Marian Anderson’s 1953 Concert Tour of Japan: A Transnational History

On April 27, 1953, one year after Japan regained its sovereignty following the postwar Allied occupation, the famed African American singer Marian Anderson arrived in Tokyo for a concert tour. Sponsored by NHK (Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, or Japan Broadcasting Corporation), Anderson’s visit was also endorsed by an interlinking network of national and local media, US Embassy officials, Japanese critics and performers of classical music, and the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS). She performed at some of the country’s leading concert facilities and filled the role of goodwill ambassador, staging a benefit concert for orphans in Hiroshima just eight years after an American atomic bomb had decimated that city. Anderson also performed at the Imperial Palace, which, as the New York Times reported, “had a Negro guest for the first time in its 2,600-year history.”

This was Anderson’s first visit to Asia. She stayed in Japan for over a month, performing several times in Tokyo and giving concerts...
Marian Anderson’s 1953 Concert Tour of Japan

in Nagoya, Osaka, and Hiroshima. Then on May 27 she made a brief trip to perform for US and UN troops serving in the Korean War. This visit took place in the midst of the fighting, turning out to be only two months before a cease-fire was signed with North Korea. Anderson’s 1953 journey to Japan predated her more extensive State Department–sponsored Asian tour, which took place four years later and did not include performances in Japan.2

Anderson encountered Japan as the nation was coming to terms with a new normalcy, fresh out of occupation, still healing from the abject defeat of World War II, and essentially reentering the community of nations. Crown Prince Akihito, as a notable example, spent six months of 1953 on a world tour, serving as the face of a recently reorganized country poised to make its debut on the international stage. The Allied plan for the reconstruction of Japan after World War II had promoted fast-paced Westernization and democratization, with vigorous endorsement from General Headquarters, or GHQ, as it was familiarly known in Japan. GHQ referred to the office of General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP), who led the so-called rehabilitation effort. Active promotion of Western traditions was central to this initiative, and the performance of Western classical music contributed to its overarching agenda, building on Japan’s strong history with European musical traditions. When the Korean War broke out in 1950, Japan was charged with special procurements by the US government; as a result, Japan experienced robust economic growth, which in turn made it possible to host foreign virtuosos. Prominent musicians from abroad like the pianist Walter Gieseking (March 1953), violinist Jascha Heifetz, and conductor Herbert von Karajan (both in April 1954) were invited

Misako Ohta is an associate professor of the Graduate School of Human Development and Environment, Division of Human Expression, at Kobe University. Born in Tokyo, she studied musicology at Tokyo University of the Arts (BA) and German Literature at Gakushuin University (MA). Her PhD in music history (University of Vienna, 2001) examined artistic intention and its public effects in Kurt Weill’s musical theater from the 1920s into the 1930s. She teaches Western music history within its cultural context and transnational perspective and has been a music critic for the regional edition (Kansai area) of the Yomiuri shinbun since 2003. She is preparing a critical biography of Kurt Weill in Japanese.

Carol J. Oja is William Powell Mason Professor of Music at Harvard. Her Bernstein Meets Broadway: Collaborative Art in a Time of War (2014) won the Music in American Culture Award from the American Musicological Society, and her Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s won the Lowens Book Award from the Society for American Music. She has served as president of the Society for American Music, Leonard Bernstein Scholar-in-Residence with the New York Philharmonic, and chair of the Pulitzer Prize committee in music. She is currently writing a book about Marian Anderson and the racial desegregation of classical music performance.
Callam, Kimoto, Ohta, and Oja

by Japanese newspaper companies and by NHK, which had foreign cash on hand for cultural events. These stars of Western classical music performed in cities across the country, and Japanese audiences received them enthusiastically. Notably, they were white males of European or Russian origin in a field in which women excelled primarily as singers and from which blacks were summarily excluded.

This article brings a bicultural perspective to a significant moment of postwar cultural exchange between Japan and the United States, contextualizing Anderson’s concert tour and her symbolic presence as an icon of civil rights in relation to the vast Westernization project of the Allied occupation of Japan. It has been researched and written by a team of Japanese and US musicologists, with archival research undertaken on both sides of the Pacific, and it draws upon sources in both Japanese and English. Misako and Makiko visited archives around Japan, including those for NHK and the imperial family. They also went to the National Diet Library and its branches, which hold national and regional newspapers. Misako’s students at Kobe University translated materials from both Japanese and Korean. Carol and Katie undertook research in Marian Anderson’s archive at the University of Pennsylvania and in its digitized photographs (available online), as well as with scrapbooks of Anderson’s career compiled by Hurok Attractions, Inc., and now housed at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center. They also had access to the digital archive of the Nippon Times, for which there is limited availability in Japan (an example of today’s unequal access to digital resources). Throughout, we sought to respect the related yet distinctive methodologies of the United States and Japan, shaping a working relationship that was both a collaboration and a negotiation.

As an exercise in cross-cultural research, this article yielded a fascinating process that is by no means standard in humanities scholarship, including musicology. Four authors, living on opposite sides of the world, shared a cluster of Google docs for developing notes and drafts and a Dropbox folder for storing research materials while holding regular group conversations via Skype. Thanks to support from the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, we convened at Harvard University in February 2018 for a ten-day working session, which turned out to be transformative. Before that meeting, each of us had drafted different sections of the article, and we spent the time together fusing our separate perspectives, aiming for a unified voice but also trying to honor cultural difference. It was an immensely gratifying experience.

While shaping a transnational history that weaves together multiple intersecting issues, we argue that Anderson’s experiences in Japan, coupled with Japanese responses to her presence, provide a means to explore pressing questions of the early postoccupation era: of the deployment of US soft power following a heavy-handed democratization project,
of how a non-European performer could stake a claim to Western classical music, of the complex history of race relations between African Americans and the Japanese, and of how Japanese audiences reacted to spirituals. Japanese music critics emerge as crucial cultural negotiators in interpreting Anderson’s performances amid rapid postwar transformations, and her visit was important for American soldiers (in both Japan and Korea), as well as for Japanese civilians. Furthermore, Anderson’s presence resulted in ongoing resonances, especially as conveyed through educational materials for Japanese schoolchildren. Recognizing a voluminous bibliography on the occupation, the Japanese members of our team nonetheless feel that memories of that period and of World War II remain polarizing subjects in Japan, repressed in public discourse and in schools. Misako describes this traumatic period as having been stored away in a “black box,” and the historian John Dower, in his acclaimed study of the occupation, described the dilemma: “More than anything else, it turned out, the losers wished both to forget the past and to transcend it.”

For our contingent from the United States, this collective research experience provided a palpable sense of the deep respect with which a major African American artist was treated while visiting Japan, despite the profound cultural reorientation—a cultural purge marking a new age of Western imperialism—that was imposed on Japan by the Allied occupation.

Setting the Scene: Race, Concert Life, and Postwar Challenges

In terms of race, gender, and national origin, Anderson stood out amid the visits to Japan by renowned classical musicians immediately after the occupation. She arrived as a celebrity whose reputation had preceded her through globally distributed recordings and a strong presence on radio, even as her difference was apparent. “The Japanese have a fine appreciation of the classics,” she told a reporter for Our World, a glossy picture magazine targeted to African American readers. “They are familiar with my records too. In fact, long before I arrived in Japan, I was swamped with their requests” (fig. 1).

Notably, when the Allies’ Civil Information and Education Division (CIE) scheduled the “first of a series of recorded American music concerts” in 1948—five years before Anderson’s concert tour—the program included some of Anderson’s recordings of spirituals.

Japanese audiences often associated Anderson’s performances with a deep level of pathos, even emotional catharsis, and the experience was remarkable enough that stories lingered. The well-known sculptor Katsura Funakoshi (b. 1951) recalls that his parents attended one of Anderson’s concerts in Tokyo. Memories of that event reverberated
in family lore, and decades later the Funakoshi children told an interviewer that their parents had a strong emotional response to Anderson’s performance. They were especially impressed with her interpretation of Schubert’s “Der Erlkönig,” the famed German lied that was among Anderson’s greatest hits. While evacuees during the war, the Funakoshi family lost a child to disease, and in retrospect the children felt their parents responded to Anderson’s performance as a kind of healing balm, even though the tickets were expensive in relation to their limited resources at the time. Peter Grilli, son of the art and music critics for Tokyo’s Nippon Times (renamed the Japan Times in 1956) and president emeritus of the Japan Society of Boston, also recalls attending one of Anderson’s Tokyo concerts as a child, and her performance of “Der Erlkönig” stood out for him, too. “I’ll never forget it!” Grilli said during a conversation in Boston. “Hearing Miss Anderson’s concert at Hibiya Public Hall made a strong impression on me, even as a child of ten.” Grilli continued: “Along with ‘Erlkönig,’ the piece that had the strongest impact on me at that concert was ‘Swing Low Sweet Chariot.’ At the time, I knew next to nothing about slavery or Negroes in American society or about Christian notions of death and heavenly rebirth. But I’ll never forget the intensity of that song. Anderson’s power and concentration seemed to be directed inward, and to me that spiritual seemed to flow from her soul directly to the souls of everyone in the audience.”

Similarly, Takaya Urakawa, who later became a renowned Japanese violinist and educator and performed with Anderson’s accompanist...
Franz Rupp during the 1970s,9 attended Anderson’s Tokyo concert at age thirteen: “My mother was a singer, so she took me to Marian Anderson’s concert at Hibiya Public Hall in Tokyo in 1953. I clearly remember the strong impression of Anderson’s performance of Negro spirituals. I just felt that Anderson’s voice itself was like an art. Her performance of Negro spirituals was religious, and it gave me some severe emotional shock. I found that Anderson had a kind of philosophy behind her performance of Negro spirituals.”10

Yet another memory of Anderson’s performances in Japan comes from Misuzu Tanaka, currently president of the Aoyama Music Foundation in Kyoto. She was in the audience at Osaka’s Sankei Hall on May 6, 1953. She too recalls the distinctiveness of Anderson’s voice: “Her pitch was always a bit lower than desirable because of her wide range. However, her singing voice was as smooth as velvet, and the performance was totally brilliant.”11

Anderson’s prominence as a symbol of civil rights in the United States followed her to Japan, especially through photographs of her now-famous 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial. As was typical with US international relations during the Cold War, GHQ promoted the United States to the Japanese as a paragon of freedom, a democratic model to be emulated. At the same time, pressure was building to deal with racial segregation and prejudice at home as the civil rights movement steadily gained urgency. Standard narratives of that movement often begin in May 1954 with the historic Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education, which declared the racial segregation of public schools to be unconstitutional. Yet the battle had been under way for decades—part of what historians now call the “long civil rights movement”—and Anderson’s 1939 concert was a defining moment, becoming an iconic representation of the struggle by African Americans for full citizenship. Invoking a whites-only contract clause, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) denied Anderson the right to perform at Constitution Hall, which was then Washington, DC’s primary concert facility (the Kennedy Center did not open until 1971). With a rapidly organized mobilization effort supported by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Anderson and her manager, Sol Hurok, outmaneuvered the DAR by staging a concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. A mixed-race audience of over seventy-five thousand people attended, and the concert reached tens of thousands more via transcontinental radio. Coast-to-coast headlines covered the event, appearing in both black and white newspapers.

Fourteen years later, the more elaborate program booklets for Anderson’s performances in Japan featured images from this concert, bearing witness to the degree to which her identity was fused with that signal event. Notably, inscriptions from Anderson and NHK’s president,
Tetsuro Furukaki, opened one booklet, and Furukaki’s message linked art with humanitarian ideals: “Only true art can give power to all people to overcome prejudice and conflict” (fig. 2). Given the singular prominence of Constitution Hall in the nation’s capital, Anderson’s victory had major implications for racial justice in US concert venues overall, and evoking that history photographically within her Japanese program booklets delivered a vivid image of democracy in action. While Anderson’s struggles with Constitution Hall continued over the years, a historic breakthrough occurred immediately before her tour of Japan: on March 14, 1953, she gave her first performance at Constitution Hall to a racially integrated audience—not as a one-time exception but as part of a new desegregated policy.

At the same time, Japanese relations with African Americans had a long history, stretching decades before Anderson’s Lincoln Memorial concert and forming an important context for her tour of Japan. In 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference, which defined the terms for ending World War I, the Japanese government advocated including the abolition of racial discrimination in the treaty, although this humanitarian clause was not adopted. Japan was then an ally of the United States, Britain, France, and Italy. By the 1920s Japan had achieved a significant status in “the ideology of black internationalism,” as chronicled by historian

Figure 2. Pages from the program booklet Vocal Recital Marian Anderson, 1953. The booklet includes photos of Anderson’s concert at the Lincoln Memorial in 1939 and statements by her and Tetsuro Furukaki. Courtesy Anderson Papers.
Marc Gallicchio. Even a decade later, as Japan’s aggression intensified in Asia, prominent African American intellectuals such as W. E. B. Du Bois continued to feel a sense of solidarity with the island nation. While acknowledging that Japan’s domination in Asia bore alarming similarities to European colonialism, Du Bois also pointed out a “vast difference” from European practices, noting that Japan’s “program cannot be one based on race hate for the conquered, since racially these latter [i.e., Formosa, Korea, and Manchuria] are one with the Japanese and are recognized as blood relatives.” Immediately after Pearl Harbor, many African American leaders and citizens continued to view Japan with a sense of racial solidarity. “A Negro Soldier,” for example, published a letter in the *Pittsburgh Courier* in January 1942, expressing faith in the Japanese yet doing so with a common racial slur of the day: “I wonder if the Negro would be any worse off if he were dominated by the Japanese than he is at present? Personally, I doubt if the Japs are as bad as we are made to believe. I doubt if they would treat loyal, patriotic citizens as badly as the Negro is treated in America.”

In the ever-shifting world of transpacific race relations, the Japanese shared this sense of solidarity, though racial attitudes were by no means consistent, especially over time. While early in the twentieth century many Japanese viewed African Americans as a model for navigating their own relationships with whites, racial attitudes became more ambivalent as Japan’s imperialism intensified. Historian Yukiko Koshiro notes a growing separation for the Japanese in the 1930s between “their physical identity as an Asian race” and a “psychological identity as a European race.” Modern Japan shaped this “dualistic racial identity” as its imperialism accelerated, “[serving] to legitimize Japan’s status as a colonial power in the eyes of Asians as well as westerners.” As a result, racial policies of the Japanese government before and during World War II were conflicted, with discrimination on the basis of skin color common in Japanese society.

The American-led occupation of Japan brought a new generation of racial issues, with greater face-to-face contact than ever before between the Japanese and American soldiers—whether black, white, or from other racial groups, including Japanese American GI’s. GHQ imposed racial segregation on the occupation forces, aligning with segregationist practices in the United States and providing a regressive model for the country it aimed to democratize. “Not one African American serviceman worked in MacArthur’s headquarters,” writes historian Sarah Kovner. American soldiers were a visible presence in Japan, however, and when they became involved in sexual relationships with Japanese women, popular culture took note. In 1952, one year before Anderson’s tour, the song “Gomen-nasai” (“Forgive me” or “I’m sorry”) became a hit in Japan and focused on “an intimate and presumably unequal relationship” between a US Army GI and a Japanese woman. The melancholic...
lyrics were written by Dr. Benedict Mayers to a melody by Raymond Hattori; both were apparently American GIs. “Gomen-nasai” was originally recorded in Japan by the African American singer Richard Bowers, then it subsequently migrated to the United States with recordings by Harry Belafonte, Gordon Jenkins, and Sammy Kay. The song opens by quoting the Japanese folk tune “Sakura,” then shifts to an up-tempo big-band arrangement. Along the way, the lyrics include “my Butterfly heart,” referring to the misbegotten mixed-race couple in Puccini’s opera *Madama Butterfly.*

The American women’s magazine *Redbook* claimed that Mayers donated his royalties for “Gomen-nasai” to “an orphanage for illegitimate children of GIs in Japan,” and in 1953 Japan was indeed dealing with a crisis over children of mixed-race parentage—children who were infamously dubbed *konketsuji.* The issue was ever-present in the news during Anderson’s visit, as these children had reached school age and had begun to penetrate the public consciousness. “Children were routinely labeled either ‘black’ or ‘white,’ a system of classification that not only identified them unilaterally with the father’s rather than the mother’s race, but also identified qualitative differences between paternal strains,” writes Kristin Roebuck. “It was black Americans and black *konketsuji* who were most forcefully defined as non-kin in 1950s Japan.” Since it was a social taboo to reveal information about these children, they were often hidden in orphanages or private homes. By the end of the occupation, the problems of the *konketsuji* were being discussed as an important social issue by journalists and politicians, yet there was considerable disagreement over how many children were affected.

Strikingly, on April 26, 1953, the *Asahi shinbun* placed an article about Marian Anderson and a review of the film *Konketsuji* in the same section. As described by Yukiko Koshiro, the film dealt with “social problems arising from the presence of U.S. military bases in Japan” by focusing on “Henry and Tommy, half-black half-Japanese children, [who] are the victims of the American military control of Japan.” Anderson’s fund-raising on behalf of Japanese orphans is discussed later in the *Asahi* article. She did not, however, draw special attention to the *konketsuji,* taking a far less activist posture than the African American singer Josephine Baker, who visited Japan in the spring of 1954—a year after Anderson—to give concerts that raised funds for the so-called occupation babies. Baker personally adopted two of the orphans.

In multiple dimensions, then, the period of the occupation was the first time for many Japanese to interact with Americans, both black and white, and Anderson’s visit took place within the overall context of those transnational connections. At her recital in 1953 in Nagoya, for example, a regional newspaper noted that the audience included many African American GIs. “Marian Anderson in white evening dress, gilded folding screen as backdrop, under the blue light, and her brown skin were
harmonized totally. In the packed Public Hall especially many black American US troops in Japan were seen.”

According to historian John G. Russel, the stereotype of the African American as a GI was reinforced through various novels and comics by Japanese authors, such as Ryu Murakami, Eimi Yamada, and Osamu Tezuka. Anderson not only enacted tropes of blackness—especially through her performance of spirituals—but also complicated those expectations through her renditions of canonical European repertoire.

Anderson’s Itinerary in Japan and Korea

Flying from New York to Tokyo in 1953 was a major multistage process. Anderson, her tour manager, Isaac Jofe, and her accompanist, Franz Rupp, took off on April 15, with flights from New York to Chicago to San Francisco, arriving in Honolulu the following day for a two-concert, ten-day stay. After a stop on Wake Island, they reached Tokyo’s Haneda Airport on April 27 and were greeted by a large welcoming delegation led by Tetsuro Furukaki (president of NHK), as well as Marcel Grilli (music critic for the Nippon Times and international representative for NHK), Aiko Saida (singer), Takeo Murata (music critic and scholar of English literature), and representatives of Japan RCA Victor. (See figure 3 for a photo of Anderson’s arrival at Haneda airport and table 1.
for Anderson’s itinerary.) This star treatment was standard throughout the tour. Anderson made fairly detailed entries in her diary during the trip, which was unusual for her, and she noted there that the welcoming party’s youngest members were “darling little girls[,] kimono-clad,” who presented her with flowers.29 The airport was then undergoing a transition from use during the occupation as a military transport facility to becoming an international commercial hub. In 1953, when Anderson arrived, the first passenger terminal was still under development and would not open for another two years.30

Various receptions and dinners, especially those hosted by NHK and the US Embassy, gave Anderson the opportunity to meet cultural and political leaders. During her first full day in Japan on April 28, she heard a performance by the renowned koto player Michio Miyagi (1894–1956) at an NHK cocktail reception.31 In an interview for the Chubu Nihon shinbun, Anderson said that she had listened to the koto once before in Chicago, and she expressed appreciation for its calmness and sense of peace, finding the sound almost heavenly.32 An article in a newspaper in Kobe, Miyagi’s hometown, included a photo of him meeting Anderson at Studio 1 of NHK Radio in Tokyo.33 Miyagi also discussed Anderson in an interview later that year. He admired the various colors of her voice as it changed from character to character in Schubert’s “Der Erlkönig.” He could not attend any of her concerts but listened to her on the radio.34

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Note: The letters A–D relate to the preset programs listed in a flier for Anderson’s tour (fig. 29). A blank space indicates that Anderson had the day off from performing.
In Tokyo, Anderson’s home base was the cosmopolitan and fashionable Yurakucho district of Chiyoda, a major cultural center located between Ginza and Hibiya Park. Yurakucho bustled with activity and exuded sophistication, part of “the few square miles of downtown Tokyo that had been spared by the air raids.” After World War II, “fashionable” for the Japanese often meant “Western.” The Imperial Hotel, where Anderson and her party stayed, was located there, and since opening in 1890, it had served as the city’s premier place for lodging foreign dignitaries and celebrities. Yurakucho also included Hibiya Public Hall, where Anderson gave her first recital on May 1. The venue had opened in 1929 with a seating capacity of 2,070, and it played a central role in Tokyo’s cultural life before and during the war, escaping damage during a major air raid in March 1945. By 1953 the Yurakucho district was dominated by an American presence, including the Ernie Pyle Theater, which was operated by GHQ and catered solely to the occupation forces (fig. 4).

Anderson’s tripartite itinerary consisted of one week in Tokyo; two weeks traveling west to Kyoto, Osaka, Hiroshima, and Nagoya; and a final week in Tokyo (fig. 5). From there, she and her retinue went on to spend five days in Pusan and Seoul, South Korea, before returning to New York via Tokyo. “My schedule was as rigid as a railroad timetable,” she wrote in her autobiography. An initial radio broadcast by Anderson on NHK Channel 1 at 8:00 p.m. on April 29, the emperor’s birthday, was
followed by broadcasts of her nine performances in Japan, which were scheduled every few days. Significantly, Anderson’s visit overlapped with the heyday of radio broadcasting in Japan. Two years earlier, Tetsuro Furukaki, president of NHK, had declared a utopian vision for radio following the war: “We feel that radio can be a powerful influence in establishing world peace and international brotherhood” (fig. 6).

The tickets for Anderson’s first concert on May 1 sold quickly. In her diary, she remarked on the “grand audience” and the “many flowers” she received. After the performance, one fan gave her a quart bottle of goat’s milk, together with a note saying it was “fresh to-day for extra strength for you.” Milk had played a major role in boosting the nutrition of children during the occupation, when food was scarce. On May 4 Anderson and Rupp again performed in Hibiya Public Hall (fig. 7). US ambassador Robert Murphy attended and wrote to congratulate Anderson that evening, stating, “You are really our very best ambassador to Japan.”

During her free time in Tokyo, Anderson shopped and went sightseeing, with the insider access afforded a visiting celebrity. While attending a Noh theater performance on May 2, for example, Anderson was invited backstage. “Met 2 of the players, saw actors being dressed in elaborate costumes & masks, saw also 2 pieces of scenery which was later brot onto the stage by 2 men each,” Anderson noted in her diary. “Needless to say, in order to see this from the back [of the stage], we had to take off our shoes.” Later during the trip, Anderson attended a kabuki theater
Figure 6. Anderson performing on NHK radio in Japan. Provided by the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo.

Figure 7. Anderson and Rupp giving a concert in Hibiya Public Hall in Tokyo. Provided by the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo.
performance, where she “met the most famous actor,” who must have been the great Onoe Baiko (1915–95), with whom she was pictured in Our World (fig. 8). Soon after she arrived, one Tokyo paper reported that Anderson wanted to learn about Japanese tea ceremonies and see traditional Japanese art, both of which she accomplished. Though her schedule was very full, Anderson seemed to enjoy her introduction to Japanese culture, noting in her diary the instances when she had to remove her shoes and expressing delight in various culinary experiences. “Dead tired but happy,” she declared in one entry.

Anderson’s next set of concerts took her first to Osaka, where she performed twice, presenting the same two programs she had just given in Tokyo and again doing so in major concert venues. “When we left Tokyo to appear in other cities we found ourselves traveling as a party of eight,” Anderson recorded in her autobiography, documenting another aspect of the celebrity treatment she received. The first concert took place in Osaka’s Sankei Hall, and the second, originally advertised as being in the same venue, was instead held in nearby Hyogo at the Takarazuka Grand Theatre, home of the Takarazuka Revue, a famous and long-established women’s musical theater troupe. Anderson’s party had a free day in
Kyoto on May 9, when they visited the Heian Shrine and toured the Katsura Detached Palace. “The interior, which has not been done over in the 1300 years [sic] is in fantastically good shape,” Anderson recorded in her diary. “The little cabinets with original paintings, fine wood work & an atmosphere which one can’t explain.”\(^53\) After a rehearsal, the men in her party “went at 6 p.m. to see the Geishas dance the cherry blossom dance.” Even though Anderson was then a global celebrity and a symbol of human rights, as a woman she was excluded from witnessing the performance.\(^54\)

The party then traveled for a day to reach Hiroshima, a significant stop, considering the city was still recovering from the American atomic bomb strike of 1945. Anderson gave one performance on May 11 at Hiroshima’s Toyo-za, a former movie theater that catered to American troops and GHQ.\(^55\) Built after the war, Toyo-za was constructed next to one of the few buildings in the center of Hiroshima that survived the bomb—an area that became a crucial cultural center, symbolic of both loss and renewal. After the concert, Anderson met Atsuko Ikeda, the former princess and fourth daughter of the Showa emperor, as well as her husband, Takamasa Ikeda.\(^56\) In Hiroshima, the group’s tourist activity included a boat trip to the famed Itsukushima Shrine (figs. 9 and 10).\(^57\)

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\(^{54}\) Anderson, Marian. Marian Anderson’s 1953 Concert Tour of Japan, pp. 281-282.


The final two concerts during this segment of the tour took place in Nagoya Public Hall on May 15 and 17, and once again Anderson performed in the city’s most prominent concert facility (fig. 11). Nagoya Public Hall had opened in 1930, with a seating capacity of 2,000, and it was a counterpart to Hibiya Public Hall in Tokyo. During Anderson’s

Figure 11. Two images of Nagoya Public Hall. The one on the right comes from the cover page of a memorial booklet for the fiftieth anniversary of the hall (Citizens Affair Bureau of Nagoya, 1980). The one below was photographed by Misako Ohta in October 2017; the building was then in the process of being renovated.
tour, the hall was still controlled by GHQ; thus details for her concert needed to be negotiated between Nagoya City Music Association and GHQ. Significantly, the audience included American GIs, both white and black (figs. 12 and 13).

Back in Tokyo, Anderson had two remaining NHK recitals plus two additional performances outside of her contractual obligations. The first

Figure 12. Anderson, Rupp, and Jofe arriving at Nagoya Station on May 15. This photograph was included in a newspaper article that identifies the two girls as sisters: Michiko Shibayama, six years old, and Kyoko Shibayama, four years old (Chubu Nihon shinbun, evening edition, May 15, 1953). Anderson Collection of Photographs. Public domain.

Figure 13. Anderson and Franz Rupp with Japanese children on May 15 accepting flowers in Nagoya. Courtesy Anderson Collection of Photographs.
of these additions was a JRCS benefit concert for orphaned Japanese children, which took place on May 19. During intermission, Anderson was presented with the Yukosho Medal by Princess Takamatsu for "outstanding social and cultural contributions." After the war, the imperial family focused attention on the crisis of orphaned and impoverished children, and Anderson, acting on her deep Christian faith, offered this benefit concert to raise both cash and public awareness. Four days later, on May 23, Anderson and Rupp performed a thirty-minute program at the Japanese Imperial Court for Empress Nagako, wife of Emperor Hirohito, and two of their children, Prince Yoshinomiya and Princess Sukanomiya. This concert reportedly marked the first time in Japanese history that the Imperial Household Agency hosted an African American artist, a development emphasized in both the Asahi shinbun and the American press.

Anderson sang with the NHK Symphony Orchestra on May 22. Kurt Voos conducted, and Eleanor Roosevelt attended. Roosevelt, who lent crucial support to Anderson’s 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., was also staying at the Imperial Hotel during her official visit to Japan, which by chance overlapped with Anderson’s. “She [Mrs. Roosevelt] came while I stood in the lobby & when she looked up & saw me she was amazed,” Anderson wrote in her diary. “A lovely greeting then she asked where I’d be singing.” Roosevelt, too, recorded their meeting, writing in her "My Day" column on May 25, 1953: “As I walked into the hotel the first person I saw was Miss Marian Anderson who has been touring Japan and they tell me she has had great success. She sings here tonight and we are going to hear her which for me is a great pleasure.” The next day, the Nippon Times featured Anderson and Roosevelt on the front page under the headline “2 Famous Women Meet.” Anderson’s final concert in Japan took place on May 25. After the evening concert Anderson enthused about the “wonderful wonderful audience. Flowers flowers flowers even from girls in the audience, & presents too” (figs. 14–17).

Franz Rupp also stepped into the spotlight in Tokyo, giving a solo recital on May 24 at the Imperial Theater that also aired on the radio. The event took place the day before Anderson’s final solo concert in Tokyo, and there were mixed results, with Japanese critics praising Rupp overall, yet noting some rough spots. “Mr. Rupp often abbreviated the notes that should have been there,” wrote the music critic Takemi Masuzawa. “He had practised long and often,” Anderson commented in her diary, “but as happens sometime[s], it was not what either he or I hoped. He was nervous so I sent him a few words during intermission.”

Rupp was primarily known as an accompanist, and the Japanese press expressed respect for that aspect of his work, which had reached Japan even before his visit with Anderson. “Franz Rupp is a leading pianist
Figure 14. Pages from Anderson’s program booklet for May 22. Provided by the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo.

Figure 15. Kurt Voos (conductor) and Anderson rehearsing with the NHK Symphony in Tokyo. Shoji Otake, photographer. Courtesy Ayumi Otake (Tokyo) and Anderson Collection of Photographs.
Figure 16. Anderson performs with the NHK Symphony, conducted by Kurt Voos. The photo includes Jürg Schaeftlein (1929–85), an Austrian oboist, who together with a few other Austrian players was invited in 1952 to play with the NHK. Provided by the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo.

Figure 17. Eleanor Roosevelt and Anderson greet each other in Tokyo, May 22, 1953. Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. Courtesy National Archives and Records Administration.
of our time and is an accompanist for Anderson, Lotte Lehmann and Elisabeth Schumann,” reported a Tokyo newspaper soon after he and Anderson arrived. “His recordings on Telefunken and Victor were on sale in Japan before the war.” Rupp as well: “Franz Rupp was also the accompanist for Fritz Kreisler. He has been accompanying Anderson for ten years. He is an excellent pianist. I believe that Anderson really made a good choice.” And Takaya Urakawa, the Japanese violinist with whom Rupp later worked as an accompanist, shared a memory about Rupp’s performance style: “Franz Rupp inherited the German tradition, and the sound of his piano performance was brilliant. Rupp’s arms were always relaxed when he played the piano. Rupp was also a flexible pianist: when I made a request about an issue of interpretation, Rupp accepted it all the time. Rupp was able to transpose with ease.” Thus Rupp enjoyed some notoriety in Japan both in relation to his collaboration with Anderson and separately.

The next stage of the tour, coordinated by the US Department of State, involved a trip to Korea to perform for the troops. Anderson, Rupp, and Jofe left Tokyo on May 27 aboard a C-54 army transport plane, which Anderson described to a reporter for the magazine Our World as “huge and awesome” (fig. 18). A press release from Hurok stated it was the
plane of General Mark Clark, commander of the UN forces in Korea. Anderson spent the next four days singing for US, UN, and South Korean soldiers, as well as civilians, first in Pusan (now Busan) and then in Seoul. Wartime conditions were challenging: microphones flickered on and off, a piano pedal ceased to work. An outdoor concert scheduled for the 28th was postponed due to rain. “In order not to lose the evening,” Anderson recorded in her diary, “we went to the Swedish Hospital, visited patients & sang for soldiers.” “My foreign career started in Sweden,” she told a reporter, “so we sang a Swedish folk song and they were very pleased.” The following morning she performed for two groups of wounded soldiers and in the afternoon met with members of the Musicians’ Union of Korea. That evening a makeup concert for “Korean nationals and invited military guests” took place. There was such an immense crowd—one Korean paper reported one hundred thousand people—that Anderson’s car “couldn’t get thru because too many people. They surrounded the car pressing from both sides,” she recorded in her diary. After the concert a police escort helped Anderson’s party exit the venue.

In Seoul, Anderson visited wounded soldiers aboard a Danish hospital ship; the helicopter ride “provided Miss Anderson with a close-range view of bombed and burned Korean homes and buildings” (fig. 19). Her
presence “electrified the hearts of thousands of UN soldiers,” reported Douglass Hall, an American journalist based in Korea who reported on Anderson’s visit for the Afro Magazine (published by the Baltimore Afro-American). A substantial number of African American soldiers served in the Korean War, and the black press covered the Korean portion of Anderson’s trip more than her time in Japan. Hall noted that Kimpo Air Base, where Anderson and her party landed, had recently been bombed, while “the year’s heaviest fighting was still raging at the front as we talked.” Of her May 31 concert, he wrote: “Judging from the reception that she received at her performance Sunday night, the men enjoyed hearing her. She sang five encores and answered many more curtain calls. Sensing what her audience wanted she finally announced, ‘My next number will be “Ave Maria.”’ For several minutes the building rocked with applause. . . . At the end of the concert one soldier paid her one of the highest GI compliments: ‘That woman’s sure got something.’” Anderson, Rupp, and Jofe returned to Tokyo on June 1, and two days later they boarded a Northwest Airlines flight for New York City, bringing Anderson’s first Asian trip to a close (fig. 20).

Figure 20. Home from her first trip to East Asia, Anderson waves as she walks onto the tarmac at Idlewild Airport on June 4, 1953. Courtesy Anderson Collection of Photographs.
For the nine concerts sponsored by NHK, Anderson cycled through four preset programs, each featuring a different group of composers (fig. 29 and app. A). Program A, given three times, featured works of Bach, Schubert, and Donizetti, as well as English folksongs. Program B, also given three times, featured Haydn, Brahms, Saint-Saëns, and Richard Strauss. With the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Anderson performed Program C, Mahler’s Kindertotenlieder and Brahms’s Alto Rhapsody. Program D, given twice, featured Martini, Brahms, Verdi, and works by French composers, including Debussy and Fauré. All programs included what were then referred to as “Negro spirituals,” which garnered a central place in the responses of Japanese music critics. These programs included Anderson’s core repertoire, no matter where she was performing, at the same time as they became part of a conversation about cross-cultural understanding.

Performing Democracy:
Propaganda, the Imperial Family, and Hiroshima

Immediately after World War II, the goals of the American-led occupation transformed radically from “a moderate exercise in demilitarization and political reform,” asserts historian John Dower, “into an unprecedented experiment in induced democratization.” A wide array of tools were deployed to promote American ideals, and Anderson’s visit can be viewed as one strand in an intricate web of cultural persuasion that existed even after the occupation officially ended. As the Cold War intensified during the 1950s, the US drive to establish and maintain democratic alliances strengthened as the threat of communist aggression grew. “Exporting democracy to Japan and other parts of the world,” writes Mire Koikari, “constituted a particularly important rhetorical and material strategy the United States deployed in creating allies against the communist block and maintaining its legitimacy as the leader of the ‘free world.’” Though a letter from a State Department official thanking Anderson for her government-sponsored Korea trip does not explicitly mention democracy, it does position her in the role of exemplary US citizen on the world stage:

Your visits and singing to the troops in the various UN and ROK hospitals and your appearances before Korean audiences helped on the morale front and permitted people abroad to meet and enjoy the work of a distinguished American artist. I wish to extend, on behalf of the Department of State, a word of appreciation for your public spirited contribution to the improvement of international relations. I should also like to congratulate you on the award of the Yukosho Medal by the Emperor [sic] of Japan for your outstanding social and
cultural contributions. Such recognition, so well deserved, will, I know, give your fellow Americans a sense of pride.\textsuperscript{88}

The Japanese portion of Anderson’s tour was sponsored not by the US government but by NHK, which GHQ had overhauled as a corporation dedicated to democratic ideals. This fact, along with the support Anderson received from NGOs (the JRCS), former heads of state (the imperial family), and representatives of the US government (State Department and Foreign Service officials)—all invested in the propagation of so-called American values—meant that her visit was nevertheless significantly tied to such ideology.

Coverage in the Japanese press makes it clear that Anderson represented democracy to the Japanese people even before her visit. As early as 1946 she was introduced in “Democracy Classroom,” a letters-to-the-editor column in the \textit{Yomiuri shinbun}. A female reader issued the following challenge: “Please show the essence of democracy in an international example.” And a Japanese journalist, posing as “a lady from New York,” cited Anderson as just such a case. The article reads like Allied propaganda, especially given the actual state of race relations in the United States at the time:

There is a Negro diva named Marian Anderson in the United States. She has visited many countries, including Europe \textit{[sic]}, in order to sing, and thousands of people have been intoxicated by her voice. It is not easy for any artist to achieve fame like her. She also attained her celebrity after overcoming severe cultural difficulties, but the important thing is that the US government granted the right for citizens to receive sufficient education, and she became a genius of an artist. She had an opportunity to fully develop her talent that may have been buried, and it enriched the world beyond her own happiness. This is an example of democracy.\textsuperscript{89}

In the massive push to restructure Japanese culture according to democratic principles, GHQ generated an environment in which Marian Anderson could be presented as a product of American democracy when in fact she and other African Americans did not enjoy the full rights of citizenship. As of 1946, when this article appeared, the US military remained segregated, and equal access to education was far from a reality for African Americans, including Anderson. She had achieved professional success by defying racial obstacles, prevailing in spite of structural racism. As Mary Dudziak has shown, the US government faced international criticism during the early Cold War for promoting democracy abroad while ignoring civil rights issues at home. This eventually led to consideration of reforms “in order to make credible the government’s argument about race and democracy.”\textsuperscript{90} Despite this fraught racial
landscape, Anderson’s 1953 tour bore resemblances to those sponsored later by the State Department, including her own, during which “prominent black celebrities . . . were to demonstrate that African Americans were not held back by prejudice and that they were able to achieve great things.”

Eleanor Roosevelt’s five-week visit to Japan, which partly overlapped with Anderson’s trip, had a similar thrust and a more explicit agenda. She was invited by the US Committee for Intellectual Interchange with Japan, and an article stored in a clipping file of the Imperial Household Archives makes it clear that she was there to promote democracy, addressing the atomic bomb in relation to humanitarianism and focusing attention on the plight of Japanese war orphans. Roosevelt’s progressive stance on civil rights in the United States was also highlighted during her visit, and she acted as an important role model for Japanese women. “I was convinced that, while the women were a force in their homes behind the scenes,” Roosevelt wrote in her autobiography, “they had not gained direct equality with men as provided in their new constitution, despite the fact that there were 30 women members of the Diet, or parliament.”

Unlike Roosevelt, Anderson declined to articulate a stance when asked about women’s issues during an interview, as she recorded in her diary: “I was asked to make a recording (tape) for the women, 4 questions in all, and one asked what changes I thought the Japanese women should adopt, my answer was since I did not know them personally I could not intelligently suggest changes etc.” During the occupation, American women had played a major role in addressing gender issues in Japan, and many of these “women occupiers” tasked with explaining democracy and encouraging domesticity believed that as Americans they were “the ideal teachers for Japanese women.” Though Anderson was unusual as a woman with an international performing career, press coverage that emphasized her home life, for example, portraying Anderson as “a woman who likes to sew and to cook and to make a comfortable home for her architect husband,” nevertheless supported broader narratives of Cold War containment and social stability.

GHQ’s campaign to democratize Japan also involved promoting Christianity, and there too Anderson was conjured up as a notable example. From 1947 to 1952 MacArthur brought 2,500 Christian missionaries to Japan, and he contributed to efforts such as establishment of the International Christian University in Tokyo. One Christian-inflected response to Anderson appeared in 1947, when Shiho Sakanishi, an “essayist and social critic,” published an article titled “A Prayer: Marian Anderson.” Sakanishi worked as an American specialist for GHQ for several months in late 1945 and, among a string of later appointments, served on the Broadcasting Review Board of NHK. In her article, Sakanishi identified as Christian and highlighted the hardships in Anderson’s story, such as
the early death of her father. Sakanishi also underscored Anderson’s 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial and discussed her performance of spirituals, with an emphasis on the repertoire’s religious themes. Eight years later, the article was rewritten as an educational tool for promoting democracy among Japanese children.\footnote{100}

GHQ’s stance on Emperor Hirohito was another major factor in its postwar agenda. Historian Kenneth Ruoff notes that while the process of reshaping the imperial family’s image had started immediately after the war ended, the legitimacy of the new “symbolic monarchy” only began to solidify in the decade after 1952.\footnote{101} The timing of these changes coincided with Anderson’s visit. Hirohito had assumed power in 1926 and was head of state during the militarization and imperial expansion that led to World War II. Believing that the imperial family was central to Japanese social stability, General MacArthur took the surprising position of supporting the emperor rather than prosecuting him for war crimes or encouraging him to abdicate. Instead, the occupation authorities chose “to resituate him as the center of their new democracy,” a process that involved him publicly renouncing his divinity.\footnote{102} During and after the occupation the imperial family played an important role in reconciliation with the United States and actively worked to shape a positive image of themselves.

Over the course of her tour, Anderson interacted repeatedly with the imperial family, and those encounters had an official sense of ceremony. Her benefit concert on May 19 for the JRCS and her private recital four days later at the Imperial Household, while not part of the prearranged NHK tour, were two of her most significant appearances in Japan, and her experiences with the imperial family related in part to their support for the JRCS.\footnote{103} Anderson’s benefit concert raised funds for war orphans in Hiroshima at the same time as it connected Anderson and all that she symbolized with the new, democratic image that the postwar JRCS hoped to project. During intermission, Princess Takamatsu, wife of Emperor Hirohito’s younger brother and an honorary vice president of the JRCS, presented Anderson with the Order of Merit and the Medal of Special Membership while JRCS president Tadatsugu Shimadzu looked on.\footnote{104} Historian Sho Konishi notes that in the nineteenth century the imperial family “gained moral standing and popularity” by accepting the role of patron for the JRCS.\footnote{105} That role continued during the occupation, even as the imperial family became figureheads rather than rulers (fig. 21).

Anderson had already been welcomed by several members of the imperial family before the Red Cross benefit. In part, their support of Anderson grew out of an effort during the occupation to project a more accessible and inclusive image by reaching out to the Japanese people. The crown prince was then on his world tour, which was intended to improve the stature of Japan on a global stage. At home, it was the
women of the imperial family who acted as cultural ambassadors with Anderson. Emperor Hirohito’s second oldest daughter, Mrs. Kazuko Takatsukasa (1929–89), along with her husband, attended the April 28 NHK reception celebrating Anderson’s arrival, for example. In Kyoto, Anderson was hosted by Satoko Ohtani (1906–89), sister of the empress and wife of Kocho Ohtani (1903–93), who was then chief abbot of Japanese Buddhists.¹⁰⁶

For Anderson, the visit to the Japanese Imperial Court offered a perspective on how Japan “has become Western in many ways, [yet] the essence of an old tradition remains.”¹⁰⁷ In her May 23 diary entry, she wrote that in the afternoon “we went to the palace where the Court Orchestra & Court dancers entertained for our glimpse into olden
times.” At 2:00 p.m. Anderson and Rupp transitioned from audience to performers as they presented a half-hour program of spirituals and Schubert songs for Empress Nagako, her two teenage children (Prince Yoshinomiya and Princess Suganomiya), and members of the court. Anderson described the event in her diary: “At 2 the Empress arrived, & shortly afterwards we went in to sing a few songs. She sat with her 2 younger children, in the centre of a graduated platform, with tiers of seats on either side, & occupied by about 40 or 50 men & women[—] men to the left, women to the right. When finished the Furukaki’s were called in first to meet Her Majesty then Franz & I & we received gifts. For me a signed wood carving of a Noh Actor.”

Another of the emperor’s daughters, Atsuko Ikeda (b. 1931), had attended Anderson’s concert in Hiroshima on May 11 with her husband. Because the city was still struggling to rebuild from the devastation caused by the American atomic bomb, this was a meaningful appearance for both Anderson and her audience; significantly, the Hiroshima concert was the only NHK-organized concert of the tour at which a member of the imperial family was present. Overall, Anderson was warmly received in Hiroshima, where the message of her spirituals—of overcoming oppression and hardship—was especially welcome as the city continued to recover. Representatives of NHK traveled with Anderson, and the media company had a tragic history with the atomic bomb, having lost thirty-eight of its Hiroshima employees, which totaled 15 percent of its staff there. Twenty NHK employees escaped to the Hara relay station (five kilometers north) to continue broadcasting that day, performing an essential public service. At the time of Anderson’s visit, Hiroshima was being reconstructed both physically and in the popular imagination, taking shape as a modern “peace city.” Hopes of economic recovery were dependent on attracting tourists to the Peace Memorial Museum, which was then under construction.

Anderson was one of many American celebrities welcomed to Hiroshima during the 1950s. Historian Ran Zwigenberg has described the generally positive relationship between Hiroshima and the United States, despite the atomic bombing, as a “particularly significant aspect” of the city’s identity. On the day of her performance in Hiroshima, Anderson visited the American Cultural Center (ACC), and she was greeted by the director, Abol Fazl Fotouhi, his wife, Agnes, and Mayor Shinzo Hamai. The US government–run ACC had opened in Hiroshima the previous year as a meeting place and information hub. Given the state of Hiroshima’s infrastructure at the time, the center was “inadequately heated and lacked modern amenities,” suffering from issues common to most buildings in the city. The ACC housed a popular library with the latest US magazines, sponsored films and concerts, mounted exhibits, and gave seminars on American culture. Fotouhi’s daughter Farida published a
memoir about those years that conveys a sense of conditions in the city during Anderson’s visit. Farida attended a Japanese public elementary school in Hiroshima, where she was the only American in her class to master the Japanese language. She also learned to play the koto:

My father’s office at the American Cultural Center and Library was right next to a vast construction site for the Hundred Meter Road, Mayor Hamai’s lushly landscaped affirmation of peace in defiance of the bomb’s destruction. Tears came to Dad’s eyes when he watched the crews manually clearing rubble, separating out human remains and saving artifacts, like a child’s melted lunch box, for the Peace Museum.

The Japanese economic miracle was years away and times were hard. Jobs were scarce. The standard of living was bare bones. The average person had no running hot water. No car. No refrigerator. No TV. There weren’t many entertainment options. People barely had money to eat, let alone pay for movie tickets. So, my father’s free American Cultural Center programs filled a gap. He brought in artists and lecturers; put on exhibits about American life, work and technology; and showed American movies not only at the Cultural Center but in our backyard where the entire neighborhood was invited to watch cartoons and dramas with Japanese subtitles. Hiroshima was curious about all things American—crowds even gathered in front of our house every morning to watch an exotic American ritual: my parents kissing goodbye. Japanese kids didn’t kiss their parents either.\(^{116}\)

After visiting the American Cultural Center, Anderson rehearsed, then gave a sold-out concert at 7:00 p.m.\(^ {117}\) According to local reviews, she had vocal troubles that evening, which is not surprising, given her tight schedule and steady travel. But reviewers looked past those issues, focusing instead on the degree to which her performance of spirituals (called “hymns of slavery”) and the “thorny path” of her personal history served to symbolize the redemptive power of democracy.\(^ {118}\)

Anderson’s itinerary in Hiroshima did not include a visit to one of the city’s many orphanages, which were filled with children who had lost their families during the war. It is estimated that four to five thousand children were orphaned in Hiroshima alone due to the atomic bomb.\(^ {119}\) Yet even with no stop at an orphanage, Anderson joined other Americans at the time who reached out to help financially. After Norman Cousins, editor of New York’s Saturday Review of Literature, wrote of his August 1949 visit to the Hiroshima War Orphans Foster Home, donations from US readers were enough to sponsor the care of seventy-one orphans in that facility by January 1950; Cousins’s initiative inspired a broad network of US donations to other Japanese orphanages as well.\(^ {120}\)
Marian Anderson’s 1953 Concert Tour of Japan

Anderson’s archive at the University of Pennsylvania includes photographs of children in front of Ninoshima Gakuen, an orphanage on the “Children’s Island” off the coast of Hiroshima, together with a thank-you letter from Yoshimaro Mori, director of the facility. Writing on August 6, 1953, after Anderson’s return to the United States, Mori described the children he worked with. The letter is in English and is transcribed here verbatim:

Today we had the eighth memorial day after the terrible Atomic-Bomb was dropped upon at Hiroshima city and we, japanese, celebrated the Peace Anniversary hoping the world don’t have the tragedy of Hiroshima again. the 190 orphans who live in my orphan asylum prostrated themselves at the tower of the spirit of the dead by Atomic-Bomb sobing in longing of their late parents and they invoked the peace of the world.

There are three children in our orphanage who are going to Hiroshima Music Senior High School and when you came Hiroshima city, they went to listen your song and they were deeply touched your wonderful songs. My dauter, Kazuko, was one of these three children.

We are much obliged to you for your kindness which you sent a plenty money to the orphans of Hiroshima. My orphanage received ¥ 270000. In our orphanage we, teachers and orphans, consulted many times about how we use a lots of money which you gave kindly the children. We confered whether we would buy a grand piano because we have only one humble piano, or we would build a house for the children. We finally come to the conclusion that we will build the beautiful house for the children and we will call that house Anderson’s Children House in order to leave your kindness forever in our Gakuen. I am sorry I can not send you the draft of the House now, but when it will be thoroughly built, I will send you the photograph of the house.121

The photographs in Anderson’s archive show children and a teacher standing in front of a building labeled “Anderson’s Children Hall,” as well as children grouped for a portrait at the orphanage, playing a guitar, harmonicas, tambourines, accordion, snare drum, bass drum, violin, and xylophone. Westernization clearly extended to children’s bands (figs. 22 and 23).

The Anderson archive also includes a thank-you letter from Sister Maria Gratia, director of the Children’s Home Maria-en in Nagasaki. On October 10, 1953, Sister Gratia expressed gratitude for Anderson’s “wonderful present . . . for the Japanese war orphans [sic].” She continued, “Your donation furnished us [with] a bookcase, a table for the reading room and rhythm instruments for our children’s home. Listening [to] the
Figure 22. Children and a caretaker at Ninoshima Gakuen, the Children’s Island, an orphanage in Hiroshima directed by Yoshimaro Mori. The sign over the door reads Anderson’s Children Hall. Courtesy Anderson Collection of Photographs.

Figure 23. Children playing Western instruments at Ninoshima Gakuen, the Children’s Island. Courtesy Anderson Collection of Photographs.
voices of children so happy as they are jumping with joy, I am writing the letter of thanks.” Maria-en had been founded in 1898 as an order of the Jesuits. The orphanage was built in Western style with brick, and forty children lived there (fig. 24).

*Marian Anderson and Music Criticism in Japan: Mutual Encounters*

Immediately upon arriving at Haneda Airport in Tokyo, Anderson gave a press conference during which she asserted her credentials as an interpreter of the German lied. “I felt a great satisfaction when I sang for the German people,” she told reporters, referring to concerts that she and Rupp had performed three years earlier in Munich and Berlin.

The *Nippon Times* observed, “The noted singer said she likes German lieder, especially those of Schubert.” By conjuring up this prestigious repertoire, Anderson not only validated her own artistic status but also emphasized music with strong historical and political ties to Japan. The Japanese had a long-standing respect for European high art, especially from Germany, and that cultural link deepened when the two countries became part of the Axis alliance. In the nineteenth century, the Japanese began to establish European-style marching bands as symbols of wealth and military strength. After Gagkusei, an order from 1872 that established...
an educational system, Western songs (shoka) were taught in schools. In textbooks and song collections, music by German composers (Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Wagner) was preferred over that by French and Italians, largely because of the influence of German music teachers, such as Raphael von Koeber (1848–1923) and August Junker (1868–1944). During World War II, German music was especially valued in Japan, given the military tie between the two countries. At the same time, the Japanese banned music with English lyrics, as well as most American music, notably, jazz and the tunes of Stephen Foster. In Anderson’s case, by asserting her love for German repertoire as an opening salvo in Japan, she aimed to preempt the issue that nonetheless remained central to her reception there: How convincingly could a woman of African American heritage perform music composed by Germans? How deeply were race and repertoire intertwined?

In 1953 Anderson was already well-known in Japan through her recordings and their broadcast over the radio as RCA Victor increasingly made her voice a global commodity. The American critic Marcel Grilli (1905–90), who was a regular contributor to the Nippon Times, marked a striking exception: Grilli had “15 years” of witnessing her perform in person “in New York, Washington, and elsewhere.” For most Japanese, however, Anderson represented a generation of performers who had achieved fame in the United States and Europe while Japan’s military ambitions had increased and the country turned inward during the war.

In the early 1950s, even before her tour began, the availability of Anderson’s recordings in Japan changed gradually at the same time as her uplifting personal story was covered in a growing list of Japanese music journals. In 1950 a number of Anderson’s recordings were discussed in the music journal Ongakunotomo. They included “Die Mainacht” of Johannes Brahms in July; “My Old Kentucky Home” of Stephen Foster and “Carry Me Back to Old Virginny” of James Bland in September (both were discussed as American “folksongs”); and the Alto Rhapsody of Brahms in November. In 1951 the music critic Sadanori Maki wrote in the Japanese magazine Disk about Anderson’s popularity after the war in Europe and the United States. Yet as of that date, he reported limited access to her work. “Her records are released much in the United States, but there are just still a few of them in Japan,” Maki stated. He lamented that the Japanese had fallen behind during World War II in encountering the work of rising Western classical artists like Anderson.

Yet only a year later, several more of Anderson’s recordings reached the Japanese marketplace, leading the music critic Akio Terai to declare an “Anderson fever.” Writing in an early issue of the Record Art (Record Geijutsu), Terai reviewed Anderson with racial inflections, articulating an issue that would come up repeatedly during her visit to Japan. “Her performance is very attractive not because of interpretation of the musical
structure, but the characteristics of her voice itself," Terai wrote. He commented on the “darkness of her voice” and how it especially suited spirituals and the songs of Stephen Foster. At the same time, however, he praised her interpretation of “Der Erlkönig” for delivering three different roles with dramatic panache.

In 1952 another essay about Anderson appeared in the Record Music, this time written by Takeo Murata, a well-known Japanese popularizer of classical music who a year later would convene a panel after Anderson’s opening concert at Hibiya Public Hall in Tokyo. In his article from 1952, Murata emphasized the individuality of Anderson’s voice, arguing that technique was not the main issue but rather the capacity to express “human existence itself.” When Anderson arrived at Haneda Airport in 1953, Murata was part of a delegation that greeted her and participated in her press conference. During that event, he commented on the popularity of her recording of “Carry Me Back to Old Virginny,” noting that it was even being played in the Japanese countryside. Murata told Anderson that her recordings were well-known in Japan, and she was delighted to hear that news (fig. 25).

As Anderson traveled from one Japanese city to another, regional and national newspapers covered her concerts in extraordinary detail—a sign of the depth and breadth of her reception in Japan. A total of thirty

Figure 25. Anderson on the front cover of the Record Art, June 1953.
regional newspaper articles about Anderson were published in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Kobe, and Hiroshima from April to May 1953. (See appendix B for a list of articles on Anderson in regional and national Japanese newspapers.)

Music critics divided their attention between her performance of European classical repertoire and African American spirituals. As reported in Japanese newspapers in 1953, Anderson’s performance of Schubert’s “Der Erlkönig” was especially controversial. Nagoya’s Asahi shinbun, for example, quoted Anderson as saying that her performance of Schubert’s “Der Erlkönig” was too dramatic. Ichiro Toriumi (1908–62) concurred in Osaka’s Asahi shinbun, titling the review “A Beautiful and Dangerous Precedent: Anderson’s Schubert”:

Especially, the thing you have to pay attention to when you listen to her performance is her singing of Schubert. According to the interview with Anderson on May 7, as published in our evening edition, she tries to sing passionately and dramatically from the meaning of the lyrics. This technique is usual in the performance of opera or Italian songs, but it seems to be very strange in a performance of Schubert. . . . We have been taught that articulation of the lyrics (the written words of a song) is more important than the meaning of the song and that this is the leading character of a German lied. But for her the combination of the lyrics and music is most crucial. So we think that Gerhard Hüsch, who came to Japan in 1952, was the great ideal singer because his performance expressed the content of the lyrics discreetly and fully described the beauty of the voice with each word of the lyrics. However, Anderson did not focus on the assonance of the lyrics, but rather on dramatizing the story that they told.

Describing Anderson’s performance of Schubert’s “Der Erlkönig” as “passionate” and “dramatic,” as Toriumi does, represented the norm among Japanese critics. His comparison of Anderson to Gerhard Hüsch, a renowned German baritone, provided an example of how the interpretive expectations of many Japanese critics—their hearing of a performance—had been conditioned by close cultural ties to Germany, especially since Hüsch’s visit had taken place only a year before. Hüsch’s renditions of Schubert were known for “a certain reserve,” as a British music critic wrote before the war. Toriumi did give Anderson the benefit of the doubt, however, reasoning that “her technique may be acceptable in countries where German is not their native language.” Even if Anderson, as a renowned artist, could be excused for this interpretation, however, other singers should not follow suit. “If [her interpretation] is imitated without restriction, it would defile the German lieder,” he warned.

Another Japanese reviewer, Ginji Yamane (1906–82), also took issue with Anderson’s interpretation of the German lied, and he did so by asserting that Anderson was more successful with spirituals. Yamane constructed his argument by declaring that German classical music...
conveyed “universal” values. For him, Anderson came up short in that realm: “Her performance of Negro spirituals was very impressive as I expected. It seems that it was special because she sang with sympathy. They sounded somewhat folksy, religious, and a lamentation of her soul; her song was fragrant and earthy. Her characteristic feeling was also apparent. Therefore, in her Schubert or Bach songs, the feeling was also pursued from her perspective, but I felt that something was missing in the point of universal musicality.”\(^{142}\) With “universal musicality,” Ginji Yamane evoked a common image for Japanese audiences conditioned to the aesthetic ideals of German musicians. By making the lied central to her identity as a recitalist, Anderson embraced a repertoire that was “arguably the most German of genres in music history,” writes the historian Kira Thurman. “Black performances of lieder,” Thurman continues, “show us a history of African Americans asserting their blackness through performances of German music and encouraging listeners to acknowledge a fuller spectrum of black expression.”\(^{143}\) Some of the Japanese critics witnessing Anderson’s 1953 tour grappled with this “fuller spectrum,” with long-standing aural expectations challenged by her audible difference.

A review by Hidekazu Yoshida (1913–2012) stood out among the responses to Anderson by Japanese critics. In contrast with Yamane, who assessed her performance in relation to German standards of high culture, Yoshida tried to articulate her distinctiveness in terms of Japanese traditions, valuing cultural difference. Born in Tokyo, Yoshida was well-known for an influential series of articles about Mozart, which were published in the magazine *Ongaku Geijutsu* in 1946. He quickly became one of the most prominent music critics in Japan, with a broad audience. In 1948 Yoshida was among the founders of Tokyo’s prestigious Tōhō Gakuen School of Music; in 1954 he went abroad for the first time; and in 1971 he began hosting *Joy of Masterpieces*, a popular radio series on NHK.\(^{144}\) Yoshida’s assessment of Anderson was extensive and perceptive—enough so to quote at length:

The variety of gradation in Anderson’s performance in Tokyo was more striking than the beauty of her voice. She is sometimes described as having a “multicolored voice,” and this is not over-stated. You can find the oboe’s high-pitched tone, the clarinet’s alto timbre, and the bassoon’s deep hollow sound. In “Der Tod und das Mädelchen,” her voice in the death section had an ominous synchronization with both the expression of the ancient Inca empire and the tense atmosphere. In “Erlkönig,” when she describes the scene of a screaming child, she skillfully uses a cracking and hoarse voice. This vocal technique, as a utilization of a kind of noise, can be found in a spiritual. It is exceptional for me to hear this vocal technique in foreign singers, but for people of the Orient it is a popular style.
She was on the stage in a dignified appearance, singing with her whole body, and though her pitch was sometimes unstable in an unusually wide range of voice and there were changes in voice quality, I felt the confidence of those who have a “spiritual home in song.” I cannot criticize anything regarding the spirituals. I think that it was something like this. This is a song of her ethnic essence; it must be her mission and honor to sing these songs for people all over the world.

The world is not just Europe, and it is not just Japan either, of course, as we can see from the rapture of the prayers to the depths of dark despair. That voluptuousness resists becoming acceptable to everyone, and it seems it would like to be heard on the stage in a style that embraces a local, tribal value. Thus, I was touched by her performance, but I feel that her songs did not fill every corner of my being, to the bottom of my heart.

Her performance of Schubert and Bach was quite unusual. Even the finest singer such as Marian Anderson still cannot deal with the integration of these three factors: internationality, ethnicity, and artistry. This problem is also for us Japanese people.

Yoshida’s observations were remarkable for Japanese critics of his era, reflecting a cross-cultural perception of Anderson’s artistry. In an era when Japan was being intensely Westernized, Yoshida tried to validate Japanese traits within a new artistic context, fusing an ethnic solidarity with his African American subject to form a version of prewar “black internationalism.” Looked at through the concept of “sonic blackness,” articulated by the musicologist Nina Sun Eidsheim, Yoshida provides a case of identifying “blackness in timbre,” as Eidsheim formulates it, as he attempts to articulate Anderson’s performance style in terms of how racial difference distinguished it from German norms.

Anderson, meanwhile, had confidently developed a rationale for her interpretation of “Der Erlkönig,” and during multiple interviews in Japan she shared her philosophy. When asked by the Asahi shinbun, published in Nagoya, if her most favorite lied was by Schubert or Brahms, she singled out “Der Erlkönig”: “I sing honestly, and my expressions are based on my impression of the lyrics. I do not think that a lied should be sung with restrained feeling. This song needs to express four kinds of voices: (1) a child, (2) his father, (3) the god of death—who all talk with intense emotion—and (4) the narrator. Therefore, I think that the true way to sing it is with feeling.” It is important to note that Anderson’s point focused entirely on the emotional and dramatic aspects of her interpretation, with no consideration of a race-based perception of vocal timbre.

While Anderson’s renditions of the German lied turned out to be controversial in Japan, her performances of spirituals were hailed by music critics as her strength, and Japanese critics connected that repertoire to her identity as an African American. Anderson’s race stood out starkly in
Japan, and critics there tried to grasp how her personal identity related to her perceived assets as a performer. At the same time, as Yoshida demonstrated, they were alert to ways in which Anderson might reveal something about their own non-European culture.

Spirituals were among the main topics at a remarkable roundtable discussion in Tokyo moderated by the music critic Kouichi Nomura (1895–1988) and featuring Anderson and three well-known Japanese singers: altos Fumiko Yotsuya (1906–81) and Kimiko Saegusa (1921–2000) and tenor Seiichi Sonoda (1905–86). In varying degrees, these singers all represented European classical music as transported to Japan. Yotsuya was especially prominent. Between the wars, she was notable for performing both classical music and pop tunes. Her work included a 1943 recording of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony sung in Japanese and the popular song “Willow in Ginza” (1932), which was her biggest hit. Saegusa studied with Dina Notargiacomo, an Italian singer who was a prominent teacher in Tokyo. Finally, Sonoda graduated from Tokyo Music School, the predecessor of the present Tokyo University of the Arts, where he studied primarily with singers from abroad, including Helmann Wuchelpfennig (1884–1969), who was an important teacher in Japan from 1935 to 1939, then again after the war (fig. 26).

Figure 26. At a reception for Anderson hosted by NHK at Studio 1 on April 28, Anderson met with Japanese singers (Shizuko Kawasaki, Akiko Seki, Miho Nagato, Kaneko Yanagi, Aiko Saida, Kazuko Sasada, Sadako Sasaki, and Kiyoko Shibata) and European singing teachers who worked in Japan (Margarete Netke-Löwe and Dina Notargiacomo). Some of the Japanese singers were founding members of Tokyo’s Nikikai Opera Foundation, established in 1952. Alto Aiko Saida was among those who greeted Anderson upon her arrival at Haneda Airport (fig. 3). Photo published in Ongakunotomo, July 1953. This volume included some gravure photos and does not have page numbers.
During the roundtable, these singers expressed special interest in spirituals, and their questions reflected the limits of the global dissemination of this repertoire in the early 1950s. Sonoda noticed that Anderson performed from a manuscript score, and he wondered how to gain access to the materials. Anderson responded by saying that the melodies of spirituals were the most important part and that she often tried out piano-vocal arrangements of the songs, after which publishers decided whether or not the materials should be issued.

Nomura then asked if new spirituals were currently being composed, and Anderson responded that the songs were not new creations but rather had a long history, adding that their purpose was to cure the sorrow of black slaves. “Is there a particular singing style for spirituals?” asked Nomura. “I don’t feel that I use a special style in my performance of spirituals,” Anderson responded. Saegusa then asked Anderson’s opinion about the performance of spirituals by the white American Wagnerian soprano Helen Traubel (1899–1972), who had visited Japan a year earlier.151 Essentially, Saegusa was querying the relationship of race and authenticity in performance. Anderson responded respectfully, saying that Traubel was very interested in “Negro spirituals” and that she traveled to the American South to try to learn the essence of the music. Anderson credited Traubel with communicating the “spirit of spirituals.” Yotsuya followed by asking “what other singers” performed spirituals, adding that she was performing them herself. “I am very happy to hear that,” Anderson replied.

This roundtable was one of many opportunities for famed Japanese singers and European singing teachers based in Japan to interact with Anderson. Another such occasion was a reception for her hosted by NHK on April 28. Margarete Netke-Löwe (1884–1971) was among those attending. A German singer who had been a professor of voice at the Tokyo Music School since 1924, she subsequently wrote about Anderson, featuring her among a group of singers who had recently visited Japan, including Hüsch, Traubel, and Erna Berger. Netke-Löwe evoked legendary visual artists to describe the distinctive vocal qualities of each performer. For Anderson, she drew a parallel with Rembrandt, stating that Anderson’s voice represented “a palette of many colors” and conveyed “mysterious and deep emotions.”152 A few younger musicians had the opportunity to meet Anderson also: one of the young girls who gave Anderson flowers during the tour was pianist Hiroko Nakamura, who was nine in 1953 and later gained international acclaim as a performer.153

In all, these events and publications provided an opportunity for Anderson to share with Japanese colleagues alternative visions for the interpretation of classical music, challenging long-standing expectations related to race, musical genre, and voice type. She arrived as the Japanese were opening themselves to the greater musical world, and her contact
with Japanese singers and singing teachers had a strong impact. Yet as the critic Motoo Otaguro perceptively observed, Anderson’s singing style and vocal qualities had broad popular appeal but could not completely satisfy the intelligentsia.\textsuperscript{154}

Another force in negotiating between Anderson and the Japanese public was the \textit{Nippon Times}, which covered Anderson’s visit closely. Marcel Grilli published several feature articles that seemed to counter the resistance of Japanese critics to her interpretations of German art songs. First published in 1897, the \textit{Nippon Times} was the country’s most prominent English-language daily; Grilli began writing music criticism for the paper in 1952, which he continued to do for nearly forty years. Grilli primarily addressed an English-reading Japanese audience, and he did so from the standpoint of a naturalized US citizen who had emigrated from Italy as a young man. During World War II Grilli and his wife, Elise, worked for the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) in Washington, DC, and in 1945 he transferred as a civilian officer to the occupation administration in Tokyo. According to his son Peter, Grilli never became fluent in Japanese; instead, he communicated with his social circle of Japanese intellectuals via English, German, French, and Italian. In 1952 he began working for NHK’s international broadcasting and classical music departments, in addition to the \textit{Nippon Times}. Grilli described himself as being “instrumental in bringing her [Anderson] to Japan for the current concert tour.”\textsuperscript{155} In short, Grilli served as a cultural mediator.

Two weeks before Anderson’s arrival, Grilli’s wife, Elise, published a feature piece about Anderson in the \textit{Nippon Times}. Elise was well-known as an art historian and critic, and she authored numerous books about Japanese screens, scrolls, and other art forms. In her portrait of Anderson, Elise referred obliquely to the Jim Crow racial practices that shaped Anderson’s career, portraying her, with her rise from modest beginnings, as a modern-day Cinderella. For Elise, Anderson’s rags-to-riches story was “part of the folklore of a new continent where such miracles do occasionally happen.”\textsuperscript{156}

Meanwhile, Marcel Grilli strove to articulate why Anderson’s performances consistently produced such deep emotional responses, and his perspective reflected expectations based in part on race and national heritage. On May 5 he identified Anderson as an “American Negro,” and he strove to establish her right to perform German repertoire. “In these very columns, not so long ago,” Grilli declared, “I said something to the effect that it was next to impossible for anyone not steeped in the atmosphere of ‘Mitteleuropa’ to reach the proper ‘Stimmung und Gefühl’ needed for the projection of German Lieder.” He continued, in part by picking up on Anderson’s comments at Haneda Airport about her relationship to German audiences: “Marian Anderson is a proof of the possibility of the impossible, for here is an American Negro bringing to
these songs a sympathy and understanding which enmeshes the hearts of the Germans and Austrians who hear her. . . . What seems to me unique and superhuman in this artist’s equipment is a profundness of human sympathy, a penetration into the deepest human roots of the music she chooses and a complete envelopment of her audience in that same pervasive humanity.”

Four days later, Grilli continued to pursue this same thread, striving to define the components that yield an artist of rare gifts and broad-ranging success: “When a fully rounded, mature singer steps forward on a stage, I often think that the resulting masterwork is one third Nature, one third art, and one third which I can only call God-in-Man.” He continued by stating that one performer seldom possessed all three: “Many an operatic artist gets by with the first two elements; and at times some glorious natural voice rings out unembellished and alone.” Grilli placed Anderson alongside white vocalists Lotte Lehmann and Elisabeth Schumann as one of these rare, thrice-gifted artists. In Anderson’s case, the language of being “naturally endowed” and exhibiting a superhuman capacity of “God-in-Man” conjures racialized imagery when read against the long history of believing African American musicians to have “natural”—even superhuman—talent. Such a posture implies a racially bestowed musical gift that is free of training. Even in an essay penned by one of her most ardent supporters, Anderson’s difference was never completely out of the picture.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Grilli’s articles was how he offered a way for his readers to listen ecumenically to Anderson. He credited her with having a rare capacity to achieve “a comprehension of a piece of music so profound as to reach the very roots from which the song emanates . . . until the listener feels completely enfolded in the particular mood or idea of that song.” Then he analyzed her inclusivity regarding repertoire: “That is the feeling which emanates from Marian Anderson’s approach to every song she undertakes. It may emerge more strongly from one Negro Spiritual than from another; it may one evening sound forth most clearly in the ‘Erlköning,’ and on another occasion peep smilingly out of ‘Comin’ Through the Rye,’ but always one feels that every song has been lovingly embraced for its own special message, its own inmost charm.”

Conclusion: Marian Anderson’s Legacy in Japan

Anderson arrived in Japan at a crucial moment in its history, and in the years after her visit she continued to be revered there as both a gifted singer and an eminent African American, becoming part of Japan’s cultural memory. African American artists from other performance traditions toured Japan at this time as well. In 1953 the Delta Rhythm Boys visited in May; the interracial Jazz at the Philharmonic toured in November,
featuring Ella Fitzgerald, Benny Carter, Roy Eldridge, Gene Krupa, Oscar Peterson, and others; and Louis Armstrong appeared in December. Josephine Baker, as already noted, arrived in April 1954. When the De Paur Infantry Chorus, conducted by Leonard De Paur, traveled to Japan in January 1954, Anderson’s performances were recalled as a standard against which the group was measured. De Paur’s chorus sang a capella, performing repertoire from Bach to twentieth-century composers. Takeo Murata, who had organized the roundtable discussion with Anderson, published a review of De Paur’s chorus in Ongaku Geijutsu, comparing the group’s performance of spirituals to that of Anderson and criticizing their technique as amateurish. De Paur extended the black choral tradition of Hall Johnson, which in performance style was further removed from the norms of European classical music than Anderson’s piano-vocal renditions of spirituals.

During the later 1950s, amid a growing number of visits to Japan by foreign virtuosos of classical music, Anderson continued to be celebrated as an accomplished artist, and her recognition in Japan remained firm as the civil rights movement grew more urgent in the United States. In 1955, for example, a Japanese photo magazine featured Anderson and renowned violinist Yehudi Menuhin as two of the most notable musicians to visit Japan since the end of World War II. That year Anderson had debuted to international acclaim at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, becoming the first African American singer featured on the company’s stage. But 1955 also marked Rosa Parks’s arrest for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white rider in Alabama and the murder of teenager Emmett Till for whistling at a white woman in Mississippi. Anderson’s story entered textbooks in Japanese schools around this time as well: in a junior high school history book from 1957, she was profiled for her moral courage. Two years later, she appeared in another Japanese textbook, this time for fifth graders, where her story was introduced in a section about “overcoming discrimination.” Anderson’s inclusion in textbooks was especially notable, meaning that for the Japanese she had come to symbolize more than the recollection of a six-week concert tour.

In 1959 Anderson’s story attracted attention in Japan yet again, this time through a Japanese translation of her autobiography, My Lord, What a Morning, which had originally been published three years earlier. The book was reviewed by the scholar Hiromi Furukawa in the journal of the Japan Black Studies Association (JBSA), which had been established in Kobe in 1954; Furukawa was among the organization’s founding members. Assessing Anderson’s success as “exceptional,” given the racial climate in the United States, he questioned her reticence about discussing racial prejudice, quoting passages from the book to criticize her understated stance. Furukawa focused on chapter 22, “The Highest and the Lowest,” for example, which was altered in the Japanese translation to
“White and Black,” and he quoted Anderson’s statement about how she adapted to Jim Crow laws:

As I have said, I take my meals in my room. That is my preference. If I wanted to take them elsewhere I would. I assume that there are hotel managements that are happier to have me dine in my room. It is not because they have any objections but because they feel other guests might complain—or so the explanation would go. If I were inclined to be combative, I suppose I might insist on making issues of these things. But that is not my nature, and I always bear in mind that my mission is to leave behind me the kind of impression that will make it easier for those who follow.167

Furukawa pointed out that Anderson’s reserved perspective on racial prejudice contrasted sharply with that of another African American singer, Paul Robeson, who was an ardent civil rights activist. In the same volume of JBSA’s journal, the Japanese translation of Robeson’s autobiography was also discussed. In 1978 Anderson’s autobiography was cited in English-language textbooks for Japanese junior and senior high schools.168

In the ensuing decades, as African American musicians gained opportunities in classical music, Japanese reviewers conjured up Anderson when writing about her successors. In 1961 Tomoaki Ogura described a trip to the United States, where he found that African American musicians had more success in jazz than classical music; at the end, he mentioned Anderson’s performance of spirituals as an important contribution. In part, Ogura noted considerable mutual respect between Japanese and African American jazz musicians.169 In 1982 Eiji Kimura published an article titled “Current Situation of Classical Music: Whether There Is Racial Discrimination against Black Opera Singers,” which covered a concert by Grace Bumbry and Shirley Verrett in Carnegie Hall that celebrated Anderson’s eightieth birthday.170 In 1997 Takahiro Kamiji predicted a major racial redistribution in classical music in the United States because of demographic changes, with a growing population of people with Asian and African heritages, and he included Marian Anderson as part of a brief history of African American singers and composers.171

For Anderson and those she came to know during her visit, the significance of the 1953 Japan tour resonated not only in musical exchanges and growing racial awareness but also in new friendships and human kindness. Despite a language barrier, cultural differences, and the shadow of the war and occupation, the tour had been a mutually beneficial experience for both Anderson and her hosts. For years, Anderson continued to exchange correspondence with the Furukaki family, and she referred to the group of NHK employees who accompanied her party outside of Tokyo as “my ‘family’” (figs. 27 and 28).172 One of these “family”
Figure 27. Sketch of Anderson by Tetsuro Furukaki, president of NHK. Anderson is not directly identified here. Rather, the illustration is titled “Impression of a Singer.” Published in *La fenêtre de Tokio* [Window of Tokyo] (Tokyo: Hobunkan, 1953). Public domain.

Figure 28. Isaac Jofe (*second from the left in back row*) and Anderson with a group of Japanese colleagues. The woman third from the right is probably Fumie Mizuhara, who was a representative of NHK and accompanied Anderson throughout her tour of Japan. Courtesy Anderson Collection of Photographs.
members, translator Fumie Mizuhara, wrote to Anderson two weeks after
the singer had returned to the United States, reflecting on the meaning
of Anderson’s visit:

I miss you. I miss that living graciousness, tactfulness and the deli-
cate understanding and consideration to others. I am thanking daily
for the wonderful opportunity which gave me a chance to observe
and know again that graciousness and humility and charity still
exist, and are wonderful and beautiful virtues to have and to hold.
During the war and especially after the war, during those period [sic]
when people were trying to rehabilitate, I have seen these virtues
trampled down and the young generation growing up with the idea
of “grabbing all you can and more than you can as soon as you
can or someone else will take all.” I’m afraid that I too have been
spoiled. Only excuse I could find for these people—through my own
experience—is that one cannot help being bitter and selfish after
finding your home and all belongings for which you have worked
for reduced to ashes within one night of bombing. You start again
with nothing and in your struggle to live you forget (sometimes
you are obliged to) charity, graciousness, tactfulness, and humility.
And so again, God bless you and thank you for showing us that in
a truly great [person] there is humbleness as well as nobleness and
humanity. If I became a little gracious and humble it is all due to
your good example.\textsuperscript{173}

As much as anything, Anderson’s extended visit to Japan enacted
these human gestures of empathy and healing, and it occurred at a sin-
gular historical moment: one poised between control of Japan by the
United States during the occupation and a new beginning for the coun-
try, which looked forward to a more equitable relationship among peers.
The Japanese had experienced deep losses both during the war and as
a result of the subsequent cultural reorientation, and Anderson and her
Japanese hosts modeled an exemplary display of peaceful transpacific
communication. Two years after her visit, Anderson was asked to send
a recorded message to NHK in celebration of the organization’s thirtieth
anniversary, and she recalled her concert tour as “one of the most memo-
rable trips, experiences, that has been mine to have.”\textsuperscript{174} While her words
conveyed diplomatic courtesy, they also confirmed a genuine feeling that
resonates through the surviving archival record: she and her Japanese
hosts and colleagues—local musicians and critics, affiliates of GHQ and
NHK, members of the imperial family—were consistently respectful of
one another, and her performances made a strong impression on those
who attended. Anderson was treated as a visiting dignitary, and she
responded gracefully: the degree to which both parties sought mutual
understanding was palpable. The emotional depth of Anderson’s musi-
cal interpretations and the sheer power of her personal character spoke
Marian Anderson’s 1953 Concert Tour of Japan

Marian Anderson profoundly to Japanese audiences, and public discussions surrounding her visit unfolded in a remarkable array of reviews in Japanese newspapers and journals, interviews in print and on the radio, and roundtable panels with Japanese critics and musicians. Through them, Anderson and Japanese musicians explored, in part, how non-European performers, whether African American or Japanese, could forge a distinctive

Figure 29. This flier provides abbreviated listings of Anderson’s four preset programs for her concert tour in Japan. Hurok Attractions, Inc., compiler, “Marian Anderson [scrapbooks],” volume 1 (of 2), Performing Arts Research Collections, New York Public Library. (See appendix A for detailed program listings at https://www.press.uillinois.edu/journals/am/media/andersoninjapan/)
relationship with the European canon. These discussions also revealed
that Japanese audiences, as of the early 1950s, had less experience with
spirituals than with the German lied and that they were especially cap-
"citated by Anderson’s renditions of that African American repertoire.
Today, the ongoing propagation of Western classical music thrives within
a global network of education, performance, and multimedia dissemina-
tion, and that interdependence traces its roots to a rich history of cross-
cultural interchanges. Marian Anderson’s 1953 tour of Japan marks a
striking chapter in a multifaceted transnational history.

NOTES

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In the endnotes, Japanese publications are cited in Japanese, followed by an English
translation. Throughout, Japanese names in English are written with given name followed
by surname. In Japanese they are written surname followed by given name. Unless oth-
"erwise indicated, all translations from Japanese to English were done by Misako Ohta,
Makiko Kimoto, or Misako’s students at Kobe University, who worked together as a team.

The following abbreviations are used for core sources:

Anderson Collection of Photographs: Marian Anderson Papers, Rare Books and Manu-
scripts, Kislak Center for Special Collections, University of Pennsylvania Libraries

Anderson Diary: [Marian Anderson], “The Year 1953,” personal diary, folder 7972, box
148, Anderson Papers

[scrapbooks],” vol. 1 (of 2), Performing Arts Research Collections, New York Public Library

Anderson Papers: Marian Anderson Papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Kislak Center
for Special Collections, University of Pennsylvania Libraries

Dower: John W. Dower, Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II (New York:
W. W. Norton, 1999)


2. Anderson’s tour in the autumn of 1957 covered present-day South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, India, and Pakistan. See Keiler, 281–88; and Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 109–12. Anderson spent two days in Tokyo on her way to South Korea, telling a reporter, “I want to visit the many friends I made during my last tour here four years ago” (Peter Ross, “Soldiers Like Classical Music: Marian Anderson,” *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, September 23, 1957, 5). There appear to be multiple editions of this publication, which are not clearly labeled, and we have focused on the one that includes Anderson. During the 1950s, this military daily newspaper reported on US news and other topics, including extensive sports coverage, crosswords and puzzles, and brief Japanese lessons.


6. “Recorded Concert Set,” *Nippon Times*, July 25, 1948, 3. These concerts actually featured recordings, not live performers, conveying a sense of the extreme circumstances in Japan immediately after the war. Tickets to hear “Samuel Barber’s ‘Second Essay for Orchestra,’ Deems Taylor’s ’Through the Looking Glass,’ from the ‘Alice in Wonderland Suite,’ and Negro spirituals sung by Marian Anderson” were available for “150 Japanese patrons” of the CIE library.


9. Takaya Urakawa was the only Japanese violinist who played with Franz Rupp. He came to know Rupp thanks to Rupp’s cousin, who attended Urakawa’s solo violin concert in Rellingen, Germany, in 1976. Urakawa and Rupp worked together from 1978 into the 1980s, recording all the Beethoven and Brahms violin sonatas (released by Fontec). Born
in 1940, Urakawa studied violin performance under Shinichi Suzuki and Anna Ono. He won first place in the Student Music Concours of Japan in 1949 at the age of nine; he then won a prize in the Music Competition of Japan in 1953 at age thirteen. After entering Tokyo University of the Arts, he went to Germany on a scholarship through the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) from 1959 to 1961. He graduated first in his class from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater (Munich) in 1964 and became concertmaster of the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra in the spring of 1965 with the support of Joseph Keilberth. After returning to Japan in 1981, he became a professor at Tokyo University of the Arts in 1984, where he is now professor emeritus.

10. Takaya Urakawa, interview with Makiko Kimoto, Osaka, Japan, March 6, 2018. The interview addressed the following topics: (1) Marian Anderson’s concert in Tokyo in 1953, (2) performances with Franz Rupp from the 1970s to the 1980s, and (3) recordings with Rupp in 1978 and 1980. “Negro spirituals” is the common translation in Japan, and it continues to be used today, even though the word “Negro” is now generally avoided in the United States. Another member of the audience at Hibiya Public Hall was Kotaro Takamura (1883–1956), a famous writer and sculptor whose poetry continues to be taught in Japanese schools. Takamura noted the date and place of Anderson’s concert in his diary but unfortunately did not record any impressions of her performance. 高村光太郎『高村光太郎全集第十三巻』 (東京 : 筑摩書房) , 1953年, 199–200頁 (Kotaro Takamura, The Complete Works of Kotaro Takamura [Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1953], 13:199–200).

11. Misuzu Tanaka, conversation with Makiko Kimoto, Kyoto, Japan, July 10, 2018. Her choice of words is much the same as in a contemporaneous review by the critic Nihei Akagi, who wrote of “Black Velvet’s Voice”: 赤木仁兵衛「黒ビロードの声」 (Nihei Akagi, “Black Velvet’s Voice: Listening to Miss Anderson’s Performance,” Chugoku shinbun, May 13, 1953). Note that the word shinbun is a transliteration of the Japanese word for “newspaper.”

12. Vocal Recital Marian Anderson, 1953, a program booklet primarily in Japanese with program details also listed in English (folder 8672, box 186, Anderson Papers). This booklet opens with photographs of Anderson’s 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial and includes biographies of Anderson and Rupp, names of pieces and notes for Programs A and B, and an ad for Anderson’s recordings on Japanese RCA Victor.


15. A Negro Soldier, “[Letter to the Editor:] How Would Japs Treat Negroes?” Pittsburgh Courier, January 24, 1942. This article is discussed in Gallicchio, African American Encounter, 119, but not cited specifically.


19. Regarding Mayers and Hattori, “Songs, East and West,” Seventeen, May 1953, 54; and “The Orphan Record,” Redbook, May 1953, 77. Seventeen suggests that both men were GIs, as does Variety: “Columbia Pays 5G for ‘Nasai’ Pic Yen,” February 25, 1953. Redbook, meanwhile, does not give Hattori’s name, claims the composer was “a Japanese employee of Nippon-Columbia Records,” and says nothing about whether or not he was a GI; Nagahara gives the composer’s name as Itsurō Hattori (“The Orphan Record,” 77). As of this writing, Bowers’s recording of “Gomen-nasai” on Columbia is available on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fH0zCQ4XmQ4. Regarding US recordings


Roebuck puzzles through conflicting statistics about the *konketsuji*: “The best survey data available indicate that about one in ten [*konketsuji*] was living in an orphanage or other state-sponsored facility in the early 1950s.” She also writes of proposals to “relocate” the children to the United States, which would have meant a purge of the children from Japan. On the other hand, US immigration laws yielded an equally problematic factor, since the Japanese were largely prohibited from immigrating (ibid., 193–94).

22. Roebuck puzzles through conflicting statistics about the *konketsuji*: “The best survey data available indicate that about one in ten [*konketsuji*] was living in an orphanage or other state-sponsored facility in the early 1950s.” She also writes of proposals to “relocate” the children to the United States, which would have meant a purge of the children from Japan. On the other hand, US immigration laws yielded an equally problematic factor, since the Japanese were largely prohibited from immigrating (ibid., 193–94).


26. 「昨夜, 市公会堂で独唱会――アンダーソン女史」朝日新聞 (名古屋), 1953年5月16日 (“Last Night Solo Recital in Nagoya Civic Assembly Hall: Miss Anderson,” *Asahi shinbun* [Nagoya], May 16, 1953).


28. Furukaki had served previously in GHQ. This section of the article builds on Keiler (261–65), adding in the substantial coverage of Anderson’s trip in Japanese newspapers.

29. Anderson’s Diary, April 27. Throughout, we have retained Anderson’s spellings and shorthand as found in her diary entries.


31. An engraved invitation (in English) for this reception is included in folder 4172, box 65, Anderson Papers.


35. Dower, 208.

36. “The Imperial’s First Century,” preface to *The Imperial: The First 100 Years* (Tokyo: Imperial Hotel, 1990). The hotel had returned to Japanese management a year previously, in April 1952. The physical structure, an updated building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright
and completed in 1923, had been damaged by American fire bombs at the end of the war. It was repaired in part by occupation forces, and the hotel housed high-ranking officers and representatives to the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, as well as reporters. Entertainers visiting the troops in Korea, including Bob Hope and Marilyn Monroe, also stayed there during the occupation. See ibid., 89–198.

37. The firebombing of Tokyo took place March 9–10, 1945; over one hundred thousand people were killed, and some eight hundred thousand were left homeless (Edwin P. Hoyt, Inferno: The Firebombing of Japan, March 9–August 15, 1945 [Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 2000], 55, 72). Four days after that air strike, a concert went on as scheduled at Hibiya Public Hall. It featured the Nippon Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Kazuo Yamada, with a program of Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4, Stravinsky’s Firebird Suite, and Sokichi Ozaki’s Den-en Kyoku (Rural symphony) (“Concert Calendar,” Nippon Times, March 7, 1945; and “Hibiya Public Hall,” https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/日比谷公会堂).

38. Marian Anderson, My Lord, What a Morning: An Autobiography (New York: Viking Press, 1956), 256. Her itinerary did not strictly adhere to the three-day units that she recalled (a concert, then sightseeing, then rest), but it was certainly packed with activities and appearances.

39. 「アンダーソン第一声 NHK①後8・0」 中国新聞, 1953年4月29日 (“Anderson’s First Voice: NHK Channel 1, 8:00 p.m.,” Chugoku shinbun, April 29, 1953).

40. The year before Anderson arrived in Japan there were over 10 million radio contracts nationwide, and the total reached a peak of 14.8 million in 1958. During and after the occupation, radio and the spread of democracy were closely linked. GHQ “made full use of the mass media, particularly radio,” to spread its message, while the 1950 Broadcast Law “clearly defined three major principles that were to govern broadcasting activities: maximum distribution to the public, freedom of speech, and contribution to the development of a healthy democracy” (Hisateru Furuta, Broadcasting in Japan: The Twentieth Century Journey from Radio to Multimedia [Tokyo: NHK, 2002], 110, 7, 79, 97).


42. 「アンダーソンやダミアンの独唱」毎日新聞, 1953年5月1日 (“Anderson and Damien’s Concert,” Mainichi shinbun, May 1, 1953). The article reports on Anderson’s recitals on 1 and 4 May. The tickets sold very fast, and the author (unnamed) suggested that two Anderson concerts in Tokyo were too few.

43. Anderson’s Diary, May 1.

44. 「アンダーソンのソロコンサート－NHK②後8・05音楽のくりもの」中国新聞, 1953年5月14日 (“Anderson’s Solo Recital: NHK Channel 2, 8:05 p.m., Gift from Music,” Chugoku shinbun, May 14, 1953). This concert was broadcast on May 14, NHK Channel 2.


46. Anderson’s Diary, May 2.

47. Anderson’s Diary, May 19. A movement to bring kabuki performances to New York City had begun a year earlier, in 1952. As Barbara Thornbury has described, celebrated American writers and theater figures Paul Green, Joshua Logan, and James Michener “promot[ed] kabuki as the preeminent example of a Japanese culture that could be presented with no reference to the Japan that was America’s wartime enemy. As the Occupation drew to a close, and as it became increasingly desirable to the United States to build good relations with Japan as a cold-war ally by demonstrating appreciation of and admiration for Japanese culture, efforts to bring kabuki to the United States got under way.” It was Anderson’s manager, Sol Hurok, who invited the Azuma Kabuki Dancers and Musicians to New York for performances in 1954. See Barbara Thornbury, America’s Japan and Japan’s Performing Arts: Cultural Mobility and Exchange in New York, 1952–2011 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013), 65.

48. 「日本の歌も習いたい」来日の歌手アンダーソン——ピアニストのルッフ氏もリサイタル」東京新聞, 1953年5月1日 (“Anderson Will Visit Japan, ‘I Would Like to Learn Japanese Songs’: Her
Accompanist, Mr. Franz Rupp, Will Also Give His Recital," Tokyo shinbun, May 1, 1953.

According to her diary, Anderson saw decorated screens in a museum on May 3 and experienced a tea ceremony on May 14 in Kyoto, which she declared “most impressive.”

49. Anderson’s Diary, May 14.

50. See appendix A for Anderson’s programs at https://www.press.uillinois.edu/journals/am/media/andersoninjapan/

51. Anderson continued: “A young woman [Fumie Mizuhara] was provided as an interpreter, and there were four men to serve us in other capacities. One young man was sent along to be banker and cashier; he carried the money and paid bills at hotels, restaurants, and shops” (Anderson, My Lord, 257). Keeping with 1950s gender norms, other than Mizuhara and US Embassy cultural attaché Margaret Williams, the “professional” side of Anderson’s tour was male-dominated (critics, political figures, NHK representatives), while the “private” side (group interviews, imperial family interactions) was female-dominated. The Japanese singers with whom she interacted were also mostly women.

52. Sankei Hall (built by the Sankei Newspaper Company) opened in Osaka in 1952, just one year before Anderson’s visit, with a seating capacity of fifteen hundred. The hall was demolished in 2005 (see https://ja.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/サンケイホール). The Takarazuka Grand Theatre opened in 1924, with a seating capacity of thirty-five hundred. It was seized by American forces in 1945–46 and returned to the Takarazuka after the war, then replaced with a new building in 1992 (https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/宝塚大劇場). It is interesting to note that “stars of the Takarazuka Revue” performed with Josephine Baker at her first benefit concert for konketsuji in Tokyo in April 1954 (“Limited Admission to 1st Performance of Josephine Baker,” Nippon Times, April 13, 1954). For more on a contemporary production by the Takarazuka, see Elizabeth York’s article in this issue.

53. Anderson’s Diary, May 9. It appears that Anderson wrote “1300” for the age of the palace, but she must have meant “300.” Anderson did not specify which palace she visited, but the article in Our World mentions the Katsura Detached Palace. “Japan Sees Marion [sic] Anderson,” 30.

54. The next evening at their Hiroshima hotel, Anderson recorded: “In another living room a party of men were being entertained by Geishas who were dancing to gramophone music of old, old American songs” (Anderson’s Diary, May 10).


56. Anderson’s Diary, May 11; "「クラシックな音楽が好き」池田ご夫妻ア女史の独唱会へ」読売新聞（広島）、1953年5月13日 (“Mr. and Mrs. Ikeda Go to Miss Anderson’s Concert: I Love Classical Music,” Yomiuri shinbun [Hiroshima], May 13, 1953); "「厚子にせがまれて . . . . . .」アンダーソン女史独唱会――隆政氏夫妻仲よく来廣、得意の黒人歌など――満場うならせた独唱会’毎日新聞（広島）、1953年5月12日 (“Atsuko Implored Me. . . . ’ Miss Anderson’s Solo Recital; Mr. and Mrs. Ikeda Came to the Concert in Perfect Harmony; Her Forte, Negro Spirituals; The Recital Impressed the Whole Audience,” Mainichi shinbun [Hiroshima], May 12, 1953).

57. Anderson’s Diary, May 10.

58. 小林公「公会堂の利用で米軍と交渉した想い出」『名古屋市公会堂-半世紀の歩み』所収, 名古屋市市民局発行, 1980年, 36–37頁 (Hiroshi Kobayashi, “Memory of Negotiation with GHQ,” an unpublished memorial booklet for the fiftieth anniversary of Nagoya Public Hall [Citizens Affair Bureau of Nagoya, 1980], 36–37) (distributed by the office of the hall manager of Nagoya Public Hall). Nagoya Public Hall was constructed in celebration of the marriage of Emperor Hirohito and opened on 10 October 1930. During World War II, it was used by the Imperial Japanese Army’s Second Division, and from 1945 to 1956 it was run by GHQ.

59. 「昨夜、市公会堂で独唱会――アンダーソン女史」朝日新聞（名古屋）、1953年5月16日 (“Last Night Solo Recital in Nagoya Civic Assembly Hall: Miss Anderson,” Asahi shinbun [Nagoya], May 16, 1953).

60. 「アンダーソンの特別慈善公演 毎日新聞, 1953年5月10日 (“Anderson’s Special Charity Concert,” Mainichi shinbun, May 10, 1953): “Marian Anderson’s Special Concert is hard to find tickets for, and they are sold at a high premium; they will be held on the evening of
the 19th at Hibiya Kokaido [Public Hall]. Net profits will be for orphan relief fund. The program of the concert includes songs by Handel, Strauss and spirituals (1,500 yen, 800 yen, 500 yen).

61. Several newspaper clippings use this wording (e.g., “Marian Anderson Gets Mikado Medal,” New York World Telegram and Sun, May 22, 1953) and are found on the same page in the Anderson-Hurok Scrapbooks. The medal is sometimes mislabeled “Yushoko” instead of “Yukosho.”

62. As adults, Prince Yoshinomiya is known as Prince Hitachi Masahito and Princess Suganomiya as Takako Shimazu (when she married, she relinquished her imperial title).


64. This concert at Hibiya Public Hall on May 22 was rebroadcast by NHK Radio 1 on May 28 at 21:15 (9:15 p.m.). 「アル ト ・ ラ プソデ ィ――亡き子を しのぶ歌、 独唱アン ダーソン 、 NHK交響楽団 [NHK第一=9 ・ 15] 独唱マ リア ヌ ・ アン ダーソン 、 合唱東京放送合唱団、管弦楽クル ト ・ ウ ェス指揮、 NHK交響楽団, 「NHK Channel 1, 9:15 p.m.」 Marian Anderson, Tokyo Radio Choir, Kurt Voos (Conductor), NHK Symphony Orchestra,” Osaka Nichinichi shinbun, May 28, 1953.

65. Anderson’s Diary, May 22.


68. Anderson’s Diary, May 25.

69. According to two Osaka newspapers, Rupp also broadcast a performance with the NHK Symphony of Schumann’s Piano Concerto in A Minor, together with Mozart’s Fantasie in C Minor (a solo work) on May 4 at 9:05 p.m. Yet the performance is a bit of a mystery. No evidence exists for a public concert by Rupp and the NHK Symphony; plus, he accompanied Anderson in a vocal recital on May 4 at 7:00 p.m. The Schumann and Mozart performances, if they occurred, must have been for broadcast only. The Nippon Times (May 4, 1953) erroneously reported that the program would feature Schumann’s Piano Concerto in E-flat Major (Schumann’s only piano concerto is in A minor). Here are the regional Japanese newspapers that announced Rupp’s concert: “NHKの後9・05フ ラ ンツ ・ ルッ プ――特別演奏会” 大阪新聞1953年5月5日 (“Franz Rupp: Special Concert by NHK Channel 1, 9:05 p.m., Osaka shinbun, May 5, 1953); 「フ ラ ンツ ・ ルッ プ演奏 会、四日夜[NHK第一=9・5]ピアノ=フ ラ ンツ ・ ルッ プ、管弦楽=クル ト ・ ウ ェス指揮のNHK交響楽団」 大阪日日新聞, 1953年5月5日 (“Radio Choice] His Forte ‘Fantasy in C Minor’ from Franz Rupp’s Concert, May 4, evening [NHK Channel 1, 9:05 p.m.], Franz Rupp [Piano], Kurt Voos [Conductor], NHK Symphony Orchestra,” Osaka Nichinichi shinbun, May 5, 1953). The program for Rupp’s solo piano recital at the Imperial Theater on May 24 featured the following works: Bach, Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue; Scarlatti, Sonatas in E Major, D Major, G Major, and C Major; Beethoven, Sonata in A Major, op. 101; Debussy, “Reflets dans l’eau” and “Hommage à Rameau” (from Images, set 1); Brahms, Capriccio, op. 76, no. 1, and Rhapsody, op. 79, no. 2; Chopin, Mazurka in
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A Major, op. 67, no. 4, Valse brillante in A-flat Major, op. 34, no. 1, and Fantasie in F Minor, op. 49 (“Programs, 1953,” folder 8672, box 186, Anderson Papers).


74. Takaya Urakawa, interview with Makiko Kimoto.

75. “Japan Sees Marion [sic] Anderson,” 29. The tour was “sponsored jointly by [the] U.S. Army and the State Dept.,” according to one article, and documents in the Anderson Papers suggest that details were handled by a network of personnel in both Japan and Korea. “Miss Anderson to Korea,” Variety, May 27, 1953, Anderson-Hurok Scrapbooks.


77. Anderson’s Diary, May 28.

78. Anderson, as quoted in Andrew Headland Jr., “Marian Anderson: A High Note to Korea,” Pacific Stars and Stripes, June 20, 1953, [6].

79. Anderson received a Korean garment as a gift from the group (Anderson’s Diary, May 29). That October, Marcus W. Scherbacher, cultural attaché at the US embassy in Pusan, wrote to Anderson: “I have meant to write to you many times to tell you how much your visit meant to Korean musicians. It seems that musicians here never get together without talking about the concert you gave and the wonderful opportunity they had in meeting you personally” (Marcus W. Scherbacher to Marian Anderson, October 28, 1953, folder 5813, box 89, Anderson Papers).


81. Anderson’s Diary, May 29. The estimate of the crowd size at Anderson’s concert comes from an unidentified Korean publication in the Anderson-Hurok Scrapbooks. The article is titled “World-Famous Black American Singer: Miss Anderson Visited Korea,” and includes fabulous crowd photos. The article was translated for us from Korean by Doris Yuma Kashiwagi. An undated Hurok Attractions press release, “Special to Ed Sullivan,” provided a lower estimate: “When Marian Anderson gave her major concert in Pusan, Korea, last week in the courtyard of one of the evacuation hospitals, U.S. Embassy officials estimated 20,000 persons were gathered between the building’s wings with 40,000 more in the streets outside” (folder 9119, box 207, Anderson Papers).

82. Headland, “High Note to Korea.”

83. Hall arranged a meeting between Anderson and a group of Korean orphans during this interview (Douglass Hall, “They All Smiled—but One,” Afro Magazine, June 27, 1953, in Anderson-Hurok Scrapbooks).

84. Ibid. Another undated Hurok Attractions press release, “Special to Dorothy Kilgallen,” likewise demonstrates the appreciation expressed by the troops and also served to boost morale at home by portraying the determination and fortitude of those who attended the concert: “Thousands of G.I.s hitch-hiked 25 to 50 miles to hear her, many from the front. One wrote Miss Anderson: ‘I have been here for ten months, but after listening to your singing tonight I am fit and ready for another ten months. Thank you for all of us’” (folder 9119, box 207, Anderson Papers).

85. Regarding Anderson’s performance with the NHK Symphony, Beatrice Alcine, who was African American and in the early 1950s served as principal of the school at the Shiroi
Air Base, which was under the control of GHQ, told a reporter that “the thrill of her life was to witness” Anderson’s performance when she “sang with the huge 60 voice chorus composed of Japanese singers and fronted the Japanese symphony” (Gladys P. Graham, “Educator Returns from Japan Post,” Black Dispatch, July 18, 1953, Anderson-Hurok Scrapbooks). The Black Dispatch was an African American newspaper published in Oklahoma City.

86. Dower, 75.
87. Mire Koikari, Pedagogy of Democracy: Feminism and the Cold War in the US Occupation of Japan (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), 20. Koikari argues convincingly that “rather than an unprecedented moment of liberation for Japanese women, gender reform in occupied Japan was intimately connected on the one hand to prewar nationalist and imperialist politics, and on the other to emerging Cold War cultural dynamics” (5).
88. Walter P. Guzzardi to Marian Anderson, July 9, 1953, folder 5800, box 89, Anderson Papers. This document demonstrates that regarding Anderson’s performances for Korean nationals, the US government relied on what Danielle Fosler-Lussier has called “the combination of music’s broad appeal and its seeming political neutrality,” which “made music a very special form of government propaganda” (America’s Cold War Diplomacy, 12).
91. Fosler-Lussier, America’s Cold War Diplomacy, 120. As Keiler notes, during the 1950s Anderson was “one of the most admired and dependable black celebrities in government circles, a black woman of extraordinary accomplishment who was also loyal, patriotic, and reluctant to criticize publicly the treatment of blacks” (281). Anderson’s 1953 visit to Japan predated government-sponsored concert tours by African American jazz musicians, beginning with Dizzy Gillespie’s tour of the Middle East in 1956. See Penny M. Von Eschen, Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).
92. 「編集手帖」読売新聞, 1953年5月23日 (“Editor’s Notes,” Yomiuri shinbun, May 23, 1953).
This article comes from clipping files in the Imperial Household Archives in Tokyo, and it is exceptional in the Imperial Archives, with no parallel clippings about MacArthur, for example. More about Roosevelt’s trip to Japan can be found in “Promoting Democracy in Japan (1953),” Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, George Washington University, https://erpapers.columbian.gwu.edu/promoting-democracy-japan-1953.
94. Anderson’s Diary, May 16.
95. Koikari, Pedagogy of Democracy, 4. Koikari cautions, however, that “in their attempts to reform Japanese women, American women occupiers’ reform disseminated—often by skits and role playing—their own American, white, middle-class notions of femininity, domesticity, and heterosexuality as the path to democracy” (77–78). Radio programs were another medium through which women’s issues were addressed. According to a 1951 NHK promotional booklet in the Anderson Papers, “Various other programs are being presented for the purpose of propagating democratic ideas. ‘Women’s Hour,’ ‘Happy Tearoom,’ and ‘Working Women’s Hour’ are some of the programs that are designed to give examples of democratic way[s] of thinking to women who had long been confined in feudalistic homes” (Today’s NHK [Tokyo: Nippon Hoso Kyokai, 1951], 21, folder 4172, box 65, Anderson Papers). For more on “Women’s Hour[s],” see Koikari, Pedagogy of Democracy, 116–18.
96. Elise Grilli, “Marian Anderson: Singer and Woman,” *Nippon Times*, April 22, 1953. At the beginning of a May 9 review, Ichiro Toriumi stated that “when [Anderson] was asked what her most favorite thing was, she answered ‘Doing needlework and cooking’” (Toriumi, “Anderson’s Schubert”). Anderson’s domesticity was often highlighted in the American press as well, with special attention to her habit of traveling with a portable sewing machine in order to make curtains and cushion covers for her Connecticut home. See, for example, “Famous Diva Uses Sewing Machine While on Tour,” *Hartford Courant*, May 7, 1950. For more on domestic containment, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: BasicBooks, 1988).


102. Dower, 277, 307. Emperor Hirohito published his intentions in newspapers throughout Japan in June 1946, and Dower observes how the emperor managed to both satisfy GHQ and retain some of his historic powers: “As a communication in the Japanese language, moreover, it fell considerably short of being the sweeping ‘renunciation of divinity’ Westerners wishfully imagined it to be. Through the use of esoteric language, Emperor Hirohito adroitly managed to descend only partway from heaven” (308).

103. In the clipping files of the Imperial Household Archives there are three articles about Anderson’s medal: (1) “Red Cross Honors Singer,” *Nippon Times*, May 20, 1953 (in English); (2) 「日赤から有功章—アンダーソン女史の慈善興行」日本経済新聞, 1953年5月20日 (“Yukosho Medal from Japan Red Cross Society: Charity Performance by Miss Anderson,” *Nikkei shinbun*, May 20, 1953); and (3) 「アンダーソン女史の慈善独唱会」中部日本新聞, 1953年5月20日 (“Miss Anderson’s Charity Solo Recital,” *Chubu Nihon shinbun*, May 20, 1953).

104. “Japan Sees Marion [sic] Anderson,” 30. Anderson’s medals, along with the key to the city she received a week later in Seoul, are now held in the Anderson Papers, as are the letters conferring the Medal of Special Membership and “a Yūkōshō” (Order of Merit) (President Tadatsugu Shimadzu, Japan Red Cross Society, two letters to Anderson, May
19, 1953, folder 4173, box 65). We retain the spelling “Shimadzu,” as used in both letters, instead of the more common “Shimazu.” In her diary, Anderson recorded that “Princess Takamatsu presented medals to Franz & me,” but it remains unclear which medal or medals Rupp received, as press coverage focused on Anderson (Anderson’s Diary, May 19).


106. “Ohtani” is sometimes spelled “Otani.” In another parallel with the reception of Josephine Baker a year later, Princess Chichibu and Princess Takamatsu (who had presented Anderson with the Red Cross medal) attended Baker’s benefit concert in Tokyo (“Tokyo Premiere” [photo caption], Nippon Times, April 25, 1954).

107. Anderson, My Lord, 259. Much information in this paragraph comes from Anderson’s autobiography.

108. Anderson’s Diary, May 23.


110. 「皇居で独唱会――アン グー女史独唱会――隆政氏夫妻仲よく来廣、得意の黒人歌な ど――満場う ならせた独唱会」 毎日新聞 (広島) , 1953年5月12日 (“Atsuko Implored Me . . . ’; Miss Anderson’s Solo Recital; Mr. and Mrs. Ikeda Came to the Concert in Perfect Harmony; Her Forte, Negro Spirituals; The Recital Impressed the Whole Audience,” Mainichi shinbun [Hiroshima], May 12, 1953).

111. Furuta, Broadcasting in Japan, 73.

112. A tourist booklet in the Anderson Papers titled Hiroshima and published by Hiroshima City Hall in 1952 includes an image of the unfinished museum. The booklet opens with a message of peace and images of the bomb’s destruction followed by snapshots of scenic tourist destinations and several peace memorials (folder 10325, box 367).

113. Ran Zwigenberg, Hiroshima: The Origins of Global Memory Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 138. Zwigenberg notes that both “passionate anti-Americanism” and “genuine goodwill” existed simultaneously in the postoccupation period, but “what surprised many Americans in Hiroshima was how little hate there was towards the USA as perpetrator” (138). This was due in large part to US soft power, he argues.

114. 「皇居で独唱会――アン ダーソン女史の黒人歌な ど――満場う ならせた独唱会」 朝日新聞, 1953年5月12日 (“Atsuko Implored Me . . . ’; Miss Anderson’s Solo Recital; Mr. and Mrs. Ikeda Came to the Concert in Perfect Harmony; Her Forte, Negro Spirituals; The Recital Impressed the Whole Audience,” Mainichi shinbun [Hiroshima], May 12, 1953). Fotouhi was the first US diplomat assigned to Hiroshima after the bombing. Iranian-born, he had immigrated to the United States and served in the army during World War II. Fotouhi directed the ACC between 1952 and 1956/57; see “Assignment Hiroshima,” Time, April 8, 1957.


117. "100年に一度しか聴けぬ声――期待される黒人歌姫の広島公演" 中国新聞, 1953年4月6日 (“One Voice in a Hundred Years: Hopeful Negro Diva in Her Recital at Hiroshima,”
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Chugoku shinbun, April 6, 1953). The advance tickets for Hiroshima were sold for cheaper prices than at Anderson’s other concerts: 1,000 yen (reserved seat), 700 yen (adults), 500 yen (students).

118. 「岡目八目」 中国新聞, 1953年5月22日 (“Bystander’s Vantage Point,” Chugoku shinbun, May 22, 1953). In her diary, Anderson made note of her vocal difficulties: “Hoarseness still with me” (May 11).

119. The estimated total number of orphans comes from the Committee for the Compilation of Materials on Damage Caused by the Atomic Bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, trans. Eisei Ishikawa and David L. Swain, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Physical, Medical, and Social Effects of the Atomic Bombings (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 435. The authors of this report noted that “records on [children] who were, or were not, evacuated are no longer available” due to the bombing, and “what actually became of all the children [in Hiroshima] is beyond confirmation now” (435). John Dower cites a report from 1948 that gives grim statistics, with the total number of “orphaned and homeless children” in Japan overall as 123,510. “Of this number, 28,248 had lost their parents in air raids; 11,351 were orphaned or lost contact with their parents during the traumatic repatriation process; 2,640 were identified as ‘abandoned’; and an astonishing 81,266 were believed to have lost their parents, or simply become separated from them, in the turmoil that accompanied the end of the war” (62).

120. The Committee for the Compilation of Materials, 440, 442. Naoko Shibusawa cites more than six hundred children in seven orphanages as having been assisted with $70,000 over approximately twelve years (America’s Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006], 224). Shibusawa argues that the “moral adoptions” encouraged by Cousins served as a way for Americans to address guilt about the atomic bombings when government policy forbade public funds aiding victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

121. Yoshimaro Mori, Director of Ninoshima Gakuen, to Marian Anderson, August 6, 1953, folder 3823, box 59, Anderson Papers.

122. Sister Maria Gratia, Director Children Home Maria-en, Nagasaki, to Marian Anderson, October 10, 1953, folder 1000, box 16, Anderson Papers.

123. In 2017 a newspaper in Nagasaki announced that the orphanage’s building will be remodeled by 2022 and turned into an exclusive hotel. 「マリア園は富裕層ホテルに」 長崎新聞, 2017年8月1日 (“Maria-en Will Be Remodeled for the Rich,” Nagasaki shinbun, August 1, 2017).

124. “Marian Anderson Hopes to Sing in Japanese Here,” Nippon Times, April 28, 1953. These concerts in Germany marked the first time that Anderson and Rupp performed together in front of a German audience; and for Anderson, it was her first return to Germany after World War II. Her previous performances there had taken place almost twenty years earlier. See Keiler, 254.

125. “Marian Anderson Hopes to Sing.”

126. As one example, on April 20, 1945, a rally and concert were held in Tokyo to celebrate Hitler’s fifty-sixth birthday. Helmut Fellmer conducted the Nippon Philharmonic Orchestra, which performed concertos by Bach (“Local Germans Observe Fuehrer’s 56th Birthday: Spahn Stresses Nation’s Unwavering Faith in Adolf Hitler’s Leadership,” Nippon Times, April 21, 1945, 1).


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130. Anderson「のLP」「レコード芸術」. 1953年5月, 88–95頁. The magazine the Record Art published a feature issue about recordings of Marian Anderson; it was released in Japan in May 1953 (88–95). The Record Art was first published in March 1952.

131. Anderson’s recordings appeared in three issues: (1) 『音楽の友』1950年6月号, 75頁 (Ongakunotomo, June 1950, 75); (2) 『音楽の友』1950年9月号, 36頁 (Ongakunotomo, September 1950, 36); and (3) 『音楽の友』1950年11月号, 48–49頁 (Ongakunotomo, November 1950, 48–49). Ongakunotomo was first published in December 1941 in Tokyo, and it is still a popular magazine for classical music lovers.

132. 河野定税 『マリアン・アンダーソン「その一」』 『ディスク』 第14巻第1号, ディスク新社, 1951年, 44–45頁 (Sadanori Maki, “Marian Anderson [No. 1],” Disk 14, no. 1 [1951]: 44–45). Disk was a Japanese magazine that covered classical music from 1951 to 1966. In the early 1950s, Maki also worked for NHK, and he later became president of the Nagoya College of Music. The history of Nagoya College of Music is included on the school’s website, http://www.meion.ac.jp/english/history.html.


134. 村田武雄 『アンダスンを迎える』 『レコード芸術』, 1953年6月, 114–115頁 (Takeo Murata, “Welcoming Anderson,” Record Art, June 1953, 114–15). Murata’s encounter with Marian Anderson was reported in this music journal. “Carry Me Back to Old Virginny” was also discussed in the following forum with Anderson: 四家文子, 齋田愛子, 村田武雄 『アンダソ ンを聴いて<座談会>』 『レコード芸術』 第2巻第6号, 音楽之友社, 1953年, 52–59頁 (Fumiko Yotsuya, Aiko Saida, and Takeo Murata, “Listening to Marian Anderson’s Music: Forum,” Record Art 2, no. 6 [1953]: 52–59).

135. 这些区域的日本报纸是仅可通过微缩胶片在国家饮食图书馆获取的。见打开附录 B 以解释不同类型的区域报纸。见 https://www.press.uillinois.edu/journals/am/media/andersoninjapan/

136. 这些区域的日本报纸是仅可通过微缩胶片在国家饮食图书馆获取的。见打开附录 B 以解释不同类型的区域报纸。见 https://www.press.uillinois.edu/journals/am/media/andersoninjapan/

137. 『アンダーソンと語る——“私は率直に歌う” 歌わないけどジャズは好き』 朝日新聞(名古屋) 1953年5月10日 (“Talk with Anderson: ‘I Sing Honestly; Though I Do Not Sing Jazz, I Like It,’” Asahi shinbun [Nagoya], May 10, 1953). These critiques likely refer to (1) Toriumi, “Anderson’s Schubert,” and (2) 山根銀二 『黒人霊歌の深味——アンダソ ンを聴いて』 東京新聞, 1953年5月2日 (Ginji Yamane, “The Real Pleasure of Spirituals: Listening to Anderson,” Tokyo shinbun, May 2, 1953.

138. Toriumi, “Anderson’s Schubert.”

139. History Compilation Room, Radio & TV Culture Research Institute, Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, eds., The History of Broadcasting in Japan [Tokyo]: Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, 1967), 301. Hüsch gave thirty-six performances in major cities over the course of three months, and many of these were broadcast by NHK. A notice for one such concert appeared in the Nippon Times (April 21, 1952) for a concert at Hibiya Public Hall. “As cultural exchanges had been closed to Japan until then,” the editors of The History of Broadcasting in Japan note, “this proved to be a project that opened up the gate to a new field” (ibid.).

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141. Toriumi, “Anderson’s Schubert.”
142. Yamane, “Real Pleasure of Spirituals.”
146. Nina Sun Eidsheim, “Marian Anderson and ‘Sonic Blackness’ in American Opera,” *American Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (September 2011): 646. The notion of “sonic blackness” resonates in a number of the critical assessments cited here, including that of Akio Terai (Terai, “Commentary on Marian Anderson, Rupp, and Siobhan”).
147. 「アンダーソンと語る——“私は率直に歌う”—歌わないけどジャズは好き」朝日新聞 (名古屋) 1953年5月10日 (“Talk with Anderson: ‘I Sing Honestly; Though I Do Not Sing Jazz, I Like It,” Asahi shinbun [Nagoya], May 10, 1953).
148. マリアン・アンダーソン、四家文子、三枝喜美子、薗田誠一、野村光一 「座談会 マリアン・アンダーソンとの声楽問答」 , 『音楽の友』 , 1953年7月号, 20–25頁 (Marian Anderson, Fumiko Yotsuya, Kimiko Saegusa, Kouichi Nomura, Seiichi Sonoda, “Q and A with Marian Anderson,” *Ongakunotomo*, July 1953, 20–25). This publication is included in the Anderson-Hurok Scrapbooks. Yet another roundtable took place immediately after Anderson’s concert on May 1. This one was moderated by Takeo Murata and included the singers Aiko Saida and (once again) Fumiko Yotsuya.
153. At sixteen, Nakamura performed with the NHK Symphony on tour in New York City (Ross Parmenter, “Japan’s NHK Symphony in Local Debut,” *New York Times*, November 30, 2012). This content downloaded from 206.253.207.235 on Thu, 31 Oct 2019 17:59:06 UTC All use subject to https://about.jstor.org/terms
2, 1960). Anderson wrote to Fumie Mizuhara, translator during her tour, to express regret for missing the concert (Marian Anderson to Fumie Mizuhara, carbon copy, NHK, Tokyo, November 11, 1960, folder 4160, box 65, Anderson Papers).


155. Grilli, “Infinite Variety.” Biographical information about Marcel Grilli comes from “Marcel F. Grilli, 83, Music Critic in Japan,” New York Times, September 23, 1990, and it was supplemented by his son Peter Grilli (email to C. Oja, July 18, 2018). Anderson’s diary suggests she and Grilli interacted frequently during her days in Tokyo: he joined the welcoming party at the airport, and he was subsequently present at a chat after tea along with US Embassy attaché Margaret Williams (May 3), a dinner (May 21), and an interview (May 25).

156. Grilli, “Singer and Woman.”


159. Ibid.


Many Japanese recall seeing that broadcast, including Misako Ohta’s mother-in-law, Yoshiko Takii, born in 1941 in Fukuoka.


172. Marian Anderson to Fumie Mizuhara, July 29, 1953, folder 3775, box 59, Anderson Papers. This handwritten letter either was subsequently typed and put in the mail or never went out.

173. Fumie Mizuhara to Marian Anderson, June 18, 1953, folder 3775, box 59, Anderson Papers. This portion of the letter is transcribed verbatim.