanness and whiteness through consumption.

During the underground folk period, Japanese folk singers and political activists identified political idealism and anti-commercialism as the qualities that made folk singers authentic, just as their American counterparts did. However, they differed from American revivalist folk singers in their belief in the universality of the music; they downplayed cultural knowledge. Japanese folk singers appropriated American folk songs to address issues in Japan and wrote songs in Japanese. Political activists ironically regarded American folk music and its Japanese derivative as an appropriate medium through which to express their anti-American sentiment. The activists claimed their ownership of American folk music by emphasizing the singers' interpretation of songs rather than the original intention of the writers. Despite their antagonistic

relationship, folk singers and political activists shared the belief that folk songs were inherently political and that the Japanese were participants in folk music who were free to use and arrange American folk songs to serve their purposes.

Throughout the 1960s, Japanese folk singers and fans actively used American folk music to build communities in Japan rather than to promote cross-cultural understanding. Even when they displayed their adoration of American culture and admiration for American folk singers, they did so in an attempt to improve their status in their own communities. Despite their apparent differences, bourgeois college folk singers and proletariat underground folk singers both shared their exclusive interests in Japanese issues and communities.

CHAPTER 3: THE CORNELL FOLK SONG CLUB AND THE ITHACA FOLK COMMUNITY, 1950S TO THE PRESENT

Introduction

The Cornell Folk Song Club (CFSC; currently the Cornell Folk Song Society) is one of the few existing college-based folk song clubs in the United States. Its history demonstrates the different ways in which its members defined folk music and used the music to build a community. During the 1950s, students understood folk music as a collection of traditional songs that could be sung by everyone and stressed the participatory nature of folk music. At the same time, folk music attracted students who were nonconformists and who resisted dominant culture on campus. They valued the anti-commercial aspects of folk music, regarding the music as an alternative to materialistic American culture that popular music represented. Folk music was also an academic subject taught on campus by an English professor, who unwittingly encouraged his students to expand the definition and the use of folk music. The folk revival of the

1960s created dominant images of professional folk singers to which the CFSC members responded in their definition of folk music. During the folk revival in the 1960s, the CFSC members criticized commercially successful folk singers and looked to the marginalized groups of people for authenticity, while managing huge logistics of concert organizing. After the revival, in the 1970s, the members criticized singer-songwriters and valued traditional folk songs and communal aspects of folk music. Today, the CFSC and its graying community members embrace an inclusive definition of folk music that conformed to Pete Seeger's definition of folk music as a process. They regard themselves as participants in that process rather than outsiders to the folk traditions. Folk music embodies their anti-commercial lifestyles and values, which they reaffirm by building a community. Over time, the CFSC and its community members have come to own folk music, instead of regarding it as belonging to the past or to the marginalized population. Their definition of folk music changed from traditional songs to music of the marginalized population to music of their own. Accordingly, the repertoires of the CFSC expanded from traditional ballads to include recent compositions by the members.

Although the CFSC members' definition and repertoires of folk music changed over time, there is a strong consistency in the members' lifestyles and ideals over time. A majority of them have been middle-class white Americans of left-leaning political

orientation who criticized the dominant culture and espoused anti-commercialism. The members regarded folk music as embodying their values and shared them by forming a folk music community. Yet they also rejected interpreting their activities as political or singing songs for political purposes; they want to think of their activities as primarily musical.

Scholars have told different stories about the role of politics in the folk revival. Robert Cantwell stressed the depoliticized nature of the revival, contending that the folk revival thrived because it dissociated itself with pre-war left-wing political activism.[295] In his view, "the folk revival had no political agenda, beyond being vaguely against racism and war."[296] Cantwell also suggested that the revival was inner-directed: "Deeper than any philosophical or stylistic difference was the collective identity itself and the search for 'connectedness'" and "while singers sought new songs to distinguish themselves among their peers, it was their peers' embrace of the new material that authenticated it."[297] In contrast, Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison argued that the folk music revival *was* a political movement. Both political activists and folk singers opposed "the massification of American society, the domination of commercial and

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[295] Robert Cantwell, *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 21.
[296] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 285.
[297] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 286.

military values over American life." The folk revival "helped justify an anti-commercial attitude and foster a sense of authenticity, as well as lifestyle. That motivated an interest in folk music as such."[298] Gillian Mitchell also argued that the folk revival was "symbolically intertwined with" political movements during the early 1960s as the revival espoused "visions of diversity" by appreciating marginalized cultures.[299]

Despite their apparent differences, the assessments made by these scholars point out the same aspect of the folk revival. As Cantwell noted, unlike the pre-war folk song movement led by the Old Left activists, the post-war folk revival did not have a specific political agenda. However, the participants in the folk revival sent a political message by sharing and disseminating folk music that they thought critiqued dominant culture. The history of the CFSC serves as a case study to illustrate this point and further demonstrates that folk music fans regarded folk music as an antithesis to dominant culture not just during the folk revival of the 1960s but also before and after the revival. Further, this chapter demonstrates that in the early days of the CFSC, the university

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[298] Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, *Music and Social Movements: Mobilizing Traditions in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 118.

[299] Gillian Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival: Nation and Identity in the United States and Canada, 1945-1980* (Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2007), 95.

served not only as a place where students formed a community; it actively helped shape the students' understanding of folk music by offering courses on folklore by a professor who directly involved his students in the study of folk music.

1. Academic, Political, and Cultural Crossroads: The CFSC in the 1950s

The CFSC during the 1950s, before the folk revival hit the campus, illustrated the complex nature of folk music as a fledgling academic discipline; music with left-wing association from the past; and music for dissenters who opposed dominant American culture. Cornell University developed a student-led folk song club as early as in 1950, before folk music became widely popular among college students during the folk music revival of the 1960s. Cornell University's freshman handbook, *The Cornell Deskbook*, for the class of 1954 listed "The Cornell Folk Song Club" as a student activity concerned with the study and singing of folk songs. Students from New York City brought folk music from Greenwich Village to Ithaca and the music helped build a community of students who did not "fit in." The students stressed the apolitical nature of their activities, but folk music provided them with a means to resist dominant culture. Folk music was the antithesis of a materialistic, conformist, and intolerant mainstream America that popular music represented, and the CFSC was a community that provided a

stark contrast to the sorority-fraternity life that dominated the campus. Singing and studying about folk music with other non-conforming students was in a sense a political activity.

The early folk music scene at Cornell expressed the paradox of folk music in the 1950s, when folk music had competing associations and images. Many listeners considered folk music part of an American cultural heritage. College students of the 1950s had learned songs like "Shenandoah" and "The Erie Canal" in the school music programs while growing up.[300] Folk music had also begun to be commercially popular with the appearance of the Weavers in 1947, who successfully spread folk songs to the general public. The publication of folk song books also helped spread folk music to young audiences as their musical heritage.[301] The authors of mid-century folklore and folk song books collected their materials from the Appalachia and the Ozarks and presented the folk as pre-modern American pioneers who descended from the British and yet embodied the American spirit.[302]

The Weavers, who disbanded in 1952 but came back in their 1955 Carnegie Hall

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[300] Joe Klein, *Woody Guthrie: A Life* (New York: Delta Book, 1980), 443.
[301] Ronald D. Cohen, *Rainbow Quest: The Folk Music Revival and American Society, 1940-1970* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 87.
[302] Simon J. Bronner, *Following Tradition: Folklore in the Discourse of American Culture* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1998), 226-227.

reunion concert, changed the way young audiences perceived folk music, including Cornell students.[303] The folk group consisting of urban left-wing artists encouraged the young audience to become performers. Inspired by the Weavers' successful career in 1948 and 1949, Arthur Kalish (Class of 1951) formed a group based on the Weavers by teaming up with guitar, banjo, and mandolin players and eventually organized hootenannies on campus, which became the basis of the CFSC.[304] Bill Steele (Class of 1954) recalled an incident around 1956 when he was so moved by the sound of the Weavers on the radio that he got out of the bed at 2am and tried to play a song from their songbook on his guitar. "Follow the Drinking Gourd," in particular, had a "dramatic, rhythmic, minor key" that particularly appealed to him. He eventually bought a record in order to replicate the complex sound and ended up learning not only that song but also all the songs which were on the Weavers' Carnegie Hall recital record. He later became a folk singer himself.[305]

Folk song books also encouraged young readers to perform folk music. Ellen Stekert (Class of 1957), who played a leading role in the CFSC by hosting the Sunday Sing and lecturing on the radio, initially learned traditional folk songs from the four

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[303] For the Weavers' commercial success that ended in disbandment and their comeback reunion concert in 1955, see Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 67-79 and 102-103, respectively.
[304] Arthur Kalish, telephone interview, July 24, 2007.
[305] Bill Steele, interview, Ithaca, New York, June 13, 2003.

volumes of Vance Randolph's *Ozark Folksongs*. As a child recovering from polio, she studied the songbooks to practice playing the guitar and singing, as part of her rehabilitation effort. Many of the traditional Anglo-American folk songs in those volumes had modal tunes and defied conventional Western harmonization. Stekert devised a method to put harmonies to modal tunes. As a result, she "developed a unique repertoire early," consisting of modal tunes and original harmonies.[306]

Ithaca's proximity to New York City could partially account for the rise of folk music at Cornell, as students from New York initiated weekly singing gatherings and a concert series, which laid the foundation for the CFSC. These students performed, disseminated knowledge, and used their direct connections with key folk figures in New York.[307] Daniel Isaacson (Class of 1954), who was part of Kalish's band and became the first CFSC president to be listed in the *Deskbook*, also learned folk music and the guitar while growing up in New York. Isaacson was first introduced to folk music at a summer camp he attended as a young boy. He collected folk music records, attended concerts of various types of music (classical, Broadway, and folk) with his parents, and listened "surreptitiously" at night to the Texan and North Mexican radio stations which

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[306] Ellen Stekert, telephone interview, February 18, 2004.

[307] For the centrality of New York Greenwich Village folk scene in the folk music revival, see Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival*, chapter 3. For New York folk music scene in the 1950s, see Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 105-112.

played Western folk music. His high school teacher loaned him a guitar during a summer break, which he mastered and began to perform with other teenagers who shared his interest in folk music. Once at Cornell, he performed at a freshman orientation week event, and the enthusiastic response led to a series of performances at various parties and events. Isaacson began to reserve rooms in Willard Straight Hall to perform regularly and these concerts became the basis of CFSC activities. Isaacson continued to be connected to activities in New York and especially benefited from his sister who lived in Greenwich Village. Her apartment, which was upstairs from a night club, was home to traveling folk singers including the young Bob Dylan, and also organized hootenannies there. Isaacson made friends with folk singers at her apartment, including Josh White, who taught him performance techniques that helped him improve his skills.[308] Stekert also brought her New York background in folk music to Cornell. In high school, she met John Cohen (who later formed the New Lost City Ramblers) and they held hootenannies at each other's homes.[309] They would also join with other teenagers to go to New York City and attend folk song events.[310] In similar vein to Isaacson, Stekert

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[308] Dan Isaacson, fax to the author, September 28, 2004.
[309] Stekert, telephone interview, February 18, 2004.
[310] Ellen Stekert, "Cents and Nonsense in the Urban Folksong Movement," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil V. Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 85.

first performed folk songs at Cornell in her freshman year to entertain and console female students who had not been invited to join any sorority. Upon request, she reserved a public room in the basement of one of the oldest dormitories on campus, Risley Hall, to perform periodically, and this evolved into a weekly event with a co-ed audience.[311] The Sunday Sing became a tradition of the CFSC. As was the case with Isaacson, Stekert took her New York City knowledge and disseminated folk music to those who were unfamiliar with it.

The initiative taken by students from New York City and the enthusiastic response by the students underscored the fact that before the revival, folk music was not yet a national culture. Naomi Lohr (Class of 1957), who had come from outside Cleveland, Ohio, recalled that her knowledge of folk music was very limited before she met Stekert and learned numerous folk songs. This was the case with other members as well. Although typically 25-40 students would attend the Sunday Sing, only a few of them would perform. The rest would sit around and listen, sometimes requesting certain songs.[312] Lohr valued the knowledge that students like Stekert had and kept extensive notes when Stekert gave folk music lectures on the local radio station.

New York also had had an active folk dance scene in the 1940s led by a

[311] Stekert, email to the author, September 23, 2004.
[312] Naomi Lohr, telephone interview, February 23, 2004.

communist activist Margot Mayo. Mayo operated the American Square Dance Group in New York in the early 1940s and brought Southern folk dance to a northern audience. Israel Young, the founder of the Folklore Center in New York (1957), co-founded the Square Dance Group with Mayo and stressed the importance of folk dance. Mitchell called the folk dance scene the "forgotten tradition" and argued that folk dance attested to the diversity of the folk revival.[313] Cohen also stated that folk dance constituted an element of progressive culture in the 1940s, along with folk music, jazz, classical music, literature, and theater. Cohen argued that folk music began to have a life of its own separate from dance beginning the 1950s, as it created a new audience of young people.[314]

But folk dance remained an important element of folk culture well into the 1950s at Cornell. The Cornell Folk Dance Club, which shared members with the CFSC, emphasized traditional culture and participation and promoted international understanding through folk dancing. Paul Hohenberg (Class of 1956), who served president of the Folk Dance Club, recalled that the Dance Club as more formalized than the Folk Song Club during the early 1950s. It was "a time when the U.S. was internationally-minded" and so the Dance Club members danced a variety of European

[313] Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival*, 61-62.
[314] Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 66.

and American dances including line, round, square, and contra dances in addition to Valkan, Polish, Israeli, Italian, and German dances. While both the Dance and Song clubs had similar students, he recalled that the former had a more diverse group with international students and women.[315]

The CFSC members in the early 1950s emphasized two main attributes of folk music, which both depoliticized the music. Members understood folk music as a collection of traditional songs. Kalish grew up in the 1940s in New York singing and listening to English ballads such as "Barbara Allen" and "Greensleeves" and saw folk music as traditional.[316] Hohenberg remembered that he regarded folk song as all "old songs" and emphasized that folk singing and folk dancing was "totally apolitical."[317] Besides its traditional nature, members liked the participatory aspect of folk songs and believed that anyone could sing folk songs. Kalish appreciated that folk songs had melodies that were easy to follow, unlike Broadway songs, which were impossible to duplicate.[318] Hohenberg also testified that he and other members did not associate folk music with particular performers in the 1950s, unlike in the 1960s, when folk music was

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[315] Paul Hohenberg, telephone interview, July 21, 2007.
[316] Arthur Kalish, telephone interview, July 24, 2007.
[317] Hohenberg, telephone interview.
[318] Kalish, telephone interview.

tied to artist's names.[319] In addition, the precursor of the CFSC was the Outing Club, where students went hiking and sang folk songs outdoors.

Despite an all-American and wholesome reputation, folk music was also associated with left-wing politics and was the target of anti-communism attack. The blacklisting of Pete Seeger and the disbandment of the Weavers in 1952 forced folk music underground during the 1950s. Blacklisted folk singers, Seeger in particular, spread folk songs to young children and students at schools, camps, and colleges. Seeger also employed what he called the guerrilla tactics of making last-minute appointments with radio and television programs to perform so as to avoid organized protest against his appearance.[320] As Joe Klein pointed out, this underground transmission of folk songs prepared young Americans for the folk music revival of the 1960s.[321] Robert Cantwell also contended that:

> it was fortuitous, for the revival, that folksong had in the early days been joined to the left, and that the repression of the left had extended to singers of folksongs—for it drove them underground, not to party cells or clandestine meetings in the coal camps and mill towns but to the seedbed of elite American culture in schools, summer camps, and private homes, to prepare for the young a new vision of society.[322]

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[319] Hohenberg, telephone interview.
[320] David Dunaway, *How Can I Keep from Singing: Pete Seeger* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1981), 158-159.
[321] Klein, *Woody Guthrie: A Life*, 443.
[322] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 271-272. He summarizes folk song activities on campus during the 1950s on pp.273-274.

The anti-communist repression of folk music intercepted the mass-mediated popularization of folk music, but it also brought an unintended consequence of spreading the music to young people.

McCarthyism also depoliticized the repertoire of folk music. Josh Dunson argued that folk music of the 1950s turned tradition-oriented due to McCarthyism; folk singers of the time preferred traditional folk songs to ones with political overtones.[323] According to Bryan Carman, traditional folk music attracted baby boomers because the music offered an escape from the fearful world they lived in during Cold War: "the folk tradition that Seeger and other campfire singers presented to them … held the memory of a simpler, kinder, prenuclear era in which the possibility of instant annihilation did not exist."[324]

The controversy surrounding a Pete Seeger concert held at Cornell in 1957, two years after Seeger was called to testify at the House Un-American Activities Committee, underscored the dual nature of folk music as traditional and political. A short ad in the student newspaper, *Cornell Daily Sun*, announcing the upcoming event alarmed an alumnus who read the paper after the concert had already been given. He contacted the

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[323] Josh Dunson, *Freedom in the Air: Song Movements of the 60s* (New York: International Publishers, 1965), 51.
[324] Bryan K. Carman, *A Race of Singers: Whitman's Working-Class Hero from Guthrie to Springsteen* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 144.

university president to express his concern over having had the performance of "the most widely-known and publicized Communist in this country." He wrote: "If this hits the press, it will do Cornell great harm."[325] After an investigation, President Deane Malott (who did not even know who Pete Seeger was) wrote back assuring the alumnus that Seeger's concert was not political in nature. Malott described Seeger as "apparently a competent entertainer" who visited Cornell "merely" to "entertain with a program of folk songs." Malott added that although the university could "ban people of this sort," "the raucous that would result would be more harmful than the cure that would be effected."[326] Malott thus justified his inaction and lack of knowledge by playing with the paradoxical definition of folk music. He ignored the political association of folk music and instead defined it as an all-American, harmless collection of old songs for entertainment purposes, not a subversive, Communist propaganda.

Naomi Lohr, who attended this concert as a student, observed that the audiences had come for a variety of reasons. The event attracted a large number of people (well over 200) who consisted of students, faculty, and townspeople. The audience packed

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[325] *Cornell Daily Sun*, May 16, 1957; Victor Emanuel to John Collyer, forwarded to Deane Malott, Dean Malott papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.

[326] Deane Malott to John Collyer, June 15, 1957, Dean Malott papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.

Willard Straight Hall and many of them tried to record his songs. As a result, there was "a sea of microphones" around Seeger. Some in the audience attempted to solicit their favorite Seeger songs including "Talking Union Blues," but Seeger dodged the request and instead talked to children in the audience before he started singing.[327] By ignoring requests from the audience, Seeger also avoided catering to only a particular group of fans.

Scholars have refuted the popular perception of the 1950s as a "happy" and "silent" era. Instead, it was an era plagued by McCarthyism, homophobia, and conformity.[328] There was a strong undercurrent of dissent among the young during the 1950s, which became the root of the Sixties social movements, such as the discontent and contradiction that white middle class young women faced while growing up in the 1950s, which set the stage for the women's liberation movement.[329] Cornell students joined the dissents of the 1950s, not by singing protest songs or joining social movements, but by appreciating and sharing traditional folk music that critiqued the materialistic dominant American culture. Stekert recalled that "it was a very repressive time," when "the worst

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[327] Lohr, interview with the author, Ann Arbor, Michigan, August 21, 2004.
[328] For the synthesis of literature regarding the social atmosphere in the 1950s surrounding baby boomers, see Gillian Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival*, 87-92.
[329] Wini Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992).

thing that could happen to you … was being called either a homosexual or a communist."[330] As she espoused left-wing political views and came to terms with her bisexuality, she felt the repressive atmosphere firsthand. Naomi Lohr remembered certain students raised money to support a professor who was accused of being a Communist.[331] Jill Nagy (Class of 1961), who arrived at Cornell after Stekert and Lohr graduated, recalled that when John F. Kennedy was elected president in 1960 she felt "the fears of the Fifties were dying out."[332]

The students who gravitated toward the Sunday Sing viewed folk music as an alternative to the dominant culture of the time, which they felt was characterized by materialism and symbolized by commercial popular culture. In Stekert's words, those students were "misfits" and "outcasts" who did not conform to the fraternity and sorority system that dominated the campus or who disliked the lifestyles of fraternities and sororities.[333] The Sunday Sing provided the nonconformist students with a community. According to Naomi Lohr, the Sunday Sing was a "church for the non-believers."[334] Appreciating folk music was implicitly a sign of rejecting materialistic values that

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[330] Stekert, telephone interview, February 18, 2004.
[331] Lohr, telephone interview, February 23, 2004.
[332] Jill Nagy, telephone interview, August 2, 2007.
[333] Stekert, telephone interview, February 18, 2004.
[334] Lohr, conversation, Ann Arbor, Michigan, August 2004.

dominated American culture.

Peter Yarrow (Class of 1959), who once served president of the CFSC and later formed the folk trio, Peter, Paul and Mary, strongly voiced the sense of discontent with the dominant culture of the time. Having grown up in New York City with a progressive left-wing education that also emphasized the arts, Yarrow found Cornell to be an exclusive, intolerant place filled with superficial and insincere people who only concerned themselves with "success and money and fame." Although folk music was an integral part of his education at high school, at Cornell, it was "not only not mainstream" but an "outside activity." He also felt that "there was no real integration of social life at Cornell with the academic life and political life…and creative life; they were very much segmented." Folk music, in contrast, cultivated all these aspects. Although he found some comfort in the company of other students who shared his sentiments, he ultimately "wanted to change [the world] so that it was more caring [and] compassionate."[335]

The CFSC members expressed their dissents by forming a community of like-minded students rather than entering into direct political activism or singing of protest songs. Their repertoire consisted mainly of traditional folk songs, including

[335] Peter Yarrow, telephone interview, May 25, 2004.

Child ballads, and while they sang union songs and Spanish Civil War songs, they understood them to be records of history as opposed to protest songs relevant to the contemporary society. Stekert recalled that although she admired Seeger's courage in voicing his dissent even during the McCarthy era, she did not appreciate the manner in which Seeger preached through songs. The students at the Sunday Sing did not sing-along unless the song was meant for group singing. According to Stekert, "it was very important that we were a group, but we were a group engaged in listening to the same songs."[336] The CFSC members shared their sense of dissent but did not express it directly through songs.

Although the members did not sing protest songs or explicitly express their dissents, they regarded folk music as critiquing dominant culture. Folk music also symbolized anti-commercialism tied to a sense of "authenticity." Yarrow regarded folk music as inherently authentic because the music came from "the tradition of being written not for dollars."[337] Stekert thought she resisted the "plastic," wasteful culture dominant at the time by performing folk music. Instead of purchasing commercial products and discarding them after use, she recycled old songs that had been preserved for generations. Folk enthusiasts frowned upon people who received money for their

[336] Stekert, telephone interview, February 18, 2004.
[337] Yarrow, telephone interview.

performance. Further, Stekert felt that through folk music, she gained insight into the lives of people who "did not live commercially."[338]

Folk music also embodied a sense of roots that white, middle-class students like Stekert missed. Growing up in the suburbs with secular Jewish parents, Stekert felt she did not have a tradition of her own. She described her activity as "finding a creative past or creating a tradition for yourself."[339] In a 1966 article, Stekert identified two marginal groups of "noble savages" whom middle-class audiences valued as "authentic" sources of folk music: African-Americans and poor mountain whites.[340] Stekert analyzed that these marginal groups filled the void that these audiences felt by providing a sense of cultural roots. Mitchell noted that the revival was "an attempt by young people to regain some kind of ethnic and social identity for themselves."[341]

Yarrow perceived folk music as intrinsically "authentic," or real: "Folk music requires, exemplifies, authentic exchange, because the songs were made out of something deeply just and respecting." He reasoned that since folk music was inherently authentic, it required a sincere singer "who ha[d] nothing to hide" to perform.[342] In his view,

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[338] Stekert, telephone interview.
[339] Stekert, telephone interview.
[340] Stekert, telephone interview; Stekert, "Cents and Nonsense in the Urban Folksong Movement," 94, 97.
[341] Mitchell, *North American Folk Music Revival*, 92.
[342] Yarrow's idea of equating authenticity with sincerity evokes Lionel Trilling's

popular entertainers such as Frank Sinatra could not sing "Blowin' in the Wind" because they wore social masks, just as the majority of Cornell students living in fraternities and sororities did. These students interacted with each other superficially without revealing their "true" selves and followed conventional, prescribed rules of behavior appropriate to their gender and social backgrounds, thereby treating themselves as objects to be traded rather than independent human beings.[343] Yarrow thus believed that the characteristics of a song determined the singer's behavior. Yarrow did not stop to examine his premise that folk music was intrinsically authentic or to define what folk music was, except to point out that folk music was not written for commercial purposes. He regarded folk music as an antithesis to what he disliked about American culture.

Folk music was also an academic subject taught on campus at Cornell, and Isaacson, Stekert, and Yarrow all served as undergraduate teaching assistants to Harold Thompson, a Harvard-educated English professor who taught folklore at Cornell and founded the New York Folklore Society. The teaching assistants performed folk songs in class to illustrate the lecture. Stekert also collected folk songs from informants living

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Sincerity and Authenticity (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972). According to Trilling, the concept of sincerity preceded authenticity, and the former emerged in the sixteenth century with the prominence of theater that displayed pretense. Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, 12-13.

[343] Yarrow, telephone interview.

in rural New York for Thompson. This experience led Stekert to pursue a career in folklore while it convinced Yarrow that he could change the world through singing folk songs. Thompson collected and taught folklore enthusiastically without any ideological or political purposes. He also regarded folklore as hobby and teaching material rather than an academic research topic, and mostly followed the conventional folklore of the time while sometimes deviating from it. But by involving teaching assistants in the performance and fieldwork, he unwittingly encouraged his students to negotiate and expand the definition and meaning of folk music, who eventually integrated folk music into their professional lives.

Many Cornell students enjoyed Thompson's popular courses but did not take the subject seriously, calling them "gut courses" or "stamping and stomping" because the professor gave high grades.[344] The students included flunking athletes desperate for a credit and competitive pre-med students who needed another A. His lectures took place in the "dead hours" of Saturday mornings in the largest lecture hall in Goldwin Smith Hall.[345] In addition to the large number of registered students, Thompson welcomed auditors, who were "asked to take back seats in the center section of room B."[346]

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[344] Stekert, telephone interview; Yarrow, telephone interview.
[345] Yarrow, telephone interview.
[346] Harold Thompson, syllabus for English 355 (fall 1955).

Folklore was a fledgling academic discipline with its roots in Harvard's English Department, where Thompson earned his Ph.D. The pioneer of folklore study at Harvard was Francis James Child, who published *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1882-1898), an exhaustive collection of British folk ballads based on his decades of research. The 305 "Child ballads" in these volumes became the canon of British folk songs.[347] Child's disciples and successors at Harvard, George Lyman Kittredge and Barrett Wendell, further advanced Child's work by educating students, who became folklore scholars in academia and government. For example, their student Stith Thompson founded the first Ph.D. program in folklore at Indiana University in 1949, with the first doctorate awarded in 1953. Stith Thompson pursued the "historic-geographic approach" in folklore, identifying and cataloguing recurring themes found in folk tales.[348] Kittredge and Wendell also encouraged John Lomax to resume collecting cowboy songs and helped him obtain a research grant, resulting in the publication of *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* in 1910. Lomax's work expanded the canon of folk songs established by Child by focusing on material beyond British ballads, and by presenting

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[347] Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory & American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 14.
[348] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 165-166.

folk songs as living in the United States.[349] Scholars from Harvard established the folklore canon, developed methodology, and expanded the scope of folklore over time.

At Harvard, Harold Thompson "took virtually every course that Kittredge offered" and sat in American literature classes offered by Wendell.[350] However, he did not focus on folklore until 1931, after two doctorates and having established himself as an authority on 18th century Scottish literature. He earned a Ph.D. in 1915 from Harvard and a Doctor of Literature from Edinburgh University (where he studied as one of the first Guggenheim Fellows) with his theses on Scottish writer Henry Mackenzie.[351] Although Thompson demonstrated his interest in folklore and American literature at Harvard, he did not perceive it as a research topic.

In 1931, Thompson started collecting folklore from New York. He sought folklore from his students and audience at the State College, Cornell Summer Session, and from the audiences for his radio program. Based on his collection, Thompson published a compilation of folklore from New York State, *Body, Boots & Britches* in

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[349] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 32; Regina Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 146-147.
[350] Francis E. Mineka, "Some of the Lives of Harold Thompson," *New York Folklore Quarterly* 14-3 (Fall 1958): 164-165.
[351] Mineka, "Some of the Lives of Harold Thompson," 164-166.

1939.[352] Thompson's junior colleague and co-founder of New York State Folklore Society attributed his new interest in American indigenous culture to the New Deal era. In a festschrift in 1958, Louis Jones wrote:

> the decade from 1931 to 1940 was, of course, the period during which America suddenly became aware of the fact that it had a folk tradition. President Roosevelt, the Federal Writers' Project, the Index of American Design, the Federal Arts Project, and scores of other New Deal forces brought to the attention of a confused and struggling people an awareness of their native culture.[353]

Thompson moved to Cornell in 1940 and in 1944, Thompson and Jones organized the New York Folklore Society and circulated the *New York Folklore Quarterly*. Both the organization and the journal targeted not only professional folklorists but also the general public.[354] Instead of regarding folklore as an academic research subject, Thompson found his new discipline a way to connect with the general public.[355]

Thompson defined and categorized folk music according to Child and Kittredge. In his introduction to English 355: American Folklore (fall 1955) Thompson distributed a handout entitled "How To Study Ballads" and cited Kittredge to define "popular ballad" as "a song that tells a story" and "a story told in songs." He classified the subjects of

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[352] Mineka, "Some of the Lives of Harold Thompson," 167.
[353] Louis C. Jones, "HWT: NYSCT: BBB: NYFS," *New York Folklore Quarterly* 14-3 (Fall 1958): 182-183.
[354] Jones, "HWT: NYSCT: BBB: NYFS," 186.
[355] Bendix argued that in the early twentieth century, the distinction between the scholar and the amateur was weaker in folklore than in other disciplines. Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity*, 146.

ballads according to Child: "Domestic tragedy," "supernatural," "historical," "heroes of the folk," and "humorous" and folk tales according to Stith Thompson.[356]

Thompson also located the roots of American folklore in Great Britain and structured his course to reflect that premise. In his second, third, and fourth classes after the introduction, he lectured on "British Ballads in America," "Ballads and Other Songs," and "American 'Mountain' Songs and Lore." In the session on American mountain songs, Thompson explained that collectors went to "remote mountain areas" for "pure" folklore and songs (Thompson himself put quotation marks around the word "pure"), especially the Ozark Mountains. The mountain areas had so few of the city's amenities that a folk song collector from New York City came back home when he could not find a hotel after his fieldwork in the Catskills.[357] As Benjamin Filene has argued, because of the tradition set by Child, by the 1910s, the "myth defined a folk song as an extremely old song, usually a ballad, that had originated from Great Britain and was currently sung by rural, isolated mountain people who were white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants."[358] Simon Bronner also argued that folk song collectors during the first half of the twentieth century located the pioneer settlers in remote mountains as the descendants of the British

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[356] Thompson, syllabus.
[357] Naomi Lohr, Harold Thompson Lecture Notes, September 22, 1955.
[358] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 26.

who developed uniquely American folklore:

> Typically, the 'Child' ballad of supposed British origin was presented first in collections followed by songs and ballads of the type on American subjects, thus giving the impression that native songs had arisen out of, but were distinguished from, the ancient ballad tradition.[359]

John Lomax asserted the British characteristics of cowboys by likening them to knights from medieval England.[360] Similarly, Thompson explained in his session on "cowboys and bandits" that cowboys sang "ballads" for recreation.

On the other hand, Thompson deviated from his Harvard colleagues in his stress on the musical aspect of folk songs and by seeking folklore from non-Anglo-Saxon sources. Kittredge reportedly remarked that "[t]he text is the thing," and ballad scholars paid little attention to the melody of folk songs.[361] Thompson explained the musical characteristics or folk songs (such as modal and pentatonic scales) and had his teaching assistants perform songs as examples to illustrate his points. He would typically have approximately five songs in each class, either on records or performed live. As Yarrow remembered, Thompson even had students sing the songs in class.[362] His former colleague recalled in 1958: "He sees music and literature as sister arts: to teach one is to

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[359] Bronner, *Following Tradition*, 225.
[360] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 33.
[361] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 16.
[362] Harold Thompson, syllabus for English 355 (fall 1955); Stekert, interview; Yarrow, interview.

teach the other."[363] Thompson had incorporated music into his classes in his career, as he earned his way through college and early career teaching English and music. He worked as a college organist and directed a village church choir as an undergraduate student at Hamilton College.[364] He taught literature and English as well as conducted the orchestra at the Music Department at New York State College for Teachers at Albany, where he got his first teaching position. He incorporated music into his English classes by having his students sing Shakespeare's songs in his course on Shakespeare.[365]

Thompson also noted the diversity and hybridity of American culture. He lectured on the folk songs of non-Anglo-Saxon ethnic groups, such as Native Americans, Creoles, African Americans, and Jews. He also introduced work songs and union songs to the students and pointed out the cross-cultural fertilization of folk songs. For example, he discussed Native Americans' adoption of the Cinderella story. In his session on sea shanties, Thompson explained that "often the shanty-men were Negroes or Irishmen," thereby acknowledging that whites and blacks worked in proximity.[366] When he served editor of the *New York Folklore Quarterly*, Thompson insisted on

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[363] Jones, "HWT: NYSCT: BBB: NYFS," 178.
[364] Mineka, "Some of the Lives of Harold Thompson," 163.
[365] Jones, "HWT: NYSCT: BBB: NYFS," 178.
[366] Lohr, Harold Thompson Lecture Notes, October 6, 1955.

documenting non-Anglo-Saxon folklore from New York State.[367] He also challenged the idea of communal creation as a defining characteristic of folk music, noting that it rarely happened.[368]

However, Thompson's challenge to the British-centered nature of folklore had limits. He divided folk songs and folklore from New York state into two categories: those of the people of British origin and "those who came to New York from other stocks." Thompson included only British materials in his anthology *Body, Boots & Britches* and saved the rest for his second book, which was never published due to his deteriorated health.[369] Although he displayed interest in non-Anglo-Saxon cultures, he regarded them as separate, and perhaps secondary to, Anglo-Saxon culture.[370]

Thompson catalogued, classified, and categorized his extensive collection of folk songs. He also welcomed a large audience to his courses and encouraged them to collect folklore. However, he did not explain *why* one might study folklore. His students and colleagues remembered that Thompson would quote his little daughter in defining folklore: "Folklore is anything that makes Papa laugh."[371] Folklore was worthy

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[367] Jones, "HWT: NYSCT: BBB: NYFS," 187.
[368] Lohr, Harold Thompson Lecture Notes, September 24, 1955.
[369] Jones, "HWT: NYSCT: BBB: NYFS," 182.
[370] According to Bronner, the tendency to categorize folk songs based on the British ballad became more evident after World War II. Bronner, *Following Tradition*, 225.
[371] Stekert, conversation, August 23, 2004; Jones, "HWT: NYSCT: BBB: NYFS," 188;

of study because it interested him. Few folklorists in the 1940s regarded folklore as an academic discipline; instead, they only collected as much folklore as possible. Although by as early as 1939, 25 institutions across the United States offered 60 courses on folklore, "the folklore work a professor did was necessarily a sidelight to work in other disciplines."[372] Thompson's interest in folklore conformed to this approach. His folklore course was a popular undergraduate class but he taught advanced courses and graduate seminars on American literature.[373] He passionately collected and disseminated folklore without an academic or political agenda. It was his teaching assistants who developed those dimensions.

Further, Thompson did not encourage his students to become folklorists. He recruited Stekert to become his assistant when she visited campus for an interview before entering Cornell, and valued her performance skills and benefited from the fieldwork she did for him. However, he held traditional gender views and suggested she focus on performance instead of pursuing an academic career.[374] Yet Thompson unwittingly provided an opportunity for her to launch a career in academic folklore.

Ellen Stekert's academic inquiry into folklore began with the fieldwork she did

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Mineka, "Some of the Lives of Harold Thompson," 167.

[372] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 165.

[373] Mineka, "Some of the Lives of Harold Thompson," 168.

[374] Stekert, conversation, August 23, 2004.

for Thompson. He received letters from people from around New York State notifying him of individuals with extensive repertoires of folk songs but was unable to travel himself after he suffered a stroke in 1950. Stekert not only collected those songs but also incorporated them into her repertoire. She performed them at the Sunday Sing and recorded her renditions on LPs. For example, *Songs of a New York Lumberjack,* released in 1958, consisted of 18 songs she learned from Ezra Barhight, an ex-lumberjack.[375]

Stekert's encounter with those informants led her to focus on the role of individuals in folk traditions, criticizing the notion of the community as a defining characteristic of folk music. Stekert found that there was no community that Barhight belonged to, as he had traveled extensively in his life and he was a loner in every place he went. This led Stekert to believe that folk songs belonged more to individuals than to communities.[376] She developed this idea in her introduction to *Songs of a New York Lumberjack:*

> It is sometimes assumed that a collection of folksongs has worth only in so far as it is representative of a group of people. The songs in this collection cannot be called "Songs of New York State" or "Lumberjack Songs." They are the songs of one man, Ezra Barhight, ex-lumberjack and resident of New York State. But the fact that all of these songs have been collected from one man makes them no less worthy of

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[375] Stekert, *Songs of a New York Lumberjack* (Folkways FA2354, 1958).
[376] Stekert, interview, August 23, 2004.

> recognition than a collection of songs from many people in one area or occupation. The body of American traditional songs cannot be torn apart and classified in any but an arbitrary way. And just as many individuals bring their folk backgrounds together to blend into the folklore of New York State or the folklore of the Lumberjack, one man in his lifetime, in contact with many traditions, finds these traditions blended in himself and finds in himself the voice of American folklore.[377]

Thus Stekert stressed that Barhight could still be a legitimate source of folk songs despite the fact that he did not belong to a "group." Her introduction demonstrated her attempt to negotiate the accepted definition of folk songs as those that were shared by a community in order to find a place for her informant.

American folklorists had debated the origins of ballads from the beginning of the twentieth century. Modeling after the Brothers Grimm, Francis Gummere, a student of Child, advocated the communal creation of ballads, which sparked a debate among folklorists that followed. Collectors who located American folk singers still singing Child ballads, including Cecil Sharp and Philips Barry emphasized individual composition.[378] Barry, in particular, strongly criticized the communal view and argued for the individual creation of folklore in 1912. In return, Robert Winslow Gordon, another student of Kittredge at Harvard, stressed the communal origin of folklore.[379]

While she refuted the communal aspect of folk songs, Stekert adhered to the

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[377] Stekert, liner notes to *Songs of a New York Lumberjack* (Folkways FA2354, 1958).
[378] Bronner, *Following Tradition*, 223.
[379] Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity*, 144-146.

notion of folk songs as old and anonymously made. Stekert portrayed Barhight as a folksinger who had blended multiple folk traditions. His songs "range[d] from Child ballads, to work songs, to children's songs to popular sentimental songs of the late nineteenth century." Among these categories, Stekert refuted the last one as not fitting the true meaning of "folk." The popular sentimental songs of the 19th century could be considered folklore in the sense that they had been passed on through oral transmission, but they did not qualify as folk songs because of their relatively short history.[380]

Stekert remained interested in Barhight and the question of community and individual. After graduating from Cornell, she entered a Ph.D. program in folklore at Indiana University and eventually transferred to the University of Pennsylvania, where she received her degree. In her dissertation, Stekert analyzed Barhight and another informant she met through fieldwork and argued that traditional folk singers were "creative artists" who actively shaped and altered folk traditions rather than being passive vehicles of traditions. She criticized older folklorists for downplaying the role of the individual in creating and transmitting folk songs, perceiving folk songs as the product of a group, passed on orally "from generation to generation." Stekert argued that these older folklorists mystified the transmission process and continued to "see informants

[380] Stekert, liner notes to *Songs of a New York Lumberjack* (Folkways FA2354, 1958).

chiefly as predictable products of a given culture exerting almost no influence upon the materials they transmit."[381] Based on an analysis of the personalities of the two traditional folk singers (a method borrowed from psychology), Stekert demonstrated that they altered folk songs "to express their feelings" in the face of the psychological pressure they faced vis-à-vis their collectors.[382] Stekert thus extended Thompson's acknowledgement that communal creation rarely occurred into an academic query and the main thesis of her dissertation, contributing to the age-old debate on how folklore was created. Stekert then became a folklore scholar, starting her career at Wayne State University and then moved to the University of Minnesota; during her tenure as a folklore professor, she also served president of the American Folklore Society.

In contrast, Peter Yarrow's teaching assistantship led him to pursue his career as a performer and a political activist. He found the root of what he later called the "song of conscience" in folk music and folk singing while performing and group singing folk songs in class. He felt that Cornell students, who otherwise guarded with social masks, could be sincere and empathetic when they sang folk songs. Yarrow recalled his moment of revelation as follows:

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[381] Stekert, "Two Voices of Tradition: The Influence of Personality and Collecting Environment Upon the Songs of Two Traditional Folksingers" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1965), 8.
[382] Stekert, "Two Voices of Tradition," 224.

> What was most interesting was when they sang, there was something within them that would reveal which was extraordinarily powerful and meaningful and moving and it was clear that their singing together brought something out in them that was the exact sensibility that I wanted to tap into, that I felt was the root of the kind of caring and vulnerability that was characteristic of the kind of person and the kind of world that I wanted to experience. And it was at that point that I realized that folk music might play a very important part in opening the hearts of America and helping to establish new traditions and the views of our lives and our society that would be far more just and fair and caring, and instead of taking a job when I left Cornell, I went out one night, I went to Greenwich Village and I started singing there.[383]

Thus Yarrow believed that the group singing of folk songs was a key to social change, in contrast to Stekert, who did not recall ever group singing in Thompson's class and did not support the use of songs as a means of social change.[384] One could argue that by singing folk songs in group, Yarrow integrated the creative, academic, and political spheres that he felt were segmented on campus.

The early days of the CFSC exemplified the regional folk music scene in the 1950s that set the stage for the folk revival. A young generation of folk music enthusiasts took over the music from the older generation of Old Left activists while depoliticizing the music, emphasizing its traditional and communal aspects. Nevertheless, the depoliticized, traditional folk songs and ballads embodied the dissents shared by the CFSC members and those who started social movements in the 1960s. Further, some CFSC members set the stage for the revival by actively cultivating

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[383] Yarrow, telephone interview.
[384] Stekert, conversation, August 23, 2004.

alternative definitions and use of folk music.

2. Embracing Cultural Diversity in Search of Authenticity: The CFSC During and After the Folk Revival

As the folk music revival began and folk music became popular nationwide, the definition of folk music became more contested. The emergence of commercially successful professional folk singers challenged the perception of folk music as a collection of unknown traditional songs that had inherent anti-commercialistic value. The general consensus about folk songs during the 1950s—that they were old songs collected from rural areas that could be sung by ordinary people—gave way to more contested definition of folk songs. The CFSC members attempted to refine their idea of folk by contrasting it to the popular image of folk music. In reaction to the popularization of folk music, the members expanded the repertoire to include lesser unknown materials such as blues, bluegrass, and early country music. They also focused on singers and the manner of performance more than songs, and evaluated the singers' authenticity. The members located authenticity outside of their ethnic and class background. After the decline of the folk revival, the CFSC members continued to formulate their vision of folk music in opposition to the popularly perceived image of

folk music promoted by singer-songwriters. The CFSC members during the 1960s and 1970s organized concerts to showcase and reaffirm authentic folk singers.

Much of the CFSC activities during the 1960s conform to Archie Green's recollection of the Campus Folk Song Club of the University of Illinois, which he led in the 1960s. Green recalled that the folksong club members attempted to foster authentic performance and engaged in active debate over tradition and authenticity. They favored traditional folk singers and those who faithfully emulated them over commercial ones. They believed in the superiority of their judgment in determining the authenticity of folk singers. Green also encouraged the students to articulate and advance their beliefs in authenticity. On the other hand, political activism was absent in the folksong club despite the music's association with the Old Left, the emergence of the New Left on campus, and Green's own political background. Instead, Green's message "consisted mainly of calling attention to American diversity and pluralism, as well as to the roles of marginal and enclaved communities within large society."[385] Although the CFSC did not have a faculty advisor like Green, the CFSC members had similar aesthetic and political positions. Even though the Cornell campus was getting politically active and

[385] Archie Green, "The Campus Folksong Club," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil V. Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 69.

CFSC members supported the civil rights movement, they did not sing or write protest songs and instead treasured "traditional" songs and singers.[386]

As revival singers proliferated and folk music gained commercial popularity, fans and critics debated authenticity and often denounced popularized folk singers for being inauthentic. They posited "authentic" folk singers against "sell-outs" and competed against each other with the attitude of "folkier than thou."[387] In 1966, Ellen Stekert addressed this debate by categorizing various types of folk singers who came into prominence. According to her, the "traditional" folk singers "learned their songs and their style of presentation from oral tradition as they grew up" and attracted only a white middle-class audience at folk festivals.[388] The "imitators" were also white middle-class youth who "have found meaning in the traditional songs and style of presentation of the authentic folksingers, and have sought to totally absorb themselves in their chosen style." Examples included the New Lost City Ramblers and the Greenbriar Boys.[389] The "utilizers" included Bob Dylan and the Kingston Trio and they "have taken folk material

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[386] Michael Goodwin, telephone interview, April 30, 2007.
[387] I. Sheldon Posen, "On Folk Festivals and Kitchens: Questions of Authenticity in the Folksong Revival," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 132; Jeff Todd Titon, "Reconstructing the Blues: Reflections on the 1960s Blues Revival," in *Transforming Tradition*, 221.
[388] Stekert, "Cents and Nonsense," 96.
[389] Stekert, "Cents and Nonsense," 97.

and have altered it in the light of accepted city aesthetics." The "new aesthetic" group learned traditional cultures and "developed its own set of aesthetic criteria."[390] Stekert's own experiment in harmonizing Ozark folk songs fell in this category. Stekert pointed out that hard-core folk music critics and fans accused utilizers of being inauthentic while praising the imitators. She questioned why urban, middle-class whites felt the need to erase their own background in order to become folk singers:

> Many singers have taken almost every aspect of their chosen culture into their private lives, even to the point of an alteration of speech patterns. The work that imitators do can be impressive and meaningful; but the question still remains why such expression was not possible within the aesthetics offered by their own city environment.[391]

The white middle-class imitators assumed that their own background provided neither the material nor the aesthetic for folk music. For them, their background was inherently inauthentic.

A hardcore faction of CFSC members shared this view and, just like the members of the Campus Folksong Club at Illinois, criticized utilizers and praised imitators. Michael Goodwin (Class of 1963), who served as CFSC president from 1962 to 1963, attempted to reshape the CFSC so its members would reject the commercialized sound that he detested and appreciate authentic folk music. When he first attended a

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[390] Stekert, "Cents and Nonsense," 98.
[391] Stekert, "Cents and Nonsense," 98.

CFSC meeting as a freshman in 1959, he was appalled by the dominance of "girls with nylon string guitars singing Joan Baez songs." These "girls" symbolized the debasement and commercialization of folk music. Goodwin grew up in New York City and familiarized himself with the Greenwich Village scene, where he frequented cafes, Izzy Young's Folklore Center, and attended Sunday jam sessions in Union Square. This background made him confident of the supremacy of his aesthetic. Calling himself a "purist" and a "traditionalist," he teamed up with fellow New Yorkers with similar taste to transform the CFSC to accept the Greenwich Village sound.[392]

The "traditionalists" criticized commercialism and defined folk music against not only popular music but also folk music that sounded popular. Goodwin criticized Peter Yarrow for pandering to popular taste. Further, he insisted that he could simply "hear" whether a certain folk song was traditional or not. He associated authenticity with a rough, unpolished sound:

> People like Peter, Paul and Mary had very sweet pop music sounding rearrangements. The songs were very pretty, whereas the songs that we really liked and thought were authentic were not pretty, so much as they were interesting and strong and dissonant and full of unusual modal chord scales and things like that, and the style of performance, of singing, too. People like Doc Watson and Uncle Dave Macon had more of a rough style of singing whereas the popular musicians were smooth and pretty and very nicely arranged to go over with the pop audience. So we looked for

[392] Goodwin, telephone interview.

those signs of authenticity.[393]

The distinction between folk (authentic) and popular (inauthentic) was not so much the difference in the origin of the songs as the quality of sound. Although Goodwin called himself a traditionalist, he did not believe that authenticity entailed oldness. For example, he admired Bob Dylan's compositions as authentic because, in addition to Dylan's familiarity with traditional folk songs, Dylan's vocal quality and musical arrangements deviated from popular music sounds. Joan Baez, who sang numerous traditional ballads, was not authentic to him because her voice was "pretty."[394] The criteria Goodwin employed sharply contrasted with those Stekert espoused in the 1950s. Instead of examining individual songs and their origins, he examined the manner in which folk singers sang them.

Not everybody participated in the authenticity debate. The members disagreed on what constituted authenticity or whether that should be the standard to judge folk music. Goodwin recalled that the "Joan Baez people" would accuse his group of being "so mean to Joanie" while he told them "they were not good."[395] Certain other members preferred Child ballads and Appalachian mountain songs. John Diebold (attended Cornell 1961-1962), who befriended Goodwin, "liked to jazz it up a bit" and introduced

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[393] Goodwin, email message to the author, June 3, 2007.
[394] Goodwin, telephone interview.
[395] Goodwin, telephone interview.

unusual material including blues and early jazz to the Sunday Sing. Goodwin performed blues, bluegrass, and early country music at the Sing, all of which were still esoteric at that time.[396] Some of the material that they presented sounded "popular" to other members of the CFSC.[397] Jill Nagy (Class of 1961) dismissed the authenticity debate as a "pretentious battle" fought out of snobbishness and insisted that the CFSC was "a singing club, not a talking club."[398]

As Mitchell pointed out, the "cult of exclusivity" espoused by folk music enthusiasts enriched the repertoire during the revival. As folk music became widely known, hard-core enthusiasts and self-styled "experts" looked for more esoteric and "authentic" material to distinguish themselves from others.[399] Diebold recalled that he liked folk music because it was "real" and "different." The desire to be different drove him and his friends to reject music that enjoyed commercial popularity while treasuring unknown material. However, the cult of exclusivity also limited their choice of material. Diebold regretted that he failed to appreciate country music because it was popular despite its roots in folk traditions.[400] Goodwin had also dismissed early rock 'n' roll

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[396] Goodwin, telephone interview.
[397] John Diebold, telephone interview, May 3, 2007.
[398] Jill Nagy, telephone interview, August 2, 2007.
[399] Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival*, 107-108.
[400] Diebold, telephone interview.

simply because it was popular until he began to appreciate Chuck Berry during college.[401] Like the others active in the folk music revival, the CFSC found the popularity of music central deciding factor in determining what constituted authenticity in folk music.

In addition to treasuring unknown folk singers within themselves, the CFSC members introduced them to the audiences in the community. In 1959 and 1960, the CFSC organized a series of concerts. The concerts became so important a part of the CFSC activities that, in 1963, Goodwin left a seven-page typed manual to his successors outlining the procedure and methods of organizing concerts. In addition to the logistics involved in concert organizing, such as how to reserve a hall and sell tickets, Goodwin stressed the importance of choosing and arranging artists in a way that promoted diversity. He wrote that the CFSC should opt for five concerts per year and the first thing to decide was which artists to invite. The artists should represent a variety of musical genres, which led to such rules as "one artist should not appear two years in a row" and no two artists of the same genre (such as blues or bluegrass) should be scheduled in close proximity. He distinguished between well-known artists and obscure ones and suggested different strategies in negotiating and advertising depending on the singer's

[401] Goodwin, telephone interview.

popularity.[402]

The distinction between well-known and obscure artists reflected Goodwin's conviction that the latter deserved to be known. He regarded the concerts as educational opportunities to showcase authentic yet unknown folk singers. Further, the members justified commercial profit by using the money they earned from concerts of famous singers for the promotion of non-profitable folk singers. The former included Pete Seeger, Odetta, and Theodore Bikel while the latter included Jack Elliott, the Greenbriar Boys, and the New Lost City Ramblers. In 1963, Goodwin spent most of the revenue from moneymaking concerts to organize the Cornell Folk Festival, which was his "crowning achievement." The Festival presented Doc Watson, blues musicians Sleepy John Estes and Jesse Fuller, a bluegrass group Don Stover and the Lily Brothers, and Jean Ritchie. In addition, the Festival attracted musicians from the New York folk scene including Maria Muldaur, who attended the Festival in order to meet the performers and learn guitar techniques from Doc Watson.[403] Goodwin and the other organizers served as mediators to connect these traditional folk singers to Cornell students. The CFSC members challenged the popularly accepted image of folk music by hosting the Festival

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[402] Mike Goodwin, "To Whom It May Concern," Cornell Folk Song Club Records, 1964-1974 (Archives 37-6-2671), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.
[403] Goodwin, interview with the author, April 30, 2007.

and concerts.

In contrast to the way the CFSC members in the 1950s had regarded folk music as part of the American past, those in the 1960s viewed folk music increasingly as contemporary cultures of "the other." As Bruce Jackson (and other folklorists) pointed out, the folk revival "appealed primarily to individuals who celebrated traditions not their own."[404] Folk singers performing at the concerts had different racial and/or socioeconomic backgrounds from the majority of Cornell students and concert management involved associating with people of different backgrounds. When the Indian sitarist Ravi Shankar visited Cornell for a concert, Shankar's management company sent the CFSC a memo entitled "Some Hospitality Suggestions for Ravi Shankar, Alla Rankha, and Kamala Chakravarty." It included a dietary direction suggesting that the host should serve tea and cookies to Shankar during the intermission and fish or chicken after the concert. The letter read: "P.S. Indians are not dieters like we Americans. Rice and potatoes will be fine."[405] Jesse Fuller, an African-American itinerant blues singer from Oakland, sent a letter in 1962 to Goodwin asking him for money. Fuller wrote: "Please Mr. Goodwin send me some money as a money order so I

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[404] Bruce Jackson, "The Folksong Revival," in *Transforming Tradition*, 73.
[405] Charles R. Rothschild to Sande Milton, September 22, 1967, Cornell Folk Song Club Records, 1964-1974 (Archives 37-6-2671), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York

can finish my trip. I am broke down in Detroit and cant go no where."[406] Goodwin recalled that he helped out Fuller because half the pleasure of having concerts was socializing with performers like Fuller and giving Cornell students the opportunity to personally know them. He recently reevaluated the meaning of interacting with folk musicians as a learning experience:

> One of the first lessons a young person needs to learn (if she or he is going to grow up into a sophisticated and interesting adult) is that the way he/she was brought up is not the only way to live. Learning that other values exist in the world, and that they are just as valid as the ones you grew up with, is essential. Many Americans never learn this lesson, which is one big reason why we have a bad rep in the world. Meeting folk musicians whose lifestyles, values, and cultural givens were different was invaluable. Some of their values were radical; others were conservative; all were fresh and scary and tempting and uncomfortable and upsetting and different.[407]

Similarly, Martha Ture (Class of 1967) agreed with Goodwin and emphasized that college circuit was the "bread and butter" for poor traveling folk singers. She also stated, "Sophistication can be defined as the ability to engage with all peoples and all classes with graciousness and interest."[408] Learning folk music helped her and others achieve that sophistication.

The folk revivalists and fans constructed "the folk" in opposition to themselves

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[406] Jesse Fuller, Detroit, Michigan, to Michael Goodwin, Ithaca, New York, October 3, 1962, Cornell Folk Song Club Records, 1964-1974 (Archives 37-6-2671), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.
[407] Goodwin, email message to the author, June 3, 2007.
[408] Martha Ture, email message to the author, June 2007.

and as a result, overlooked the differences among the folk. Archie Green recalled that a South Indian artist resented being called a folk singer as he performed classical art music and was of Brahmin caste. Green and the members of the Campus Folksong Club at Illinois "had to learn that not all 'ethnic' or 'foreign' artists fell comfortably into American 'folk' bins."[409] "The folk" was an American construction and despite its cosmopolitan and multicultural outlook, the folk revival was based on the worldview that had middle-class, white America at the center.

The "traditionalist" members of the CFSC believed that as an outsider of the folk traditions, they should learn and preserve the manner in which traditional folk singers performed folk music. The New Lost City Ramblers, a group of white middle-class musicians who reproduced traditional Southern Mountain music, were their role model. John Cohen of the New Lost City Ramblers told Goodwin that the group was "just sharing their discoveries of old music and they wanted to do so in as traditional a way as possible."[410] This view led them to take deferential attitude toward the authentic folk singers. As Mitchell summarized:

> Arguments over the "authenticity" of imitators versus traditional musicians abounded throughout the revival; imitators were never permitted to forget that, no matter how much they resembled the traditional performers, they would always be considered

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[409] Green, "The Campus Folksong Club," 65.
[410] Goodwin, telephone interview.

derivative by factions within the movement.[411]

Goodwin downplayed his skill and role as a performer by claiming that the primary reason he played the guitar was to learn folk music better, even though he played the guitar and performed with his brother and Diebold in a band during college years.[412]

The CFSC members' appreciation of folk music and authentic folk singers were closely tied to their support of the civil rights movement and promotion of cultural diversity. Ture went further than espousing diversity by regarding folk music as embodying the history of the underprivileged population. She stated, "You can't understand your own country's inexplicabilities without knowing the details of history and culture not taught formally." Folk music provided those details. Having grown up in Washington, D.C. where she witnessed racial segregation firsthand while at the same time being taught the value of equality at school and at home, Ture was personally invested in the civil rights movement. Although the CFSC activities did not involve singing topical songs, she perceived folk singing and the civil rights movement to be closely tied to each other. Further, she traced the root of her concern for the civil rights

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[411] Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival*, 94.

[412] Goodwin, telephone interview. Folklorist Neil Rosenberg pointed out the "imitators" remained in power even though they considered themselves inauthentic and praised traditional folk singers. Folk revivalists were "from a dominant class and therefore [had] the power to choose the terms on which they [would] assimilate." Rosenberg, "Starvation, Serendipity, and the Ambivalence of Bluegrass Revivalism," in *Transforming Tradition*, 196-197.

in the U.S. to understanding different cultures of the world, the values she learned at school where she studied with children of embassy staff from around the world. Folk music, struggles for desegregation, and international understanding went hand in hand.[413]

Even though the CFSC members, like other folk revival participants, learned folk music as a foreign culture, they inherited values, political positions, and musical aesthetics to appreciate folk music from their parents. Goodwin's parents had strongly opposed racism even before the rise of the civil rights movement.[414] Diebold's parents learned folk music at Swarthmore College and handed their record collection to their son, allowing him to appreciate the music before the folk revival.[415] Ture grew up in Washington, D.C. in a political family and international classmates at school, who were taught to be "little ambassadors and ambassadresses to the entire world" who would be "kind, interested in, and helpful" to people of all backgrounds.[416] These CFSC members inherited their knowledge, sensibility, and political beliefs from their parents and brought them to Cornell. Susan Douglas argued that the post-war optimism and the belief that Americans could achieve anything, which the baby boomers learned from their parents,

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[413] Ture, email message to the author, June 2007.
[414] Goodwin, email message to the author, June 2007.
[415] Diebold, telephone interview.
[416] Ture, email message.

encouraged young Americans to participate in the civil rights movement.[417] Todd Gitlin wrote that the "generation gap" was smaller among the New Left and the educated middle-class families: both the parents and children "wanted to live out the commitments to justice, peace, equality, and personal freedom."[418] These CFSC members illustrated that the parents of some baby boomers provided their children with the resources to critique dominant culture, as opposed to embodying the culture. The baby boomers' confidence in their values led them to disseminate those values to other students and to form a community based on them.

As the folk music revival declined and singer-songwriters replaced folk singers in the 1970s, the CFSC members split between those who supported the singing of traditional folk songs only and those who liked pieces by "commercial" singer-songwriters. According to Phil Shapiro (MA 1969), the traditionalists won control over the CFSC. Shapiro organized a series of concerts to advance traditional folk songs.[419] He had come to Ithaca in 1967 as a graduate student in economics and began a weekly radio program called "Bound for Glory," where he broadcast live folk concerts from Cornell campus. "Bound for Glory" added another center to the folk

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[417] Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with Mass Media* (New York: Times Press, 1994).
[418] Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (Bantam, 1993), 19.
[419] Phil Shapiro, interview, Ithaca, New York, June 15, 2003.

music community in Ithaca. During the early to mid-1970s, the CFSC activities consisted of weekly Friday night concerts, monthly Sing, and attending the "Bound for Glory" concerts.[420] Cornell continued to have a thriving folk music scene after the folk revival.

The CFSC in the 1970s maintained similar activities as in the 1960s, resisting popularized image of folk music while favoring traditional folk singers. The members organized folk concerts to showcase and socialize with lesser known "traditional" folk singers, balancing a "money-making artist" with "those that did not attract audience." Pete Seeger continued to be one of the money-making singers, as he accepted invitations from Cornell, remembering that the audiences at Cornell warmly received him even during the height of McCarthyism. He filled the Baily Hall and the revenue from his concert would bankroll the group for several years. The singers would often stay at the CFSC members' apartments and enjoyed interacting with them.[421] The CFSC even overcame its financial crisis around 1980 by successfully organizing concerts. Bill Steele recalled that the members found only $300 in the treasury and decided to use the money to organize one last concert before disbanding. However, the concert turned out to be a great success and the CFSC gained another $300 through ticket sales. Building

[420] Wendy Grossman, interview, Tokyo, Japan, November 30, 2004.
[421] Grossman, interview.

on that success, the CFSC has survived to this day.[422]

Scholars have argued that folk musicians in the 1970s began to look at themselves and their own heritage for sources, as illustrated by the prominence of singer-songwriters and the ethnic revivals of Klezmer and Irish music. Singer-songwriters wrote introspective songs irrelevant to social issues. In contrast to the folk musicians in the 1960s who looked for roots outside their own within American indigenous music, those in the 1970s located them in traditional music of the Old World where their ancestors came from.[423] Further, folk musicians grew less interested in the authenticity debate. Sheldon Posen recalled that by the 1970s, "people seemed to tire of the whole argument about authenticity and just decided to play and listen to what they wanted. Very 1970s."[424] Mitchell characterized singer-songwriters and the ethnic revivals as nostalgic and escapist in nature: "their prominence…seemed more of an escape from contemporary society than the manifestation of an optimistic pluralist perspective."[425] Folk musicians became inner-directed during the 1970s.

The CFSC did not completely follow this national trend. On the one hand, the

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[422] Bill Steele, interview, Ithaca, New York, June 16, 2003.
[423] Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival*, 169-172.
[424] I. Sheldon Posen, "On Folk Festivals and Kitchens: Questions of Authenticity in the Folksong Revival," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 128.
[425] Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival*, 181.

majority of the CFSC members remained white and middle-class even though the university had a growing number of nonwhite students. They also did not discuss authenticity or politics, preferring to think of their activities as purely musical. Wendy Grossman (Class of 1975), who served president between 1973-75, voiced her uneasiness with the idea of attributing one's preference for folk music to political reasons. She stated, "You might have underestimated the number of people who simply get involved with the music because they just really liked that kind of music" who "just responded to tunes and stories."[426] On the other hand, the members rejected introspective singer-songwriters and continued to appreciate traditional folk songs outside of their heritage and backgrounds. She criticized how the term "Klezmer" music in fact underscored the fact that "folk" music was centered on "Anglo-Irish-American" traditions; instead of incorporating Jewish traditional music into the American folk heritage, they made a separate name.[427] Further, while Grossman considered herself an outsider of folk traditions because of her white, upper middle-class, New York background, she believed one could learn to become closer to the insider by taking the approach of learning a foreign language. In fact, thirty years after college, Grossman today finds herself closer to the insider, as few other people know the folk songs she

[426] Grossman, interview.
[427] Grossman, email message to the author, September 20, 2007.

performs.[428]

Grossman's views of folk music signaled a transition in the CFSC members' attitude toward the music. Instead of regarding folk music as cultures of others, Grossman valued it as a communication tool that allowed people to relate to each other. Current members of the CFSC share her views of folk music as a means of communication. Grossman cited the work of a contemporary Canadian folk singer David Francis, which was based on his twenty years of working in construction sites, to illustrate "absolutely what the folk tradition is about." In contrast, "some woman with a pretty voice and not much guitar skill" singing a song "that you can barely make out the words to, and telling that 'oh, [I wrote this song] because my grandmother died'" made folk music degenerate into "naval gazing songs" that only expressed the feelings of the performer. Grossman also valued the way folk music was passed on from one person to another, either through oral transmission or through songbooks and recordings. In the liner notes to her album, *Roseville Fair*, Grossman explained in detail where she learned each song.[429]

The commercial success of the folk revival and the subsequent prominence of singer-songwriters helped the CFSC members refine their ideas of folk music as

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[428] Grossman, interview.
[429] Grossman, *Roseville Fair*, Lincoln House Records [CD], 1980.

anti-commercial and traditional. The members focused on performers in judging the authenticity of folk music and "tradition" became the standard by which they examined the singers' authenticity. During the 1960s, they located "the folk" outside of their own backgrounds and believed that appreciation of folk music led to intercultural understanding and critiquing dominant American culture. However, this gave way to a more flexible understanding of folk music as a communication tool during the 1970s.

3. Continuity and the Folk Process: The CFSC and the Ithaca Folk Community Today

The CFSC today modestly but steadily hosts a monthly singing party and seasonal concerts initiated by graying community members including university staff, graduates, and "townies," who help students run the club. Contemporary CFSC members embrace an eclectic and inclusive understanding of folk music. As one member wrote, the CFSC has a "tolerant philosophy" of appreciating traditional ballads as well as contemporary singer-songwriters.[430] Bill Steele, who returned to Ithaca after graduating in the 50s and has been a long-time member, explained: "We concentrate on traditional or traditionally-oriented performers. That is not always easy to define, and we reserve the

[430] Margaret Shepard, response to survey by the author, June 14, 2003.

right to be arbitrary about it."[431]

The CFSC members also downplay the class and racial difference that characterized folk music in the 1960s and define it as the music of "the people," which includes themselves. Forty years after the revival, "the folk" has become "us" instead of "the other." The CFSC members today value folk music as a means of communication by emphasizing song lyrics and oral transmission. One member wrote that folk music meant "songs that people learn from each other" while another noted that she likes music "that tells stories or gives pictures of other times."[432] Judy Pierpont, an English lecturer, views folk music as "poetry of the people." She teaches composition to ESL students and observes that folk songs are "shortened versions of novels and poems" that deal with "issues of humanity" that students want to explore in their lives such as death, loss, fear, belief, and oppression.[433] Pierpont thus regards folk music as addressing universal themes as opposed to expressing the cultures of the marginalized population.

The CFSC members emphasize social interaction fostered by sharing folk music. One member wrote that works of singer-songwriters whose songs are "very personally introspective" would not qualify as folk music, as these songs would not resonate with

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[431] "Common Folk," *Ithaca Times*, November 13, 2002.
[432] George Houghton and Jo Houghton, respectively, response to survey by the author, June 14, 2003.
[433] Judy Pierpont, interview, Ithaca, New York, June 2003.

listeners.[434] Bryant Adams, who served as CFSC president in 2004, stated that folk songs tell a story, have a good chorus to sing, and foster social interactions.[435] Folk music is not a subject to debate over but a tool to build a community.

Although the CFSC members do not debate the authenticity of folk music, their activities are not devoid of ideology. They promote and share anti-materialistic values and lifestyles through folk music. They bring homemade dishes to the Sing and use recyclable cups to drink water at the contradance meeting. They attend the "Bound for Glory" live concert on a Superbowl Sunday. One member grows vegetables in his home garden while another has built his own house and celebrates the solstice with a small circle of friends instead of going holiday shopping in the mall. Adams aptly stated that "folk music" is not so much the music itself as the people who gravitate toward the music, the "folkies." The folkies are left-leaning people who engage in "less-commercialistic, self-sufficient living." Adams observes that despite their liberal leanings, they are also conservative in the sense that they adhere to the traditional notion of self-support.[436]

As Adams suggested, folk music represents self-sufficiency in addition to anti-materialism. Shapiro stated that "it is a declaration of independence to make your

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[434] Kathy Wolf, response to survey by the author, June 14, 2003.
[435] Bryant Adams, interview, Ithaca, New York, February 1, 2004.
[436] Adams, interview.

own music because you don't have to rely on commercial media and consumption to entertain yourself."[437] Steele also defined folk music as self-made music: "We thought [the folk music revival] was a revival of a bunch of old folk songs. At least that's the way most people think of it. It wasn't. It was a revival of the idea that ordinary people could make music for themselves…from the very beginning of the 'revival,' half of the songs people were singing had been written two years ago."[438] The members' liking of folk music is tied to their lifestyles and values.

The CFSC members not only embrace those values but also attempt to spread them. They believe that the folk music revival never ended and assert the vibrancy of the folk music scene. Scott Alarik, the author of *Deep Community,* a compilation of interviews with folk singers from the 1990s, asserted that while "the mainstream music industry is in historic decline, the small, substream world of folk music is thriving as never before."[439] Shapiro sends the same message through "Bound for Glory," the radio show he began in 1967 and still runs today. According to Shapiro, the audiences of "Bound for Glory" respond more actively to the performers than the audiences at regular folk concerts do. They laugh at the right moments, sing-along at times, and openly

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[437] Shapiro, interview.
[438] Steele, interview.
[439] Scott Alarik, *Deep Community: Adventures in the Modern Folk Underground* (Cambridge, MA: Black Wolf Press, 2003), 1.

show appreciation of the music being played. The performers enjoy their experience at "Bound for Glory" and pay return visits even if they are not paid.[440] According to Shapiro, "It validates their whole life: It says, 'Yes, you've made the right choice to share your life with us."[441] Shapiro thus suggests that his program provides a haven to folk singers who may not be appreciated in other places. Further, although the live concerts take place in a relatively small room on campus, they are broadcast globally on the Internet. In Shapiro's view, folk music did not disappear with the decline of the folk music revival; rather, it simply "went under the radar." Shapiro regards the audience attracted to "Bound for Glory" as a testament to the thriving folk scene.[442] Steele contended that he and others like him remained unaffected by the folk revival: "People who played in the church basements were still playing in the church basements. [After the folk music boom disappeared,] we went back to where we were before."[443] They stressed the continuity of the folk music scene at Cornell.

Folk music also continued to appeal to young students looking for alternative music. Particularly in the 1990s, as children of the Sixties generation entered college,

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[440] Phil Shapiro, interview, Ithaca, New York, June 15, 2003.
[441] Bill Steele, "'Bound for Glory'—live from Cornell for 35 years," *Cornell Chronicle*, September 27, 2001, http://www.news.cornell.edu/Chronicle/01/9.27.01/Bound_for_Glory.html
[442] Shapiro, interview.
[443] Steele, interview.

Shapiro observed a growing number of undergraduate students in the audiences of "Bound for Glory," which otherwise consist mainly of older community members. The students embraced "non-standard music" that included contemporary acoustic songwriters and old-timey string bands.[444]

Pete Seeger, who has paid multiple visits to Cornell over the past fifty years, influenced the way certain members live their lives and understand music. The "discovery" of Seeger in 1962 made Pierpont seriously interested in folk music. Seeger looked so authentic that all the folk songs that she had listened to as a child such as those by the Kingston Trio became less meaningful to her. She stated, "I think Pete Seeger is just so inspiring as an idealist, his stories go to the heart, he has something to say, and it was inspiring to an adolescent, a person who was looking for something, powerful ideas to believe in and hope for. No older people were somehow talking to us like that." She joined the Peace Corps and lived in an isolated area in India, where she formed a community with other Westerners listening to Bob Dylan, Tom Paxton, and the Beatles from the records that a Peace Corps doctor brought to them from the U.S.[445] Steele recalls that Seeger was his idol and a strong influence: "Not only the songs but [Seeger's] whole charisma on stage, and the way he could get people to sing along and participate.

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[444] Steele, "'Bound for Glory'—live from Cornell for 35 years."
[445] Pierpont, interview.

I tried to imitate that and I got pretty good at it." He took up the banjo, improved on his performing skills, and emulated Seeger's singing voice.[446]

The CFSC members believe that the folk tradition is continuous and that they participate in reshaping that tradition following Seeger's idea of the "folk process." Seeger has proposed that "folk music is not so much any particular group of songs or singers, but rather it is a process, an age-old process of ordinary people making their own music, reshaping old traditions to fit new situations."[447] Seeger further encouraged people to actively use the folk process to make new songs, but only after they have learned the folk tradition, writing, "The good folk musician is a creator as well as a re-creator, and when he creates he improvises within the idiom."[448] Steele took Seeger's advice to heart and learned traditional folk songs for about 20 years before he wrote "A Thousand Songs," about a folk festival.[449] He composed other songs relating to events around the world such as the pollution and the Gulf War. Similarly, Terry Kelleher composed "Twelve Steps" and "Inland Privateers" in the past decade after a long period of playing the guitar and singing others' songs.[450] The CFSC members embrace these

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[446] Steele, interview.
[447] Pete Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), 145.
[448] Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, 413.
[449] Steele, interview, Ithaca, August 28, 2004.
[450] Terry Kelleher, conversation, August 29, 2004.

songs at the monthly Sing. Steele's "A Thousand Songs" and "Chocolate Chip Cookies" are among the perennial favorites. For example, at the January 2004 Sing, the members sang in harmony the chorus to "A Thousand Songs" while Shapiro played the guitar accompaniment. About one third of the songs they sing at the Sing are traditional folk songs while the majority are compositions of the last two decades.[451] Indeed, Naomi Lohr from the 1950s CFSC, who watched the video recording of the January 2004 Sing, recognized only about 15 of the 46 songs as those that she could have sung in the 1950s Sing.[452] However, the distinction between "old" and "new" songs is vague, because some songs are not easily distinguishable. Shapiro stated that the best compliment one gets is when he or she performs a new folk song and people mistake it for a traditional one.[453] The CFSC members regard themselves as active participants in the folk tradition.

The CFSC members at the Sing also adhere to the singing style that Seeger dictated. Seeger preached that a student of folk songs should learn the folk manner of singing as well as lyrics and tunes of folk songs.[454] Audience participation and group singing, a

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[451] Steele, interview, June 16, 2003.
[452] Lohr, conversation, August 22, 2004.
[453] Shapiro, conversation, June 14, 2003.
[454] Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, 145.

practice for which Seeger was famous, was part of the process.[455] He looked to Woody Guthrie as a model to emulate and promoted "a matter-of-fact, unmelodramatic" delivery of singing, which involved maintaining steady volume and tempo. Seeger in particular discouraged his readers from using retardandos and insisted that "[s]udden crescendos and pianissimos are abjured."[456] Seeger further outlined how to sing folk songs appropriately, listing "Seven ways to ruin an American folk song," which included "Sing it in the kind of *bel canto* voice that says "Look what impressive pipes I have!" and "Croon it as though it were just one more pretty pop song."[457] Seeger also instructed singers to keep accompaniments minimal, writing "don't pretty up your harmony too much" and "The greatest success is when the song itself overwhelms you, and you don't even think about the arrangement."[458] Seeger suggested that as Guthrie did, folksingers should prioritize words and contour melodies and phrasing to best express those words, sometimes incorporating irregularities into the music.[459]

The CFSC members at the Sing preserve the manner in which Seeger suggested singing folk songs. They use natural voices and natural phrasing, enunciate words to the

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[455] Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, 330.
[456] Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, 353.
[457] Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, 415.
[458] Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, 411.
[459] Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, 353.

songs clearly, accompany themselves with simple acoustic harmonies, and encourage audience participation. At the January 2004 Sing, for example, the members sang along, in an unmelodramatic manner, the chorus to a murder ballad "The Banks of the Ohio," which describes the way in which a man drowns his girlfriend. At the same Sing, Pamela Goddard sang British ballads including "Scarborough Fair" unaccompanied and in a detached manner, with her eyes closed. The CFSC members also employ simple arrangements, which was made evident when Carrie Shore, an accomplished violinist, playfully accompanied a song in an exaggerated and elaborate manner. Other members remarked, "Nice schmaltz," acknowledging that Shore mocked how a violinist would accompany a popular song.

The CFSC today serves as a community where folk singers and fans validate their values and lifestyles. They refuse to think of folk music as a momentary craze of the past, a view illustrated in the mockumentary *A Mighty Wind*.[460] Certain members are semiprofessionals who have invested their lives in folk music and lead lives according to the values they see inherent in folk music. As Shapiro noted of the performers who visit "Bound for Glory," folk singers and fans today reassure each other of the values of folk music and their lifestyles.

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[460] *A Mighty Wind*, directed by Christopher Guest, 2003.

The definition of folk at the CFSC appears to have returned to the one from the early 1950s, when the CFSC members considered folk music as old songs for everyone to sing. However, the current CFSC members believe they actively participate in the folk tradition. By vaguely defining the folk as "the people," they have freed themselves from the confines dictated by a narrow view of authenticity. Their white middle-class background, which would have marked their inauthenticity at the height of the folk revival, no longer keeps them from claiming the music as their own. Ethnomusicologist Neil Rosenberg pointed out that the folk revival created a new tradition. Although the revivalists considered themselves outsiders to the folk tradition, over time, they created a tradition for others to carry on.[461] The forerunner of such a revival was Pete Seeger, whose inauthentic background as an upper-middle-class Harvard dropout combined with an earnest interest in folk culture and hard work made him a role model of a folk singer for white middle-class younger revivalists to emulate. As Filene has put it, Seeger had an "ability to cross the outsider-insider barrier without pretending to dissolve it—to become identified as a legitimate expositor of traditional cultures without disguising his status as an interloper."[462] Current CFSC members have adopted Seeger's philosophy of folk music and follow his definition and singing style. They have inherited the tradition

[461] Neil Rosenberg, "The New Aesthetic," in *Transforming Tradition*, 123.
[462] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 201.

created through the folk music revival.

Conclusion

The outlook of the CFSC changed significantly over time: the repertoire of folk songs expanded from old traditional ballads to include songs written by the members themselves. As members got older, the proportion of community members to students increased. However, there is a strong consistency in their lifestyles and ideals over time. A majority of them have been middle-class white Americans of left-leaning political orientation who have criticized dominant culture and embraced diversity and anti-commercialism. Folk music has been not simply a genre of music that they happened to like (although some prefer to think of it in that way), but represented their cultural values and formed an integral part of their life. Further, the meaning and the definition of "folk" has always been constructed and contested against dominant images of folk music and folk musicians of the time. The folk music revival created those images to which the CFSC members responded in their definition of this genre.

Over the last fifty years, the definition of folk music among the CFSC members changed from a "collection of old songs" to "cultures of the other" to the "music of the people," or self-made music. They defined folk music in opposition to the way it was

commonly understood in the commercial worlds. During the folk music revival, the CFSC members regarded the folk as cultures of others and promoted diversity through appreciating folk music. This essentialized sense of difference gave way to a more relative idea of an insider and outsider during the 1970s. Over time, the folk came to mean “us”; the members regard themselves participants in the folk traditions.

CHAPTER 4: THE RECEPTION OF PETER, PAUL AND MARY AND BOB DYLAN IN JAPAN

Introduction

In the 1963 Newport Folk Festival, Peter, Paul and Mary, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, and Theodore Bikel joined hand in hand with the Freedom Singers to sing "We Shall Overcome." The oft-cited picture of this scene symbolized the height of the folk boom and the political idealism associated with folk music in the U.S.[463] Peter, Paul and Mary and Bob Dylan were representative figures in the folk music scene in the U.S.

These two sets of contemporary musicians played different roles in Japan, each serving as the historical root of a different phase of the Japanese folk music scene. While Peter, Paul and Mary served as a role model for Japanese amateur college folk singers who depoliticized the music, Dylan was dubbed the "god of folk" by the media and folk singers, who identified him as the leader and role model of anti-war protest

[463] Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 183.

singers in the 1960s. After the folk revival, the Japanese media used these American musicians to narrate the history of the Japanese folk music scene, even making a chronological error of presenting the two sets of musicians as coming from different periods of time: Peter, Paul and Mary was the direct ancestor of the Japanese "college" folk period of the early 1960s, followed by the emergence of Bob Dylan, who inspired Japanese folk singers of the "underground" folk period of the late 1960s. Japanese musicians built their careers using this image (Japanese protest folk singers called themselves "Dylan's children") and critics and fans narrated Japanese music history in a way that would boost Japanese national pride by arguing that the Japanese musicians modeled after and then surpassed the American musicians. Thirty years later, Japanese fans today regard Peter, Paul and Mary and Dylan – once the icons of American folk singers – as "universal" figures decontextualized from American history and culture; they are no longer "American" or "folk." Peter, Paul and Mary fans reconnect with their college friends through the performance of the trio's music while Dylan fans adore him as a legendary artist and a rock musician. Critics, promoters, and musicians working in the music industry struggle over ownership of these artists to improve their status among Japanese fans and audiences.

Bob Dylan: From a Social Protest Singer to an Enigmatic Artist

Bob Dylan first came to be known in Japan as the writer of folk songs popularized by Peter, Paul and Mary and Joan Baez.[464] While "Blowing' in the Wind" became extremely popular in Japan in 1964, Dylan's album did not get released in Japan until December 1965.[465] The first magazine to speak about Dylan introduced him in an article entitled "Odetta, Whom Harry Belafonte Admires, Comes to Japan." Despite its title, a significant portion of the article described Dylan's popularity in Great Britain at that time. The article contrasted Dylan and the Beatles, identifying them as a folk singer and a rock 'n' roll band respectively despite the fact that Dylan had already released rock music pieces by the time the article appeared. The article reported that the Beatles would appear in Dylan's upcoming concert and that it would be an "on-stage battle" between Dylan's folk music and the Beatles' "rhythm and blues."[466]

The media continued to portray Dylan as a folk singer of protest even after his departure from the folk music scene. In an article that reported the controversy and

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[464] Ichiro Fukuda, "Kaigai no wadai: Berafonte betabore no Odetta rainichi su" [What's Happening Outside Japan: Odetta, Whom Belafonte Admires, Comes to Japan], *Heibon Punch*, April 26, 1965, 110.
[465] Yoshitake Maeda and Koji Hirahara, *60-nendai foku no jidai [The Era of the 60s Folk Music]* (Tokyo: Shinko Music, 1993), 239-240.
[466] Ichiro Fukuda, "Kaigai no wadai: purotesuto songu to Bobu Diran" [What's Happening Outside Japan: Protest Songs and Bob Dylan], *Heibon Punch*, November 1, 1965, 110.

debates over the censorship of Barry McGuire's "Eve of Destruction" in the U.S, *Heibon Punch* in November 1965 gave Dylan the last word, concluding the article by quoting him and calling him "the god of folk-rock and protest song."[467] A *Heibon Punch* article in February 1966 depicted Dylan as a socially conscious, anti-commercial troubadour who traveled freely around the country, stopping by college campuses to sing songs while rejecting lucrative offers for television shows. The article reported that Dylan, Baez, and Pete Seeger "taunted the White House" with their criticism of the administration and gained the support of young college students through anti-war songs. The author further explained that while popular media censored and blacklisted them, serious college students preferred these "outcasts of the pop music world" to the more commercial folk-singing groups such as the Kingston Trio, the Limeliters, and the Brothers Four and popular rock musicians like Elvis Presley and the Beatles. The article explained that Baez, Dylan, and Seeger appealed to students because their songs "voiced the frank feelings of young Americans who hate the war and do not want to be drafted."[468] The media described Dylan as the champion of anti-war protest.

In April 1967, Japanese *Playboy* magazine reported in detail Dylan's change in

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[467] Fukuda, "Kaigai no wadai," 110-111.
[468] "Howaito hausu o nayamasu san-nin no hansen kashu" [Three Anti-War Singers Who Taunt the White House], *Heibon Punch*, February 14, 1966, 25.

direction, supposedly from a protest folk singer to a self-absorbed rock musician, in an article entitled "LSD-like Life of Bob Dylan, Former Lover of Joan Baez – Can the 'King of Folk-Rock' Revive?"

> Bob Dylan's name is well known in Japan as the Hero of Protest Songs and Joan Baez's former lover. But two years ago, he suddenly turned his back on politics and became the idol of teenagers all over the world as the King of Folk-Rock. His former comrades now call him traitor, and Joan Baez left him as well. Since his motorcycle accident last year, he leads a tumultuous and chaotic life, which evokes the world of LSD.[469]

The article summarized Dylan's life by capturing key moments including his running away from home on several occasions as a young boy; his relocation to New York in search of freedom and his encounter with his idol Woody Guthrie; his romance with Joan Baez and his ascendancy to stardom in the folk scene; the 1965 Newport Festival incident; and the motorcycle accident, which left him "seriously injured." The article reported that Dylan had once been the superstar among protest folk singers and had come close to marrying the queen of folk; however, having forsaken both, he was reduced to writing LSD-inspired songs and songs with homosexual themes, which might jeopardize his career. The article quoted an anonymous music critic who expressed his doubt as to whether Dylan would be able to appear on stage again.[470] This article showed that

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[469] "Jon Baezu no koibito datta Bobu Diran no LSD-teki seikatsu" [LSD-like Life of Bob Dylan, Former Lover of Joan Baez], *Playboy*, April 11, 1967, 42-43.
[470] "Jon Baezu no koibito datta Bobu Diran no LSD-teki seikatsu" [LSD-like Life of Bob

Dylan's life had already assumed legendary status within the set narrative of the rise and fall of a folk star. The Japanese popular media attempted to maintain Dylan's role as a forerunner in protest folk singer by burying him in the past instead of reporting on his recent new direction.

While the popular media like *Heibon Punch* and *Playboy* ceased to report on Dylan after 1967 until he began his concert tour with The Band in 1974, *New Music Magazine*, the first magazine that specialized in rock music, periodically published essays by music critics about Dylan. Music critic Toyo Nakamura, who founded the magazine, reasoned that both Dylan and the Beatles paved the way for a new type of music. While the popular media in the mid-1960s had focused on the personal life of Dylan, including his romance with Joan Baez and his tumultuous childhood and youth (most of which proved to have been fabricated by Dylan), critics who wrote for the *New Music Magazine* focused on the lyrics (mostly through translation) and the philosophy behind Dylan's works; they rarely analyzed the musical aspects of his music.

Writers for the *New Music Magazine* had three themes in portraying Dylan, which influenced the way popular magazines reported on him in the late 1970s. They asserted that Dylan was a mysterious, enigmatic artist; a democratic social critic; and an outdated

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Dylan, Former Lover of Joan Baez], *Playboy*, April 11, 1967, 44-45.

star surpassed by Japanese musicians who initially emulated him. First, all the Japanese critics agreed that Dylan was a cryptic artist who defied understanding, attributing this incomprehensibility partially to language and to cultural differences. The critics insisted on Dylan's incomprehensibility while depending on American writers in interpreting his music. They also privileged a certain number of Dylan "specialists." Despite the difficulty in understanding (or perhaps because of that), music critics assumed the importance of Dylan's works and took him seriously. Second, critics continued to look for signs indicating that Dylan remained a protest singer who conveyed messages through his songs. Third, critics and folk singers identified Dylan as the forefather of Japanese folk singers, thereby occasionally relegating him to the past or suggesting that the Japanese folk singers had surpassed him.

Japanese critics demonstrated their problems with authenticity in interpreting Dylan, suggesting that Americans understood him better than they did. Critic and lyricist Reiko Yukawa assumed that Dylan was an important, mysterious artist, beyond the comprehension of the Japanese. Even though Dylan was beyond the comprehension of many Americans as well, Japanese critics including Yukawa believed their Japanese background kept them from properly understanding him. In her essay entitled, "Incomprehensible Yet Beautiful: An Approach to Bob Dylan the Poet," Yukawa revealed

her uneasiness with claiming to comprehend Dylan:

> It was not until I learned that Bob Dylan was not necessarily a difficult poet to understand that I got interested in Bob Dylan. That does not mean, however, that he is easy to understand … According to native speakers of English, Bob Dylan's songs are beautiful … They say that it is sometimes not clear what he means but his words are beautiful. [471]

Although it was unclear who exactly the "native speakers" were, or where she obtained the information, Yukawa reasoned that Dylan's songs must be worth examining if native speakers liked them. She proceeded to examine the manner in which Dylan's songs were actually "difficult to understand but beautiful" by analyzing "Rainy Day Women #12 & 35," a song that she did not find beautiful when she first heard it in 1966. Yukawa wrote that she had come to understand the song better after her visit to the Haight-Ashbury district, where she witnessed hippies who "got stoned." She then saw other songs including "Mr. Tambourine Man" as "drug songs," and wrote that Dylan's drug-inspired songs were more beautiful than his earlier pieces, as Dylan's imagination was more active in such songs. Yukawa conceded that, in the end, since she was Japanese her opinion would not be of much importance.

Japanese critics' diffidence assumed a comical tone as music critic Kazuo Mihashi wrote that he had suffered from insomnia and acute gastritis in his attempt to comprehend

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[471] Reiko Yukawa, "Wakaranai dakedo – utsukushii: shijin Bobu Diran e no apurochi" [Incomprehensible Yet Beautiful: An Approach to Bob Dylan the Poet], *Music Magazine*, July 1969, 13-18.

Dylan; however, Mihashi concluded that it was not necessary to understand every word of Dylan's songs and it was sufficient to *feel* something and take it back home. To his dismay, Mihashi then discovered that American music critic Paul Williams had already proposed the same idea.[472] Mihashi thus suggested that although it took a Japanese tremendous effort to reach a conclusion on Dylan, an American critic could easily do so. Another critic, Yosuke Kawamura, interpreted Dylan's newly released album *Self Portrait* seriously as full of meanings that he could not fathom. He wrote: "Everyone has been talking about what Dylan was thinking, and I'm fully aware that I am not capable of answering such a question."[473] After this disclaimer, Kawamura argued that Dylan's transition from folk to rock, then to country and western to romantic ballads, of which the album mostly comprised, was "not only convincing but also very American," because by singing romantic ballads, Dylan had "returned to the roots of American music." Kawamura then wrote that Dylan distinguished himself from other popular singers by singing in harsh voice, which would normally be inappropriate for romantic ballads.[474] The album included numerous cover songs including "Blue Moon," and

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[472] Kazuo Mihashi, *60-nendai no Bobu Diran [Bob Dylan in the 60s]* (Tokyo: Shinko Music, 1991), 42-44.
[473] Yosuke Kawamura, "Amerika ongaku ni kaiki shita? Bobu Diran" [Has He Returned to American Music?: Bob Dylan], *New Music Magazine*, September 1970, 24.
[474] Kawamura, "Amerika ongaku ni kaiki shita? Bobu Diran," 25.

critics considered the instrumentals excessive. Dylan's biographer, Howard Sounes, argues that Dylan created this unusual album that included songs originally by other artists because he wanted to minimize his manager Albert Grossman's profits.[475] Instead of dismissing Dylan's album as a failure or nonsense, as American critics did, Kawamura took it seriously and claimed that it was "American" and interesting. However, after presenting his interpretations in this manner, Kawamura concluded that "Dylan [was] perhaps thinking about something entirely different and my interpretation would prove to be wrong. But Dylan is attractive nevertheless."[476] Kawamura thus demonstrated his insecurity over interpreting Dylan, and yet instead of doing research or referring to American authorities, concluded that Dylan was incomprehensible to the Japanese. Similarly, Satoru Hamano and Shinzo Ishiura agreed, after having written six-page essays on the subject, that despite their substantial efforts, Dylan proved difficult to understand.[477] Ishiura concluded that Dylan was a "code" that was not meant to be deciphered but "invited the audience to become codes themselves."[478] Japanese music critics thus discouraged Japanese readers from trying to understand Dylan by writing

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[475] Howard Sounes, *Down the Highway: The Life of Bob Dylan* (New York: Grove Press, 2001), 240.
[476] Kawamura, "Amerika ongaku ni kaiki shita? Bobu Diran," 25.
[477] Satoru Hamano and Shinzo Ishiura, "Bobu Diran o kangaeru: danpenteki oboegaki," [Thinking about Bob Dylan: Memos] *New Music Magazine*, April 1972, 67.
[478] Hamano and Ishiura, "Bobu Diran o kangaeru," 71.

about his incomprehensibility.

While Japanese critics believed that they were unable to sufficiently understand Dylan because of language differences, Williams argued that the fact that the Japanese appreciated Bob Dylan implied that Dylan's lyrics were not very important to his appeal. In an article entitled "Aquarelle with Words and Sound: Maturing Bob Dylan," Williams wrote that it was intriguing for Americans like him to learn that the Japanese admired Bob Dylan, whose lyrics puzzled even Americans. Williams reasoned that contrary to popular belief in the U.S., Dylan's emotional appeal lay not in his lyrics but in his singing voice; it was the manner in which he attempted to communicate with the audience that was most appealing.[479]

In addition to Dylan's incomprehensibility and the uncertainty with which music critics attempted to analyze him, the concept that Dylan was a protest singer persisted. Poet Yuzuru Katagiri, who translated Dylan's lyrics, argued that Dylan protested against the establishment even through his love songs. According to Katagiri, Dylan's "It Ain't Me, Babe," a song in which the narrator declares that he will not behave like a gentleman, was a strong anti-romance protest song against the establishment, claiming the right of

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[479] Williams' article was available only in Japanese translation. Yoshihiro Masaki, trans., "Kotoba to oto ni yoru suisai-ga: enjuku ni mukau Bobu Diran," [Aquarelle with Words and Sound: Maturing Bob Dylan] *New Music Magazine*, June 1975, 25.

men to be "effeminate." Katagiri claimed that conventional manhood that was manifested through heterosexual monogamy served the interest of rulers who enforced capitalism and Christianity, akin to the Japanese military leaders during the Second World War who imposed ideal manhood on the Japanese in order to secure their blind loyalty to the country. He argued that challenging the dominant notion of masculinity and the institution of marriage threatened the establishment more than direct political activism; therefore, Dylan's anti-love songs like "It Ain't Me, Babe" were, in fact, powerful and subversive. Katagiri concluded that Japanese fans understood only a quarter of Dylan's songs, since they did not experiment with LSD and also because of language differences.[480] While closely analyzing Dylan's lyrics to find a meaningful message, Katagiri concluded by emphasizing the incomprehensibility of Dylan, thereby discouraging the general readers from attempting to analyze him.

Despite the Japanese claim to be unable to comprehend Dylan, Japanese critics and folk singers were certain that Dylan was the direct ancestor of Japanese folk singers. In the September 1969 issue of *New Music Magazine*, folk singer and music critic Tadasu Tagawa asserted that Japanese folk singers who had begun their career as followers of Dylan had already surpassed their American master. In a parody poem entitled "Hey Mr.

[480] Yuzuru Katagiri, "Diran no 'memeshisa' ga taisei o yusuburu," [Dylan's Effeminacy Undermines the Establishment] *New Music Magazine*, July 1969, 21-23.

Dylan," which invoked the opening line of Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man," Tagawa mocked Dylan by addressing him in a nagging, unkindly manner, just as Dylan criticized a woman who lost her privilege in his "Like a Rolling Stone." In the poem, Tagawa indicated that even though it had only been less than a decade since "Blowin' in the Wind" and "Masters of War" were released, Dylan was already on the threshold of being surpassed in Japan by powerful Japanese folk singers, including Nobuyasu Okabayashi. Tagawa cited the successful release of a recent Japanese folk song, "Kaze" [wind] (1969), to assert the superiority of Japanese folk singers. Further, Tagawa called Dylan "fertile" with numerous offspring, listing the first names of American and Japanese musicians: "Al [Cooper], Mike [Bloomfield], Johnny [Cash], Joan [Baez], Tomoya [Takaishi], Nobuyasu [Okabayashi], Haruomi [Hosono], Goro [Nakagawa], and Kenji [Endo]." The narrator anticipated that although people now examined Dylan's every move in detail, someday they would be indifferent to him. Through the song, the narrator questioned Dylan about whether his characteristic "bashful smile" would freeze once his "offspring" ceased to mention him. The narrator suggested that when people started to ignore him, Dylan must remember the phrase "don't think twice, it's all right."[481] By using such words such as "offspring" and "fertility," Tagawa suggested a familial connection between

[481] Tadasu Tagawa, "Bob Dylan: Hey, Mr. Dylan," *Music Magazine*, September 1969, 43.

Dylan and Japanese folk singers. Tagawa used Dylan's authority to claim the maturity of the Japanese folk music scene.

Just as Tagawa asserted that Japanese folk singers succeeded and then surpassed Dylan, Takuro Yoshida, a folk singer who rose to stardom in Japan in the early 1970s, identified Dylan as the legendary folk singer whom he emulated and from he then became independent. Yoshida commented on Dylan in 1970 as follows: "People would call me the Japanese-made Dylan, but I would say, no way! Dylan is far beyond reach [of ordinary artists like me]. Besides, calling someone a Japanese-made so-and-so suggests that he is a fake."[482] Eight years later, he reiterated his admiration for Dylan: "[Dylan is] a god. To me, he is so great that I cannot comment on him or critique him."[483] Yoshida thus called on Dylan's authority to define himself while at the same time indicating his independence from the American folk singer.

As shown in Chapter 2, Dylan inspired Japanese folk singers to emulate him and write folk songs of their own. Their biographers and the media also emphasized Japanese folk singers' connection with Dylan and used his authority as the "god of folk

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[482] Takuro Yoshida, "Takuro no kuchiguse [Takuro's Monograph], *Young Guitar*, September 1970, reprinted in *Foku ogon jidai [The Golden Age of Folk]* (Tokyo: Shinko Music, 1992), 10.

[483] "Bobu Diran ga yatte kuru 'shijin' to iwazuni 'karuwazashi' to yonde kudasai [Bob Dylan Is Coming: Please Don't Call Me a 'Poet' Call Me an 'Entertainer'], *Josei Jishin*, February 16, 1978, 153.

(-rock)" to impress the readers. Yoshida emulated Dylan with his guitar and harmonica style, and came to be known as the "Japanese-made" (*wasei*) Bob Dylan. He allegedly even ran away from home to become a folk singer like Bob Dylan.[484] Another folk singer, Kenji Endo, heard "Like A Rolling Stone" on the Far East Network (FEN) as a college student and started to play the guitar in 1967.[485] Tetsuo Saito was also inspired by Dylan to become a folk singer.[486] Nobuyasu Okabayashi led the protest folk-song movement in Japan from the mid- to late 1960s and was compared to Bob Dylan. He was dubbed Japan's (*nihon no*) Bob Dylan, even inheriting Dylan's title as the "god of folk."[487] These Japanese folk singers and their biographers and writers used Dylan's authority in establishing their own careers.

Japanese folk singers used Dylan just as Dylan used Woody Guthrie. Dylan idolized Guthrie as the legendary figure in folk songs and claimed to be his legitimate successor by emphasizing his encounter with and alleged apprenticeship with Guthrie. As Mark Willhardt argued, Seeger and Dylan's authenticity as folk singers in the U.S.

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[484] "Rikon no isharyo kasegi! Foku no kamisama 2-gatsu rainichi no ura niwa!" [The True Motive Behind the Japan Visit of the God of Folk Is to Earn Money for Alimony], *Bisho*, January 14, 1978, 243.
[485] Ken-ichi Nagira, *Nihon foku shiteki taizen [My Personal Accounts of the Japanese Folk Scene]* (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1999), 102.
[486] Nagira, *Nihon foku shiteki taizen*, 147.
[487] Nagira, *Nihon foku shiteki taizen*, 35; Maeda and Hirahara, *60-nendai foku no jidai*, 223.

derived from their close contact with Guthrie:

> Everyone who has ever held an acoustic guitar sees him [Guthrie] as a progenitor; if Pete Seeger has proven more long-lived and Dylan more influential, it is only because the former started his career by touring with Guthrie and the latter acknowledged early and repeatedly in his storied career that Guthrie was the better and more important songwriter.[488]

Dylan and Seeger both defended their authenticity by identifying Guthrie as authentic and then stressing their close relationship with him. Similarly, Japanese folk singers identified Dylan as the legendary folk singer, and by claiming to be his disciples who surpassed the master, made themselves look important.

From 1974, when Dylan began his tour with The Band, popular media once again provided detailed reports of his activities, and identified this tour as Dylan's come-back. However, the media tended to regard this as a retrospective and nostalgic event for adults reminiscing about their teenage years. In 1974, the national newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* reporting on the tour wrote that nostalgia drove New Yorkers in their late twenties in a frenzied rush to obtain the concert tickets; the hype was so great that whenever two young people met, all they could talk about was whether they had obtained tickets to the concert. Further, the newspaper reported that the audience, teenagers in the 1960s, had

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[488] Mark Wilhardt, "Available Rebels and Folk Authenticities: Michelle Shocked and Billy Bragg," in *The Resisting Muse: Popular Music and Social Protest*, ed. Ian Peddle (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006), 32.

become adults and behaved well, giving the guards nothing much to do.[489]

At the same time, the Japanese folk music scene also changed. Japanese folk singers divorced themselves from political American folk songs and instead wrote depoliticized songs of mass appeal in Japanese. While folk music had been political and anti-commercial in the late 1960s, from 1970 onward, it became commercial with introspective lyrics and polished sound, merging into the popular music scene by the mid-1970s.[490] An historic outdoor concert in Tsumatoi, Gumma Prefecture in 1975 symbolized the independence of the Japanese folk music scene. From August 2-3, 1975, Yoshida and a folk group called Kaguyahime sang nonstop for twelve hours to an audience of 30,000 people.

Despite its appearance as an independent Japanese event, the idea for the Tsumagoi concert came from the American folk music scene. In the July 1975 issue of *Young Guitar* magazine, Yoshida explained that Dylan had inspired him to plan a large-scale outdoor concert: "In short, [the Tsumagoi concert] is a Bob Dylan concert. When Dylan gives a concert in Los Angeles, for example, people get together from all over the country, not just from Los Angeles. Since Japan is a smaller country, I thought

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[489] "Bobu Diran fukkatsu" [Dylan Resurrected], *Asahi Shimbun*, January 22, 1974, 3.
[490] Tadasu Tagawa, *Nihon no foku & rokku shi: kokorozashi wa doko e [The History of Japanese Folk and Rock: Where Have the Aspiration Gone]* (Tokyo: Ongaku no tomo sha, 1982), 103-105, 119.

it would be possible to do the same thing. I asked [the staff] to find a large place."[491] Despite his claim to have become independent from Dylan and that Dylan was too important a figure for him to reach, Yoshida assumed that Japanese musicians could do what Dylan did.

Japanese popular magazines continued to portray Dylan as a social critic even during the mid-1970s, as they featured the release of *Planet Waves* in 1974, *Blood on the Tracks* in 1975, *Desire* in 1976 (which sold 200,000 copies in Japan), the Rolling Thunder Reviews in 1975 and 1976, and a brief reunion with Joan Baez.[492] In particular, "Hurricane," a song that supported a former middleweight boxer charged with murder, caught the attention of the press, beginning with the Japanese *Playboy* report in December 1975.[493] Among the eleven magazine articles on Dylan in 1976, four of them focused on this song. *Shukan Post* reported that the song "revealed the aspect of American society that embarrasses Americans most" and that Dylan had made the same

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[491] "Dokyumento Tsumagoi no 12 jikan Takuro Kaguyahime ga moeta atsui yoru" [12 hours in Tsumagoi: The Night When Takuro and Kaguyahime Passionately Sang], *Young Guitar*, July 1975, reprinted in *Foku ogon jidai [The Golden Age of Folk]* (Tokyo: Shinko Music, 1992), 179.

[492] Heckel Sugano, interview with Masayoshi Koshiya, March 25, 2002, in *Sotokushu Bobu Diran* (Tokyo: Kawade shobo, 2002), 105.

[493] "Amerika kenkoku 200nen ni mukatte ugokidashita Bobu Diran: hyotto suruto rainen wa rainichi no kanousei mo" [Bob Dylan Has Started to Work Toward the Bicentennial: Perhaps He May Visit Japan Next Year], *Playboy*, December 23, 1975, 79.

point in "Blowin' in the Wind."[494] Japanese *Playboy* even sent a reporter to interview Rubin "Hurricane" Carter in his New York office. The article concluded: "Together with Baez, Dylan used to be in the forefront of folk protest. He still is."[495] The media felt more comfortable with the idea of Dylan creating protest songs because that conformed to the widespread image of Dylan as a social critic and a protest singer who inspired the underground folk singers in Japan.

The concept that Dylan was the original "protest folksinger" was so persistent that in 1977, one magazine speculated that Dylan might visit Japan to join the upcoming "Rolling Coconut Revue," a U.S.-Japan joint concert in support of environmental causes. The article explained that "having Dylan come to Japan is so difficult that Elvis Presley would be beyond comparison. Since a large sum of money would not convince him to come anyway, if he decides to come, it would be if he sympathizes with the music movement in Japan."[496] Ironically, Dylan did visit Japan, attracted by "a large sum of money."

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[494] "Beikokujin no chibu o uta ni takusu Bobu Diran no shinban kaibo" [Analyzing Bob Dylan's New Album That Puts to Music What Americans Are Ashamed of], *Shukan Post*, March 5, 1976, 144.
[495] "Bobu Diran no shi ga ore o ningen ni kaeshite kureta! hariken kata no kokoro no sakebi" [Bob Dylan Has Turned Me Back into a Human Being: The Heartfelt Cry of Hurricane Carter], *Playboy*, July 20, 1976, 47.
[496] "Idai naru otoko Bobu Diran ga yattekuru…" [Great Man Bob Dylan May Come…], *Shukan Myojo*, January 9, 1977, 43-44.

Bob Dylan in Japan, 1978

As soon as it was announced in December 1977, the popular media hyped Dylan's Japan tour scheduled for February 1978. Between December 1977 and April 1978, a total of 20 national Japanese magazines carried 39 articles and 10 rotogravures about Dylan's visit. Numerous pages reviewed Dylan's life and the myths surrounding him with sensational headlines and a plethora of pictures. According to the articles, Dylan was the only super-star who had not visited Japan since Presley and Bing Crosby were dead, and the Rolling Stones had been denied entry into the country in 1973 because of Mick Jagger's past drug abuse. The magazines called Dylan the "god of folk" and promised to unveil the mysterious and mythical figure.

The magazine articles revealed less about Dylan himself than about Japanese perception of him. With a few exceptions, magazines did not seek new information directly from Dylan but repeated the same stories that had been previously circulated, thereby keeping Dylan mysterious instead of unveiling his myths. They collected comments and speculations only from Japanese writers, critics, musicians, and celebrities. Even before his arrival in Japan, the magazines molded Dylan into a set narrative and image that was not flattering to him: a mysterious, mythical "god of folk" who belonged to the past; a "fallen idol"; and a "greedy Jew" who was after Japanese yen. This

negative portrayal underscored a flattering self-image of the Japanese: boasting a strong economy, traditional culture, and folk singers who surpassed Dylan.

Just like the articles that appeared in the *New Music Magazine* several years earlier, the 1978 articles portrayed Dylan as the forefather of Japanese folk singers, calling the former the "god of folk" and the latter, "Dylan's children." *Josei Jishin,* the weekly magazine for women, published an illustrated guide to Dylan that showed him holding strings that connected to people of importance in his life. Included were "the women Dylan loved" (Echo Star Helstrom, Suze Rotolo, Joan Baez, Sara Lownds, and Ronnie Blakely), "the people who influenced Dylan the most" (Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Elvis Presley, Hank Williams, and Charlie Chaplin), and "Japanese who [had] been influenced by him," a list of seven people.[497] The article presented Dylan's influence on Japanese folk singers as an important element of his life.

The magazines claimed that "Dylan's children" in Japan had already surpassed Dylan. The weekly magazine *Shukan Myojo* reported that neither Yoshida nor Okabayashi would attend the upcoming Dylan concert. According to the article, there were approximately 12,000,000 Japanese folk fans, half of them being followers of Bob Dylan; however, Yoshida's friend told the *Shukan Myojo* reporter that Yoshida had no

[497] "2 gatsu 20 nichi rainichi hatsu koen Bobu Diran" [Bob Dylan, who Visits Japan on February 20 and Gives His First Performance], *Josei Jishin*, March 2, 1978, 182-183.

interest in attending the Dylan concert, and that "after seeing Dylan's come-back concert [in 1974] in the U.S., Takuro suddenly stopped talking about Dylan." The article also claimed that Okabayashi, another of "Dylan's Children," focused on his own concert tours and therefore would not be interested in attending Dylan's concert. The writer of the article concluded: "[Yoshida and Okabayashi's lack of interest in Dylan's upcoming visit] appears to be the sign of their harsh rejection of Dylan, their former guru who has walled himself in tradition and has distanced himself from contemporary young people."[498] The article did not offer any evidence to support the claim that Dylan was out of touch. Indeed, contrary to the prediction in the article, Okabayashi did attend the Dylan concert. In a similar vein, *Shukan Bunshun* reported in January 1978 that tickets for the Dylan concert were not selling well, and that Dylan was "outdated" and a "fallen idol."[499] However, as it turned out, the same magazine reported in March that the tickets now sold well; over a dozen young rock fans even began to line up in front of the ticket center the night before the advance sale.[500] Thus, the press portrayed Dylan as outdated

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[498] "2-gatsu 20-nichi Bobu Diran rainichi: sono toki Takuro Okabayashi wa…" [February 20th Bob Dylan's Japan Visit: Where Will Takuro and Okabayashi Be Then], *Shukan Myojo*, January 1, 1978, 205.
[499] "Bobu Diran wa 'ochita guzo'?" [Is Bob Dylan a Fallen Idol?], *Shukan Bunshun*, January 26, 1978, 24.
[500] "Rokku fu no Bobu Diran 'kamisama henshin' ni tomadotta orudo fan" [Rock-like Bob Dylan: Old Fans Were Bewildered by the Transformation of the God of Folk], *Shukan Bunshun*, Marcuh 9, 1978, rotogravure pages.

and out of touch in an effort to elevate the status of Japanese folk singers.

A Dylan expert also suggested that Dylan was already past his prime. In the February 1978 issue of *New Music Magazine*, music critic Toyo Nakamura, who had written the earliest liner notes for Dylan's recordings in Japan and served as an expert who introduced him to the Japanese public, now criticized Dylan. Nakamura recalled that he first became aware of Dylan merely as a protest singer-songwriter; however, he was bewildered when Dylan turned electric. Nakamura:

> came to the conclusion that Dylan and the Beatles were moving toward the same direction. The phrase "new music" seemed to be most appropriate in expressing their new types of popular music, hence I named this magazine the *New Music Magazine* in order to follow them in this new direction.
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> However, by the mid-1970s, as new music and the new lifestyle and new thought of young people ceased to challenge society, Dylan went along with the trend and started to lose his edge.[501]

Nakamura lamented that Dylan, who once challenged the older generation with the phrase "The Times They Are A-Changing," was now silent regarding the changes occurring among the younger generation. Nakamura expressed a persistent attitude that Dylan should continue to propose alternative values and ideas to the establishment through his songs.

Popular magazines asserted the superiority of the Japanese by explaining that

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[501] Toyo Nakamura, "Toyo's Talk," *New Music Magazine*, February 1978, 162-63.

Dylan decided to visit Japan only because he was lured by a lucrative offer by Japanese promoters. *Bisho,* a women's magazine, quoted Toshiyuki Sugano (who later anglicized his name to Heckel Sugano) — director of CBS Sony — as testifying that Dylan had to pay alimony since his divorce and blamed his divorce on his extramarital affair, which included him taking his mistress home to the disbelief and anger of his wife.[502] Other magazines also emphasized the unusually expensive performance fee of 350,000,000 yen ($2,000,000)—over double the amount that had been paid to Frank Sinatra – and reported that this amount would help Dylan to pay alimony to his estranged wife, Sara; moreover, the Japan tour would be lucrative for him because of the increase in the value of the yen. According to biographer Howard Sounes, the motive behind the world tour was indeed an economic one. In Dylan's own words: "I've got a few debts to pay off…I had a couple of bad years. I put a lot of money into the movie, built a big house…and there's the divorce." Dylan "agreed to sell his soul" and "embarked on a lucrative world tour."[503] An author of an article in weekly magazine *Shukan Shincho* wrote: "If the reason [for his decision to visit Japan] was to save the economic crisis caused by the divorce litigation, it

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[502] "Rikon no isharyo kasegi! Foku no kamisama Bobu Diran 2 gatsu rainichi no ura niwa!" [God of Folk Comes to Japan in February to Earn Money for Alimony], *Bisho*, January 14, 1978, 244.
[503] Howard Sounes, *Down the Highway: The Life of Bob Dylan* (New York: Grove Press, 2001), 314.

could be said that Japan was looked down upon by Dylan; on the other hand, it could mean that Japan has become an economic power."[504]

Japanese media sought additional information related to Dylan's tour that would boost Japanese national pride. *Josei Seven* quoted Toshiyuki Sugano as saying, "Dylan is very pleased to be visiting Japan because he himself is very interested in Eastern philosophy."[505] Sugano also testified in *Playboy* that "the reason why Dylan decided to start his world tour with Japan is probably because he came to be interested in Eastern philosophy through Alan Ginsburg and Leonard Cohen." The same article reported that Hisashi Miura, a college professor who translated works on Dylan, stated that the philosophy behind Dylan's songs was similar to Zen Buddhism, and that "Like a Rolling Stone" expressed the same ideas as those written in the Record of Linji (*rinzai roku*).[506] Weekly magazine *Shukan Post* reported that Dylan had an expensive Japanese garden at his Malibu mansion, a garden which cost more than the swimming pool on the same

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[504] "Foku no Kamisama no Rainichi: Jitsu wa Rikon Isharyo Kasegi" [The Upcoming Japan Visit of God of Folk: The Real Purpose Is to Earn Alimony], *Shukan Shincho,* December 22 & 29, 1977, 127.

[505] "Foku rokku no teio Bobu Diran karei na ai to hangeki no zen shinwa" [The Emperor of Folk and Rock, Bob Dylan: His Myth of Romance and Rebellion], *Josei Seven*, February 9, 1978, 44.

[506] "'Ochita guzo' 'kako no hito' to akuhyo punpun no rainichi zenya Diran-kun 'kamigakari' dake wa yamete hoshii no yo" ["Fallen Idol," "Person of the Past" – Filled with Bad Reputations: Mr. Dylan, We Can't Stand Your Theomania], *Playboy*, February 14, 1978, 70.

property.[507] The magazines sought clues that indicated Dylan's appreciation of Japanese cultures.

Japanese writers and critics denounced Dylan even before his performance or his arrival in Japan, basing their criticism not on an analysis of his music but on prejudices and unsubstantiated evidence. The weekly magazine *Shukan Post* resorted to anti-Semitism in denouncing Dylan, attributing his "commercialism" and "greed" to his Jewish background. In an article entitled "The Jewish Business Practice of B. Dylan Who Demanded an Extraordinarily Expensive Performance Fee," a "music critic Mr. M." was quoted as saying, "Bob Dylan's real name is Robert Zimmerman, a Jewish American, and he is therefore very greedy for money." The writer of the article continued, "When he was still singing protest songs in 1966, he demonstrated his tough negotiation skills by demanding royalties of 10% and contract money of $1,500,000. That was when Andy Williams, who was the top super-star, only got 5% royalties and contract money of 5,000,000 dollars. He charged high fees while pretending to be an anti-establishment singer." The article reported an agreement between Dylan and the Japanese promoters that his performance fee would be paid half in dollars and half in yen, "a contract that

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[507] "Kata daitouryo kara Ari made habahiroi yujin o motsu Bobu Diran sono shinwa to jitsuzo" [Bob Dylan, Who Is Friends Even with President Carter and Ali: His Myth and Real Image], *Shukan Post*, February 17, 1978.

shows the Jews' keenness in taking into account international monetary uncertainty."[508] The *Shukan Post* strongly emphasized Dylan's "Jewish characteristics" with two additional articles—one of them in the issue of February 17, 1978, where the magazine repeated the same story; in addition, it also quoted an anonymous music critic stating that Dylan's decision to perform overseas and be interviewed could be attributed to his "impatience over becoming outdated and his attachment to money which is peculiar to the Jews."[509] The *Shukan Post* further claimed that Dylan's life could be in danger during his stay in Japan as he was a target of a left-wing extremist group, which allegedly claimed that Bob Dylan was a "Zionist" and "a rock star produced by Jewish capital." The article cited dubious anonymous sources in order to explain that Dylan was indeed a "Zionist" who supported Israel, and that his lyrics reflected his Jewish roots; however, no example or analysis was provided. One source allegedly claimed without any evidence that "Clive Davis, former President of CBS Columbia, [was] a known Zionist" (Davis was Vice President of Columbia), and that "he could be planning to spread pro-Israeli

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[508] "Ijo na Kogaku Gyara o Yokyu Shita B. Diran no Yudaya Shoho" [The Jewish Business Practice of B. Dylan Who Demanded an Extraordinary Amount of Performance Fee], *Shukan Post*, January 27, 1978, 58.

[509] "B. Diran rainichi wa 'shirake dori': hansen imeji kisetsu hazure" [Lukewarm Reaction to B. Dylan's Visit to Japan: The Image of Anti-War Is Outdated]," *Shukan Post*, 24 February 1978, 42.

sentiment among Americans through music."[510]

The crude manner in which the writers expressed this bigoted viewpoint revealed their assumption that only Japanese would read the article. According to David Goodman and Masanori Miyazawa, authors of *Jews in the Japanese Mind*, the Japanese images of the Jews became increasingly negative in the 1970s, as anti-Zionism gained popularity. Left-wing groups in Japan, after having failed to achieve their own political causes at home, identified with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, denounced Israel and "took control of Japanese perceptions of the Jews and Israel during the 1970s and 1980s."[511] The anti-Zionist ideology "was domesticated and legitimized by prominent Japanese academics and intellectuals" and "popularized by the mass media."[512] Further, Goodman and Miyazawa argued that the Japanese traditionally used foreigners to deal with their anxiety and define their ethnic identity; anti-Semitism as well as philo-Semitism emerged as a result of this tradition. The anti-Semitic attack on Dylan occurred in this context and suggests a Japanese concern with their self image.

A few magazines actually collected new detailed information from Dylan but did

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[510] "B. Diran wa Kagekiha ni Nerawarete iru [B. Dylan Is a Target of the Extremists]," *Shukan Post*, 10 March 1978, 30-32.
[511] Masanori Miyazawa and David G. Goodman, *Jews in the Japanese Mind: The History and Uses of a Cultural Stereotype* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 185.
[512] Miyazawa and Goodman, *Jews in the Japanese Mind*, 211.

not use it to tell a new story. *Heibon Punch* sent a reporter to Santa Monica, California, to interview Dylan in person shortly before his visit to Japan. The reporter based his questions on the same assumptions and concerns as those of other magazine articles. However, Dylan's answers upset the reporter's expectations. For example, Dylan revealed that he possessed only a limited knowledge of and interest in Buddhism or Eastern philosophy. The reporter, referring to the picture of the Great Buddha at Kamakura on the jacket of *Desire*, asked about Dylan's interest in Buddhism. Dylan answered that he used to be interested in "Buddha before he became Buddha" because before Buddha was deified, he was simply another human being. Dylan stated that he had studied Zen at one time but had forgotten most of the teachings; the only memory he had of it was learning about nothingness.[513] The reporter asked five questions attempting to find any indications of Dylan's interest in Buddhism but failed to learn much. Further, Dylan did not display any particular interest in Japan. He had decided to visit Japan simply because he had many fans there. In addition, contrary to what the Japanese media had reported, Japan would not be the first non-English speaking country where he would perform as he had already been on a tour to Europe. When asked whether he had any advice to give to "Dylan's children" in Japan, he answered that the

[513] "Bobu Diran tono atsui 50 fun" [50 Hot Minutes with Bob Dylan], *Heibon Punch*, February 13, 1978, 37.

Japanese musicians would need to work hard and go to the U.S. if they wanted to study this kind of music, suggesting a disinterest in his Japanese followers and low expectations of the level of musicianship in Japan.[514] Despite these clear answers, the reporter concluded that Dylan was incomprehensible, thus reinforcing the concept of Dylan being a mysterious artist.[515] The questions posed by the reporter reflected the preexisting image of Dylan rather than being queries for new information. One of the last questions that the reporter asked Dylan was whether he was the "god of folk." Dylan answered "there is some truth to that" and that "if you looked at things from both sides, you would notice that it could be true sometime but false at other times."[516] Although this answer was cryptic and hardly made much sense, the question itself was almost unanswerable. Dylan also stated that he would not speak on behalf of the young generation of Americans and refused to comment on the anti-establishment movement.[517] The questions asked by the reporter from *Heibon Punch* were based on the old image of

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[514] "Bobu Diran tono atsui 50 fun" [50 Hot Minutes with Bob Dylan], *Heibon Punch*, February 13, 1978, 36-38.
[515] "Bobu Diran tono atsui 50 fun" [50 Hot Minutes with Bob Dylan], *Heibon Punch*, February 13, 1978, 39.
[516] "Bobu Diran tono atsui 50 fun" [50 Hot Minutes with Bob Dylan], *Heibon Punch*, February 13, 1978, 39. This is not a direct quote from Dylan but my English translation from the Japanese translation of Dylan's remark in the magazine. Original transcripts were not available.
[517] "Bobu Diran tono atsui 50 fun" [50 Hot Minutes with Bob Dylan], *Heibon Punch*, February 13, 1978, 38.

Dylan—the spokesperson of younger generation and a protest singer—an image Dylan had opposed for over a decade.

When Dylan arrived in Tokyo on February 17, 1978, Japanese reporters asked the same questions at a press conference immediately after his arrival from the airport, suggesting their lack of preparation and knowledge. Dylan's statements were even blunter in the press conference than when he spoke to the *Heibon Punch* reporter, baffling the 300 reporters present. The magazines portrayed him as unfriendly and difficult to comprehend. One magazine described the interview as a "Zen dialogue," where Dylan offered single-sentence answers to each question.[518] According to the magazines, only a few music critics, nominated in advance, were permitted to ask questions. A large number of questions regarded Dylan's opinion of Japan. Reporters asked Dylan about his reception in Japan as the "god of folk," to which Dylan simply answered, through an interpreter, that he was "just a person." When asked the reason for his decision to visit Japan, Dylan offered no explanation. In addition, Dylan stated that he did not have any message for the Japanese fans and that he had come to Japan simply to perform. The reporters also asked Dylan to define the age that they lived in, to which Dylan replied, after some hesitation, that it was the "Zen age." When asked to elaborate, he conceded

[518] "Sonoyo Bobu Diran ni sogu shita suta-tachi no fukuzatsu na hanno" [Various Reactions of Stars Who Saw Bob Dylan That Night], *Shukan Myojo*, March 5, 1978, 28.

that he did not know much about Zen, except that he had once read about it in a book.[519] The press conference lasted for less than thirty minutes. A majority of the magazine articles reporting the press conference accused Dylan of providing meaningless answers and blamed the singer for the event. However, the already published *Heibon Punch* interview proved the ineffectiveness of a large number of the questions. Further, Dylan had already been known for disliking the press and not answering questions properly in the U.S. and the U.K. The Japanese press asked the same questions based on the old premises and did not even attempt to come up with a question that might interest Dylan.

It could be argued that both the reporters at the press conference and the magazines that reported the interview did not care what Dylan had to say to begin with, as the magazines did not report Dylan's remarks accurately. One of the few questions in which Dylan displayed an interest was a question with regard to his concept of "love," and the manner in which he differed from the Beatles in expressing this concept in their respective works. While *Shukan Myojo* and *Shukan Heibon* reported that Dylan regarded his songs as *more* abstract than those of the Beatles, *Shukan Josei* reported to the contrary, claiming that Dylan answered that his songs were *less* abstract than those of

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[519] "Ore no uta de yononaka ga kawatta" [My Songs Have Changed the World], *Shukan Josei*, March 7, 1978, 177.

the Beatles.[520] The reporters did not ask Dylan to elaborate on this answer, which could have provided an indication of Dylan's ideas on his own music. The inconsistency in the way these magazines reported Dylan's remark and a lack of follow-up questions suggest the magazine's disinterest in Dylan's philosophy of music. Furthermore, the writer of *Shukan Myojo* wished he could have asked Dylan whether he was "lured by the performance fee of 350 million yen to pay off alimony to his ex-wife Sara" and what Dylan thought about his old fans calling him the "fallen idol."[521] These questions would have been mere statements of Japanese preconceptions than questions seeking information.

Most magazine articles also selectively reported on Dylan's concerts, focusing on incidents where Dylan seemed out of date and out of touch with the Japanese audiences. Weekly magazine *Shukan Bunshun* relegated Dylan to the past by portraying his concerts as nostalgic events for Japanese fans who were young in the 1960s. According to the article, the audience "put their hands on their laps and listened to the music quietly, as if

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[520] "Sonoyo Bobu Diran ni sogu shita suta-tachi no fukuzatsu na hanno," [Various Reactions of Stars Who Saw Bob Dylan That Night], *Shukan Myojo*, March 5, 1978, 28; "'Ore wa kamisama nanka ja nai tadano ningen sa' 3-oku 5000 man-en no kao, Bobu Diran ga 2-gatsu 17-nichi tsui ni rainichi!" ["I'm not a god, just a person": The Face of 350 million yen, Bob Dylan, Finally Comes to Japan on February 17], *Shukan Heibon*, 2 March 1978, 154-155; "Ore no uta de yononaka ga kawatta" [My Songs Have Changed the World], *Shukan Josei*, March 7, 1978, 176.

[521] "Sonoyo Bobu Diran ni sogu shita suta-tachi no fukuzatsu na hanno," [Various Reactions of Stars Who Saw Bob Dylan That Night], *Shukan Myojo*, March 5, 1978, 29.

they had been listening to Mozart."[522] Other magazines portrayed Dylan as an unfriendly, incomprehensible former "god of folk" who confused the audience with weird arrangements of his otherwise familiar songs, thereby displaying an obvious departure from folk (or even rock) music. Japanese *Playboy* reported that at the February 20 concert in Budokan, Dylan started singing immediately after he appeared on stage and simply performed one piece after another without any communication with the audience. The only words he spoke apart from the songs he sang were the title of each song and "thank you" at the end of each performance.[523] *Shukan Myojo* dismissed Dylan by reporting that Hibari Misora, the "queen" of Japanese popular music who attended a Dylan concert as an audience member, left during the intermission. She commented, "I didn't come here to listen to the Beatles. I was expecting something that would sound more like folk music, but his music was rather… I had meant to stay until the end of the concert, but I decided to leave because I thought I had figured it out already." Further, while getting into her white Cadillac, Misora added, "Okabayashi-kun is much better than Dylan. You should support the Japanese folk scene more."[524] This Japanese pop

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[522] "Okurete kita Bobu Diran [Bob Dylan Came Late]," *Shukan Bunshun*, 2 March 1978, 22.
[523] "Bobu Diran 'Kami dewa nai tada no otoko' no zessan to genmetsu no suteji" [Some glorify Dylan's performance while others were disenchanted by it; Dylan is "a man and not a god"], *Playboy*, 14 March 1978, 64-65.
[524] "Sonoyo Bobu Diran ni sogu shita suta-tachi no fukuzatsu na hanno," [Various

superstar denounced Dylan by suggesting that Japanese folk singers had surpassed him. Japanese popular magazines portrayed Dylan's concerts as unprofessional, outdated, and not worthy of the expensive performance fee paid him.

However, Dylan's performances and audience reactions varied throughout his tour, which consisted of eleven concerts in two cities: February 20, 21, and 23 in Tokyo; February 24, 25 and 26 in Osaka; and February 28 and March 1, 2, 3, and 4 in Tokyo again.[525] According to Eiji Ogura, who attended all eleven concerts and wrote a comprehensive account for the *New Music Magazine*, Dylan connected better with the audience in Osaka than with that in Tokyo. Ogura attributed this to the fact that the majority of the audience in Osaka were young people in contrast to the Tokyo concerts, where members of the audience included both youth and older adults.[526] In contrast, the dominant reaction of the audience in the first Tokyo concert was one of mixed feelings of being glad to watch Dylan live and being taken aback by how much he had changed.[527] Dylan performed one song after another without speaking much. Ogura observed that by the third concert in Tokyo, Dylan started to connect with the audience, but the

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Reactions of Stars Who Saw Bob Dylan That Night], *Shukan Myojo*, March 5, 1978," 30.

[525] Eiji Ogura, "Diran zen konsato no kiroku" [The Record of All the Dylan Concerts], *New Music Magazine*, April 1978, 50-60.

[526] Ogura, "Diran zen konsato no kiroku," 57.

[527] Ogura, "Diran zen konsato no kiroku," 52-53.

enthusiasm did not match that in Osaka. Similarly, *Heibon Punch* reported that approximately 80% of the audience in Osaka appeared to be of college-going age or younger and that they were responsive to Dylan, who in turn complimented the audience and talked a lot between songs.[528] When Dylan returned to Tokyo, the audience reaction was again lukewarm or cold, making him bitter and hostile.[529] This difference in audience reaction indicated a shift in Dylan's fandom from older folk music fans to younger rock music fans.

American biographers of Dylan recorded his Japan tour differently. Biographer Howard Sounes wrote that Dylan sang his hit songs with big band arrangements that sounded drastically different from the ways he had previously performed and recorded them.[530] Dylan also baffled his fans by wearing lavish white suit and pale make-up, while his female backup singers were dressed in costumes such that they, in the words of a member in the band, "looked like hookers."[531] In contrast, William McKeen, author of *Bob Dylan: A Bio-Bibliography*, wrote that "Dylan, who was often taciturn during concerts (he barely spoke from the stage during the tour with The Band) was verbose

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[528] "Bobu Diran in Japan 240 jikan kamisama wa chotto kimagurena haikai yaro datta" [Bob Dylan in Japan 240 hours: The God of Folk Was a Whimsical Rambling Guy], *Heibon Punch*, March 13, 1978, 42.
[529] Ogura, "Diran zen konsato no kiroku," 58-59.
[530] Sounes, *Down the Highway*, 316.
[531] Sounes, *Down the Highway*, 315.

while talking to his Japanese fans."[532] Dylan's concert tour in Japan was not monolithic, as Japanese popular magazines wanted to claim.

Heibon Punch reported Dylan's activities outside concert halls in detail based on firsthand observation. Unlike many other magazines, which depicted Dylan as mysterious and unfriendly, this article portrayed Dylan as an affable man who did not mind giving autographs to fans passing by and was curious enough to try new food from a street vendor. However, the article concluded with a description of Dylan's interest in Japanese culture, conforming to the dominant interpretation of Dylan's trip by Japanese popular magazines. A reporter followed Dylan around for ten days, from the day of his arrival, and observed him exploring the city of Tokyo, including shopping for clothes and drinking orange juice at a fruit parlor in Shinjuku.[533] Dylan bought a *go* (Japanese chess) game set. He also visited the traditional city of Kyoto after his successful concert in Osaka, where he "gazed at the Kamo-gawa River and the completely Japanese stone garden of the Ryuan-ji Temple and was deeply satisfied." Despite the fact that Dylan had revealed his lack of knowledge or interest in Zen Buddhism, the writer of the article

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[532] William McKeen, *Bob Dylan: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1993), 110-111.

[533] "Bobu Diran in Japan 240 jikan kamisama wa chotto kimagurena haikai yaro datta" [Bob Dylan in Japan 240 hours: The God of Folk Was a Whimsical Rambling Guy], *Heibon Punch*, March 13, 1978," 42-43.

mentioned that Dylan "had wanted to see Zen, Mount Fuji, and a river that flows."[534] The writer was intent on promoting Dylan as one who appreciated traditional Japanese culture.

Japanese writers and critics portrayed Dylan in a way that flattered the Japanese readers and improved the status of Japanese musicians. They portrayed Dylan more negatively in the late 1970s than in the 1960s not because they believed Dylan's music had deteriorated in quality but because they defined Dylan as the root of Japanese folk singers and therefore wanted to keep Dylan a mythical and historical figure. They also used Dylan's visit to Japan to showcase the improvement of the Japanese folk music scene and the superiority of Japanese cultures, which meant that they had to criticize Dylan.

Dylan's visit to Japan also marked a shift in his fandom from folk to rock musicians and audiences. While popular magazines and critics dismissed Dylan as surpassed by Japanese folk singers, younger audiences and fans admired Dylan's rock music performances. Although Dylan's image as a prototypical folk singer from the 1960s persisted, he gained new audiences and followers among rock musicians in Japan.

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[534] "Bobu Diran in Japan 240 jikan kamisama wa chotto kimagurena haikai yaro datta" [Bob Dylan in Japan 240 hours: The God of Folk Was a Whimsical Rambling Guy], *Heibon Punch*, March 13, 1978," 41.

Bob Dylan in Japan Today: Dylan "Specialists" and the Struggle Over Ownership

Thirty years after Dylan's visit, many Japanese rock musicians and fans today credit Dylan for inspiring them and take pride in being Dylan fans. Following the examples of Japanese critics who mythologized Dylan and assumed his importance, contemporary critics and musicians regard Dylan as an enigmatic genius who was difficult to comprehend. However, instead of relegating him to the past or assuming that only Americans would understand him, Japanese critics and musicians treat Dylan as a universal figure independent of his temporal and geographical context. Further, instead of claiming to have surpassed him, Japanese musicians and critics struggle over ownership of Dylan. They have developed a community of Japanese Dylan fans with a hierarchy among its members.

On October 9, 2006, Japanese rock musician Koji Wakui organized "Dylan Summit," a concert and talk show to celebrate the successful release of Dylan's latest CD, *Modern Times*. Artists and critics gathered to discuss Dylan's influence on them, and they performed Dylan's pieces as well as their own composition for the audience who packed a live music club in Daikanyama, Tokyo.[535] They agreed that ordinary people

[535] The event was (misleadingly) named "Dylan Summit" and was held at a live music club named "Haretara sora ni mame maite" in Daikanyama, Tokyo. I attended this event and observed the performances as well as the audience reactions.

such as themselves could not possibly comprehend Dylan or be as good a musician. Music critic Kenta Hagiwara told the audience about his journey of trying to "figure out" Dylan: At first, he found Dylan incomprehensible. Gradually, he came to understand him and displayed his knowledge of Dylan to others, assuming that he had finally comprehended singer and his music. However, as he learned more about Dylan, he concluded that Dylan was incomprehensible after all and that it should be left at that. Hagiwara asserted that just has Martin Luther had stated that one needed to spend decades in order to understand the Bible, so comprehending Dylan and his music should take a long period of time. Hagiwara and his co-panelist, music critic Manabu Yuasa, asserted that despite his mysteriousness, Dylan made his songs belong to both everyone and to each individual, and that the Japanese also had a claim to his music. Hagiwara and Yuasa thus insisted that Bob Dylan was an exceptional artist who defied understanding. Yet they also believed that there was room for the Japanese to interpret Dylan freely. Music critics still subscribed to Yukawa's "incomprehensible yet beautiful" proposed over thirty years ago while at the same time, freeing themselves from their insecurity as a Japanese listener interpreting an American artist.

Wakui identified Dylan as one of the most influential figures in the twentieth century and the source of contemporary popular culture. In his one-page essay entitled

"The Purpose of the Bob Dylan Summit," Wakui wrote that he wanted to acknowledge Dylan's influence on contemporary society (which he called "Diran teki na mono" [things Dylan-esque]) and carry on his tradition: "I have always thought that unless we thoroughly discuss Dylan, the person, his work, and all the *things Dylan-esque* in popular culture, *we cannot complete the 20th century.*" According to Wakui, Dylan's influence was widespread in Japanese popular culture, including music, anime, and cartoons. Wakui himself began to write music and poems when he was a seventh grader inspired by Dylan's album, *The Concert for Bangladesh*. Dylan inspired him to "sing in [his] own words" and to express himself. Wakui wrote that Dylan had a greater impact on him than did the Beatles. He thus reiterated the concept of Dylan as the source of Japanese rock music scene.[536]

Wakui treated Dylan as a universal figure severed from the U.S. cultural context. He detailed Dylan's influence on Japanese artists including him, but never mentioned the singer's impact on American culture. He identified Dylan as the source of "twentieth century popular culture" without specifying where geographically that culture was located. Wakui expanded his vague universalism in his obscure explanation of why Dylan turned to rock music, suggesting that it was the most inclusive and eclectic form of

[536] Koji Wakui, "Bobu Diran Samitto no Shushi [The Purpose of Bob Dylan Summit]," SOS Production, http://www.flying-dc.com/bds/dylan-purport.html.

music:

> Dylan has adhered to traditional culture including folk music and poetry, which he renovated to fit the field of rock/pop. In order to transcend differences in ideology that go along with religion and politics and inherit culture in a way that was effective for all human beings, Dylan has for the most part since 1965, chosen rock 'n' roll as his mode of expression. This was the most compound and flexible music ever born in the twentieth century.[537]

Wakui relied on Dylan's authority to justify his profession as a rock musician, claiming that rock music was universal. Wakui praised Dylan for inheriting and revitalizing tradition by incorporating it into rock music, and assumed that such music connects people of different backgrounds. However, he never questioned whether such tradition and music which emerged from the American context was transferable to Japan. Wakui's lack of cultural and geographical consideration and his disregard of his own subject position as Japanese suggest his implicit assertion that he and Dylan shared the same music and that Japanese musicians were legitimate performers of rock music as much as Dylan was.

The event proved that Japanese musicians, despite appearing to have interests in American music, are primarily concerned with a Japanese audience and with their positions in Japanese society. Among the performers were two non-Japanese musicians: Robyn Hitchcock (a British rock musician who had published a cover album of Dylan

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[537] Wakui, "Bobu Diran Samitto no Shushi."

entitled *Robyn Sings*) and an American rock musician, Scott McCaughey. The organizers of the event tried to create an "international" outlook by having performers from abroad. However, they imagined a Japanese audience as evidenced by the fact that they were surprised to see a group of German tourists and other Westerners in the audience.[538]

A cartoonist Jun Miura, himself an avid Dylan fan, presented Dylan as a unique artist devoid of cultural context. In his manga, *Iden & Tity*, a juvenile story of a fledgling rock musician who struggles with his promiscuity and the lure of commercialism, Miura portrayed Dylan as the epitome of an authentic rock musician. In the story, Dylan mysteriously appears to encourage the protagonist as he faces hardships in his idealistic quest for "true rock" and "true love." The rock musician also encourages himself by studying the fragments of lyrics from Dylan's songs as if they were a sacred text. As the episodes progress, Dylan's status is elevated from a human being to a mythic figure. While Dylan stays at the protagonist's apartment in the first episodes (and even gives him his guitar as a token of gratitude for his hospitality), later Dylan becomes visible only to the hero and his friend who ceased to "sell out."[539]

Just like his cartoon character, Miura regards Dylan as a guru. As an artist,

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[538] Dylan Summit, Daikan yama, Tokyo, October 9, 2006.
[539] Jun Miura, *Iden & Tity* (2004).

Miura appreciates the manner in which Dylan expressed himself in his work. Miura writes, "The underlying theme in both Dylan's work and mine is 'disclosure.' The way Dylan pursues the truth is by exposing himself to the public."[540] Miura also regards Dylan as a life coach who challenges him to periodically examine himself with the phrase, "How does it feel?," a line from "Like a Rolling Stone." He learned about Dylan through reading his biography when he was a "ronin," preparing for the entrance examination for college after graduating from high school. Instead of studying rigorously, Miura led an idle life overwhelmed by the pressure of having to secure entrance to a university.[541] Dylan's life and philosophy provided companionship to the troubled youth. In both his life and work, Miura worships Dylan, who inhabits in a different world and yet whose every word and behavior is filled with meanings.

Even though Miura's relationship with Dylan seems to be easily reproduced by other people, Miura wants to claim ownership of Dylan. In an interview with a TV program, Miura expressed his contempt for "young people who claim to be Bob Dylan fans." He felt that *he* was the only person entitled to be called a fan. In order to distinguish him from other fans, he started to collect Dylan paraphernalia. In his

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[540] Miura, interview by Yoshifumi Sato; text by Mari Yamaguchi (March 25, 2002), *Sotokushu Bobu Diran [Special Issue Bob Dylan]* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 2002), 112.
[541] Jun Miura, "Never Ending Tour," *Miura Jun Magazine* (Tokyo: Byakuya Shobo, 2006), 102.

magazine, Miura displayed his extensive collection of items related to Dylan, which included records, books, pictures, and anything that pictured Dylan. Simon Frith pointed out that "[r]ock music is now sold as part of a 'merchandising' package" which includes biographies that do not contain any new facts. Fans do not purchase them to obtain information but to own them for display.[542] Miura displayed his collection of Dylan paraphernalia in order to assert his superiority as a Dylan specialist, setting himself apart from other fans.

Heckel Sugano, who recently translated Dylan's autobiography, *Chronicles*, supported the idea of Dylan as an idol whom only selected people could directly approach while others only learned about him indirectly through the interpretation of specialists. At the Dylan Summit, Sugano spoke to the audience as one of the few Japanese who knew Dylan personally. He said only that Dylan was actually a nice and friendly person. Sugano also stressed that his relationship with Dylan dated from the making of the *Live At Budokan* album in 1978, which Sugano produced. He spoke of Dylan with reverence and awe while revealing little information about him. Instead of educating the Japanese audience about Dylan, Sugano reiterated his own proximity to Dylan while keeping him distant from Japanese audiences.

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[542] Simon Frith, "Rock Biography," *Popular Music* 3 (1983): 271-277.

Sugano has established his status in Japan as an authority on Dylan. In an NHK television program that traced the history of "Blowin' in the Wind" and how it spread around the world, the narrator introduced Sugano as follows:

> Both his name and his appearance may make you suspicious of him. [He wears dark glasses and has replaced his Japanese first name with a Western sounding one.] But he is an expert on Bob Dylan. Anyone who is a student of Dylan and who does not know Mr. Sugano is considered to be a fake.[543]

This narrative suggested that instead of directly studying the biography and music of Dylan, a Japanese novice in Dylan studies should consult a Japanese specialist and understand the artist's work through his interpretations. Dylan considered to be an extraordinary person who is beyond the reach of ordinary people, and only specialists can comprehend him. In truth, Japanese who are interested in Dylan but who do not read English have to rely on Japanese translators. However, for a government-subsidized television program like NHK to endorse the idea that Dylan should be understood through a particular person underscored the idea of Dylan as incomprehensible. It also demonstrated that Sugano successfully convinced the Japanese public that Dylan was such an enigmatic genius that only a handful of privileged specialists like him could rightfully understand.

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[543] *Seiki o kizanda uta [Songs That Marked the Century]*, "Bobu Diran, kaze ni fukarete—sonotoki Berurin Souru ni fuita kaze" [Bob Dylan, blowin' in the wind: the wind that blew in Berlin and Soul then], episode 3, NHK, September 7, 2003.

Contemporary critics and artists thus are free from the concerns about authenticity that those from the 1960s had. They believe that their Japanese identity does not keep them from claiming Dylan. They keep Dylan mysterious and incomprehensible not because they are insecure about their own ability to comprehend him but so that they can privilege themselves as Dylan specialists. Personal ties and fetishism instead of knowledge of American culture justified their position as Dylan specialists, as they decontexualized Dylan and treated him as a universal figure.

Peter, Paul and Mary: Sophisticated Artists for the Educated Audience

The Noel Paul Stookey concert in Tokyo (May 18, 2007, at Bunkyo Civic Hall) also demonstrated that Japanese professional musicians and promoters developed similar relationships with PPM as Dylan writers and musicians did. Professional musicians identified PPM as their musical roots while self-subscribed PPM specialist asserted his ownership of the trio. At the concert on stage, Japanese folk singers Junko Yamamoto, former member of the Red Birds and Yasuhiro Suzuki, former member of the Off Course, performed singing their hit songs from the 1970s as well as PPM's rendition of "Where Have All the Flowers Gone." Yamamoto and Suzuki praised PPM by claiming that they regarded the group to be akin to gods. Yamamoto told the audience that PPM was her

musical roots and that she and other Japanese of "the folk generation" studied PPM's music as if it were the Bible. She regarded PPM's music timeless and at the pinnacle of the music world. Suzuki expressed the same sentiment by confessing that PPM recordings still moved him to tears. He also told the audience that even on stage that night he carefully observed Stookey's every movement, including the ways in which he stared at a certain point in the air, in order to emulate him. Toward the end of the concert, Yamamoto, Suzuki, and Stookey formed an ad hoc PPM to perform their classic pieces including "Blowin' in the Wind," "Don't Think Twice, It's All Right," "I Shall Be Released," "We Shall Overcome," and "If I Had a Hammer." While Mary Travers no longer sings clearly, Yamamoto's soprano resembles Travers' when she was young. Suzuki's guitar work was also impeccable. Together with Stookey, they reproduced the PPM sound that was no longer available live, as the original PPM today do not perform their classic pieces the same way as they recorded them in the 1960s. The Japanese artists proved legitimate successors to PPM by both downplaying cultural differences and by perfecting their musical skills.[544]

Stookey's Japanese agent, Yasuo Nagai, asserted his ownership of PPM by emphasizing his personal ties with Stookey. Nagai, a promoter who served as

[544] I attended the concert and held a group discussion with the Peter, Paul and Mary Fan Club members after the concert.

interpreter while presiding over the concert, attempted to impress upon the audience that he was the proper mediator between Japanese fans and Stookey. He told the audience that he had known him since he was a teenager and was the first to organize a fan club. He also circulated fliers to the audience, inviting them to join his circle so they could obtain the latest news regarding Stookey. Certain PPM fans who attended the concert criticized the unprofessional manner in which Nagai presided at the event. He failed to translate Stookey's remarks faithfully and offended women in the audience by joking that the majority of them were so old that they must be suffering from postmenopausal disorders.[545] One PPMFC member complained that Nagai was responsible for distancing Stookey from the Japanese audience. According to this member, each PPM member has his or her own favorite native guide in Japan whom they trust completely. As a result, their knowledge on Japan is limited to what those natives provide.[546] The Paul Stookey concert in Tokyo showcased the way Japanese music professionals used PPM to improve their status in Japan, just as they did with Dylan.

In contrast to Dylan, who attracted disaffected youths and aspiring artists with his image of a social critic and an enigmatic artist, PPM attracted well-educated amateur musicians by projecting the image of "intelligent" and "sophisticated" artists from

[545] Group discussion, May 18, 2007.
[546] Telephone interview, May 29, 2007.

Greenwich Village suitable for Japanese college students of both genders to emulate. Japanese magazine articles in particular emphasized that PPM included a female member and described the group as "hootenanny" singers, evoking the image of college students singing folk songs together.[547] In 1964, *Heibon Punch* announced PPM's upcoming concert in Tokyo and introduced the group as a "hootenanny song vocal trio" that consisted of "leader Peter Yarrow, comedian Paul Stookey, and 27-year-old woman Mary Allin Travers."[548] In the same issue, a reviewer of PPM admired the group for "having made hootenanny songs their own" and that their upcoming concert in Tokyo would surely increase the number of Japanese fans "because they [PPM] have hootenanny songs."[549] The writer thus described the group using the fashionable word without defining it. *Heibon Punch* reported in 1966 that PPM was among the five favorite groups (PPM, The Kingston Trio, The New Christy Minstrels, The Mitchell Trio, The Brothers Four) on college campuses to cover.[550] In the same year, an article that

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[547] According to music critics Hirotake Maeda and Koji Hirahara, Japanese folk singer Izumi Yukimura first introduced the word "hootenanny" to the Japanese in 1963 as she began to sing American folk songs on television and radio after she had returned from studying abroad in the U.S. "Hootenanny" thus had an American aura and soon became the most cutting-edge, fashionable word among young Japanese. Maeda and Hirahara, *60-nendai foku no jidai* (Tokyo: Shinko Music, 1993), 35.
[548] "Konshu no suteji" [This Week's Performances], *Heibon Punch*, June 22, 1964, 122.
[549] Somegoro Ichikawa, "Peter, Paul and Mary," *Heibon Punch*, June 22, 1964, 123.
[550] Hiroyuki Takayama, "Shutsugen suruka? Nyuu modan foku" [Will New Modern Folk Emerge?], *Heibon Punch Deluxe*, January 1966, 213.

documented the popularity of folk songs among students in Japan quoted a male college student who led a quartet of two men and two women named "Hoots Emile" (which they thought would translate to "the children of hootenannies") who said that his group aspired to become like PPM. This college student enjoyed having female members in the group because of the attention they received on campus.[551] The writers identified PPM as collegiate and communal.

Japanese popular magazines and amateur musicians depoliticized PPM by emphasizing PPM's musical skills instead of their political involvement. A record review for PPM's album entitled *The King of Modern Folk Songs* released in Japan in 1965 emphasized their musical accomplishment while deemphasizing their political activism. The writer explained that PPM prioritized aesthetic beauty in performing folk songs, adding that "they are also admirable in their having strong social awareness and not falling in the pitfall of aestheticism."[552] The writer thus treated PPM's political involvement as an incidental addition to their aesthetic strength. Japanese college folk singers also awarded a particularly high status to PPM because of their musical skills; young Japanese identified the Brothers Four as the role model for the entry-level amateur

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[551] "Foku songu buumu o kakuchi ni saguru" [Exploring folk song boom throughout Japan], *Heibon Punch*, August 15, 1966, 97.
[552] "W & F Record Best 22," *Heibon Punch Deluxe*, November 1965, 209.

musicians while PPM as the advanced-level.[553]

The media continued to associate PPM with the intellectuals while reporting on the gradual decline of folk song popularity in Japan. In June 1967, when PPM visited Japan for the second time, *Heibon Punch* reported that the tickets for PPM concert did not sell well, reflecting the fading folk song boom in Japan. According to the article, "once it was said that those who did not understand folk songs were not intellectuals," but today, the popularity of folk songs in the U.S. declined to the extent that only a handful of college students enjoyed folk songs; instead, bossa nova and Western music had gained new popularity.[554] Thus, the article asserted that the decline of the popularity of folk songs in Japan coincided with that in the U.S. and that folk songs belonged to the intellectuals regardless of the music's popularity among everyone else.

After 1967, popular magazines did not report on PPM until their reunion in 1978. When weekly popular magazine *Shukan Post* announced the group's reunion, it quoted a music critic who described PPM as "the ghosts of the sixties." In addition to relegating the group to the past, the writer of the article described PPM in the context of the Japanese folk music history. Ignoring the fact that PPM and Dylan debuted almost

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[553] Hirotake Maeda and Koji Hirahara, *60-nendai foku no jidai* (Tokyo: Shinko Music, 1993), 25.
[554] "Foku buumu nimo akikaze?" [Is the Folk Boom Fading Out?], *Heibon Punch*, June 26, 1967, 33.

simultaneously in the U.S. and were preceded by Baez, the article identified PPM as the precursor of both Dylan and Baez, asserting that the commercial popularity of folk songs as represented by PPM in the early 1960s gave way to the prominence of protest folk songs as sung by Dylan and Baez in the mid and late 1960s. In addition to making this chronological error, the article described PPM as "the textbook of college folk" and Dylan and Baez as the "underground folk singers," employing terms that meant something special to Japanese fans. The writer further asserted that when PPM performed protest songs, they "pushed folk songs over ground with their polished beautiful harmony."[555] The article portrayed the American folk singers using words that narrated Japanese folk song history.

Shukan Post repeated the same claim four years later in an article that included an interview with Mary Travers when PPM visited Japan for a concert. The article relegated PPM to the past by asking Travers how she reflected on her youth in the 1960s, adding that the sixties in American history was comparable to the youth in human lives.[556] The writer also summarized the history of American folk music while

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[555] "60-nendai no hanagata data piitaa pooru & marii fukkatsu" [Peter, Paul and Mary, Who Used to Be the Stars of 60s Folk Music, Revive], *Shukan Post*, November 24, 1978, 104.

[556] "'Uta wa toki ni juudan nimo nariuru' to iu piitaa pooru & marii no foku riron" [Peter, Paul and Mary's Folk Theory to the Effect That "Songs Can Sometimes be Bullets"], *Shukan Post*, March 5, 1982, 72-73.

conflating it with what happened in Japan: "the early 1960s was the era of college folk when the New Christy Minstrels, Peter, Paul and Mary, and Brothers Four, created the folk boom. In contrast, Bob Dylan and Joan Baez, who appeared later that decade, were called the anti-war folk singers." The writer added that PPM contributed to the folk music scene by raising the musical quality of folk songs through their polished renditions. Instead of understanding American folk singers in the context of American history, the writer polarized American folk singers into two groups to support the narrative of Japanese folk music history.

Reliving the College Folk Period: PPM Fan Club and the Reception of PPM in Japan Today

While the popular media thus lost interest in PPM except as a reminder of the sixties and the root of Japanese college folk period, hardcore fans continued to follow the group and carried on their music to this day. The Peter, Paul and Mary Fan Club (PPMFC), established in 1990 by Japanese baby boomers entering middle-age, boasts more than 300 members today and keeps up with PPM's recent tours and recordings, learns the history of the group and their songs, and follows news about their lives, which they share and distribute through their seasonal periodical, *Friends of Harmony.* Many

of the members are amateur musicians who diligently practice singing and playing instruments to meticulously reproduce PPM's pieces. They form groups of four to each impersonate Peter, Paul, Mary, and Richard (the bass player off stage) and call themselves by a combination of their actual family name and the first name of the name of the musician whose part they play. They practice and rehearse for concerts they perform at local clubs and at the annual "PP&M Festa," where PPMFC members gather. On one occasion, a group of four men demonstrated their love of PPM by faithfully impersonating each member. The men who played the parts of Peter and Paul's sections even started growing their mustache a month or so before the concert in order to better resemble the originals. Another man, who sang the part of Mary, wore a blonde wig and had a dress made that he saw Mary wearing in a picture.[557]

A casual observer of PPMFC might think of the community as a tragic (and comical) example of how American cultural imperialism has worked on the minds of Japanese middle-aged men and women. They seem to be trying to become Americans by singing folk songs in English instead of appreciating Japanese culture. Indeed, as babyboomers, the PPMFC members grew up adoring American popular culture mostly through watching TV programs during the 1950s and the 1960s, including *Father Knows*

[557] A picture on the fan magazine, *Friends of Harmony* (December 2001): 28.

Best, Bewitched, and *Lassie Comes Home*. However, the PPMFC members do not think of their performance of PPM's music as reflecting their adoration of American culture or even a Japanese adoption of American culture. Their identity and pride as Japanese remain intact even when they wear a blond wig and sing American folk songs; they even refuse to think of PPM as American. They insist that PPM's music is so outstanding in quality that it transcends cultural differences; the *musical* quality of the trio, especially the "sophisticated harmony," which has a "universal" appeal, attracted them most.

The PPMFC members downplay cultural differences and avoid having to deal with the question of authenticity by claiming the "universality" of PPM's music and emphasizing the trio's musical skills. The preface that appeared on PPMFC 15th anniversary booklet failed to mention the trio's country of origin and left out any cultural differences that Japanese listeners may have experienced when first exposed to American music in the 1960s:

> The 1960s, when Peter, Paul and Mary was active and spread numerous hits and beautiful songs to the world, was exactly the most sensitive time of our lives. During our youth, the singing voices of Peter, Paul and Mary captured our minds. Their performance style, the message of peace and love that they spread through their songs, and most importantly, their sophisticated harmony were their strongest appeal.[558]

This PPM fan further downplayed cultural difference by stressing how special PPM was

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[558] Preface, *Peter Paul & Mary Fan Club 15th Anniversary Book*, n.p.

— while PPM was not the only folk group that was popular both in the U.S. and Japan at the time — electric music was also popular, with the Japanese GS (Group Sounds) boom — the trio held a special place in the hearts' of fans.[559] Takayuki Sasaki, a PPMFC member, likened PPM's music to Western classical music, which he believes transcends cultural differences.[560] Sasaki maintained that just as an orchestra conductor is free to interpret a symphony, so too can an amateur perform PPM music. At the same time, he qualified his remark as follows: "not everything can be classical music to anybody. PPM just happens to be classical music to me."[561] Sasaki thus asserted that PPM's music transcends time and place while leaving room for other interpretations. His band mate, Shunro Nakai, also told a magazine reporter that his dream would be to compose a song and perform it in a manner that sounded as if it came directly from a PPM record, indicating his perception of PPM's music as having a unique style that could be replicated.[562] Another PPMFC member claimed that PPM was a genre in itself and

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[559] Preface, *Peter Paul & Mary Fan Club 15th Anniversary Book*, n.p.
[560] For detailed analyses of Asian musicians of Western classical music asserting the universality of classical music to claim the music, see Mari Yoshihara, *Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2007), 201.
[561] Takayuki Sasaki, telephone interview by author, July 18, 2007.
[562] Shunroh Nakai, interview by Kazuhiro Uda, "Modan foku ni miserarete: Reunion intabyuu" [Enamored by contemporary folk music: an interview with the Reunion], *Shinko Music Mukku*, April 2, 2005, 7.

therefore was not comparable to any other groups or musicians.[563] The PPMFC members also appreciated the ways in which PPM created rich harmony from an apparently simple combination of voices and instruments. One member remarked that PPM successfully combined "three voices of different quality, two guitars, and a wood bass" to create "dramatic music, which could be likened to that of a small orchestra."[564] Others pointed to the intricate guitar-work including the use of the three-finger technique and the unconventional harmonic progression suggestive of jazz. By emphasizing the complexity of music, the PPMFC members set PPM apart from American folk music.

The PPMFC members also explain their activities using a nationalistic discourse. Akira Yagi, a member of a cover band, the Reunion, explained that their activity of copying PPM reflected a Japanese characteristic. He speculated that Americans and Japanese enjoy PPM in different ways: while the Americans value originality and therefore may not want to emulate PPM, the Japanese enjoy copying a model. He stated, "It may be a Japanese thing. We like to first learn and master the original before creating something of our own."[565] Instead of regarding himself as a copycat, he explained that copying PPM was part of the legitimate process of learning music.

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[563] Group discussion, May 18, 2007.
[564] Masao Suzuki, e-mail to author, May 12, 2007.
[565] Akira Yagi, telephone interview by author, July 18, 2007.

Another member, Fumio Ogawa, asserted that the presence of PPM cover bands in Japan reflected the Japanese love for overcoming challenges:

> It is not easy to form a cover band of PPM. You have to find people who play the guitar well, know the chorus, have good diction in English, and can memorize numerous songs in English, French, and Spanish—those qualifications are hard to come by. In addition to that, members of the band have to have good chemistry and shared experiences such as having gone to the same school. In order to cover Peter, Paul and Mary, you would need members with extraordinary talent and diligence. The Japanese are the people who rise to the challenge. Perhaps the reason why so many young Japanese were absorbed in the music of Peter, Paul and Mary was precisely because their music was difficult to cover.[566]

Ogawa thus regarded the act of covering an American folk group as the manifestation of the Japanese characteristics of diligence and hard work. He also explained that many Japanese musicians who started off by covering PPM gradually outgrew the original as they modified their work. He wrote: "Taking the best from the world and making it even better—this is the culture that the Japanese are so great at."[567] According to Ogawa, this "Japanese" trait was manifest in the 1969 Yamaha Light Music Contest, where the groups that won the first and second prizes, "Akai Tori [The Red Birds]" and the "Off Course," both had initially emulated PPM. They modified PPM's pieces when they appeared on stage for this contest. Ogawa asserted that this incident changed the course of Japanese folk music history. Japanese folk fans' attention shifted from the

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[566] Fumio Ogawa, letter to author, February 7, 2007.
[567] Ogawa, letter.

American original to the Japanese derivatives such as the Red Birds and the Off Course, who, according to him, were supported by the Japanese audience for "blending in traditional Japanese elements while not departing too much from Peter, Paul and Mary." He also believed that they further laid the foundation for such folk singers as Takuro Yoshida and Shigeru Izumiya, who "made folk music truly Japanese." He evaluated the two groups as "so outstanding in their ability that they were able to not only copy but also develop the work of Peter, Paul and Mary."[568] The PPMFC members assert their national pride in their performance of American folk music.

However, the nationalistic discourse is merely a tool to explain the PPMFC members' subject positions in singing American folk songs; they discuss the issue of identity only when asked. They most want to discuss the intricacy of PPM music and the challenge of finding the right people to form a band, the joy of creating music with others, and the differences in techniques and characteristics among various cover bands. PPMFC members do not perform PPM's pieces in search for national identity.[569] The PPMFC members think of their activities as purely musical so that they do not have to

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[568] Ogawa, letter.

[569] In his study of Tokyo Disneyland, Aviad Raz argued that Japanese customers only passively consume nationalistic discourse which were presented in a "playful, evasive manner." PPMFC members uphold Raz' argument. Aviad E. Raz, *Riding the Black Ship: Japan and Tokyo Disneyland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 200.

examine the issue of national identity.

Foreign observers, including PPM themselves, do not share the PPMFC members' view that PPM music is universal and that the Japanese can rightfully claim ownership. A PPMFC member, Kayo Hara, remembers an incident in 1995 when Paul Stookey questioned her at the reception the night before his Tokyo concert about why she and other PPMFC members did not perform their "original" songs. Stookey was also surprised to learn that she did not know the complete lyrics to a Japanese children's song, "Yuki ya kon kon," which he planned to sing with the Japanese audience the following day. Stookey assumed that American folk songs including the ones PPM sang were foreign to the Japanese and that they should authentically sing Japanese folk songs. Hara later lived in Germany and faced the same questions and pondered what it meant to be a Japanese singing PPM songs.[570] Japanese could claim ownership of PPM only in the context of Japan.

The absence of American and Western audiences allowed the PPMFC members to ignore any issues of authenticity and instead focus on musicianship. In the U.S., self-described "hardcore" folk fans have been suspicious of folk music that sounded "nice" and smooth. Folk music was defined against popular music, and a harsh,

[570] Kayo Hara, telephone interview, May 29, 2007.

unpolished sound marked authenticity. As Benjamin Filene demonstrated, folklorists John and Alan Lomax created "a cult of authenticity" when they presented Lead Belly to American northern audiences as the most primitive, hence most authentic, folk singer. Lead Belly defined what authentic folk music should sound like.[571] Japanese folk music fans did not have the same expectation. When asked to comment on the problem of authentic folk music being commercialized and brought to the middle-class taste by pop folk groups like PPM, one PPMFC member remarked, in English, "[That's] none of my business."[572] They did not adopt an American standard of authenticity and did not need to demonstrate their authenticity as folk singers. Instead, they thrived on making polished sounds by perfecting their guitar and singing skills. On June 23, 2007, The Reunion, a PPM cover band formed by four PPMFC members, performed a total of twenty PPM songs at an American folksong-themed nightclub in Tokyo. The members of The Reunion faithfully reproduced the repertoire. After what seemed to be a flawless performance, one member of the band sent an email to fellow PPMFC members in the audience asking for criticism and suggestions for improvement, and received earnest

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[571] Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 49. Hugh Baker and Yuval Taylor argued that Lead Belly's sound defined what authentic rock music sounded like. Baker and Taylor, *Faking It: The Quest for Authenticity in Popular Music* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007), 22.

[572] Takayuki Sasaki, telephone interview, July 18, 2007.

answers.[573] Instead of incorporating the American standard of authenticity, the PPMFC members established their own objective of perfecting their musical skills.

Even though the PPMFC members downplay cultural differences and interpret their activities as purely musical, they are aware of the cultural meanings of PPM in Japan. As shown in Chapter 2, Japanese magazines in the 1960s portrayed PPM as "sophisticated," "urban" intellectuals and artists from Greenwich Village suitable for college students to emulate. College folk singers regarded folk singing in English as a way to demonstrate their social status and to build a community of educated middle-class youth. The PPMFC members subscribed to this image and described the trio with the same language. They used "sophisticated" and "urban" as the two key words to describe PPM, even saying the word "sophisticated" in English, and associated the trio with Greenwich Village, the symbol of cultural refinement and cosmopolitanism.[574] A member of the PPM FC wrote that he and his friend (with whom he later formed an amateur folk band) first learned to enjoy American folk songs when they were in junior high school (English is a compulsory subject taught at every junior and senior high school in Japan) while watching a guitar lessons program broadcasted by NHK, the government subsidized broadcasting network: "Singing folk songs in English became a

[573] Rumi Yanagimoto, email, June 23, 2007.
[574] Group discussion, May 18, 2007.

great source of pleasure for us, as we were learning to play the guitar and English at the same time."[575] Another PPMFC member, Fumio Ogawa, recalled an incident in high school where his English teacher told the class to write down on a sheet of paper as many English words they knew. The first student who completed that task was one of the top students in class who later went to the University of Tokyo. When Ogawa asked him how he had learned so many English words, he replied that he had learned those words from American folk songs on the radio. Ogawa recalled that part of what motivated high school students then to learn folk songs was to demonstrate their proficiency in English.[576] Given the importance of English as an academic subject taught at school, the mastery of which being one of the major deciding factors in the college entrance exam, singing American folk songs in English suggested the students' future entry into the elite ruling class of Japan. Folk singing as represented by PPM embodied cultural refinement and academic achievement tied to upward social mobility.

While the PPMFC members insist on the "universality" of PPM music, they keep PPM's political message in the U.S. context and do not apply it to the Japanese situation. They understand the problems pointed out by American folk singers to be American in nature, and remain sympathetic audiences who are not affected directly by

[575] Tetsuyuki Kawatani, "History," *Friends of Harmony*, September 2001, 26.
[576] Fumio Ogawa, letter to the author, February 7, 2007.

these issues. One member admired the way PPM contributed to the civil rights movement, commenting how she was moved to read about the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr.[577] Another member explained that PPM's songs were "not protest songs but songs written from the perspective of the underdog." He thought that such songs embodied the American ideal of freedom of expression, which he admired.[578] He and other members insisted that PPM's songs were more sophisticated and effective than overtly political songs, which they considered vulgar. The message of peace and brotherhood appealed to the members as a sign of sophistication and intelligence, as opposed to earnest message that Japanese audiences needed to apply to the Japanese situation.

The PPMFC members have treated PPM as both exotic and familiar.[579] On the one hand, PPM was and remained exotic — white, blonde, and sexy American musicians who embodied cultural refinement and cosmopolitanism. When asked about the appeal

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[577] Kayo Hara, group discussion, May 18, 2007.
[578] Yuji Horiuchi, group discussion, May 18, 2007.
[579] Mary Yoko Brannen proposed these terms to explain the Japanese domestication of Disneyland. According to Brannen, Japanese promoters of Tokyo Disneyland decided to reproduce the American original ("keeping the exotic exotic") in establishing Tokyo Disneyland instead of altering it to look Japanese ("making the exotic familiar") with the intent of asserting Japanese superiority. Mary Yoko Brannen, "'Bwana Mickey': Constructing Cultural Consumption at Tokyo Disneyland," in *Remade in Japan: Everyday Life and Consumer Taste in a Changing Society*, ed. Joseph Tobin (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 219.

of PPM, one PPMFC member answered, "it was not because PPM was WASP that we liked them."[580] The PPMFC members acknowledge that PPM's physical appearance contributes to their "sophisticated" image. At a group discussion of the PPMFC member after the Paul Stookey concert in Tokyo in May 2007, one male member admitted that he liked the way Mary's blond hair waved as she sang, while another remarked that Mary symbolized ideal womanhood, combining her physical appeal with intelligence.[581] The two women agreed that Stookey was "sexy even though he was bald."[582] A woman in the audience at the same concert (not a member of the PPMFC) exclaimed in whisper while Stookey sang, "He looks like Sean Connelly!" The PPMFC members regard PPM's whiteness as a positive characteristic.

However, PPM's exotic image is also reflective of the members' self-image as sophisticated and intelligent members of an elite community. Like their U.S. counterparts, the PPMFC members looked to PPM music for an alternative to what was available to them. As demonstrated in Chapter 3, to American folk music fans during the folk revival, American popular music of the time sounded too nice and polished to be authentic. To the Japanese PPM fans, however, Japanese popular music of the time was

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[580] Group discussion with the PPMFC members, May 18, 2007.
[581] Group discussion with PPMFC members, May 18, 2007; Akira Yagi, telephone interview, July 18, 2007.
[582] Group discussion with the PPMFC members, May 18, 2007.

not polished enough for their taste. One member recalled that when she grew up in the 1950s and 1960s, there was no music that appealed to her: "Japanese popular songs all sounded the same; they all sounded like *enka*. The rhythm was in simple meter of four, and there were only two kinds of lyrics: a man who believes he can solve any problem with his guts and a woman who still believes in the man who dumped her. The singers looked so hammy."[583] She could not sympathize with those old-fashioned motifs and identified more with music from the West such as the Beatles and PPM. Other members also stressed the novelty of PPM. Masao Suzuki recalled that PPM was "stylish and intelligent" in a way that no other musician was. Although he liked various types of popular music, everything sounded "unrefined" in comparison to PPM's music. He also thought that "*enka* was out of the question."[584] They perceived American folk songs as more reflective of their taste than Japanese popular songs of the time.

Further, PPM is less exotic and more familiar today than in the 1960s. The PPMFC members adored American culture and associated whiteness with modernity when they grew up watching American television programs. However, their blind adoration of American culture had waned by the time they entered college, as the Vietnam War escalated. Today, PPM and the 1960s America have become a shared

[583] Rumi Yanagimoto, telephone interview by author, July 3, 2007.
[584] Masao Suzuki, e-mail to author, May 12, 2007.

memory for their aging Japanese fans, a familiar image which helps them build a community. A majority of the PPMFC members were amateur musicians when they were young. They have reconnected with their old friends and are reliving their youth today. PPM has become a familiar figure while maintaining their exotic traits.

Conclusion

Dylan and PPM both served as models for Japanese musicians and helped them build communities in Japan. Japanese musicians admired and deified Dylan not out of an inferiority complex toward the Americans but so as to use his authority to improve their own status among the Japanese audience. They replicated Dylan's strategy of self-authentication: Dylan glorified Guthrie and then asserted his authenticity by claiming to be the direct descendant of Guthrie. With the help of the media, Japanese folk singers and songwriters made a similar claim by calling Dylan the god of folk and themselves Dylan's children. The Japanese media attacked Dylan for the same reason as they deified him: to help raise the status of Japanese musicians. PPM fans and musicians also made themselves legitimate successors of the trio by asserting the "timelessness" and "universality" of PPM's music and perfected their musical skills. It was ironic that Bob Dylan and Peter, Paul and Mary, two sets of musicians both representative of the folk

revival, ceased to be called folk singers in Japan.

Japanese fans and musicians' appreciation of Dylan and PPM did not lead to a greater understanding of American culture or seeking to espouse a transnational community. Japanese audiences and musicians were content within Japanese communities and struggled to improve their status in these communities by claiming ownership of the American musicians. Japanese agents and specialists of Dylan and PPM in particular attempted to keep the general public distanced from the artists so as to maintain their privilege as experts. This was contrasting to the American folk singers and fans during the folk revival, who viewed folk music as a way to understand and connect to people of different backgrounds. Further, in contrast to the way the Cornell Folk singers have come to view themselves as participants in the folk process, the Japanese counterparts ceased to regard Dylan and PPM as folk singers; instead, they have come to view these American musicians as unique, universal artists independent from their cultural and historical contexts. They regarded Dylan and Peter, Paul and Mary not as part of the folk music scene but as independent artists who were genres in themselves.

Japanese audiences and critics also used Dylan and PPM to assert a nationalistic discourse. They deified and then dismissed Dylan in an attempt to stress the superiority of Japanese musicians. They also sought for clues that showed Dylan's appreciation of

Japanese culture so as to make Japanese readers feel good about themselves. Certain PPMFC members also narrated their activities in a way that stressed positive Japanese characteristics and underscored their high social status in Japan.

The Japanese use of Dylan and PPM ultimately revealed a strong association between American cultural products and high social status in Japan. Japanese critics and fans fought over ownership of American artists because they had strong cultural currency. However, the Japanese also challenged the American definition of folk music as essentially belonging to the racial, cultural other. As Stookey's remark suggested, American folk singers assumed an organic relationship between the Japanese and traditional Japanese music. Japanese musicians, by contrast, claimed their ownership of American folk music by redefining it to serve their purposes. In this sense, PPM fans are similar to the Cornell Folk Song Club members today in negotiating the meaning of folk music so they could become insiders of folk music. Both Cornell folk singers and PPM fans today claim the music as their own.

CONCLUSION

A comparison between the U.S. and Japanese folk communities showed that in both countries, folk music enthusiasts perceived the music as an alternative to what was easily available to them. They defined folk music as an antithesis to commercialized popular music that was prevalent and common at the time, but the antithesis had different meanings over time and across borders. American folk music enthusiasts in the sixties viewed folk music as the music of the marginalized population not available through commercial media, embodying values that resisted the dominant American culture. In contrast, folk music provided young Japanese fans in the sixties with a sense of sophistication that the Japanese popular music of the time lacked. In both the U.S. and Japan, folk music represented political, aesthetic, and cultural values that the music's audience, producers and critics negotiated and formulated.

The values that folk music embodied such as political idealism, anti-commercialism, and cultural diversity were contested and negotiated, and they differed across borders. As discussed in Chapter 1, the relationship between folk music

and commercialism was far from simple; while defining folk music against commercialism, producers of the magazines as well as revivalist musicians disagreed on an assessment and definition of commercialism, and the business side also espoused an anti-commercial and anti-establishment sentiment. The relationship between political and folk songs was also ambiguous, as folk music magazines documented a shift in the meaning of political songs from those that encouraged collective action to those that expressed personal freedom. As shown in Chapter 2, Japanese folk singers of the late 1960s replicated similar debates concerning commercialism and political idealism in folk music, but they did not embrace cultural diversity as had their American counterparts. American critics, musicians, and fans, while disagreeing on commercialism and politics, agreed on the idea that folk music helped them understand different cultures and peoples. The Japanese participants in the folk music revival did not see folk music as a way to understand different cultures but as a universal medium they could freely use in Japan.

Both American and Japanese folk music fans had a racial understanding of the music. Americans viewed the folk as exotic and ethnic, associating the music with the non-white and otherwise marginalized population, while their Japanese counterparts regarded the music as standing for white American. The Japanese media's obsession with Joan Baez' Hispanic background, which was rarely taken up in the U.S., attested to

the way American folk music was racially marked in Japan. At the same time, the Japanese audience took a flexible approach to race, as can be seen in some Japanese journalists' assertion that Japanese and Mexicans were "Orientals" and therefore Baez had a natural affinity to the Japanese audience. Ethnomusicologist E. Taylor Atkins demonstrated the ways in which Japanese jazz critics, musicians, and fans coded jazz as African-American music, and maneuvered the concept of race to claim their ownership of jazz. Japanese critics identified African-Americans as the authentic jazz musicians and claimed that because of the Japanese affinity to African Americans as "colored" people, Japanese musicians could create uniquely Japanese jazz that was also comparable to the American original. Their quest for "Japanese" jazz during the late 1960s and the 1970s was also based on the essentialized notion of race and ethnicity.[585] Japanese fans of bluegrass, in contrast, understood the music as white and rural American. As Toru Mitsui showed, Japanese bluegrass fans perceived the music as stemming from the American South and the Southwest, regions which they ironically associated with freedom and democracy.[586] Mitsui argued that geographical and cultural distance

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[585] E. Taylor Atkins, *Blue Nippon: Authenticating Jazz in Japan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 226, 251.

[586] Toru Mitsui, "The Reception of the Music of American Southern Whites in Japan," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil V. Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 290.

between the source musicians and the Japanese musicians made the Japanese less concerned about authenticity than the American revivalists. He wrote, "the American folk 'revival' did not affect the revival to the Japanese, because it has been a phenomenon in a geographically and culturally far-off country. That culturally deep gulf naturally makes Japanese performers one step further removed from the performances of southern rural whites than are those of American revivalists such as Mike Seeger."[587] This dissertation showed that the Japanese' lack of concern over authenticity was a choice rather than a "natural" consequence of a geographical or cultural distance; the Japanese perception of folk music exhibited complex racial and national identities. Japanese fans viewed folk music as white American and were strongly aware of the racial difference between the American performers and the Japanese audience. At the same time, however, Japanese fans defined the music in a way that they meant they could claim ownership of the music and elevate their status in Japan.

The folk music revival in the U.S. and Japan showed the process by which American and Japanese baby boomers encountered and appreciated music not their own and, over time, came to embrace the music as their own. They did so in different ways, but in both cases, over time, folk music ceased to embody differences and became a tool

[587] Mitsui, "The Reception of the Music of American Southern Whites in Japan," 283, 290.

to build a community. American revivalist folk singers and fans, especially during the revival, considered themselves outsiders of the folk tradition while at the same time, viewed folk music as their heritage and past. American folk fans romanticized domestic noble savages and non-Western foreigners while the Japanese counterparts romanticized middle-class white Americans in the 1960s. As shown in Chapters 3 and 4, the Cornell Folk Song Club members today have made folk music their own by redefining themselves as the folk, while the Japanese fans of Peter, Paul and Mary and Bob Dylan have ceased to call their music "folk" and instead regard the music as universal. In her study of Asian musicians of Western classical music, Mari Yoshihara argued that Asian musicians' claim that classical music was "universal" served to challenge Western hegemony instead of internalizing Eurocentric rhetoric.[588] The PPM Fan Club members' suggestion that the music was similar to Western classical music had a point, not because the two types of music were musically similar but because of the way the Japanese performers identified the music as white and yet asserted the music's universality to claim ownership.

After the folk revival, Japanese and American folk scenes showed similar divisions. During the 1970s, American revivalist musicians split into the

[588] Mari Yoshihara, *Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2007), 201.

singer-songwriters, who distanced themselves from traditions, and the ethnic revivalists, who cultivated such music as Klezmer and Celtic music. Gillian Mitchell argued that the ethnic revivals were the extension of the "named system revivals" as proposed by folklorist Neil Rosenberg.[589] Rosenberg classified revivalist singers into the "new aesthetics" and the "named-system revivalists," extending the terminologies proposed by Ellen Stekert in 1966. The "new aesthetics" musicians performed folk music in a manner that was compatible with their background, while the "named-system revivalists" (whom Stekert had called "imitators" or "emulators") attempted to immerse themselves in the culture of the folk music that they learned.[590] Folk music in Japan similarly split into those who continued to embrace American folk music performed by American revivalist singers and those who wrote their own songs in Japanese. The latter distanced themselves from their source musicians (i.e., revivalist singers in the U.S.) and claimed folk music as Japanese, even to the point of erasing the music's American origin. The former, including the PPM Fan Club members, many of whom are musicians, continued to learn from their source musicians. Unlike the ethnic revivalists in the U.S., who

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[589] Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival: Nation and Identity in the United States and Canada, 1945-1980* (England: Ashgate, 2007), 169.
[590] Neil V. Rosenberg, "Named-Systems Revivals," in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, ed. Neil V. Rosenberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 177.

immersed themselves in both the music and its cultural context, the Japanese performers of American folk music concentrated on musical techniques.

The reception of folk music in Japan was different from the ways other types of American music such as jazz and bluegrass were received because folk music lost its American association over time. Today, "folk" music in Japan refers to Japanese protest singers and singer-songwriters from the 1970s. For example, a recently released "definitive version" of folk CD collection consisted exclusively of Japanese artists and their songs.[591] Folk music was initially understood as white, urban, and American, but by the late 1960s during the underground folk period, Japanese musicians and activists freely used American folk music as a universal musical form to express their own ideas. From the 1970s, Japanese singer-songwriters took over the position of authority figures in the folk music world; American revivalist folk singers came to belong to the history of Japanese folk music.

The contrasting ways in which American and Japanese communities understood folk music indicated that political and aesthetic meaning of folk music was not inherent in the music but was constructed by its audience and producers. American revivalists and fans felt it was natural that folk music was ethnic, proletarian, and premodern. They

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[591] *Watashi no Seishunfu* (Victor Family Club).

constructed authenticity by projecting onto folk music values that were against the dominant American culture. Japanese fans of folk music did not have the same sense of the music and instead, established a different image that better suited their needs. As shown in Chapters 2 and 4, in an attempt to define folk music as belonging to the educated, sophisticated young Japanese, the media and fans developed a particularly high opinion of PPM as musicians in contrast to American critics, who praised the trio's political commitment but not their musicianship. They also depoliticized Joan Baez' activities even at a time when she was recognized more as an anti-war activist than a folk singer in the U.S. The political message that Americans (including an alleged CIA agent) found inherent in Baez's performance was met with the Japanese insistence that they could choose to ignore it. The dissertation, which documented debates, opinions, and attitudes that folk music fans had, revealed that folk music enthusiasts negotiated their identities and values as they made meaning from folk music.