

Memory Lane

Photo and Travel Impressions by Grit Alter
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“Memory Lane”

We were on our way from Winnipeg to Saskatoon. The bus stopped several times. Also on Memory Lane. This is where I took the picture. Having been on the bus for several hours, I woke up and didn't exactly know where I was. And then I looked out of the window. Seeing that sign, I became aware of some of the things I had experienced during the past few months in which I had been writing my thesis in Canada on problems between different generations of Japanese-Canadian families. From their experiences one can derive that moving sometimes entails severe difficulties, oppression and racism, but on the other hand also successful stories are told. From rags to riches.

Today, people are on the move to an extent history has barely witnessed before. It has never been that easy to move from one place to another, not even oceans seem to be an obstacle. But what do people leave behind? What do they take with them? Will they ever go back? What happens on Memory Lane? Do people leave marks on the road? Turn around when there is a sign saying “do not enter?” Which path do they choose at a junction? Straight ahead? The shorter,

the better? A detour? A path others have taken before? Since they are in their own shoes and, being aware of it or not, carry their own past with them, people always take roads not taken before. On Memory Lane they leave footprints, some deeper, some only at the surface. On Memory Lane people find but also lose hope, fulfill but also discard dreams. Why not build a castle in the air, live in it for a while? Time will tell when it is necessary to take care of the foundations. The longer Memory Lane gets, the more the beginning of it blurs until certain parts even vanish. You do lose things, but only imagine what might be ahead of you. Look out for the pieces of the past you want to carry with you! It is worth looking back and retracing footsteps that may have been washed away. Hold still for a while and freeze a moment in time. My own memory lane now crossed with Memory Lane. For a few moments both shared the same path, and continuing our journey to Saskatoon, I wondered who else passed here and what other memories can be found on Memory Lane.