Asia's Transformations

Transcultural Japan

At the borderlands of race, gender, and identity

Edited by
David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu

Transcultural Japan

Transcultural Japan: At the borderlands of race, gender, and identity provides a critical examination of being Other in Japan. Portraying the multiple intersections of race, ethnicity, class, and gender, the book suggests ways in which the transcultural borderlands of Japan reflect globalization in this island nation. The authors show the diversity of Japan from the inside, revealing an extraordinarily complex new society in sharp contrast to the persistent stereotypical images held of a regimented, homogeneous Japan. Unsettling as it may be, there are powerful arguments here for looking at the meanings of globalization in Japan through these diverse communities and individuals. These are not harmonious, utopian communities by any means, as they are formed in contexts, both global and local, of unequal power relations.

Yet it is also clear that the multiple processes associated with globalization lead to larger hybridizations, a global mélange of socio-cultural, political, and economic forces and the emergence of what could be called translocal creolized cultures. *Transcultural Japan* reports regional, national, and cosmopolitan movements. Characterized by global flows, hybridity, and networks, this book documents Japan's new lived experiences and rapid metamorphosis.

Accessible and engaging, this broad-based volume is an attractive and useful resource for students of Japanese culture and society, as well as being a timely and revealing contribution to research scholars and for those interested in race, ethnicity, cultural identities, and social transformations.

David Blake Willis is Professor of Anthropology and Education at Soai University, Osaka, where he has been since 1986. He was a Senior Associate Professor at the University of Oxford 2006–2007.

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Asia's Transformations

Edited by Mark Selden

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Foreword

Toward zones of hybridity in Japan

Harumi Befu

In this short foreword let me paint a broad picture of the larger historical as well as social and economic background for the complex phenomena which unfold in the pages of this volume. These phenomena may be viewed in the context of Japan's globalization, internal and external, which began as soon as Japan opened its ports and began its modernization-cum-westernization project. Externally, modern Japan's globalization began in the Meiji period, when Japan began to establish itself as Asia's imperial power by acquiring control of Okinawa, Taiwan, part of Sakhalin, the Kurile chain, Korean Peninsula, Micronesia, and northeast China (Manchuria). If Taiwan and Korea were part of Japan, were Taiwanese and Koreans Japanese?

Here already in the prewar context were a variety of interstices where inhabitants were at once Japanese (legally) but not Japanese (ethnically), foreshadowing problems that would loom large half a century later. Japan's external globalization has inevitably gone hand in hand with its internal globalization. The influx of Koreans and Chinese into the four major islands of Japan before World War II is a direct result of Japan's imperialist expansion and invasion into continental Asia. Thus these "old-timers" have one hundred years or more of history in Japan.

Turning to more recent times, from the end of the twentieth century through the early twenty-first century, Japan has been going through a series of convulsive transformations. After the hyped "bubble" economy of the 1980s, Japan went through a decade of "burst" and slump, only to return to a growth pattern in the last few years. These economic changes came about hand in hand with the newly evolved corporate culture that places profit over worker welfare, resulting in corporate restructuring, shedding permanent workers to the bare-bone minimum and also in off-shoring company operations to countries where labor is cheap. The new corporate culture has spelled the demise of the so-called unique Japanese management system consisting of permanent employment, seniority, and enterprise unionism. This system is not dead, but has been much compromised, resulting in a small number of elite employees still under the system and a large army of temps, hourly workers, and contract workers whose pay and benefits are far below those "in the privileged system." As a result, the gap between the top economic elite and the bottom working class has been widening. On the increase are the so-called *freetaas* working on meager hourly wages and NEETS—those who are “not in education, employment or training,” but are dependent on their parents for livelihood.

At the same time, offshore corporate activities have sent hundreds of thousands of corporate soldiers to oversee operations abroad. By now there are scores of Japanese communities with well over 5,000 Japanese in them, including those in Seoul, Hong Kong, Singapore, Bangkok, Honolulu, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Paris, and London, where Japanese language is the primary means of communication and Japanese schools educate the children of these corporate soldiers. Thus, again in the postwar context, “Japan” is no longer confined to the archipelago east of the Asiatic continent. Re-territorialized “Japan” now includes all these Japanese communities, and at the individual level, “the Japanese” are not just those living on these islands, but include thousands abroad.

Economic prosperity has encouraged a middle-class orientation, one of the essential accoutrements of which is higher education. The government has continued to approve more new institutions of higher learning, more schools and departments, thus increasing available college seats each year. In the face of decreasing birth rates and the decreasing eighteen-year-old population, there are now as many college seats as there are applicants, resulting in a shortage of high school graduates who could fill the unskilled labor market.

In the meantime, the family system has also been going through various transformations. The marriage age is going up for both males and females. Many who cannot join the elite employee class and thus lack the wherewithal to start a married life have been forced to remain single; or for some, being single has become a fashionable social status. Inevitably the birth rate has plummeted, now far from being enough to reproduce the population. The numerous government interventions have been ineffectual in reversing the trend, signaling serious labor shortages.

The falling birth rate, the increase in the college population, the disdain of youth to take up undesirable “3-K (*kiken, kitanai, kitsui*)” work, and the social system, which allows these youths to continue to depend on their parents for subsistence, have all contributed to massive shortages in the unskilled labor market. From the late 1980s on, this situation has created socio-economic niches for foreign workers to fill. Hundreds of thousands of workers, legal or illegal, have come to Japan from Latin America, South and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. They have enriched Japan’s ethnoscape with their varied cultural backgrounds. One such newcomer may be a Latin Nikkei from the “Land of Samba” who works in an auto parts manufacturing plant; another may be an overstaying Muslim from Bangladesh who has lived in Japan for ten years working in construction sites; a third may be a woman from Thailand who works in the entertainment/sex industry; and still a fourth may be from the Philippines working as a caregiver in a nursing home, filling a niche desperately in need of workers to help with the increasingly aging population.

Moreover, we should not see foreigners only with labels such as “the Filipinos” or “the Latin *Nikkei*”; instead, we should see them in all of their varied and individualized shapes and stripes. Thus one Filipina may be married to a Japanese, have Japanese citizenship, and be a full-time housewife with children in school, while another Filipina may be an overstayer caught up in a prostitution ring controlled by Japanese gangs. One Latin may be a non-Japanese Peruvian spouse of a Japanese Peruvian with a legitimate visa working for an auto parts manufacturer only to make money, but without knowledge of, interest in, or identity with Japan, while another Latin may be a Japanese Brazilian Nisei with fluency in Japanese and a committed interest in Japanese culture. Appreciation of such diversity within diversity is a *sine qua non* for twenty-first-century Japan.

As this internal globalization continues on the work front, and as the general population becomes used to seeing foreign names and faces in the media and on the street, the Japanese are being exposed to foreigners in the area of popular culture as well. Foreign names and faces in professional baseball and sumo are by now commonplace, as the so-called talents among foreigners are a regular fare on television shows. The recent phenomenal upsurge in the interest in Korean home dramas should be understood in the context of an internal globalization that has created a receptive environment for what had once been seen as strange and foreign.

The presence of hundreds of thousands of foreigners in Japan—not only the "newcomers" from developing countries but also those from industrialized parts of the world as well—has inevitably resulted in thousands of intermarriages with Japanese. These intermarriages across the lines of ethnicity, nationality, and race have produced children of "mixed blood" whose hybrid social status and identity are called into question. But "mixed bloods" are not one thing any more than "foreigners" are one category. A Korean-Japanese may carry an identity baggage vastly different from that of a Filipino-Japanese or an Australian-Japanese. Furthermore, we need to be aware of the complexity even within each of these categories of hybridity. A person born of a Korean father and a Japanese mother, for example, may form a totally different identity from someone born from another Korean-Japanese couple, for instance, in terms of the degree of identification with Korea, South or North, as against identity with Japan, depending on their parents' own affiliation and ideological identity, and whether they attend a North Korea-oriented school or a South Korea-oriented school, among other factors.

Intermarriage also raises the question of the naturalization process as a foreigner married to a Japanese is often motivated to become a naturalized Japanese citizen, although this issue does come up even without intermarriage. Requirements of naturalization have been changing toward a Western model, to be sure. Nonetheless in practice, legislators who pass laws on naturalization and the highest bureaucrats who pontificate on naturalization, as well as the lowliest clerks, untrained in law, who interface with foreign applicants for naturalization, are likely to act according to what I call "the *habitus* of homogeneity," *à la* Pierre Bourdieu, that is, a set disposition to act and react toward foreigners on the assumption that Japan is supposed to be a homogeneous nation, and thus foreigners are to be excluded as much as possible.

All this internal and external globalization of Japan has created a murky border zone between inside and outside, where what once was inside is now outside and what used to be outside is now inside. Or rather, a new space has developed in the borderlands where one cannot tell whether it is inside or outside by the conventional definition of Japan, a borderland where in one sense it is inside and in another outside.

This book is about this blurred and confused borderland which now demands a new order, a legitimate place in the sun, rather than being exiled to the land of "strange foreigners" and "exceptions." At the same time, in a broader context, this border zone demands a new definition of "Japan," where hybridity is part of the legitimate landscape, where those in this borderland become legitimate "citizens" in a cultural sense, and not have to feel they are in Japan on sufferance, or feel they are included in one sense but excluded in another. Surviving in the twenty-first century, in short, demands invention of a new *modus vivendi*, often called *kyōsei*, through a radical modification of the *habitus* of homogeneity, if not its total abandonment, so that this borderland can turn from its "problem" status to one of pride.

Part I

Introduction

1 Transcultural Japan

Metamorphosis in the cultural borderlands and beyond

David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu

Takarazushi: a microcosm of a changing Japan

What could be more Japanese than sushi?

Sushi symbolizes traditional Japan for many people, but a recent visit to Takarazushi, a premier sushi restaurant in Kobe, revealed another side of this complex modern society. The rice may have been decidedly native, but the seafood was striking in its variety and origins. Though visibly less dramatic, the diversity of the people was no less astonishing.

To begin with, there was Takeshi, our friend and Takarazushi's sushi master. Few occupations speak for Japan more than being a sushi master, but Takeshi lived in America for six years and has an MBA from the University of Wisconsin. He told us later in the evening that the man to our right, a solitary diner introduced to us as Kimura-san, was a Korean whose family had been in Japan for 70 years. The blond woman at the end of the bar, speaking fluent Japanese and joking about the shellfish, turned out to be a Russian. The night before, there had been two women from the Caribbean chatting with Takeshi in their Jamaican lilt and cautiously trying the sushi.

Ryo, one of the kitchen workers, was from Brazil, the descendant of grandparents who had emigrated there from Okinawa. Jo (Jiang-guo), his co-worker, was a Chinese student of engineering at Kobe University. Momoko and Shizuka, the two waitresses, were college students who had recently returned from America and Australia. These two young women knew what it was like to be treated as the "Other" from their experiences overseas, not to mention how Japanese feel toward women who have lived abroad. Momoko's parents ran a nursery that had children from "Other" backgrounds, including Peruvian, Brazilian, Vietnamese, and mixed race children. And then there were the two of us.

While the diversity of origins revealed a new Japan, there were also signs of the old Japan. The red-faced Japanese man to our left treated us as if we were there for his amusement, commenting on the hair on our arms, our tall noses, and our long legs. How amazing it was that we could eat sushi! Clearly to this man we were Others who were not part of Japanese society. We have lived here for much of our lives, however, and have identities as members of Japanese society that are deeply embedded in our experiences.

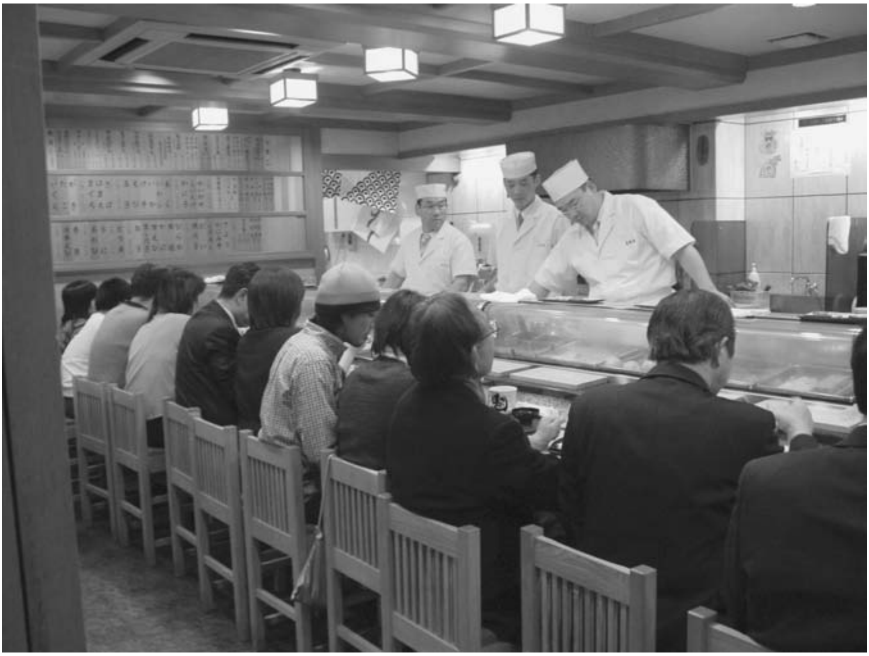


Figure 1.1 Takarazushi, Kobe, 2006. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

When we became members of Japanese society has as much to do with the Japanese and their changing attitudes as it does with us, of course. Stephen was born in Japan, has Japanese ancestry, and was a national government employee for many years, but it required persistent effort in middle age to obtain a Japanese passport. David reminds his university students who compliment him on his skill at chopsticks or the Japanese language that he has been in Japan longer than they have and that his two grown sons are Japanese. Both of us have watched carefully as Japan has globalized.

Takarazushi is a microcosm of a changing Japan, of new cultural flows and old traditions. The fish and other marine products come from the seas around Japan and from all corners of the globe: Africa, Southeast Asia, the Atlantic, the Pacific, and South America. The customers and workers, too, represent not only a more traditional Japan, but a diversity that forces us to look more deeply at this dramatically changing society.

Living in the borderlands

Japan is undergoing a metamorphosis, a transformation that began in its cultural borderlands and is now spreading throughout the country. This is a territory being remapped gradually and gingerly, yet unmistakably. Sojourners, immigrants, and long-term residents alike, some “looking” Japanese, some not, are now part of the fabric and life of Japanese society. And while they are not yet as visible as in multicultural societies like America or Brazil, their numbers represent, surprisingly, about the same level of diversity as the United Kingdom in 1990 (Lie 2001: 4).

More and more Japanese, in fact, even resemble our friend Dennis Chang. Of Indonesian, Indian, Chinese, and Malay ancestry, Dennis hardly “looks Japanese.” Since 9/11 he is often stopped at borders and carefully questioned. Some people assume Dennis is American because of his name, and his impeccable English. But his Japanese is also fluent, and in the spring of 2004, a little over five years after first coming to Japan, Dennis received a letter from the Ministry of Justice informing him that he was no longer a foreigner and had now become Japanese. Dennis was among the 15,000 persons who naturalized that year, becoming one of the country’s new citizens. For Dennis and many others, including some of the authors in this book, questions of identity and place are not just academic.

We are writing this book because we care about what happens to the people in the cultural borderlands and transnational crossroads of Japan. Many of us live in these borderlands and see them as revealing the dynamic contradictions, complex textures, and multiple levels of reality found in contemporary Japanese society. The dividing lines between Japanese and Others, including conceptions of what is “pure” and “impure,” are no longer so clear as they were once assumed to be. These new and complex contexts reveal a transcultural world that is overlooked when we are preoccupied with conceptual dichotomies and dialectical oppositions. What we are seeing instead is a transcultural, transnational society with fluid boundaries, constant change, and often innovative cultural formations. These developments speak for “imagined communities” (Anderson 1994) that have become very real indeed in today’s Japanese society.

Transcultural Japan seeks to complement earlier works on difference in Japan by focusing on the social construction of alternative realities in the Japanese context, on questions that lead to reflexive narratives and on cultural transformations in transnational contexts. We are especially sensitive to the social and political manipulations of cultures, their identities, and their representations. We would like to emphasize (1) the changing nature of Japanese society; (2) the increasing openness and countervailing opposition in Japan to difference, whether of oldcomers, newcomers, or those Japanese who come from historically marginalized populations; and (3) the tensions and frictions which are the result of these changes in Japan.

This book is an articulation of how this is happening in Japanese society. Rather than stable, bounded cultural wholes, the transformations taking place concern constellations of relationships and how they create “fluid and shifting social entities” (Crehan 2002), something very much at the center of these narratives. Too often in the public discourse of difference in Japan the actual interactions of peoples at the level of popular culture and the agency of minorities themselves have been left out, and these are often the very venues of social transformation. Telling the story of Others, of minorities, in Japan, "requires an appreciation not only of the changing landscape elements but also of the partial, tentative, and shifting ability of the storyteller to identify elements at all" (Tsing 2001: 453).

The writers in this volume attempt to avoid or at least lessen the depiction of the diverse peoples of Japan as communities separate from Japanese society, by instead seeing them as integral parts of the whole. The marginal then becomes of crucial importance to the mainstream. We have tried to be cognizant of the dangers and move beyond the fragmentation and divisiveness of separately studying specific groups, which decontextualizes and reinforces the "uniqueness" or separateness of each subject studied as they are examined in isolation from larger social and economic forces. Our focus on reflexivity and narrative here is an attempt to deal with the problem of what some scholars have called "an othering of Others."

We thus felt it was important to "write against culture," as represented in traditional accounts of the Japanese and minorities that lead the reader to conceive of groups of people as discrete, bounded entities (Abu-Lughod 1991). Looking for voices of social-constructive transformation from within and critical perspectives from without, we report the experiences and perceptions of these Others within the chapters that follow. What we hope to do is to reveal at least part of a larger picture by encompassing and emphasizing the linkages, processes, and ties to larger economic and social contexts.

We talk about race, gender, and identity in the context of how these are perceived on a day-to-day basis, in the lived experiences of Others in Japan. Whatever the discourse on the social construction of race, gender, and identity might be for anthropologists and political scientists, these concepts have powerful day-to-day salience for those living in the borderlands. However they are defined, and that is often very individual, these issues do matter for those traditionally on Japan's margins.[1]

The writings here are transborder, transpersonal, and transdisciplinary in nature. As a collection of multidisciplinary essays, they reflect a rapidly changing Japan as "the Japanese" themselves are transformed and confront a new range of diversity in their midst. Revealing the struggles of on-going multiculturalism in Japan by presenting multiple and diverse narratives of personal and larger social change, we wish to provide a place for articulating the multiple voices of Others who are both being changed by and who are changing Japan.

Landscapes: globalization and immigration in transnational Japan

This book comes to press at a historic moment in Japanese history. The first decline in the Japanese population began in October 2005, as the population of 126.76 million decreased by 20,000, according to the Internal Affairs and Communications Ministry (Yoshida 2005). Late marriage, low fertility, and economics have all combined to create a phenomenon called *shōshika*, meaning the trend toward fewer and fewer children. The government even announced in December 2005 that Japan's population would be cut in half in less than a century unless something is done (*The New York Times* 2006; Reuters 2006). Alarmed by a population that is rapidly aging and a postmodern economy that has a range of labor requirements if it is to be maintained at or near present levels, the government and the media have begun serious soul-searching regarding the necessary actions to be taken (Ajima 2006; Arudou 2006; Masaki 2006). Clearly implicated in these discussions are the questions of foreigners and immigrant labor in Japanese society.[2]

Early in 2004, the director of the Tokyo Immigration Bureau, Sakanaka Hidenori, called for a clear decision and measured response as soon as possible to the problem of a declining Japanese population. Business has also endorsed this approach, with Keidanren, the powerful federation of Japanese business organizations, for example, describing immigration as the "reinvigoration of the Japanese economy" in its policy documents. Proposals have been made by top opinion leaders to reverse this "brain drain" of natural attrition through such measures as recruiting foreign students and granting them automatic permanent residence upon graduating from Japanese universities.

These moves follow reports in January 2000 from the United Nations and the Japanese government which forcefully noted the impending need for large-scale immigration in order to maintain Japan's labor force. As the demographics of the relentless graying of the country and low fertility squeeze the society, immigration has become a prominent new theme for Japan. These reports spoke of annually needing between 380,000 and 600,000 new immigrants, resulting in a foreign population in Japanese society of over 10,000,000 within 13 years. Various scenarios predicted that there might eventually be anywhere from 14 million to 33 million people of foreign origin in a society of 120 million people by the year 2050. If "population replacement" is the aim, then an immigrant society which will "become Japanese" would, at least from the logic of the history of assimilation in the United States and elsewhere, be the goal.

The government has moved from opposition to immigration, to resignation that immigrants will likely have to be admitted but should be kept at arms' length, grudgingly accepting the idea of creating a *kyōsei shakai* (a symbiotic society in which people live together harmoniously; see Inoue, Ueno, *et al.* 1996). The latter term replaced *kokusaika* (internationalization) as a buzzword in the early 1990s and like *kokusaika*, was a term first created by elites to describe Japan's relations with other nations. By the beginning of the twenty-first century *kyōsei shakai* began to be widely used domestically (and even *tabunka shakai*, a multicultural society, as Burgess (2007) has so carefully articulated it), as an approach to managing change, echoing the policies of countries in Europe such as France, Germany, and Sweden, where the importation of labor has come with an expectation and a hope that the "foreigners" will eventually "go home."

Unfortunately for these countries it was not so simple. Nor will it be for Japan. Such "Other-blindness" clearly led to the recent upheavals in France, America, and elsewhere. As the famous quotation from Max Frisch describes it, speaking of the guest worker program in Switzerland, "We asked for workers but human beings came" (Hollifield 2000: 149). Human rights issues surrounding foreign

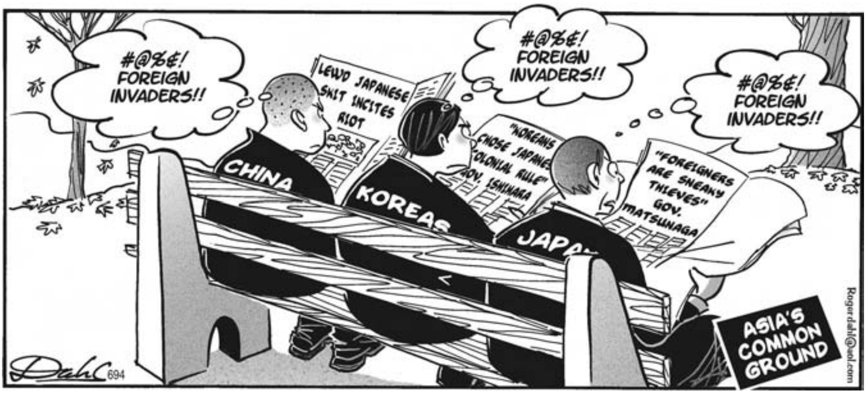

#@%¢! FOREIGN INVADERS!!
LEWD JAPANESE SKIT INCITES RIOT
CHINA
#@%¢! FOREIGN INVADERS!!
"KOREANS CHOSE JAPANESE COLONIAL RULE" GOV. ISHIHARA
KOREAS
#@%¢! FOREIGN INVADERS!!
"FOREIGNERS ARE SNEAKY THIEVES" GOV. MATSUNAGA
JAPA
ASIA'S COMMON GROUND
Dahl 694
Rogerdahl@aol.com

Figure 1.2 Asia's common ground. (Roger Dahl)

workers are sure to grow in Japan, too, especially in terms of housing for migrants and schooling for children (Arita 2003), where discrimination is often said to be widespread.[3]

Though there has been much discussion about the need for more workers in Japan, no decision has been made to clearly pursue this goal of replacement migration. Indeed, in spite of the obvious economic trajectory and needs, no consensus has been reached on whether this is even desirable or necessary. "A Big Japan" vs. "A Small Japan" is how the controversy is usually framed in the media. Yet this debate also appears to include a realization that at least some labor will have to be imported, given the pressing needs of service industries such as geriatric care, nursing, manufacturing, and even agriculture. The depopulation of the countryside, for example, has also meant not only a shortage of labor but also a lack of eligible brides for young farmers.

Which foreigners and how many will be a key question for Japanese society. New people are coming, and most of them will likely come from Asia. The transition from a society in which only 1% of the population is foreign to one where potentially 8–27% may be, depending on which part of the range of UN and Japanese government projections you accept, will be a dramatic transformation that not a few Japanese will find threatening. The data speak of a new Japan in need of a new understanding. We would like to begin disaggregating the possible trends and directions by looking at people and their contexts on the ground.

Transculturalism, multiculturalism and Japan

What do we mean by transculturalism? What does this word mean in the Japanese context? We use transculturalism in an attempt to move beyond the confines of the term multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is an important concept for understanding the changes taking place in society today, but it has been riven with controversy and multiple interpretations. Whose multiculturalism are we talking about? Multiculturalism for us is not a reified, abstract notion of bounded, exclusivist ethic units as is often indicated in discussions of ethnicities, particularly of Japan. We believe there is a need to move the multicultural debate beyond such a restrictive view of ethnic identity, typical examples of this discourse being found in numerous academic texts in English and Japanese about different ethnic communities in Japan. This view of rigid identities and indivisible ethnicities encounters numerous obstacles when faced with what is actually happening on the ground (Befu 2001).

While we will continue to use the words multicultural and multiculturalism as they describe the realities of present-day Japan, we also choose at the same time to use the words *transcultural* and *transculturalism* as they describe even more explicitly what is happening, indicating movement across time, space, and other cultural boundaries. When we realize that multiculturalism is not simply the old concept of culture multiplied by the number of ethnic groups, but a new and internally plural "praxis of culture" within oneself and others, in other words transculturalism, then we begin to make progress toward understanding the deeper workings of Japanese and other societies (Banks 2004 and 2006).[4] The "tribalist" preoccupation with boundaries misses the interactions and lives across and on the borders of cultures. Boundaries are of course maintained in many ways, but at the same time there are those individuals who cross these boundaries and who can move freely into different contexts. Sometimes social class has more salience than culture, for example. Also largely unchallenged in public debate, is the idea of ethnicity as personal property. Human beings, however, are not things. We mobilize our identities and enact them fluidly according to the circumstances.

A liberating theory of culture and multiculturalism is a theory about process and dialogue, not about reified tribes, nationalist religions, and communalist conformity. This processual approach vs. a materialist (identity as property) approach is, therefore, something new in the debate about multiculturalism.[5] Culture is not just something we have and are members of, but also something we make and shape. All identities are identifications and thus situational. We will see this in the chapters that follow, which describe flexible, imaginative, and innovative approaches to culture and cultures. Differences are thus relational rather than absolute, and involve multiple rather than singular identifications. Thinking about cultures is then multirelational rather than one-dimensional.

There are commitments, too, that reach across national boundaries, and some of those are reported here as bonds of exchange and meaning that are transcultural and transnational. Transnational flows across borders are especially important. Families, politics, religions, and other bonds, moral as well as economic, help us to understand the diasporic exchanges taking place, not only between cultures of place but cultures of era, gender, and class. There are cross-diasporic exchanges taking place, as well, such as between Brazilians and Chinese, that we are only now beginning to glimpse and understand.

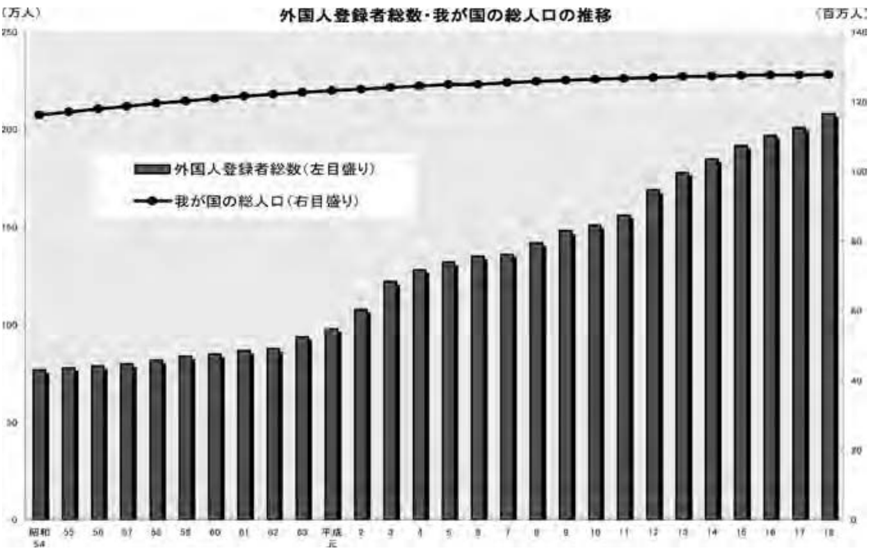
It is well worth thinking about the ways in which Japanese history has actually been multicultural and transcultural. From the beginning of Japanese history, when mass migrations from the south and west brought new and different people to these islands, through medieval and colonial times when large numbers of laborers either came or were brought to the archipelago, Japanese society has indeed been multicultural. The Japanese empire (1868–1945) was itself explicitly multiethnic. Citizenship was granted to Koreans and Taiwanese, for example, and people from Japan and its colonies moved in the millions: Japanese and Koreans going to Manchuria, Okinawans to Nanyo and Taiwan, and large numbers of colonials coming to Japan to work, some as forced laborers. Both the pre-war and post-war versions of Japan in the world of the twentieth century speak for other versions of Orientalism, first with the multicultural empire and its emphasis on the unity of peoples in Asia under the Japanese flag and its supposedly superior culture, and then culminating in places like the colonies of Manchukuo and Nanyo which were depicted as multicultural paradises (Peattie 1992; Young 2001).

At the same time, a severe division between inside and outside has traditionally been seen as the mark of a continuing rigid separation in Japan between *ka*, those within the orbit of civilization, and *i*, those from outside and therefore barbarian. These concepts, borrowed from China and used to claim Japanese superiority, mark the limits of what would be called "civilized." The layering of those closer to the center, to "civilization," has often been marked by boundaries indicating who is more or less accepted in Japanese eyes; who belongs and who doesn't belong (Clammer 2001; Doak 1997). This layering has often been problematic, too, as we see in the prewar racial or ethnic classifications of colonial Manchuria (Tamanoi 2000). How Other cultures and their representatives are seen in Japan has been dramatically affected by this ebb and flow of looking inward or looking outward, of an open or closed Japan.

Others living in Japan after World War II, for instance, became invisible, with restrictions raising the bar too high for any significant immigration. As Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu has noted (1993), the received wisdom from this time was that Japan is monoethnic and that the Japanese are a singular ethnic group. This was not the claim during the empire, of course, when a hierarchical, multicultural pyramid was the model for a larger imperial society that included Korea, Taiwan, and other areas. This belief achieved the status of mythology and continues to be widely shared, not just by scholars of Japan and the Japanese themselves, but also seemingly by virtually everyone else (Befu 2001). State ideology suggests, moreover, that homogeneity is one of the most positive Japanese characteristics (Burgess 2004). The reality, as many authors who have questioned this orthodoxy have noted, and as this book will further demonstrate, is something quite different from this distorted picture.

As the economy became over-heated in the late 1980s, the need for labor resulted in yet another set of changes, with the entry of Iranians, Bengalis, Thais, Filipinos, and Japanese-Brazilians. The numbers remained relatively small, especially in relation to the older populations of *Zainichi* Koreans and Chinese, but the presence of these non-Japanese in the society again raised questions of ethnicity, identity, and the Other.

Table 1.1 Population increase of non-Japanese in Japan (1979–2006)



Source: Ministry of Justice, http://www.moj.go.jp/PRESS/070516-1.pdf (August 5, 2007).

Note: Bars are the number of registered foreigners, read on the left scale, in units of 10,000. The dotted line is the total Japanese population, measured on the right scale, in units of 100,000.

Table 1.2 Foreign nationals in Japan (May 2007)

	Number	*Ratio (%)*
Total Japan	2,084,919	1.63
Korea (N, S)	598,214	28.7
China	560,741	26.9
Brazil	312,979	15.0
Philippines	193,488	9.3
Peru	58,721	2.8
USA	51,321	2.5
Other	309,450	14.8

Source: Ministry of Justice, http://www.moj.go.jp/PRESS/070516-1.pdf (August 5, 2007).

Note: The U.S. military, dependents, and support personnel (104,500) are not included in this total.

More than two million foreign nationals reside in Japan, accounting officially for over 1.6 percent of Japan's population. Coming from 188 countries, according to Justice Ministry statistics for 2007, their numbers are rising (Tables 1.1 and 1.2).[6] The overall gain during the last ten years is almost 50 percent, and nearly 40 percent of those non-Japanese living in Japan are now permanent residents. The largest group continues to be Koreans (598,214), followed by Chinese (560,741), Brazilians (312,979), Filipinos (193,488), Peruvians (58,721), and Americans (51,321) (Figures 1.2, 1.4 and 1.5; Korean numbers have dropped, partly because of naturalization). Many of these people have lived so long in Japan as to make their first culture more Japanese than anything else, while others were born abroad but are of Japanese ancestry, some of whom could thus be seen as "returning" to Japan generations after their ancestors left for a better life in Lain America. The latter is especially the case for Brazilians or Peruvians, often called *Nikkei Burajirujin* or *Nikkei Perujin* (Japanese-Brazilians, Japanese-Peruvians). We can note, too, the large increases over time of some of these communities in Table 1.3, especially the rapid rise in the number of Chinese, who will soon surpass Koreans to become Japan's largest minority. Of the foreign residents, 131,789 are students, finally breaking in 2002 the target of 100,000 set by the government in 1983.[7]

When other factors besides citizenship were considered, Lie estimated the population of "non-Japanese Japanese" to be 4–6 million (2001: 4), numbers in considerable variance with the official statistics indicated in Tables 1.1–1.3. His estimate included the Ainu (25,000–300,000), Koreans (700,000–1,000,000), Chinese (200,000—underestimating the actual numbers), children of mixed ancestry (10,000–25,000), "foreigners" (150,000–200,000; please note that there is no mention of Brazilians specifically, who by then had come in even larger numbers), Okinawans (1.6 million), and Burakumin (2–3 million).[8] While the latter two groups are Japanese, both are Othered, Okinawans as linguistically incomprehensible and exotic, and Burakumin as unsuitable marriage partners or workmates, in the case of the Burakumin. One other group whose numbers are great but who are not considered *hon-Japa* or *jun-Japa* (transnational slang terms for supposedly "pure" Japanese) are returnees: children and adults whose long experience overseas makes them outsiders, too.

For many Others in Japan, the official Japanese position, that those who are non-Japanese are those with non-Japanese citizenship, belies the reality of identities and lived experiences and the fact that many people who have Japanese citizenship do not necessarily classify themselves as exclusively Japanese culturally. The figures themselves mask the considerable numbers of people who are culturally or ethnically diverse but who carry Japanese passports. Characterizing people like these as "insider minorities," Joshua Hotaka Roth (2005) contrasts them with the more visible "outsider minorities" whose race, culture, or language distinguish them from mainstream Japanese. There are also a large number of bicultural/binational/biracial individuals who are not counted in these statistics, such as Brazilian *Nikkei*, naturalized Koreans, and others (who number perhaps 400,000; see Wetherall, "Naturalized Japanese," in his chapter here, and 2007), and Japanese returnees born in America. Some of these people have either not had a voice or have had their voice softened to a whisper, while others have had strong, vocal representation, such as Koreans and Burakumin.

Table 1.3 Foreigners in Japan by nationality (1997–2006)

Nationality	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*
Total	1,362,371	1,415,136	1,482,707	1,512,116	1,556,113	1,686,444	1,778,462	1,851,758	1,915,030	1,973,747	2,011,555	2,084,919
Korea North/South	666,376	657,159	645,373	638,828	636,548	635,269	632,405	625,422	613,791	607,419	598,687	598,219
(%)	48.9	46.4	43.5	42.2	40.9	37.7	35.6	33.8	32.1	30.8	29.8	28.7
China	222,991	234,264	252,164	272,230	294,201	335,575	381,225	424,282	462,396	487,570	519,561	560,741
(%)	16.4	16.6	17.0	18.0	18.9	19.9	21.4	22.9	24.1	24.7	25.8	26.9
Brazil	176,440	201,795	233,254	222,217	224,299	254,394	265,962	268,332	274,700	286,557	302,080	312,929
(%)	13.0	14.3	15.7	14.7	14.4	15.1	15.0	14.5	14.3	14.5	15.0	15.0
Philippines	74,297	84,509	93,265	105,308	115,685	144,871	156,667	169,359	185,237	199,394	187,261	193,488
(%)	5.5	6.0	6.3	7.0	7.4	8.6	8.8	9.1	9.7	10.1	9.3	9.3
Peru	36,269	37,099	40,394	41,317	42,773	46,171	50,052	51,772	53,649	55,750	57,728	58,721
(%)	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.8
USA	43,198	44,168	43,690	42,774	42,802	44,856	46,244	47,970	47,836	48,844	49,390	51,321
(%)	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Other	142,800	156,142	174,567	189,442	199,805	225,308	245,907	264,621	277,421	288,213	296,848	309,450
(%)	10.5	11.0	11.8	12.6	12.9	13.4	13.8	14.3	14.5	14.6	14.8	14.8

Sources: Ministry of Justice, http://www.moj.go.jp/PRESS/050617-1/050617-1.html (May 14, 2006) and http://www.moj.go.jp/PRESS/070516-1.pdf (August 5, 2007).

Table 1.4 Foreign nationals in Japan by prefecture (May 2007)

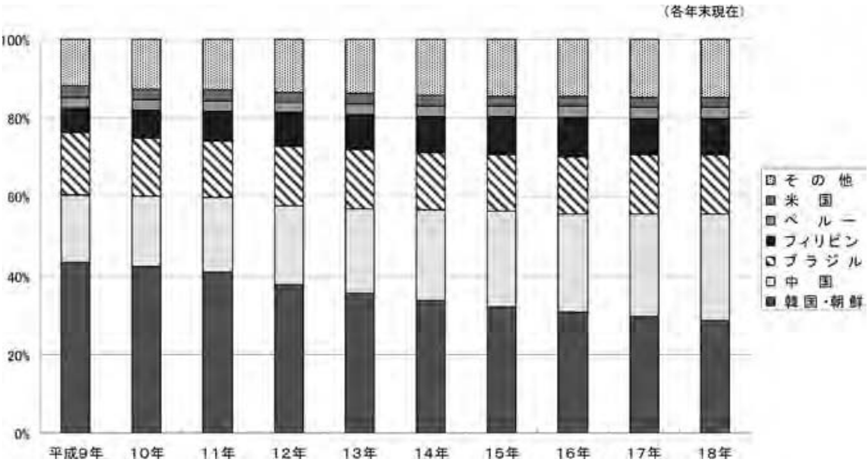
	Number	*Ratio (%)*
Total Japan	2,084,919	
Tokyo	364,712	17.5
Osaka	212,528	10.2
Aichi	208,514	10.0
Kanagawa	156,992	7.5
Saitama	108,739	5.2
Hyogo	102,188	4.9
Chiba	100,860	4.8
Shizuoka	97,992	4.7
Gifu	54,616	2.6
Kyoto	54,213	2.6
Other	623,565	29.9

Source: Ministry of Justice, http://www.moj.go.jp/PRESS/070516-1.pdf (August 5, 2007).

The American military, along with their dependents and civilian workers, are another category, totaling 104,500, mostly living on US bases in Japan, especially in Okinawa (GlobalSecurity.org 2006), though, unlike the others discussed above, they are short-termers, gone in one to three years. We also note the large number of undocumented and "illegal" foreigners, officially 170,839 but perhaps numbering up to 400,000, mostly from other parts of Asia: Koreans 21.3 percent, Chinese 16.2 percent, Filipinos 16.7 percent, Thais 5.0 percent, Malaysians 3.7 percent, and others. Of these over-stayers, 68.7 percent came on short-term visas (Ministry of Justice 2007). The Ministry of Justice has been on a campaign the last few years, we might note, to tighten visa regulations, eliminating or at least strictly defining visas for short-term trainee internships of 3–4 years and visas for those of Japanese ancestry. Many workers have entered the country since the early 1990s through these routes. How far the Ministry of Justice will succeed in this is very much open to question as they are in direct opposition to other ministries and the business community, who favor loosened regulations in order to increase the supply of skilled and unskilled labor.

Will a nation with this degree of diversity be able to persist much longer in a portrayal of their society as uniquely homogenous (*tan'itsu minzoku*)?[9] Will the society become more inclusive and the definition of what is "a Japanese" expand? How might social attitudes, state ideology, and myths regarding diversity evolve (Oguma 1998a,b; Burgess 2004, 2007)? Countries like the UK, France, and Germany have faced similar questions in the recent past, with subsequent changes to immigration policies, nationality laws and social conditions. Consideration of their struggles could help us to better understand the Japanese case and its possible future trajectory (see MPDI Data Hub 2007). Similarities in conceptions of ethnicity, history, and economic development make Germany an especially

Table 1.5 Foreigners in Japan by nationality, percentage changes (1997–2006)



Source: Ministry of Justice, http://www.moj.go.jp/PRESS/050617–1/050617–1.html (May 14, 2006) and http://www.moj.go.jp/PRESS/070516-1.pdf (August 5, 2007).

Note: From top to bottom: Other, USA, Peru, Philippines, Brazil, China, South and North Korea.

meaningful example to study as it may foreshadow what will happen for Japan and Japanese society, especially in urban settings.

Multicultural communities in Japanese society are shown by these government statistics, especially in the Tokai industrial areas around Tokyo/Yokohama, Nagoya, and Osaka/Kobe/Kyoto (Tables 1.4, 1.6, 1.7). Along with the locations of jobs and the comfort factor of being near people who share a common language and culture is the continuing “Dejima mentality” of the Japanese foreigners being isolated in social enclaves like the small historical island of Dejima in Nagasaki Bay during the Tokugawa Era. This has, wittingly or unwittingly, meant that foreigners have clustered in certain areas in Japan, as David Blake Willis discusses in his chapter in this book, often around an international school. In spite of this clustering, at least in certain large urban areas, Japanese society has thus become heterogeneous and multiethnic. This has not, however, precluded a scattering of foreigners living throughout Japan. Many of these foreigners, especially Chinese and Koreans, are invisible, making blending in easier physically while they also bring new cultural diversity in other ways. One is no longer very far anymore, anywhere in Japan, from diversity.

An exhibition at the National Museum of Ethnology in the spring of 2004, *Taminzoku Nippon: Zainichi Gaikokujin no Kurashi* (“Multiethnic Japan—Life and History of Immigrants”), reflected this reality, emphasizing that Japan was gradually becoming a multiethnic society. Pointedly translating *Zainichi* and *Gaikokujin* as “immigrants” (rather than temporary/long term residents or outsiders), the exhibition made a political statement with which not all Japanese would agree.

Table 1.6 Foreign nationals in Tokyo (January 1, 2006)

	Number	*Ratio (%)*
Total Tokyo	364,653	
Males	172,827	47
Females	191,826	53
Asia	299,518	82
Myanmar	3,454	1
Bangladesh	3,166	1
Sri Lanka	1,373	
China	123,611	34
India	6,993	2
Indonesia	2,692	1
Iran	1,309	
Korea (S, N)	106,697	29
Malaysia	2,693	1
Nepal	2,404	1
Pakistan	1,519	
Philippines	31,077	9
Singapore	1,218	
Thailand	6,096	2
Vietnam	2,604	1
Europe	24,191	7
France	4,759	1
Germany	2,569	1
Russia	1,908	1
UK	7,696	2
Africa	2,983	1
Ghana	594	
Nigeria	687	
Egypt	228	
North America	23,374	6
Canada	3,621	1
USA	18,848	5
South America	9,014	2
Brazil	5,012	
Peru	2,414	
Oceania	5,325	1
Australia	4,174	1
New Zealand	1,017	
Stateless/Other	248	

Source: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, http://www.toukei.metro.tokyo.jp/gaikoku/2006/ga06010000.htm

Note: Data is for Tokyo Prefecture, including Tokyo City (August 19, 2007).

Table 1.7 Foreign nationals in Osaka (December 31, 2006)

	Number	*Ratio (%)*
Total Osaka	212,136	
Australia	1,017	1
Brazil	4,517	2
Canada	1,029	
China	44,057	21
Korea (N, S)	138,306	65
Peru	1,191	1
Philippines	5,449	3
Thailand	1,566	1
UK	1,032	
USA	2,979	1
Vietnam	2,697	1

Source: Osaka Prefectural Government, http://www.pref.osaka.jp/kokusai/policy/kunibetsu18matsu.pdf

Note: Data is for Osaka Prefecture, including Osaka City (August 19, 2007).

Transcultural realities: reporting the cultural spaces of Others in Japan

Standard depictions of an ethnoracially homogeneous Japan have been contradicted in recent years by several books revealing Japan as a multicultural society. Refuting the powerfully hegemonic images of a monoethnic Japan, the signal contribution of this scholarship has been to clarify difference in the Japanese context. Beginning with pioneers such as Wagatsuma Hiroshi, Changsoo Lee, Richard Mitchell, William Wetherall, George DeVos, Mikiso Hane, Roger Goodman, Tanaka Hiroshi, Ross Mouer, Yoshio Sugimoto, and others, this scholarship has emphasized the existence, history and politics of minority groups in Japan that have been, and are, victimized.[10] The social construction of Japanese identity around racial purity and illusions of homogeneity has been their focus, providing a much-needed response to the array of images, stereotypes, and cultural constructions of a monolithic "Japan."

Writings under the metaphor of *uchinaru kokusaika* (globalization from within), other authors have also described challenges in terms of internationalization and immigration (Hatsuse 1985, 1996). This rich array of literature has given new visibility to the struggles, challenges, and achievements of Japan's minority populations. Their examples help us imagine multiple ways of seeing Japan, Japanese society, and globalization. Others in Japan help us imagine transnational connections, movement/mobility, and social transformations in the Japanese context.

Especially helpful in shifting the focus toward deeper complexity are the works of Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Harumi Befu, Michael Weiner, Chung Dae Kyun, Sonia Ryang, Chong Yong Hye, and Eika Tai. Morris-Suzuki's penetrating and incisive analyses (1998 and 2002) complement the insider knowledge and provocative insights of Befu (2001), while Weiner (1997) gave an in-depth look at Japan as a society with important minorities that could not be ignored. Chung (2001) has been a consistent voice in challenging set conceptions of resident Korean identities. In earlier work (1997), and then with the authors of her edited volume (2000), Ryang has shown the need to hear from Others in Japan themselves (in their cases the *Zainichi* Koreans), especially in their own words and through their narratives. Chong (1996) and Tai (2004) have also written provocatively, challenging essentialized and stereotypical forms of identification for both resident Koreans and majority Japanese.[11]

There is also a growing literature on migrants as workers, focusing on issues of economics, human rights, and ethnic communities. Especially significant has been research concerning Japanese-Brazilians,[12] while the roles of recruited foreign English teachers in "importing diversity," another important dimension to the Other in Japan, have also been reported (McConnell 2000).

The Japanese gaze on these new foreigners in their midst has of course generated reports in the media and commentary by certain politicians, often slanted and racist, as well as more grounded studies. Activists with the Osaka Human Rights Museum (Liberty Osaka), the ISSHO organization/website, Japan Focus, Solidarity with Migrants Japan (2007), and emerging local multicultural networks have given added impetus and new dimensions to the examination of Japan as a multicultural society. A recent collection from a conference concerning this "globalization from within" also helps us better understand these changes (Goodman *et al.* 2003). Many of these organizations represent ethnic politics and identity in Japan, first addressed by Wagatsuma and others, and later examined in more complex ways by researchers including Ohta (1996), Kim (1999), and Ota (2000). Other research has, at the same time, revealed previously unrecognized communities such as Transnationals and mixed peoples (Murphy-Shigematsu 2002a; Willis 2001b).

This book takes a somewhat different approach, describing Others in a globalizing society in transition. We follow these signal works and extend their exploration of self-expression and self-empowerment to a diverse range of Others in Japan. What struggles and challenges do they face? What do community, social life, and relationships mean for these Others? What is the quality of these social relationships and how are they positioned in space and time?

We have identified the following themes transforming the cultural borderlands of today's Japanese society as particularly deserving attention:

1 Cultural identity
2 Ethnicity, race, and gender
3 Diaspora and mobility
4 Visibility and invisibility
5 Memory, power, and resistance

Cultural identity

Cultural identity, a key issue for many of our authors, is demonstrated here in stories as diverse as those of third-generation Korean residents by Kyo Nobuko (Chapter 2), the waves of *Nikkei* Brazilians and *Uchinaanchu* (persons of Okinawan ancestry), portrayed by Angelo Ishi and Wesley Ueunten (Chapters 5 and 7, respectively), and newcomers from Bangladesh and other Islamic countries by Onishi Akiko (Chapter 10), seeking not only jobs and stable incomes but answers to deeply personal questions of place and position.

Culture has always been a mark of social distinction, but in our era it has also become a ubiquitous synonym for identity, an identity marker, and a "differentiator" (Benhabib 2002: 1).[13] Our conception of culture emphasizes the shared experiences of individuals and groups that coalesce around common symbols and values. Culture also contains contradictions and conflicts and is constantly evolving. These experiences, historical as well as contemporary, are powerfully affected and enacted by particular symbols, codes, and education. Education includes both the form and the content of the particular culture in question, with cultural transmission being especially important here as values are transferred from one generation to the next, perpetuating that culture or cultures.

Turning the assumptions of Japanese society inside-out, we see examples in recent Japanese literature that speak for the power of the Other in shaping Japanese identity. The Burakumin, as discussed by Yoshiko Yokochi Samuel (Chapter 8) are one important case of people whose experiences defy the logics and stereotypes of traditional visions of Japanese society. Sometimes, as with the Chinese in Kobe examined by Tsu Yun Hui (Chapter 6), layer upon layer of meaning and experience have made the enterprise of identification fraught with uncertainty as well, whatever the outward trappings of existence might be.

How different groups and individuals position themselves on identity issues is thus the product of their own complex experiences. Two themes shown to be taking place in our narratives are the larger things that may be said about the world, by what is happening within us, and the messiness inherent in any cultural exchange shown to be taking place. These narratives are about life, not little boxes into which people neatly fit. As Willis notes (Chapter 11), the lengths of residence, for example, be they long-term, mid-term, or short-term, present complexly different sets of issues for each group, for the individuals in these groups, and for their identities in these cohorts of eras, age, class, and length of residence.

Considered, alternatively, as outsiders or accepted as insiders, depending on specific contexts, Others are constantly reforming and rearticulating their identities. "Who Am I?" and "How Do I Present Myself to the World?" either are not always the same thing, as Ishi and Nobue Suzuki (Chapter 3) demonstrate. What parts of one's life one chooses to reveal and what parts to conceal, as a person of Korean heritage in Japan discussed by Kyo, or as a child of Japanese and foreign parents portrayed by Murphy-Shigematsu (Chapter 13), are very much contextually based, reflecting the importance of positioning and carefully taking stock of each personal interaction.

Throughout the book we are interested in exploring how Others in Japan negotiate the social construction of identities and, in the process act as agents who continuously inject new meaning-streams into the discourse of Japanese society, to paraphrase Arjun Appadurai (1990). Like Henry Louis Gates and Anthony Appiah (1992), we show how multiplying identities disrupt the cliché-ridden discourse of identity by exploring what it is like to be Other in a society in which you are invisible, a phantom, or a fantasy.

Ethnicity, race, and gender

For most of Japanese society, the first encounter with the word *esunikku* (ethnic) came only with the so-called ethnic foods boom from the mid-1990s, the first visibly widespread manifestation of this being a spicy potato chip called *Esunikan*. Devoid of the cultural, racial, and historical baggage of *minzoku* (tribe) or *jinshu* (race), a gradual transformation of the nuances attached to the word "*ethnic*" occurred in Japan. Gender (*gendaa*) is likewise a term that came to Japan in the late 1990s and is also directly expressed in katakana, the Japanese alphabet for foreign words.

Many of the chapters in this volume deal with issues of *ethnicity, race, and gender*, topics often unaddressed in Japan. Discussions of ethnicity were long limited by the consciousness that Japanese society was composed of Japanese only, making mainstream ethnicity alone a topic worthy of attention. Race was a subject for international relations with the United States and other countries, especially when it came to treaties and the treatment of Japanese immigrants, especially in the United States, but it has seldom been discussed in the context of Japanese society itself.

Usually denoting something exotic and clearly not Japanese, the word "ethnic" and concepts related to it are, on the other hand, now moving toward visibility and acceptance, as demonstrated by a recent special issue on Japanese society and ethnicity of the *International Journal of Japanese Sociology* (Yazawa 2003).[14] The editor describes the authors, whose sociological articles discuss ethnic stratification, immigrant Chinese, the Brazil–Japan "niche" in Japan, and the small but visible Vietnamese resettlement population (Carruthers 2004), as analyzing the "multicultural ethnic characteristics of contemporary Japanese society under globalization." This approach, of course, continues to privilege the vision of Japanese society as consisting of discrete ethnic communities, when, as we shall see in the chapters that follow, there is great complexity.

The intricacy of the lives of resident Koreans is illustrated in Kyo's chapter, for example. A translation of excerpts from her best-selling book *A Perfectly Ordinary Ethnic Korean in Japan*, which received considerable attention when it was first published in Japanese in 1987, details memoirs of a third-generation Japanese-Korean woman and has been updated for this chapter. In one of the first personal accounts of being Korean in Japan, Kyo offers an intimate statement of someone who moves between many worlds. She discusses job discrimination, educational challenges, marital issues, and problems of identity as a person who firmly believes herself to be both a Korean and a member of Japanese society.

Reaching beyond neat ethnic categorizations, Murphy-Shigematsu focuses on an area often shrouded in the mists of racial and national ideologies and myths (Chapter 13). Individuals who negotiate these borderlands are often invisible within a society where minorities are either ignored or essentialized, illustrating the complexity of lives of persons of mixed ancestry in contemporary Japan. Murphy-Shigematsu writes reflexively, integrating his personal experiences into his scholarly efforts to move beyond images of invisibility and victimization by presenting narratives of empowering identity, assertions gleaned from extensive interviews. Each narrative obviously has related problems, yet all forms of narrative are viewed as active identity reconstructions by individuals.

Demonstrating another example of ethnicity in contemporary Japan by describing how the very survival of the Ainu, like the first peoples of North America, is testament to the power to resist the onslaught of cultural, if not physical genocide, Katarina Sjöberg reports on Japan's First People (Chapter 9). Even as late as the 1990s the Ainu, led by the indefatigable Kayano Shigeru who passed away in the spring of 2006 (see Kayano 1994 and Temman 2006), had to contend with infamous proclamations of their nonexistence by Japanese politicians (the "disappearing Ainu"). Members of these communities, like other oppressed peoples around the world, have lashed out in many ways, not least of which is in artistic expression, challenging in their writings and other ways the marginalization that has been their traditional burden. Burakumin, in particular, as discussed by Samuel, have shown that their lives can be read as assertions of independence from the powerful norming and Othering practiced by traditional Japan.

Showing how race in Japan has generally been a private matter, William Wetherall (Chapter 12) notes that racialism and even racism have also been reflected in attitudes and behaviors, as well as regulations and policies, in all quarters of society. At the same time, race has rarely been an element of national or local laws, including Japanese nationality laws. Japanese, for example, are not racialized in family registers or other public records. However, Japan is now under pressure from the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) to racialize official descriptions of its population. Inspired by ICERD, human rights organizations like the Japan Civil Liberties Union are also pressuring Japan to adopt laws that would racialize its people in the name of outlawing racial discrimination. Wetherall explores the ramifications of such racialization on the civility of Japanese nationality.

Race and ethnicity have become more significant concepts for Japanese society, too, as a globalized consciousness has spread to Japanese society. Particularly as large numbers of Japanese are traveling and finding themselves as minorities in global contexts, and thus increasingly aware of their majority position in Japanese society, the questions of race and ethnicity have also been highlighted in Japan.

Gender is gradually receiving more visibility in Japan, too. Some of this attention comes from the outside, through women from Other communities who

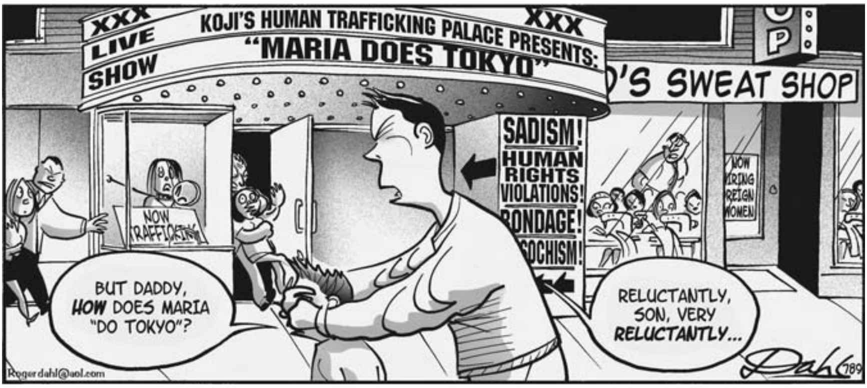

XXX LIVE SHOW
KOJI'S HUMAN TRAFFICKING PALACE PRESENTS:
XXX
"MARIA DOES TOKYO"
'S SWEAT SHOP
SADISM!
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS!
ONDAGE!
OCHISM!
NOW TRAFFICKING
NOW IRING REIGN OMEN
BUT DADDY, HOW DOES MARIA "DO TOKYO"?
RELUCTANTLY, SON, VERY RELUCTANTLY...
Rogerdahl@aol.com
Dahl '89

Figure 1.3 Human trafficking. (Roger Dahl)

bring new approaches to gender to Japanese society. There are also influences from within, by Japanese women who themselves become Other by striking out on new paths and by having new lifestyles.[15]

In the background of many of the chapters are the shadows of strong and powerful women, as we see in the personal account of Kyo and the lives of Filipina brides in Japan as Suzuki presents them to us (Chapters 2 and 3). In portraying the discourse on Filipina *hanayome* (brides) in administratively mediated marriages to Japanese men from the mid-1980s to the present, Suzuki notes that in these narratives of "international marriages," "Filipina" came to represent the "problem of brides from Asia." As seen elsewhere, the effects of various textual and media representations have depicted rural Filipina women as socioeconomic victims and sexually subjugated women. Simultaneously however, constructions of Filipina *hanayome* in rural Japan have also followed local Japanese twists. Suzuki focuses on sexual subjectivity and economic autonomy, two dimensions of the women's lives in which they struggle to recapture their own ways of making meaning vis-à-vis various social forces. There are many aspects of gender in need of further exploration, the trafficking of foreign women to Japan, for example, being a serious problem for these Others and Japanese society (Onishi 2005).

Reports of Japanese women who return from abroad altered in profound ways have had uncomfortable and unsettling repercussions in the society. Karen Kelsky (Chapter 4) describes a special group of self-selected, professionally ambitious Japanese women. Their very personal accounts show how they deploy discourses of the modern, or narratives of internationalism, to construct an emancipatory turn to the foreign/West. This is in strong opposition to those traditional, gender-stratified corporate and family structures that most women experience in Japan, making these women Others in their own society. Through their internationalist practice, women enunciate a critique of Japanese culture as exemplified by Japanese men, but they also become implicated in a global politics of assimilation to the West.

The one-sided gender story of Filipinas is mirrored by the situation of Muslims in Japan, as reported by Onishi, who constitute a special case for considerations of gender as well, because such a lopsided number of them are men. As Japanese men provide the means for Filipinas to live in Japan, Japanese women through marriage provide the legal opportunity for these foreign men to live in Japan. Other chapters in this volume address gender issues of *Nikkei* Brazilians, *Uchinaanchu* Okinawans, mixed Japanese, and resident Koreans. In the cases of women reported in this volume, few of whom could be considered mainstream, the mirror they hold to the mainstream in re-imaging Japanese women is especially valuable.

Diaspora and mobility

Many of the voices heard in this book are from *diaspora*, those mobile communities which have spread around the world for economic, political, or social reasons. There are oldcomers and newcomers in these diaspora, many of whom see movement as both an option and a lifestyle. Some of this diversity is right at home for the Japanese, for returnee women and men who have struck out on pioneering paths but who have returned to Japan, as Kelsky discusses in her chapter (see also Goodman 1990).

Some of the members of these diaspora are the large numbers of workers laboring in what are called the "3K jobs" (*kitsui*, *kiken*, and *kitanani*: difficult, dangerous, and dirty). Others come in small numbers but have much higher profiles and influence. Television showcases the latter, usually White Americans and more recently Blacks and Africans, but at the same time they are isolated, as they have been for centuries in the standard model of how the Japanese have dealt with difference. Their situation also highlights the other end of the social spectrum, the criminal, violent, and drug element, who are most often seen as Chinese illegals and legals.

The most highly imagined of the diasporic communities are the Okinawan *Uchinaanchu* and Brazilian *Nikkei*, who often overlap. But transnational elites are emerging as a diaspora as well, as are people of faith, such as Muslims. The Chinese have a very strong sense of diasporic identity, embodied in the idea of Overseas Chinese (*Kakyō* in Japan: see Chapter 6 by Tsu in this volume), but even here the distinctions sometimes break down, their identities as members of Japanese society superseding the erstwhile loyalty to the Middle Kingdom.

Ishi's account of Brazilian *Nikkei* migrants helps us see that their influx to Japan, especially since the end of the 1980s, needs to be understood as more than a question of "foreigners in Japan." Based on fieldwork in the regions of Japan where *Nikkei* are concentrated, this chapter explores how they face peculiar problems in their relationship with the Japanese. Ishi's approach blends a journalist's eye with academic rigor as he investigates "his own" community and reports on it for outsiders. His stories also focus on how both Japanese and *Nikkei* are gradually accepting the idea of a long-term coexistence.

Another "Insider–Outsider" perspective is given by Ueunten's analysis of the complexities of Okinanwan transnationality through the lives of South American

Okinawans who have come to work and live in Japan in recent years. Ironically, they are the descendants of Japanese who left Japan since the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century in search of a better life in the Americas and Hawaii (Nakasone 1996, 2002). In this so-called return flow identities are constantly being changed by individuals, in accordance with their economic and social circumstances and the ideologies they come into contact with, notably "back" in Japan. The author, a third-generation Okinawan from Hawaii, uses his own experiences to show the dynamic nature of identities, reflecting the complicated movement of persons and ideas across the Pacific.

The adaptation of a new population to Japan, Muslim foreign workers from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Iran, is reported by Onishi (Chapter 10). Highly visible by physical appearance, yet at the same time invisible in their anonymous working worlds, the stories of these Muslim foreign workers reveal diverse patterns of adaptation to Japanese society. While they almost universally experience legal and social exclusion, Muslim individuals in Japan, as Onishi's extensive fieldwork and interviews reveal, react and develop different strategies for survival. Their narratives of acculturation, which include re-embracing Islam and a simultaneous rejection of Japan, are of great interest and importance in light of recent and continuing international political tensions such as the violent events in France in 2005.

Mobility is also driving Japanese society today in ways unheard of even a generation ago. Some of this can be seen in job mobility in the population at large, and even physical movement, but much of this mobility takes place on the borders, where marginalized peoples, be they *Nikkei* Brazilians, Pakistanis, or White Americans, are sometimes the majorities in airports. Always looking out and elsewhere, the Brazilians and other newcomers see themselves in a life of back-and-forth, of coming and going. For members of the Okinawan *Uchinaanchu* diaspora there is always an "in-between," a space where they can come together and celebrate who they are, even in the middle of numerous tongues (English, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, and Okinawan). Here, too, as for the Brazilian *Nikkei*, music is one of the ways the position of Others in Japan is being transformed, playing a role in expressing their identities, their strivings, and their protests.

Mobility is something culturally internalized as well. For the Chinese in Japan it has meant holding on to an identity as middlemen between Japan and the outside. The Chinese have always been the largest international communities in places like Kobe, Nagasaki, and Yokohama, perhaps surprisingly so given the image these communities have as "international" (i.e. Euro-American) ports. Mobility also means a personal journey every day of their lives for the Chinese in Japan and others moving between two worlds. Actively and intimately involved with this journey, these people further aid in the metamorphoses of traditional stereotypes of Japan.

The chapters in this book also report on the ways in which some people are Othered in Japan, viewed through a lens darkly or narrowly even as they participate fully in what used to be very closed social settings. For those who have

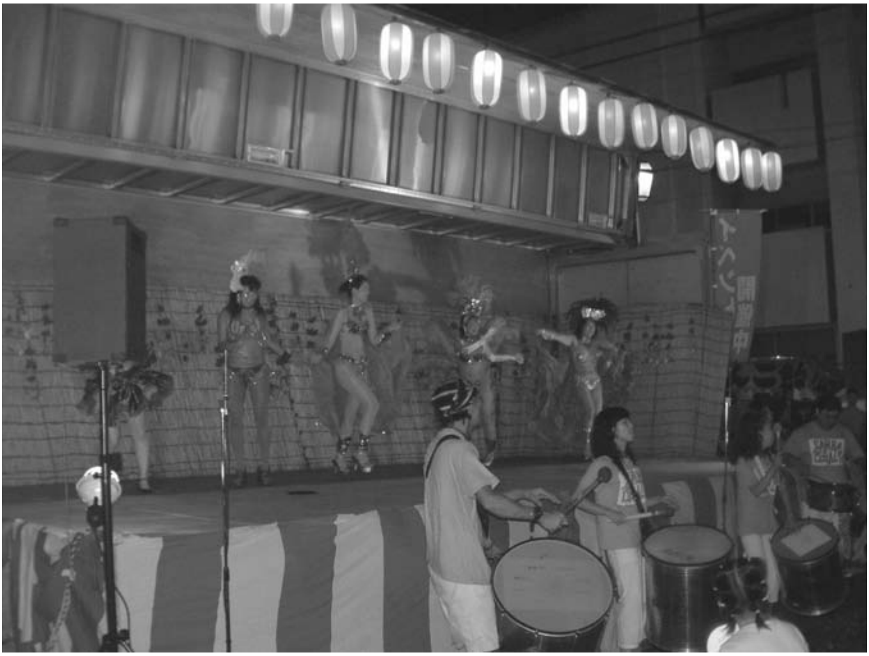


Figure 1.4 *Natsu Matsuri* samba, Shiga Prefecture, 2004. Summer festivals in Japan these days sometimes include samba performances. The population of Brazilians exploded in the 1990s to become the third largest group of foreigners as new communities formed and permanent residents multiplied. (Photo: Tatsu Yamato)

footholds in Japan and other cultures, it is no longer a question of "When will you go 'home'?" or even "Have you decided to stay?" but one of fluid movement encouraged by dense networks and personal concerns.

Visibility and invisibility

With mobility comes the question of positioning as well, as expressed in the themes of visibility and invisibility.

Diversity is both visible and invisible. In addition to those Others prominently displayed on TV, we have the continuing invisibility of communities and individuals who have historically been denied their place in society. Some of these invisible people have been victims of official drives for assimilation that have included direct attacks on Ainu, Okinawan, and Korean culture. Forced name changes, humiliation for anyone who spoke his or her own language in school, and other pressures to become Japanese, are illustrated by Sjöberg, Ueunten, and Kyo in their chapters. At the same time, we need to see the other side of the coin: the deep desire by many minority people to participate in Japanese society.

Evidence of openness, visibility, and invisibility is available in diverse settings: in Brazilian grocery stores and churches in Hamamatsu, Filipina wives gathering on Sunday afternoons after church in Kobe, Ghanians selling funky American hip-hop style clothing in downtown Osaka, Chinese and Portuguese language newspapers in convenience stores in Shinjuku, Indonesians gutting fish in a coastal village, Japanese Peruvians running Mexican restaurants in Nara, and many more instances of the outside world coming to Japan.

Greater integration and tolerance of diversity generally accompany these shifts, though there are many sharp edges and occasional, inevitable friction as well. There is a new openness to others and to change in Japan, as Jeff Kingston (2001) and others have pointed out, a search for new solutions to social and economic problems. In a society that has traditionally resisted visible displays of difference there are many invisible areas that may actually be more important than what is visible.

These cultural and social practices interrogate our assumptions about openness and closedness, visibility and invisibility, in Japanese society. How Others are *seen* and *not seen* affects not only the question of diversity in the society but the diasporic movements and mobility of these Others. Murphy-Shigematsu's chapter shows how some mixed people are extremely visible in the sense of physical difference while others are largely invisible. But in either case, they are both mostly invisible in terms of their different existence as Others being acknowledged.

One example of the movement from invisibility to visibility is presented by Tsu, who traces the history of Kobe's Chinatown from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, showing that the neighborhood's character has changed over time in relation to changing circumstances in the city, in the country at large, and internationally. Following developments outside Kobe, Tsu reflects on the ambiguity and the attendant difficulty of being Chinese in Japan in relation to the celebration of internationalism and multiculturalism symbolized by Kobe's Chinatown, among other similar icons. Koreatowns, too, are now moving, like these Chinatowns, from being ethnic ghettoes to almost theme-park-like destinations for domestic tourists, indicating again the trend from invisibility to visibility. The transnational perspectives and questions which Tsu and others raise make it clear that Japan is not a society alone and apart but one with vibrant connections and networks with nearby countries and societies.

Memory, power, and resistance

We find *memory* throughout the chapters, particularly the memory of neighboring countries and how their histories have been interwoven with Japan's. Reflective as they are of imperial and continuing hegemonic flows of *power* and economics we note, like Tessa Morris-Suzuki (1998), the relationship between time and space. These are not the smooth, rounded, and polished surfaces of *kokusai kōryū* (international relations meant to create and maintain good will), almost invariably conceived until relatively recently as Japan and the West, the Japanese and the Whites. Rather they are the jagged, dissonant edges of intrusion and aggression, the active search for markets and the attractions of incomes far in excess of even the best jobs in one's home country.

Imperial memories are especially potent reminders of unresolved and problematic issues of hegemony and *resistance*, particularly for *Zainichi* Koreans like Kyo and the Chinese middle-men/women of the border spaces of Tsu's Chinatowns in Japan. The oldest memories of conquest, expropriation, and attempted assimilation are of course those of the Ainu, the first people of Japan discussed by Sjöberg, while the echoes of religious, caste-related bigotry and discrimination are always in the background of everyday relations for Japan's largest minority, the Burakumin, as Samuel has noted.

Many of these memories are related directly to attempted legal remedies for difference in the expanding and then contracting realm of Japan. Artifacts of previous eras hang on and trip up current relations in unexpected and difficult ways. For larger images of difference in the society, few symbols can rival Dejima, the tiny island in Nagasaki harbor where the Dutch, the only Europeans allowed contact with Japan, were historically isolated (1639–1853). Dejima is an especially powerful symbol of the treatment of Others in the Japanese context. While research by Ronald Toby and others has revealed a far more complex reality on the ground in historical Japan, the grip which Dejima has on the Japanese consciousness with regard to the Other remains potent, as Willis explains. Dejima continues to be a special symbol for the Japanese with its images and imaginings.

Finally, memory is perhaps most poignant among mixed peoples of Japan and elsewhere. Their lives have long been intimately connected with postwar memories of illegitimacy, poverty, and abandonment and thereby stigmatized. Murphy-Shigematsu's narratives however, show how this stigma is fading along with the appearance of new, even celebrated forms of hybridity.

Many of the relationships described in the following chapters concern dominance, oppression, and struggle in Japanese society. These personal and structural dramas represent, sometimes on a small scale, sometimes on a large-scale, the uneven power relations that have often created and sustained the presence, position, and place of Others in Japan. *Memory, power, and resistance* are thus important shadow presences in the narratives which follow. For those newer peoples in Japan, the narratives of acculturation/resistance can be seen in the poignant tales of Japanese women who choose to resist the system, the Brazilian *Nikkei*, the Okinawan Diaspora, Muslims in Japan, and especially mixed peoples.

How Others, as minorities in Japanese society, relate to the majority, involves the presentation and performance of roles in this power context. A deep analysis of these roles, as our authors have done, provides us with powerful explanatory tools for understanding the forces of hegemony and resistance and their outcomes in Japan. As Mikiso Hane (1982) put it, this resistance has been a common theme of those left out on “the underside of Japan.” At the same time, because of the nature of complexity in today’s world, we should note that power is not omnipotent. Unintended consequences mean that power, dominance, and hegemony are very much like sand, seemingly hard and clear in its shapes at one moment, only to be suddenly dissolved and swept away at the next. It is a world that is both strangely ordered and simultaneously on the edge of chaos (Urry 2003: 119).

Among the important themes raised in the chapters that follow are the marginalization and survival strategies that can be seen, especially with the oldcomers like the *Zainichi*, while the newcomers are represented by those like the merchants of Chinatown in Kobe and the Brazilian *Nikkei*. All of the chapters recount narratives of position and place, notably Dejima and Chinatown, while economics and class are monitored by Muslim workers in Japan at one end of the spectrum and White foreign elites at the other. The resurgence of the Ainu in the face of a massive effort of the Japanese government at assimilation challenges the pre-established social and cultural hegemony of Japanese society. Their creative approaches to these pressures as they interact with what they call *Wajin* (Japanese) society, are portrayed by Sjöberg. Samuel, meanwhile, show how the Burakumin writer Nakagami Kenji gives concrete form to his protest against marginalization and discrimination. Nakagami not only challenged modern Japan and its oppression of marginalized people, but has also subverted the institution of modern Japanese literature and the written word. His voice portrays, above all, “the power of the word” to name, subvert, and transform a society.

Being Other in Japan

Japan is in some ways a more foreigner-friendly society today, while in others it remains foreigner-averse. In terms of immigration, for example, many of the more oppressive discriminatory rules and treatment have been removed, and there is a widespread awareness of the need for the protection of individual human rights against abuses by the society and the government. Yet Japan still remains among the most restrictive societies concerning immigration, the contentious debate on long-term policies and the actual inaction on the ground reflecting what has been happening in many countries with regard to immigrants.

These are indeed dissonant, contradictory times in Japan. A Korea boom that began with *Winter Sonata* (*Fuyu no sonata*), a syrupy melodrama from Korea, has extended to cuisine and pop stars and shows no signs of letting up. The number of foreign students is greater than ever as well. Most of these students are Chinese, yet at the same time local police warnings are out all over Japan about the menace of foreign (Chinese) gangs. Young people aspire to hip-hop styles, buying their clothes from Africans dressed like Gangsta American Blacks in Osaka’s *Amerikamura* and Tokyo’s Harajuku. The courts continue to make statements now and again about race and difference in Japan, the most recent being a ruling in the spring of 2006 against Steve McGowan, an African-American

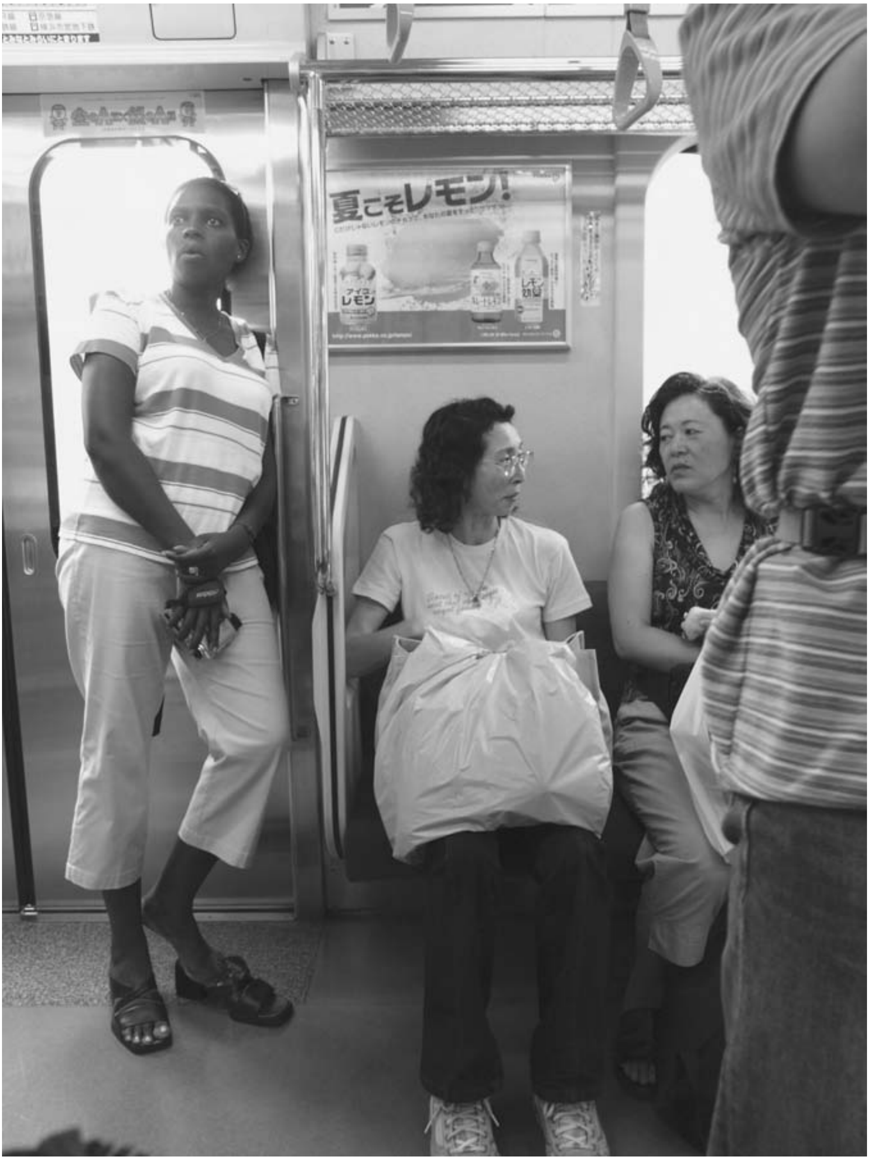


Figure 1.5 Three relatives on a Tokyo subway. (Photo: Igarashi Taiji)

designer from Kyoto who claims he and a South African friend were denied entry to an eyeglass shop because of their skin color (Johnston 2006).

Whereas twenty years ago diversity was hardly apparent anywhere on the Yamanote Loop line train in central Tokyo, today every car will have people who do not look "Japanese." Beyond physical images are those who are Others but who are not visually identifiable on the train: Koreans, Chinese, various Asian diasporas, for example. The stereotypical images of Others in Japan as either White Westerners or as victims of historical discrimination have given way to far more complex and elusive stories. Many Others in Japan today are themselves members of multiculturalized, creolized families. So-called *kokusai kekkon* (international marriages) are numerous and growing. Only a minority are those stereotyped marriages of a Japanese woman and White Western man. There are, in fact, far more Japanese men marrying Other women, mainly Koreans, Filipinas, Chinese, and other Asians. The other side of this story is, of course, the concern of long-term Koreans in Japan about their survival as a "pure" ethnic community.

What multiculturalism means in this society is thus represented in the way the question of difference is newly addressed. Categories over time change, and we may be on the edge of such an important change now. There are diverse forms of citizenship being proposed, for example. Some people advocate a new, broader sense of citizenship in Japan with the push for rights for "denizens." The practices of democracy and citizenship in general show remarkable change, particularly at the local, community level where elections have seen former foreigners elected as officials and, in one case, a National Diet member (Brooke 2002; Tsuda 2006).

Acknowledging that there are citizens who may be Korean-Japanese, Chinese-Japanese, or American-Japanese (Tai 2004) is a major step forward for Japan. The responses of the Japanese government and the Japanese people, however, interest us less here than the roles and active participation in the society of those individuals and communities whose stories will be told in this volume. We are, in a sense, doing the inverse here of the path-breaking work of Harumi Befu and Sylvie Guichard-Anguis (2001) who have examined the global presence of the Japanese, by looking at the increasing presence of the global in Japan.

Many questions have yet to be answered about Others in Japan: What are their memberships and social networks, local, ethnic, national, and transnational? What do these networks mean for identity and how might they conflict? To what extent are the issues of culture, ethnicity, religion, values, and the presentation of cultural autonomy or identities central to their experiences? How is the pursuit of meaning, psychological and spiritual, as well as material, carried out by those who are not "mainstream" Japanese? How has social change, in Japanese society and elsewhere, had an impact on their lives and lifestyles?

How these themes are engaged has very much to do with who we as authors and editors are, with the personal as contingent. This volume has brought together a group of scholars from a range of disciplines and professional perspectives. We have been engaging a common problem to try to make sense of the transitions in Japan for Others, for those in Japan's cultural borderlands. Our authors include six women and six men who are from a range of nationalities and ethnicities. Many of us are Japanese citizens or residents, even if we neither look, act, nor otherwise conform to the dominant image of being "Japanese." The multiple possibilities of positioning which each of us brings to this project are partly because we are culturally and linguistically mixed. In our lives and work we cross boundaries, push the limits of "common sense," and create new cultural landscapes.

As editors we have personally experienced what it is to be Other in Japan through long years of work and residence here. Like many of our authors, our lived experience in Japan is the frame of our writing. We are not researchers who make short research visits from time to time to Japan but rather members of the society about which we write. We are thus especially sensitive to the changing terrain of culture and identity in Japanese society.

Our lives are affected by how difference has been traditionally seen in Japan and how it could be seen given the many changes brought to this society by globalization. For many Japanese cultural differences are either lasting and immutable or are giving way to a social homogenizing, assimilating process that is often defended as just and equitable. We would like to suggest, however, that there is a greater, multi-centered complexity occurring . While the former two, the privileging of pure cultural traits and assimilation, are of course occurring in the social landscapes of Japan, there is another view that is possible, too, that of a mix, of a hybrid of possibilities, generating new differences in the process.

Japan is moving in two seemingly contradictory directions at the same time, one of increasing isolation, as we note the sharpened discourse on crime and foreigners (usually mentioned in the same breath and referring to Chinese), and the other of opening more doors, symbolic and real. This is not surprising given today's global complexity. Trajectories, trends, and flows thus emerge in ways both positive and negative, for Others in Japan, for the Japanese themselves, and for the Japanese context.

Unsettling as it may be, there are powerful arguments here for looking at the meanings of globalization in Japan through these diverse communities and individuals. These are not harmonious, utopian communities by any means, as they are formed in contexts, both global and local, of unequal power relations. Yet it is also clear that the multiple processes associated with globalization lead to a larger hybridization, to a global mélange of social, cultural, political, and economic forces and the emergence of what could be called trans-local Creole and creolized cultures.

Seeing Japan as increasingly diverse, rather than as one-dimensional and homogeneous, reveals new layers of meaning where Others meet Japanese society. As Japan surprisingly demonstrates, globalization does not mean homogenization. Just the opposite is usually the case, as Jan Nederveen Pieterse has shown for other parts of the world (1995, 2004). Creolization, a powerful act of cultural creation, transmission, and mixing almost seen as taboo in earlier eras in Japan (and the West) can now be viewed as an important force in Japanese society.

We want to unveil how Others are seen in Japan, moving beyond static conceptions of ethnic groups and minority politics. The fusion revealed by the bricolage of cultures presented here depicts border crossings, borderlands, and border zones. Boundaries have become more contingent and permeable, their meanings altered with the fluidity of politics and power. This has made boundary fetishism both more pronounced and less visible; more pronounced in the political landscape and less visible in the economy, society, and daily life, which are becoming increasingly globalized.

This book is thus concerned with transnational spaces, with difference, and marginality. Likewise, society and change in Japan, especially in terms of cultural identities, cultural transformations, and globalization, are important themes for the authors of the chapters that follow. Moving beyond the grand meta-narratives of Japan as either homogeneous or multiethnic, we are interested in conveying the voices and experiences of people who reflect the complexity and breadth of Others in Japan who have been crossing borders in provocative, new, and imaginative ways.

Notes

1 One reflection of this is how we call ourselves and the names we prefer to have used for ourselves in various contexts. A note on names and name order is thus appropriate. Three of our authors (Kyo Nobuko, Tsu Yun Hui, and Onishi Akiko) prefer the Japanese or Chinese style of using their family name first and then their personal name. We will use both styles in this book, respecting the individual wishes of the authors. Japanese and Chinese names in the bibliography are listed in this order as well, of course, and the comma between the family and personal names has been omitted for authors based in Japan, Korea, China, or other parts of Asia. Scholars with Asian names who are based in the United States, Europe, or other areas where the custom of using the personal name first predominates, are indicated with a comma in the references. We apologize in advance for those whose preferences have not been exactly noted. There are many different choices to be made, quite in line with the theme of our book.

2 Immigrant labor and migrants have been the subject of many studies in Japan: Komai 1994, 1995a,b; Herbert 1996; Hingwan 1996; Iyotani and Sugihara 1996; Komai 1996; Hanami 1998; Kajita 1998; Komai 1998; Weiner and Hanami 1998; Gurowitz 1999; French 2000; Brody 2001; Iyotani 2001; Komai 2001; Laszlo 2002; Goodman *et al.* 2003; Iwasaki and Yui 2003; Iwasaki *et al.* 2003; Papademetriou *et al.* 2000; Morris-Suzuki 2002; Shipper 2002 a,b; Douglass and Roberts 2003; Iwasaki and Yui 2003; Niigaki and Sano 2003; Weiner 2004; and Shipper 2005.

3 Resources on human rights in Japan include DeVos and Wetherall 1983; Coates 1990; Goodman and Neary 1996; Osaka Jinken Hakubutsukan 2000, 2001; Weiner 2004; Diène 2006; Gottlieb 2006; and Oda *et al.* 2006. Weiner's three-volume set (2004), a compilation of previously published works, is the most comprehensive single source for articles on minorities in Japan.

4 Multiculturalism in Japan has been discussed by Murphy-Shigematsu 1993; Willis 1993; Kanagawa Jinken Sentā 1994; Hatsuse 1996; Kawamura 1998; Ko 1998; Befu 2001; Oguma 2002; Osaka Shi Kyōiku Sentā 2002; Tarumoto 2003; Tsuboi 2003; and Buckley 2004. Multiculturalism in global and national contexts has been examined carefully in the works of James A. Banks (2004 and 2006).

5 Unlike many of the debates on multiculturalism in the "culture wars," it is not an exclusivist "us vs. them," nationalistic view of cultures.

6 By the end of 2005, in fact, the total number of foreigners in Japan had surpassed 2 million for the first time ever, according to the Ministry of Justice.

7 Only 5,264 of the 117,000 foreign students in 2004 actually obtained work visas, prompting the media to note that Japan is letting foreign students "drain away" due to the immigration law (Kyodo 2006). See also Ministry of Justice (2007).

8 The widely disparate figures for some of these groups reflect the difficulty of estimating those who are hiding their identities and passing as majority group members, those who are mixed culturally but who do not want to stand out, and varying estimates by the government and scholars, notably here of the Ainu (Sjöberg 1993: 152).

The government's figures, for example, are for "pure" Ainu, whereas Sjöberg has included those estimated by herself and the Ainu themselves to have Ainu blood. Figures for the Burakumin are similarly difficult to ascertain.

9 Japanese ethnocentrism has been examined by Wakabayashi 1991; Nakano 1995; Ohnuki-Tierney 2000; Yoshino 2000; Clammer 2001; and especially Befu 2001, among others. At least for some Japanese, and certainly for many scholars, one of the most striking signs of change in Japan since the early 1990s has been the rediscovery of diversity, as Tessa Morris-Suzuki has noted.

10 These pioneers in the study of multicultural Japan include DeVos and Wagatsuma 1967; Mitchell 1967; Yoshino and Murakoshi 1977; Donoghue 1978; Lee and DeVos 1981; Hane 1982; DeVos and Wetherall 1983; Wetherall 1983; Mouer and Sugimoto 1986; Onuma 1986; Shukuya 1988; Neary 1989; Goodman 1990; Murphy-Shigematsu 1993; Willis 1993; Komai 1994; Komai 1995a,b; Maher and MacDonald 1995; Tanaka 1995; Denoon *et al.* 1996; Komai 1996; Moore 1997; Ryang 1997; Weiner 1997; Komai 1998; Ishi 1999; and Befu 2001.

11 *Zainichi*, broadly defined as foreigners living in Japan for an extended period of time and often for generations, have been examined by a wide range of authors, including Ezaki and Moriguchi 1988; Yoon 1992; Nagano 1994; Kim, Shinoda, and Shin 1995; Hicks 1997; Ryang 1997; Guo 1999; Kim 1999; Lie 2000; Fukuoka 2000, 2001; Ryang 2000; Kan, Reikishi no naka 2001; Ichiji 2002; Lee 2002; Guo 2003; Chung 2006; Kang 2006; Lee, Murphy-Shigematsu, and Befu 2006.

12 De Carvalho 2003a,b; Lesser 2003; Linger 2001; Roth 2002; Tsuda 2003; Yamashita 2001; and Ishi, in this volume and 2003a,b, are some of the best examples.

13 Identity for Others in Japan has been reported by Onuma 1986; Field 1991; Russell 1991; Ventura 1992; Willis 1992; Murphy-Shigematsu 1993; Willis, Enloe, and Minoura 1994; Nakano 1995; Chong 1996; Hingwan 1996; Russell 1996; Melucci 1997; Ko 1998; Oguma 1998; Ito and Yanase 2001; Kajita 2001; Willis 2001b; Murphy-Shigematsu 2002a, 2003; and Stevens and Lee 2002. We also note the relevance of Hall (1992, 1996), Bhabha (1994), Chambers (1994), and Hall and DuGay (1996) for the study of identity in Japan.

14 Communities and ethnicities that have been studied include, among others, those by Brameld 1968; Shimahara 1971; Ogbu 1978; Ezaki and Moriguchi 1988; Tomiyama 1990; Chikap 1991; Okuda and Tajima 1991, 1993; Robertson 1993; Howell 1994, 1996; Nagano 1994; Maher 1995; Ohta 1996; Sugihara and Tamai 1996; Akino 1998; Shimazau 1998; Sugihara 1998; Fitzhugh and Dubreuil 1999; Guo 1999, 2003; Kitaguchi 1999; Su-lan Reber 1999; Davis 2000; Osaka Jinken Hakubutsukan 2000, 2001; De Carvalho 2003a,b; Goodman *et al.* 2003; Hein and Selden 2003; Ishi 2003a,b; Iwasaki *et al.* 2003; Niigaki and Asano 2003; Podalko 2003; Roberson 2003; Takenaka 2003; Tani 2003; Tsuboi 2003; Yazawa 2003; Carruthers 2004; Ishikida 2005; and Lee, Murphy-Shigematsu, and Befu 2006.

15 See Shukuya 1998; Fujimura-Faneslow and Kameda 1995; Imamura 1996a; Iwao 1998; Robertson 1998; Ito and Yanase 2001; Kelsky 2001; Mackie 2003; McLelland 2005; McLelland and Dasgupta 2005; and Gottlieb 2006, for works on gender and sexuality in Japan.

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Part II

Gender and identity

2 A perfectly ordinary ethnic Korean in Japan

Reprise

Kyo Nobuko

Translated from the Japanese by Akemi Wegmüller

November 1, 1987 (Tokyo, Japan)[1]

Prologue

I was born in Japan in 1961.

Counting from the time my grandparents came to this country, I am a third-generation Korean resident in Japan: a *Zainichi Sansei*. Someone who worries about the various issues faced by all Japanese Koreans, while living a quiet, perfectly ordinary life.

It's not as if resolving these issues is at the center of my life. On the other hand, I don't close my eyes to their existence, or never think about them at all. I care about them, think about them, sometimes get angry, and sometimes forget about them. What it means to be an ethnic Korean in Japan, and the anxieties this involves, is a fog that hangs perpetually in the depths of my soul. But if a fog is always present, you get used to it. Having it there becomes your normal condition.

In the daily business of life, you start to console yourself, tell yourself it will all work out someday: "Getting up and speaking out in public, that's not for me. Leave it to the activists, let them take care of it" is how most *Zainichi* Koreans feel, and in that sense too, I am perfectly ordinary. Or maybe I should say I was.

Because I am now taking that small step out from a voiceless people to become a person who—though lacking in confidence—tries with a small voice to speak. Giving me the impetus to do so are the changes that have taken place around me in the last few years.

I spent an extra year in college. The reason: job discrimination. It was the first time I had experienced discrimination as a serious, personal issue. For me at the time, young and unable to imagine life outside of Japan, being rejected for my Korean nationality was a shock of some magnitude.

The year I finally managed to get hired by a Japanese advertising firm, I got married. My husband is Japanese, so I suppose you would have to call it an international marriage. Describing my husband as "Japanese" feels strange to me, though; after all, Japan has been my home all my life. Yet, this marriage again brought home the fact that I am a foreigner in this country.

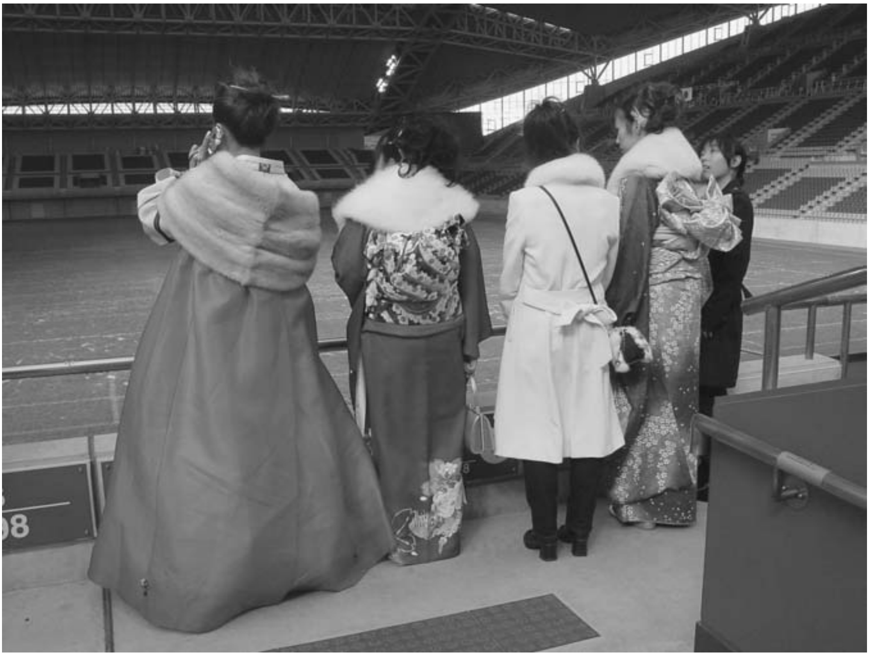

Figure 2.1 Coming of Age Day (*Seijin no hi*), Kobe, 2004. Young women in *Chima chogori, kimono*, and Western dress. These Korean, Japanese, and Western styles reflect individualized choices for this important ceremony that takes place at the age of 20. Some of the choices are revealing of ethnicity, while others are simply fashion statements. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

The problem was my family register:

Since my nationality is Korean, my family register is—naturally enough—in Korea. When registering a marriage in Japan, you have to attach a copy of your family register, which is kept at the municipal office of your permanent domicile and names all of the family members under the head of the household. In order to do that, ethnic Koreans need at least two to three weeks, sometimes even a month or two, to get their copy from Korea. I was lucky. My sister happened to have an extra one.

It was after that that my troubles began. Korean registers, which are written in Korean, of course, have to be translated into Japanese to be accepted at the local municipal office. I didn't speak Korean in the first place. But even a Korean friend of mine, an exchange student, couldn't help me with the requirement that place names be given in Chinese characters. The family register is written in phonetic Hangeul, which only tells you how the name is pronounced. A variety of Chinese characters could be used: how do you know which is the right combination? Not even "real" Koreans could answer that question.

My fiancé and I rushed around in whatever spare time our busy work schedules permitted, looking for someone who knows Korean place names. Two weeks later, we got to the Korean Cultural Service in Ikebukuro, and they figured it out for us.

Amazingly, the village given in our family register as my grandfather's birthplace no longer exists. Its name was changed, in other words. Half a month spent running around after a "disappeared" place name—this incident was enough to make me feel profoundly the length of time that has passed since my grandparents' arrival in Japan before the Second World War, and the distance that lies between me and my country of nationality.

Korea is distant and receding, while Japan is a very large part of me. And yet Japan, of which I as a *Zainichi* Korean am undeniably a part of as well, treats me with prejudice and discrimination. The Korea craze before the 1988 Seoul Olympics is sending hordes of Japanese tourists to Korea—right over our heads. No matter how close we *Zainichi* Koreans may feel to Japan, Japanese society has no use for the ethnic Koreans in its midst. How am I to live without misgivings in such a situation? Becoming a mother soon after our marriage has made my anxiety grow all the more.

What if Korean-Japanese relations grow hostile?

What if there's an emergency, like a food shortage, and foreigners are kicked out of the country?

What if, what if...I come up with countless such scenarios. My Korean nationality could mean, in the worst case, our family being ripped apart. Being a worrier by disposition, every small happiness that comes my way becomes the cause for further anxiety.

A part of me says it would be a lot easier if I just took Japanese citizenship. My Japanese friends suggest it lightly as well—but I can't quite bring myself to do it. What is ethnic identity? What does it mean to me to be a Japanese Korean? What does nationality mean? I am caught between the ethnic Korean community, with its jumble of diverse viewpoints and feelings, and the opposing Japanese society, their tangled threads wrenching me in many directions. Either way, the fact is that naturalization gives rise to a certain sense of guilt among ethnic Korean citizens.

No matter how positively the person herself approaches the question, no matter that she has reached this decision to her own satisfaction, she cannot completely shrug off the cold gaze of society. There's a chill that greets a naturalized citizen on both sides, in the ethnic Korean community's reaction to her and her family, and also on the receiving Japanese side. I personally don't care what people say about me; but I don't want my family to suffer on my account.

Putting aside the question of whether to change citizenship or not, I think it is about time I really thought about ethnic identity, nationality, the meaning of being an ethnic Korean in Japan. This maternity leave is a great opportunity for me to come up with some answers. Tracing the twenty-odd years of my life from the time I was born, I will assemble the things I have learned, and thought, and want to say. And I would like my voice, that of an ordinary *Zainichi* Korean, to be heard by many people.

Hundreds of thousands of ethnic Koreans, each with his own complex thoughts and feelings, live their lives speaking timidly, loudly, voicelessly. Here is my voice, one among the many.

My “international” marriage

My father’s words, my mother’s letter

The day my husband, Imamura Akira, first set foot in my house was October 1, 1982. That was also the day he learned I was an ethnic Korean.

The reason I remember the date so clearly is not that this was the first time I introduced him to my parents; in fact, I’d only met him twice before myself. And I don’t remember this date because, finding out about my nationality, he went into shock, or threw a fit, or anything like that. This was the day I moved out of the dorm, with its many distractions, to a place of my own where I could study seriously in peace.

I didn’t have much stuff, so I just rented a station wagon and had some guys from school help me carry things. Akira was one of those guys.

He was more or less tricked into it. One of my friends, who’d gone to high school with him, had asked him if he wanted to go for a little drive, and he’d said yes. I didn’t know anything about it.

Entering our house in Yokohama after the short drive from Tokyo’s Minato-ku, he noticed things you don’t usually see in Japanese homes: a postcard in Hangeul, lying in the corner; on the shelf, a doll in Korean costume; and in the record rack, LPs by Korean singer Lee Mija, her name written in large, bright letters. Peeking into the living room, he saw a big mother-of-pearl dressing table, sitting solidly against the wall. And wait a minute, “Kyo” isn’t a very Japanese-sounding name…

His curiosity mounting, he timidly asked our mutual friend, “Does Kyo-san have some kind of connection with Korea?”

Yeah: I didn’t think it was worth announcing so I didn’t tell you, but she’s a *Zainichi* Korean.

He could feel the excitement mounting in his chest. A real live ethnic Korean! He’d heard about them for so long, in school, and in the newspapers, and here, finally, was the real thing. He felt the kind of thrill one feels upon meeting a celebrity on the street.

I didn’t hear this exchange between Akira and my friend, and I didn’t notice his excitement, either. All I noticed, as we sat next to each other in the car, was that we hit it off really well. In fact, we started seeing each other from that day on. Not as an ethnic Korean and a Japanese, but as two people who happened to have a lot in common.

In Kumamoto, where Akira comes from, you can hear radio broadcasts from both South and North Korea at night, along with the Japanese broadcasts.

“That’s why I knew phrases like ‘*Annyeong hasimnika*’ since grade school. And that ‘President Bok’ was actually called ‘President Pak,’ ”[2] he told me proudly, and yet he knew hardly anything about Korean residents in Japan.

He had heard of them. He’d gotten a whiff in history class of how “*Zainichi* Koreans” came to exist. He had even heard of discrimination against them. But he only found out about the use of dual names after he started going out with me. The fact that ethnic Koreans have a hard time getting hired by Japanese companies only hit home when he saw me struggling to find a job. Even he, who felt an affinity toward Korea and had even studied its language a little, was so limited in his knowledge of us. Then what about those who had no particular interest in Korea or in *Zainichi* Koreans? What, if anything, did they know?

Through me and my family Akira learned for the first time what *Zainichi* Koreans are like, and how they live. As for me, through him I was made keenly aware of how little the average Japanese knows about the ethnic Koreans in their midst.

So we noticed these little differences, but nationality never entered our minds as a problem of any kind. It was just one feature among many, like tallness, or looking good in green, or having an outgoing personality.

But even if it meant nothing personally to the two of us, when the word "marriage" entered our heads, nationality began to acquire a meaning of its own. To us, it was just one attribute among many; to my parents, however, it was the single most important factor upon which everything else depended.

Trusting Akira, who confidently said, "Don't worry about my parents—I'll convince them somehow," I turned my attention to the problem of persuading mine.

Having my parents accept a Japanese as my husband-to-be would take some doing—careful maneuvering was required. My father had for years drummed it into his daughters that we could only marry ethnic Koreans. My mother, while not as rigid as my father, felt the same way. How to convince her? I pinpointed a strategic weakness: the lack of males in our household. My busy father was hardly ever home to lend a hand, while my only brother was still in grade school—basically useless.

So whenever something heavy needed carrying, I would volunteer "one of my guy friends," and bring Akira. If my mother needed someone to work for her part-time, I'd bring him. And if she wanted me to take my kid brother to the beach in summer, I'd say, "Wouldn't you rather have me bring along someone who can swim?"—not being able to swim myself—and of course, I'd take Akira. He's the type of guy that kids take to instantly, and soon my brother was asking my mother directly if Imamura-kun could go to the beach with him again.

Do this enough times, and most parents would start to realize something was up, but my mother seemed to think only that we were good friends, and that Akira was a considerate, good-humored boy. I was a tomboy when I was little, and all the friends that ever called me or came over had always been boys. That seemed to have left its mark on my mother, and accounted for her complacency. Also, she believed my explanation that my classes at the university were mostly male, so I had very few girlfriends. Further, she was too busy with work, and tired, to ponder the fact that the boy I brought over for her errands was always the same one.

My parents may not have noticed what was going on, but my sisters suspected. I had nothing to hide from them, so I told them he and I were together.

"Well, I'm on your side. Japanese or Korean, you should marry the person you feel is best for you." Thus my eldest sister, engaged to a *Zainichi* Korean herself, voicing her strong support. As the eldest, her sense of responsibility and duty had prompted her to do *omiai*[3] with ethnic Koreans only, leaving Japanese out of the running from the outset. Unlike our parents, however, she doesn't insist that her own children will marry Koreans only.

"Ima-moo's on the phone," comes a voice. That's my younger sister, and her nickname for my boyfriend. My eldest sister calls him "Ima-chan," as in, "I think Ima-chan is good for you. He's got such a great personality."

She wanted "Ima-chan" to come to her own wedding, but "inviting him would seem unnatural if he's just a friend of yours, so how about if he comes to help, as cameraman/receptionist?" And so he did. My sisters provided considerable reinforcements to my campaign.

My mother seemed to get quite fond of him too, in the course of his frequent visits.

Instead of my volunteering his services, she began to request them herself: "I wonder if Imamura-kun could help me with this?" And when he came over, she would somehow find the time to fix him a feast, made with the best of her efforts from whatever happened to be around the house, saying, "I bet you hardly eat any proper meals, living in that rooming house."

I would immediately pitch in with, "You can say that again! It's pitiful, really, the way he exists on instants," exaggerating of course. "Let's let him eat at our house sometimes."

Akira, for his part, would exclaim "Mmm…this is delicious!" as he ate, and these heartfelt expressions would melt my mother completely, resulting in her urging him to come over and "eat with us whenever you want."

In this way, he firmly captured my mother's heart. When I finally told her that I intended to marry him, her response, "If only he were Korean," meant that apart from this fact, she approved of him completely.

"If only he were Korean" eventually became "If it's Imamura-kun, a Japanese husband would be all right," until finally she said, "I'll talk to Father for you, so you just keep quiet." And one way or another, she managed to persuade him.

On January 10, 1985, Akira came stiffly into the house he had visited so many times over the last two years: he had come to ask my parents formally for my hand in marriage. Although this was truly a formality, as my mother had already convinced my father to say yes, he could always change his mind. What if he started shouting, "What?! Give my daughter to a Japanese?" Akira had braced himself for anything.

Finally, it was my father who broached the subject, as Akira sat paralyzed and tongue-tied, sipping his tea and unable to get to the point.

"So you want to marry my daughter?"

"Yyy…yes, I do!"

"She's a headstrong girl. I'm sure she put you through a lot of trouble."

Agreeing inwardly with my father's words, he nevertheless managed to answer, "Oh no, not at all."

"You take good care of her. She's Korean—this may put her in a difficult position among your relatives. You're the only one who can stand up for her at times like that. So you make sure you take good care of her."

My father spoke these words quietly, fixing Akira with a steady gaze.

When he answered, “I will,” my father smiled gently and said, forcefully, “I’m counting on you.”

Then he stood up, and softly saying, “I’m sorry, but I have to get back to work. You stay as long as you like,” he left the house. Before Akira had had a chance to speak, my father had given vent to all of his emotion, and gone.

“That was it? So it’s OK?” Akira sounded unsure, while I just sat there relieved.

“My, but he sure has softened!” My mother was in disbelief.

So that was how it happened. Without any fuss or commotion, my parents accepted a Japanese for my husband, in peace. They had stepped beyond the realm of refusing a Japanese partner for abstract reasons, to dealing with one individual Japanese person, talking to him, and making their decision on this basis. I am so grateful to my parents for having been able to do that.

Now it was my turn to go to Kumamoto to visit Akira’s parents. True to his word, he had persuaded them to accept our marriage. We went in May of that year, during the Golden Week string of national holidays. After I returned home without any incident, my mother sent a letter to my fiancé’s parents.

> Dear Mr. and Mrs. Imamoto,
> Thank you for your hospitality toward my daughter Nobuko during her recent visit. Also, I was very grateful for the wonderful gifts from you that she brought back with her. Thank you very much.
>
> I would have liked to write this letter sooner, but I’m afraid my work got the better of me. Please accept my apologies.
>
> Although I must confess to some surprise when my daughter first told me of her intention to marry your son, he had always been among her many friends at college, and I knew and liked him well. Fate brought them together, and I do believe they were meant for each other.
>
> If I must say so, the issue of their nationalities—and I am sure this is something that you have thought of as well—means nothing to the two young people themselves, and as they have chosen each other as two individuals, I am sure that they will establish a fine family together.
>
> As parents, we would like to give them our support in becoming good members of society, good workers and good parents themselves.
>
> As my daughter is still young and inexperienced, I hope you will give her your warm guidance now and into the future.
>
> Wishing you both the best of health, I remain
>
> Sincerely yours,
> Kak Suran
> May 15, 1985

We were married on September 15 of that year.

The ethnic Korean bride

Does she speak Japanese? And what about food—what does she eat?

These were my mother-in-law's biggest worries before she met me.

"I'd heard of *Zainichi* Koreans, but frankly I didn't know much about them. Just because they live in Japan doesn't necessarily mean…I mean, I thought they wore Korean costumes and ate only Korean food. So I just didn't know what to do!" she says.

Her son had explained to her that we weren't all that different from themselves, but she couldn't relax until she actually met me.

My mother-in-law is a perfectly ordinary Japanese woman. The fact that she has long worked outside the home probably means her outlook is broader than that of full-time housewives. She glances through the newspaper every day, and keeps herself abreast of current events. Nevertheless, she never stopped to read those articles dealing with *Zainichi* Koreans' refusal to be fingerprinted, or wondered why they might do so. She had never talked to an ethnic Korean. Nor had she even seen one in the first place, as far as she knew. So her first encounter with this unknown entity was with me, who suddenly appeared in her life as the girl her son wanted to marry.

She wasn't opposed to the marriage, but the fact that her daughter-in-law would be a foreigner bothered her: she just didn't know how she should behave with me. Her anxieties were endless.

I, the source of these anxieties, first visited my fiancé's parents in Kumamoto during Golden Week in May 1985.

I'm never very relaxed with someone I meet for the first time—in fact, I get so nervous I can barely make conversation. Getting ready to be introduced formally to my future parents-in-law, I was so stiff I would have fallen over if prodded with just one finger.

We stepped into their entrance, and Akira called, "We're here!" We heard footsteps come rushing toward us, then saw his mother's figure. Our eyes met for a fleeting moment, and then she was already on her knees on the raised floor, her hands placed in front of her in formal greeting.

"I am Akira's mother. I am so glad to make your acquaintance," she said, bowing her head deeply. This threw me off so completely I almost frothed at the mouth as I hurriedly stammered out a greeting.

Even after we removed our shoes and stepped up into the house, my nervousness did not abate.

Asked by Akira's mother what I would like to eat, I was unable to think. The proper response would have been, "I would enjoy trying some Kumamoto specialties," or at least, "I'd be happy with anything," but the first things that entered my head were the plebian curry-rice and udon noodles.

"Curry and udon," his mother repeated, sucking in her breath slightly and widening her eyes.

I really blew it. Twenty-three years old, and meeting my future parents-in-law for the first time to boot—but by the time hot embarrassment cascaded over me, it was too late. During the next three days, I cringed every time curry or udon appeared on the table.

Akira's parents discovered over the three days of our visit that not only had I never been to Korea, but also that I did not even speak the Korean language. They marveled to see me eat *nattô*. I may have been hopeless and awkward as a prospective bride, but my mother-in-law was happy to find I wasn't really a foreigner after all.

"When I finally met you, I was relieved because you weren't so different from us," she said. "Though actually, some people bring home blonde, blue-eyed brides . . . so sure, I was worried, but when I thought about that, well you at least look the same as us . . . So I figured you couldn't be all that different."

After all the horror stories I'd heard about marriage with Japanese partners, their terrible relatives, and so on, this was the lucky reality that awaited me. I had braced myself for a charged atmosphere, a psychological resistance to their son marrying a Korean. What I found instead was a preoccupation with cultural and linguistic differences. What most worried my fiancé's parents was not the fact that I was a foreigner but, having accepted that I would marry their son, how they would get along with me.

And they worried also about future problems that could arise from my holding Korean citizenship: if a war should break out and I was suspected of spy activities, and so on.

Calling her son in his Tokyo room about something or other, his mother would let slip some worry of hers, such as, "If you have children, they could be teased at school for having a Korean parent, and have a hard time." Her worries stretched far into the future.

Nevertheless, Akira's parents thought of such problems as ours, and that if we wanted to marry each other, we should. Not once did they react viscerally to my being Korean, nor did they ever show any negative feelings in their attitude toward me. They may have had a web of complex emotions deep in their hearts, but they never showed even a filament.

Encountering so little resistance, it was we who wondered if it was really all right that it should be so easy.

If Akira said, "What about our relatives? Are any of them likely to say anything?" his parents would answer stoutly, "Don't you worry about that. If something comes up, we'll take care of it."

And so it was that during our engagement, and after our marriage, I've had no problems at all with my husband's parents. Not being the most dutiful daughter-in-law, however, I've often felt bad about the consideration I receive from my mother-in-law regarding my Korean nationality.

When we took our month-old baby daughter to the shrine for *omiya-mairi*,[4] she asked, "What do you do in Korea for this type of thing?"

"Gee, I don't know," I had to answer. "I think they must do something similar, but I wouldn't know what."

What she meant was, "If there is some analogous Korean custom, by all means let us observe it," and yet I could not even rise to the occasion.

Or when the baby started laughing and squealing, my mother-in-law would try to amuse her by crying, "*Banzai, banzai*!"[5] My husband and I would join in, cheering, "Banzai, banzai!" too, and the baby would laugh, and we adults would laugh to see her laughing.

But even after something as innocent as that, my mother-in-law would suddenly realize what she had been shouting, and say quietly to my husband, "I hope Nobuko-san didn't feel bad about that. We just think of it as a cheer, but 'banzai' has such militarist connotations, after all . . . I'd better watch what I say."

If she hears that a department store is having a Korean Fair, she'll go and buy *kimchi* and *ttok*.[6] She had her granddaughter's name written in Korean characters, and has it hanging on the wall. Her new interest in all things Korean is boundless.

Her son brought home a Japanese-Korean bride, and she tries to cherish the "Korean" part as much as the "Japanese," if not more. Yet she doesn't dwell on my being an ethnic Korean, and treats me as an ordinary member of the family. Through our daily interaction, we try to assess the best way of dealing with each other, and are arriving at a natural relationship. To my husband's mother, I am her daughter-in-law, nothing more. My Korean nationality seems to be to her just one among my many properties.

Her earlier sensitivity to things I didn't even think about, her fastidiousness in choosing words that wouldn't wound, so that she could hardly talk to me—these qualities are receding now as we get to know each other. Just as a pendulum swings wildly only to come to a stop in the middle, my mother-in-law and I, like our counterparts everywhere, are now engaged in the give-and-take of finding a comfortable middle ground as two individuals.

We don't carry the added baggage of "Japanese" and "Korean," one the oppressor and the other the victim. We know what the history is, but we look toward the future, to creating a strong and lasting relationship between us. If only such efforts could extend beyond the framework of one family to society at large, how nice that would be.

But reality is different, as we were reminded by one of Akira's relatives. He had previously worked in the village office of the family's permanent domicile in the country, and these were his words of advice:

"When you marry and start a new family register as head of your household, Akira, don't ask someone else to get you a copy when you need one, like you used to. You should go and get it yourself."

My husband's independent family register lists only two names: his own, and our daughter's. My being a foreigner means I am excluded from the Japanese register. A man with a daughter but no wife? If they were to look closely at the margin, they would see he was married to a Tokyo so-and-so, a South Korean citizen. But this being the countryside, who knows what the person seeing this would think, or say to others? And who wants to be the butt of tiresome gossip? Better to be careful and go yourself—this was what Akira's relative was trying to tell him.

My policy is to live normally, naturally, without hiding my ethnic background. On the other hand, I don't want to press my policy no matter what, to the point of distressing others (I call it courtesy). There's no point in having someone I don't even know, see, or ever talk to know that I am an ethnic Korean. And I don't enjoy being the subject of spiteful gossip by people with nothing better to talk about. For these practical reasons, we decided to accept this relative's advice—for now. It's a compromise that I hope to grow out of soon.

I wish I could live in Japanese society as an ethnic Korean without thinking about such things. I suppose for that to come true, we must tell the Japanese people around us that we are Korean, and through interaction as friends and neighbors, show them that *Zainichi* Koreans are ordinary people like themselves. Although we might know them, they hardly know us.

The very advice my husband received from his relative was given to me as well, but with the circumstances reversed.

It was on a visit to an ethnic Korean home. Our friend said, "It's better you don't tell my grandmother that Akira is Japanese."

His grandmother, like mine, was born in Korea and had a strong antipathy toward all Japanese. If she found out my husband was one, she'd probably pitch a fit. She wasn't the sort that would listen to conciliatory words about "understanding," and her age commanded respect, so we decided to keep quiet.

This grandmother got into a conversation with my husband. She said, "I'm telling you this because you're still a young boy: those Japanese are two-faced, so you watch out in your dealings with them. Be careful, you hear?"

My husband smiled widely, and nodded his agreement.

To my daughter (fighting our own prejudices)

"If you come right out and say it, she's the offspring of victim and oppressor," my husband said pompously.

Our little daughter was sitting beside him, holding a white teddy bear and sticking her finger into a penny-sized slit in his body to extract bits of sponge. Akira watched her out the corner of his eye, making sure she didn't put the stuffing into her mouth.

He wasn't serious, really. It was just a weighty way to say that our daughter has an ethnic Korean mother and a Japanese father. His true feelings are better expressed when he says, "Lucky little *haafu* girl,[7] you've got the blood of two peoples flowing in your veins. I can cut myself anywhere, and all that comes out is Japanese blood." He amuses himself by imagining our daughter will marry a Chinese one day, and their child will wed a Thai, and their child an Indian, and on and on.

The reason he names only Asian countries is that he prefers Asia to other continents; he entertains himself with visions of his descendants representing every Asian country in their veins. As a Japanese, he's probably not your ordinary, average father. But I much prefer his attitude to someone who would insist that his child is the daughter of a Japanese, and must therefore be raised as a Japanese.

"As a Japanese" and "as a Korean" are phrases we do not use in bringing up our daughter. For her to grow up and fashion her own mold is up to her. As parents, we try not to cast her in molds of our making. Neither of us is a perfect human being—so how can we mold someone else?

We are developing, ourselves. What we can do for our daughter is to provide her with all sorts of materials to help her develop freely as her own person. Obviously, these materials will reflect our values and biases, but that cannot be helped, I suppose—it was our daughter's fate to have the two of us as parents.

We have books in English, French, and German. We have Chinese and Korean books as well, and even some in Sanskrit and Egyptian hieroglyphics. Some of these we'd gotten from people at college, and they'd been sitting around unread and useless. Others had been bought by my husband, a language dabbler since student days. We'd decided that when we moved, we would take them all to a used bookstore, but now we are glad we didn't. We have them scattered around where they would naturally catch our daughter's eye and be part of her environment.

Whether she was aware of our intentions or not I do not know, but right after her first birthday she started picking these books up, pulling at their covers and trying to rip them away. Sometimes she holds up her achievement and leers at us. My husband has learned to recognize "paa . . . ppa!" as her battle cry, and hearing it draws an agonized moan from him each time.

But that's all right. As she grows up, she will see the alphabets and pictures of many different countries around her, as part of her everyday environment. If she can somehow sense the variety of people who use these different alphabets, that's all that matters. So saying, my book-loving husband restrains himself and tolerates her violence.

Watching the tiny tots' show on public television she laughs and shrieks with joy. She dances to the Korean song that introduces Korean lessons on the educational channel. I tried to teach her the English alphabet, pointing to the letter "A" and saying, "ay." This didn't go quite as planned, however; now every letter she sees is "ay"!

Regardless, we are like people possessed: we go out and buy records of all kinds of ethnic music, books showing various ethnic lifestyles . . . Just as my mother told me the Korean folk tale of *The Tiger Hunt at Geumgang Mountain*, I gave my daughter a picture book of the same story.

My husband is all pumped up about getting a short-wave radio so that she can hear voices from all over the world. "It might be good for her"—he constantly searches for things that will be useful to her when she grows up. So this is what parenthood is like. I used to ask my parents for so many things, and now I know what they were thinking when they gave them to me.

The more you have suffered, the more you want your children to have what you could not have yourself. This is why ethnic Korean parents work themselves to the bone: they will do without if it means their children will have a better life. Having grown up a self-centered child, I can only now appreciate this fact.

The travails of *Zainichi* Koreans are born of their inextricable relationship to the Japanese. Certainly, there may be some truth to my husband's words: "the offspring of victim and oppressor." But if that is the case, did I as the victim have to forgive my husband, the oppressor, to marry him?

The Japanese that came two generations before my husband deprived Koreans two generations before me of their names and their culture, and established a relationship of persecutor and persecuted: this is an indisputable fact.

Both my husband and I must impart to our daughter the history of what our forbears experienced. At the same time, we must also impart to her our current relationship. I was not directly deprived of my heritage by my husband or the Japanese of his generation. What disturbs me now is that discrimination against ethnic Koreans, with all its past history trailing behind it, is a grim reality in Japanese society today.

My husband and I, direct descendants of actual oppressors and victims, think about this issue together. We don't torment ourselves with oppressor/victim complexes; we have always seen each other as two people having some things in common and some things very different. We never harp on our differences or ignore them, but accept them for what they are and concentrate on what we share. Acknowledging each other for what we are, we joined hands as partners. Our relationship has nothing to do with forgiving or being forgiven.

The fruit of our partnership is our daughter.

Trying to discover great possibilities for this daughter comes of our one-sided hope as her parents. How will our daughter, with an ethnic Korean mother and a Japanese father, define herself? It is something that fills us with curiosity. At the same time, we wonder how people around her will look at her.

Even though she has Korean blood, I do not think she will be accepted by most *Zainichi* Koreans as one of their own. Rather, her having Japanese blood will make her seem to them an outsider. On the other hand, there will probably be Japanese who will not accept her because of her Korean blood. If I hide the fact that I am an ethnic Korean, then the Japanese might see her as Japanese—but I have no intention of doing anything so unnatural.

Neither Korean nor Japanese: how will my daughter react to people who classify her this way?

As long as you dwell excessively on such concepts as "nation" and "ethnicity," you will never find a way out—this is how I feel, and how my husband feels. My husband says we have to have the generosity of spirit to overlook the careless remarks of others. I say that, at the very least, being able to think deeply about the essential qualities of human beings through confronting the issue of discrimination—an issue so many Japanese overlook—has its own rewards. He claims this is a convoluted way of thinking.

There are *Zainichi* parents who, when their child comes home from school crying because he was teased, say, "Experiencing discrimination is the baptism that makes you a Korean. Be glad!" They are saying, in effect, that awareness of oneself as not Japanese, as an ethnic Korean, is triggered by experiencing discrimination. That even while forced to self-awareness in this twisted way, one arrives at a deeper understanding of one's identity. That there may be greater happiness in the profound experiences and opportunities for thought afforded us than can ever be experienced by those who discriminate against us. This may be true. But we believe there is a need to go one step further.

I live in Kumamoto now. Walking around town, I have been startled several times by seeing wheelchair-bound people moving freely around the streets, a sight one almost never sees in Tokyo. I've been taken aback seeing groups of Filipinas walking around the entertainment district downtown. I realized that I don't know what to do when confronted with people who are different from me.

I find myself staring at them, then self-consciously looking away. Am I differentiating, or discriminating? When faced with people different from me, I have to admit to a feeling of wanting to shrink back, before I try to discover what we have in common. This feeling is what leads to rejection of the "Other," and from there to hate. I still have to make the effort to push my flinching self forward, consciously.

I experience discrimination as an ethnic Korean. And yet I feel something close to prejudice toward the disabled and *Japayuki-san*. Persecuted can easily become persecutor.

There is no such thing as a hundred percent victim or a hundred percent oppressor. Japanese people, who discriminate against ethnic Koreans, are ridiculed sometimes as "yellow monkeys" when traveling in Europe or the USA. A Japanese friend of mine, who transferred to West Germany, had a neighbor push her way into the kitchen, saying, "Coming from a place like Japan, you probably don't even know how to work a gas stove."

The tendency to discriminate that lies deep within all human beings emerges in society in many guises. Discrimination against ethnic Koreans in Japan, and the discrimination that my daughter may experience as a person of mixed ethnicity, are just two of those guises.

I have many things I want to tell my daughter, and ideals of how I want her to grow up. I have no intention of pushing these things upon her. But as one weak human being fighting the prejudice in those around me and the prejudice inside myself, I intend to tell her this: You too are a weak human being with prejudices. I want you to look that fact straight in the eye. How do you live without being swayed by your prejudices? That's what I want you to think about.

March 1, 1990 (Taejon, South Korea): postscript to the paperback edition

I am living in South Korea now. Whenever I climb into a taxi, the driver asks me, "Why do you talk like that? You sound like an American." In other words, my Korean is funny.

It's been ten months now since I came over here. I practiced a lot, but there are some sounds I just cannot produce. It's hard to pronounce sounds that don't exist in Japanese. This is akin to my discomfort with Korean customs such as walking arm in arm with someone of the same sex, or casually touching someone on the knee during conversation. Or my resistance to the deep-rooted Confucianism of this country, where a boy is required no matter what to conduct a Buddhist memorial service, where everything from herbal medicines and special diets to myriad superstitions are mobilized to conceive male children, and if that fails, women do not hesitate to have abortions, so that now the ratio of male to female newborns is skewed out of all proportion.

I've taken to casually calling myself "linguistically Japanese" lately, to describe this sense of being neither Korean nor Japanese. I borrowed this from my three-year-old daughter who, wanting to say she was Japanese— "*Nihon-jin*"— mistakenly called herself a "*Nihongo-jin*." "Nihongo" is the Japanese language—my language. Calling myself "linguistically Japanese" as opposed to "ethnically Korean," "Nihongo-jin" rather than "*Zainichi* Korean," with all the tensions and meanings that lurk beneath that expression, makes me feel much lighter.

I want to dissociate myself sometimes from the heavily meaningful label of "*Zainichi* Korean." It's not precise enough to describe what I am now. And I think it's better not to try so hard to define myself with a single phrase, anyway. I am what I am, and I want to start from there, without any tags or labels.

Two and a half years after *A Perfectly Ordinary Ethnic Korean in Japan* came into the world, this is how I feel.

April 28, 2001 (Kumamoto, Japan): for the day-to-day happiness of you and impure me

My daughter, who was a year old when *A Perfectly Ordinary Ethnic Korean in Japan* first came out, is now fifteen. For two years while she was growing up, we lived in Taejeon, South Korea, from 1989 to 1991. My husband, who works for the Kumamoto prefectural government, was sent to the provincial government office of Chungcheong Nam Do, which had formed sister ties with Kumamoto. He was the first Japanese civil servant to work in a Korean government office since the country's independence.

Our daughter was three at the time of our move, and in no time, through playing with the children in our neighborhood, was thinking, talking and even behaving in Korean. I, her ethnic Korean mother, was having a harder time getting used to the language and ways of my new environment. My daughter would sometimes take my hand and lead me over to a group of mothers, forcing me to overcome my diffidence by throwing me willy-nilly into Korean life through these interactions.

And now, ten years after we left Korea, my daughter has forgotten virtually all of her Korean. The only words she still uses are those for mother and father: she calls me *Omma*, and her father *Appa*. At home, on the street, at school, it's "Omma!" and "Appa!" when she wants to get our attention. She uses these foreign-sounding words naturally in Japan, without self-consciousness. They exist alongside the precious memories of the time she spent with her Korean friends, and these memories teach her not to fear encounters with people having different languages and cultures from her own, but to treasure them instead.

Now at fifteen, she talks with sparkling eyes about wanting to learn lots of languages and travel all over the world. And watching her, I am discovering the possibilities in store for the generations coming of age in the twenty-first century. Unlike us, the children of the twentieth century, she is not bound by the confines of nation and race, or drawn into confrontation by such limiting concepts. She has the freedom to connect with people irrespective of their nationality or ethnicity, to make her world that much richer and larger. And the lightness and sureness of her steps as she sets out to do so gives me hope.

Nevertheless, there is still a lot for us, the children of the twentieth century, to do to make those possibilities a reality for the next generation. In that sense, the last century is not over yet. As one of its children, what is there that I can do? Asking myself this question today is another step in a journey I began long ago, with *A Perfectly Ordinary Ethnic Korean in Japan*.

That work was my first attempt to voice my ideas as I struggled to define my identity and carve out my own path as someone born into the status of "*Zainichi* Korean," someone who belonged neither to Japan nor to Korea. It evoked a huge response in Japan, and generated a great deal of argument in the *Zainichi* community as well. With regard to the title, there were those who questioned how "perfectly ordinary" someone who graduated from the elite University of Tokyo Law Faculty could be, while my self-definition as someone "neither Korean nor Japanese" drew a vast range of responses, both positive and negative, hostile and sympathetic. The most scathing criticism was that my work "mocked ordinary *Zainichi* Koreans who [were] desperately battling discrimination in their daily lives, and [was] nothing more than a confession of [my] own ignorance and inadequacy." This came from people in the ethnic Korean community who were active at the core of political movements to abolish compulsory fingerprinting and to improve the legal status of Japanese Koreans.

I had, of course, expected stinging criticism of this sort from committed activists in the political sphere. And yet, nay, all the more for that reason, I had chosen to use the words, "perfectly ordinary." This was because I wanted to indicate, to the people I wanted my voice to reach, where I was coming from as a writer, and what sort of language I would be using. My choice of title was strategic in terms of realizing my aims. What I would like to stress particularly here is that my title, *A Perfectly Ordinary Ethnic Korean in Japan*, was suggested first and foremost by my desired readership: perfectly ordinary Japanese. No matter how justified a demand for rights, raising one's voice to assert it and trying to win those rights in a movement felt to me like a special activity. There are many Japanese, my friends and neighbors among them, who prefer to steer clear of such special activities and try to live ordinary lives. These were the people I wanted to reach. I wanted to find an opening to start a dialogue with them, to give rise to understanding and compassion on their parts for us to live together.

At the time of my writing this work, the steady efforts of political *Zainichi* movements were making headway and winning results. At the same time, the public image of ethnic Koreans in Japan was becoming identified with such political activism. The more the voices of *Zainichi* in the special sphere of the "movement" were being heard, the less visible other *Zainichi* trying to get through their day-to-day lives became in the eyes of the Japanese. It was from the standpoint of one living an invisible "day-to-day *Zainichi* life" that I wanted to address

Japanese readers: not with the aggressive, confrontational words of an activist, but with the language and stories of day-to-day life, of ordinary life. I believed that, in so doing, I could reach people who had no interest in *Zainichi* issues as political issues. An argument, no matter how sound, is meaningless if it does not reach its audience. Unless couched in words used every day by that audience, the argument is in danger of slipping right past without being heard. Unheard, it doesn't have the power to change anything. Thus it was that, wanting to communicate the day-to-day reality of life for a *Zainichi* Korean to the ordinary Japanese in whose midst we live, I chose "perfectly ordinary" as the key phrase in my title.

My words as an ethnic Korean in Japan were those of someone who had spent her entire life confronted, from both the discrimination of Japanese society and the ideology of the *Zainichi* community, with only two choices: either assimilate and become Japanese, or regain your ethnic identity and become a Korean. I was also speaking as one of a generation who was born and raised in Japan, who knew no other home. There were many like myself, who found it difficult to live their day-to-day lives according to the strict either-or proposition above, who struggled against its rigidity, agonized, and were plagued by doubts.

I wanted to find another way, a new way of living my life that was not shaped by this dichotomy. The phrase "neither Japanese nor Korean" that I used in *A Perfectly Ordinary Ethnic Korean in Japan* was my point of departure. But this formulation still betrays an absorption with the Japan-Korea dichotomy. It was my experience of living in Korea for two years that helped me finally realize this fact.

The greatest impact of my time in Korea was my almost daily exposure to the relentlessness of "ethnic identity" as the centripetal force driving national selfhood, a force that by definition pursues purity while systematically rooting out contaminating influences. Japanese Koreans like me, stamped by the culture in which we were born and raised, are hardly welcomed as brethren: we simply become *zaikan Zainichi* Koreans (Koreans in Japan in Korea). So what about the "Korean blood" that runs in our veins? It doesn't mean a whole lot. In a country where history is taught with a focus on the repressions and depredations of the colonial era, the agenda is to recover the purity of Korean culture following its ravagement by the Japanese. For a nation with such an agenda, purity is prized above all other values.

Someone like me, whose pronunciation, intonation, and idioms when speaking Korean are inflected with the echoes of Japan, whose physical demeanor and even facial expressions are imbued with Japaneseness, is disqualified as a member of the Korean people because of those contaminating influences, in other words, because of their low grade of purity. To be accepted within the ethnic circle, they must purge themselves of their impurities.

But I am a mixture, a compound creation. Faced with an ethnicity that defines itself in terms of crystallized purity, I found myself confronted with a new dichotomy: "Japan or Korea" had been replaced by "alloyed or pure."

If purity is maintained by cleansing out impurities and foreign substances, then doing so *ipso facto* requires building protective barriers against the outside, a situation inviting antagonism. How do we open up this dangerous concept of "purity" to accept difference, variety, and intermixture? For me, an impure entity, this is a question of great urgency that must be asked if I want to live a full and happy life. After all, if purity is a desirable condition in this world, whether I live in Korea or Japan or anywhere else, I will always be something that must be cleansed or eliminated. At the same time, this is a question that goes back to the twentieth century, a time of war and confrontation, nationalism and racism, displacement, exile and refugees from the viewpoint of the dispossessed, with the aim of ensuring that the new century now unfolding does not end up as a repetition of the last.

And so, I seem to have come to some rather large themes in writing this reflection, but my basic stance has not changed since *A Perfectly Ordinary Ethnic Korean in Japan*. As someone who wants to enjoy happiness in my day-to-day life, I am always trying to reach you, who wants the same thing. I'm saying, "Let's think about this together, and let's work together, so that all of us can live together in peace and happiness." Everything, I believe, starts from there.

Notes

1 *A Perfectly Ordinary Ethnic Korean in Japan* was originally published in a special issue of the *Asahi Journal* in 1986. It received the 1986 Asahi Journal Non-Fiction Award, and was extensively expanded for its publication in book form in 1987. The work has been translated in its entirety, and this selection, with the exception of the final reflection dated April 2001, was taken from the translated manuscript. The author and translator are seeking a publisher for the English-language version of this book.

2 Chinese and Korean names, which like Japanese names are written using Chinese characters, are often pronounced in Japan according to their Japanese pronunciation.

3 *Omiai* marriages are often called "arranged marriages" in English, but the *omiai*'s most common function now is to meet eligible singles through matchmakers, as prospective partners but without obligation to marry.

4 First shrine visit for a baby, considered especially auspicious, sometime in the first month or two after birth. Many babies were formerly given their names at this time by the shrine priest.

5 *Banzai* literally means "ten thousand years," and was originally used as a cheer wishing long life, although now it is used as "Hurray!" is used in English. "*Tennô-heika banzai*!," heard frequently during World War II, but used even now, simply means "Long live the Emperor!"

6 A round rice cake made with sesame oil and/or wheat gluten and eaten in a stew at New Year's or other celebratory occasions.

7 *Haafu*, or "half," refers to people who are half-Japanese (and usually half-white).

3 Between two shores

Transnational projects and Filipina wives in/from Japan

Nobue Suzuki

Synopsis

While tales about Filipinas in diaspora have attracted a global audience, those living in Japan have been referred to as "entertainers" who work in *the* "sex industry." Filipinas in Japan have thus been constructed as the "immoral" Other under the gender regimes of Japan and the Philippines. Based on ethnographic research, I explore the meanings and possibilities of the practices of Filipina wives of Japanese men in public charity events organized by the women themselves in Japan and the Philippines. Dislocated from their subjective identities, Filipina wives in the Tokyo area have deployed images and symbols of socially sanctioned (Christian) wives and mothers in these events. Although ironically participating in Orientalist and sexist discipline in the context of their events, their practices nevertheless constitute a way to create affirmative spaces for themselves on the margins of the two nation-states.

> Our main purpose was to counter-attack the media blitz on the plight of Filipino women working in Japan as bar hostesses that was wrecking havoc on [the] Philippine image in Japan.
>
> (Philippine Women's League of Japan 2004)

Recent stories about Filipino women (Filipinas) in diaspora as domestic workers, "mail-order brides" and "entertainers" have attracted a global audience. As the quote above suggests, the women also become subjected to the discipline of stereotypical images constructed locally in their "host" societies. While such stereotypes often "wreck havoc" on the newcomers, other images the immigrants themselves create constitute spaces for negotiation and change, thereby providing alternative sights and sites for perceiving the subordinate group (Trinh 1991: 107–116). In this light this chapter explores the meanings of, and possibilities for, constituting such spaces by examining the practices of urban Filipina wives in selected public events organized by the women themselves.

In Japan, many Japanese view Filipinas as "brides," being incorporated into rural households for social reproduction (Suzuki 2003b). The ethnicizing prefix *Filipina* or *Asian*, as in *Firipinjin hanayome* (Filipina brides), marks their fantasized "good old feminine virtue," which, in marriage promoters' eyes, modern Japanese women have "lost." However, as will be described in greater detail in this chapter, Japanese also commonly refer to other Filipinas with the defiling label "*Japayuki* (Japan-bound)" entertainers,[1] a term considered to be equivalent to prostitutes. Similar binary categories of womanhood have also disciplined Japanese women by sanctioning their conduct based on ideologically and institutionally defined "appropriate" gender roles and demeanors. If they step out of their gendered niches, they are punished through various social mechanisms including stigmatization. However, the particular labels attached to Filipinas push them to the extremes of the wife/whore polarity in Japan's gender scheme.[2] Regardless of the actual, lived experiences of immigrant Filipinas, in the past in the Philippines and at present in Japan, Filipinas have thus been subjected to a disciplining discourse within their host society.

Much of the literature on Filipinas in Japan has thus far focused on issues surrounding human rights and the social and political-economic structures which make the women subjects of discipline. Seldom is attention paid to the mundane processes in which the women themselves try to resist and rework such ideological yoking for their own identity construction. In this paper, I situate Filipinas' own views and public practices in relation to the discourse of "Filipina," which is deeply embedded in the gender regimes of Japan and the Philippines. My approach is inspired by recent studies of gender as performative and negotiated practice, which is most intense at the borders of cultures and nationalities (Butler 1990; Ortner 1996). Ong and Peletz (1995: 3) have further suggested that gender is not only negotiable but also evolving in complex hierarchical relations, although it may yield unintended consequences and the ironic reproduction of the dominant social schemes.

Between May 1993 and July 1999, I met over 100 Filipina wives in the Tokyo area, both regularly and through chance encounters.[3] As a Japanese woman researcher with some competence in their language (Tagalog) who was willing to listen to their stories, many Filipinas found me "amusing." I was soon asked to join several groups of Filipinas, and many women also invited me to their homes for casual gatherings. From August 1995 to July 1999, I also served as an interpreter in numerous public events organized by these women. While such rapport as I enjoyed did not eradicate the inequality of the researcher-informant relationship, by recognizing them as cultural agents whose messages insist on being heard, I aim to provide Filipina wives "a point of access" to put their views into public circulation (Ong 1995).

The political economy of gender in the Philippines

The construction of images of Filipinas and their social positions in Japan are tightly embedded in the web of the Philippine political economy and the women's gendered positions in the international labor market. In Philippine culture, the word *mahinhin* (demure, virtuous) represents ideal womanhood. *Mahinhin* indexes the purity of the Virgin Mary and describes women who preserve the moral values of the home, especially among middle-class Catholic households (Siapno 1995: 227). Conversely, "the seductive and sexual female is usually young and unmarried…or a widow" (Siapno 1995: 225). Under an ailing economy since the Marcos regime in the 1970s, the Filipino ruling elite exploited these ideas of women's sexuality for political leverage and economic gain (Richter 1989). Women's gendered and sexual services have been massively deployed in international tourism and "rest and recreation" services for the US military. Women who work in these sectors have been variously referred to as "entertainers" and "hospitality girls" in the "entertainment industry" (Miralao, Carlos and Santos 1990; Wihtol 1982). These sexualized women are contrasted to the valorized morality preserved by the Virgin Mary.

Starting in the 1970s, Japanese men began joining "sex tours" to various tourist sites in East and Southeast Asia. By the late 1970s, they constituted 29 percent of the tourists going to Manila (Eviota 1992: 138).[4] These "sex tours" were soon vigorously protested against by women's groups, initially in Korea and later in the Philippines (Muroi and Sasaki 1997). Such protests resulted in Japanese state intervention against the organization of sex tours from the early 1980s (Muroi and Sasaki 1997). A series of crime cases committed against Japanese in the Philippines around this time also contributed to the decrease in visitors to the Philippines (Richter 1989: 65).

In recent Philippine history, overseas employment has served as one of the most important sources of national revenue and political stability. While Filipinas have long been economically active, they began to take jobs abroad starting from the 1960s. By 1995, they came to account for over half of all Filipino workers overseas (Torres 1996). Women take jobs abroad because of their strong concerns, among others, for social mobility and the welfare of their families. Many Filipinas are unable to respond to such concerns in the domestic job market because of un/underemployment and because they receive lower wages than men do (Eviota 1992). As capitalist logic requires cheap labor, the majority of migrant women overseas also take "women's jobs" as domestic helpers, nurses and entertainers.

As the number of explicit sex tours dwindled and as overseas employment has become an option for many, numerous Filipinas began to work as entertainers in Japan and immigration authorities called 1979 "*Japayuki* Year One" (*Japayuki gannen*) (Yamatani 1985).[5] Because they primarily work in bars and hotels as hostesses,[6] singers and dancers, Japanese, Filipinos and others alike have commonly aligned "*Japayuki*" and entertainers in Japan with "entertainers" in the Philippines. The continuing domination of such a pervasive "prostitute" image of Filipinas symbolically places *all* Filipinas in the time-space confinement of *the* "sex industry" in the night and outside of the home. One Filipina wife of a Japanese man related to me her encounter with a Japanese woman whose comment exemplifies this time-space containment: "Filipinas will never survive in Japan because they know nothing but making and serving alcohol to men and they will always prefer 'night life.' "

"Filipina entertainers" in Japan

> The brown, naked body of Maria, the stripper, was lit up [on stage] and a shabby old man was leaning over her. As he began panting with sexual arousal, she inserted him into her body.
>
> (Yamatani 1985: book cover)

By the mid-1980s, the Japanese media circulated and consumed tales about migrant Filipina workers as newsworthy objects because they "make good cinematic subjects with their beauty and other marketable stories referring to them as 'highly educated mothers' " (Yamatani 1985: 28). In one of the most influential reports on Filipinas in Japan, filmmaker Yamatani Tetsuo called Filipinas "a convenient public toilet" and contended that this is "a reality of Southeast Asian women in Japan" (1985: 194). According to the publisher, Yamatani's book not only sold well, but it also made the word "*Japayuki*" popular. Magazines, tabloids and newspapers voluminously disseminated allegories of *"Japayuki"* as the "immoral" Other, linking sex work with eroticized bodies and criminal syndicates operating forced prostitution. Other articles have focused on Filipinas as women from a poor country "working for the yen" in Japan (Sellek 1996). The women in such accounts have been portrayed as hostesses and whores choosing to work at night in order to achieve their own ends, with some even depicted as deceiving their clients and intentionally becoming pregnant to bear "Japanese" children (Suzuki 2000: 149–155).[7]

Publications critical of these conditions and representations began appearing around 1990, written by groups and individuals concerned about the exploitation of female sexuality and human rights (Ishiyama 1989; Oshima and Francis 1989). ALS (1990), for example, disclosed a case in which a gangster bar owner confined four Filipinas in a caged apartment to force them to serve men's sexual desires. Despite their intentions, these accounts have ironically reinforced the linkages between "Filipina," "entertainment" and crime by widely circulating the plight of Filipinas engaged in prostitution, forced or otherwise.

Native voices have also contributed to the homogenized image of all Filipinas as localized in "the sex industry." Created by the powerful mechanisms of the mass media, one particular Filipina actress also known as "the Star of *Japayuki*" (*The Asahi Shinbun*, September 4, 1996: 3), Ruby Moreno, has come to embody the eroticized "Filipina." The media construction of this actress seems to replicate popular stories of the "*Japayuki*." In the early 1990s, Moreno began to appear in television dramas and movies mostly as an "entertainer." Two pieces of her work in particular contributed to her fame. She won a number of major awards and rose to stardom as a result of her role in the film *All Under the Moon*. She played a "*Japayuki*" hostess who was also the lover of a man with whom she repeatedly engaged in steamy sex. She also released a collection of nude photographs, and with the profits "cleared all of her debts" (*The Asahi Shinbun*, September 4, 1996: 3). She "confessed," that, "although I played the roles of stereotypical Filipinas, in a sense, it was genuinely my life itself" (Moreno 1994: 146–147).

Dominated by such images of "entertainers" in the pleasure zones in the Philippines as well as by the Japanese "media blitz," global spectators voyeuristically assume that the term "*Japayuki* entertainer" is a euphemism for a "prostitute" involved in sex, lies, crime and miscegenation, and that all entertainers work in a singularly conceived "sex industry" (see, for example, Douglass 2000). In reality, while a primary function of bar hostesses in the Japanese context is to facilitate *social* intercourse and while their work is gendered and sexualized, it is not necessarily "sex work" (i.e. coitus) (Allison 1994). Where certain types of establishments do (forcefully) require sex as part of their services, at other bars hostesses entertain their clients with frivolous conversations. This is also true for Filipina entertainers. Sitting on a couch in a "Philippine club," a Filipina hostess from the rural Philippines, for instance, gave me one of her favorite examples: "I told my customers that when we squat in the toilet, a pig may be waiting to clean our bottom! That's why pork in the Philippines tastes so good!"

During such conversations, male customers may indeed approach hostesses sexually. Some women cried over their mistreatment as "the worst experience in the club"; others, however, confronted rude, lecherous behavior by men, including gangsters. Another former "talent"—as they call themselves—said, "When they (tried to) touch me, I took my [5-inch] high-heel off and hit them with the pointed heel! They learned a lesson!" Out of the 50 (former) talents I met, only one mentioned that she had performed strip dances. Working as entertainers thus does not only mean doing commercial sex work. While the masculine ego may be pleased with entertainers' behavior, the women also negotiate and assert their rights, and are proud of themselves.[8]

Urban Filipina wives and transnational projects

While Filipina entertainers have attracted a global gaze, intermarried Filipinas in the Tokyo area actually comprise the largest estimated population among all registered Filipinos in Japan. Of the 169,359 registered Filipinos in 2002, 57.0 percent (96,552) held spouse and related visas while 27.5 percent (46,547) held "entertainer" visas (Ministry of Justice 2003). These categories are not distinguished by sex; however, statistical data suggest that the large majority are wives.[9] Nearly half (40.6 percent; 68,740) of legal Filipinos—both female and male—live in the Tokyo area, followed by 16.6 percent (28,026) in the Tōkai area (Aichi, Shizuoka and Gifu prefectures). Moreover, since 1996 Filipina-Japanese marriages have comprised the second largest group after marriages between Chinese women and Japanese men (Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare 1993–2003).

Twenty years after "*Japayuki* Year One," many Filipinas and their spouses continue to feel that their public images are still "wrecking havoc," despite their striving to "raise the low, disparaging Filipina image for the sake of ourselves and our families." For example, married Filipinas as residents of Japanese communities now actively participate in governmentally organized foreigners' forums to appeal to local administrators about various issues and problems. Terada Yasunori, a Japanese filmmaker married to a Filipina talent, has made a documentary which tried, "against Yamatani," to "portray ordinary Filipinos and ordinary people's lives" (Terada 1994: 14). However, even Terada's attempt was quickly rejected by some as being in "search of Ruby Moreno" (Kaneko 1995).

By rejecting these efforts to speak for themselves, the writings of even well-meaning writers have tended to funnel representations of Filipina diasporans into those of women with uniform, truncated and troubled lives. Moreover, as Ong (1993: 353) contends, in social-scientific knowledge production "the researcher-writer can sometimes even profit from informants' tragedies."[10] What has prevented Filipina wives' voices from being heard may then also lie in observers' desire to have a unified "immoral" Other for their own privileged positionings. As such, for Filipinas' practices to be recognized, as Spivak maintains, we as researchers must "unlearn" our privileged knowledge about them and *listen* to marginalized people (Landry and MacLean 1996: 4–6). We should also "pause and look more closely than is required" (Trinh 1991: 114) to see beyond the pervasive construction of Filipinas in/from Japan.[11]

Forming groups

> [A] program of action needs a concerted effort and cannot be effectively done alon[e] by a few. Not only by Filipino wives in a given area alone to act but by collective of all Filipino Japanese wives all over Japan and in the Philippines. Then, what has been kept in silence will become a louder voice to shape better our common future.[*sic*]
>
> (Filipina Circle for Advancement and Progress 1999)[12]

Recent postcolonial studies have argued against descriptions of a minority people that homogenize individuals within that group (Lowe 1991; Ong 1995). By naming a group, we risk recreating a bounded, unchanging representation similar to the very construct that we want to dismantle. However, as the above message suggests, when the group is juxtaposed with an out-group, its members may wear a unified identity for the purposes of their own agenda. In the case of Filipinas in the Tokyo area, the image "Filipina" marks the women's nationality, gender and sexuality. If we conceptualize gender as social relations, urban Filipina wives then refashion their identities vis-à-vis images both of Filipina "whores" and Japanese "virgins." Thus, while "Filipina" popularly refers to "entertainers," Filipino women themselves often employ "Filipina" in the singular to unite their collective identity, as in "the plight of [the] Filipina." Recognizing this collective agency of Filipinas is one way to contribute to a "counter-attack," which in turn allows us to see beyond what is otherwise deemed unimaginable.

While the prevailing discourse has constructed "Filipinas" as located on the negative side on the binary gender scale, many Filipina wives in Metropolitan Tokyo with whom I associated actually belong(ed), over time, to both categories, based on their occupations. Of the 84 women whose manner of meeting their husbands are clearly known to me, 50 women work(ed) at bars and met their husbands there. Twenty wives met their husbands while the men were sojourning in the Philippines as professionals and tourists. Seven wives married through introductions by relatives or private marriage agencies. Three did so while visiting relatives in Japan and two were working as professionals (e.g. English teachers). There were also a former student and a tourist to Japan. Some of the women continued to or began to work as hostesses after marriage in order to augment their Japanese family incomes and to remit money to their families in the Philippines.

The different routes used to arrive at their marriages in Japan may reflect, to varying degrees, the women's socioeconomic and occupational backgrounds both in the past and the present (Suzuki 2002, 2003a: chapter 2). Discontent with "*Japayuki*" images also varies among the women depending on their routes to Japan. Nonentertainers are often frustrated at being identified with the entertainer *image* per se. As one noted, "being a Filipina here in Japan is to be ridiculed as '*Japayuki*.' " Wives who are (former) talents are even unhappier about the *stigma* attached to their work in entertainment industries. One ex-talent aptly said, "I didn't do anything wrong! So, why do people make evil remarks about us?" Although such gaps in interpretation may unite them in forming groups, Filipinas may organize themselves based on their present familial identities of wife and mother. These identities create in the women a stronger sense of dwelling in Japan than is common among other transmigrants.

One Filipina group leader related her motivation to form a group, saying: "We may come from different backgrounds, but we face the same task of overcoming the odds of change and [the odds against] the Filipina images as good wives and good mothers." Thus, while a number of Filipinas in the Tokyo area, at one point or another worked as entertainers at bars, they deploy acts and symbols of "good girls" (wife/mother) to deflect the pervasive negative view of "bad girls" (entertainer = whore). As shown below, this deployment of alternative images may be intensified in various public projects organized by the women.

One Filipina wives' group is the Japan Society of Filipina Wives (JSFW),[13] which has some 20 members. In addition to struggling to adjust to new social environments by challenging the discursive construction of "Filipina," the group has raised community consciousness and solidarity among the women and has been active in organizing public events. JSFW was established by a nontalent Filipina, Anna, who came to Japan in the early 1980s upon her marriage to a Japanese man. Her activism started in the late 1980s, when her son, then in kindergarten, came home sobbing. He had been upset by his classmates bullying him because his mother is Filipina. This episode happened just at the time when numerous academic-popular reports in Japan were loudly publicizing the "problems" of "Filipina entertainers." In talking about this incident as the motivation for her group activism, Anna referred to the defiled constructions of "entertainers" in Japan: "Whores! Whores! Whores! Not all Filipinas in Japan are whores!" While this group does not necessarily represent all groups of Filipinas in Japan, its activities and lines of thought are shared by many.

Similar to other groups, JSFW members originally met each other at churches and in their local neighborhoods in the early 1990s and started providing mutual support. To introduce themselves as wives and mothers to Japanese, they began holding public events, which incorporated diverse cultural (re)presentations. Such events have included public symposia, community festivals, demonstrations of Filipino cuisine and Japanese speech contests. One of their aims is to project

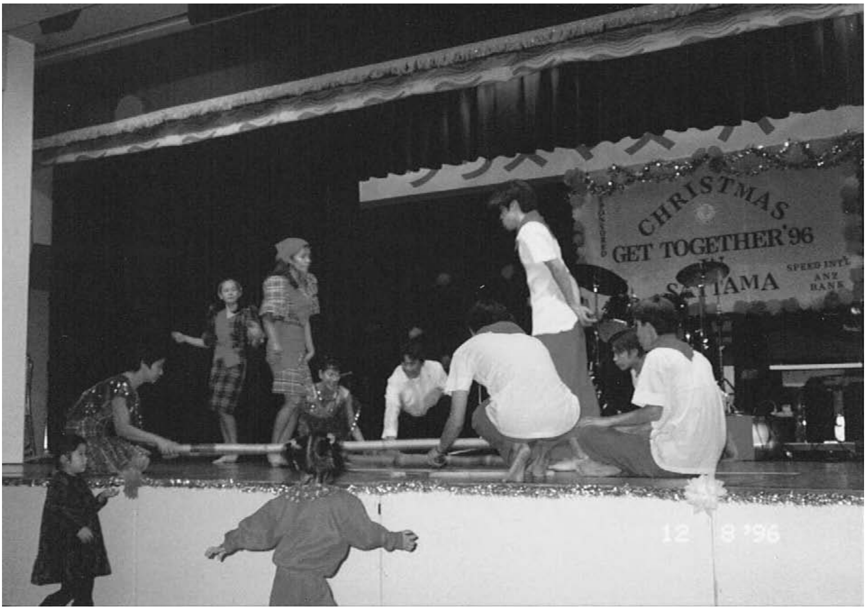

Figure 3.1 Filipina-Japanese children on stage at a Christmas party. (Photo: Nobue Suzuki)

their own images; as many women I spoke to declared, "We aren't Japanese but we, too, are ordinary housewives," echoing Paul Gilroy's (1991) argument about the Black diaspora's struggles for different ways to be "British." Charity programs are also commonly organized for recipients in the Philippines because, as a JSFW member put it, "although Japanese people seldom understand this deeply, volunteer work and donations are extremely important for us Christians." However, donation programs organized by urban Filipinas do not only reflect their religious beliefs. For Filipinas in Japan, such transnational projects also encode signs of accommodation and resistance to the ideological gender constructions of the "*Japayuki*" Filipinas disseminated in urban Japan and beyond.

Charity Christmas party

Recent studies of transnationalism have shown that contemporary diasporans live simultaneously within two or more nation-states (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc 1994). Because of various forms of inequality and discrimination, these transmigrants mediate experiences "of living here and remembering/desiring another place" (Clifford 1994: 311). Through translocal exchanges of symbols and materials, they reconfigure space so that they dwell in and travel between their home and host societies. The JSFW's public events likewise demonstrate the ways in which these women attempt to relocate their subjectivities between Japan and the Philippines.

Framed around charitable programs, Filipina transmigrants try to create sights and sites to project themselves as altruistic Catholic wives and mothers. Like the former "housewife" President Corazon Aquino, who cashed in her image as a stoic Catholic widow to gain power, Filipinas' public events and charity programs are attempts to unharness themselves from their symbolic yoking as "*Japayuki*" through the workings of cultural capital and feminine power. With the deployment of images and symbols of the widely accepted "good wife, good mother," the JSFW women are reconfiguring their space in the interstices of the hegemonic gender cartography. As Anna once articulated, "Unless we initiate actions by ourselves, we are only going to lose our space in this society!" As in other dominant-subordinate relations, their national and gender identities are articulated in everyday, familiar and habitual practices. While their practices may involve a self-exoticizing process, without such action their identities would continue to be discursively dislocated and what would remain would only be the notorious negative image of the "*Japayuki*."

The JSFW reaches the climax of its annual activities in December, when it has held a charity Christmas party entitled *Pamaskong Handog* (literally, Christmas Gift; hereafter *Pamasko*) since its establishment in the early 1990s. This event was started when Anna "suggested to the members that the group should help the less fortunate in the Philippines enjoy Christmas." The members agreed to organize a Christmas party because the event would not only allow them to raise funds but also to introduce different dimensions of Filipino culture and show the women's charitable spirit to the Japanese and to their own children. Although Anna also hopes to ultimately incorporate issues such as the education of bicultural children and social conditions in the Philippines, food and stage performances serve as the best compromise for their charity party.

Since its conception, *Pamasko* has been held in early December at the church hall in the community where the members live. Prior to the party, members put advertisements in local newspapers, with the assistance of sympathetic reporters and sell tickets to their Japanese and Filipino relatives and friends. Over the years, total ticket sales have numbered between 80 and 300. Despite the trouble involved in organizing such a big affair, *Pamasko* has continued to be held because, as Anna explained:

> We have been in Japan for quite some time, but we cannot [fully] join in Japanese society [because] there has been an overwhelming amount of negative images about the Philippines and Filipinos. We really didn't know how to express our identities. By holding this Christmas party, we can introduce our culture and food with the hope that the Japanese will begin to understand us.

To assert their respectable memberships in both Japan and the Philippines, the JSFW also invites Philippine Embassy officials, Japanese national and local politicians, local administrators, nongovernmental organization members and the media to the event. Like other Filipina groups, the JSFW requests that these guests give speeches or send official messages to be printed in the event programs, thereby demonstrating formal recognition of the women.[14]

Pamasko always begins with the display of the Philippine national flag and the playing of the Philippine national anthem, followed by a Catholic mass, in an otherwise largely non-Christian country. After these, in each part of *Pamasko*, the members emphasize different aspects of Philippine culture such as performing arts, the meaning of Christmas, skits on Filipino life and culinary culture. The 1994 *Pamasko* was "one of the best events [they] ever had." After the opening ceremonies, a skit about traditional courtship rituals ("*Pagliligawan 1950*") was featured in which the children of the members pantomimed to a narrative prepared by the women. The narration emphasized the strictness of relationships between unmarried women and men in the Philippines, where men were expected not to even touch unmarried women. In order to pursue the lady in his heart, the wooing man had to voluntarily work hard to demonstrate his worthiness to the woman and her family. Only after this would the woman's parents allow the man to marry their daughter. As Emilda, one of the group's choreographers and a former talent, explained, the skit was meant to show the Japanese audience that "in the Philippines before, women were not easy targets of sexual affairs or even marriage and were treated with respect and care." Although there was a time lag between the skit's 1950s setting and the present, this piece sharply contrasts with current images of the sexually available "*Japayuki*."

While theatrical presentations may not be included every year, the party has always offered Filipino "home cooking"[15] and traditional dances. For example, in 1994, by serving Filipino cuisine after the wedding scene in the skit, the JSFW members drew on the gender ideal in which, both in Japan and in the Philippines, women are supposed to become "good wives, good mothers" who nurture their families well. In addition to repeated announcements about "home cooking," the wives were also visible cooking and serving in the kitchen, which was open to the hall. In the midst of frantic work feeding dozens of guests, the women said, "we cook and enjoy seeing others eating well, as do wives and mothers everywhere!" The dishes, furthermore, were usually carefully selected and included fried spring rolls, fried (rice) noodles and stews. Food unfamiliar to most Japanese, such as pork blood stew, was avoided so as to bring their Japanese guests closer into their "home." Yet, the table was also accentuated with ceremonial Filipino food like grilled whole piglet and ham. With such an arrangement, the women hoped that their "Japanese guests would enjoy [Filipino] culinary culture as tastefully different." The JSFW women wanted their cuisine to communicate and reflect that their own identities as "different but ordinary wives and mothers" were also, by extension, "tasteful."

Performing arts are generally fixed features when Filipinos gather, and music and dance particularly enliven their party spirits. According to a leader of another Filipina group, "We *have to* have singing and dancing in our events; otherwise, it's not Filipino!" Through their version of entertainment, as well, the JSFW women demonstrate the ideal Filipina womanhood and affectionate relationships. Although the dances Emilda arranged are popularly performed by many other

Filipinos elsewhere in Japan, she invested much meaning into the dances in order to intervene into the Japanese fantasy of the eroticized Filipina body. She related to me that, combined with the courtship skit, she wanted to deliver her message that: "Filipinas are *mahinhin* especially before marriage. I wished the Japanese audience to know that." According to her, "Filipinas are [also] *karinyosa* (affectionate)." In the dance *Karinyosa*, for example, she thus expressed the way the ideal effective relationship develops in the Philippines. Women and men (danced by women here) appeared in elegant ball gowns called *Maria Clara* and men's formal attire, *Barong Tagalog*. This piece is about courtship, depicting the dainty and coy demeanors of Filipinas and the affectionate yet gentle relationships between women and men. While enjoying the men's approach and attempts to peek, the women constantly hide their faces and shy smiles with fans and kerchiefs. Although Filipino authorities consider fans as "flirtation props" (Tiongson 1994: 20), Emilda emphasizes the feminine qualities of *mahinhin* and *karinyosa*.

Stage performances usually end with *tinikling* (bamboo dance), which depicts farmers using bamboo poles to try to catch birds that are picking rice. With crisp vocal calls and clapping bamboo poles, the piece makes the occasion convivial. The women always invite the Japanese audience to join them. In so doing, this piece creates a moment of friendship and cooperation, which both Filipino and Japanese participants work together to achieve by holding hands and jumping over the trap of the bamboo poles. Such entertainment serves to generate fun as well as to bring people together.

While excitement is still lingering in the air, the finale of the party usually highlights the message of the JSFW women's identities as wives and mothers, as all the women line up on stage with their husbands and children. By standing side by side, the women attempt to project themselves as wives and mothers in Japan who are leading happy marital and family lives. Anna explained their message to me thus: "We're Filipinos. So, we speak different languages and grew up in a different culture from the Japanese. But we're now married to Japanese and have happy family lives just like those in the audience. They can see it!"

As such, in the process of what they have asserted and negated in the annual *Pamasko*, the JSFW members have attempted to loosen the yoke of the "*Japayuki*" image. With the support of sympathetic media reporters and local administrators, especially those in international exchange programs, tales about Filipinas have been gradually diversifying. The day following the 1996 *Pamasko*, for example, a report was broadcast by a television reporter who had joined the event. The reporter credited the women's spirit of charity and the presence of their husbands in making the event a family affair. In another case, a female local government worker commented, "I really enjoyed the party! I thought it good to deepen our understandings of each other through these familiar activities. Above all, I thought the Filipinas, who were running around the hall, appeared no different from Japanese mothers near me" (Nanba 1994: 80).

While I am not certain whether the meaning of this comment was that Filipina wives are "different but ordinary" members of Japanese communities, Japanized immigrant mothers or "Filipina brides with feminine virtue," at least *Pamasko* served, however temporarily, to relocate the JSFW members from the "whore" side of the discursive gender stereotype. However, Anna feels that "after all, the image of Filipinas in Japan has not really changed." Yet she agrees with her husband's view that "people working in nongovernmental organizations have begun to have an ear to listen to" the messages JSFW is sending to the public. Through word of mouth and their networking with local officials, the group has taken part, as foreign wife-mother panelists, in various symposia. They have also been invited to different schools not only to introduce Filipino food and dance but also to discuss with PTA members and students problems of bullying, in which some of their children have been targets because of their "Filipina" mothers. Thus, *Pamasko* and other public events constitute a quiet "counter-attack" through which JSFW members make "what has been kept in silence . . . a louder voice." Other Filipina groups also hope to achieve this, and in so doing, they gradually make it more possible to relocate their subjective social positionings in the interstices of dominant gender-national regimes.

Donation programs and Filipinas from Japan

> Your home is a mansion now
> All your fingers have rings
> Frequenting Japan, Japanese man-hopping
> You promised me before I was the only man you'd love
> But I was exchanged for Japanese yen[16]

Basch, Glick Schiller and Blanc (1994) have argued that transmigrants' multiple linkages with their natal societies are reinforced by their inability to be fully incorporated into their host societies. The philanthropic projects and other practices in the Philippines by intermarried Filipinas from Japan, however, must also be situated in relation to their exile from national affiliation, gender and morality "back home."

As suggested by the song above—popular during the early 1990s in the Philippines—Filipinas' flights to Japan are also portrayed as tantamount to a betrayal of their natal state and its gender ideology. Their moves appear only to satisfy their personal interests in money and material wealth, disregarding the obligations of the valorized "new heroine" overseas workers to contribute to the development of the state. Filipinas from Japan, both as real and assumed "sex workers," have been particularly vilified because they earn money by "hopping from one *Japanese* man to another" and "selling their love [for a Filipino man] for yen." This "many for money" image clashes with Catholic idealism in which women should remain the *mahinhin* "virgin" located within the *Filipino* home.

My informants say that they "are easily recognized as Filipinas from Japan by our clothing, styles, skin color growing light and mannerisms." Even when people recognize that returnees are married, Filipina wives from Japan are still chased by the pernicious association of marriage/sexuality with money. One woman said, "wherever I go out with my husband, people's eyes communicate that I'm 'cheap' . . . I'm wronged as his 'second wife.' " When Filipinas are married to men who are many years their senior, people, including their own relatives, may suspect that their marriages are for convenience or the "four Ms [*apat na M*]," standing for *matanda, mayaman, madaling mamamatay* (old, rich and die soon). In these cases, the Philippines, as well as the oft-mentioned close Filipino family relationship can, at best, offer the women a "bittersweet home."[17]

Just as their public events in Japan are used to counter negative "entertainer" stereotypes, charitable activities have allowed JSFW members to intervene against their reputations as "bad girls," challenging their defiled images at home in the Philippines as well. While talking about their charity programs, Emilda told me: "Not all *Japayuki* are bad! The Filipinos and the Japanese will understand that there are people like us who do respectable things!"

The JSFW's subsequent task after *Pamasko* is to take the money raised through the event to the Philippines. During the first year, with funds of ¥250,000 (US $2,050 at US $1 = ¥120), they assisted three different groups of people, including squatter dwellers, patients in an under-equipped hospital and school children. They contacted formal institutions such as the Catholic Church and an educational institution to help find suitable avenues for their charity. They also contacted a hospital, which in turn assigned them to help patients in its obstetric-gynecology ward with a donation of drugs, blankets and other materials. JSFW members were delighted with this assignment because, as one of the representatives commented, "We too are mothers! We know how hard it is to be in a hospital while worrying about one's family. So, we are happy to help other women in the hospital."

According to representatives from 1992 to 1994, after arriving in Manila they purchased the desired donated goods in order to maximize the value of their contributions, taking advantage of the strength of the Japanese yen. The items were then taken directly to the designated places, and representatives had their photos taken as a sign of recognition. At the hospital, the JSFW's name plaque was mounted on the wall during the years they contributed to its patients. The educational institution organizing their assistance to school children also acknowledges the group in its brochure. The women also make their efforts visible to the masses in other ways. In 1994, for example, the group extended its assistance to the long-suffering victims from the 1991 eruption of Mt. Pinatubo. Representatives drove for three hours in a small truck filled with goods, with the group's banner on the side of the vehicle. The banner shows the national flags of the Philippines and Japan and their embroidered identity as Filipinas married to Japanese.

From the start of their charity programs, the JSFW has been providing educational funds for school children. Unlike material contributions, the members hope that this scholarship program will bear different fruit since education will enable the recipients to accumulate one of the most important kinds of capital needed for social mobility in the Philippines. One representative told me a common view of education in the Philippines: "Everything can be lost in one fire, but you can never lose your education until you die!" Thus, the children, who are given the title "JSFW scholars," are seen as enjoying an invaluable asset for life. This member continued, "because the children are benefited for the long run, they will long remember our goodwill!" Indeed, as is culturally understood, their debt of gratitude (*utang na loob*) to JSFW's goodwill is not repayable, forever.

This kind of resistance—intermittent but enduring—actually began prior to, and runs concurrently with, the donation program. Anna experienced both the impact and limit of their challenge:

> Before organizing JSFW, I returned to my hometown with my family during Christmas time. We offered rice, sardines and soaps to the poor in an unfamiliar area. They asked if I was a political candidate. I said, "No, these are from God" and walked off. One of our neighbors happened to watch what we were doing there and talked about us in our neighborhood. From this time on, the image [as a Filipina from Japan] changed. People come to [my natal family] in times of need....Their eyes seem to half wonder at and half respect us. Even a mayor, my Daddy's friend, told Daddy about us. What I did has spread and remains there. I've achieved a happy life because I helped others....And now, returning entertainers imitate what I did.... Even a small thing you do to cure the root, we can fix it little by little.... [We] cannot change the negative image at once, of course.... You can *never* clean it up. No way! But just a part, if someone does it.

Kerkvliet has argued that in the Philippines wealthy people "may enjoy prestige, not because they are held in esteem...but because poorer people envy their standard of living" (1991: 61). The personal wealth "*Japayuki*" gain through assumed "immoral" work has caused envy among the poor, as in the song introduced at the beginning of this section. The wealth of return migrants has also become a source of antagonism in middle-class people's minds (Aguilar 1996). Hence, these women's "grief" has been massively circulated and consumed in spectators' "gossip" (Rafael 1997). Whether or not social worth can be earned, Kerkvliet (1991: 62) maintains, "depends rather on how they treat the poor." One way for Filipinas from Japan to do this has been to "help others" and give things as "from God." In so doing, they have also destabilized the negative stereotypes of Filipinas from Japan.

Conclusion

Through their unfinished public projects, Filipina wives in/from Japan have attempted to confront and bypass the discipline of gender-national regimes in their host and home societies, which see them predominantly as "*Japayuki*." For them to transcend their subjective displacement, the JSFW women's tactic is to deploy images and symbols of the paragon of middle-class womanhood, which has been valorized both in Japan and in the Philippines. Through *Pamasko*, the JSFW women appear "no different from Japanese mothers," possibly making themselves Japanized Filipina brides with "good feminine virtue." Such a projection in fact conceals Filipina wives' daily struggles to, in many ways, adjust to Japanese sociocultural contexts. Working through the hegemonic gender regime means that the Filipinas must discipline themselves under that scheme, and in the process they paradoxically participate in Orientalist and sexist formulations in order to enable themselves to win a measure of social acceptance and respectability on the margins of these nation-states.

By valorizing the "virgin," intermarried Filipinas have also ironically disciplined women positioned on the other side of the divided womanhood. Underscoring their marital roles, they have reinforced the gender ideology and have left entertainers localized in the discursive time-space of the "night life." The stigma, which many hostesses and entertainers see as a source of their struggle, hence remains intact while wives try to elude being so tainted themselves. However, by not more directly challenging the "wife/whore" division in the context of their public events, it is possible that the Filipina wives' staged performances and racial-ethnic differences may be interpreted in ways contrary to those they wish to express. The women may conceivably again be recast in the very classification, "entertainer," they are trying to dismantle. As Vergara (1996: 91) has argued, there is the risk that the returnees' charity may be seen in the Philippines only as a token of "return boasters" (*balikyabang*).[18]

These unintended consequences are real and inextricably linked in shifting relations of power. These women, nevertheless, *have to* be optimistic. The comment made before an event by one Filipina group leader, echoing Anna, aptly articulated their diasporic commitment:

> The thing is, we have to live here [in Japan]. Our husbands are Japanese. Our children are Japanese. Therefore, . . . we must make the appeal . . . that we are not like the images. Nothing may happen right away, but I believe the situation will improve in the future as we continue our endeavors. And *we* have to make it better ourselves!

As Trinh (1991: 107–116) has contended, if Filipinas in/from Japan come into view with some intensity and in ways that they are not presumed to appear, they will provide the spectators a space to pause and reevaluate the rigidity of their categories. This is why the women have been so passionately investing their time and cultural knowledge in deploying images and symbols of respectable womanhood in order to win wider social acceptance both in Japan and in the Philippines. What their unceasing voices also call for is the need for us to reframe *our* privileged knowledge about the workings of gender, sexuality, national relations and identities within the context of the Filipina diaspora to recognize the contradictions and unintended consequences and the struggles to create affirmative spaces for themselves between the two shores of Japan and the Philippines.

As the new century began, the situations in which Filipinas in Japan found themselves had changed. The denigrating term "Japayuki" seems to have largely left the common vocabulary of the majority of Japanese, although the label is still perniciously used by Filipinos in the Philippines, the elite population in particular, and those living abroad. The economic environment of the women has also changed over time from the continuation of the Heisei recession from the

STARBUCKS C
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STARBUCKS COFFEE

Figure 3.2 Filipinas in Kobe, 2007. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

early 1990s on and as numerous Filipina wives and custodians of Japanese children lost jobs in ethnic enterprises, including Filipino restaurants, garment vending for bar workers, and sundry shops selling food, DVDs, music and cosmetic items. Meanwhile, many women are burdened by the costs of post-compulsory educational institutions which their children have entered. After the issuance of entertainer visas for all practical purposes ended in March 2005,[19] the demand for hostesses has led some former entertainers to return to work in nightclubs. In this trade, they can earn a better hourly wage than most jobs available for Asian women, who are members of a stigmatized minority. In this context, organized philanthropic events such as those described in this chapter have become less visible in various parts of urban Japan. However, this does not mean that their struggles to defy the monolithic negative representations of who they are have ended. Instead, they have begun to take different forms and their challenges have been combined to satisfy their economic and social aspirations.

As of May 2006, many Filipina wives in urban Japan have been exploring two major areas in which they are attempting to establish their niches: they are becoming English teachers at home and in the community and caregivers for the elderly and others who need assistance. With English, they are able to empower themselves with what the Japanese often associate with the powerful "West," rising from an oft-represented "impoverished, helpless Third-World" womanhood

(Suzuki 2005). In this field, they transform themselves from former-"barmaids/prostitutes"-turned-housewives into the socially recognized *sensei* (teacher) and simultaneously earn a better income. In the field of what is called carework, they take pride in providing assistance to the elderly despite the fact that the work is physically and mentally demanding and has unfavorable work hours.

These former-entertainers-turned-caregivers are fully aware of the continuing structural problems in which they are embedded and that their job is to continue providing care and emotional labor, previously for mostly *ojisan* (middle-aged men), and now for *ojiisan* (old men) and old women. Some still take up "nightwork," even working 18-hour shifts. Nonetheless, in much the same way as the Filipina group leaders talked about themselves some years ago, these emerging workers continue to emphasize that in public spaces they, too, are trying to "clean up" the negative images ("even just a part") and that they are "doing it by themselves."

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Notes

1 I use "*Japayuki*" as a discursive concept rather than in reference to lived realities. This term was coined by a filmmaker, Yamatani Tetsuo (1985). It is based on the word *Karayuki* ("China-bound" Japanese prostituted/ing women) used for women who were deployed in greater Asia from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. The collapsing of these two categories of women, as seen for example in Douglass (2000), is highly problematic because such an observation disregards the historical specificities of the experiences of the Karayuki and "Japayuki." See Suzuki (2005 and forthcoming) for further critique.

2 Numerous Filipinas have been deployed as domestic workers worldwide. Japan's immigration law does not, however, permit the entry of domestics, since they are classified as "unskilled" workers, although a small number of domestics in Japan are employed by privileged foreign expatriates such as embassy staff and corporate executives.

3 The Tokyo area in this study covers Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, and Saitama Prefectures. I conducted field research during two summers in 1993 and 1994 and 14 months during 1995–1996. I also associated with Filipinas in the Nagoya area in central Japan from late 1996 to early 1998. Because I continued to live in Japan after my formal fieldwork until July 1999, the number of my informants actually grew larger than 100.

4 Others came from Australia, America and Europe.

5 This marked the number of entrants with entertainer visas exceeding 10,000 for the first time. The "entertainer" visa is granted not only to the entertainers under discussion but

also to other professional performing artists, athletes and people engaged in other show businesses. For an analysis of Filipino boxers and hosts, see Suzuki and Takahata (2007).

6 Under Japanese Immigration Law, hostessing is "unskilled work" and is therefore illegal for foreigners to perform. Many Filipina talents entering Japan hold entertainer visas that stipulate their status as performing artists at business establishments that meet the various criteria required by Japanese law (for detail, see MJ 1996). Regardless of their actual performances, however, recruiters and agents commonly require that these women and some men illegally work as hostesses and transvestite (*bakla*) or straight hosts to entertain their Japanese, Filipino/a and other customers. Many of these Filipino host(esse)s, especially "timer" repeaters, accept this task as part of their job while others refuse to do anything that is not stipulated in their contracts. In March 2005, the Japanese government tightened restrictions on the entry of workers with entertainer visas. First-hand observers are skeptical of their seeming feminist rhetoric of wanting "to protect women from being trafficked." This move must be critically read within the context of Japan's heightened nationalism, military interests, and concerns for a diluted national "mono-ethnic" body owing to the increasing number of intermarriages and for growing welfare cost for (foreign) single mothers. See Suzuki (2005b), for further discussion.

7 Starting from September 3, 1996, the Ministry of Justice has allowed foreign custodians of Japanese children to stay on in Japan even after divorce from their Japanese spouse.

8 Filipina hostesses' work at bars and their relations with Japanese customers are far more complicated than casual observers assume. See Suzuki (2002: 108–110, 115; 2003c) for further discussions.

9 "Spouse or related visas" include the holders of "spouses or children" (45,510, 27.9 percent), permanent (32,796, 19.4 percent) and long-term (18,246, 10.8 percent). Although no statistics on the exact numbers of intermarried Filipinas are available from the Japanese or Philippine governments, the vast majority of the first two categories are wives and long-term visa holders, Filipina custodians of Japanese children (see Note 7 above). This is surmised from the general sex ratio of registered Filipino residents in Japan (women 83.6 percent, 141,557 men 16.4 percent, 27,802 in 2002); new entrants with spouse-or-child visas (nearly 90 percent were spouses during the mid-1990s and 93 percent in 2002; Ministry of Justice 1993–2003); and the sex ratio of Filipinos in registered intermarriages (98.9 percent or 58.076 women and 1.1 percent or 618 men; Ministry of Health and Welfare 1993–2001). These latter numbers became available only from 1992, when the Ministry of Health and Welfare began providing breakdowns of nationalities other than the originally given Korean, Chinese and American. Note that visas do not determine the kinds of work people do and many married Filipinas also work in bars.

10 Filomeno Aguilar (1999: 99) argues that academic and nonacademic writers have formed "migrant-labor research industries," criticizing that they profit from their academic labor. One Filipina Japanese activist in Japan has also criticized those writers benefiting from the "gold mine" of the struggles of immigrants there (Takei 1999).

11 See Suzuki (forthcoming), for further critique of the prevailing representations of Filipino entertainers by academics and advocates.

12 The Filipina Circle for Advancement and Progress homepage, http//www.os.rim.or.jp/~murata/what.htm.

13 My informants' names, affiliations and event names appear, with their understandings, as pseudonyms. Although they are held in public, discussing events with their real names may risk revealing my informants' private identities in my other publications.

14 Some of these messages have come from Philippine President Fidel Ramos, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and Ambassadors to Japan; and from Japan, members of Houses of Representatives and Councilors, prefectural governors and mayors.

15 Filipina groups usually cook for their guests; however, on some other occasions their "home cooking" food is also professionally catered.

16 Excerpts from Paul Toledo's song *Pajapan-Japan*, which was rerecorded in 1992 as one of the best hits of the popular genre called OPM (Original Philippine Music). The original lyrics are

> Mansion na ngayon ang bahay mo
> Lahat ng daliri mo'y mayro'ng singsing
> Pajapan-japan, pahapon-hapon
> Pasumpa-sumpa ka pa noon sa akin
> Na tanging ako lang ang 'yong iibigin
> Ngunit ako'y pinagpalit mo sa Japanese yen.

The popularity of this song was reflected in the fact that the music tape I acquired was a karaoke version that had three functions, one of which allowed people to sing without the lyrics.

17 See Suzuki (2002, 2004) for critical analyses of the valorized Filipino notion of "strong family ties."

18 This is a pun on the common word *balikbayan* (returnees).

19 For a critical assessment of this legal move, see Suzuki (2006).

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4 Gender, modernity, and eroticized internationalism in Japan

Karen Kelsky

Introduction

In this essay I will examine the personal accounts of a marginalized population of professionally ambitious Japanese women to demonstrate how they deploy discourses of the modern, or "narratives of internationalism," to construct an "emancipatory" turn to the foreign/West in opposition to gender-stratified corporate and family structures in Japan. In 1993 and 1994 I interviewed sixty working women in Tokyo who had gained international experience through study abroad, work abroad, or employment in foreign-affiliate firms or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as the United Nations. My informants included bilingual secretaries, translators and interpreters, securities traders in British and American brokerage firms, grants officers in the United Nations University in Tokyo, and free-lance journalists. Most of these women were single and aged between 23 and 45, and had invested a great deal of time and energy to the mastery of English or other Western languages, and achievement of international expertise. About seventy percent had study abroad experience ranging from six months to four years. Most had been or were currently romantically involved with a white Western man, and as I shall show, professional and erotic (heterosexual) desires were often closely intertwined in their lives.

It should be noted at the outset that such international-experienced professional women constitute a small minority of Japanese women; as Ogasawara observes, the majority of young women in Japan still hold marriage and full-time motherhood as their primary life goal (Ogasawara 1998: 62–63). For those small numbers of women who are enabled by their age, marital status, economic resources, and familial flexibility (among other factors) to explore the cosmopolitan possibilities of internationalization, however, this option can lead to opportunities to travel, study, and work abroad, and to the discovery of a female niche in the international job market as translators, interpreters, consultants, bilingual secretaries, entrepreneurs, international aid workers, UN employees, and so on.[1]

Examples of internationalist narratives abound in a genre of Japanese women's writing about the West by authors such as Mori Yōko (1988), Toshiko Marks (1992), Yamamoto Michiko (1993a, 1993b), and Miyamoto Michiko (1985, 1988).[2]

These texts narrate an allegiance to a “global democratic humanism” which makes the modern West the universal model against which the backward particularities of Japanese tradition must be judged, rejected, or reformed. However, they are not limited to published texts, but are widely spoken, and acted, by a stratum of young, urban, middle-class Japanese women who are discontent with the highly regimented life course expected of both men and women in Japan (Brinton 1992), and who use internationalist opportunities to circumvent it.

There were, however, important distinctions between the published accounts and informants’ versions of internationalism. Whereas the published texts were unqualifiedly celebratory, informants’ narratives were tentative, shifting, contradictory, and contingent. Women aligned themselves with internationalism at different points in their lives, only to reject it later, and did not at any time unarguably accept all of its claims. My project was to observe what happens when a group of women exploits transnationally circulating images of the West to open a much-needed and effective space for oppositional female praxis, and to trace the steps by which they move in and out of cosmopolitan associations as active subjects who are yet constituted by the limits of late capitalist and postcolonial regimes of power.

This female “exodus” is not a defection to the West, but to an idea of the West, which is synonymous with the international. In their most utopic forms, narratives of internationalism do not simply argue for a search for professional advancement abroad, but for an alliance with the “universal” ideals of Western modernity in Japan. Thus they do not require women’s physical displacement abroad but are equally predicated upon an absorption of the West into Japan. Kapur has observed that “modernism always implies internationalism” (1991: 13); I would argue that internationalism always reveals the presence of (a certain kind of) modernity, inevitably set against the “traditionalism” of the national/local.

There are certainly modernities which are nationalistic and isolationist, and indeed in this case an internationalist modernity is mobilized specifically to do battle with another kind of modernity. The masculinist modernization narrative has fueled Japan’s single-minded postwar economic growth, and imposes, in the name of “national security,” a rigid and binarized gendered division of labor (Miyoshi 1989, 1991; Molony 1995; Sakai 1989). The encroachment of a specifically Western modernity has also been viewed in Japan as a traumatic event of the first order: in Takeuchi Yoshimi’s view, nothing but the “devastation” of being deprived of an independent subjectivity (Sakai 1989: 117). By contrast, however, women’s narratives construct internationalist modernity as offering Japanese women their very first chance at a truly emancipated subjectivity.

However, women’s internationalist identity claims not only challenge patriarchal nationalism in Japan, but they also implicate internationalized Japanese women in eroticized Western agendas of modernity and universalism, and the emergence of a global cosmopolitan class which contains its own hierarchies of race, gender, and nation. As Rey Chow writes, modernity must be understood “as a force of cultural expansionism whose foundations are not only emancipatory but also

Eurocentric and patriarchal" (1992: 101). Japanese female adoption of the universalizing claims of Western modernity reinforces the continuing Western hegemony that these claims support. Ethnographies of globalizing Western modernity then, must also problematize the role of the Western ethnographer as "native" of a globally circulating West (Kelsky 2001).

Women have no need of borders

In August 1994 Kawachi Kazuko, a Keiō University professor and feminist scholar, published an editorial on the status of women in Japan in *The Yomiuri Shimbun*, Japan's largest newspaper. Her piece, which was quickly translated into English for a foreign readership in *The Daily Yomiuri*, was a powerful critique of the systematic exclusion of women from Japan's corporate structures, and a ringing manifesto for women's rights. The essay's rhetorical force derives from a discourse shaming of Japanese men in an "international" arena. Japanese men, Kawachi argued, should be ashamed of themselves for their poor treatment of women, which is scandalous by European or American standards. She insists that Japanese men must immediately reform their ways if Japan is to become truly "internationalized." Indeed, Kawachi equates "internationalization" (*kokusaika*) with the guarantee of women's equal rights by the Japanese government. The editorial concludes, "I look forward to the day when the US administration denounces Japanese firms for having achieved prosperity at the expense of women" (1994: 6).

Kawachi's editorial is an example of the publicly subversive and performative Japanese female discourse of complaint and desire expressed through narratives of women's internationalism. These narratives depend on two sets of rhetorical contrasts, between a progressive West and a backward Japan, and internationalized Japanese women and "feudalistic" Japanese men. The narratives argue a "natural" alliance between Japanese women and foreign, particularly Western, interests against the insular and wrongheaded Japanese male establishment. They construct the West as a site of emancipation for Japanese women whose ambitions and abilities are thwarted in Japan. They take as their agenda the project to remake Japan (and Japanese men) in the West's image.

Space is the recurrent image in these narratives, conspicuous in its alleged absence in Japan, abundance in the West. According to Tanabe Atsuko, an international business consultant who has lived in Mexico for over thirty years, the solution to women's "limited mental and physical space" in Japan can only be to seek "salvation" in the "limitless space of the foreign" (*kaigai no mugen no supēsu*) (Tanabe 1993: 170–173). In an autobiography entitled *Shall I Leave Japan*? Yamamoto Michiko, a journalist who spent five years studying and working in England and the United States, insists that Japan is a "pond" that keeps its women stunted in size and swimming in circles, while the West is a lake that allows women to grow to their full proportions and capabilities (1993: 167–168). Former "office lady" Fuke Shigeko, in her personal account *Beguiled by*

New York (1990), asks, "Why do [Japanese women] all aim for New York?"

> Because it is filled with everything that Tokyo lacks. On the one hand you have Japan, which emphasizes efficiency, order, and harmony, and which makes no effort to respect lifestyles (*ikikata*) that stray from the norm. Then you have America, a country in which individuality, creativity, and personal expression are the top priorities, and which respects peoples' right to live as they please.
> (Ibid.: 281–282)

These narratives articulate an almost religious faith in a redemptive West and are distinguished by their insistence that the very marks of gender discrimination—social marginality and professional exclusion—instantiate a natural female "flexibility" that frees Japanese women from oppressive and outdated conventions of national and racial identity. Japanese women, it is claimed, can instinctively negotiate the demands of global society because they "are not hemmed in by the rules of Japanese male society, and haven't been subjected to the same social discipline based in the [traditional] Japanese social environment" (Katō and Berger 1990: 272). As 53-year-old housewife and amateur poet Nakagaki Sachiko expresses in a poem, "Women Have No Need of Borders," published in *The Yomiuri Shimbun* in 1993 (Takara 1993):

> Women have no need of borders
> We need only bear the child of the man we love
> Race, nationality, religion—none matter
> Men war to make women theirs
> They make boundaries, they make nations
> But women have no need of borders
> We need only to love.

The poetry editor remarks of this poem that "women are internationalists by birth."[3]

In the narratives' most utopic form, women call upon each other to break out of their "prison of culture" and the inward-looking obsolescence of Japanese particularity, and clear a path for the bright light of the universal West. One recent "primer" on internationalism targeting young women tells them that "international rules [*rūru*] are Western rules, and…[Western rules] are universal" (Takahashi 1995: 20). It is an Enlightenment vision of modernity, based on liberal democratic humanism, individualism, and verbal self-expression, which becomes the foundation for a critique of the "group conformity" and unspoken communication of Japanese tradition (what Ivy has called "the notion of a *volkisch* unity defined by a near-telepathic, transparent, harmonious communication" [ibid.: 18]). To be modern is to speak out in the international marketplace of ideas: the primary signifier of maturity on both the personal and the national levels is command of an assertive individual speaking voice: "Japanese are poor at speaking, withdrawn, and anti-social," Takata Kiyoko claims in her book *A Little Bridge*

Over the Pacific, "and must learn to speak for themselves like Americans if they want to be seen as 'adults' on the global stage" (1995: 244–246).

The editorial collective of a 1990 book entitled *Women Love The Earth* (*Onna wa chikyū o aishiteru*) writes:

> Japan, Inc.—the original male-dominated society. But this society doesn't know where to turn in the midst of an era of internationalization and globalization….Compared to Japanese men, Japanese women right now are clearly more independent, have more concern for society, are awakened to the interdependence between the individual and the world at large….Nowadays there are many Japanese women who are active on the world stage; *they are all individuals who have crossed borders, and embody a practical humanism in the midst of "global democratic society"*.
>
> (UPDATE 1990: 1–2, emphasis added)

As Hannerz has shown, the enunciation of a cosmopolitan consciousness can be an enactment of autonomy vis-à-vis the native (Hannerz 1990: 240). As I shall demonstrate below, women in dead-end, clerical "office lady" ("*OL*") positions are uniquely enabled to turn their marginalization from the centers of corporate power into opportunities to gain professional training and experience abroad. While this trend has not yet given rise to an identifiable backlash in Japan, it has undoubtedly shaken the smoothly self-sustaining and self-referential gendered divisions imposed by the corporate structure.[4]

Refugees to the West

As such discourses suggest, there is an exodus of professional women from Japan. Because many Japanese women are faced with persistent discrimination in the workplace based on gender and age (what Yamamoto calls "age harassment," 1993a), supported by a deeply entrenched gendered division of labor in society, women require an alternative, and travel, study, and work abroad is it. Internationalism is an important, and indeed, courageous choice for Japanese women among a highly circumscribed range of domestic options. Women's domestic exclusions occur at both the family and corporate levels; indeed these exclusions reinforce one another. Full participation in the urban white-collar corporate world is predicated upon a male employment trajectory that begins with intensive schooling supported by the single-minded investment of a stay-at-home mother. It continues, with only a short break during college years, through hiring, training, promotion, job rotation and transfers, and (until recently) retirement.

While the recent recession has certainly affected this pattern, reducing available positions for new college graduates both male and female, raising the incidence of lay-offs among regular male workers, and diminishing workers' sense of loyalty to and security within the company, it has not substantially changed the structure of the Japanese job market. As in previous recessions, women have overwhelmingly borne the burden of corporate economic "adjustment," with 50 percent of new female college graduates unable to find work in 1997, according to the *Sankei Shimbun* (1998).

As numerous scholars have pointed out, the dominant urban white-collar employment pattern excludes women at every level; young women are nearly always hired for dead-end secretarial "office lady" positions, and are suspect if they continue working past the age of 30, at which time they are expected to have married and become full-time homemakers. Meanwhile, married women cannot combine family duties, usually entirely the woman's responsibility, with the demands of a full-time job, particularly the periodic transfers to other cities. Men, of course, cannot give the required devotion to the company without the support of a homemaker wife (See Iwao 1993; Lebra 1984; Molony 1995).

Of course the urban, white-collar, corporate job market by no means exhausts the possibilities of employment in Japan for either men or women. However, deeply entrenched gender discrimination exists in these other work settings in Japan as well (see Kondo 1990; Roberts 1994). While blue-collar women are often required to work to support the family, they tend to be funneled into part-time jobs (at virtually full-time hours but with no benefits or security) in order to accommodate continuing domestic responsibilities. In the meantime, as Ogasawara notes, the relative number of women in white-collar clerical jobs has steadily increased since 1960, and the relative number of women in blue-collar jobs has decreased. In 1995 one-third of all women employed held white-collar clerical positions (Ogasawara 1998: 19).

While this gendered division of labor has been discussed intensively by both Japanese and foreign observers over the past twenty years, few to date have observed that it has produced a residual effect: women's exclusion from positions of responsibility in the domestic corporate establishment has led ambitious women (with the means) to leave Japan even when they would prefer to stay, while men often must stay, even if they might prefer to leave.[5] Ogasawara notes that Japanese female office workers frequently choose the option of "exit" over protest (ibid.: 63–64). International exodus is an extreme form of the exit that she documents, and one which is a critical opportunity for those who wish to reject or at least postpone the only other socially condoned form of exit: marriage (ibid.). For ambitious, capable women with the resources to leave, extended periods of study or work abroad constituted a kind of *ad hoc* "escape" from a desperate situation. As a bilingual secretary with two years study-abroad experience told me:

> I used to spend all day every day serving tea and coffee to the men in the office. "This one takes two lumps of sugar"; "this one takes only green tea"...Can you believe it? This is what Japanese women have to deal with. I couldn't stand it anymore and escaped. I had to go abroad. There was nowhere else to go.

Women describe themselves as "refugees" (*nanmin*), "exiles" (*bōmeisha*), and "emigrants" (*imin*), fleeing the killing oppressiveness of their office lady jobs. Matsui Machiko titled her sociological study of Japanese female study-abroad students, “Exiles from a Sexist Culture” (1994), while Yamamoto Michiko refers to herself and other Japanese women fleeing abroad as “social refugees” (ibid.). Foreign countries, foreign-affiliate firms, and NGOs such as the United Nations are perceived as offering women the equal opportunities for advancement that they are denied in the Japanese corporate establishment. From the mid-1990s Japan began to have a higher proportion of women in its delegation to the United Nations than Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. In 1992, 44 of a total of 92 Japanese employed by the United Nations are female (Satō 1993).[6] This rate is increasing as numerous elderly first-generation males retire, leaving women to fill the gap in the absence of Japanese men, who at least until recently have rarely been lured to such organizations at any price (ibid.). For indeed, men find it difficult to leave the domestic establishment. Informant Mori Mayumi, an international volunteer nurse, spoke of her husband:

> He sometimes says he’s jealous of me for being able to travel abroad so much. He plays rugby, and has always wanted to go to New Zealand for a year to play. But the company would never permit it. If he went, he would lose his job and all the benefits he gets as a male in Japanese society—good salary, status, company perks. When push comes to shove, he won’t leave. He doesn’t feel like I as a woman do, that he needs to go abroad to do the things in life that he wants to do . . . Conversely, I sometimes wish I could get what I want without having to travel abroad constantly.

Study abroad (*ryūgaku*) is the most common means women employ to circumvent the Japanese corporate system. From the 1950s through the 1970s, *ryūgaku* was the privilege of elite, management-track males who were sent by their corporations to earn MBA degrees at high-ranking US business schools. Now, however, such men have been almost entirely eclipsed by independent self-funded women: currently nearly 80 percent of all Japanese studying abroad are female (ICS 1996). In the mid-1990s approximately 130,000 women traveled abroad to study each year (ICS 1996). The influential feminist social critic Matsubara Junko wrote of this female *ryūgaku* phenomenon in her book *I Can Speak English* (1989), “US–Japan trade friction might soon be resolved—right now Japan doesn’t export Toyotas and Nissans so much as female study abroad students” (ibid.: 145). As a bilingual securities trader in her early thirties told me of her study-abroad experience at Loyola University:

> The reason that I first decided to study in America was that Japanese society is male-dominated. And if a woman tries to fit into this society, it will always be as an assistant. When I thought about how I could get my foot in the door, the first thing that came to mind was to study English in the United States and get qualified abroad.

Many women flow from study abroad into a more permanent defection to the West. In contrast to the highly bounded stays of male corporate expatriates (*chūzaiin*), women's sojourns abroad tend to be extended, with the possibility of permanent relocation left open. As Tanabe observes of former office ladies studying abroad in Mexico:

> Many of the women who come to Mexico for study abroad stay and find jobs with expanding corporations, or marry Mexican men and settle here permanently. Rather than calling this trend "OL study abroad," I think it may be more appropriate to call it "OL emigration" (*OL imin*).
>
> (1993: 174)

One woman employed in an international securities trading firm told me:

> I have a lot of friends who won't come back to Japan. It's not that they hate Japan, but that when they tried to do what they want to do here, there are too many obstacles, just too many things in the way.

Matsui observes that more Japanese women are working on Wall Street than in Japan's financial district of Kabutochō (1995: 376), and it is precisely the "borderless" world of high finance that constitutes one of the most compelling sites for female cosmopolitan practice. Women become absorbed into the global professional class of neoliberal capitalism, and multinational corporations absorb the dissenting energies of women who in another time and place might have been drawn to local activism. I will return to this below.

It is difficult to obtain reliable information on the percentage of Japanese female study-abroad students who do not return to Japan. Although one writer has estimated it as high as 50 percent (Matsui 1994), my research suggests the figure must be much lower, not because women want to return to Japan, but because they cannot easily acquire the foreign working visas required to stay abroad. Several informants referred to the US Green Card as a "Platinum Card," reflecting both its value and its scarcity as well as its ability to confer status on its possessor. Yamamoto calls the lucky women who manage to acquire a US Green Card "Green Card Cinderellas," and writes that some women's desperation to acquire a Green Card can force them into unfortunate marriages with American men. She writes of her own involvement with Robert, an American man who intermittently promised her marriage, "regardless of whether I did or did not love him, he held the key to my life" (ibid.: 160–161).

The (un)modern man in Japan

Narratives of internationalism simultaneously produce their phantasmatic Other, the Japanese male, for whom the possibilities of internationalist transformation and universalist alliances are foreclosed. Japanese men, in women's accounts, are characterized as backward (*okureteru*), the static and dehistoricized emblems of particularity. They are accused of being privileged by the domestic system, and intransigent defenders of "feudal" Japanese tradition. A 31-year-old technical designer told me, "men's values and priorities have not kept pace with changes in the world. They still want things to be like they used to be, and women to be like they used to be." Japanese men are portrayed in women's accounts as hating and fearing the West, and working actively to prevent its influence on Japan. As I was told by Maeda Seiko, a 36-year-old housewife who has made nine trips to Western countries, been employed in two foreign-affiliate firms, and spent one year studying abroad in the United States, "We cannot look forward to significant internationalization in Japan. The problem is Japanese men. They think Japan is number one in the world, and refer to white people as *ketō* [hairy barbarians]. Men hate foreigners. As long as Japanese men's attitudes don't change, true internationalization is out of the question." Similarly, senior *Asahi Shimbun* journalist Shimomura Mitsuko argued in 1990 (presciently as it turned out) that while Japan might have appeared on the surface to be a global economic superpower, Japanese men had in fact created a "rotten, pus-oozing" system, literally putrefying from the inside out from its pathological insularity, and paralyzed in the face of globalizing forces (quoted in UPDATE 1990: 90).

It is worth noting that a survey of men's popular media sources such as young men's magazines *SPA!* and *Popeye*, revealed scant discussion of the West compared to equivalent women's media, and what little there was, taking an ambivalent or negative tone. Where women's magazines each year come out with Christmas special issues full of breathless descriptions of "authentic" Christmas celebrations from Europe and the United States (and instructions on how to recreate these at home), an article in the December 1993 issue of *SPA!* grumbles:

> Aren't you people Buddhist? You're not even Christian! What is this "*Meri kurisumasu*"?? Get serious! If you want a holiday, have one on April eighth—the "Flower Festival," when Buddhists the world over celebrate the birth of the Buddha in a Himalayan flower garden.
>
> (SPA! 1993: 58)

A systematic survey of young men's attitudes regarding the West would be revealing in this regard. In the context of this essay, however, I wish to emphasize not sociological "proof" of the accuracy of women's claims about Japanese male insularity but the rhetorical effects of such claims, which allow women to challenge hierarchies of the native over the foreign, of male over female, and construct an alternative reality under which all that had been maligned is now revered, all that had been revered now rejected. For the West of women's accounts excludes Japanese males. Illustrations that accompany internationalist texts show a Japanese woman alone in a crowd of foreigners, or speaking fluently to foreigners in English. Japanese men are either absent, or depicted as tongue-tied outcasts, incapable of blending in. This is the point at which the West becomes gendered, for it is the Western male who is made to embody Western modernity, and to stand in contrast to the "backwardness" of Japanese males.[7]

I have argued elsewhere that the white Western man stands in Japanese public culture as a moderator of commodity desire and adjudicator of racial upward mobility (Kelsky 1997). Women's narratives feature white Western men in the role of teachers, mentors, and guides, and women's shift of loyalty to the institutions of the West carries erotic overtones. Narratives of foreign encounter are filled with sexual metaphors: "English had become my lover"; "I'm in love with foreign cultures." In the distilled utopianism of some of the published autobiographical accounts, the Western man provides the seed in the birth of a new Japan and a "new self" (*atarashii jibun*). "For me," wrote Fuke Shigeko, "New York City is a lover (*koibito*). But not a lover who gently holds me, no, but one who pushes me ever harder to live more, live harder, live the life you want. *He* knocks hard at the doors of my heart, to where my desires are hidden deep inside. He is a wild, thrilling lover" (Fuke 1990: 290, emphasis in original). Nearly every published autobiographical account culminated in the author's sexual, romantic, or marital union with a white man. Kurihara Nanako, the maker of the film *Looking for Fumiko* (in English, *Ripples of Change*), a paradigmatic text in the female internationalist genre, features a photograph of herself and her American partner Scott Twinkler as the frontispiece of her autobiography *Finding Myself in New York: Angry Women Are Beautiful!* (1994), and in the text describes her union with him as the turning point in her quest to become a filmmaker. Igata Keiko, in her text *Someday I Shall Live In England*, writes of her lover Rick, "through [him], the first true English man I encountered, I greedily imbibed the values and culture of England. The new world that I had longed to see spread out before me, and I was filled with a deep happiness" (1993: 119). Author Takahashi Toshie writes in her book *No Demons on the Road to America!*, "Through [Herbie] I encountered a world more exciting than any I had ever known; in truth, he taught me how to enjoy life" (1989: 196).

These eroticized discourses of new selfhood resonate suggestively with the 1970s Japan National Railway "Discover Japan" advertising campaigns described by Marilyn Ivy in *Discourses of the Vanishing* (1995). As Ivy relates, the JNR advertising team led by male advertising executive Fujioka Wakao targeted young women as travelers/consumers, manipulable markers of cultural inauthenticity for whom travel promises erotic possibility as well as the chance to discover a hitherto unknown "new self," completely different from the everyday self (39). Writer Kokuni Aiko consciously appropriates Fujioka's formulation in her book *The London You Don't Know* (1990). After regaling readers with stories of encounters with charming English men, Kokuni concludes:

> A while back everyone was talking about "Discover Japan" (*disukabā Japan*). But when you come to London, you find the chance to "discover yourself" (*disukabā jibun*). You can meet the self that you had never known was there, and have the chance to contemplate the self that you are going to become…I've complained a lot about London, but still, I love it here.

> Because no matter what, the air here is free. Here you can believe in your talents that have been hidden up until now; here you can dream.
>
> (1990: 234–235)

Grounded in Japan

The vast numbers of Japanese women who, because of their age, class, ethnicity, or location, are placed outside of the urban professional sphere, might respond to this internationalist rhetoric as nothing more than privileged talk, entirely distant from the immediate demands of day-to-day life. Meanwhile, a number of Japanese feminist activists object directly to internationalist discourses, rejecting the West as a model and seeking solidarity with Asian women, often against the depredations of both Western and Japanese capital expansion in Asia (see AMPO 1996; Buckley 1997; Saito 1997). While the internationalist narrative echoes many of the claims of first wave Western feminism, particularly the effort to gain access to the Enlightenment category of individualism (Fox-Genovese 1982), the women themselves consistently rejected what they understood to be the goals and methods of Western, as well as Japanese, feminists. They insisted that activist tactics have no hope of working in Japan, and that they could only "suffer in Japan or go abroad." Thus, many Japanese feminists have objected to internationalist rhetoric. Feminist author Matsubara Junko writes:

> When I was younger, my English was poor, but I was so pleased with myself just for being able to associate with foreigners. No, it was more than that. I actually felt a sense of superiority when I was with a foreigner. I had a stage in which all I did was criticize Japanese men in my mind, and I planned on living abroad. I imagined having a cute little "half" baby, and I was just thrilled. Looking back now, I can't believe what an ignorant, stupid woman I was.
>
> (1989: 202)

The conflict between domestic feminist activists and internationalist Japanese women is displayed in the film *Looking For Fumiko* (*Ripples of Change*) by filmmaker Kurihara Nanako, mentioned earlier. In the film, Kurihara, who resides permanently in New York, travels back to Japan to interview five women formerly active in the Japanese women's liberation movement of the 1970s. Continually contrasting the freedoms of life in America with the implied failures of these five women who remain in Japan, Kurihara, as Linda White observes, "[uses] an invisible West…to evaluate and gaze down upon the positions of Japanese women and the *ribu* [liberal?] movement" (1997: 12). Some of the feminist women whom she interviewed, however, responded with barely concealed outrage at the implicit condescension of her questions, and stoutly defended their life choices as based on deeply held values of community, family, and activism in Japan.

The conflict centers here and elsewhere on the intense individualism of internationalist rhetoric vs. the communalism of feminist activism. International journalist Hisada Megumi wrote a fictional parody of "new self" rhetoric entitled "Horseback Riding, English, Beautiful Young Men, and Everything British: She Loves Them All," in the working women's magazine *Nikkei Woman*:

> Keiko likes England. That is, Keiko doesn't just like England; she loves every single thing associated with England. She loves Mother Goose and London Bridge. She loves the misty Thames River and the sound of Big Ben.... She loves England so much that she believes that only in her imaginary English world is she truly alive.... Wearing her flower-print cotton dress with the hand-woven lace collar, Keiko tells her friends, "I'm crazy about England. I'm in love with England"...And if her English teacher isn't quite as handsome as Hugh Grant, the way he behaves so chivalrously toward her quite sends Keiko's heart a-flutter.
>
> As long as Keiko stays in her English dream world, Keiko never has to grow up. She can be a child forever. But someday soon Keiko is going to wake up and find out that she is an unmarried office lady nearing 30. And then, just like all those other Japanese women, Keiko is suddenly going to realize that she is all alone in her tiny, lonely little craft pitching in the rough Dover Straits.
>
> (Hisada 1993:130)

In Hisada's essay, the grand image of the lone exile fleeing an oppressive Japan for glorious liberation in the West has been replaced by the pathetic figure of an aging, unmarried, and possibly deluded office lady paddling a dinghy beneath the forbidding white cliffs of Dover. For many feminists the "community" of a global West is no more than a politically debilitating private fantasy.

Contradictions arose within the ranks of internationalist women as well. In contrast to the authors of published autobiographies, informants with whom I spoke in Tokyo did not align themselves with internationalist rhetorical projects in any static or unitary way. Younger women, who had studied abroad in particular, narrated a homelessness of multiple marginalities and displacements, which did not permit any simple resolution. This was partly a result of their residence in Japan. They described a Japan which remains, despite (or because of) faddish *kokusaika* rhetoric, invested in essentialized boundaries demarcating Japanese from Other and male from female, and many made clear that they were not there by choice, but had been forced to return against their will for lack of a foreign working visa.

Once returned to Japan, they found that female internationalist exhilaration is not shared by their families, friends, and colleagues, who still overwhelmingly impose expectations of women's life course centering on marriage and full-time motherhood (Ogasawara 1998). Once women remove themselves from the highly age-regimented life course expectations that continue to characterize Japanese society, they find it nearly impossible to return successfully. Informants' accounts were poignant, and alternated dramatically between proud recountings of obstacles overcome and goals achieved, and sad and thoughtful reflections on the disappointments, uncertainties, and fears they confront daily in the interstices of clearly defined and socially accepted female identities and roles. The metaphor they employed was that of the train track: repeatedly they told me, "there is only one set of tracks you can follow as a woman in Japan, and once you jump the tracks, you can't get back on." With each passing year a woman's chances of finding meaningful full-time work in a corporation decreases, despite her international expertise or bilingualism.

The confusion and despair that can result from "jumping the tracks" (and the intense age-related pressure that follows) is illustrated by a story told by one woman about her sister-in-law, who studied for two years in Hong Kong:

> She met a Chinese man there, but her parents refused to allow her to marry him. After that she went to Africa and spent two years working in a refugee camp. She was already thirty when she left.... Now she's back, and working at an NGO in Tokyo, but her salary is so low that she has to live with her parents. And she's faced with this choice: marry or pursue a career? Her parents pressure her constantly, relentlessly, to get married.... She's already 33 now, and to hit 35 and still be single in Japan means that companies probably won't even hire you! It's so hard for her in Japan that she's thinking of going abroad again, and looking for work in an NGO in England or the U.S. I feel bad saying it, but really, if she stays in Japan much longer, she's going to have a nervous breakdown.
>
> (Nakajima 1994)

Sakakibara notes that while more than 90 percent of the male former study-abroad students he interviewed in Japan expressed a degree of contentment with their lives, 45 percent of the female returnees were discontented, unemployed, and unable to find work that utilized the skills they had gained abroad (quoted in Matsui 1995: 376, fn. 44). Tanabe Minami was one such case. A passionate, dynamic, deeply intelligent young woman of 23 when I met her, she had just returned from two years of study abroad at UC Santa Cruz's History of Consciousness program. She spoke excitedly of postcolonial feminist and race theory, the writings of bell hooks, and her own position as an Asian woman in a racially divided United States. Yet upon her graduation from college, Tanabe could find no work but a position as an office lady in a small trading firm in Osaka, with no opportunity to use even her English skills, let alone her academic achievements. Two years later she managed to find a position in a cash-strapped feminist NGO devoted to Asian women's issues, but in doing so sacrificed a living wage and any kind of benefits. Now forced to live at home, Tanabe told me when I last saw her in the summer of 1997, that she dreamed of going to a graduate school in the United States (to study the politics of "imperialist Japanese feminism" in Asia), but could foresee no opportunity to do so in her current financial circumstances.

Japanese women newly returned from abroad circumvent disappointment and disillusionment by establishing wide-ranging support networks in Tokyo, around the country, and globally through the use of letters, newsletters, email newsgroups and visits. I found that they also actively participate in international volunteer projects focused on human rights and the environment, including Amnesty International and Greenpeace. More importantly, however, I found that as women aged, they ceased to maintain allegiances to the more utopic and uncritical forms of internationalism. The personal life stories of individual women in their forties and fifties consistently told of a radical break, a rupture between "before" and "now" in response to the West. According to different women, and at different times in their lives, disillusion with Western governmental policy and the apparent failure or hypocrisy of liberal political rhetoric (particularly during the Gulf War, ongoing at the time of my fieldwork), experiences of racism and sexism at the hands of Western male superiors in foreign firms, a questioning of the merits of individualism (particularly within personal relationships), and reevaluation of the virtues of "Japaneseness" (often expressed in explicitly self-Orientalizing racial terms) led to skepticism and a distancing from the enthusiasms of earlier years. Even Nakajima Arika, the informant who wrote the essay for the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* quoted above (1994), looked back on the essay in a later interview about six months after the first, and reflected, "You know, white men are overrated. I used to think all I wanted to do in life was marry a white man and move to Canada. I wanted to actually *become* Canadian. But now I don't think so. Now I think, I want to stay in Japan and make it here. If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere."

Although the women I spoke with radically rejected claims that the West was "better," telling instead of their processes of rediscovery of their racial/national identity as Japanese, this identity comprised a subjectivity that could be described as not only, but also Japanese. Nagata Hiroko, when I first met her, a successful, 42-year-old public relations manager in an American securities trading firm, told me of her "transformation" which took place at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. She had been eagerly exploring the Impressionism exhibit and studiously avoiding the Asian art collection, because she was, in her words, "crazy for white peoples' culture." Then, by mistake, she turned a corner and found herself face to face with an enormous, ancient Korean mural of the Buddha. As she recounts, "It was as if, seeing the round, peaceful face and narrow eyes of that Buddha, I for the first time realized a different side to my identity… That's when I came to realize myself as Japanese, as Oriental." While this identity was explicitly racialized, Nagata did not retreat to an inward-looking nationalism, but rather discovered through it a newfound international commitment, this time to Asia. Shortly after our interview she quit her high-paying job to take on a position of public relations officer for an overseas aid NGO in Tokyo, at starvation wages. Her job takes her to Laos and other Southeast Asian countries each year. She told me in a letter after my return from the field that her new life goal was "to work to become a human being who knows the joy of life and fosters true equality."

Nagata seems to be enunciating what Stuart Hall has called the diasporic identity: an identity which "lives with and through, not despite difference… [and] hybridity" (Hall 1994: 402). Yet in my view, this invocation of "hybridity" should not be read as a humanist resolution to the hierarchies and histories of modernity and universalism that underlie the larger presence of internationalist impulses in the world. Japanese women's internationalism is an example of what Bruce Robbins has called "discrepant cosmopolitanisms" (Robbins 1992: 81), and while it shows that the concept is "neither a Western invention nor a Western privilege" (ibid.), it also suggests the degree to which it remains embedded in ongoing Western political projects. As anthropologist John Russell has asked, "Is women's new awareness of themselves as 'Oriental' still embedded in the white culture they now reject? Whose authenticity is privileged in claims of racial and cultural identity?" (Russell, personal communication). In the remainder of this chapter I want to turn from questions of hybridity and selfhood to the political consequences of women's narratives when they begin to circulate in transnational spaces, implicating other modernities.

Performing modernity

Because of the social pressures on women, noted above, to renounce international allegiances in favor of a return to the communal fold, internationalized women are often forced to seek sustenance and legitimation of their cosmopolitanism from foreign sources. The process of women's internationalism entails above all a disciplining of the body, mind, and voice in accordance with the "rules" of a predeterminative West, in a version of what Homi Bhabha has called "mimicry" (Bhabha 1984): "In America I had to learn to express myself," "I was forced to think for myself," "I finally learned to be independent," "I stopped letting others decide for me." Foreigners, either encountered in Japan or on temporary trips abroad, played the role of audience for the performance of internationalism; they alone could evaluate the performance, and legitimize the personal and professional aims that motivate it. As I was told by a 29-year-old married nurse who struggled against family pressure to continue her studies abroad:

> For me to go abroad periodically is how I reconfirm to myself that I am on the right track. I meet Americans and other people, and they tell me it's fine to leave your husband to study. So I make sure I go abroad regularly, and when I come back to Japan I feel recharged.

The mimetic nature of internationalism can be seen in the following conversation, published as the final chapter of a 1990 book on US–Japan relations written by Katō Kyōko and Michael Berger, both international business consultants. Katō opens the dialogue by forcefully arguing a standard women's internationalism narrative, concluding with the assertion that because of their innate sensitivity to international protocol, women should always represent Japan in trade negotiations with Americans. Berger at once agrees. "Certainly. Unlike a Japanese man, once a Japanese woman recognized the Western style of doing things, she would immediately comply."

Katō responds: "We're tough, aren't we?!" Berger: "You certainly are! Japanese men, on the other hand, are all brittle inside because they've been so spoiled by their mothers." Katō goes on: "You know, Mr. Berger, for Japanese women, American men are very easy to negotiate with." Berger inquires: "Easier than Japanese men?" Katō exclaims: "Oh, the two can't possibly be compared!" Both laugh (Katō and Berger 1990: 270–274). We have returned to the shaming of the Japanese male, but this time in a performative mode. It is an exchange shot through with erotic innuendo. Berger is coyly delighted with Katō's faith in the Western male; Katō mirrors back to him what he most wants to believe about himself, about the United States, and about the superiority of Western men over Japanese men.

The "immigrant woman" (in this case the figuratively or rhetorically immigrant woman) turning her back on her own kind to grasp freedom and opportunity in America is one of America's most resonant foundational images. Lauren Berlant has described immigration discourse as a "central technology for the reproduction of patriotic nationalism . . . because the immigrant is defined as someone who *desires* America" (1996: emphasis added). She goes on to note that "immigrant women especially are valued for having the courage to grasp freedom" (ibid.). This "freedom" is inevitably eroticized, symbolized through the (interracial) love marriage. As Dearborn has observed, "Intermarriage between white men and ethnic women becomes a symbolic literalization of the American dream . . . an assertion of melting-pot idealism, of the forging of a 'new man,' of Cinderella success, of love 'regardless of race, creed, or color,' of the promise of America itself" (1986: 103).

Japanese and other Asian female immigrants embody a particularly potent version of this intermarriage fantasy (Lye 1995: 272); it is the same fantasy which has propelled Amy Tan and Jung Chang novels to best-seller status as feel-good parables for a multicultural age, an age in which white men are both increasingly uncertain of their desirability, and anxious to prove their racial sensitivity.[8] In this context Japanese women's internationalist discourses enable an eroticized assimilation that makes the United States a model for the world, and an object of universal female desire. The added allure of this object is that it is unavailable to Japanese males. Matsui Machiko, in her study of Japanese study-abroad students in the United States, celebrates Japanese women's advantage over their "Oriental" male counterparts based on women's exclusive ability to assimilate into the white mainstream through marriage with Americans, an opportunity, she implies, out of reach for Japanese men (ibid.: 137–138). Likewise, my informant Ishizaki Reiko, a 24-year-old woman who had studied for two years at UC Santa Barbara, explained to me, "Japanese guys feel more inferiority than girls do that they are racially despised by the world. With Japanese girls, you are popular just for being a Japanese girl. For us, it's almost an advantage. But Japanese men have no standing (*tachiba ga nai*). Race becomes a problem for Japanese men, but for women, race is 'excused' " (*yurusareru*).

It seems, however, that in the case of Japanese women race is not so much excused as fetishized. Japanese men, by contrast, like the Asian-American men described by Ebron and Tsing in a 1995 article, are seen as representatives of too much tradition in a regime of modernity that defines the traditional as "outside, ineffective, and already having lost the game" (1995: 397). The West has already established the racial hierarchy of tradition and modernity that sets up its own mimetic appropriation in Japanese women's domestic strategies of resistance, and created the conditions for an act of revenge against the Japanese nation-state that is potentially devastating in its intimacy. The transnational West, a West that, in Ashis Nandy's words (1983: xi) "is now everywhere," complicates any simple *domestic* formulation of female marginality/male centrality such as that from which women's narratives gain their rhetorical (and political) force.

Circulating desires

The point I wish to emphasize about this union between Westerners and Japanese women as an enactment of multicultural utopia and a solution to the problem of Japanese male sexism and insularity is that it is recirculated back to Japan through a variety of means. The Kawachi editorial cited earlier employs as its central legitimating authority not the experiences of actual Japanese women, but American *Time* and *Newsweek* articles, written by American men, about gender discrimination in Japan. The English conversation textbook is another such means. One textbook sold in the mid-1990s, written by two American men and illustrated by a Japanese female cartoonist, featured as its central plot line and animating each successive lesson, a budding romance between a white American man and a Japanese woman. The romance, and the textbook, culminated with Clint's marriage proposal to Keiko (resplendent in a formal kimono) and the engaged couple's relocation to America. In their climactic dialogue (which features blank spaces in which students must insert the proper vocabulary word chosen from a list), Clint declares to Keiko, "Anyway, gaijin or not, I've always been [myself]...My life is my own and so I can never allow any group or person to control it." Keiko responds, "I've probably been influenced by you, and I, too feel the [same] way. I want to live my life as I see it!" She goes on, "I want to continue working for a better international understanding among people...and not just to make Japan a richer country." With that, Clint proposes. Through the use of this textbook, one imagines the English conversation classroom itself becoming a venue for the erotic union of Japanese female students' internationalist dreams and white men's agonistic desires (a speculation borne out by quantities of anecdotal evidence from the Tokyo English-teaching scene).

Ethnographic fieldwork is another means for the transnational circulation of discourses about the West. As Clifford (1992) wrote, thinking of the informant as a traveler "shakes things up" (100), and requires that anthropologists see the representational challenge as being the portrayal of "local/global encounters [and] co-productions" (101).

During fieldwork my informants' expression of internationalism absorbed me in their dialogic impulses. Some informants undoubtedly approached interviews with me as an opportunity to share the testimony of an "authentic" Western female. As a native of the United States, as an American woman (and incidentally one who occupied at least superficially similar age, class, and professional positions as my informants), I was repeatedly called upon to affirm internationalist claims and share in a discourse of allegiance to the West.

For a number of reasons, however, I failed in this role. Not only did I bring with me to interviews a profound skepticism about the emancipatory promise of America, but my own marriage at the time to a Japanese man, when it was revealed (as it inevitably was in the course of repeated interviews and social interactions), proved to have a jarring effect; it disrupted the establishment of a taken-for-granted agreement about the universal desirability of white American men and the universal abjection of Japanese. In a positive sense, the "problem" of my marriage at the time caused sexualized hierarchies to become explicit, and in some cases, seemed to provide informants with a means to express ambivalence about the "dogma" of Western (male) desirability. One informant wrote me after I left the field, "I've enjoyed our conversations; they've made me reconsider the ideal of 'Pax Americana' in my life." When this influence seemed less salutary was when I was confronted with not-so-subtle urgings from informants to neutralize the disruptive effect of a Japanese partner by constructing him as "Americanized," and an "exception" to the "rule" of Japanese male backwardness. In the interest of building rapport with informants, I reluctantly participated for a time in exchanges that permitted the categories of American and Japanese males to remain intact, mutually exclusive, and hierarchically ordered. As time passed, however, such moves became untenable on many levels, and eventually, I stopped participating in these rapport-building strategies.

My inability to perform in this reflexive process became my primary fieldwork dilemma, one which was never satisfactorily resolved. The flatness of my responses dumbfounded several of my most highly West-identified informants, leading to a permanent estrangement in one case. This estrangement troubled me. By refusing to collaborate was I undermining informants' much-needed and deeply invested oppositional efforts? What were my responsibilities as a "native" Western ethnographer? To what extent was I liable for my citizenship in fieldwork? My domestic arrangements?

I still have found no satisfactory answer to these questions. These fieldwork experiences lead me to reflect, however, that an important form of accountability necessary to an engaged transnational ethnography is accountability for the "nativeness" of the Western, particularly the white, ethnographer in her practice of representation, in both of its meanings of representing the West in the field, and representing the field in the West.[9] While there has been growing attention to the position of ethnographers who, because of their racial or cultural subject position identify themselves and are identified with their informants, until now the "native" ethnographer has been problematized mainly as she who is native to her non-Western field site.

The Western anthropologist, however, is the native of that West/ modernity/ universalism that circulates transnationally; she is both "native informant" for subjects' knowledge and identity projects, and conduit for the circulation of these projects back to the Western metropolis. To fail to account for this can only be to again reinscribe the unmarked universality of the white Westerner in anthropology as elsewhere.

Conclusion

Mary John describes the explicitly gendered nature of the "pull of the universalist and unmarked attractions [of the West]" on the intellect and identity of highly educated and ambitious non-Western women who, she writes, have pushed for inclusion within the deceptively unmarked spaces of the new international class (1996: 18). When my informant Nagata Hiroko quit her high-paying job in high finance to work at the Asian-focused NGO, she was rejecting one version of the global professional-managerial class, but inserting herself into another, the transnationally circulating class of highly educated first world professionals who administer both high finance and humanitarian aid, who mediate both dystopic commodity capitalism and continuing utopian dreams of human progress. Insofar as internationalist Japanese women constitute a highly educated, bilingual, elite employee resource for American firms or educational institutions, they are also well-situated to serve the current impulses of US multiculturalism. All the while expatriate Japanese women work/study in the United States, the American companies/universities that employ/educate them gain not only bilingual, bicultural workers/students, but also the opportunity to celebrate and sell their "diversity" to shareholders/alumni and the consuming public hungry for nonthreatening multicultural images. And finally, the power of multinational capital under neoliberal capitalism is to transform discontent from loci of collective activism into modes of individualized consumption. While internationalist women are not simply "buying" the West in the form of conspicuous designer shopping (and this is by no means unknown in Japan), they are actually "buying into" it, and substituting individual trajectories of upward mobility for a collective confrontation of the social arrangements in Japan that have led to their unhappiness.

Thus while the West represents a space for female agency and achievement, it is also a site for the imposition of new regimes of compulsory consumption and political appropriation. As Grewal and Kaplan (1995) have shown, women (and men) in transnational spaces engage with multiple, "scattered" hegemonies simultaneously. Responses are always contingent, tentative, and temporary. I want to emphasize in closing that narratives and practices of internationalism are necessary and important means of resistance for some ambitious Japanese women within the gender-stratified structures of domestic Japanese corporate culture. What they reveal, however, is that in postmodern, transnational landscapes, peoples' fondest dreams of escape and redemption are always vulnerable to the recuperative processes of transnational political and economic processes, for informants and ethnographers alike.

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Notes

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2 These writings are the most recent installations in a longer history of women's "internationalist" writings, many of which, not insignificantly, have been written in English for an American audience. Earlier examples include Mishima Sumie's *My Narrow Isle* (1940) and *The Broader Way* (1953), Matsuoka Yoko's *Daughter of the Pacific* (1952), and Kawai Michi's *Sliding Doors* (1952).

3 Tajima Yoko, for example, has written that to Japanese men, women are simply *gaijin* (foreigners), alien, unknowable, and antithetical to male concerns (Tajima 1993: 19). Similarly scholar of comparative literature Mizuta (Lippett) Noriko, hypothesizes that contemporary Japanese female authors so often use foreign settings and characters because women themselves are foreigners (*ikokujin*) within Japan, and as such find foreignness "deeply intertwined as metaphor for the strangeness and exclusion of women's lives" (1993: 31).

4 However, Toyoda insists that such a backlash did occur in the form of the "yellow cab" controversy, in which Japanese men attempted to paint all internationally active women as sexually loose and promiscuous in their relations with foreign men (see Toyoda 1994; Kelsky 1996c, 2001).

5 Also see Iwao (1993) and Lebra (1992) for a discussion of women's success in so-called *katakana* professions, newer fields often with a foreign or foreign-language component, such as designer, illustrator, or copywriter.

6 This figure is particularly remarkable in light of the fact that female participation in domestic government is extremely low compared to these same nations.

7 Douglas MacArthur is often acknowledged as the man who first "gave" Japanese women the right to vote, and the source of women's rights in Japan; as the birth-control activist Baroness Ishimoto Shidzue recently stated, "General MacArthur was really very nice to Japanese women. The first thing he said in 1945 was to give them equal rights" (quoted in Chapman 1993: 20). But see also Matsui, who argues that female professors provide important role models for Japanese women studying abroad (1994: 137).

8 As Aihwa Ong has written of this genre, "…perhaps for Western readers the satisfaction of these stories derives from their depiction of Chinese women fleeing an unremittingly oppressive society into full emancipation in the West" (1995: 350).

9 This category of Westerner is uneasily racialized, as while white and Western are not collapsible, certainly of all Westerners, whites are both most easily able to efface their race, and also make themselves and be made to represent the West.

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Part III

Diaspora and mobility

5 Between privilege and prejudice

Japanese–Brazilian migrants in “the land of yen and the ancestors”

Angelo Akimitsu Ishi

> My home is not mine, and this place is not mine as well. I am alone and do not resist, I have too much to say
>
> (*Travessia*, Milton Nascimento)

Introduction: migration with a special name

When Brazil defeated Germany 2–0 in the 2002 World Cup soccer finals in Japan, becoming the only team to be world champions five times in this sport, the majority of Brazilian supporters who cried and repeated proudly “Brazil! Brazil!” in and around Yokohama stadium had, in fact, Japanese-like faces. They were the so-called *Nikkei*, people of Japanese descent. They did not travel to Japan as tourists, aiming to cheer for the Brazilian squad. Almost all of them were Brazilian *Nikkei* migrants working and living in Japan as *Dekasegi*, a Japanese term used for people who leave their homeland to work temporarily in another place and incorporated into the Portuguese language as *Dekassegui*.

This is a study about whether this very specific group of transnational migrants, the Brazilian *Dekasseguis*, have been welcomed or not by Japanese society. It is also aimed at discussing how and why those migrants have reacted or not to the ways in which Japanese have perceived them.

For the purpose of this paper it is enough to say that the major difference between the Third World Brazilian currency and the powerful Japanese First World yen has been the catalyst of this influx of Brazilian *Nikkei* to Japan. But the reasons for going to Japan have not strictly been economic. Individual motivations for migrating to Japan widely vary, but one can say that for most *Nikkei* these are wishes and dreams typical of middle-class people in Brazil: buying a house/apartment, a new car, starting/owning a business.

For the Brazilian society as a whole, the migration of *Nikkei* from Brazil to Japan is only a part of a larger “Brazilian Diaspora” which started in the late 1980s. It is said that at least two million Brazilian citizens have chosen to go overseas, most of them to the USA. However, due to the fact that the majority of

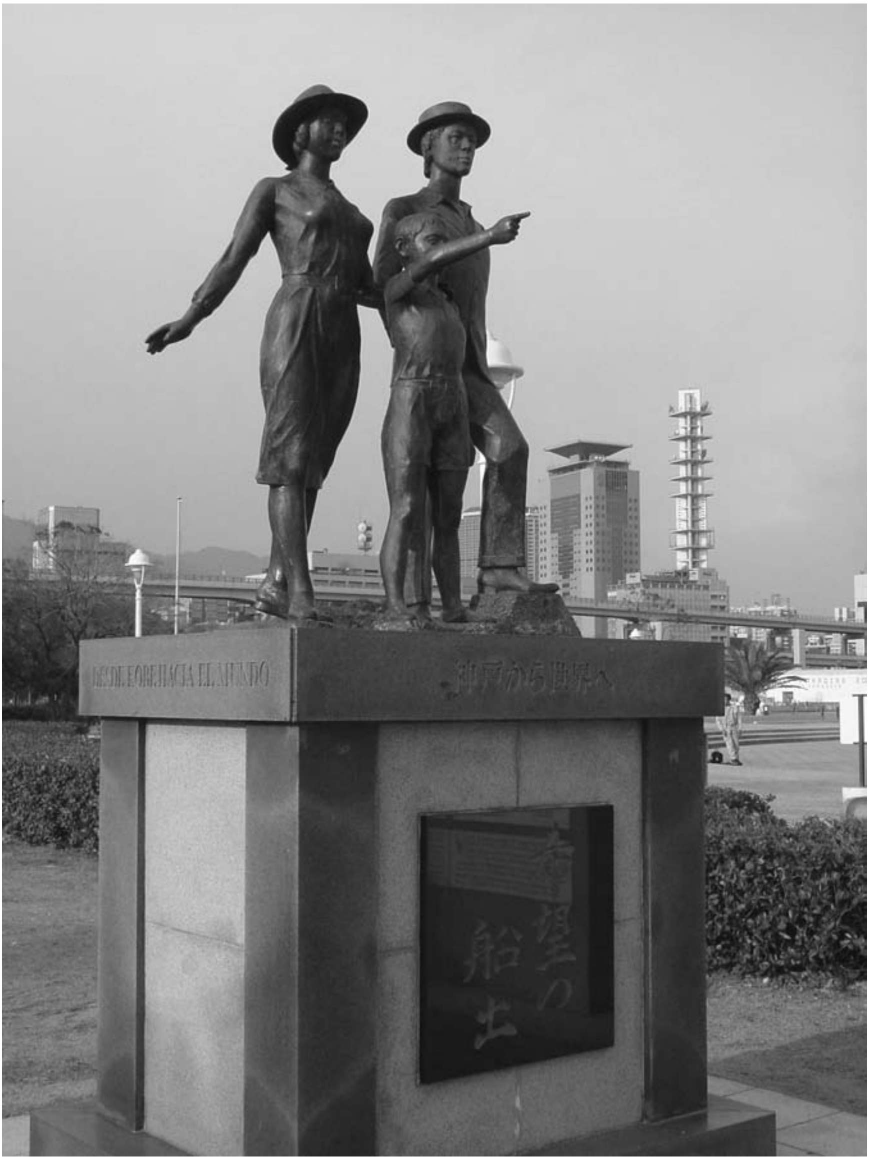

Figure 5.1 Brazilian emigrants monument, Kobe, 2006. The migration to Japan in the 1990s of hundreds of thousands of Brazilians, mostly of Japanese ancestry, is a U-turn by the descendants of a massive emigration to Brazil from Japan early in the twentieth century. This statue in the port of Kobe commemorates the place from where many of the emigrants departed. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

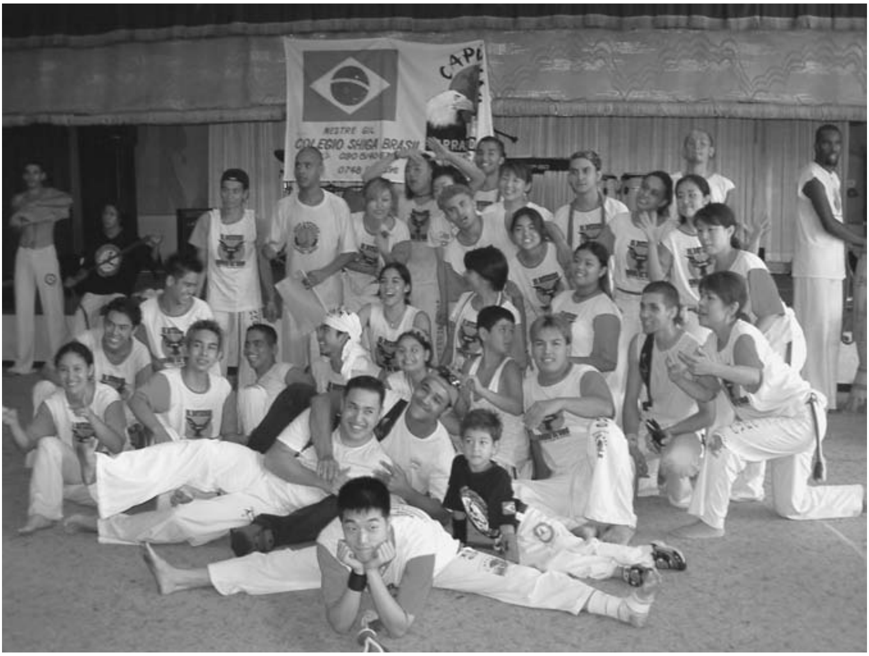

Figure 5.2 *Batizado*, Shiga Prefecture, 2004. A *batizado* is an advancement test/ceremony for the Brazilian dance/sport of capoeira. Typically, the entire group will gather and other capoeira schools will also be invited. In Japan, participants might include Japanese, *Nikkei* and other Brazilians. (Photo: Tatsu Yamato)

migrants to Japan are *Nikkei*, which means that they have gone to the land of their ancestors, this migration, and the migrants as well, have been labeled *Dekassegui*. The newest Portuguese dictionary, *Dicionário Houaiss*, defines *Dekassegui* as "people who settle, but only temporarily, in Japan, to work frequently as a direct labor force."

Otherwise, from the Japanese society's point of view, *Dekasseguis* constitute the main newcomer community, as statistics from the Ministry of Justice have shown. By May 2007, in a ranking by nationalities, Brazilians were found to be the third most numerous group in Japan (312,979), following the "old-timers," Koreans and Chinese. These Brazilians have acquired the "right" to go to Japan as unskilled laborers not because of their Brazilian citizenship, but because of their Japanese origins.

How to deal with the "*Dekassegui* puzzle"

Many journalistic reports and academic studies on *Dekassegui* have been published since the early 1990s, especially in Japan. Bibliographies in English are smaller in number but richer in terms of sources for debate. Sellek (1997) and Carvalho (2003), for example, have done fine overviews of the *Nikkei* migration.

Roth (2002) and Tsuda (2003), whom I met when they were doing field research in Japan in the mid-1990s, provide suggestive ethnographic pictures of *Dekassegui*, with a special focus on identity matters. Yamanaka (1997, 2000) calls attention also to gender issues, while Yamashita (2001) describes in an attractive language the cultural shocks and misunderstandings between Brazilians and Japanese. A book by Hirabayashi and others (2002) explores several issues concerning *Nikkei* and "globalization," including chapters on economic and educational issues of the *Dekassegui* phenomenon. But perhaps the most provocative reflection on *Dekassegui* is that of Linger (2001).

Aiming at a "person-centered ethnography," he casts doubt on the studies that reduce people to "social categories": "One may not 'subordinate lives to theory' " (Linger 2001: 10). By entitling each chapter of his book with the names of his main interviewees, Linger reveals a clear intention of refusing categorizations. "Rather than paraphrasing interviewees' comments or stitching them into monologues, I have opted to reproduce portions of field conversations (...). The presentation (...) conveys vividly and with immediacy the presence of others" (Linger 2001: 15–16). This approach has much in common with a journalistic interview (though most of the interviews published in newspapers and magazines fail to be as consistent as Linger's).

Though I do not present the "raw data" in the same way (interviewees' comments were paraphrased due to the economy of space), I share his concerns. Thus, I have tried to clarify as far as possible the actual questions the interviewees were answering as well as "what, why and how I asked" something to someone. As the gap between their discourse and their practice cannot be noted by those who use questionnaires, I have tried to check migrants' answers and their behaviors at diverse times and in multiple situations.

This paper reflects an extensive long-term research project I have done since 1990, both in Japan and Brazil, concerning *Dekassegui* migration. During this period, hundreds of *Nikkei* as well as Japanese have been interviewed, mainly in municipalities in Japan with a high concentration of *Nikkei*. The first stage of my research was made along with a group consisting mainly of Japanese sociologists and was published in a two-volume report. One of these volumes featured case studies of 93 *Nikkei* and 17 Japanese who employed *Nikkei*.

However, most of the data presented in the present paper were collected during the course of my professional as well as volunteer activities: editor-in-chief of a community's newspaper, member of the Citizens' Council of the Brazilian Embassy, and so on. Due to my deep "commitment" to the *Nikkei* community, I should have to admit that, ultimately, my interest in the fate of the *Nikkei* "collectively" overwhelms that toward *Nikkei* "as individuals." Thus, I have paid special attention to the rhetoric about/by migrants printed or aired in the so-called ethnic media (the newspapers and TV programs made by/for Brazilians in Japan), as well as the coverage about *Nikkei* by the Japanese mass media. I could not ignore, either, certain epoch-making events that were "news" within the *Nikkei* community and Japanese society as well: "the Ana Bortz trial," "Herculano's murder," and soccer's World Cup, among others.

Some Japanese scholars seem to have had a bias as members of the host society, often being less interested in understanding *Nikkei*'s thoughts and feelings, and much more interested in discussing how Japanese society should deal with "aliens" who have become "neighbors."

For instance, in one of the earliest studies concerning *Dekasseguis*, Kitagawa classified *Nikkei* according to three patterns of migration: *eijūgata* (settlers), *bunkyogata* (something like "people who live in two places"), *dekasegigata* (temporary migrants). This kind of analysis clearly attends to the needs of the Japanese hosts, who want to know what the plans of *Nikkei* for the future are, especially how long they intend to stay in Japan. But the question is: Can they be classified so easily like that? If one considers *Nikkei* views and initiates a deeper interaction with them, one can perceive that they are not so sure about their life plans and strategies. Or, to be more precise, they have multiple plans for each possible scenario.

As the *Nikkei* "community" is geographically dispersed, and also because I was interested in the peculiarities of each region, to move from one place to another while doing research was thought to be more effective than staying in just one place. Rather than making an "ethnography" of Brazilians in a specific place, as Margolis has done with Brazilians in New York City, the method of conducting a "*cruzade*" all over Japan was initiated, visiting the places where Brazilian were "making news."

Though my research has covered all Brazilian residents in Japan (including Brazilians not of Japanese descent), this paper will focus on those who have Japanese descent, as they still constitute the absolute majority in the so-called Brazilian community in Japan (and there are virtually no signs of a shift in Japanese immigration policy).

Most of the studies on this matter simply asked whether *Nikkei* "felt prejudice" or "experienced discrimination," but failed to ask whether they found it "acceptable" or "justifiable." Similarly, *Nikkei* have been stormed by questions concerning a probable "identity crisis" as if it should undoubtedly be a decisive matter in their minds. However, they have not been asked whether they found it as a determining factor of "pain" or "uneasiness." Some "voices" cited here may help to "question the questions," which means, to question the nature and the grade of the so-called identity dilemmas of *Nikkei*.

One cannot be trapped by an "a priori" supposition that *Nikkei* had to choose one or another "ethnic" identity, or at least "give a priority" to one of them. Though I agree in general terms with the studies which have emphasized the strengthening of "Brazilian-ness" among *Nikkei* in Japan, one may say that if the *Dekassegui* experience has resulted in an enforcement of migrants' Brazilian-ness this does not necessarily mean that they have lost or hidden their Japanese-ness. One and the other are not exclusive, and both are very "subjective" concepts.

This paper avoids the term "return migration" because the majority of *Nikkei* were born in Brazil and are not "returning," but "going" for the very first time to the land of their ancestors. Of course I am aware that the term *Dekassegui* has a negative connotation, but that is the way people identify themselves. Moreover, some of my informants even preferred to be labeled as "*Dekassegui*" instead of "migrant."

For similar reasons, this paper gives priority to the term *Nikkei*, instead of *Nikkeijin*, more popular among scholars, probably in accordance with the terminology adopted by the Japanese Ministry of Justice. I use the term *Nikkei* because it is largely used in the Japanese-Brazilian community, both in Japan and Brazil, and especially by the ethnic media.

The implications of being "*Nikkei*" and "*Dekassegui*"

Are Nikkei "Japanese" or "foreigners"? This has been a classical question in discussions regarding identity dilemmas of *Nikkei* from Brazil. The question has implications not only on the individual level, but also for the overall relationship of the *Nikkei* as a group with Japanese society and/or with other minorities in Japan.

The main reason *Nikkei* were welcomed as a labor force in industries was the revision of the Immigration Law in 1990, which gave special rights only for *Nikkei*. Unlike other foreigners, the *Nikkei* can receive long-term visas in Japan. These include the so-called *Nihonjin no Haigūsha Nado*, or Visa for Japanese spouses and Others, for the second-generation *Nikkei* who have Japanese parents; and the *Teijūsha*, the Long-Term Resident Visa, for third-generation *Nikkei* who have Japanese grandparents. These visas are not "Working Visas," but represent a privileged status that permits "any activities" in Japan, including unskilled jobs. With the Immigration Law's reform, enacted in 1990, the Japanese government chose to accept those who were supposed to be more similar to them.

A director of a small factory in Gunma was asked why he chose to employ *Nikkei*. He answered that, "Of course one reason is that *Nikkei* can work legally, and other foreigners cannot. But another reason is that there are many girls and women in our factory. They feel better, they feel less *iwakan* (a sense of incongruity) towards a *Nikkei* than working with Pakistanis or Iranians." He explains that this difference is due to the sense of affinity one feels with *Nikkei* since they are supposed to be closer to Japanese than other foreigners. Remember how important *wa* (harmony) and *chian* (security) are for Japanese people, especially in work places and human resource management.

There is no doubt that *Nikkei* are "foreigners," since they were born in Brazil and have Brazilian nationality. For many of them, however, going to Japan to work does not have the same meaning as going to the United States. Even if they do not mind it, the Japanese host society will see them with different eyes, because for many Japanese the *Nikkei* share "the same blood" (origin) and "the same faces" (phenotype) as Japanese.

When Japanese people immigrated to Brazil beginning in 1908 they were supposed to make lots of money and return to Japan as soon as possible. Initially, they were *Dekasseguis*, too. In later decades many "success stories" of immigrants in Brazil were emphasized by the media and by the leaders of the *Nikkei* community. Both the Japanese in Japan and new immigrants believed that *Nikkei* in Brazil had achieved a high status and were in a relatively comfortable economic situation. When the descendants of an immigrant go to Japan as a *ryūgakusei* (student who studies abroad), they are welcomed by their relatives as a symbol of the success of their parents and grandparents (it is assumed that a *ryūgakusei's* family enjoys a good life, since they have sent a young member of the family to study in such a far-away place as Japan).

But if the same *Nikkei* goes to Japan as a *Dekassegui*, he/she is likely to be an object of compassion by many Japanese people. From their point of view, if a descendant of an immigrant is coming to Japan to work in a 3K job (*kitanai, kitsui, kiken*, meaning dirty, difficult, and dangerous), it is because the parents or grandparents were "economically unsuccessful" and are "poor" in Brazil. Japanese people in general still cannot understand that *Nikkei* who go to Japan for work are not as poor as they imagine and that they have the same middle-class origins as the *ryūgakusei*.

Having experienced my first six years in Japan as a *ryūgakusei*, I was frequently invited to "international exchange" events, parties, home stay programs and presentations of "Japanese art." However, the foreigners I met there were invariably of special "classes," headed by *ryūgakusei* (especially those sponsored by government's scholarships) and AETs (Assistant English Teachers). No *Dekassegui* were invited.

As a *Nisei* (second-generation Japanese) who worked in an office in Tokyo said, "Every time I introduce myself to some Japanese, I emphasize that I am not a *Dekassegui*, I'm an office worker." Though I have not had a formal discussion among the so-called elite of the *Nikkei* community (white-collar workers and students supported by scholarships), many of them expressed in an informal way their "strategy" of protecting themselves from the stigma of being the "son/daughter of a loser."

"When defects are discovered during factory production, the responsibility is always attributed to us," said many *Nikkei* who defined themselves as "victims of discrimination." But I asked them, "Who are the Japanese you have had contact with?" The "Japan" they know is in the work place (small factories in most cases) and the "Japanese people" they know are seasonal workers and part-time workers competing in the same labor market.

Many young *Dekasseguis* are buying new cars in Japan and travel to their job location by car. Japanese people cannot understand why those young men, who are supposed to be in a bad economic situation in their home country and need to send money to their families, can make extravagant purchases like expensive cars with the money they have earned in Japan. That is not what the Japanese expect from a typical *Dekassegui*. They cannot imagine that many *Dekasseguis* do not need to send money to Brazil. Surprisingly, even some of my Japanese academic colleagues condemned the young migrants' behavior, defining them as people "lost in consumption," primarily concerned with "enjoying life"—as if "expending money" were a "dirty" act.

In sum, one must recognize not only the "cultural" differences between Brazil and Japan, but also the differences in prior life-style and in the educational and social backgrounds of newcomers. Japanese hosts cannot ignore the fact that the *Nikkei* were neither poor people nor manual laborers in their country of origin.

And *Nikkei* will have to understand that Japanese people have never imagined a university graduate or professor having to do unskilled labor for money.

Overestimating *Nikkei* dilemmas

If one classifies *Nikkei* according to their "Japanese generation," one can note that only a few of them are *Issei* (of first generation) and the majority are *Nisei* (second) and *Sansei* (third generation). There are also a few from the fourth and fifth generations.

Before 1990, the majority of *Nikkei* going to Japan for work were *Issei*. That is why the *Nikkei* media in Brazil called it a "U-turn," meaning that they were "returning" to Japan. With the revision of the Immigration Law, *Nisei* and *Sansei* were given the right to get long-term visas and to work in Japan. Nowadays, the majority of *Dekasseguis* in Japan were born in Brazil and have only Brazilian nationality.

Many studies about *Nikkei* migrants have given much importance to the "generation" factor. But it seems that this factor has been quite overestimated. In February 2004, I was invited to be a consultant for a theatrical production entitled "Seikimatsu no Carnival" (Carnival at the End of the Century). The characterization of *Nikkei* in this play, as the author Ren Saito explained to me, was inspired by the more than 50 books on the matter he had read. The main characters—a three-generation family—are an *Issei* grandmother, a *Nisei* couple, and a *Sansei* grandson. The grandmother prefers Japan instead of Brazil and speaks poor Portuguese; her son and his wife are perfect bilinguals but prefer Brazil; the grandson did not speak Japanese until he came to Japan as a *Dekassegui*, and, even having a Japanese girlfriend, decides at the end of the story to go back to Brazil.

More than "portraying" the real *Nikkei*, the characters seem to retrace the stereotypical "image" Japanese have of immigrants, according to "a priori" expectations toward each generation. In a debate with the writer, published in the official leaflet of the theater, I emphasized my discomfort about being labeled as a "*Sansei*," as I am not what many Japanese expect from a grandson of Japanese immigrants. I speak more Japanese than many *Nisei* and I chose Japan as my new "home." After 15 years of living in Japan, I feel it is more appropriate to label myself as an "*Issei*," in the sense that I am a first-generation Brazilian immigrant.

Another common misunderstanding concerning *Nikkei* identity dilemmas in Japan has been induced by some common phrases by informants who say, "I was treated as a *Japonês* ('Japanese') in Brazil and now I am treated as a *Gaijin* ('stranger') in Japan." Even if *Dekassegui* migrants are "uncertain" of being more "Japanese" or more "Brazilian," even if they do not have a clear and conclusive answer to researchers that ask them, "Will you cheer the Japanese or the Brazilian national team in the World Cup?" one should not easily conclude that the *Nikkei* are *suffering* some "ethnic" identity crisis. In the overall context of *Nikkei*'s life, they are far more concerned with other sorts of dilemmas such as their "professional" and "class" identity crises.

The case of an interviewee who did not even know the meaning of the term "*Nikkei*" was significant. In the very beginning of the interview, he suddenly told me: "I've never heard the term *Nikkei* in my life." When I explained that *Nikkei* are people of Japanese descent, he then asked: "Am I a *Nikkei* too? I'm a *mestiço* . . ." *Mestiço* in Portuguese means "half-blood, born of mixed parentage." I said, "Yes, all the people who have at least one Japanese ancestor are considered *Nikkei* by the Japanese."

In point of fact, any *Dekassegui* is instructed to know his *Nikkei* condition, since they have to prove their Japanese origins through the *koseki tōhon* (Japanese family register). There is a system in Brazil for recruiting and preparing all the documents necessary for going to Japan. However, some of my informants simply paid the fees for these agencies and did not know any of the details of these bureaucratic procedures.

Playing roles

"Why can't I be 100% Brazilian *and* 100% Japanese as well?" This was the provocative response of a Brazilian *Nikkei* when asked about his identity. His claim is that he can, and tries to be, both Japanese and Brazilian according to his needs. His situation is, of course, special since he was born in Japan but migrated to Brazil with his parents when he was three. In fact, his identity is more than "double" (a term frequently used by *mestiços* in an attempt to give a positive evaluation to their anomalous position), since his parents were born in the southernmost Japanese islands of Okinawa. He has made great efforts to increase the friendship between *Nikkei* and Japanese. He speaks the Japanese language with Japanese people, Portuguese with *Nikkei* in general, and *Uchinaanchu* (the Okinawan dialect, also used to describe those people with an Okinawan identity) with close Brazilian friends whose ancestors are from Okinawa.

An episode involving this informant unveils the complexity of identity management by *Nikkei*. In December 1991, I joined a bus tour organized by him. When he put samba music on during the dinner party, nobody showed interest in dancing. He quickly shifted the program and played *enka* (Japanese traditional songs) in a karaoke player. Suddenly people were in high spirits, and the party was a great success. This made me remember that the *Nikkei* in Brazil were crazy for karaoke concerts, where they could sing Japanese songs. This smart organizer owned a karaoke bar in Ōizumi, a small town that became famous as a "Brazil Town" because of the strong presence of *Nikkei*. He understood that the *Nikkei* wanted to act "naturally" as if they were in Brazil because there were no Japanese on the tour and they could momentarily "forget" that they were in Japan.

The episode on the bus tour does not mean necessarily that *Nikkei* prefer "Japanese" culture rather than "Brazilian" culture. If they rejected samba and chose "Japanese songs," it is not because they want to be "Japanese," but because appreciating these songs was part of their "Brazilian *Nikkei*" culture before going to Japan. They were just reproducing what they used to do on weekends in Brazil. For similar reasons, it is also true that, in Brazilian discos throughout Japan, the

DJs play more English songs than Brazilian rhythms, something both the media and the scholars have (deliberately?) ignored.

The *Nikkei* were playing (intentionally or not, depending on the circumstances) a "Brazilian role" when they went to a samba party with Japanese people or a samba parade like the Ōizumi Festival (an annual festival where organizers introduced a samba parade in the program, like a Brazilian Carnival), to be "watched" by the Japanese public. But when they wanted to relax it would be when there were only *Nikkei* in the room. They felt free of any pressure and could show the face they showed when singing Japanese songs (and dancing English hits) in the karaoke houses and dance halls in São Paulo or Paraná (states of major concentrations of *Nikkei* in Brazil). In this sense their attitudes were similar to that of a movie actor. At occasions like the Ōizumi Festival, they tried to be as Brazilian as possible, because that was what was expected of an authentic, "good" Brazilian. From the *Nikkei* point of view, this kind of performance was an opportunity to convince the Japanese that, as one *Nikkei* asserted, "although we are *Nikkei* (with Japanese phenotype and Japanese origins), we are different from you." Playing a Brazilian role does not mean that they necessarily "strengthened" their "Brazilian-ness." Among Brazilians, this dramatization was unnecessary. That is why the participants of the tour did not make any effort at dancing the samba. They managed their behaviors according to their own (strategic) convenience.

Another example of identity management was found during the first two soccer World Cups of the post-*Dekassegui* age: one held in the USA (1994) and the next in France (1998). An "average Brazilian" is supposed to become "crazy" during this huge soccer tournament. During the US tournament, some *Nikkei* cheered together for the Brazilian team in front of big TV monitors in Brazilian restaurants all over Japan. The final match, between Brazil and Italy, was broadcast by Japanese television at 4 a.m. Brazil was victorious, but, curiously, no *Nikkei* were reportedly absent from work.

They knew that if they were in Brazil they would have the "right" of not working—an "automatic" holiday of sorts. But they continued to work as if nothing had happened, and kept their explosion of happiness for the night after work, when they gathered again at the same restaurants and celebrated the championship.

They "forgot" their "Brazilian" desire to not work on the day of the championship's festivities because they knew they were in Japan for the purpose of making money. They chose to play a hard-working *Dekassegui* role (rather than an authentic Brazilian role) in the work place, acting exactly as was expected of a good employee in a Japanese company, and leaving their other facet—what they considered their "real" facet—for their compatriots. Thus, as with the bus tour, the Brazilian *Nikkei* demonstrated different behaviors when they were with the Japanese and when they were among compatriots. They made strategic choices depending on whom they were with at the time.

A silent minority?

In the media and in informal talks, prejudice and discrimination have been a recurrent topic among *Nikkei* in Japan. "We were not invited to the *bōnenkai* (year-end parties), only Japanese," complained one interviewee. Many of them reported some kind of prejudice in the workplace. Reports about shops and discos that "prohibited Brazilians' entrance" were common in the early 1990s. Though some of these claims were proved to be unreal or exaggerated, the fact that many *Dekassegui felt* discriminated against is uncontestable.

Along with "ethnic" and "cultural" differences, the insertion of *Nikkei* in the lowest portion of Japanese society was also a crucial reason for some negative attitudes toward *Nikkei*. "Japanese in the factory asked me whether there were telephones and doctors in Brazil. They also asked me whether there were snakes in the middle of Brazilian streets," said a 25-year-old *Nisei* woman who was one of the first Brazilians to go to Japan in 1988.

I asked if she had tried to clear up that kind of misunderstanding. Her answer was "No," because she could not speak Japanese. Then I asked if she wanted to learn Japanese. "I prefer to learn English," she answered, "because in Japan the only foreigners who are unconditionally welcomed are the English-speaking ones, especially the Americans." That made me remember "advice" given by a *Nisei* woman who married a Japanese and teaches English in private lessons. "In Japan, you *must* speak in English instead of Japanese, so they ou respect you more and treat you well."

Though the majority of *Nikkei* in Japan do not have English proficiency like this woman, their attitude is similar to hers. If they cannot act as an American *Nikkei*, they could act as if they were Japanese when they are in public spaces, thanks to their Japanese-like face. Many of my informants have noted, with some irony that, "When one Brazilian notes that there is another Brazilian in the same train, they even try to pretend as if they were Japanese."

This attitude may seem contradictory with some signs of solidarity among *Dekasseguis*. Why would a *Dekassegui* who interacts with compatriots when she or he is within the ethnic community suddenly become "cold" toward friends when he or she is among Japanese? This double standard reaction is perfectly understandable, since some *Nikkei* are looking for a kind of "self-protection" from the negative attitudes towards them.

Avoiding direct battles with Japanese—that has been the general trend of *Nikkei*. Rather than voicing their protest, they have looked (consciously or unconsciously) for other alternatives for "navigating" in Japanese life. With only a few exceptions, *Nikkei* are willing to show they are "peaceful" and "hardworking" people.

For example, *Dekassegui* families rarely participate in the meetings and activities of the district residents' council. Second, they rarely fight for better conditions in their workplace. Some attempts to organize labor unions and associations for claiming better working conditions have failed to get a reasonable number of members. I have attended the meetings of some such associations (like SSNB and CATLA). Their leaders often blamed *Dekasseguis* for the lack of "unity" and "mutual cooperation." They told that the majority of *Nikkei* only joined those associations when they faced big problems. "Once the problem was resolved, they invariably disappeared," said the leaders of both associations.

A single exception amid this trend was that of Ana Bortz, a reporter of a Brazilian TV channel living in Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka Prefecture. After being ejected from a jewelry store because of her Brazilian origins, she filed a suit for "racial discrimination." Significantly, many voices in the Brazilian community were aware of a possible "negative" effect of her fight. Even her own media company has refrained from treating her as a "heroine." Many Brazilians were aware that this explicit challenge against Japanese discrimination could worsen the allergy of Japanese society against them.

Instead of challenging Japanese people who discriminate against *Nikkei*, many have shifted their dissatisfactions to derogatory attitudes against compatriots. For instance, many Brazilians of non-Japanese descent told me they were victims of discrimination from *Nikkei*. They were, in effect, minorities within a minority. The increasing stratification within the *Dekassegui* community also requires more attention. And though the Brazilian *Nikkei* rarely admit it, it is well known that they harbor prejudices against *Nikkei* of other South American countries like Peru and Bolivia. Perhaps this was because Brazilians considered themselves the leaders of South America; one informant emphasized how he did not feel comfortable being labeled as "*Nanbeijin*" ("South American") by the Japanese.

Some *Nikkei* have externalized their hostility concerning exploitation by Japanese companies in a peculiar way: instead of criticizing the Japanese, they criticize the Brazilian managers and interpreters who are the bridge between patronage and laborers. This is similar to what happened at the time racial tensions emerged in the form of riots in Los Angeles in the early 1990s, when African-Americans struck Korean shops instead of White American ones. "I feel a big pressure because Brazilian workers hate me, they think I'm a dog of the patronage. But I am just doing my job!" claimed one of those *Nikkei* interpreters.

Another solution that *Nikkei* have found for dealing with their undesirable situation in Japan is "escapism," in the sense that they try to "forget" or "do not think about" their condition. Joining a religious group could be included among those "escapist" strategies. A considerable portion of the *Nikkei* network in Japan relies on religious groups and activities. Some fervent religious followers (not only Christian groups, but also Japanese-origin religions that had believers in Brazil) began to organize masses and meetings with Portuguese translations, or meetings exclusively in Portuguese for Brazilian followers.

In 1992, I took part in one of these meetings as an observer of a three day "Bible Camp" near Tokyo where more than one hundred believers opened the first group baptism ceremony among Brazilians in Japan. Many of the believers said that they had never been interested in religious matters before going to Japan. One of them told me felt a sense of "redemption" after he "discovered the faith," stating, "Here, everyone treats each other with respect."

Meanwhile, some *Dekasseguis* have literally "escaped" from undesirable conditions by exchanging their blue-collar job for a white-collar one, even if it meant earning less than before. And they did not regret it. One former factory worker who got a job in a trading company in Tokyo (owned by Brazilians) said, "For the first time in my Japanese stay, I felt like a '*gente*' (true man)."

About this matter, it may also be useful to mention the key concepts analyzed by DaMatta (1979) for understanding Brazilians: *Casa* & *Rua* (Home and Street) and *Pessoa* & *Indivíduo* (Person and Individual). He says Brazilians have different patterns of behavior according to the place, the situation and the people they are relating to at any given moment. In Casa they are more apt to be recognized as Pessoas, with their rights, their own rules, their name, defined hierarchical positions and special treatment from familiars and friends. Casa is the space of Pessoas.

The opposite place is Rua, where the same Brazilian is an anonymous citizen, tends to be just an Indivíduo who has to obey laws, rules, and hierarchies determined by others, and where everyone must be equally treated. Who the person is in the Casa is frequently ignored by others when he/she is in the Rua. Thus, one could say that the *Dekassegui* migration was a movement from Casa to Rua, with Pessoas becoming Indivíduos for the first time of their lives in Japan.

Many *Nikkei* do consider themselves in the “Rua” in Japan, so that they do not see much merit in fighting for a discrimination-free society. “Anyway we’ll go back to *casa* in the near future, so I don’t want to waste time,” as one interviewee justified himself to me. Others even question the “moral right” of voicing some protest. “Here is their *casa*, so they have the priority,” said one informant. Another one tried to justify the negative reactions of Japanese toward Brazilians. “Japan was a very homogeneous and peaceful country. Now we have invaded their space, so they are confused.”

Due to the logic of following Japanese “rules,” some *Nikkei* stress that “one must stop making use of *jeitinho* (a well-known Brazilian style for solving problems by ignoring laws) in Japan.” According to my friend, a *Nikkei* student who works as a translator for the police in Aichi Prefecture, the traffic police arrested many Brazilians because they caused auto-accidents or were driving without a license. Because they cannot speak Japanese (and because the policemen can not understand Portuguese), my friend acts as the interpreter. “Invariably Brazilians ask me to ask the policemen how much they should pay them for not registering the penalty and eliminating the payment of a fine,” he says. “Then I stop the translation and explain to those guys that here it is not Brazil, that such a kind of *jeitinho* does not have an effect in Japan, and if they try to corrupt the policemen, their penalty will be worse.”

Another case that illustrates how Brazilians voice their protest in Japan is that of the parents of Herculano Lukosevicius, a 14-year-old Brazilian who was lynched by a Japanese boys’ gang (known as *bōsōzoku*) in October 1997 in Komaki City, Aichi Prefecture. During the murder trial, these boys admitted that they were looking for “any Brazilian guy” to do a revenge against a “Brazilian group” that was confronting them. Herculano’s parents launched a campaign asking for “justice” in the trial, but instead of blaming “racial discrimination,” they adopted more “universal” slogans like “*Bōryoku hantai*” (“Stop the Violence”) and “*Inochi wa Taisetsu*” (“Life deserves care”).

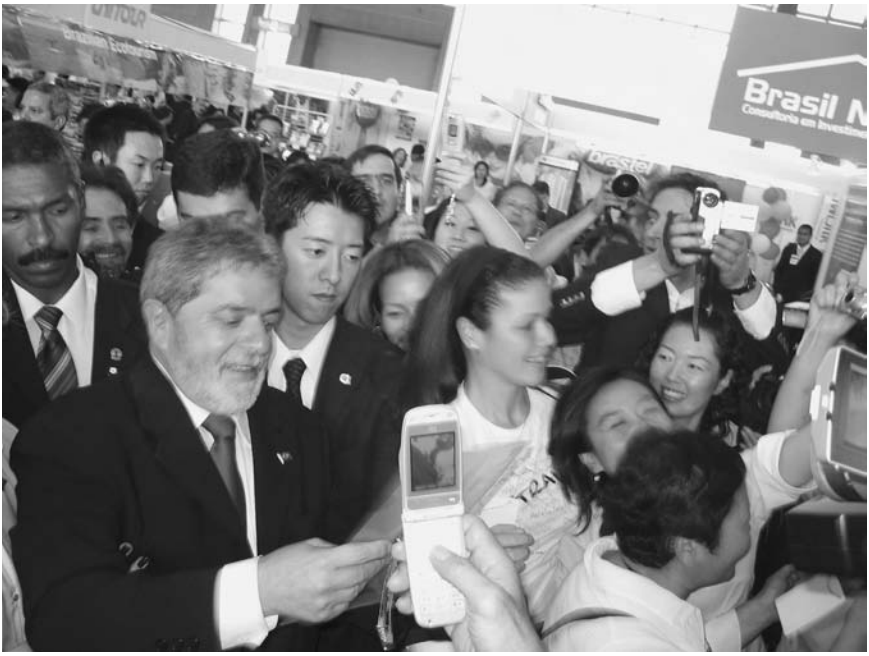

Figure 5.3 Brazilian President Lula visiting Expo Business 2005 in Nagoya, a business event of Brazilians in Japan. (Photo: Angelo Ishi)

Beyond silence: some voices of "coexistence"

Identity, discrimination, and coexistence are all issues too large to be satisfactorily treated in such a short paper. Of course the aim of this paper is not to provide definitive conclusions about any of these issues. Regarding the heated controversial matters of identity discussed above, my intention was simply to cast doubt on the pertinence of some of the ostensibly "conclusive discourses" circulating both in public and personal spheres. Or, more precisely, my job consists of making public what *the migrants asked me*—more than what we—the scholars and the media—asked them.

As to the matter of discrimination, I suggested (yet did not conclude, as the quotation marks in the subtitle above show) that Brazilian *Nikkei* may have acted as a "silent minority" in Japan. This section will report a few "voices" from both sides which are breaking this "silence" and urging "coexistence."

Some *Nikkei* are beginning to recognize that, even if they do not "intend" to be long-term settlers in Japan, at least their *Dekassegui* condition is going to be "permanent." According to the Ministry of Justice, the number of *Eijūsha* (Permanent) Visas issued for Brazilian nationals has increased dramatically from 4,592 in 1998 to 41,771 in 2003. There is also an increasing number of people who want to own a business in Japan. The "Expo Business" in Nagoya (Aichi Prefecture), which has functioned as an incentive for those people, was designed as a show window for Brazilian enterprises in Japan. The 2005 edition of this Expo had a distinguished guest: Brazilian President Lula, who came to Japan on an official visit and included in his tight agenda one entire day of meetings with Brazilian migrants.

On December 2003, I was invited to make a speech during the launching ceremony of a permanent exhibition on the main boulevard of the shopping center Brazilian Plaza in Ōizumi named "Immigrants' Memorial" of Brazilians in Japan. This naming deserves attention, since, for the first time, members of the Brazilian association in Japan have identified themselves as "immigrants." On the occasion, I interviewed Hidekichi Hashimoto, a *Nikkei* entrepreneur who was the mastermind of the memorial, confirming that the idea of establishing a "memorial" was also intimately related to a desire to send signals both to the Japanese society and to his Brazilian compatriots. "We wanted to tell the Japanese that we now have roots in Japan, and, at the same time, increase a kind of consciousness among Brazilians: we do have a history in this country!"

On the other hand, the Japanese host society has also gradually been recognizing *Nikkei* as Brazilians, which means, as foreigners. The main example of this trend has been the launching of the so-called *Gaikokujin Shūjū Toshi Kaigi*, or Committee for Localities with a Concentrated Foreigner Population (CLCF).

In November 2001 the mayors of 13 municipalities in Japan gathered in Hamamatsu, a city of half a million people in Shizuoka Prefecture, 300 kilometers south of Tokyo. What those municipalities have in common is that at least three percent of their population is of Brazilian descent. Their first desire is to discuss common problems, sharing their views, and looking for concrete solutions. Their ultimate goal, however, is to seek the central government's help, especially in the financial sphere, for the problems that they consider almost impossible to solve only through efforts at the local level. As Mayor Yasuyuki Kitawaki of Hamamatsu, who took the initiative of organizing the G-13 network, told me: "It is time to consider even some changes in Japanese society's rules, on behalf of foreigners."

The essence of the Hamamatsu Charter is as follows:

> In our 13 cities there are many foreign inhabitants living, especially *Nikkei* from South America, the so-called newcomers. Facing this reality, we strongly desire a local coexistence between Japanese people and foreigners (...) and we decided to launch this CLCF. (...) We understand that foreign inhabitants are people who share the same local life and are increasingly staying longer in Japan. We understand that they have brought a big contribution to the local economies, and that they are important partners in the process of the construction of the local cultures as a consequence of the interaction between different cultures. Based on this viewpoint, we want to achieve the consensus and cooperation of the whole population to consolidate the rules and systems for ensuring the security and welfare of the local society (...)

What is interesting in this movement by Japanese local governments is that, for the very first time, *Nikkei* have been recognized not only as a "labor force," but as "(long-term) residents," that means, as partners in daily life. Another significance of this convention is that local governments have crystallized the perception of *Dekasseguis* as "foreigners," rather than as "Japanese descendants." In that sense, there is a clear difference compared to the overall Japanese policy toward foreigners which has treated *Nikkei* as "short-term, temporary guests" who are not supposed to be "neighbors" or "long-term partners."

These local-level developments are creating a kind of double standard in immigrant policy. On the one hand, some local governments have finally recognized *Nikkei* as genuine foreigners. On the other hand, the central government persists in treating *Nikkei* as "Japanese-like *gaijin*." For the municipalities of "G-13," *Nikkei* are given a special treatment as "Brazilians." For the cabinet's office, they still do not need a specific policy, since they are supposed to be "Japanese." One should mention, however, that the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has launched in 2005 the *Tabunka Kyōsei no Suishin ni Kansuru Kenkyūkai* (Study Group Concerning the Development of Multicultural Coexistence), aimed at compiling suggestions for national as well as local government policies toward migrants. I was invited to be one of its members, which may be interpreted as a sign that the central government is recognizing "*Nikkei*" as a "migrant" group.

For sure although some *Nikkei* of the fourth and fifth generations are reaching adulthood the Japanese government has yet to determine whether it will allow them the same rights as the second and third generations. Will these new *Nikkei* be included as "Japanese" or excluded as "foreigners"? It is evident that even those who are third generation, or the *mestiço Nikkei* who apparently seem to have reinforced their "Brazilian-ness" in Japan, expect the Japanese Ministry of Justice to grant their children the special "*Nikkei* visa."

Except for the cases of some *Issei* (who claim rights as Japanese nationals) and "non-*Nikkei*" (Brazilian not of Japanese descent), the *Nikkei* seem to lack a discourse relying on the "ideology of equality." It is not incidental that only a non-*Nikkei* like Ana Bortz voiced a protest claiming "the same rights" of any other citizen. None of my *Nikkei* interviewees have claimed "the same rights as any foreigner," as they probably are conscious about their "privileged status" in relative terms.

The key to decoding the "*Nikkei* puzzle" is to understand that the *Nikkei* have accepted an ambivalent treatment for pragmatic reasons. In the role playing game between *Nikkei* and Japanese, both partners will show the most convenient face of their coins, according to the moment. As far as *Nikkei* find this ambivalence useful, they will prefer to maintain it in the same way they manage their savings in two currencies, the Japanese "yen" and the Brazilian "real." And their more profound thoughts and feelings will continue to be "voiced" in a dual way: clearly visible and audible to the members of their ethnic community, but almost invisible and silent to the ears and eyes of the Japanese hosts.

Soccer, samba, and Nissan: the "long match" of coexistence

Some episodes during and after the Brazilian victory in the 2002 World Cup in Japan show that the future of *Dekasseguis* in Japan is not so bright. Even during the tournament, incidents of discrimination against Brazilians were reported, as the BBC News Online report titled "Japan's Fear of Brazilians" noted (Parsons 2002). Significantly, Japanese newspapers gave no attention to the incident.

Ronni Ota, one of the leaders of the Brazilian community in Ōizumi, told me that, "definitely, local Japanese neighbors did not welcome the way Brazilians expressed their joy, horn blowing in the late of the night. They did not realize what this championship meant for us."

One later episode showed that, with or without horn blowing, Japanese people did not share Brazilians' joy following the soccer victory. Local Brazilians suggested including a "victory parade" in the schedule of the town's summer festival in July. A few days before the festival, the local governor issued a statement canceling the parade on the grounds of "lack of safety measures." But one Japanese inhabitant close to the organizing committee revealed that the true reason for the cancellation was that "the Japanese side was jealous of Brazilians." "They knew that, if such a parade was done, the traditional *mikoshi* (portable shrine carried in Japanese festivals) parade would be put aside, playing only a supporting role in the festival." Many people believe that the samba parade, once a symbol of Ōizumi's "internationalization," had been canceled the previous year for similar reasons.

Even if Brazilians could not act as heroes in a victory parade in the Ōizumi Festival, at least they wanted to be recognized as members of this town. The problem of the cancellation of the parade was that the Japanese inhabitants showed that they do not want to share their space (the road) and time (the festival) with people who do not deserve it (the foreigners, Brazilians). And, presumably, neither local Brazilians nor the community opinion leaders voiced any official protest against the cancellation. Or, to be more precise, there was one timid, silent demonstration of protest. During the launch of the aforementioned "Immigrant's Memorial," I was asked by the organizers to create a catchphrase that would be printed in large letters in the exhibition space. "We wanted the local government to reconsider the cancellation of the annual samba parade" the aforementioned Hashimoto explained to me. I suggested, and they accepted, the phrase "O samba não pode parar" ("Don't stop the samba").

Following the World Cup finals, Brazilians in Japan were proud to know that Zico, the former Brazilian soccer superstar, had been nominated as the new coach of the Japanese squad. However, it is too early to be optimistic about the improvement of Brazilians' image, since many Japanese seem to believe that Brazilians are good only in soccer, but not in more "serious" fields like "business" and "work."

Few Japanese know, for instance, that the most famous and most successful *gaijin* (foreigner) in the Japanese business world, the automaker Nissan's

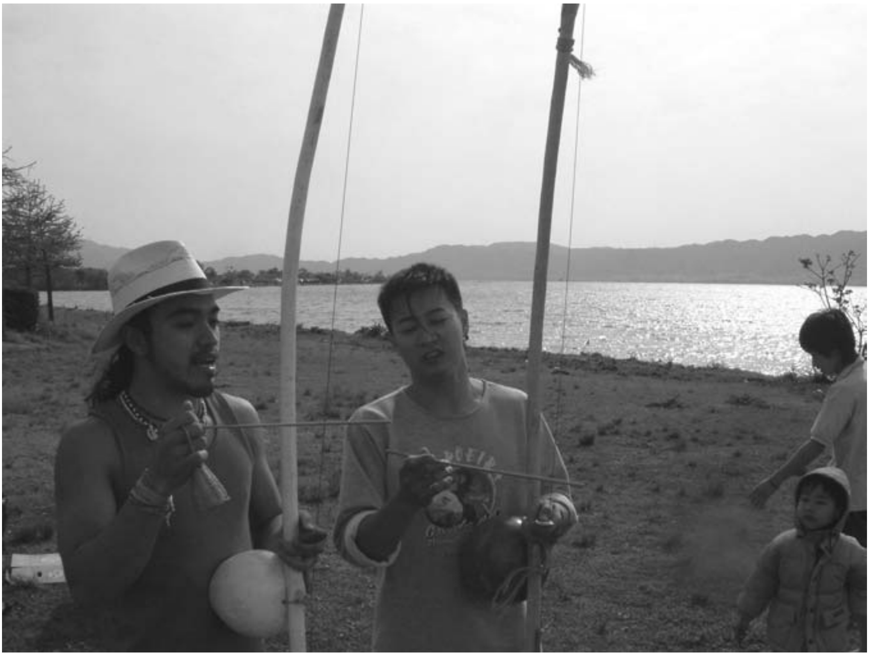

Figure 5.4 *Berimbau* on Lake Biwa, Shiga Prefecture, 2004. The *berimbau* is the primary musical instrument in the Brazilian dance/sport of capoeira. The rhythms that are played upon it determine the pace and style of the game. (Photo: Tatsu Yamato)

president Carlos Ghosn, is a Brazilian. Most of them believe that Ghosn is French, mainly because the Japanese media only emphasize that he was sent from France's Renault. In my view, this misunderstanding has deeper roots. Japanese can understand or accept having someone of "First World origin," a European foreigner, leading Nissan's restructuring as their master and commander. but not a "Third World" person, a Brazilian. The stereotype of "what a Brazilian could be doing in Japan" is limited to "working in blue-collar jobs," "playing soccer," and, of course, "dancing samba."

Regarding the Japanese perception of "Brazilians," the pamphlet of the aforementioned theatrical production "Seikimatsu no Carnival" had a suggestive catchphrase: "From the *ura* of the planet, we can see Japan!" In fact, the original proposal of the piece was to review Japan from the perspective of "Others." My old friend, a former Japanese diplomat who now presides over a volunteer organization aiming to give financial assistance to Latin Americans who suffered some serious accident or illness in Japan, sent a letter to the theater company, suggesting a correction in the pamphlet of the play: "The phrase 'From the *ura* (back, reverse) side of the planet' denotes a sense of superiority, as it pretends that we the Japanese are in the front side of the world and they, the Brazilians, are in our back." The director replied: "I understand, but the fact is that, in our common sense, that is the way we perceive Brazil" (Chijinkai 2004).

Despite such polemics, the public and the critics welcomed this play as an opportunity to learn about *Dekassegui*. Moreover, its merit was that, instead of centering the story only in the dichotomy of Japan–Brazil, it showed the "polyphony" of twenty-first-century Japan. The characters spoke Portuguese, official Japanese, *colônia-go* (the language of *Nikkei* that mixes the old prewar Japanese with Portuguese), Okinawan dialect (from the southernmost islands of Japan), Tsugaru dialect (from the northeastern province of Aomori) and Gunma dialect (where Ōizumi town is located). The play thus seemed to claim that Japan was multiethnic and multicultural even before the *Dekassegui's* arrival.

One last example of "polyphony," of "voices" breaking the overall silence and urging "coexistence" comes from a "rap" music group named "Tensai's MC's," whose debut album entitled *Faça a coisa certa* (Do the right thing) was released in 2004. Half of its members are Brazilians who worked as Dekasegi in Kanagawa Prefecture, and half are their Japanese friends. The lyrics of their music is not only bilingual, but also "double-messaged": lyrics in Japanese have messages criticizing "discrimination against minorities," while lyrics in Portuguese include phrases like "I'm tired of seeing another news about Brazilian criminals on TV!"

The confusion concerning Carlos Ghosn's nationality, cited earlier, may also be related, of course, to the difficulty of Japanese people in dealing with people of multiple backgrounds. Ghosn is a Brazilian of Lebanese descent. He has lived in a number of countries and speaks many languages. In that sense, to the eyes of Japanese, the "Ghosn puzzle" is as complex as the "*Nikkei* puzzle." Although Ghosn claims that he is not concerned with his personal identity, he notes that "in Brazilian's general sense, once you were born in Brazil, you will be always a Brazilian, wherever you go." If Japanese people call him "French," that does not matter to him. But it may be crucial for the self-esteem of *Dekasseguis*, thirsty for recognition in fields other than soccer. They have no doubt that, once they are "from Brazil," they will be always "outsiders" in Japan. "Being others" is not the problem. They do not expect "privileges" as "compatriots" of their Japanese hosts. They just want to be recognized as "pessoa," without "prejudice."

The good dreams of soccer glory are gone. Now, *Dekasseguis* have to face the rude reality of daily life in Japan. And unfortunately, in this long match of "coexistence," no happy ending is guaranteed.

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6 From ethnic ghetto to "gourmet republic"

The changing image of Kobe's Chinatown and the ambiguities of being Chinese in modern Japan

Tsu Yun Hui

Among the minorities of modern Japan (from c.1860), Chinese[1] are without a doubt underrepresented in the English scholarly literature. While many volumes have been written about the *Burakumin* ("outcastes"), the Ainu, and the Koreans, only a small number of articles exist on the Chinese (Hoare 1977; Kamachi 1980; Vasishth 1997). The story of the Chinese deserves greater attention, however, for it adds a different dimension to conventional accounts of majority–minority relations in Japan that focus on victimization and resistance.

It has often been pointed out that mainstream Japanese society stigmatizes the social and/or ethnic Other. On the one hand, this propensity to discriminate has been attributed to such ostensibly immutable factors as geographic isolation, ethnic homogeneity, and the group instinct of the Japanese (Nakane 1991: 21; Ohnuki-Tierney 1987; Yoshino 1992: 9–38, 87–132). On the other hand, it has been traced to a long history of conflicts, subjugation by force, and institutional exclusion by the ("mainstream") Japanese of minorities (DeVos and Wagatsuma 1966; Lee and DeVos 1981; Mitchell 1967; Neary 1989; Weiner 1989, 1994, 1997). Although some members of the discriminated groups choose to resist by openly embracing their minority identity while pressing for equal treatment, they frequently confront an impassive government, a prejudiced public, and recalcitrant institutions. Many feel they have no choice but to keep a low profile and to try to pass as "ordinary" Japanese. The result of majority oppression (or the fear of it) and minority self-effacement is an uncontested public Japanese identity that celebrates uniformity at the expense of significant differences (Field 1993).

Drawing on the history of Kobe's Chinatown, this paper highlights an aspect of majority–minority relation in Japan that is largely missing from conventional accounts, namely, mutual accommodation and cooperation. Without denying the reality of discrimination and even outright oppression, it argues that modern Japanese society does not always stigmatize and exclude Chinese. Although Japanese once harbored a strong suspicion of the Chinese among them, since the 1970s this negative attitude has receded due to a popular fascination with Chinese people and culture as well as a general awareness of the need to "internationalize" (*kokusaika*).

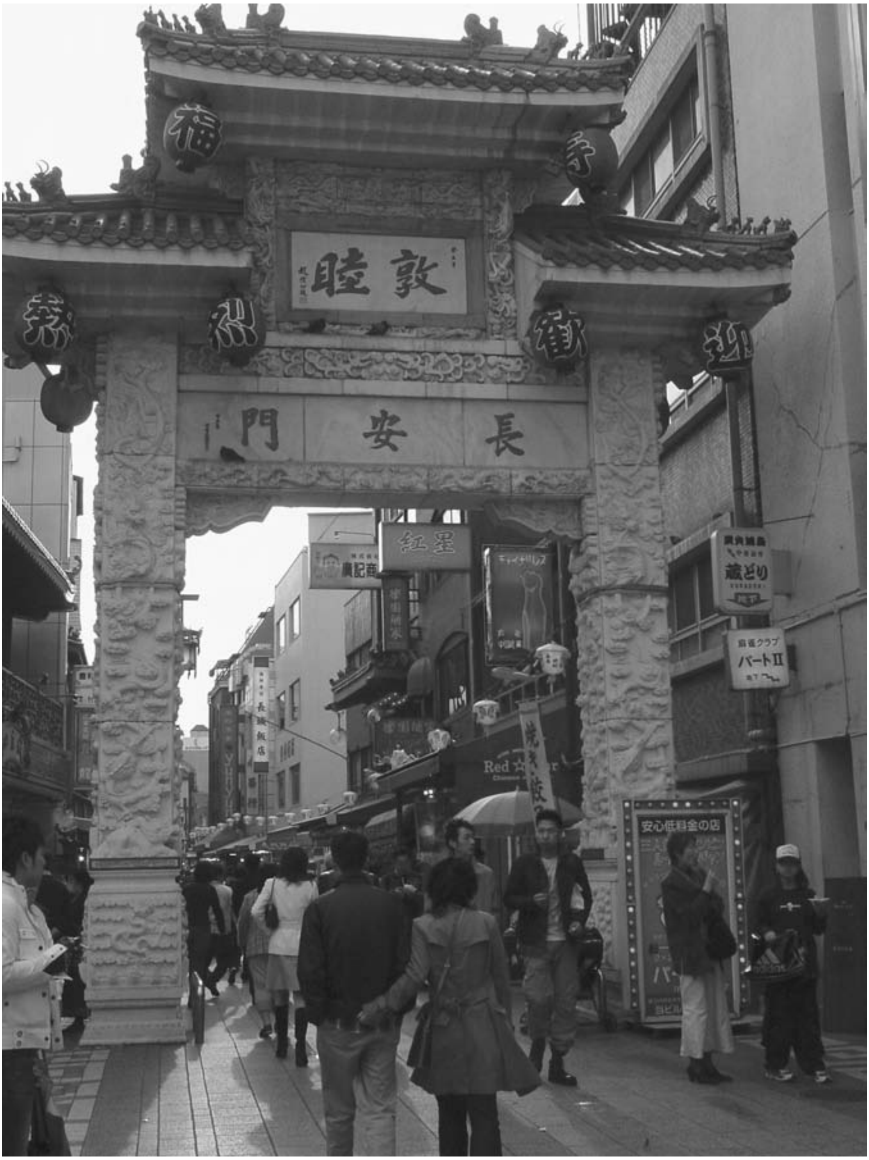

Figure 6.1 Entrance to Chinatown, Kobe, 2006. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

In this paper, the image and socioeconomic position of Kobe's Chinatown are shown to have been fluid and continually renegotiated since the neighborhood first came into existence around 1870.[2] Specifically, its transformation from an ethnic ghetto to a celebrated urban landmark and cultural symbol in the 1980s reflects a new partnership between Japanese and Chinese in which both groups moved from mutual rejection to mutual accommodation and even joint-celebration of cultural differences.

This paper also contends that, even though successful and developing, this new partnership is not without limits and ambiguity, especially in light of national and international trends since the late 1990s. The Chinatown model of cooperation assigns only stereotypical roles to the Chinese, and so makes their acceptance by the host society highly context-specific. Even more problematic is the emergence in the country of a vocal and seemingly broad-based backlash against China and Chinese immigrants. Its provocative rhetoric sends tremors across the country, threatening to compromise, if not undo, the kind of integration achieved in Kobe.

This paper has six sections. The first section uses the Spring Festival to shed light on the new image of Kobe's Chinatown. The second section traces the neighborhood's development before and after World War II. The third and fourth sections analyze the reinvented neighborhood as an exotic streetscape and a cultural symbol. The fifth section considers the political, social, and economic forces that have facilitated Chinatown's transformation since the late 1970s. The sixth section discusses the limitations of the present Chinatown and the uncertainties facing Chinese in twenty-first-century Japan.

Birth of the Gourmet Republic

Back in January 1987 I witnessed the opening ceremony of the first Spring Festival (*Shunsetsusai*) in the square of Kobe's Chinatown. It began with an elderly Chinese man dressed in the ethnic costume of *changshan* who declared in Japanese that Chinatown was an independent "Gourmet Republic" (*Gurume Kyōwakoku*). He made the declaration as the republic's "President" (*Daitōryō*) and was greeted with applause from the bemused audience of tourists and journalists. It was followed by congratulatory messages from the Association for Promoting Chinatown (*Nankingmachi Shōtengai Shinkō Kumiai*) and the Kobe Overseas Chinese Association (*Kōbe Kakyō Sōkai*). Next, the abbot of Kobe's Kantei-byō (Guandi Temple) presented offerings to the deities and prayed for peace and good fortune on behalf of the neighborhood. The "independence ceremony" culminated in a dragon dance. As the mythic animal wound its way through the alleys, it dragged the crowd along, taking them on a tour of the neighborhood. The brief but theatrical ceremony signaled the beginning of a three-day festival during which Chinatown was to dedicate itself to gastronomic pleasure, shopping, and cultural shows.

Coming after Christmas and the New Year, the Spring Festival (which coincides with the Chinese New Year) is basically a sales gimmick to sustain consumption as the Japanese year-end festivity (done according to the Western calendar) begins to wane. But its implications go beyond boosting sales within Chinatown. It is a key component in an ongoing urban revitalization drive (*kasseika*) to restore the lackluster Motomachi area surrounding Chinatown to its pre-war glory as a vibrant high-end shopping district. A colorful and exotic Chinatown will have more appeal for the crowd and thus beneficial effects for the whole district.

More broadly, a re-invigorated Chinatown will contribute to the city's effort to promote a chic and sophisticated image for itself. It was no coincidence that the first Spring Festival took place on the 120th anniversary of the city's opening as a port for foreign trade. To the primary movers behind this continual endeavor of "community-making" (*machizukuri*)—local politicians, the municipal government, the business community, and various voluntary organizations—a greater visibility for Chinatown will reinforce the city's claim to be an international metropolis where peoples and cultures converge and enrich each other.[3] The perception of cultural sophistication that comes with foreign goods and ethnic diversity confers upon Kobe a special, glamorous quality, setting it apart from other nondescript cities. Thus, the creation of a distinct identity not only enhances Kobe's appeal to nonresidents but also helps to foster a sense of pride and belonging among the citizens. That the Spring Festival has since been held every year (with an interruption after the 1995 earthquake) with ever greater fanfare is an indication that Chinatown and its trademark festival have become an important part of the city's public self (*Kōbe Shinbun* 1992).

What is remarkable about this festival is not so much Japanese participation in Chinese merrymaking but the conscious promotion by a major Japanese city of a "foreign community/neighborhood" as a constituent part of itself. Indeed, as the festival shows, Kobe is prepared to celebrate ethnic and cultural heterogeneity within itself to the extent of recognizing in a playful manner the "independence" of Chinatown. Its eager embrace of an "ethnic" neighborhood, whose image it not just condones but helps to construct and sustain, contrasts with the intolerant Japanese society described by most studies of Japanese minorities. Kobe is a reminder that under certain circumstances, Japanese society allows and even encourages the positive display of cultural and ethnic differences. In fact, public functions in Kobe nowadays often include some participation by foreign residents, be they Chinese, Koreans, Indians, or Americans.

Chinatown in historical perspective

That Chinese and Japanese openly cooperate in capitalizing on their cultural differences is a recent phenomenon. For a long time, relations between them have been fraught with mutual recriminations and occasional violence. Chinatown was an ethnic ghetto where exotic objects and bargains could be found, but which was also infested with crime, disease, and above all, despicable "Chinamen." The Chinese had to endure slights, suspicion, and harassment. Meanwhile, some of them, too, were openly antagonistic to Japanese society.

Chinatown originated in the mid-nineteenth century when the Tokugawa government (1600–1868), under pressure from the West, abandoned its policy of maritime embargo and designated Kobe and other ports for trade with the West. Seizing the opportunity, Chinese began to arrive in these treaty ports (Chūka Kaikan 2000; Itō 1994; Kōyama 1979; Shiba 1982; Sugawara 1991). Only Nagasaki had a Chinese presence under the maritime embargo. Although the presence of Westerners was guaranteed by formal treaties, the status of the

Chinese was initially problematic as there was no similar agreement between Japan and China. Many of the early arrivals attached themselves to Westerners as servants, foremen, and compradors while pursuing their own business on the side. The lack of proper legal status prevented them from residing in the foreign concession (*kyoryūchi*) reserved for the citizens of treaty countries. Yet, as non-Japanese they could not live freely among the local population. As a compromise they lodged on the periphery of the foreign concession, in a buffer zone known as the "area of mixed residence" (*zakkyōchi*), which had been designated in May 1868 for Westerners to reside in until the site of the foreign concession was ready (Chūka Kaikan 2000: 32). Chinatown thus arose from an anomalous settlement sandwiched between the legitimate foreign (Western) community and Japanese society. Although the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Friendship and Trade (*Nit-Shin shūkō jōyaku tsūshō kyōtei*) came into effect in 1873, which theoretically released the Chinese from legal/diplomatic limbo (Chūka Kaikan 2000: 28), they continued to reside in the buffer zone, being held at arm's length by Japanese and Westerners. The Western community, for example, refused to sell land to Chinese in order to prevent them gaining a foothold in the concession (Chūka Kaikan 2000: 53–55). This spatial and social marginality became a lasting characteristic of Chinatown, accounting for its weakness and strength.

Being on the boundary gave the Chinese access to both Japanese and Westerners, whose direct interaction was curtailed by the authorities in the early years. The Chinese were also more adept at dealing with these two groups than Japanese and Westerners were in dealing with each other. The Chinese who came to Japan often had experience working for Westerners in the treaty ports of China, whereas most Japanese had never worked for Westerners before. Meanwhile, unlike the Westerners, Chinese had been trading with Japanese for centuries (at Nagasaki). Moreover, they had the decisive advantage of living among the locals in the area of mixed residence. Thus taking advantage of the initial distance between Japanese and Westerners, the Chinese gained considerable leverage in the import–export business.[4] By the 1880s an unplanned but recognizable Chinatown (*Nankinmachi*, literally Nanjing Town) had come into existence. Importantly, this "Chinatown" was not an exclusive ethnic enclave but had a mixed population of Japanese and Chinese from the beginning.[5]

The facility with which Chinese crossed social boundaries enabled some of them to engage in illicit activities. They were held responsible for introducing new forms of gambling, trafficking in opium, and "selling" Japanese children and women overseas.[6] The neighborhood was regarded as infested with thieves and thugs ready to prey on unsuspecting Japanese (Okumura 1994: 173–220). Home to all sorts of vice and disreputable characters, it saw occasional violence and was the target of police raids.[7] At one point, rumors of Chinese "bogeymen" snatching Japanese children caused sword-bearing vigilantes to patrol the night streets (Kōyama 1979: 177).

Just as bad was Chinatown's physical environment. Developed from makeshift shop-houses with little prior planning, its alleys were narrow, congested, and polluted (Kōyama 1979: 168–172; Yamazaki 1997: 1–6). Although the alleys were widened and paved around 1899, the general condition did not improve much over time due to a vicious cycle that prevented the neighborhood from physical and social improvement (Kōyama 1982: 6–10). Residents who had the means moved out of the neighborhood in search of a more salubrious living environment and the social status conferred by residence in a "good" area. Many of them chose the Nakayamate district where they could enjoy living on hillsides but were still within walking distance of Chinatown and the wharf.[8] Thus the riches Chinatown generated had little palpable impact on its appearance, and the continuous drain of wealth and talent left it trapped in its history as a ghetto.

There was a bright side to this too. As a place where cultures and peoples met, Chinatown reputedly had the best-stocked market in the city (Kōyama 1979: 169–172; Yamazaki 1997: 106). Serving a large and diverse clientele of Chinese, Japanese, and Westerners (who had Chinese servants), the shops, stalls, and hawkers there offered a wide range of fresh produce, fish, and meat. There was an abundant supply of imported goods and exotic foodstuffs, too. In addition to provisioning local Japanese and Chinese households, Chinatown was also the main supplier for the foreign ships coming through the port and for many restaurants and hotels. Even now, elderly Japanese can recall the hustle and bustle of Chinatown's morning market and the large quantity of strange things on display.[9] While they remember the stench and filth of the place and the grotesque sight of pig heads and the like, they also comment on the low prices and the good quality of the merchandise.

As an ethnic enclave, Chinatown has always borne the brunt of conflicts between Japan and China. The first Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) unleashed an unprecedented wave of hostility against Chinese (Chen 1996: 1–26; Keene 1971: 121–175; Kōyama 1979: 31–46). In addition to being ridiculed in the press, Chinese were also intimidated and suffered property damage. During the war, Kobe's Chinese population was reduced by almost half and business in Chinatown ground to a halt. The next half-century saw the tension between the Chinese and their host country escalate as Japan aggressively expanded its influence overseas. In the years leading up to the second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), the militarized Japanese government treated all Chinese in the country as potential agitators and spies.[10] Heightening international tension, however, did not prevent Chinatown from celebrating its 50th anniversary in 1926, an early sign that the neighborhood had developed a self-identity (Kōyama 1982).

As war broke out in 1937 Chinese nationalists were arrested, student activists harassed, and Chinese shops subjected to police raids (Rin 1997). Chinatown and what it symbolized became a threat to Japan's security. It suffered the sharpest drop in population in the neighborhood's history. Those who did remain lost their freedom of movement and were under constant surveillance. Businesses had to close or merge under government supervision, and when the tide of the war turned against Japan, even Chinese were mobilized for production. As the end approached, intense bombing by the Allies reduced the whole city, including Chinatown to rubble.[11]

Chinatown's recovery began immediately after the war. As post-surrender Japan experienced extreme privation, Chinese took advantage of their new status as victors to set up stalls in and around downtown Kobe, including the original site of Chinatown, hawking food, medicine, and other necessities either obtained from the Occupation forces or smuggled in from abroad. Amid the general chaos of the time, some were also involved in racketeering and rioting (Kōyama 1979: 78–84; Ochiai and Arii 1973: 139–145, Keizai antei taisaku honbu sōsai kanbō kikakubu chōsaka 1947; Rin 1997: 96–115). As a result, although Chinese had been instrumental in delivering otherwise unavailable goods to the Japanese people, their activity reinforced Chinatown's dubious reputation from before the war. Over the next 20 years the neighborhood shifted from a black market to an area of cheap entertainment for American military personnel and foreign mariners, who came through the port in large numbers (*Kōbe Shinbun* 1987; Matsui 1984). During the Vietnam War bars and other entertainment establishments almost entirely displaced the Chinese grocery stores and restaurants. The transient foreign population also sustained a flea market of foreign goods, contraband, and even narcotics. Meanwhile, locals preferred to stay away for fear of getting involved in the brawling of drunken sailors. Thus, in the 1970s Chinatown was still thriving on the margins of mainstream Japanese society as before. Only it was on the verge of losing its Chinese identity.

The neighborhood began to work on recovering its Chinese character in the late 1970s after the oil shocks, the end of the Vietnam War, and the rising international trade disputes had caused it (and the country) to plunge into an economic slump. The bars for foreigners closed, making room for the return of grocery stores and restaurants catering to locals. In 1977, Chinese and Japanese proprietors formed the Association for Promoting Chinatown to find ways to revive their neighborhood (Guo 1997b: 183–193; Matsui 1984; Nankinmachi shōtengai shinkō kumiai 1978). With guidance and financial aid from the municipal government, the Association started to improve the streetscape in 1981 within the city's "land adjustment" (*kukaku seiri*) framework. The aim was to make the neighborhood "Chinatown-like" by doing such things as building an arch, using colored bricks for the pavements, and coordinating the exteriors of buildings (Nankinmachi shōtengai shinkō kumiai 1978). Chinatown's metamorphosis into the Gourmet Republic was underway.

Chinatown as exotic streetscape

Among Japan's foreign nationals, the Chinese, alone possess publicly recognized landmarks attesting to their presence.[12] The distinctive streetscape of Kobe's Chinatown is familiar to the Japanese public due to tourist promotions and coverage by the mass media. While any urban landscape is a construct carrying sociocultural meanings (McDowell 1994: 146–173), Kobe's Chinatown stands out for its ostentatious use of ethnic markers to craft a "personality" (*kosei*) for itself. This section analyzes Chinatown's streetscape as a form of self-representation as well as how the host society appropriates it as an icon.

Pick up almost any tourist map of Kobe, and one will find Chinatown's location prominently marked with the icon of a Chinese arch.[13] It is one of the must-see places served by the City Loop Route, a bus tour recommended by the municipal government and the local tourist association. Less than two square kilometers in size, the neighborhood is bounded on the north by the Motomachi Shopping Arcade and on the other sides by thoroughfares (Toshikeikaku-kyoku kōmuka 1981). Internally, it is divided into four parts by two streets that intersect roughly at the center. Alleys further carve up these parts into smaller units. The present streetscape owes much to the restoration effort that began in 1981, but is still continuing.

Chinatown relies heavily on cultural stereotypes to stand out from the rest of the city landscape. Crammed into this small neighborhood is a jumble of objects, styles, motifs, and colors, all designed to conjure up a distinctive ethnic ambience. Monuments are found at the four main entrances. Standing astride the east, south, and west approaches are tall, bright red Chinese-style arches; a pair of stone lions guard the north approach. The magnificent east arch, *Chōanmon* or the Arch of Everlasting Peace, is named after the ancient Chinese capital Chang'an. Under this edifice, life-size replicas of the terracotta warriors unearthed from the tomb of the First Qin Emperor are lined up on both sides of the street for about 20 meters. In the square near the main intersection stands a Chinese pavilion. In the vicinity of the pavilion are stone sculptures representing the 12 zodiacal animals from Tianjin, China.[14] Not far away stands a lamppost with a shade fashioned as a Chinese lantern. This square is the place where ceremonies and cultural performances take place. Even the public toilet is not spared stereotypic Chinese trappings: called the Dragon Lair (*Garyūden*), it is a slim three-story structure that sports vermilion pillars, green tiles, and a pair of dragons perched on the ridgepole. Furthermore, the alleys and the low-rise shop-houses dating from the early postwar years have been preserved to retain the sense of intimacy characteristic of a "traditional" downtown neighborhood (Bestor 1992: 23–48). For the same effect, alleys are paved with mortars, bricks, and granite instead of asphalt and cement,[15] and a degree of staged disorderliness is introduced by having the shops display their wares outside and allowing hawkers to peddle their goods in the streets (*Asahi Shinbun* 2/7/1997). The streetscape of the present Chinatown is thus the product of a calculated effort at self-exoticization.

There is good evidence that the Chinatown streetscape has gained nationwide recognition. The Arch of Everlasting Peace, for example, is featured in an All Nippon Airways in-flight video shown to travelers flying into the Kansai International Airport.[16] After explaining immigration and customs formalities, the video shows snapshots of the prominent landmarks of the major cities in the Kansai area. While the ancient capitals Nara and Kyoto are represented by Buddhist temples and Osaka by a castle in feudal-era style, Kobe is represented by a single frontal view of Chinatown's main arch. In this case at least, Chinatown stands for Kobe.

Two other examples confirm that the distinctive streetscape of Chinatown has become so closely identified with Kobe that it serves as a synecdoche for the city.

Both, interestingly, come after the 1995 earthquake. The first example is a snapshot in a set of four pictures that won the "Gold Prize" (*kinshō*) of the 1995 *Asahi Shinbun* Photograph Contest (*Asahi Shinbun* 21/7/1995). The theme of the set is the devastation Kobe suffered from the earthquake, each picture showing an aspect of the city in disarray. The shot in question is a close-up of fallen terracotta warriors at the eastern entrance of Chinatown. Taking photos and the subsequent exhibition and appreciation of them constitute an important process of self-representation and identity construction. Therefore, it is significant that the photographer (a Kobe resident) and the national panel of judges for the contest have found it appropriate to inscribe an image of Chinatown in the national memory of Kobe's most severe natural disaster in centuries. Their choice confirms that the host society no longer perceives Chinatown as an alien, anomalous entity but as a suitable symbol of a major Japanese city.

Further confirmation of Chinatown's broad appeal among Japanese comes from the central government. In 1997 the Ministry of Construction commended the Committee on Streetscape Formation in Kobe's Chinatown (*Kobe Nankinmachi Keikan Keisei Kyōkai*) for its renovation work in the neighborhood after the earthquake (*Asahi Shinbun* 2/7/1997). As a part of the city's general restoration program, the committee formulated a "plan of community-making" (*Nankinmachi machizukuri keikaku*) and re-paved the area's characteristic narrow alleys with locally mined granite and bricks inscribed with messages from celebrities throughout the country. For this work the committee was praised for injecting "vigor" (*kakki*) into the neighborhood by enhancing its "exotic mood" (*ikoku jōcho*) and "distinctive character" (*kosei*). That the central government has chosen to highlight Kobe's recovery by directing national attention to Chinatown is an indication that the neighborhood has come to stand not just for the city's devastation but its hope and confidence as well. For a neighborhood known for its contraband and unruly foreigners just 40 years ago, the present-day Chinatown that literally basks in the limelight has come a long way indeed.

Chinatown as cultural symbol

Today's Chinatown is notable not just for its distinctive streetscape but also as a cultural symbol. Its physical transformation in the last 20 years has been accompanied by the acquisition of a new range of positive cultural and even moral meanings. Such meanings are readily found in sources as diverse as tourist literature, news reports, books on overseas Chinese, as well as interviews and essays by Japanese and Chinese individuals. Ostensibly describing and explaining Chinatown, these sources subtly shape people's perception and experience of the place. Significantly, Chinese are not the sole purveyors and consumers of these meanings, as Japanese individuals, corporations, and government agencies are equally active in expounding their own interpretations of Chinatown's cultural and moral significance. Typically, the meanings ascribed to Chinatown cluster around two themes: exoticism and communalism. As a symbol of Otherness, Chinatown's exotic quality goes beyond streetscapes to include such dynamic

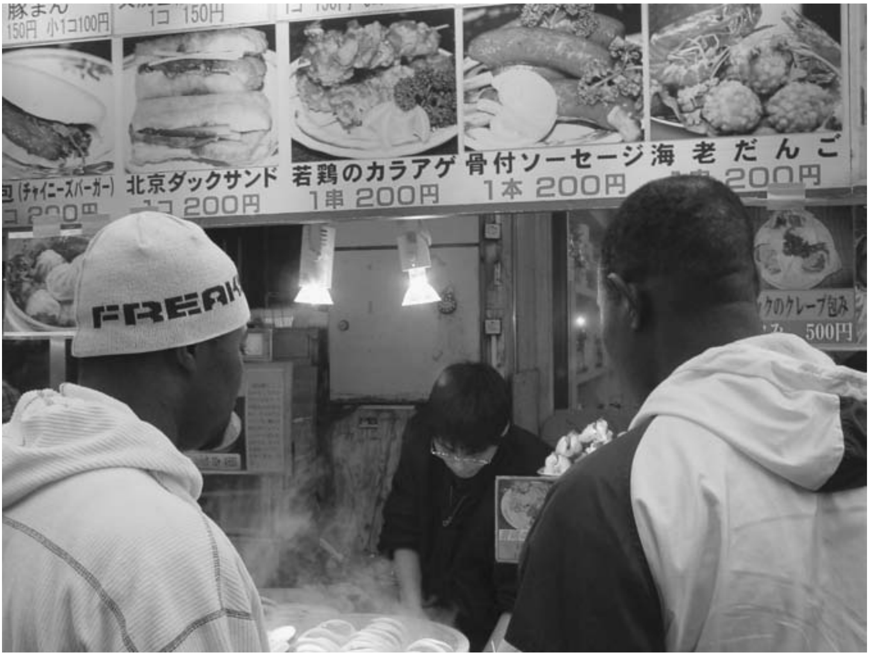
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Figure 6.2 Kobe Chinatown and African residents, 2006. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

cultural experiences as tastes, smells, and sounds. Meanwhile, as the model of an ideal community, the neighborhood's "moral character" has been much emphasized, especially after the earthquake, to reinforce such values deemed essential for recovery as resilience, mutual help, and interracial harmony.

Understandably, the image of "exotic Chinatown" occupies a central position in the tourist literature and popular books on Chinatown and the overseas Chinese. Exoticism in this case has three main components: exotic mood, ethnic food, and historical nostalgia. According to a placard in Chinatown put up by the city's Office of Urban Design (Toshikeikaku-kyoku Keikakubu Āban Dezain Shitsu), the neighborhood is a fitting symbol of the "international port-city Kobe" (*kokusaiteki minato machi Kōbe*) because it is full of vitality (*kakki*) and exudes an exotic aura (*ikoku jōcho*).[17] As proof, it makes reference to the foreign style and origin of the objects and monuments in Chinatown. It explains that the Chinese-style stone lions came from China, whereas the arches were crafted in Taiwan. Other aspects that are often highlighted in the literature on Chinatown are the distinctive architectural features and the liberal use of red and green. In fact, the Office of Urban Design publishes a guideline that gives specific instructions to proprietors on the appropriate colors, architectural motifs, and street furniture to use (Toshikeikaku-kyoku 1990). Yet quaint designs and foreign artifacts are not

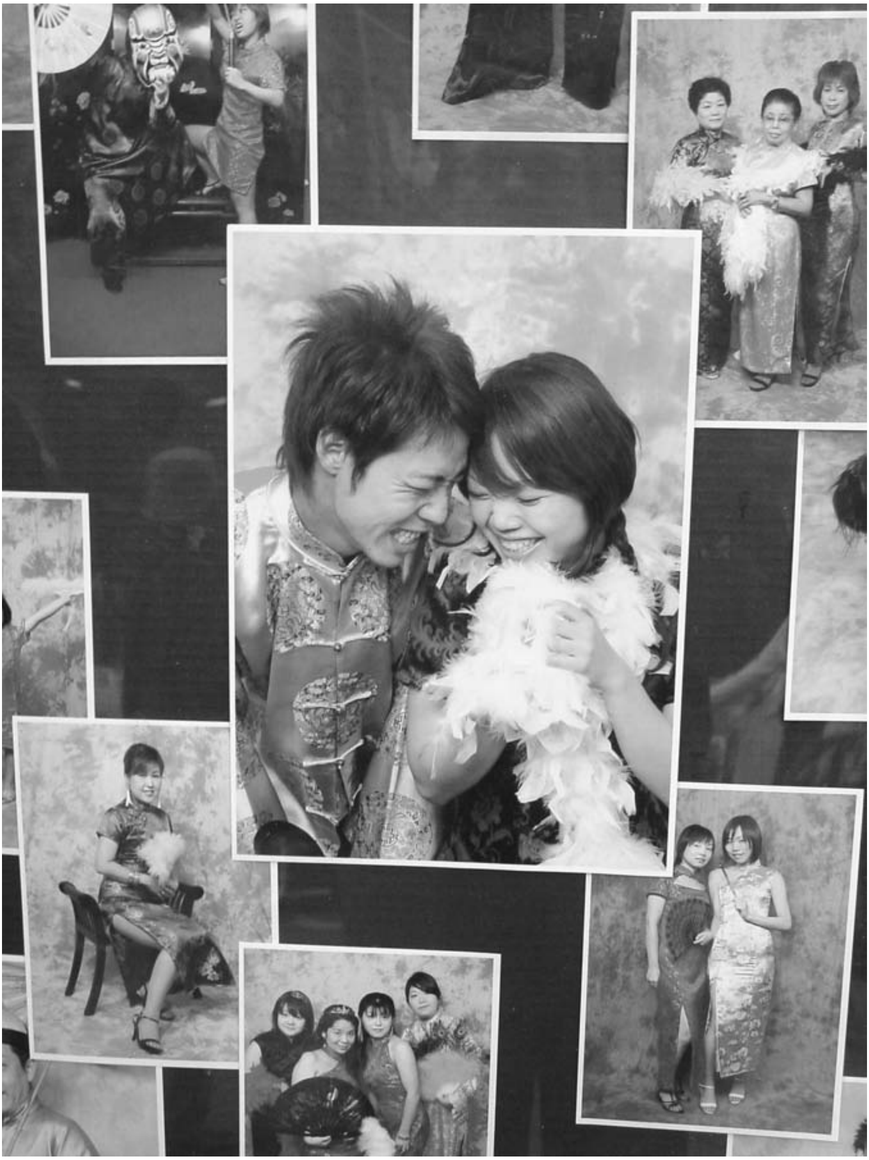

Figure 6.3 Kobe Chinatown, Japanese youth playing at being Chinese, 2006. Simulation activities, or *cospurei* (costume play) are popular in Japan and include Japanese dressing up like foreigners. The old foreign section of Kobe, Ijinkan, also has boutiques where Japanese can dress like a Dutch person or Dutch bride. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

all there is to the neighborhood. As the Chinatown enthusiasts are quick to point out, the unfamiliar sounds of spoken Chinese and pidgin Japanese, as well as the sight of women in Chinese dress, all serve to reinforce the "Chinese color" (*Chūgokushoku*) of the place (Matsui 1984: 268–269; Taimu supeisu 1976: 60–62).

Food is an important factor that contributes to the exotic quality of Chinatown. Writings on Chinatown invariably contain graphic descriptions of the peculiar, rare, and "grotesque" foodstuffs available, including the wide range of spices and alcohol imported from China and other parts of Asia (Matsui 1984). Great attention is given to introducing and assessing the quality of individual restaurants. Besides essential information about the names of special dishes, such accounts also provide some anecdotes about the chef or owner of each restaurant (Sōgensha henshūbu 1970; Taimu Supeisu 1976). The writers even try to capture the smells of the place in words: it is claimed, for example, that the air in the precinct is suffused with the oily fragrance of Chinese cooking (Matsui 1984). Perhaps predictably, there are endless claims that the Chinese food in Kobe is somehow more authentic, more innovative, and tastier than that available in other cities. The cumulative effect of these claims about food and related sensations is best summed up by the nickname given to Chinatown—the "food district" (*shoku no machi*).

A third aspect of "exotic Chinatown" capitalizes on its role in the historic "opening" of Japan (*kaikoku*) in the mid-nineteenth century. The people of Kobe pride themselves on the pioneering role of their ancestors in mediating between Japan and the West in early Meiji and subsequently in developing the city into a hub of maritime activity in East Asia. Nonetheless, redevelopment before and after the war has erased almost all physical traces of the original Western community. Standing on its original site, Chinatown remains the only existing landmark that can attest to Kobe's history as a leader in the introduction of Western technology and cultural trends. Admittedly, the city is home to a few "residences of Westerners" (*ijinkan*) from before the war, but these have been turned into either mini-museums or restaurants, and are no longer a living reality like Chinatown. Such uninhabited houses are at best relics of a bygone era, whereas Chinatown continues as a functioning community with an active Chinese presence. Pointing to this "living monument," Kobe can lay claim to a quality of "foreignness" which is useful for inculcating a sense of historical awareness among residents and tourists alike (Sōgensha henshūbu 1970: 164–167).

Besides representing Chinatown as a realm of the senses, the sources also stress that, as a community, the neighborhood exemplifies certain social virtues. It is credited for displaying such desirable traits of the overseas Chinese as diligence, perseverance, and communal solidarity. Although these stereotypes of Chinese have existed in the background for a long time, Chinatown's speedy response to the earthquake gave them renewed currency, elevating the neighborhood to a symbol of hope for the whole city. According to news reports and individual testimonies, only three days after the deadly shock waves hit, a stall selling dumplings appeared in Chinatown, with nine more vendors following suit in the next five days (*Asahi Shinbun* 1/26/1995; Guo 1997a: 183–193; Yasui *et al.* 1996). As both utilities and the normal supply of food had been disrupted, the vendors had to improvise using propane gas, water from fire hydrants in the street, and ingredients procured from alternative sources. Food and drink were offered either for free or at a discount, and on Chinese New Year (two weeks after the tremor) 18,000 dumplings and large quantities of Chinese wine were given away free of charge. Moreover, profits from the sale of other food items on New Year's Day went to the city's relief fund. Less than two months after the quake, when most stores and restaurants in Chinatown had reopened for business, the neighborhood publicized a Manifesto of Revival (*Nankinmachi fukkatsu sengen*) to send a message of hope and optimism to the city's struggling population. A month and a half later, it participated in the citywide Kobe May Festival (*Kōbe Gogatsu Matsuri*) under the name of "Yummy Square" (*Hauchī Hiroba*)[18] serving Chinese snacks.

According to this interpretation, then, Chinatown exuded optimism and public spiritedness amid the despair and confusion that immediately followed the earthquake. The headline of a story in the *Asahi Shinbun* (January 26, 1995) on post-earthquake Chinatown captured this perception: "The District of Food: The Steam of Recovery" (*shoku no machi, fukkō no yuge*). The smaller caption elaborates: "Warmth in the Stomach; Stalls Reopened; Long Lines of Refugees" (*atatakasa ga i ni shimiru, tsugitsugi kaiten, hisaisha ga gyōretsu*). The story revolves around the observation that Chinatown was the first neighborhood in the city to regain "vitality" (*kakki*) and to extend a helping hand to others by serving hot meals in the frigid mid-winter cold. The moral message of courage and generosity in the face of adversity is driven home by the words of a grateful housewife who is quoted as saying that Chinatown's steaming "real" food has brought "warmth to her stomach," which had known nothing but bread and instant food for many days.

The Chinese themselves remember the neighborhood's post-tremor experience in much the same way. Personal accounts collected by a team of university researchers used the same themes and images as in the *Asahi Shinbun* story (Yasui *et al.* 1996). In an interview with the newspaper on the disaster's second anniversary, the President of the Kobe Overseas Chinese Association provided a more elaborate interpretation of Chinatown's recovery (*Asahi Shinbun* 1/30/1997). Invoking again the image of steaming hot meals being served to refugees in mid-winter, he claimed that the Chinese were able to get back on their feet faster than the Japanese due to their "spirit of self-dependence" (*jiriki kōsei no seishin*). He stressed the importance of the "network of mutual help" connecting the Chinese in Kobe with Chinese elsewhere in Japan and the world around. He further observed that the generosity of the Chinese was not restricted to their compatriots, and the Japanese, but has extended to other groups of minorities such as Koreans and Vietnamese. Such acts of interracial charity have resulted in the forging of new ties between the Chinese and the other foreign communities. In this sense, he claimed, the disaster did more than demonstrate the moral character of the Chinese: it has also created an opportunity for the Chinese to reach out and become integrated with other minorities. The same view is echoed by the comments of a Japanese man who told his interviewer that "Chinatown's response to the earthquake exemplifies the 'overseas Chinese spirit' (*kakyō no kifū*) that the fortunate should help the unfortunate without discrimination."

The idea that Chinatown sets an example for the whole of Kobe also received support from a popular booklet on the earthquake (Tsumura 1995). The author, a journalist, interprets Chinatown's "robust return to business" (*takumashiku saikai*) as a portent for the city's successful recovery. Like others, he praised the Chinese food vendors for their "energy" (*genki*), while at the same time noting similar resourcefulness in an Indian couple hawking curry amid the rubble. The appearance of hawkers, from his point of view, is the sure sign of a community reconstituting itself, as these makeshift stalls draw people together and encourage them to interact and bond with each other. This kind of "refugee feast" (*nanmin enkai*), he claims, is effective in breaking down racial barriers, integrating foreigners with Japanese, and bringing Kobe one step closer to becoming a truly international and multiracial city. Here again, Chinatown is held up as a moral example for the city.

In sum, Chinese community leaders, businesses in Chinatown, the mass media, and the municipal and central governments have collectively made Chinatown into a powerful cultural symbol. Not only have they created an exotic Chinatown in line with Kobe's self-perception as an international city but they have also transformed the Chinese into a "modern minority" whose very existence underscores important values for the wider community.[19] Consequently, the present-day Chinatown is not the exclusive possession of the Chinese, nor is it a landmark known only in Kobe. It has become a nationally recognized symbol that stands for the common interests of Japanese and Chinese in the context of regional society (*chiiki shakai*).

Chinatown in the post-high growth era

Chinatown's new status as an urban landmark and a cultural symbol did not emerge in a social vacuum. Four interrelated factors have been decisive in facilitating the formation of Chinatown's present image. They are (1) the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, (2) a phenomenal growth in domestic tourism and the related "gourmet boom," (3) the official drive toward "community-making," and (4) the policy of internationalization. These political, economic, and social trends began to make an impact on Japanese society in the 1970s and their influence continues today.

The diplomatic rapprochement between Japan and China in 1972 created a whole new socioeconomic space for the Chinese in Japan (Chūka Kaikan ed 2000: 259–262; Kōyama 1979: 96–97). Japan's official recognition of the People's Republic of China ended an identity crisis among the Chinese overseas and the confusion of perception among the Japanese people, both of which had been caused by the competition between "two Chinas." As direct and regular communication and travel between the two countries became possible, a "China Boom" (*Chūgoku būmu*) ensued. Merchants in Kobe's Chinatown seized the opportunity to reestablish (or strengthen) business contacts with the mainland and brought in a whole range of new merchandise to satisfy the curiosity of the

Japanese public (*Kōbe Shinbun* 1987: 36). The better-stocked grocery and souvenir shops did more than satisfy the Japanese craving for Chinese delicacies and handicrafts: they also provided up-to-date information about the culture of the "New China" through sales promotions, demonstrations, and exhibitions. Over time culture shows and festivals were added to enhance the tourist appeal of Chinatown. Brisk sales and optimism about closer ties between Japan and China in turn encouraged the proprietors to invest in renovation and restoration, thus creating a cycle of reinvestment and growing business.

The "China Boom" coincided with a period of rapid expansion in domestic tourism (Ivy 1995: 29–65). Highly successful national campaigns such as "Discover Japan" and "Exotic Japan" promoted the tourist potential of selected localities in the country by spotlighting their unique history and culture. Taking their cues from these successes, communities across the country began implementing their own advertising campaigns featuring local cuisines, scenery, crafts, festivals, monuments, and other claims to uniqueness. While some places offer hot springs and beaches, others capitalize on their classical cultural heritage, and still others promise an experience of a vanishing past through the staging of a rustic, idyllic lifestyle (Clammer 1997). It was amid this fierce competition for tourists that Kobe came to appreciate the economic potential of its Chinatown. The declining neighborhood was earmarked for "restoration" to give the city an edge in the quest for a bigger share of the tourism market. The "gourmet boom" (*gurume būmu*) that followed only increased Chinatown's appeal, for it holds the promise of a unique gastronomic experience for the "food conscious" tourists.

Reinforcing Kobe's self-promotion as a tourist destination is the city's active pursuit of "community-making" (Yasui 1997). Also known as "hometown making" (*furusato-zukuri*) and "community vitalization" (*machiokoshi*), the policy was first conceived by the national government in the early 1970s. The aim is to channel resources into nurturing regional cities and rural communities so as to mitigate the ill effects of industrialization and urbanization (Robertson 1991: 3–18; Seah 1989). Funds are made available for the building of cultural infrastructures such as libraries, sport facilities, community centers, and museums in cities and towns across the country. At the same time each community is encouraged to discover its history and to foster its local culture (Inoue, N. *et al.* 1979: 163–183). Communities with a rich culture and a strong sense of local identity, it is reasoned, will not only be able to retain their population but also be able to integrate them back into an organic and harmonious whole. In this context Chinatown serves as a highly visible icon of local history and culture. Moreover, because of its rarity, it confers on Kobe a special quality that is matched only by Yokohama and Nagasaki, the only other cities in Japan that have their own Chinatowns.

The fourth factor contributing to the new image of Chinatown is Kobe's pursuit of internationalization. In the early 1980s national leaders concluded that as an economic superpower Japan must open itself up to the outside world (Sugiyama 1992: 72–103). This initiative was two-pronged. On the one hand, emphasis was placed on external relations. Overseas trips by Japanese as well as visits by foreign groups were encouraged in the name of culture, business, aid, sports, or simply sightseeing. On the other hand, measures for "internal internationalization" (*uchi naru kokusaika*) were taken to integrate the nation's growing foreign population into local communities. This stress on international friendship and appreciation of foreign cultures created many opportunities for the Chinese to take part in communal functions.[20] For instance, it has become customary since the 1970s for Kobe's government agencies and business groups to include overseas Chinese as members when receiving delegations from China. The same is true in the area of cultural life. Like other communities, Kobe is eager to display its "international" credentials, so its Chinese residents (and other foreign residents) are regularly invited to participate in communal festivals and perform martial art drills, ethnic dances, and of course to show off their culinary skills. On these occasions Chinatown provides an appropriate venue due to its exotic ambience.

Limits and ambiguities

For more than 20 years Chinatown has been able to sustain and capitalize on its transformed image. By collaborating in the advancement of the interests of Kobe, it has gained economic ground and greater social prominence for itself. While Chinatown is still prospering, there have been signs in the last decade or so, however, that its current status is neither fixed nor certain. In the first place, its position as the only "ethnic" neighborhood may be compromised by the creation of a "new Chinese District" (*arata na Chūgokujin-gai*) in the city. As envisioned by the municipal government, this new "Chinatown" will be a modern business and information hub that interfaces Central China with Japan and the world beyond. Second, although Chinatown's status as a cultural symbol has greatly increased the visibility of the Chinese in some contexts, this does not necessarily mean that they will be accepted in other areas of life as well. It was the earthquake, ironically, that has revealed some of the deep-seated tensions between the minority Chinese and the majority Japanese. Third, what is happening in Kobe cannot be separated from broader trends. Growing criticism of China and Chinese immigrants at the national level offers a sober reminder that festivals and goodwill visits alone do not guarantee the dissolution of mutual distrust and full integration.

The idea of creating in Kobe a Chinese District distinct from Chinatown was first floated in 1995 by the national government's Committee for Recovery in Hanshin and Awaji (*Hanshin Awaji Fukkō Iinkai*) (*Kōbe Shinbun* 11/10/1995, reproduced in Yasui *et al.* 1996: 149). It was floated as a key component in a bold vision called Shanghai–Yangtze River Trade Promotion Project (*Shanhai Chōkō kōeki sokushin purojekuto*). Its purpose is to provide a powerful boost to the economic rehabilitation of Kobe by linking the city up with Shanghai and its vast and resourceful hinterland. The new Chinese District would be located on Port Island, one of Kobe's multipurpose artificial islands. The concept received further elaboration in a report prepared by the Kobe municipal government in 1996 (Yasui *et al.* 1996: 35). This document calls for the Chinese District to focus on developing partnerships with Shanghai in the areas of international trade, finance, high tech industry, research, and cultural exchange. To minimize competition with the small retailers and restaurateurs in the existing Chinatown, it will aim to become the center of an envisioned East Asian trade and information network in the twenty-first century. Importantly, the report stresses the need to seek the participation of both longtime Chinese residents and students from China, who are expected to use their "personal connections" (*jinmyaku*) to set up new ventures as well as attract business from China.

The municipal government is interested in the new "Chinatown" because it presents a chance to recapture the trade Kobe lost to other ports domestically and overseas due to the earthquake, which has been slow in returning. Municipal officials feel that if Kobe succeeds in pairing up with Shanghai, a city widely seen as the main engine behind China's growth in the next century, this will bode well not only for Kobe's recovery but also for its long-term growth. In 1998 a Business Planning Committee (*Jigyō Kikaku Kentō Iinkai*) was set up to study the details of the District's developmental plans. A year later, under the auspice of this committee, a study group (*kenkyūkai*) was formed, which floated the idea of creating a center to assist Chinese students in Japan to become entrepreneurs upon graduation. Armed with advanced degrees from local universities, these young and resourceful Chinese are expected to set up their business ventures in the Chinese District, thus helping Kobe to realize the ambition to become the gateway for the traffic of "people, goods, and information" (*hito, mono, jōhō*) for East Asia (http://www.cokoya.com/, date?). It is, of course, too early to tell how many tangible results will derive from the numerous visits and return visits, study group meetings, speeches, and handshakes.

The important point, however, is that the new Chinese District could be either a boon or a bane for the existing one. On the one hand, the partnership between Kobe and its Chinese minority as it is articulated by the Chinese District concept will reinforce the symbiotic relationship that underlies the success of the existing Chinatown. By helping to realize the Shanghai–Yangtze River project, the Chinese will have yet another opportunity to strengthen their socioeconomic position in the city. In fact, Chinese business leaders from Kobe and Tokyo as well as Chinese academics from Japanese universities are already regularly involved in related seminars, public forums, and consultative committees. On the other hand, the presence of a new "Chinatown" will almost certainly divert attention from the old one. In fact, with its emphasis on information, finance, and high tech, the new district has the potential to surpass the existing Chinatown, which relies on businesses that are typically low tech and have low turnover. There is the danger that Chinatown will once again become a quaint but outdated and rundown city ward as it was in the 1970s.

Meanwhile, it should be remembered that Chinatown's favorable image is a product of specific social forces and so has currency mainly in the contexts in which these forces predominate. All the hype about Chinatown's exotic quality and moral character in the publicity and tourism literature does not necessarily signify the formation of an unambiguously cordial relationship between Chinese and Japanese. Nothing better illustrates the limits of Chinatown's image than the 1995 earthquake that devastated the city. Despite the high social profile of Chinatown before the disaster and the host society's use of it as a symbol for international friendship and interracial harmony in the aftermath, individual Chinese did experience rejection when they sought help from Japanese sources in the post-disaster chaos (Yasui *et al.* 1996: 41–44).[21] There are reports of Chinese being told to go to Chinese organizations for help or suspected of abusing public assistance. While the city's International Exchange Office (*Kokusai Kōryūka*) quickly clarified such "misunderstandings" and tried to ensure that Chinese (indeed, all foreigners) had equal access to aid and temporary lodgings, some local groups appeared reluctant to take in Chinese refugees, especially students, due to concerns about their lack of personal hygiene and public spirit. Whatever the reality behind these claims and counterclaims, it seems clear that 20 years of lion dances and dumpling parties have not entirely removed prejudices and mutual suspicions.

Even more alarming is the rising tide of criticism of recent Chinese (legal and illegal) immigrants and their home country in the mass media by a wide range of opinion makers: journalists, commentators, intellectuals, and politicians. While Kobe's situation may be less complicated than Tokyo's, where the intensity of Sinophobic polemics rivals the rise in crimes by Chinese, it cannot avoid the ripple effects so long as Tokyo sets the tone of political debates and shapes public opinions. As a result of liberalization in China after 1979, the number of new immigrants from the mainland increased manifold in the following decades. Despite considerable Japanese goodwill initially, this unrelenting influx of Chinese has created tension in Japan. Minor complaints about Chinese students' insensitivity to norms and etiquette of the host society soon turned into resentment, which then degenerated, from time to time, into paranoia about Chinese criminals running wild. Hase Seishū's 1996 novel *Fuyajō* (The City that Does not Sleep), which sensationalizes the audacity and brutality of Chinese gangster activity in Shinjuku's Kabukichō, captures well the changed public perception. Open expression of dislike of Chinese acquired a veneer of "respectability" in 1999 when *AERA* (1999.7.19), a slick weekly published by the mainstream "center-left" *Asahi Shinbun*, ran a piece entitled "Japanese Dislike Chinese" (*Nihonjin wa Chūgokujin ga kirai*). While this piece does not refer to crimes by Chinese in Japan, when *Bungei Shunjū* ran a series of articles under the theme "China: This Troublesome Neighbor" (*Chūgoku kono yakkai na rinjin*) in 2002 these included a report on Chinese criminal activity in Japan (Tomizaka 2001: 211–216).

Even the government chimed in. The populist governor of Tokyo Ishihara Shintarō made an infamous speech on April 9, 2000 referring to *sangokujin*,[22] urging that the Self-Defense Forces be given police power to fight Chinese and Korean criminals. But the bureaucrats were not to be outdone. The ever-vigilant Japanese police printed posters for distribution that urged citizens to call the police emergency number when they think they see a Chinese or hear someone speaking Chinese (*The Financial Times* 12/12/2000).[23] Needless to say, being Chinese under these conditions has none of the luster that comes with *acting* Chinese under the banner of the Gourmet Republic.

Conclusion

However Kobe's Chinatown may fare in the twenty-first century, its experience so far is a useful reminder that Japanese society, though exclusivist and conformist, does not always reject and victimize foreigners and other minorities. Without downplaying the severity of discrimination (like the Koreans and *Burakumin*, the Chinese have experienced their fair share of persecution, especially during the war years), this paper nonetheless tries to show that majority–minority relations are more dynamic and multidimensional than traditional accounts have allowed. The fact that the image of Kobe's Chinatown could change from negative to positive is a good example that once-despised ethnic and cultural marginality can become a cause for celebration under a different set of socioeconomic conditions.

If the political and economic imperatives of an imperialist Japan provided the context for the production and consumption of a negative image of Chinatown, pacifist and affluent Japan in the postwar era has preferred a positive one. Nonetheless, it must be pointed out that the transformed, favorable image of Chinatown is similarly as subordinate to the interests of the Japanese majority as the old one was. The special qualities attributed to Chinatown are reflections of the aspirations of mainstream Japanese society.

By embracing the Otherness of Chinatown, Kobe expresses its desire to be international rather than parochial, and by praising the moral character of Chinatown, the city drives home the importance of retaining communal bonds despite rapid urbanization. In other words, the Chinese were able to attain their present status by conforming to the specific and stereotypical expectations of the host society, the restrictive nature of which is comparable to the segregating function of the old prejudices. And the national mood is changing again. The same fluidity that allowed Chinatown to reinvent itself as the Gourmet Republic has the potential to mire it again in new conflicts between Japan and China. A Japan that is politically more assertive and economically weakened now feels less generous toward China and the Chinese among them.

As China comes to be perceived more and more as a "troublesome" neighbor (*Bungei Shunjū* 2001, no. 10), or even a vicious competitor, public alarmism—especially toward those who look and sound Chinese, whatever that may mean—poses a real threat to the kind of limited achievements made in Kobe. It would be interesting to review, say twenty years from now, if the Gourmet Republic could exert beneficial influences beyond the two square-kilometer neighborhood it occupies and achieve, for Japanese and Chinese alike, something that is at once more mundane and longer lasting than the Spring Festival.

Notes

This chapter is an expanded and updated version of an article that first appeared in *Japanese Studies*, 19(1), May 1999.

1 They were usually called *Shinajin* before 1945 but are referred to as *Kakyō* or "overseas Chinese" after the war. *Shinkakyō* or "new overseas Chinese" was applied to Taiwanese in Japan who were reclassified as foreigners after Japan's defeat. Recently,

it came to denote immigrants from the People's Republic of China who began to arrive since the early 1980s.

2 Although this paper deals with Kobe, the transformation it documents has parallels in the Chinatowns of Yokohama and Nagasaki (Sugawara Kazutaka 1994; Sugawara Kōsuke 1991; Wang 1997).

3 Former mayor Miyazaki Tatsuo was an enthusiastic promoter of Kobe's international ties and cultivation of a trendy, upper-class image (1995: 159–179). The same message is central to a shopping guide (Mizutani 1999) published as part of the post-earthquake revival effort.

4 For Western merchants' complaints about Chinese, see Chūka Kaikan (2000: 40–41). Kagotani notes that Japanese expressed similar sentiments (2000: 57–89).

5 The earliest appearance of the term *Nankinmachi* so far identified is in 1888 (Chūka Kaikan 2000: 55). For more information, see Yamazaki (1997: 1–6).

6 Kōyama (1979: 168–172, 173–179) is a useful source on Chinatown's seedy side. Reports on Chinese criminal activity in Kobe and the other treaty ports can be found in the newspapers of the time. For the "sale" of children, see *Bankoku Shinbun* 3/1872 (Nakayama 1965, 1:446); for opium-related activity, see *Chōya Shinbun* 2/23/1878 and 8/21/1880 (Nakayama 1965, 4:32 and 255); for gambling, see *Tokyo Yokohama Mainichi* 3/31/1880 (Nakayama 1965, 4:189).

7 A police raid of a Chinese opium den in 1889 developed into a diplomatic row between China and Japan. As a result Japanese police stopped informing the Chinese consulate before entering Chinese properties (Chūka Kaikan 2000: 47).

8 I developed this point on the basis of an interview in Kobe with Chen Deren, Curator of the Overseas Chinese Museum in Kobe and a successful trader before retirement.

9 One of my informants is a 103-year-old (in 1998) woman who has lived in Kobe since childhood. She can bear witness to the history of Chinatown through most of the twentieth century.

10 Even children freely expressed anti-Chinese sentiments. Writing in 1939, a Kobe resident recalled a children's game inspired by the first Sino-Japanese War (Shimoda 1939: 69–71). It had weaker boys who were forced to play Chinese soldiers being chased around and manhandled by stronger ones who played Japanese soldiers. Also see Deguchi (1996: 24–46).

11 The experience of Chinese in Japan during the war is not well documented. I have benefited from interviews with Mr. Chen Genlin, Deputy Curator of the Overseas Chinese Museum in Kobe, and Mr. Lan Pu, Senior Teacher at the Kobe Overseas Chinese School. Deguchi (1996) is a relatively recent study that tries to fill the gap using declassified police and diplomatic sources. A new and useful source is Chūka Kaikan (2000: 197–217).

12 My emphasis is the *public* nature of these places as landmarks and tourist attractions. There is little evidence of mosques and Korean temples, for example, receiving similar publicity.

13 Maps are available free at train stations, tourism information booths, and other public places. Guidebooks also contain them. I have consulted: *Map of Kobe* (no publication information), *Kobe: Sannomiya Motomachi* (Kobe-Shi Keizaikyoku Kankōka 1994), *City Loop Guide* (Kobe kokusai kankō kyōkai, no date), and *Kobe Nankinmachi Area Guide Map* (Nankinmachi Shōtengai Shinkō Kumiai, no date).

14 Tianjin is Kobe's sister city.

15 This style of pavement is said to be that of *pudi* (Chinese), which can be seen in the Forbidden City in Beijing (Toshikeikaku-kyoku Kōmuka 1981).

16 I first saw this video in 1995 when flying from Singapore to the Kansai International Airport. I have seen it a few times since then. It was in use as late as 1997.

17 This is taken from the text on a placard in Chinatown's square.

18 *Hauchī* is the Japanese reading of the Chinese word *haochi* (delicious). This is another example of Chinatown exoticizing itself.

19 For a standard exposition of this quality of the Chinese in Japan, see Vasishth (1997: 108–139).

20 The best source is *Kansai Kakyō Hō*, a newspaper published by the overseas Chinese associations of Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe. Also see Chūka Kaikan (2000: 259) expand on some of the opportunities here for communal functions or at least how they are described in the above publications.

21 When interviewed by the research team led by Professor Yasui Sankichi, Shi Jiacheng from the Kobe Overseas Chinese Association gave convoluted answers about friction between Japanese and Chinese after the earthquake. While he did not mention any serious case of discrimination (or "misunderstanding"), his rambling comments blaming both sides betrayed a sense of unease just beneath the surface.

22 *Sangokujin* historically refers to Taiwanese, Chinese, and Koreans who rampaged through post-surrender Japan. The governor and his defenders argue that the term is not pejorative.

23 The posters were withdrawn before they went out to the public. A similar flyer, printed in the name of the Kanagawa Prefectural Police in September 2000, urged citizens to call the police immediately if they see: Chinese carrying travel bags; several Chinese going up into a mansion; Chinese visitors not seen before; Chinese speaking with a cell phone; a waiting car where the driver is a Chinese (on December 21, 2001, I accessed the following site, http://village.infoweb.ne.jp/~fwjh7128/genron/haradachi/anzen-news.htm, which is no longer available). For more discussion, see "*Chugokujin sabetsu bira jiken* (On the Anti-Chinese Discriminatory Flyer), http://homepage3.nifty.com/m_and_y/genron/hatsugen/sabetsu-keisatsu.htm. I assume the sample shown is authentic, although I have no independent corroboration. Incidentally, one of the results of a search (in 2001) using the keyword "Chinese" (*Chūgokujin*) (http://www.infoseek.co.jp) was "home security companies/crime prevention."

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7 Okinawan diasporic identities

Between being a buffer and a bridge

Wesley Ueunten

An "*Uchinaanchu* Pacific"

When my grandparents left Okinawa to work in the cane fields of Hawai‘i in the early 1900s, Okinawa had been a prefecture of Japan for only a few decades. Prior to its forcible annexation by Japan, it had been a separate kingdom with its own social hierarchy, written history, body of literature, and musical and dance traditions.

In the pre-war Hawaiian Japanese community, Okinawans were a lower class of Japanese, economically because they arrived later than mainland Japanese and socially because they were not considered "pure Japanese." As a result, the Okinawan language and culture were often suppressed in favor of assimilating into the culture of the Japanese community in Hawai‘i. The decline of Okinawan culture in Hawai‘i, of course, was also a result of the White American mission to civilize the children of its nonwhite immigrant population. Consequently, the Okinawans in Hawai‘i were a minority within a minority as well as at the receiving end of missions to Japanize and Americanize.

A personal search for my "roots" or the essence of my existence led me to Okinawa on an Okinawa Prefectural Government scholarship for Okinawan descendants to study in Okinawa. My cohort group which went to Okinawa in 1984 included eight Okinawan descendants: one from Canada, one from the mainland United States, one from Peru, one from Bolivia, one from Argentina, two from Brazil, and myself from Hawai‘i. We also joined other overseas Okinawans who remained in Okinawa from the previous years. This first contact with South American Okinawans was very interesting. I was surprised to meet people who were phenotypically similar to me speaking Spanish or Portuguese. At the same time, however, they were just as surprised to hear me speaking English.

As the months together went by, I noticed the variation in the level of Okinawan culture retention among the overseas Okinawans. On one extreme were people like the *Issei* and *Nisei* Bolivian Okinawans who grew up in one of the exclusively Okinawan communities established in the 1950s called "Colonia Okinawa." Some of the *Nisei* Brazilians and Argentineans whose families had many associations with other Okinawans (such as through Okinawan organizations) were also very "Okinawan." Possibly due to a history of anti-Japanese sentiment in Peru,[1] most of the Peruvians spoke little Japanese and almost no Okinawan. Among the North

Americans were some students who were fluent in Japanese and to some extent Okinawan because they were either born in Okinawa or had parents born there. Because we were three or four generations removed from Okinawa, the Okinawan language was virtually non-existent among Okinawans from Hawai‘i and what Japanese we spoke was learned more at Japanese schools or in high school or college classes rather than at home.

There was also colorful variation in adopted cultures. While the North Americans and Hawaiians would talk about football or complain about the high cost of fast food, the South Americans would debate over *futebol* and complain about the terrible coffee. On any given day, one could walk down the dorm wing where the overseas Okinawans lived and hear anything from Hawaiian slack key guitar to Brazilian *samba* to flute pieces from the Peruvian Andes being played from recordings sent from “home.”

After two years in Okinawa, I returned to Hawai‘i and finished up my Master’s degree in sociology with a thesis on the Okinawan ethnic community in Hawai‘i. I then went to Japan on a Ministry of Education scholarship to study Okinawans in mainland Japan. In the six years that I spent there, I again met many South American Okinawans.

Their reasons for being in Japan were very different from mine. While I had gone to Japan to study, many of the South American Okinawans that I met had gone to Japan to escape the poor economic conditions of their country or, in the case of the Peruvians, the danger of terrorists who often targeted Okinawans because of their perceived status as part of a bourgeois middle class representing Japanese capitalist interests. Their entry into Japan was facilitated by a Japanese government policy to allow *Nikkei* (overseas Japanese) to obtain work visas more easily than other foreigners.

It is ironic that the search for an “essence” or a singular Okinawan-ness has exposed me to the heterogeneity of the body of people across the world with ancestral ties to Okinawa or what we may call the Okinawan diaspora.

The Okinawan diaspora: theoretical locations

To give tribute to all the theoretical writings that have shaped my thoughts on the Okinawan diaspora would take up more time, space, and energy than is allowed here. However, my own intellectual development owes a great deal to the field of ethnic studies that emerged in the late 1960s as a challenge to the Eurocentrism of academia that had largely ignored racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. The field of ethnic studies has brought about widespread appreciation of minority experiences, consciousnesses, cultures, and practices rather than their dismissal as trivial and inconsequential. Most importantly, ethnic studies have shown minorities to be agents rather than passive spectators of historical and social change. Gary Okihiro’s eloquent assertion of the significance of this “marginal” condition in the United States is useful here. He writes:

> What I would like to suggest is that the deeper significance of Asians, and indeed of all minorities, in America rests in their opposition to the dominant

> paradigm, their fight against "the power," their efforts to transform, and not simply reform, American society and its structures.
>
> (Okihiro 1994: 155)

The works of scholars of Asian American Studies who focus on connections between Asian immigration, racialized images of Asians, and the development of the United States as an overseas military and capitalistic power have had a close fit with the particular material and ideological conditions of the Okinawan diaspora. Such conditions include the need for cheap labor in the United States after the abolition of the slave trade and the gradual rise of agricultural and industrial capitalism, particularly on the Pacific coast. According to Asian American scholar Lisa Lowe, the need for labor has "placed Asians 'within' the US nation-state, its workplaces, and its markets, yet linguistically, culturally, and racially marked Asians as 'foreign' and 'outside' the national polity" (Lowe 1996: 8).

Lowe emphasizes that the diasporic condition is a site of not only victimization, but also of resistance against absolute notions of nation and race. She points out that:

> while immigration has been the locus of legal and political restriction of Asians as the "other" in America, immigration has simultaneously been the site for the emergence of critical negations of the nation-state for which those legislations are the expression. If the law is the apparatus that binds and seals the universality of the political body of the nation, then the "immigrant," produced by the law as margin and threat to that symbolic whole, is precisely a generative site for the critique of that universality.
>
> (Ibid: 7–8)

While the Okinawan diaspora can be located within the contradiction between the need for labor and the need to maintain national and racial purity in the United States, I must also point out that it has been shaped by other complicated dynamics of capitalism and racism that require the development of new theoretical perspectives.

First, in terms of population, the Okinawan diaspora is centered in Latin America. This reflects the need for labor that emerged from capitalistic development outside the United States. However, it can also be tied to the anti-Japanese exclusionist movement that began with the first large-scale anti-Japanese protest in California in May 1900 (Daniels 1963: 21), the same year that the first organized group of Okinawan immigrants arrived in Hawai'i. The exclusionist movement led to the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907–1908 and ultimately to the Immigration Act of 1924, which virtually halted immigration from Asia to the United States and diverted the flow of pre-war Okinawan immigration to Latin America.

The shape of the Okinawan diaspora has also been determined by US influence in both Latin America and Asia. A glimpse of how US influence in Latin America shaped the Okinawan diaspora is provided by the little-known story of 2,264 Japanese Latin Americans brought to the United States during World War

II to be used as hostages in exchange for Americans trapped in Japan after the Pearl Harbor attack. Over 1,800 of these Japanese Latin Americans were from Peru. Judging from 1938 records that show a majority of Japanese business association members in Lima to have been overwhelmingly Okinawan[2] and from Department of Justice internment camp records which show many unmistakably Okinawan surnames, we can assume that a large proportion of the Japanese Latin Americans taken for hostage exchange by the United States were Okinawan.

The presence of the United States in Okinawa also has a gendered aspect. For example, a large number of Okinawans who left Okinawa to live in the United States are women married to US soldiers and other military personnel. The US presence also involves violence that specifically targets women and children. An Okinawan *Nisei* woman, who had been taken from Peru to an internment camp in Crystal City and then deported to US-occupied Okinawa by the United States after the war, recalled in an oral history interview that men from the American base near her home would come in the middle of the night to look for women to rape.

Finally, the presence in Japan of a large number of South American *Nikkei*, many of whom are Okinawan, indicates a new period in Japan's relationship with the outside world. Japan's economic development reached a point in the 1980s when it was forced to accept foreign workers. Thus, Japan faced the same contradiction between the need for a supply of cheap labor and the desire to remain racially pure that the United States and South American countries faced when they imported Japanese workers from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. South American *Nikkei*, the descendants of those overseas Japanese immigrants, represent an attempt to rectify the contradiction between the need for and the abhorrence of foreign workers. Despite their cultural and linguistic differences that make them foreign, the *Nikkei* workers are "racially" preferable to other foreign workers.

Being Okinawan from the late twentieth century onward

"Bridge" vs. "buffer": two sides of the same coin?

While being Okinawan varies greatly over space (i.e., over the diaspora), it has also changed greatly over time. Being Okinawan became something very different in the last part of the twentieth century. A few months after I arrived to do research in Japan in 1989, I remember hearing Ryuichi Sakamoto's version of *Asadoya Yunta*[3] on an FM pop music station. Right around the same time, I was startled by the sound of Okinawan *minyō* blaring outside. Running out to see where it came from, I saw a right-wing nationalist loudspeaker truck going down the street. The cultural environment surrounding Okinawan-ness is very different from 1926, when an Okinawan journalist warned Okinawan immigrants that Okinawa did not have much "that was worthy of national pride" and that "we must be careful not to make a display of our most striking and unique customs" (Kobashigawa 2000: 6).

As a *Sansei* Okinawan growing up in Hawai‘i, I had to search high and wide for any traces of what my Okinawan grandparents brought with them from the homeland. I even had to steal glimpses of the Okinawan-style tattoos on the back of my grandmother's hands, which she deftly concealed from public view. Being Okinawan, even for *Nisei*-Okinawans, meant feeling a sense of shame or "dirtiness."

However, overseas Okinawans now enjoy a sense that Okinawa has finally received the recognition that it deserves. Many of us were excited over the 2000 G-8 Summit being hosted by Okinawa. The G-8 was just one event in a string of Okinawan "successes" that put Okinawa on the map, including the huge popularity of Okinawan pop stars and bands as well as the euphoria over an Okinawan team capturing the national high school baseball championship in 1999.

Even for those not interested in popular music or sports, the widely watched NHK series *Churasan* (2000–2001) brought the lives of a post-Reversion Okinawan family into the homes of people throughout Japan and in the homes of overseas *Nikkei* with access to satellite broadcasts of the show. Although *Churasan* portrayed Okinawans as "different," it located them within the national entity of Japan. In fact, the main character of *Churasan* was born on the day that Okinawa was "returned" to Japan by the United States in 1972, symbolizing the rebirth of Okinawans as Japanese.

Despite the willingness of Japanese to locate Okinawans in the national entity, Okinawa's independent past is an important part of Japan's efforts to promote "internationalism." The theme of the 2000 G-8 Summit held in Okinawa was "*Bankoku Shinryo*" or "Bridge to the World." This theme refers to Okinawa's golden age in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as an important trading center in East Asia.

Okinawa's newfound importance in Japan's internationalism, however, conceals its historical role as a buffer between Japan and rest of the world. As George H. Kerr wrote, "From the Japanese point of view the Ryukyu kingdom formed an outer barrier, a line of first defense before [its] 'closed doors' " (Kerr 1958: 239). Nearly a century prior to the Battle of Okinawa, Commodore Perry and a flotilla of armed ships that was on its way to Japan on its fateful voyage in 1853 landed in Okinawa, where the Americans forced their way into Shuri Castle in an attempt to negotiate a treaty with the king between the United States and the Ryukyus (ibid.: 313–318).

The most tragic outcome of Okinawa's role as a buffer happened during the Battle of Okinawa in 1945 when over 150,000 Okinawan lives were lost and all important Okinawan cultural treasures, including Shuri Castle, were destroyed. The battle was waged in an effort to buy time for "Japan proper." On the battlefields, Japanese soldiers killed many Okinawans under the suspicion that the Okinawans were spying for the Americans. On April 9, 1945, the Japanese military gave the following order in Okinawa: "From now on soldiers and civilians as well are all required to use nothing but standard Japanese. Those who speak Okinawan will be regarded as spies and receive appropriate punishment" (Ota 1999: 30).

The Japanese military simply did not trust Okinawans even though it expected them to fight to defend the Emperor and the Imperial homeland. Master Sergeant

Tadashi Kayama who carried out executions of civilians on the outer island of Kume explained his acts saying:

> My troops consisted of a mere thirty or so soldiers while there were ten thousand residents. So if the residents had turned on us and sided with the Americans, we would have been finished right away. So . . . we needed to take firm measures. So I conducted executions in order to keep the civilian residents under our control.
>
> (Ibid.)

Serving to remind Okinawans of their status as a buffer is the continued presence of US military bases that have been in Okinawa since the Battle of Okinawa. Some of the US military bases replaced Japanese military facilities while others were built on land that was procured by forcibly evicting Okinawans who had lived there. According to Kozy Amemiya, the US military's program to encourage Okinawan emigration to Bolivia in the early 1950s functioned as a "safety valve" to reduce a large segment of the Okinawan population that could potentially harbor Communist sentiments—young, restless, and landless Okinawans (Amemiya 1999: 60).

Although it was ostensibly "returned" to Japan in 1972, Okinawa still carries the bulk of the American military umbrella that has served to protect Japan's post-war economy: 75 percent of the US military bases in Japan are located in Okinawa, which comprises only 0.6 percent of the total land mass of Japan. The bases cover about one-fifth of the main island of Okinawa and control both the surrounding air space and sea-lanes. While the bases occupy some of the best real estate in Okinawa, their presence is magnified by screeching jet fighters, live ammunition firings and training exercises all within crashing or striking distance of residential areas. Perhaps the most threatening of all, however, is the violence directed at women and children by US soldiers. One infamous incident was the rape of a 12-year-old girl by three American servicemen in 1995 that sparked mass protests by Okinawans against the US bases. While the rape and the protest that followed became well-known in the United States, this was only one in an unbroken string of violent incidents stretching from the early days of the Battle of Okinawa to the present which displayed Okinawa and Okinawans as a buffer between Japan and the outside world.

The Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival: top-down diaspora?

The estimated 300,000 Okinawans living overseas—mainly in South America, Hawai'i, and North America—have, on the other hand, become an integral part in Okinawa's role as a strongpoint in Japan's strategy of "internationalism" as a bridge rather than as a buffer. The Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, or in Japanese *Sekai Uchinaanchu Taikai* and in Spanish and Portuguese *Festival Mundial Uchinanchu*, is organized and financed mainly by the Okinawan prefectural government. The Festival has been held three times: 1990, 1995, and 2001.

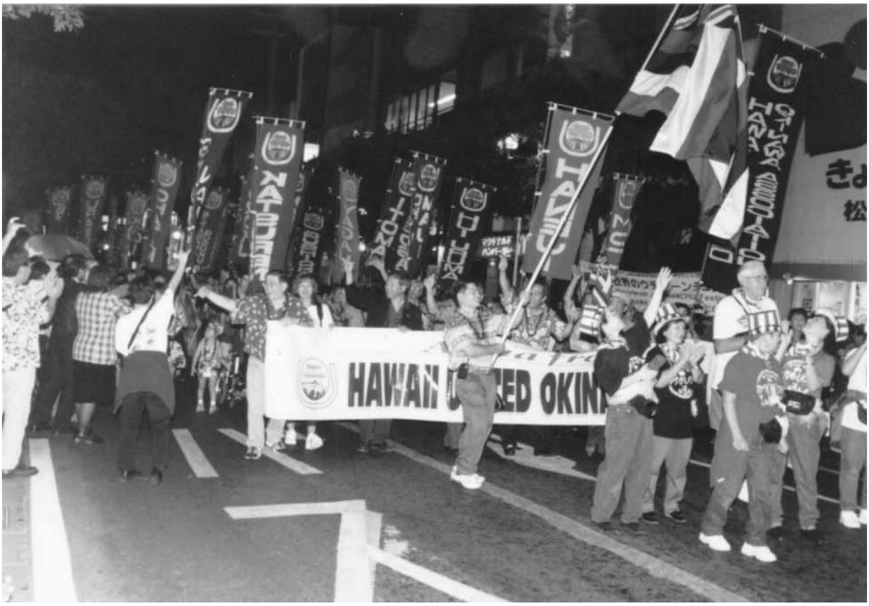

Figure 7.1 Hawaiian contingent to the Uchinanchu World Festival Parade, Okinawa, 2001. The festival draws thousands of participants from other countries, including many overseas Okinawans. (Photo: Wesley Ueunten)

According to the 2001 Festival booklet, the intent of the Festival was to create an "organically functioning worldwide network" that links overseas Okinawans and Okinawa. The Festival has drawn thousands of overseas Okinawans and non-Okinawans to Okinawa to participate in various events including music and dance concerts, karate exhibitions, symposia, product fairs, and banquets over four days. Including myself, over 4,000 overseas participants braved international travel in the post-9/11 period to participate in the 2001 Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival. It was an exhilarating experience to share feelings of pride in being Okinawan.

At the same time, however, I would like to focus on how Okinawan diasporic identity is related to political and economic developments in larger regional, national, and international arenas. I believe that these developments both shape, and are in turn shaped by, Okinawan diasporic identity. I am also concerned over the speed with which images of Okinawa have changed—from "barbaric" and "backwards" to "international." This rapid transformation seems to indicate the lack of control that Okinawans have over our own identity, and that the image of the Okinawan diaspora is not of our making and not always for our benefit.

The World Uchinanchu Festival is a top-down approach to creating the Okinawan diaspora since the main sponsor and organizer of the World Uchinanchu Festival is the Okinawan prefectural government, which is subordinate to the central government of Japan. The World Uchinanchu Festival seems uncomfortably similar to the “revolution from above” approach to building the Japanese nation during the Meiji Period.

I propose that our construction of Okinawan identity take a different view of the Okinawan diaspora. It is a view that includes portraits of Okinawan experience that are left out of the current discourse, based on the metaphors of Okinawa being a “bridge to the world” or of Okinawans as “worldwide Okinawans.”

The view of Okinawan experience that I offer in the following sections is of South American Okinawan migrant laborers in Japan. I make no attempt to hide the fact that I am writing about a group of people that I am connected to only through shared origins in Okinawa and not through shared historical or contemporary material conditions. I am a *Sansei* Okinawan—born, raised, and educated in Hawaiʻi and the continental US. My observations of South American Okinawans occurred mainly through the contacts I had with Peruvians, Brazilians, Argentineans, and Bolivians, while living in Okinawa and in the Tokyo area.

The people who appear in this paper are South American Okinawans who lived near me and with whom I interacted through personal contacts during my stay in Japan from 1989 to 1995. The majority of them came to Okinawa and Japan during the late 1980s and early 1990s to earn money in Japan’s then booming economy. My first contacts with most of them were through the English classroom that I started in 1990. A few Peruvians approached me to teach them Japanese and, despite my own lack of proficiency, I taught them Japanese for a brief period (until they became too busy to attend class, moved away, or realized that they did not need me to teach them Japanese).

The languages we used to communicate included Japanese, English, Spanish, and Okinawan. Japanese was the means of communication with some of the *Nisei* South Americans who had spoken Japanese at home while growing up. A few of the South Americans had studied English and were quite proficient in speaking it, so we communicated in that language. A few others spoke little Japanese or English and so we had to communicate in Spanish, of which I have only rudimentary knowledge. The Okinawan language was seldom used except for a few words that described certain foods, customs, or emotions.

Finally, a few words about the approach of my research may be needed. My study misses, of course, the width and breadth that a statistical study of a large population might provide. For example, it would be helpful to know the general attitudes of South American Okinawans as reflected in a survey questionnaire. Such a study could provide important insights into cross-nationality, cross-generation, cross-gender, and other types of variables. However, I believe that my humble efforts have importance because they provide information that questionnaires and formal interviews do not. For example, some Okinawans who have experienced repressive efforts against Okinawan culture may not be willing to reveal their Okinawan-ness in an interview or survey.

When I first arrived in Japan to do research on Okinawans living in mainland Japan, I was flatly told by a Japanese researcher that I would be better off studying Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern, South Asian, or Korean immigrants in Japan because of their visibility. He had previously done a questionnaire survey of Okinawans in Yokohama and concluded that the Okinawans there were assimilating into the mainstream culture. I appreciated the intent of his advice, but also wondered what many Okinawans in the Yokohama area who have had negative experiences for being Okinawan would be willing to share with a *Yamatunchu* (Japanese) researcher. The point here is that identity is not always visible and that it more often reveals itself through contacts that are less intimidating than those through a questionnaire or microphone.

The Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival: themes

It is fitting here to outline some of what I think are the implicit themes of the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, which include "overseas emigration," "internationalism," and "immigrant upward mobility."

The theme of "overseas emigration" is reflected in the term *sekai Uchinaanchu* or "worldwide Uchinanchu," which implies that emigration is a movement outward away from both Okinawa and Japan. In other words, the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival is a gathering of Okinawans who have migrated to lands that are distant geographically and culturally from both Japan and Okinawa. The "world" is not here, but "out there." Consequently, Okinawans who have migrated within Japan have an ambiguous role in the Festival, reflected by, for example, the Okinawan prefectural government's webpage, which states that "the 2001 festival saw more than 4000 participants come to Okinawa from 30 countries and regions." Whether Okinawans within Japan are included among the participants from 30 countries and regions is unclear. Although there were representatives from Okinawan *kenjinkai* of areas with large Okinawan populations, such as Tokyo, Osaka, and Hyogo, instead of the red badges that "overseas participants" wore, the Okinawans from Japan were given green "domestic participant" badges.

There is also an assumption that "worldwide Uchinanchu" naturally represent the theme of "internationalism" as promoters of international exchange between Okinawa, Japan, and the rest of the world. That is, there is an attempt to somehow connect the cultural heterogeneity of Okinawans worldwide to Okinawa's role as a bridge between Japan and the rest of the world. The Okinawa prefectural government agency that oversees the Festival, the *Kōkusai Kōryū Ka* or the International Exchange Division, created a poster that advertised the event in reference to the G-8 summit that was held in Okinawa the year before:

> It's been six years in the making. Uchinanchu from around the world are heading back to their furusato [hometown]. The third Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival will celebrate friendship and exchange. The G-8 Summit revealed the charm of Okinawa, and Okinawa will again captivate the world in 2001.
>
> (Okinawa-ken Bunka Kankyō Bu Kōkusai Kōryū Ka 2001)

World Uchinanchu Festival discourse also assumes “immigrant upward mobility” that is reflected in the imagery evoked by the Festival theme song, *Con el Sanshin en la mano*, which exhorts youth to go out into the world:

Nisēta yo sanshin muchitati	Young men! Pick up your sanshin
Hichinarashi	And play it
Sike ni nkati tumu ni	Together let’s face the world
Kariyushi nu funadi sana	On this auspicious voyage

The theme of the song harkens to Fukuzawa Yukichi, the famous advocate of Western learning in Meiji Japan. In books such as *Seiyo Jijo* (*Western Conditions* 1866) and *Seiyo Tabi Annai* (*A Travel Guide to the West* 1867), and in *Jiji Shimpo*, a newspaper he established in 1882, Fukuzawa encouraged the youth of Japan to go overseas to take what the West offered and to make contacts that would lead to the selling of Japanese goods overseas (Ichioka 1988: 10–11).

Toyama Kyuzo, the Okinawan People’s Rights Movement activist who pioneered Okinawan immigration in 1899, is an embodiment of Fukuzawa’s sentiments. In his hometown of Kin is a life-size statue of Toyama pointing across the horizon. The direction of Toyama’s finger is not only toward distant lands, but also toward success in the future. That is, movement outward over the horizon to foreign lands also means upward mobility for immigrants. There is, of course, nothing intrinsically extraordinary in this view of overseas immigration. Aside from instances of forced emigration due to such factors as war, famine, and colonization, a main driving force of emigration has been the perceived possibility of upward mobility.

What I want to direct attention to is not the theme of “immigrant upward mobility” itself, though. Rather, I believe that there are two unvoiced aspects behind this theme that deserve a closer look. The first is a discourse in which one chapter of the immigrant story already has been completed and we are about to embark on another chapter. The first chapter is about material conditions, while the second chapter is about cultural conditions. In the first chapter, challenges against adverse material conditions have been met and overcome by *Issei* and *Nisei*: it is a success story that is complete. In the second chapter, which is still incomplete, the story concerns how the *Sansei*, *Yonsei*, and later future generations will preserve Okinawan identity and culture. A “Third Worldwide Uchinaanchu Festival Special” published by the *Ryūkyū Shimpō* on October 25, 2001, begins with the following:

> Never forgetting to smile and hope even while facing hardships: the *Issei*. Helping their parents and continuing the challenge in foreign countries without giving up: the *Nisei*. Not knowing *hōgen* (the Okinawan dialect) but holding the homeland of their grandfathers in their hearts: the *Sansei*, *Yonsei* and . . .

In other words, the fight to survive poverty, war, and exclusion is over, while the struggle to preserve culture and identity happens in the future. The danger in this lies in the neglect of present realities as culture and identity issues are pushed into the future and struggles against material conditions are pushed into the past.

The second is a discourse that emphasizes male overseas immigration. It is notable that *Con el Sanshin en la mano* encourages "*Nisēta*" or young men to go out into the world. Further, the catch phrase "pick up your *sanshin*" is directed more at males than at females since the *sanshin* has traditionally been played mainly by men.[4] Further, the selection of recipients of Special Commemorative Awards at the Third Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival (35 men, 5 women) does seem to suggest a greater importance placed on the overseas immigrant experiences of males compared to females.

Con el sanshin en la mano and gambateado

Con el Sanshin en la mano also talks about a voyage full of hope to a faraway land:

Tōku kikoeru shiokaze wa	The sea breeze heard in the distance
Umi no kanata e yume hakobu	Carries a dream over the ocean
Kono furusato kara tabidatte yuku	I will journey from this, my home
Mitasenu kokoro tsusunde kita	Bringing my unfulfilled heart

Alberto Shiroma, the performer of *Con el sanshin en la mano* is an Okinawan Peruvian *Sansei* who worked at manual labor jobs when he first arrived in Okinawa. In fact, one of his earlier songs, *Gambateando*, sung in the third-person, is of the experience of a Peruvian *Nikkei* worker in Japan. Ramon, the protagonist of the song, takes a lonely journey away from Peru to Japan:

Era una noche oscura	On a desolate night
Ya nadie va caminando	When no one is around
Esta con sus dos maletas	He waits for the departure of the DC-10
El DC-10 esperando	With his two bags

Gambateando follows a direction that is opposite of that represented in *Con el sanshin*. Instead of going forth with high hopes and a *sanshin*, the protagonist carries two bags to a bad dream back in the "homeland":

Aqui lo que mas le cuesta	The worst thing here
Es poder comunicarse	Is not being able to communicate
Entre tanta indiferencia	Surrounded by indifference
Dificil es aguantarse	It's difficult to bear

Aparte de la rutina	The days pass by
Interminable y pesada	Long and heavy
Hay gente que discrimina	Some people discriminate
Y lo provoca por nada	For no reason

"Ichariba Chōdē" (Our meeting makes us brethren)

Patricia and Yuki

From my notes, I have the following recollections of one *Sansei* Okinawan from Peru that fit the gloomier mood of *Gambateando* rather than the optimism of *Con el sanshin*:

> I met Patricia[5] in 1991 when she came to my English classroom and asked me to teach her and her two sons (aged 6 and 4) Japanese since they had just arrived from Peru to join her husband. Patricia was in her early 30s and said that she and her husband were *Sansei*... At our first meeting, we confirmed that we were both "Uchinanchu" and told each other which part of Okinawa our grandparents had come from. Her husband had come two years earlier to work in a factory nearby. In a combination of Japanese, which she could speak very little, and Spanish, which I could speak very little, we somehow communicated. What stood out in my mind about our first "conversations" was her wish not to go back to Peru. The reasons she gave me included not only the bad economy, but also the *terroristas* and the general anti-Asian sentiment that she said was worse after Alberto Fujimori had become president.

An acquaintance of Patricia, Yuki, came to my classroom to practice her English, which was quite fluent since she had studied it in Peru. From my notes, I recall that:

> Unlike the other Peruvians, she did not see herself as wanting to stay in Japan. Instead, she and her husband were exploring ways in which they could immigrate to the U.S. Because they knew it was next to impossible for Peruvians to enter the U.S. to work, they were seriously considering entering illegally as her relatives had done years earlier. Her husband was a race car mechanic in Peru and her relatives said that he would be able to get a good salary in the U.S. if he could only get there.

The center of many South American Okinawan social, cultural, and economic activities in the Tokyo area coincided, not surprisingly, with the center of Okinawan social, cultural, and economic activities. The working-class areas of Kawasaki and Tsurumi on the outskirts of Tokyo have drawn laborers from Okinawa since before the war, and from the 1980s many South American Okinawans found work and living quarters through Okinawan relatives or acquaintances there.

The movement of the South American Okinawans, therefore, has coincided largely with that of their working class predecessors from Okinawa. This movement is not outward as the movement talked about in *Con el sanshin*. Rather it is toward the industrial areas of Japan and to life in such blue-collar regions as Kawasaki and Tsurumi.

The movement of South American Okinawans is not upward. Although they earned more money than they could in South America, each person I knew actually experienced downward mobility. Yuki's English-speaking ability revealed her high level of education, reflective of her upper-middle-class status in Peru. Her husband was a highly skilled racecar mechanic. They both worked in occupations, however, that were popularly known in Japan as the "Three K" jobs: *kiken* (dangerous), *kitsui* (difficult), and *kitanai* (dirty).[6] Although her husband worked overtime and on weekends to earn as much cash as possible, his work schedule was gradually reduced due to Japan's economic recession. Yuki also worked to supplement his income. She first worked for a small company run by Peruvian Okinawans that handled remittances sent back to Peru. She quit her job after one year since it took over two hours to get to her office. Her next job was at a small electronic appliance factory nearby. The job was easy, but low-paying. Eventually, she and her husband found new jobs in another factory that made bathtubs.

Antonio and Amelia

Antonio and his wife Amelia walked into my English classroom and asked me to teach them Japanese. Antonio was about 30 at the time while Amelia was in her late 1920s. Antonio's initial stiffness was dispelled when I asked him if he was Uchinanchu, to which he answered in the affirmative. Amelia was a non-Japanese Peruvian but seemed to know the difference between Okinawans and Japanese.

After that first meeting, my wife, my daughter, and I often had them over or went to their apartment to have dinner. Their apartment was in the same building as the apartment that Patricia and her family lived in before they moved. Both Antonio and Amelia worked in the same factory with Patricia's husband. They said that the work was hard since they were schoolteachers, and not laborers, in Peru. Their dream was to earn enough money in Japan to open a liquor store in Peru.

Antonio and Amelia had been to Okinawa to visit his relatives. Further, as with all the other South American Okinawans I met, they needed to keep in contact with their Okinawan relatives in order to obtain copies of their family register (*koseki*) to prove that they were Japanese descendants. Antonio and Amelia moved away suddenly when they heard of a job opening in Nagoya.

Yuki's mother

Because they were entrusted with "domestic" work, the Okinawan women from South America often took on the responsibility of dealing with the outside world for their families by communicating with schools, doctors, city offices, stores, post offices, and banks. In fact, it was usually the women in the family who took the initiative to approach me for Japanese lessons.

Yuki's mother, a *Nisei* who had gone to Japanese school as a child in Peru, assumed an invaluable role for her family in Japan because she spoke Japanese. Aside from childcare, cooking, and cleaning for her daughter and son-in-law, she secured necessary social services such as medical treatment for her invalid husband and a low-rent municipal apartment for the whole family.

I can still picture Yuki's mother, already in her late 60s, walking down the street with her young grandson in tow on their way to take care of the family's errands. Since she could not read Japanese, she often came to ask my wife or my wife's sister (who are from Okinawa) to read certain documents in Japanese. In gratitude, she would bring a store-bought gift or home-cooked meal (which was a combination of Okinawan, Japanese, Chinese, and Peruvian food) a few days later.

Different types of internationalism

It would seem that South American Okinawan migrant workers in Japan are poised to make important contributions to Japan's "internationalism." Having a population of people with cultural and linguistic ties to both Japan and their home countries in South America brings to Japan a golden opportunity for international exchange on the level of everyday experience. In fact, there were Japanese who made special efforts to get to know the South American Okinawans. Workplace friendships with Japanese were common among the South American Okinawans that I knew. South American Okinawan adults got to know the parents of their children's friends, too.

However, for the most part, the South American Okinawans and Japanese I encountered in my research seemed to be miles apart. *Nikkei* speaking Spanish or Portuguese in public were usually given sidelong stares. South American Okinawan young people who came to Japan past early elementary school age often had a hard time adjusting and being accepted in school.

A layer of complexity is added to the cultural differences between Japanese and South American Okinawans by their Okinawan surnames. Many Okinawan surnames are seen as "unusual" to Japanese mainlanders. Okinawan names such as Nakandakari, Gusukuma, Gushiken, Isa, Kudeken, Ginoza, Ueunten, Chinen, and Tengan, are "foreign-sounding" to many Japanese. Okinawan surnames, therefore, can be seen as part of the cultural borderland between Japanese and "Others."

In the past, Japan's labor needs were largely supplied by displaced farmers from rural areas and by colonized subjects from places like Korea and Taiwan. Okinawa has never been officially categorized as a colony of Japan, but rather as a marginal territory. It has long supplied cheap labor to industrial centers such as Tokyo, Yokohama, Kawasaki, Osaka, and Hyogo. Since the 1980s, Japan has been compelled to accept foreign workers from a host of other countries including Iran, Pakistan, the Philippines, China, Taiwan, and Korea.

This influx of foreigners, especially those with recognizable racial differences, has elicited discomfort among Japanese. The situation echoes that of the American West Coast in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries when the need for cheap labor was met by the importation of thousands of workers from China, Japan, Korea, India, and the Philippines. Immigration laws in both contexts represent attempts to balance the need for labor with the desire to preserve "racial purity."

The revised Immigration Control Law of June 1990 introduced penal regulations for employers employing illegal foreign workers, but it allowed anyone of Japanese descent down to the third generation to work legally even without specialist skills or know how (Kajita 1995: 11; Shimada 1993: 21). Dismal economic situations, along with the threats of terrorism and crime in South American countries, were "push" factors for *Nikkei* workers to come to Japan. However, the effect of the revised Immigration Control Law as a "pull" factor can be seen in the dramatic rise in the number of South American *Nikkei* immigrants from 8400 in 1988 to 148,000 in 1991 (Shimada 1993: 21). The presence of *Nikkei* workers in Japan therefore reflects an internationalism driven by economic necessity rather than any real concern for intercultural exchange. Takamichi Kajita writes that:

> For the Japanese management system, internationalization means upgrading into a universal system which can be introduced into foreign countries rather than the promotion of multi-nationality within companies through the introduction of foreign workers.
>
> (Kajita 1995: 26)

The inclusion of *Nikkei* into the category of "Japanese" has, of course, benefited them by giving a relatively easier access to the Japanese labor market, something often translated into higher wages when compared to illegal workers. However, the Japanese-ness of *Nikkei* workers has also been tainted by the stain of their South American ethnicity. For South American Okinawans, this stain is superimposed on the stain of Okinawan ethnicity.

Buffers and bridges

In 1925, Nakamura Gongoro, an Okinawan graduate of the University of Southern California, expressed his shame for his fellow overseas Okinawans in an essay written for a colleague in Okinawa. He lamented that it was "regrettable that Okinawan emigrants in the past were less cultured than other Japanese," that because of "their improper attire and strange behavior," (they) gave a queer impression to foreigners and were even rejected and scorned by their own countrymen (Nakamura 1981: 77).

Nakamura proposed the setting-up of a training school in Okinawa to eliminate the "old evil customs" and correct the "bad habits" of Okinawan emigrants before they embarked for their destinations. Ironically, the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival celebrates the very cultural traits that Okinawan intellectuals such as Nakamura and Okinawan government officials felt were the source of shame. Cultural activities that might have made Nakamura cringe such as Okinawan music and dance and the use of the Okinawan language are now important markers of Okinawan identity throughout the Okinawan diaspora.

On the other hand, the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival shares a commonality with Nakamura's project: it is a top-down approach to deciding how Okinawans in the diaspora should be represented. Nakamura proposed that the Okinawan prefectural government take the lead in the education of Okinawan emigrants "to raise their reputation, trust and respect as immigrants." The Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival is organized and financed by the Okinawan prefectural government. While Nakamura advocated the selective screening of emigrants to be representatives in overseas countries, the Okinawan prefectural government is now selective in the themes used in the representation of Okinawan identity.

As mentioned earlier, the dominant themes at the Festival have to do with "overseas emigration," "internationalism," and "immigrant upward mobility." Confined to these themes, "worldwide Okinawans" are represented as being far away geographically and culturally, making them important in the "internationalism" of Okinawa and Japan. They have taken a masculine journey abroad, where they have achieved upward mobility.

The lives of the South American Okinawans I knew in Japan provide an alternative vision to the dominant themes of the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival. They are in Japan, rather than far away. Thus, they represent an unpopular internationalization within Japan, rather than an abstract internationalism that happens at a safe distance in foreign countries. Although they usually earn more money than they would at home, they experience downward mobility in occupational status. Gender roles among South American Okinawans are also altered, as women take on more important roles in family survival.

Moreover, for South American Okinawans in Japan, present-day material conditions cannot be separated from culture and identity. For the South American Okinawans in Japan, economic, political, and cultural struggles are inseparable since their legal and economic status in Japan is tied to their ambiguous inclusion into the Japanese "race" as *Nikkei*. However, the discourse of the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival tends to see economic and political struggles as belonging to the past while treating the struggle to preserve culture and identity as the more important struggle for the future.

The *Nikkei* status of South American Okinawans makes them a buffer against the influx of other non-Japanese into Japan. The World Uchinanchu Festival discourse, on the other hand, portrays overseas Okinawans as Okinawa's connection to the rest of the world. The Third Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival booklet emphasizes the building of a "world bridge (*sekai no kakehashi*)" through overseas Okinawans and is an extension of the "Bankoku Shinryo" theme used at the 2000 G-8 Summit in Okinawa.

Similar metaphors have been used to describe Okinawa's importance in international exchange. According to the International Exchange Division's *Kokusai Kōryū Kanren Gyōmu Gaiyō* (Operations Outline for International Exchange), the Japanese government decided in 1992 that its development policy was to make Okinawa a "southern international base of exchange (*minami no kokusai kōryū kyoten*)." This theme was reiterated in 1998 when the Japanese cabinet decided that the basic direction for Okinawa was to make use of its regional characteristics in creating a "Pacific Crossroads (*Pashifiku kurosurōdo*)" that can contribute to economic, social, and cultural development in the Asia-Pacific region (Okinawa-ken Bunka Kankyō Bu Kokusai Kōryū Ka 2001: 1).

The difference between "buffer" and "bridge" should, however, be noted. The metaphors of "bridge," "base of exchange," and "crossroads" refer to Okinawa's role as a place where internationalism begins, yet Okinawa has also had an important role as a place where Japan has held off the effects of internationalism. From the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Okinawa has been more of a buffer than a bridge between Japan and the rest of the world, especially with the West. Western ships, strictly prohibited from entering Japan under the Tokugawa government, were sometimes allowed to enter Okinawa. Commodore Matthew Perry's opening up of the doors of Japan had to be done via Okinawa. Okinawa provided breathing space for Japan to shape its response to the West.

However, what is a metaphor for one group of people can become a real tragedy for another group. We must not forget that the most disastrous example of Okinawa's buffer role was the Battle of Okinawa, during which the Japanese military sought desperately to hold off the American forces in Okinawa to buy time for the rest of Japan. Caught in the crossfire of the battle between American and Japanese militaries, which has been metaphorically described as a "typhoon of steel," Okinawa suffered the loss of over 150,000 lives and most of its material culture.

After World War II, the line between the "free world" and "Communism" was drawn over Okinawa as well. While Communism is no longer the perceived threat it was, the declaration by President Bush of an "axis of evil" has effectively re-solidified the lines of defense that had been drawn over Okinawa. American-centric metaphors such as "Keystone of the Pacific" result in real consequences that affect the everyday lives of Okinawans in the homeland: chain link fences that surround about one-fifth of the main island of Okinawa; the deafening sounds of fighter jets flying over residential areas, schools, and hospitals; live ammunition firing drills; and the constant fear that men trained and sanctioned to violently fight "evil" may turn their violence toward the residents of Okinawa, especially toward women and children.

The experiences of the South American Okinawans in Japan demonstrate the limits of the dominant metaphors placed on Okinawa and Okinawans. They also point to the limits of the dominant images of "worldwide Uchinanchu" identity. Unlike the image of masculine, upwardly mobile immigrants who have succeeded in overcoming discrimination and economic hardships in faraway lands, the South American Okinawans in Japan are both men and women, usually downwardly mobile who are experiencing discrimination and economic hardships in the here and now.

I would like to briefly return my discussion to Hawai'i to give an illustration of the ironies behind our present-day Uchinanchu identity. I mentioned earlier the statue in Kin of Toyama pointing toward distant lands and upward mobility. In 2000, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of Okinawan immigration to Hawai'i, an 18-ton boulder was transported from Kin to Hawai'i. Inscribed on the boulder are the words Toyama is said to have written in 1903: "*Iza ikan warera no ie wa godaishū* (Let us set out and let the five continents be our home)" (Kreifels 2000).

It is important to remember that Toyama was a member of the earlier People's Rights Movement that struggled against injustices in Okinawa. After Governor

Narahara, who had been appointed to rule over Okinawa by the Japanese government, crushed the People's Rights Movement, Toyama regrouped his efforts and fought to have Okinawans allowed to emigrate overseas. After much struggle, Toyama was successful in getting the governor to allow the first group of 27 immigrants to leave Okinawa in 1899. They arrived in Hawaiʻi in January 1900. It is fitting, therefore, for Toyama to be an icon of Okinawan immigration to Hawaiʻi.

Kin, however, the birthplace of Toyama and of Okinawan immigration, is also home to a large US Marine base. In fact, it was the US Marines who ironically brought an 18-ton boulder to Hawaiʻi from Kin (Kreifels 2000). The US Marines were generous and gracious in bringing such a "keystone" of Okinawan identity to Hawaiʻi, but that act cannot be separated from the 1995 brutal rape of a 12-year-old Okinawan girl by three American servicemen, which also happened in Kin.

I am not, of course, advocating the abandonment of a worldwide Uchinanchu identity. As a participant in the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival and in Okinawan cultural pursuits in the United States, I have long been invested and implicated in Okinawan identity and culture. The images of Okinawans as an "international" ethnic group venturing overseas are important for my own identity construction. They are also a far cry from the "barbaric" and "backwards" images that caused many Okinawans to hide their tattooed hands, to speak their language in hushed tones, to change their surnames, and to play their *sanshin* softly behind closed doors.

However, the drastic change of the images that represent Okinawans should remind us of the constructed nature of Okinawan identity and that it is a process rather than something written in stone. While we may sometimes confuse identity with inanimate objects such as heirlooms or monuments, viewing Okinawan identity as something changing in form and function over time and space is more instructive if we are to begin understanding the complexities of the Okinawan diaspora.

Moreover, such a view enables us to move away from wallowing in a type of fatalism or cynicism that views domination and exploitation as inescapable "iron cages" or as waves that push and pull us this way and that. This perspective serves to constantly prompt us to ask "Who are we?" at many points in our ongoing history and at many locations of the Okinawan diaspora. Without such constant questioning, we may grow content with top-down answers and notions from others of who we should be.

Realization that these metaphors and images are not necessarily "natural" can also lead to a new empowerment and new visions of who we are as Okinawans in the Uchinanchu Pacific. Taking control of our identity thus requires us to venture into the realm of *"What if*… *?,"* an undertaking of uncertainty over the outcome, much like the voyages of Okinawan immigrants who crossed and re-crossed the Pacific during the past century.

Notes

1 I was to learn later that there was an anti-Japanese riot in Lima in 1940 during which Japanese businesses were specifically targeted and destroyed.

2 For example, Okinawans were 212 out of the 245 members in the Japanese Merchants Association, 100 out of 121 in the Japanese Barbers Association, 150 out of 173 in the Japanese Cafe Owners Association, and 20 out of 30 in the Japanese Restaurant Owners Association (Tigner 1954: 592).

3 *Asadoya Yunta* was originally a folk song from Taketomi in the southern part of the Ryukyuan Archipelago.

4 The *sanshin* is an Okinawan stringed instrument with a snake-skin cover that is deeply associated with Okinawan identity and the precursor of the Japanese *shamisen*.

5 I use pseudonyms here instead of real names.

6 My American status was a ticket to English teaching jobs in Japan. Although Yuki's English was excellent, the fact that she was Asian and Peruvian largely prevented her from seeking similar jobs.

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Part IV

Imagining oneself: visibility and invisibility

8 The marvelous in the real

Images of Burakumin in Nakagami Kenji's *Kumano* saga

Yoshiko Yokochi Samuel

The *Hisabetsu Burakumin*: Japan's invisible inner Other

Among the marginalized peoples of contemporary Japan, there is a group labeled *Hisabetsu Burakumin* (the people of the hamlet subject to discrimination; hereafter Burakumin). As the "invisible inner Other," in no way different from mainstream Japanese, Burakumin have historically been discriminated against for their occupations and bloodline. *Buraku*, or hamlets, are scattered throughout Japan, except for the islands of Hokkaido and Okinawa Prefecture, and are concentrated in the western half of the country (Amino 2000: 42–45). Since there are no physical characteristics or surnames that differentiate them from other Japanese, the Burakumin are identified by their permanent addresses, something which indicates that their ancestors likely belonged to discriminated hamlets.

It should be explained that the place of residence appears on one's family register in Japan, a document which must be shown in many situations in Japanese life. This, of course, makes for potential (and systematic) abuse and discrimination, especially at times of employment and marriage, when private investigators have often been hired by families or companies to determine a person's background. If the investigation turns up a place of residence in a *buraku* area, it is assumed that the person wanting to get married or employment is Burakumin. The prospects of a job or a marriage can then evaporate.

Scholars trace the origin of the Burakumin back to the Edo Period (1603–1868) during which time the entire Japanese population was placed in four rigidly defined classes. Headed by the warrior class, then followed by the farmer, artisan, and merchant classes, in that order, the system allowed little mobility across these lines. Outside the stratification was the outcaste class, which grouped together the "untouchables," that is, the *Eta* ("the defiled") and the *Hinin* ("nonhumans"). The former included people who had traditionally held menial trades involving death, blood, animals, and soil. They were often undertakers, butchers, hide tanners, and leather-goods and footwear makers, people considered defiled because their occupations violated at once the Shinto notion of purity and the Buddhist perception of death and killing as the most serious sources of defilement. Less defiled than the *Eta*, the *Hinin* were criminals, street entertainers, prostitutes, beggars, and rebellious tenant farmers. Both the *Hinin* and the *Eta* were forced to

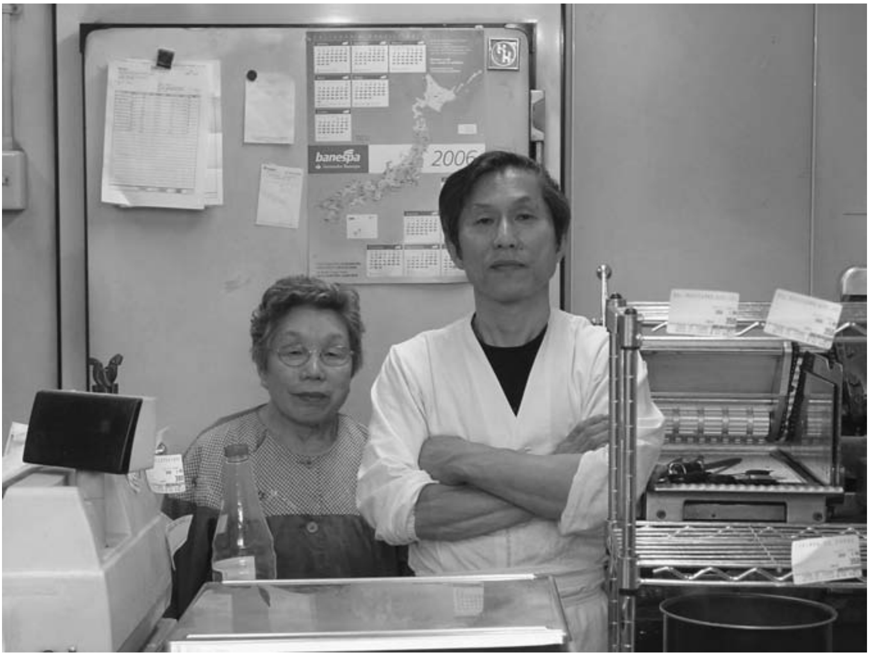

Figure 8.1 Owners, Casa De Rio, Osaka, 2006. Mr. Nakamura and his mother told the photographer bluntly, “We’re *Burakumin*, and all of our customers are *Nikkei* Brazilians.” Over half the market is dedicated to various meats, revealing a deep connection between one minority, the producers of meat cuts, and another, the consumers of prodigious quantities of meat. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

live in isolated hamlets under the leaderships of the Chief of the *Hinin* and the Head of the *Eta* appointed by the *Bakufu*. Scholars assert that the “untouchables” are the ancestors of the modern Burakumin (DeVos and Wagatsuma 1966: 3–10). Since the status of the “untouchables” is defined primarily by their occupations, the roots of which can be traced back beyond the Edo period, some scholars assert that the marginalization of the Burakumin began not with the establishment of the class system of the Edo period, but with the development of “defiling” occupations in the pre-Heian period.

The Edo class system was abolished at the beginning of the modern period (1868–present), and all citizens of Japan except the *kazoku* (members of the extended imperial family, other aristocrats, local political leaders, and industrialists, officially abolished in 1947) and *shizoku* (former warriors, also abolished in 1947) received the status of *heimin* (commoners) in 1870. The pariahs, however, were not officially recognized as commoners until one year later, when the government, under pressure, finally granted them the status. There were approximately 400,000 emancipated “outcastes” in 1872 (Takahashi 1992: 156–173).

Even after the emancipation, the old prejudices persisted, and the Burakumin were stigmatized as *shin-heimin* (the new commoners), deprived of freedom in marriage and choice of occupation. Since the government also then prohibited a monopoly of their traditional trade of shoe manufacturing, they suffered a serious economic setback as well. In addition, those who worked as tenant farmers were excluded from the benefit of a new tax law that greatly improved the economic conditions of non-Burakumin farmers (Inoue and Kitahara 1968: 70–71). No class distinction has existed in Japan since 1947 except for the *kazoku* (the extended imperial family), and the democratic Constitution of 1946 guarantees equality for all citizens of the country. Caste attitude and fear of contamination (DeVos and Wagatsuma 2000: xx–xxii), however, continue to persist, subjecting the estimated three million Burakumin living in 6,000 *buraku* in Japan to discrimination. Today, Burakumin are comprised of diverse people, including day laborers, survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, immigrant laborers and other equally marginalized people. With the diversity and the mobility of Burakumin it is difficult to estimate their current population. Generalizations about them can also be misleading.

Disagreement among scholars concerning the origin of *buraku* discrimination and changes in the composition of *buraku* residents, suggest that marginalization of the Burakumin has been a fluid phenomenon both historically and physically. The marginalization, however, has remained constant and it is those with the most power in Japanese society who have been most responsible. In the past, these included Heian aristocrats and the Edo *Bakufu*. Currently the Burakumin seem to hold the monarchy responsible for the injustices committed against them.

Recent statistics show that 81 percent of the hamlets are found in rural communities, and that the landholding of each Burakumin family is less than 63 percent of the national average. Of these families 83.7 percent consequently supplement their incomes with additional work such as construction work; logging and lumbering; animal butchering; and leather, bamboo, and straw crafts. Even with secondary occupations, their earnings amount to only 60 percent of the average income of the Japanese. Unemployment, health problems, and illiteracy are much more prevalent in the hamlets than in other communities. The average lifespan of the Burakumin, too, remains much shorter than that of mainstream Japanese. Living conditions reminiscent of a pre-industrialized time often force young men and women of the *buraku* to seek an alternative life elsewhere. They remain a subject of discrimination outside, however, since they are identifiable as Burakumin on the basis of their “places of origin” indicated in their family registries. There have consequently been a considerable number of *buraku* people who have drifted into ghettos in Japan, or emigrated abroad in order to escape this oppression at home (Kuwata 1990).

Human dignity, discrimination, and resistance

The Burakumin have persistently resisted the discrimination committed against them. Particularly effective were efforts made by several Marxist-inspired *buraku* intellectuals who sought assistance from socialist and communist leaders. They organized the National *Suihei-sha* (The Levelers' Society), celebrating its first convention in Kyoto in 1922. Over 2,000 *buraku* representatives attended the meeting to affirm their solidarity and to strive for "complete emancipation by our own" (DeVos and Wagatsuma 2000: 43) and "economic and occupational freedom from the majority society" (DeVos and Wagatsuma 2000: 43), and "human dignity and . . . the full realization of human values" (DeVos and Wagatsuma 2000: 43). The following declaration was read at the convention:

> *Tokushu* Burakumin (Members of Special Hamlets) through-out the country, unite! Long-suffering brothers: In the past half century, the undertakings on our behalf by so many people and in such varied ways have failed to yield any favorable results. This failure was a divine punishment we incurred for permitting others as well as ourselves to debase our own human dignity. Previous movements, though seemingly motivated by compassion, actually corrupted many of our brothers. In the light of this, it is necessary for us to organize a new group movement by which we shall emancipate ourselves through promoting respect for human dignity.
>
> Brothers! Our ancestors sought after and practiced liberty and equality. But they became the victims of a base, contemptible system developed by the ruling class. They became the manly martyrs of industry. As a reward for skinning animals, they were flayed alive. As a recompense for tearing out the hearts of animals, their own warm, human hearts were ripped out.They were spat upon with the spittle of ridicule. Yet all through these cursed nightmares, their blood, still proud to be human, did not dry up. Yes! Now we have come to the age when man, pulsing with this blood, is trying to become divine. The time has come for the victims of discrimination to hurl back labels of derision. The time has come when the martyrs' crown of thorns will be blessed. The time has come when we can be proud of being *Eta*.
>
> We must never again insult our ancestors and profane our humanity by slavish words and cowardly acts. Knowing well the coldness and contempt of ordinary human society, we seek and will be profoundly thankful for the warmth and light of true humanity.
>
> From this the Levelers' Society is born. Let there now be warmth and light among us!
>
> (DeVos and Wagatsuma 2000: 237–238)

The *Suihei-sha* movement spread rapidly throughout the country and, although the organization was forced to suspend its activities after its sixteenth national convention in 1941, its leaders began to tackle the task of reorganization as soon as World War II was over. They subsequently formed the *Buraku Kaiho Zenkoku Iinkai* (The National Committee for the Liberation of the Buraku) in January 1946. During the following year, Matsumoto Jiichiro, Chair of the Committee, was elected into the Upper House of the Parliament, along with eight other Burakumin who won seats in the Upper and the Lower Houses. The Committee came to be called the *Buraku Kaiho Domei* (Buraku Liberation League) in 1955 (Inoue and Kitahara 1968: 144–212). Joined by another liberation organization, the *Zenkoku Buraku Kaiho Undo Rengokai* (National Buraku Liberation Alliance), the League has continued to exert its effort for the elimination of all discrimination against the Burakumin.

Despite their hard work, and the Japanese government's efforts to assist them, prejudice against the Burakumin persists, due, it seems to unfounded fears of them as violent, crime-prone people. There is even a widespread belief that they are gangsters and that the origins of the *yakuza* can be traced to the Burakumin. It was revealed in 1975, for instance, that lists of *buraku* addresses were circulated among 220 reputable companies in Japan for the purpose of discriminating against prospective employees who were from the areas (DeVos and Wagatsuma 1966: 159; *Far Eastern Economic Review* 1992: 29; Kono, Amatatsu, Tamura, and Aoki 1993: 36–37). As recently as 1985, 61.3 percent of *buraku* people above the age of fifteen reported that they were subjected to various forms of overt discriminatory treatment. Among them, 49.4 percent reported discrimination in marriage, 32.1 percent in encounters with outsiders in the *buraku* vicinities, 20.8 percent in schools, 18.2 percent at work and the rest in various social situations. It is perhaps due to the mistreatment that *buraku* children receive in schools that their levels of educational achievements remain lower than those of non-Burakumin pupils. Illiteracy, too, continues to be a problem among Burakumin in their thirties and above (Takagi 1990: 65).

Burakumin literature: combating prejudices

One of the ways in which both Burakumin and non-Burakumin have been combating these prejudices is through descriptions of *buraku* life in the form of fictional writing. There have been over 100 works since 1868 that portray the people of *buraku*. The earliest works, however, often misrepresented their situation, exacerbating the discrimination. Take, for instance, "Torioi Ōmatsu kaijō shinwa" (A New Story of the Street: Enter Ōmatsu and Her Adventure in the Sea) (Kubota 1976: 1–70) serialized in a newspaper from 1877 to 1878 (Kanagaki 1976: 1). Following the tradition of the Edo *gesaku* (playful work) with woodblock-prints illustrating the text, this didactic story tells of a *Hinin* Ōmatsu who is both a street entertainer and a prostitute (Kubota 1976: 2). She is a *dokufu* (a venomous woman) (Kubota 1976: 49) who capitalizes on her physical beauty to seduce men and extorts large sum of money from them. A habitual thief in cahoots with her mother and lover, Ōmatsu hides her outcaste identity and evades authorities by drifting from one part of the country to another, committing every conceivable crime on her way. She is eventually punished for her evil-doings and dies crazed, "like a mad dog" (Kubota 1976: 79). Throughout this story of extreme prejudice, the *Hinin* characters, regardless of their sex and gender differences, are depicted as degenerates. The nonoutcaste characters, on the other hand, are portrayed as good people victimized by the very lawless people to whom they have extended their compassion.

Many of the early Meiji (1868–1912) works portraying Burakumin share similar depictions, reinforcing the stereotyped images of the people as lawless, violent, and defiling. The protagonist, Torakichi, of "Gosunkugi mukashi-banashi" (A Memoir of the Five-Inch-Nail Man) (Ihara 1976: 167–232) for instance, is a male counterpart of Ōmatsu, who has spent his entire life as a lawless criminal. He has earned the nickname, Five-Inch-Nail Man, for his subhuman ability to endure the pain caused by a large nail that has penetrated into his foot while trying to escape from the scene of his own burglary. "Nokogiri-biki" (The Sawn-off Head) (Fujikage 1976: 106–122), on the other hand, depicts Kuruma Zenhichi and Danzaemon, two of the most powerful outcastes, who in real life were appointed by the Edo *Bakufu* to the positions of Chief of the *Hinin* and the Head of the *Eta*, respectively (Takahashi 1992: 118–123). Their men appear in this story as the executioners and undertakers of a woman who has murdered her husband. The narrative depicts in sadistic detail the role that they play in this most humiliating, cruel, and "defiling" execution.

In works more sympathetic to the plight of the Burakumin, identity and unrequited love are understandably the most common themes. In "Okoso zukin" (A Head-Cover) by Iroha-an (a pen-name believed to have been shared by the socialist Kotoku Shusui and Koizumi Sakutaro) (Kitagawa 1985: 49), for instance, the protagonist, about to marry, is told by his father to break the engagement. He reveals to his son that he and his elder brother, long missing from the family, are the children of a *shin-heimin* woman. The father is worried that this identity will stigmatize his new daughter-in-law. The son is stunned by this revelation but replies: "So I'm a *shin-heimin*. Well, that's fine with me. I'm no different from anyone else, for there's no difference between the Kazoku and the New Commoner now. From now on, I will let the world know that I'm a shin-heimin" (Iroha-san 1976: 144).

This self-assertion, as well as the liberal attitude of the protagonist's father and the fiancee's parents toward *shin-heimin*, appear in the literary works of this period, depicting the more common effort of self-deprecation by Burakumin to either conceal, or eradicate through marriage, their identities (Echi 1976: 81–105). Unusual, too, is the conclusion of this story, which celebrates the happy union of the young *shin-heimin* and his non-*shin-heimin* bride. Moreover, the twin themes of identity and equality among all people are further substantiated by insertion of a secondary story that concerns the protagonist's elder brother. Before the protagonist was born, the father, wishing to conceal his past sexual association with a *Hinin* woman, and thus to avoid a possible social ostracism, had given his elder son away to a *Hinin* family. The family had given his adopted son a good education that had launched him on a teaching career. Since the deaths of his adoptive parents, however, he has become a degenerate, murdered his wife, and disappeared without a trace. As the younger son is being married, the elder son lies dying in a lodging house. Seeing this, his lover commits suicide to follow him in death. With this tragic episode, the author voices his view that one's wrong doings have little to do with one's blood line or social status as Burakumin.

Another narrative that deals with the question of Burakumin identity is Shimazaki Toson's *Hakai* (Shimazaki 1964: 58–270) (*The Broken Commandment*) (Strong 1974). In this 1906 novel, the protagonist Ushimatsu, a teacher in a small rural community in Nagano Prefecture, struggles with his identity as Burakumin and his father's command not to reveal it to anyone. Witnessing at once an injustice done to his fellow Burakumin and the courage of a *buraku* liberation leader aspiring to become a politician, Ushimatsu professes to his students the origin of his birth, apologizes to them for withholding the information for so long, and resigns from teaching with the hope of starting his life anew in the United States. Although some critics have praised this narrative highly, others have criticized this work for its conclusion, which they claim is both unrealistic and counter-productive.

Among the works that deal with the theme of unrequited love between a Burakumin and non-Burakumin, Izumi Kyoka's "Yoken kibun" (The Story of a Strange Dagger) (Izumi 1976: 61–134) is perhaps of the most outstanding literary quality. Typical of Kyoka's writing, the narrative weaves together a rich tapestry of reality and illusion, love and spite, and ecstasy and despair. In the center of this beautiful realm is an *Eta* woman captured in the image of a purple iris blooming by a clear stream in the semi-darkness of a deep forest, and a young non-*Eta* man who dares to drink her blood as she lies dying of a self-inflicted stab wound. This work owes its success not only to the significance of its theme, but to its highly pleasing aesthetic quality and Kyoka's exceptional talent in storytelling.

Shimaki Ken'ichi's "Reimei" (The Dawn) (Shimaki 1977: 142–189) is yet another *buraku*-centered work. It is unique, however, in that it deals not with identity or unfulfilled love, but with the difficulty of organized resistance against prejudice and discrimination. The main character of this story is a leader in a local chapter of a labor union. He befriends a Burakumin, Kumakichi, in a nearby hamlet who is severely exploited by his landowner. As the hero learns more about the plights of tenant farmers in the *buraku*, he becomes indignant and tries to persuade *buraku* members to join the labor union to assert their basic human rights. Just as the farmers are ready to attend an organizational meeting to listen to their would-be leader, Kumakichi is arrested and thrown into prison by the authorities siding with the landowner. This work illuminates the poverty, injustices, and humiliation suffered daily by the people of *buraku*, as well as the problem of illiteracy among them.

Hashi no nai kawa (A River with No Bridge) (Sumii 1989), too, deserves a discussion. Having spent most of her life in her native prefecture of Nara, Sumii witnessed countless acts of injustice against Burakumin and became determined to expose them in her writing. In this seven-volume narrative, for which she spent over two decades to complete, she voices her strong conviction that the problems of prejudice and discrimination exist because of the hierarchy that continues to play a dominant role in human relations in Japan. At the top of the hierarchy, in her view, is the emperor, and he is, therefore, the symbolic cause of the plight of the Burakumin in her novel.

The writings of Nakagami Kenji

While the majority of the authors introduced above are non-Burakumin writers, Nakagami Kenji (1946–1992) is a writer who owes his literary imagination to his actual identity as a member of a hamlet. Born in a *buraku* (called *roji*, or alley, in his narratives) in the seaside town of Shingu in Wakayama Prefecture, he left his home for Tokyo in order to pursue higher education after graduating from a local high school. This move to a highly modernized metropolis was a difficult one; he became engrossed in jazz music and immersed himself in alcohol and drugs. It took little time for him to give up his dream of attending university.

He nonetheless managed to write fictional works depicting the self-destructive lives of alienated youth. These short stories were twice nominated for the prestigious Akutagawa Award for new writers. After a series of disappointments, including a broken marriage, Nakagami returned to his home in Shingu, located in the legend-rich Kumano region on the Kii Peninsula. There he wrote "Misaki" (The Cape, originally 1976) (Nakagami 1978b: 171–266), the setting of which, unlike those in his previous works, is the *buraku* of his hometown.

The *roji* in this story is located in a rural town isolated from modernized Japan by a river, the Pacific Ocean, and mountains. A hill that stretches "like a dragon" further separates the hamlet from the rest of the town. The *roji* is filled with tragedies and miseries. The twenty-four-year-old protagonist Akiyuki, Nakagami himself in this autobiographical fiction, is the illegitimate son of a woman who has struggled in acute poverty throughout her life. He works as a construction laborer in the nearby mountains. He is deeply disturbed by the searching eyes of his biological father, "the ugliest man…with a face full of evil, (Nakagami 1978b: 197) who would seduce any woman who comes his way" (Nakagami 1978b: 196). Akiyuki's half-brother, abandoned by his mother at the time of her second marriage, has committed suicide, and his half-sister becomes crazed upon hearing the news of her husband's stabbing death at the hand of her brother-in-law. Moreover, Akiyuki develops an incestuous relation with another of his half-sisters in his attempt to negate his blood relation to his father. As his extended family gathers for a religious observation, Akiyuki wonders about the meaning of "the blood" that has caused the profound miseries in each of its members.

Receiving the long-anticipated Akutagawa Award with "Misaki," Nakagami then wrote its sequels, *Karekinada* (A place name 1980, originally 1976); *Hōsenka* (Touch-Me-Nots 1982, originally 1979); *Sennen no yūraku* (The Pleasures of One-Thousand Years 1992, originally 1983); *Chi no hate, shijō no toki* (The End of the Earth, The Time of Ecstasy 1993c, originally 1983); and *Nichirin no tsubasa* (The Wings of the Sun 1993d, originally 1984) invariably set in the *roji* of Shingu. In this Kumano saga, he persistently pursues the theme of kinship developed within the economically oppressive reality of the *roji*. Nakagami also spent six months in 1977 visiting over twenty *buraku* scattered throughout the Kii Peninsula. Hoping to hear "what people would not openly talk about, the things that they would not dare to tell outsiders" (Nakagami 1993b: 12), he tirelessly made a pilgrimage through "the space of darkness in the brightness of the sun" (Nakagami 1993b: 319) where "the defeated from various internal wars and conflicts have settled" (Nakagami 1993b: 323). There he listened to personal narratives by elderly *buraku* women, conversed with workers in a slaughter house, tasted the salt in horses' hair preserved to be made into violin bows, and discussed the problems of discrimination with people working in the local offices of the Buraku Liberation League.

On his way, Nakagami stopped at the Ise Shrine, Japan's holiest religious site, which enshrines the "imperial ancestor of origin, the Sun Goddess" (Nakagami 1993a: 319). Finding an enormous volume of literature on past royal families in the shrine's library, he became convinced that the imperial authority had been built upon written words, words that were monopolized by the men of nobility in ancient Japan and that were still denied in large part to people of *buraku*. Contrasting this experience with that of listening to the story-telling of *buraku* women, Nakagami found "definite gaps between written words and the words spoken in [their] story-telling" (Nakagami 1978a). At the same time, he felt that "the words spoken by illiterate *buraku* women captured things more completely and perfectly [than did written words]" (Nakagami 1978a). He consequently concluded that, "These spoken words alone have the power to challenge both the written language that has come to serve only ornamental functions and the system that the emperors of the ancient time had established by compiling the [eighth-century] books of mythology" (Nakagami 1978a). Nakagami was also convinced that Japanese tales traditionally transmitted orally by women are invariably told from the viewpoint of "*yowai mono*" (Nakagami 1978a) (people placed in disadvantageous positions) for instance, children, women, and the socially oppressed. He asserted that he hoped to develop a new way of looking at the history of modern Japanese literature by capitalizing on this characteristic of oral literature (Nakagami 1978a). He subsequently tried to capture, in his writing, the power of spoken language by placing illiterate characters on the center stage of his fictional world.

"The marvelous in the real"

The impact of this trip on Nakagami was much like the effect of the 1943 journey to Haiti of the Latin American writer Alejo Carpentier. Surrounded by the natural environment of the island, he was awakened to "the marvelous in the real" (Williamson 1994: 107). What struck him as "marvelous" was the vitality of traditional folk culture shaped by the diverse peoples of Haiti. He consequently redefined his role as a writer as a chronicler of "a reality that was different from European reality" (Williamson 1994: 107). His aim was to contribute to the revitalization of a dominant European culture that, in his view, was in need of rejuvenation by the application to his writing of what has now come to be called magical realism (Williamson 1994: 107). Magical realism thus constitutes a component of challenge to postcolonialism, modernism, and postmodernism. It is characterized by the existence of two elements—one, folk culture (of story-telling and carnivalesque, for instance) and the other, contemporary reality. It therefore contains the metafictional, metaphorical, fantastic, child-like, or primitive, and repetitive elements of local lore and superstitions (Ferris 1995). Grotesque realism, the core aesthetic of the carnivalesque, is an important factor in magical realism as well. As Mikhail Bakhtin explains, the function of a carnival is to debase all that are high and lofty to the level of the masses, amid the eccentric laughter of a folk celebration, and to grant them new lives at that level. Grotesque realism is consequently characterized by themes of defiance, death, and rebirth, as well as by polyphony, exaggerations, bodily and material images, and black humor (Bakhtin 1973).

Nakagami's works written after his 1977 discoveries can also be analyzed on the basis of magical realism. In *Touch-Me-Nots*, which depicts the life of Akiyuki's illiterate mother Fusa, for instance, the town of Shingu represents the real world, while the *roji* signifies a magical world. An illegitimate child born in the *roji* of a nearby town of Koza, Fusa's birth is by no means illustrious. Yet, with her exceptional physical beauty and noble nature, she presents the image of a child-god or a life-giving enchantress, common in folklore. The opening paragraph of the story portrays her as follows:

> The sea around the Kii Peninsula glistened in the March sun as if it were covered with a light snow. Fusa liked the sea in March more than at any other time. March was a special month for her. After the plum blossoms bloomed at the temple near her home just a short distance away from the shore, the buds on the cherry trees grew larger, until they were ready to burst forth. Along the stone wall that always caught Fusa's eye as she hurried on errands bloomed the narcissus.
>
> They were there this year, too. Fusa stopped and stared at them, forgetting for a moment the urging voice of the women at the sake shop who had hired her for a quick errand. As she watched the white petals of the unpretentious flowers, her chest tightened and her eyes became filled with tears as she stood there.
>
> (Nakagami 1982: 5)

Metaphorized in the images of abundant water and the plants that never fail to return to full life every spring, Fusa, as a child, symbolizes the beginning of life in the agrarian cycle of death and rebirth. As a fully matured woman, she is later identified with her mother through the image, this time of the flaming red flowers of *Hōsenka*, or Touch-me-nots, with which her mother performed shamanistic rituals for her when she was a young girl.

In 1931, at the age of fifteen, Fusa leaves her mother's home in Koza and travels to Shingu to work as a live-in maid. She soon settles in the *roji* of the town. There she encounters a series of ordeals, from the deaths of her beloved brother, husband, and son, to extreme poverty through the chaotic years of the fifteen-year war (1931–1945). She also suffers betrayal by the man who fathered Akiyuki in the aftermath of World War II. Fusa eventually remarries, but just as she begins to enjoy her new life, she receives the news of her mother's death. Soon after the funeral, Fusa attempts a double suicide by submerging herself and Akiyuki in a nearby river. This act serves as an initiation rite, and Fusa at age thirty-five emerges as a full-fledged matriarch like her mother once was. In this work, Nakagami weaves together the harsh reality of Fusa's adult life with the magical reality of the *roji* that has nurtured her strength and vitality. Repetitions characterize Fusa's endless ordeals, giving a concrete voice of protest against social injustice. Fusa's mother as a shaman, and Fusa's metamorphosis, are reminiscent of common elements in ancient lore.

Concerning this story, Nakagami asserts that, while the preceding work, *Karekinada*, that depicts Akiyuki's relationship with his biological father, is "a myth of the iron-and-bronze culture" (Nakagami 1982: 5), *Hōsenka* represents a myth of "the agrarian, shamanistic, matriarchal culture of Southeast Asia" (Nakagami and Yun 1981: 111). Like Carpentier, who saw Europe as being in need of revitalization, Nakagami perceived highly modernized contemporary Japan as being in the state of "spiritual and intellectual bankruptcies" (Nakagami and Yun 1981: 111–115). His intention for *Touch-Me-Nots* is to place Japan in the cultural sphere still unspoiled by the malaise of modernity in order to emancipate the country from these "bankruptcies." Here it is apparent that Nakagami identifies the *roji* with pre-industrialized Southeast Asia.

Nakagami's statement regarding the "iron-and-bronze culture" and the "agrarian culture" also sheds light on an interesting approach that he takes to his writing. He alternates in this Kumano saga between a narrative that represents "iron-and-bronze culture" and another signifying "agrarian culture." Just as *Karekinada* is followed by *Touch-Me-Nots*, *The End of the Land, the Time of Ecstasy*, (which focuses on the men of the *roji*), precedes *The Wings of the Sun* (a story of the *roji*'s matriarchs). Moreover, while both *Karekinada* and *The End of the Earth, The Time of Ecstasy* end in destruction, the former in the suicide of Akiyuki's father, and the latter in the demolition of the *roji*, *Touch-Me-Nots* and *The Wings of the Sun* celebrate the rebirth of the *roji*. Nakagami, in other words, weaves the marvelous with the real not only in an individual narrative, but also between the pairs of works. It is also clear that he associates "iron-and-bronze culture" with male, modernity, and death, while linking "agrarian culture" with female, pre-modern life, and revitalization.

While the use of grotesque realism is minimal in *Touch-Me-Nots*, the carnivalesque plays a dominant role in the subsequent work. Nakagami further reinforces in this work the effect of grotesque realism with the long, windy style of Edo *gesaku*, the comic fiction of the Edo Period written and enjoyed not by elite aristocrats and warriors, but by commoners. The combination of the two techniques is superbly effective in creating the vibrant ambiance of a folk celebration.

Blood, body, and sexuality

A collection of six short stories, *A Pleasure of One Thousand Years* probes the meaning of "the blood" shared by six young men invariably related to one of the step-fathers of Akiyuki. Inhabitants, again, of the Shingu *roji*, they exhibit the common characteristics described as follows:

> Nobody knew why, whether or not it was because of someone perhaps seven generations ago who committed a deed deserving of the Buddha's wrath, men—and only men—of the Nakamoto family, with its many branches

> included, died young. They were all handsome lads. With their eyes and noses shaped differently, and with their bones being big or delicate, some looked truly manly, while others were female-like but, regardless, they had the faces that made women think they were no ordinary men, that they must have descended from men of nobility, barons or viscounts, perhaps. Besides, no one would rival them in love-making, women of the *roji* would tell you. And the young men all shared their love of music and dance, as well.
>
> (Nakagami 1992b: 187)

Here, the men's bodily images and sexuality are emphasized and exaggerated, and the "nobility" who were known for their preoccupation with "music and dance" are debased to the level of the masses. Linking the stories of the young men is Oryu no Oba, an archetypal shaman-like character modeled after one of the women whom Nakagami had met in his search for orally transmitted local lore. He appears to have incorporated many of her stories into this narrative. Like the story-telling woman, Oryu no Oba is the widow of a shoemaker who had become a lay Buddhist monk after the death of their infant son. Since the family tragedy, she has helped practically every mother in the alley bear her child as the only midwife in the *roji*. This illiterate enchantress is endowed with a remarkable ability for remembering the birth and death days of everyone in the *roji* and knows everything that takes place in the community. The *roji* where Oryu no Oba lives is again a magical space. Take, for instance, the following opening passages of the first story in this linked narrative:

> As the sweet fragrance of the rose mallow of summer suddenly came drifting into her house through the back door toward the dawn, Oryu no Oba woke, feeling as though she were choked by it. Seeing the framed photograph of her husband Reijo on a little platform by a Buddhist alter stands out white in the darkness, she thought that her marriage to him, who was like the benevolent Buddha himself, was all but an illusion.
>
> She folded her hands together in her bed and, still keeping her eyes on the picture, mumbled, "Thank you, I thank you very much." Then she breathed in the smell of the rose mallow of summer and smiled to herself, recalling the days when she was young and wore the white powder that made her smell like the flower.
>
> When dawn broke, birds in the woods behind the house began to sing in clear, emerald-like voices. Just who had told her Oryu no Oba could not remember, but she does remember hearing that the chirping belonged to the small golden birds that, since a long time ago, have been coming to the hill behind the *roji* to feed on the nectar of the rose mallow of summer. This knowledge made her think that she was the luckiest person on earth to be able to keep on living by the hill of the *roji* even to an old age.
>
> The rose mallow of summer bloomed at dusk and withered when the sun came out the next morning, ending its life of only one night, and so when-ever she heard the chirping of the birds that had come for the flower's

> nectar, Oryu no Oba wanted to ask them whether they had gathered to lament the night gone by or to enjoy the bright sunlight of the day.
>
> (Nakagami 1992: 9–10)

The *roji*, where night and day, and death and rebirth, merge, is a magical world, a paradise. Moral values are inverted in this world. As Oryu no Oba lovingly observes, for instance, some of the young men commit the most audacious acts of gambling, stealing, and deceiving, as the narrator explains:

> Unlike ordinary parents, she [Oryu no Oba] believed in no moral value, like you must not steal or you ought not kill. She felt instead that you should be free to do what you pleased. That you are here as you are is good enough—that's what she always thought.
>
> (Nakagami 1992: 50)

The "ordinary parents," needless to say, represent the mono-vocal authority of a real world outside the *roji*. In the utopian space of the *roji* live "hide tanners, footwear repairmen, and basket weavers" (Nakagami 1992: 32), as well as loggers, construction laborers, and horse traders. They have historically been made a target of harassment by the people of a real world, as Oryu no Oba recalls:

> When she was still a little girl, the hill behind the *roji* divided the *roji* from the rest of the town, and a barrier with a gate was attached to the little shrine on top of the hill to stop the going and coming of the people on both sides of it. The gate was shut tight during the New Year's days to keep the people of the *roji* out of the castle town and, if anyone dared to break through it, they were chased by men of the town who came after them with stakes in their hands.
>
> (Nakagami 1992: 39)

It is perhaps because of this harsh reality that two of the six young men emigrate to South America, while another settles in an Ainu hamlet in Hokkaido. Their withdrawal from the *roji*, however, is by no means an act of passivity, for Oryu no Oba perceives it as a sign of the expansion and rejuvenation of the *roji*. The element of fantasy, too, abounds in the narrative. Ghosts and goblins appear, and the spirit of Oryu no Oba frequently speaks to Oryu no Oba, still lying in bed in her *roji* home. Some of the lore is told repeatedly in slightly different versions and in various voices throughout the six stories.

In *The Wings of the Sun* (1993d), grotesque realism also plays a key role in the delineation of the theme of rebirth. After the *roji* is demolished to yield to the construction of a modern condominium at the conclusion of *The End of the Land, The Time of Ecstasy* (1993c), uprooted matriarchs of the alley form a team with several young men of their community and travel throughout the country. Here, the semi-dark space within the stolen freezer truck in which they journey is "the magical world," that traverses across "the real world" outside. As the truck speeds on super highways, the women inside entertain each other by repeatedly telling the ancient *roji* story of a mistaken identify and its tragic consequences in incest and a double suicide. The story changes each time it is told. Exaggeration characterizes the depiction of the young men's sexual adventures on their way.

In this hilarious story, the women are also portrayed in fresh, child-like images. Whenever the truck stops, they go out into "the real world" but go about their own business as though they had never left home. Unloading cooking utensils of the most primitive sort they have brought with them, for instance, they squat in a rest area by a super highway, on a busy street of Tokyo, or on the holy ground of Ise Shrine, kindle a fire, and prepare the recipes of the old *roji*. Moreover, tenaciously adhering to their old folkways, they simply ignore modern laws and customs and openly commit mass shoplifting and other "crimes" as they travel. They also perform an act of purification at the sacred imperial grounds of Ise and the Imperial Palace by sweeping the grounds with the brooms brought from their home. That the persons of the *roji*, long victimized by the age-honored system of hierarchy, clean the sacred space occupied by the family at the very top echelon of the hierarchy, constitutes a protest and challenge of intensity rare in modern Japanese literature. The women disappear into thin air after sweeping the imperial ground. This fantastic occurrence signifies the completion of their mission, that is, to challenge Japan's modernity by propagating the folk culture of the *roji* throughout the country.

As Latin American writers relied on magical realism for assertion of their power against the dominant culture of European colonialists, Nakagami capitalizes on the revitalizing power of magical realism, not only to challenge modern Japan and its oppression of marginalized peoples, but also to subvert the institution of modern Japanese literary tradition. The significance of his Kumano saga owes much to Nakagami's genuine affection for the people of the *roji*, an affection that manifests itself in the lyricism of supreme tenderness, and to his superb ability as a storyteller. It is, however, the skillful use of magical realism in his works that gives a concrete form to his political message by enabling him to convert "the space of darkness in the brightness of the sun" into *the space of brightness in the darkness of the sun*.

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9 Positioning oneself in the Japanese nation state

The Hokkaido Ainu case

Katarina Sjöberg

The first report by the Japanese government to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1980 denied the very existence of the Hokkaido Ainu. As a signatory to this Covenant, the Japanese government is required to report on the measures it has adopted to ensure protection of the rights contained therein, yet Prime Minister Nakasone unequivocally stated in 1986 that, “Japan’s success on the world market is due to its homogenous population” (Sjöberg 1991).

This indifference to the Hokkaido Ainu’s own view of themselves as a distinct ethnic minority within the Japanese nation state has led to a situation where they challenge the idea that indigenous issues are the sole jurisdiction of the state. In the late 1970s, Hokkaido Ainu representatives traveled to China and Alaska for meetings concerned with indigenous affairs and in the early 1980s they attended international indigenous conferences in Greenland and Asia (Dietz 1999; Tsunemoto 1999).

Such actions then made it difficult to deny their existence, and in 1991 their status as a cultural and religious minority was conferred upon the Hokkaido Ainu by the government. The Nibutani Forum, an international conference on indigenous affairs, was held two years later in Nibutani village, the center of many Ainu activities. The main aim of this forum was to discuss the concerns and activities of the world’s indigenous peoples. In 1997, the “Law on Promotion of Ainu Culture and Facilitation of Popular Understanding of Ainu Tradition,” replaced the old law from 1899, “The Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act,” and in this same year The Sapporo District Court recognized the Hokkaido Ainu as an indigenous minority within the Japanese nation state (Dietz 1999; Sjöberg 1993, 1995; Tsunemoto 1999).

The process leading up to the Ainu’s recognition as an ethnic minority and the actions they have taken have many similarities with indigenous peoples in North America, but there are also interesting differences. While a prime concern of these peoples has been political and economic matters, among the Hokkaido Ainu a prime concern has been cultural autonomy (Davis 1987; Sjöberg 1993, 1995, 1997b, 1998).

Concerns and approaches

In this essay, my concern is the contemporary Hokkaido Ainu, with a focus on the process leading up to their recognition as an ethnic minority and the years

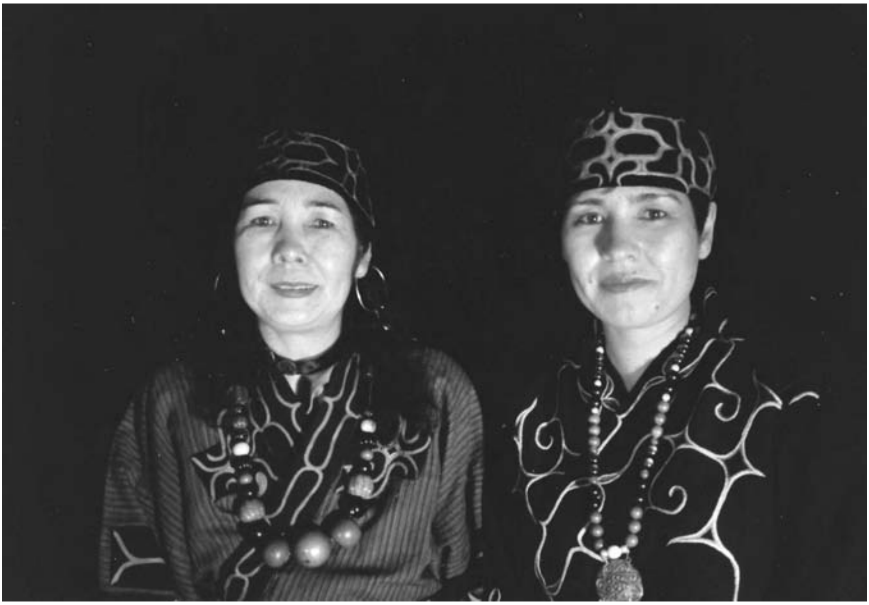

Figure 9.1 Ainu women dressed in Ainu garments. (Photo: Katarina Sjöberg)

following this event. Emphasis is placed on their strategies for maneuvering in a larger socio-cultural system that cherishes its ethnic and cultural homogeneity as a strong value orientation, while also incorporating the Hokkaido Ainu as a primitive variant of this majority ethnic group, the *Wajin*. The standard position in Japan, when talking and writing about culture and people, has been that it is homogenous, despite the fact that there are actually a number of different cultures and peoples in Japan (Baba 1980; Cornell 1964; Peng and Geiser 1977; Reischauer 1973; Saito 1912; Smith 1983). The argument I pursue in this essay builds on a combination of two key themes. The first is the conception of Japan as inhabited by one homogenous group of people. The second is the perception of the Hokkaido Ainu as an inferior race and culture. These two together constitute major factors in understanding the measures taken by the Hokkaido Ainu in order to survive in Japanese society. To understand their situation, it is essential to consider the hierarchical and holistic identity of the *Wajin* and the fact that one main ambition of the Hokkaido Ainu has been to gain recognition as a separate ethnic group on equal terms with this group of people.

While this might appear simple to the Western or other non-Japanese observer, it is a serious problem for a state whose leaders act as if their legitimacy is threatened by the existence of multiethnicity. In this sense, identification with a specific socio-cultural tradition that differs from the one prevalent among the *Wajin* is both provocative and crucial. It is provocative, since by this act they oppose the state ideology of Japan, and it is crucial when it comes to defining themselves and their place in the larger society.

In recent times, the Hokkaido Ainu have constructed specific knowledge centers, putting themselves and their material culture on show. Since such centers provide them with a means to support their families and themselves, and the unemployment rate being high among the Hokkaido Ainu population, these centers and the activities taking place in them can, of course, be interpreted as purely economic projects.

Yet these centers are also socio-cultural projects, giving the Hokkaido Ainu a means to work with, recapture, and/or learn skills and practices belonging to their cultural tradition. Following this line of thought, the distinctive content of their material culture and customs is highlighted. With this view, their engagements in Ainu activities and practices emanate from a conscious sense of belonging, consolidated by membership in a common tradition. Furthermore, in light of their incorporation into the global community of indigenous peoples, the centers can be understood as a part of a larger project, politicizing their interest in their Ainu heritage and tradition as well as with subordination and discrimination issues, which are also on their agenda.

Given this point of departure, my understanding of the Hokkaido Ainu way of positioning themselves in the Japanese nation state relates to a model where cultural, social, and political values inherent in the larger context enclosing the Hokkaido Ainu, constitute the foundation behind their activities and practices. Hence, their way of establishing a place in Japan is neither self-contained nor unidirectional but an outcome of multiplex interactions between the Hokkaido Ainu and the larger society.

The material used in this essay comes from my fieldwork among the Hokkaido Ainu, conducted during the years 1985–1988, a follow-up study conducted in the year 1995, and archival, historical, and more contemporary sources that have provided me with updates concerning the situation since my visits. The fieldwork was conducted in the Hokkaido area, particularly the villages of Nibutani, Shiraoi, and Akan in the Hidaka, Iburi, and Kushiro regions, whereas the follow-up study was restricted to Nibutani village.

Background: questioning the past

To understand the present, we have to look back, starting with some basic facts. The Hokkaido Ainu are traditionally described by anthropologists as belonging to the general category of hunters and gatherers, primarily inhabiting the northern island of Hokkaido. Their contact with values and norms belonging to people of *Wajin* descent dates back to the eighth century. People of *Wajin* descent are then known to have immigrated to Hokkaido over an extended period of time.

Immigration on a large scale eventually resulted in conflicts between the two groups of people. These conflicts continued for a considerable amount of time, until the middle of the sixteenth century, at which time the authorities in Honshu changed their policy to one of reconciliation. With this reconciliation policy, the prelude to the annexation of Hokkaido to the emerging Japanese nation state began, comprising a period of more than four centuries, stretching from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

This was the beginning of a decline as far as the religious, cultural, and social values of the Hokkaido Ainu were concerned. The first years of the Meiji era[1] saw Hokkaido annexed to Japan, a colonization office established in Sapporo, and the process of assimilating the Hokkaido Ainu begun. The new era brought Japan into the world market. The Hokkaido Ainu were registered as *Kyōdojin* or *Dojin*, concepts standing for aborigines and natives respectively, on Hokkaido Island.

According to the official policy of assimilation, the Ainu were to be incorporated into the Japanese nation state on equal terms with the *Wajin*. For the Hokkaido Ainu, the assimilation procedure was, however, a final blow against their lifestyle. Among other things, they were now prohibited to use their own language and perform important ceremonies. Moreover, their land was transformed into government-managed farms (see for instance, Baba 1980; Cornell 1960; Howell 1999; Munro 1962; Sjöberg 1993; Smith 1983; Takakura 1960).

During the years that have passed since the annexation of their native land, the Hokkaido Ainu have used different strategies in order to fit into this larger socio-cultural context, a context that until recently fostered the idea of them as a vanishing group of people with "primitive" ways and lifestyle, explaining their situation in social rather than ethnic terms.

Ainu origins: controversies and perspectives

In the year 1999 the Arctic Center of the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, in association with the University of Washington Press published a book titled *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People*, bringing together the works of scholars within the Ainu field (Fitzhugh and Dubreuil 1999). In the introduction to this work the Ainu are described as having living cultures that have exhibited much creativity, a theme taken up by some contributors to the volume.

Although the contributors to this book deal with some aspects of the living Ainu culture, the texts, nonetheless, stand as a testimony to researchers' fixations with the preservations of the customs of a "dying people" and to their analyses of the Ainu, particularly of their ways and belief systems, as primitive, backward, and retarded. Such characterizations are legitimized by the use of the term "traditional." This primitivization of the Ainu can partly be explained by the fact that researchers have approached the Ainu through a manner that mirrors the state ideology of Japan.

Following this ideology, one perspective that seems to have historically attracted the interest of several researchers has been to solve the problem of Ainu origins in terms of their relationship with aboriginal populations in Japan. According to reports of some of the scholars within this field, the original inhabitants of Japan were not the Ainu but an ancient group known in Ainu legend as the *Koropok-un-guru*. A rival view has claimed that the close resemblance of Japan's Neolithic populations and the Ainu must be seen as evidence that they were indeed the aboriginal settlers of Japan.

These views have been challenged by a third view, which puts forth an argument that builds on the idea that the aborigines of Japan were the population from which both the recent Ainu and the historic Japanese population were derived. According to this view, the Ainu were a result of the mixture of aboriginal Japanese populations, of unknown origins, and peoples who later migrated to the islands from the northeastern parts of Siberia. This view has also been challenged, by a theory building on the idea that the ancestors of the Ainu came from the north to Hokkaido, whereas the ancestors of the historic Japanese population came from the south of China to the Japanese island of Kyushu and then moved north to Honshu.

Another approach closely linked to the ones above and also catching the attention of several researchers, has been to solve the problem of identity of the Ainu from the standpoint of territorial concepts. This is an extremely difficult task, partly due to inconsistency in the historical/mythical reports of territorial locations, and partly due to a contradiction in the classification of the Ainu (see for instance Batchelor 1932, 1971; Fitzhugh and Dubreuil 1999; Hilger 1967; Kodama 1970; Kreiner 1993; Munro 1911, 1962; Peng and Geiser 1977; Refsing 1980; Seligman 1962; Takakura 1960; Watanabe 1972, 1975). This puzzling situation has been the battlefield on which researchers within this field have fought each other.

In retrospect, these texts are deceptive, since issues related to the question of Ainu origins have been mixed up with the issue of establishing unanimity with respect to territorial names and locations in mythical and historical time.[2] Suffice it to say in this context that there have existed two main rival views, one in support of the existence of the Ainu in Honshu and another opposing this view.

Parallel to such writings, the official policy of assimilation was well underway, and, in political and social rhetoric at least, this policy was referred to as successful. This state of affairs is partly related to the fact that among the Hokkaido Ainu there were those who welcomed the assimilation policy. Hence, at the time of the annexation of Hokkaido to Japan there were those who devoted much time and effort to becoming fully assimilated (see for instance Cornell 1964; Hilger 1967; Peng and Geiser 1977; Refsing 1980).

Even though research on their origins has been a central part of the studies of the Ainu in general, their origins remain unknown.[3] This intricate picture, a legacy of research on the identity of the Ainu, is thus political in essence. First, and regarding the Hokkaido Ainu in particular, in a nation state cherishing cultural and ethnic homogeneity as a strong value orientation, conclusive evidence of separate ethnic identities threatens the very foundation on which it is built.

Second, if conclusive evidence is found that people of Ainu descent and people of *Wajin* descent are of one and the same origin, the Hokkaido Ainu must be recognized as the rightful owners of the land to which the latter claim exclusive rights. Given this situation and judging from the results, this research has not really been concerned with solving the question of their origins, but rather with making it an issue of endless scientific debate.

Ainu strategies for positioning themselves in the Japanese nation state

Against this background, the actions taken by the contemporary Hokkaido Ainu are best understood if we consider that the authorities in Japan for a long period of time have been successful in denying them status as an ethnic minority and incorporating them into an image of a dying, primitive, and backward group of people. During my fieldwork among the Hokkaido Ainu, problems of incompatibility between their own interpretations and the picture emerging from the texts produced about them, were a recurring topic of debate. The Ainu took an active part in critical analysis of foreign as well as *Wajin* writings about themselves.

With this development, then, it is necessary to place our point of departure within a realm of research promoting the exploration of a field within which the Hokkaido Ainu continually debate the relationship of their lifestyle with reference to others' interpretation of it.

Speaking in general terms, there are two major strategies used for identification, one by people who emphasize their Ainu origins, and the other by people who de-emphasize it, preferring instead to point out similarities between themselves and the people of *Wajin* descent.

The people belonging to the latter group make use of their national identity as Japanese in a national context, whereas in a regional and local context they identify themselves as Japanese of Ainu descent. These people employ what might be termed "double identities." Their use of the identity concept is strategic and hierarchical in essence.

The people belonging to the former group identify themselves as Ainu in a national context, whereas in a regional and local context they use the term *un-guru*. This is a concept expressing a sense of belonging—*Nibutani un-guru*, *Shiraoi un-guru*, etc., namely people belonging to such and such a settlement (*kotan*), thus distinguishing people from different settlements. The Hokkaido Ainu belonging to this category can be said to use their identity for "clarification" purposes, implying a strictly horizontal use of the identity concept (Sjöberg 1993).

Knowledge centers

Although many of their activities include commercial aspects and have a low profile outside the tourist seasons, the Hokkaido Ainu claim that their commitment is indeed social, cultural, and religious. The places where they perform activities tied to their Ainu heritage and tradition they call knowledge centers. These consist of Hokkaido Ainu villages in the Hidaka, Iburi, and Kushiro regions, notably the villages of Nibutani, Shiraoi, and Akan, respectively. The knowledge centers are places where the Hokkaido Ainu, by putting themselves and their activities on show, express their group or collective identity, emphasizing the distinctive content of their cultural and religious heritage for the tourists and the larger public, who are invited not only to buy Ainu-made products, but to see how they are made, even to experiment in manufacturing them themselves. They can also learn about Hokkaido Ainu mythology, ritual, and history, taste Ainu food and live in their homes.

Moreover, to inform the larger public of important happenings, gatherings, meetings, and field trips, such as excursions to settlements important to the Hokkaido Ainu, they advertise their activities beforehand. During these events, the participants are informed about old Hokkaido Ainu place-names, the ways in which these names have been changed and how this has led to the loss of essential knowledge about the characteristics of the places. With a hope of replacing the standard picture of the "traditional" Hokkaido Ainu way of life with a picture of diversity, the participants are also informed about local and regional variants of their language, customs, and religious beliefs (Sjöberg 1993, 1997a,b, 1999).

The initiative, in building such knowledge centers, is largely the work of Mr. Shigeru Kayano, who is of Ainu descent.[4] Today we find Ainu all over Hokkaido who are creating a manifold picture of their customs and ways (Sjöberg 1993, 1997a,b, 1999).

Confusing the Hokkaido Ainu way of positioning themselves with folklore and commerce

In social and political rhetoric and in mainstream scientific texts, the knowledge centers and the activities taking place in them have been ignored or else confused with folklore and commerce.

Taking a perspective where their activities are seen as folklore is a serious misinterpretation. Folklore is concerned with making permanent aspects of the specific cultural nature of certain values belonging in the past, whereas the activities of the Hokkaido Ainu are concerned with building knowledge of their heritage and material culture, lifestyle, and belief system in the present. In this sense, it is as much a way of understanding one's past and present, as it is also a means to establishing belonging, that is, as a way of identifying with the ways and customs of the people of Hokkaido Ainu descent.

When it comes to the commercialization of their activities, this aspect should not overshadow the time and effort the Hokkaido Ainu devote to educating themselves in matters related to their cultural heritage. Their involvement, as well as the skills required, must be ascribed their rightful value and viewed as a means to stimulate or activate Ainu-based activities rather than only as satisfying purely material needs.

However, in mainstream scientific texts folklore and commercial aspects have come to overshadow ideological content. Accordingly, substance has been de-emphasized while the display for the larger public has become a dominant feature. In this light, the knowledge centers and the activities taking place in them are understood in much the same way as are museums and exhibition halls, freezing their customs; and practices in fictitious and arranged surroundings. With this view, their attempts to position themselves in the larger socio-cultural context have been confused with attempts to enter modernity as the majority population in Japan defines it, especially since to achieve recognition of their "otherness," they advertise their activities beforehand.

This misconception is linked to an understanding of the activities of the Hokkaido Ainu as a means of creating themselves, and especially of experiencing their customs and belief system as parts that have been lost, namely, as something external to themselves that they strive to regain. With this approach, a deeper or more nuanced understanding of how and why the Hokkaido Ainu explore their past and present is lost.[5]

Confusing the Hokkaido Ainu way of positioning themselves with social conditions

When accounting for the changes that have occurred, scientists within the Ainu field have, to a large extent, adopted the state ideology that ranks rather than analyzes, clinging tightly to a view of the Hokkaido Ainu as backward and primitive, and arriving at conclusions that it is elements of this nature that are the ultimate causes of their present status as a group of individuals depending on social welfare for their survival. Of the Hokkaido Ainu, 60 percent depend on welfare to a greater or lesser degree. As their land was lost, they found that they must often work for others, in agriculture and related industries as well as in the tourist and service sectors. Authorities and researchers have both made use of the low percentage of the Hokkaido Ainu registering as people of Hokkaido Ainu descent and the high percentage of them engaged in the rural sector to confirm the success of the policy of assimilation.[6]

There is reason to believe that this view has been constructed to suit national purposes; a context in which the Hokkaido Ainu belong to a nation that has grounded itself firmly in a territorial and social space inherited from the ancestors of the *Wajin* people. It is a reality where people of Hokkaido Ainu and *Wajin* descent jointly occupy the same national territory on "equal" terms.

The fact that they "share" this same space with *Wajin* descendants has not, in fact, resulted in the two being equals. For if the Hokkaido Ainu are officially like any national citizen, they are still, in reality, lower in rank. For such reasons, the interests of the Hokkaido Ainu and national interests must rather be understood in terms of a contradiction (see Burger 1990; Dietz 1999; Kayano 1994; Sjöberg 1993, 1995; Tsunemoto 1999). For the Hokkaido Ainu, the act of putting a face to their culture is an indispensable means of unequivocally defining their own position in the context of the larger society. Here, the knowledge centers and the activities taking place in them are central to positioning themselves in the larger society.

This presentation of their Otherness encompasses a larger authentication project. It is in defining themselves for the *Wajin*, their significant Other, that they establish their specificity. When Hokkaido was annexed to Japan the situation was different. This was a time when their Otherness/self-hood was fully subjected to others' interpretation. Today this is no longer the case, though as I have discussed earlier, there is still an ongoing struggle over definitions. Among the contemporary Hokkaido Ainu the controversial question of definitions has discharged itself into authentication projects and articulating culture as well as political positioning principles.

Entering modernity and the global community of indigenous peoples

The final part of my discussion attempts to provide a view of these projects among the Hokkaido Ainu, focusing on the years following their recognition as a cultural and religious minority, and on Nibutani village in particular.

By and large, the activities in Nibutani seemed to adhere to a familiar pattern. When I arrived in 1995 tourism was at its peak. The Nibutani Ainu were busy in their workshops, manufacturing cultural items, giving information on their activities, such as Ainu language classes, Ainu songs and dances, lectures on how to manufacture Ainu-style garments and utensils, and various kinds of gatherings, happenings, and fieldtrips. In the interviews they spoke with enthusiasm about Hokkaido Ainu networking, about associating with and learning from each other, and about their joint participation in various Ainu-related projects and religious activities. They mentioned, for example, the *Marimo*[7] ceremony, dedicated to a powerful lake god whom the Hokkaido Ainu used to fear because it was believed that this god fed on humans; the *Iyomante*[8] ceremony, a distribution ceremony including the killing of a bear; and the *Shakushain* ceremony, celebrating a Hokkaido Ainu hero who led the Shakushain War in 1669 and held in the honor of Ainu ancestors.

Yet, in their discussion, when talking about the Iyomante ceremony, the Hokkaido Ainu gave voice to uncertainties concerning the possibility of continuing the practice of this ceremony. They mentioned problems concerning the length of time and efforts for its preparation, the fact that the bear cub has to be kept in human custody until it reaches fertility, hence, looked after and fed by members of the "host family" and also the danger involved when catching the bear cub and when sending it away.

Placing weight on practical matters was something new. There was more to come. For example, between the Ainu there were constant debates concerning the role of modern equipment when it came to presenting their customs and the activities attached to these customs. A debate that has come to include issues related to authenticity, namely what is and what is not Hokkaido Ainu culture and tradition, how to perform their practices and how to present their customs and values.

With this development, the focus has shifted from a critique of scientific writings to concern about their own indigenous understanding of their tradition and how this is reflected in their practices and activities in the present. Against this background, I place my point of departure in an area of research that explores the relationship of Ainu customs and ways with reference to indigenous understandings of them, focusing especially on questions concerning ideological content in relation to performance and display.

The dam building project

In 1995, a controversial dam building project on the Saru River was nearly finished. How to stop or prevent this project was a constant topic of debate in my previous relationships and contacts with the Nibutani Ainu. The construction of a dam in this area was seen as a severe crime against Nature, since acres of their lands would be flooded and it would also affect the spawning of the salmon in this river. In discussions with the authorities, it was understood that individuals whose land would be covered with water would receive compensation in the form of cash.

This was the starting point for an improvement of the economic situation of several individuals in the Nibutani village. After having received the money as a compensation for the damage caused by construction of this dam on the Saru River, various financial institutions approached the Nibutani Ainu, offering them loans to improve their situation.

With this development, the dam building project has come to function as a means to give the Nibutani Ainu status as solvent creditors, improving their material standards. Some of the inhabitants in Nibutani used this new status to invest in the village's knowledge center profile.

The Chip Sanke *ceremony*

Chip Sanke is an annual ceremony held to the river god when launching canoes in the Saru River. The year 1995 was special. It was the last time for performing this ceremony. Because of the dam building project, the water level in the Saru River was set to rise to such a degree that carrying out the Chip Sanke ceremony in this river would become a dangerous enterprise.

Hence, the ceremony was expected to become the largest ever, gathering people of Ainu descent not only from the Hokkaido area but also from Honshu, along with people from the mass media to document this important event. As it turned out, the ceremony gathered many people, representing a mixed lot, including Hokkaido and Honshu Ainu, the mass media, people representing various indigenous groups coming from all over the world, scientists belonging to different schools of various disciplines, tourists from all over Japan, and, finally, people who had traveled from around the world to pay indigenous peoples their respect.

The ceremony began with a gathering in front of the exhibition hall, the *Shiryoka*,[9] where the participants had assembled to hear the welcoming speech given by one of Mr. Kayano's sons, acting now as his father's secretary and expected to be his successor. In his speech, given in Japanese, the younger Kayano's emphasis was on the importance of this ceremony to the Hokkaido Ainu and the fact that this was the last time this ceremony was to be held in the Saru River. Afterward, the participants were invited to pay their respects to Nature, an act including an Ainu-style invitation and the welcoming of spirits dwelling in Nature. The event was followed by an invitation to participate in a gathering in a *Chise*,[10] watching Ainu chiefs, *Ekashi*, perform ritual practices tied to this

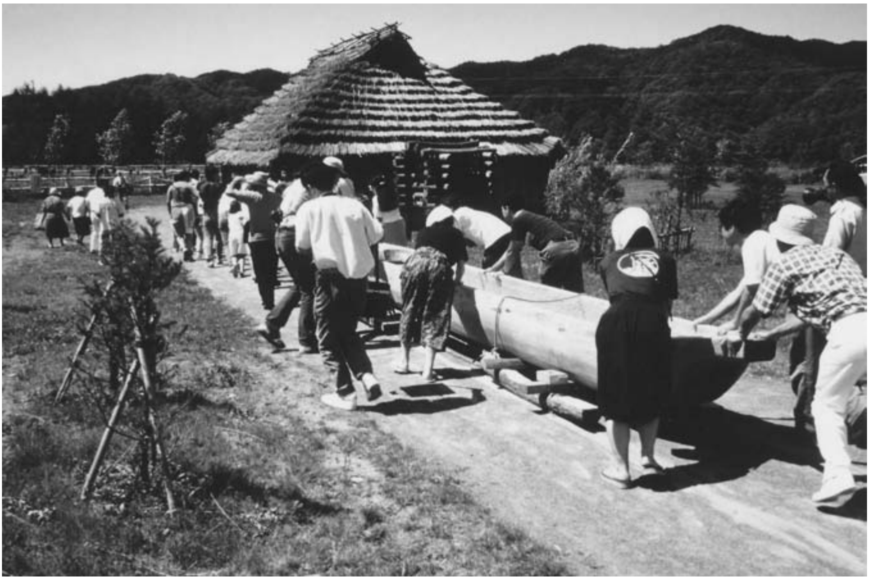

Figure 9.2 *Chip Sanke* ceremony; pulling the canoes to the Saru River the old way. Ainu *chise* house in background. (Photo: Katarina Sjöberg)

ceremony. The Ekashi were all dressed in Ainu garments and when they spoke they used the Ainu language and I noticed that some of the Ainu words were changed. For instance, the Ekashi did not use the term *Saru Pet*,[11] but referred to the river as *Shi–shi–ri–muka* and when addressing the salmon they used the Ainu concept *Shiepe.* These name changes are related to the elder Kayano's plans for an Ainu-Japanese dictionary.

When this part of the ceremony was finished, the participants joined in Ainu-style dances. Apart from the changes in Ainu terminology, there were also other changes compared to the ceremonies I had attended during my previous visits. For example, one important ingredient of this ceremony used to be the building of new canoes, an enterprise involving the selecting and cutting of appropriate trees and engaging the most skilled wood carvers in the Hokkaido area, who perform rituals tied to the canoe building process. This time the canoes that had been built the previous year were used.

Another important ingredient was also missing, namely the one involving all the participants pulling the canoes from the Shiryoka to the launching area in the Saru River. This activity, aimed at instilling in the participants' feelings of responsibility and belonging, was this time done by large trucks equipped with hydraulic lifts, which transported the canoes to the Saru River. When commenting on the ceremony afterward there were lively debates between the Hokkaido Ainu concerning the role of modern equipment, particularly the use of hydraulic lifts, and also the decision to exclude the preparation rituals tied to the building of new canoes.

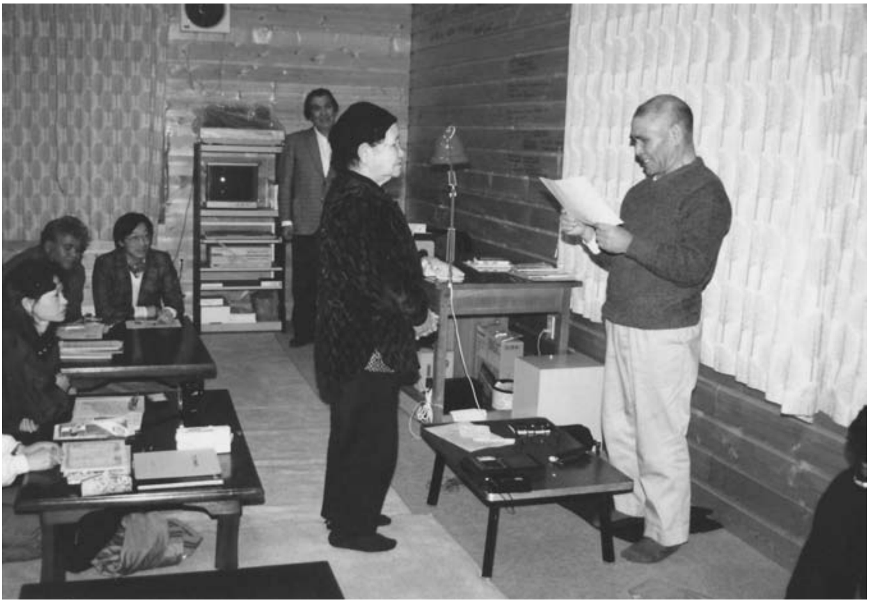

Figure 9.3 *Ainu Itak* class; Ainu woman receiving a diploma for attending Ainu language classes from Ainu Ekashi. The late Ainu leader Kayano Shigeru is standing in the background. (Photo: Katarina Sjöberg)

With this development, questions concerning the ideological content, including networking with Ainu coming from other areas of Hokkaido in relation to performance and display, were actualized. At that time, and with practical issues as one point of reference, notably the exclusion of the preparation rituals and the use of modern equipment, it seems as if performance and display had come to play the upper hand. On another level and with their concern for indigenous concepts and word arrangements in mind, notably in recent name changes, development points in the opposite direction. In this light, the link between their indigenous language, the *Ainu Itak*, and the inherent ideological substance or meaning of their activities and practices, is highlighted.

The Ainu language, especially the use of proper Ainu words, is of great concern to the Hokkaido Ainu.[12] Ever since it has been studied, linguists have labeled the Ainu language a dying language (see for instance Batchelor 1938; Naert 1960; Refsing 1986, 1993, 1998; Tamura 1983, 1999). Historically, the critique against *Wajin* and foreign attempts to translate their language has been strong among the Hokkaido Ainu. In 1995, Mr. Kayano's work with an Ainu-Japanese dictionary was much appreciated by some of the Hokkaido Ainu, but there were also those who had strong objections. In their opinions, there are several Ainu dialects in the Hokkaido area and with Mr. Kayano there is a risk that these dialects will be understood as mere variations of the Nibutani dialect—a way of monopolizing a particular dialect.

The Nibutani Ainu Cultural Museum

The Nibutani Ainu Cultural Museum was built with funds from the prefectural government, and is located on a hill overlooking the Saru River, with a cluster of Chise to one side. The demand to construct a Hokkaido Ainu museum in Nibutani village was also a topic much discussed during my visits in 1985–1988. At that time, it was wishful thinking, due both to economic costs and to the fact that Nibutani already have one exhibition area, the Shiryoka.

The exhibition areas and general information on the new museum are presented in the form of leaflets placed on the entrance counter and handed to the visitors when paying the entrance fee. In the museum, videocassettes or other taped recordings are used as one form, among others, for presenting their lifestyle, customs, beliefs, and material culture.

To a person like myself, familiar with the people and the surroundings, the museum gives an air of intimacy. The people appearing on the various videocassettes, documenting the Ainu "traditional" wedding ceremony, how to build an Ainu-style house, children's games, the Iyomante ceremony, and so forth, are my friends and associates. The children playing by the Saru River are grown up now, and watching the videocassettes gives us a feeling of peering into the past. When I push the button on the tape recorder to listen to *Yukara, Kamuiyukara* and *Uuepekere* (epics, myths and old tales, respectively), I hear voices belonging to persons whom I knew but who are now dead. Furthermore, in earlier research visits I had watched local craftsmen/women make some of the exhibited items.

This view was contrasted with the Ainu's own views. What was their impression and what did they say to this presentation of their lifestyle, material culture, and religious beliefs? Among other things, they complained about an Ainu smell being absent, giving them a feeling of alienation. One of the interviewees expressed this in the following way, "*It does not smell Ainu. We do not feel at home in this new museum* (Interview, Ainu female, August 1995)." There were those who complained about the style and size of the museum building. In their opinions, the building was not Ainu-style, and they also thought the museum was much too big. "*The style and form of the museum building is not Ainu-style, it is not even Japanese. Western architects inspire it. In some big city this museum would be all right but not here in Nibutani, such a small village. We prefer the Shiryoka. It is more Ainu-style. It has an Ainu smell* (Interview, Ainu male, August 1995)."

When it came to presentation of their handicrafts, utensils, lifestyle, religious beliefs and myths, they were more positive. Above all, they appreciated the idea of placing photo images of local craftsmen/women next to their products, instilling feelings of pride and also a sense of connectedness with craftsmen/women in fields related to the production of the material items. They also appreciated the educational roles of videocassettes and other taped recordings to help keep them in touch with their values, norms, myths, and epics, while they reflected on this technology in other ways, too reminiscent of the way people in general use such equipment to document important happenings in their lives.

These developments also actualize questions concerning the ideological content of the displays. In the context of this newly built museum, the notable absence of an Ainu smell and the size and style of the building sheltering and enclosing their values, the ideological content is, if not endangered, at least set aside. Here, display has come to play the upper hand. However, focusing on their pride and the connectedness they felt with craftsmen/women in fields related to the production of the material items, the picture becomes more nuanced.

Moreover, in adapting modern media equipment such as photo images of the craftsmen/women next to their products, videocassettes and other taped recordings of their customs and ways, they have found a way of linking past and present practices. This establishes continuity between the two, and the display issue now becomes a question of making their ways into "living, social and networking practices." Further, such strategies help counter perceptions of their lifestyle as something external to themselves, or as something belonging in the past. Looking at it from this angle, they are adapting to the new and changing conditions without diminishing the ideological content, thus maintaining a firm grip on future development and entering modernity the Hokkaido Ainu way.

Entering the global community from the grassroots up

The Ichi Man Nen Sai *ceremony*

Here I highlight a development where feelings of joint participation in a common tradition have come to include not only one's own group but also indigenous groups coming from all over the world, and its consequences for the Hokkaido Ainu, starting with the grassroots approach envisaged in the *Ichi Man Nen Sai* ceremony.

The *Ichi Man Nen Sai* ceremony is a joint Ainu-*Wajin* ceremony, stretching over a period of five days and dating back to 1989. It is a camping arrangement held in the bush, one hour's drive from Nibutani village. In 1995, this event gathered some three hundred people from all over the world with the sole purpose of expressing their solidarity with indigenous peoples. Very few Hokkaido Ainu attended, and there were none from Nibutani.

The majority of the participants were of *Wajin* descent. Some of them had Rasta-style hairdressing, and many of them were dressed in Ainu-style garments wearing Ainu dresses and Ainu shoes made of bark. They kept their belongings in Ainu-style gathering bags. The reason for dressing and ornamenting themselves in this way had to do with paying tribute to their ancestors, which in their opinions, were Ainu as they saw/see themselves as of Ainu descent. As one of the interviewees expressed it, "*In our opinion the Ainu are the original inhabitants of the Japanese islands. They are our ancestors* (Interview, *Wajin* male, August 1995)."

When it came to their reason for attending the ceremony, they stressed the fact that they shared indigenous peoples' concern for Mother Nature, and that they supported demonstrations against the exploitation of natural resources. "*We have joined this ceremony because it is a ceremony celebrating Mother Nature. To show our appreciation we sing and dance* (Interview, *Wajin* male, August 1995)." Singing and dancing were indeed dominant features of this gathering. Some of the songs and dances had Ainu origins, some had origins in the cultural tradition of other groups of people, and some were mixtures of various different cultural traditions. Some of the songs were new compositions, such as one featuring the Ainu ancestor Shakushain, which places his origins in Nibutani instead of Shizunai where historians generally place it.

The Hokkaido Ainu did not like this mixture of cultural traditions and they were reluctant to provide information about this ceremony. "*We do not attend. Nobody does. It is more like a hippie gathering. People are dirty. Don't ask me what they are celebrating. I could never figure it out* (Interview, Ainu male, August 1995)." This was thus seen as an ideology-based identity project, with a mixture of cultural traditions, and did not appeal to the Hokkaido Ainu, who demonstrated their discontent by not attending the ceremony, dismissing it as a hippie gathering.

Some Hokkaido Ainu trace this negative attitude to Mr. Kayano's strong leadership, directing the development occurring in Hokkaido Ainu matters with a firm grip. His view of this ceremony is that, "*This is not an Ainu ceremony but something sprung from the mind of a confused female* (Interview, Ainu male August 1995)." Tracing the negative response among the Hokkaido Ainu to Mr. Kayano's strong leadership is not without reflection, but linked to the image he has created of himself as an Ainu specialist, where he functions as the embodiment of the entire Hokkaido Ainu culture.

With this understanding, the Ichi Man Nen Sai ceremony has, in a way, come to intensify questions concerning the role of authenticity in contemporary Hokkaido Ainu practices and activities. With this development, there are two opposing views. One focuses on the necessity to isolate and separate the inherent ideological content of the specific Hokkaido Ainu culture and tradition from other living indigenous cultures and traditions, an authenticating project within specific and defined borders. Another emphasizes unification of the living cultural traditions of indigenous peoples, taking a view of the ideological content as something transparent and transforming, locating it in an ever-changing reality.

However, in the Hokkaido Ainu case, these views can also be understood as complementary in the sense that they serve as a focal point activating internal debates and discussions concerning what is and what is not Hokkaido Ainu culture and tradition. At the same time, they also function as a means to establish continuity with certain aspects of their past, opening up opportunities for the Hokkaido Ainu to elaborate and develop, both in their practices and performances, understandings of the actual authentic content of their customs and beliefs, linking these to their present activities and practices.

The Nibutani Forum

As I have mentioned earlier, in 1993 Nibutani village hosted The Nibutani Forum, an international conference on the affairs of indigenous peoples.[13] The initiative by the Nibutani Forum Organizing Committee to arrange this conference clearly indicates that the Hokkaido Ainu wish to continue to perform on an international basis. With this act, they oppose the view that Hokkaido Ainu matters are solely the jurisdiction of the Japanese nation state.

The Nibutani Forum has put the Nibutani village on the world map, and in 1995 the village was already an important gathering place for indigenous peoples. One of the participants, a man from Australia who represented a group of aboriginal people, expressed his feelings about attending in the following way: "*If you want to meet indigenous peoples, or people interested in indigenous matters, you come here to Nibutani* (Interview, August 1995)."

Generally speaking, international conferences and gatherings provide the Hokkaido Ainu with opportunities to build a global network, and they also offer a forum to update their situation on developments within Japan from the Hokkaido Ainu perspective. The main aim of The Nibutani Forum in 1993 was to share and discuss problems concerning steps to be taken in the future, consequences of the exploitation of their natural resources, and political, social, and economic factors in general, as well as educational preferences, especially, the necessity to incorporate the language of indigenous peoples in the curricula of the nations to which they belong.

With their entrance into the global community of indigenous peoples and with a view of the Hokkaido Ainu as global actors, the concern about authenticity and its role and place when it comes to presenting and practicing their customs and ways has taken on a political dimension. In this light, questions regarding indigenous and other interpretations of their material culture, customs and belief system, as well as the relationship between performance and the ideological content, have also become questions of power and control, politicizing the interest in their Ainu tradition, practices, and activities.

Concluding remarks

There is no doubt in my mind that any people would hesitate to refer to themselves as a vanishing race with a primitive lifestyle, and that such an attribution is rather something coming from the outside. In the Hokkaido Ainu case, some scientists within the Ainu field have contributed to this primitivization of a people and their lifestyle. This has been done by approaching an understanding of the Hokkaido Ainu customs and traditions through an adaptation to the state ideology of Japan. This ideology was constructed around the idea that Japan is inhabited by one homogenous group of people, the *Wajin*, incorporating the Hokkaido Ainu as, among other things, Neolithic remnants of the people who populated the Japanese archipelago in ancient times. The Hokkaido Ainu way of positioning themselves in the Japanese nation state is, to a large extent, determined by this state of affairs.

Hence, a key strategy in the positioning process of the Hokkaido Ainu today is to enact a kind of peaceful cultural upheaval. Central parts of this project have been the joining of the international community of indigenous peoples and the establishing of specific Ainu knowledge centers. Such measures have resulted in a somewhat nuanced picture of their customs and beliefs, notably in the publication of *Ainu: Spirit of a Northern People*, as well as in the recognition of them as an ethnic minority, hereby challenging the state ideology of Japan as well as perceptions of the Hokkaido Ainu as a "dying people." Yet, the motivation for their engagement in their Ainu tradition is not solely found in this accomplishment.

In understanding the development that has occurred, it is tempting to focus on the socio-political aspects, using these as the main tools in the analyses. After all, the Hokkaido Ainu have suffered tremendous hardships in Japanese custody. They have been robbed of their territories and of their means to support themselves. Their families have been circumscribed, and their mental capacity as well as their customs, lifestyle, and belief system, have been belittled, and so on. Although highly relevant, such an approach easily disguises other aspects of the reality in which the Hokkaido Ainu live and operate.

To some Hokkaido Ainu, employment and the possibility to support their families and themselves overshadow other aspects, such as learning about their traditions, networking, or joining the global community of indigenous peoples. To these people, coping with their lives on a day-to-day basis has the highest priority; their tradition, material culture, customs, and other aspects of their Ainu heritage are not of first concern. Not all of the Hokkaido Ainu belonging to this category forget their heritage when the tourist seasons are over, but some do. Their approach is individualistic in essence, and among them we find attempts to enter modernity as the majority population in Japan defines it, with material aspects and commerce playing the upper hand.

Other Hokkaido Ainu focus on socio-cultural aspects, placing collective and networking activities at the center to instill a sense of belonging. Their engagement has to do with preserving and practicing a lifestyle with roots in a common tradition. It is a way of exploring their Ainu heritage by gathering knowledge, insight and understanding about their past and present, including identification, and pride in their past. This is an authentication project, placing indigenous understandings of their culture and tradition at the center with questions related to ideological substance in relation to performance and display on the agenda.

Added to this is a political awareness stressing the exploitation of the Hokkaido Ainu population as well as their natural resources. These are factors that actualize issues of subordination and discrimination. In this light, and with their identification with indigenous peoples all over the world, the engagement in their material culture, language, customs and beliefs, becomes a means to oppose the state ideology of Japan, an authentication project with a political signature. This is a field within which their critique of biased views, interpretations of their customs and ways as backward and primitive, and understandings of their situation in social terms, becomes intensified. It is a context within which their collective activities, their interest and engagement in their Ainu heritage, practices, and ways, are transformed into an issue of the right to determine the future of their community.

Notes

1 Meiji, ironically, stands as a concept for “enlightened government.” The Meiji era began in the year 1868.

2 For a lengthy discussion see Sjöberg 1993.

3 One theory currently in fashion is that the Ainu, as well as the Ryukyuans, the inhabitants of the Okinawan Islands, represent more or less direct descendants from the Neolithic people of the Jomon culture, the prehistoric culture of Japan (Arutiunov 1999).

4 At the time of my fieldwork, Mr. Kayano was not only commonly accepted as a virtual authority on the culture of the Hokkaido Ainu, but he also embodied their entire culture. This was an image created as much by his interest in and his work with Hokkaido Ainu matters as by his frequent appearances on television and radio, where he acted as an official representative of the Hokkaido Ainu people (Sjöberg 1993, 1995, 1997a, 1999).

5 For a lengthy discussion see Sjöberg 1993, 1995, 1997a.

6 Government recognition of the Hokkaido Ainu beyond mere acknowledgment of their existence has been, and still is, a highly political issue. See Dietz 1999 and Tsunemoto 1999. See also Cornell 1964; Hilger 1967; Peng and Geiser 1977; Refsing 1980.

7 This ceremony was "originally" performed on an individual basis, whereas today it has been transformed into a collective ceremony (Sjöberg 1991).

8 According to most reports, the *Iyomante* ceremony is the most precious of all ritual performances practiced by the Hokkaido Ainu. It is connected to hunting activities of men and is included into the sacred realm. According to Batchelor, the Iyomante ceremony represented "the outward expression of the greatest racial religious act of worship of the Ainu brotherhood" (1932: 37). In connection with Hokkaido's annexation to Japan, the Iyomante ceremony was banned, and the restriction against performing it was not lifted until the late 1970s in connection with a flourishing tourist industry. Henceforth, the celebration took place in August, not in February, adapting the celebration date to tourism, rather than "traditionally" based practices and beliefs, thus reducing it to a tourist attraction (Sjöberg 1993, 1997a).

9 In 1995, the profile of the *Shiryoka* was somewhat changed, compared to the years 1985–1988, aiming to displaying various cultural items belonging to indigenous groups from all over the world.

10 *Chise* are Ainu-style houses built of oak and linden pillars and with thatched roofs.

11 During my previous visits the proper Ainu name of this river was discussed and debated in a lively fashion. Yet, at that time people seemed to have more or less settled for the term *Saru pet*, where "pet" stands for river in the Ainu language (Sjöberg 1993).

12 "To us the Ainu Itak is so important that a person will feel that he must die early so that the proper words can be spoken for his requiem. When a person is born on earth, who would wish to die early? But my father and his friends wished to die early, because they wanted to have a proper Ainu requiem" (Nibutani Forum Organizing Committee 1994: 23).

13 Resulting in the report published by the Nibutani Forum Organizing Committee *Gathering in Ainu Moshir, The Land of the Ainu: Messages from Indigenous Peoples in the World* (1994).

Editorial notes

The *Ichi-Man-Nen-Sai* continues, apparently mostly as a New Age spiritual gathering advertised by local tourist agencies. See Snow Japan, "Ainu Festival," http://www.snowjapan.com/e/features/niseko-magic-10.html (August 26, 2007). The article begins with "Deep down hippie tendencies that need satisfying?" Research on the Ainu has taken a different tack with Mark Watson (2007 forthcoming) "Kanto Resident Ainu and the Urban Indigenous Experience," in Mark Hudson and Tomek Bogdanowicz (eds), *Visions of the Ainu: Changing Academic and Public Perspectives*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. After a gap of 12 years the Nibutani Forum was held again in 2005. Kayano Shigeru passed away on May 6, 2006.

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10 “Becoming a better Muslim”

Identity narratives of Muslim foreign workers in Japan

Onishi Akiko

The changing face of Japanese society

No one ever imagined that Nishi-Kawaguchi would become notorious throughout Japan.

This small, unassuming community on the outskirts of Tokyo became the center of national attention when raids in May 2004 resulted in the arrests of at least eight suspected al-Qaeda cell members, all originally from South Asia or Africa. This sudden jolt to the Japanese consciousness threw a spotlight on what had been a quiet, unobtrusive community: Muslims living in Japan. Swelling the wave of concern about Islam, obvious from the many new books, television documentaries, and talk shows following 9/11, the idea that Japan, too, had a Muslim presence to be reckoned with became a powerful and compelling new focus for Japanese society.

In 1980, there were 782,910 registered foreigners in Japan. By 2004 the number had increased to nearly two million, along with more than 223,000 visa-overstayers (Nyūkan Kyōkai 2002), numbers both surpassed by 2006. One group which has shown surprising growth, those of Islamic faith, now numbers between 70,000 and 100,000 (with perhaps 10 percent being Japanese citizens who profess Islam) and includes migrants from South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and China. The number of all foreigners is expected to increase in the near future due to an impending labor shortage that will necessitate the entry of several hundred thousand immigrants a year to maintain the size of the present labor force. Not only will the number of foreigners continue to increase, but the countries they come from and their purposes or reasons for staying in Japan will also become more and more diverse. As has been discussed in earlier chapters, newly arrived foreigners are sometimes called “newcomers,” in contrast to “oldcomers,” primarily Koreans and Chinese who have been in Japan for three or more generations. Newcomers mainly consist of two groups, *Nikkeijin* and other “foreign workers” (Kajita 1998). The former are second- or third-generation descendants of Japanese emigrants, mostly to Latin America, while the latter are mainly from Asian countries and engage in unskilled work.

The reactions of Japanese society to this rapid change have been both positive and negative. These changes have been welcomed as a sign of internationalization of the country on the one hand, while many in the media and government, as well

Figure 10.1 Tokyo Mosque. One of the oldest mosques in Japan, the Tokyo Mosque was built by Kazan Tatar emigrants in 1938 and reconstructed in 2000. A video of the mosque and a prayer service can be seen at http://youtube.com/watch?v=YGJjxVWkLpc. (Photograph with permission from website by Onishi Akiko)

as scholars, have, on the other hand, stressed the possible social confusion which may be brought about by a rapid increase in the foreign population.

The groups of people who have attracted the most attention and who have been subject to the most discussion are Asian foreign workers. The number of these workers began to increase in the 1970s, first with female workers coming for service jobs in the entertainment and sex industries. This was followed by male workers, a result of the increasing demand for labor during the time of economic growth in the 1980s (Douglass and Roberts 2003). During the time of this rapid increase, the immigration law was revised to regulate the influx (1990). The new law guaranteed *Nikkeijin* the right to stay and permitted them to work, while shutting out other foreign unskilled workers. The circumstances of *Nikkeijin* and Asian foreign workers are therefore very different, and their cases need to be discussed separately.

In the early 1990s, most scholars regarded the increase of foreign workers as a temporary phenomenon and expected them to leave Japan after a short stay. The number of newly entering foreign workers declined with the revision of the immigration law and the faltering Japanese economy. However, many of those who were already in the country stayed. Some of them married Japanese nationals, legalized their status, and settled down in Japan. Many others, without legal status of residence, have also continued to stay, with a strong wish to settle permanently.

In this paper I will focus only on Asian foreign workers who are Muslim. Historically and culturally there has not been much contact with Muslims in Japan until very recently, in contrast to those European countries where Muslim migrants date back to colonial times. Most Muslim workers in Japan commonly stand out physically and culturally, which makes their everyday life very different, and probably more difficult, than that of other foreign workers whose physical appearance is more similar to the dominant Japanese.

Cross-cultural contact and identity issues

The rapid increase of foreign workers has aroused public attention and initiated heated debate on its social, political, and economic ramifications. Many studies have been done, and the areas where foreign workers have drawn the most attention are those of immigration law and crime. However, my interest is in individual foreign workers and in understanding how they have accepted their experiences and how their identities might have changed during their stay in Japan.

In particular, I sought to examine what Tajfel (1978) called social identity, meaning the categorical attributes that refer to social groups to which individuals belong, in which they invest their energy, and with which they identify themselves. Social identity refers to the ways in which individuals perceive themselves as resembling other group members and sharing values, meanings, and goals with them. Identity has multiple sources such as age, gender, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation, as well as other contextual variables that interact in complex ways (Gloria 2001). Individuals construct a self in which they distinguish themselves from others and perceive continuity throughout their life span. However, this is not necessarily a stable, static characteristic of the individual but is subject to change as a result of interactions between the individual and the social context. Although identity may have constancy, its content varies, and the construction of identity is a continuous effort to synthesize opposites, cope with difference, and respond to changing contexts (Murphy-Shigematsu 2002).

Moving from one cultural context to the other may reveal these unstable, multiple and dynamic characteristics of identities in remarkable ways. Migrants encounter cultural discrepancies and must negotiate different and often contradictory norms and attitudes. The person must struggle with maintaining a sense of sameness in time and space while integrating new experiences, values, and representations (Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre 1997).

My understanding of the experience of Muslim workers in Japan also draws on Berry's work on acculturation. He describes this process of negotiation in his theory of acculturation with respect to two basic issues worked out by groups and individuals in their encounters with each other (1997a). One is the extent to which their original cultural identity and characteristics are considered important (cultural maintenance). The other is the extent to which individuals become involved in other cultural groups or remain among themselves (contact and participation). He classified four different strategies and each strategy includes both attitudes and actual behaviors. *Assimilation* strategy is when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures. Another strategy, called *separation*, is when the individual places value on holding on to their original culture and avoiding contact with the host culture. Attempting to both maintain one's original culture and valuing interaction with other cultures is called *integration*. A fourth strategy, called *marginalization*, occurs when there is little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance and little interest in relations with others.

The broader national context also affects acculturation strategies, with multicultural societies expanding and assimilationist societies constraining choices. An individual's preferred strategy may or may not be permitted by the dominant group. The level of acceptance and openness toward newcomers by members of the dominant groups affects immigrants' degree of host country identification and the possibility of their integration (Nesdale and Max 2000).

The work of Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre (1997) also informs this study through its emphasis on the importance of the impact of the societal situation on the individual choice of strategy. Situations of great cultural distance, of social exclusion and discrimination, and of rapid social change, may pose serious threats to a person's social identity. Individuals may avoid conflict by clinging to their own values, or by re-appropriating religious texts or cultural traditions. They may distinguish between private and public universes, and see them as governed by different rules. Individuals may attempt to develop strategies to avoid suffering from stereotyping, prejudice, rejection, derogatory judgments and resulting negative self-images, self-effacing behavior, and submission (Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre 1997).

One common method, for example, is the psychological repression of racist experience. Another is to attempt assimilation with the host group by trying to resemble them to the point of internalizing the dominant culture and denying one's own difference. An alternative strategy is to avoid disparagement by accepting and increasing the value of one's own difference. Such valorization often occurs in opposition to racism, allowing individuals to dismiss the image of them projected by the host society. Idealization of one's own culture and a critical attitude toward the host culture may be both individual and collective.

Applying the above research to Japan is done with caution. Although the social context has been considered as one factor which influences the nature of the cross-cultural contact and the resulting acculturation process or the identity change within the individual, there have not been many studies which examine its influence carefully. Rather, many studies have been done in multicultural societies without analyzing the impact of the context. Whether the findings from such studies may be applicable to different social contexts is still unclear. The dynamic interaction of cultures needs to be examined more carefully, especially in the case of a relatively monocultural context where the power balance between groups is grossly unequal (Timotijevic and Breakwell 2000).

Muslim workers in Japan

Although diversity clearly exists in Japan, compared to other developed nations, it is a relatively monocultural society facing the pressures of opening itself to immigration. Despite the increasing presence of minorities, Japan has not embraced multiculturalism, and minorities are still pressured to culturally assimilate to avoid discrimination (Murphy-Shigematsu 1993, 1999). Social attitudes toward foreigners from less developed countries may often be more negative than those who are from industrially developed Western countries. Negative social attitudes may, in turn, adversely affect the attitudes foreigners hold toward Japanese people, which may worsen the longer they stay and the more language skill they acquire (Hagiwara and Iwao 1988; Tsai 1995).

Studies of Pakistani and Bangladeshi immigrants in Great Britain have shown that these immigrants emphasized their distinctive Muslim identity more than Indian or East African immigrants (Ghuman 1991, 1998; Law 2000). Other research has demonstrated how Muslim immigrants from North Africa in France utilize several cognitive strategies to manage different contradictory norms and attitudes in order to avoid or reconcile contradictions and to preserve the congruity of their identity (Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre 1997).

The experiences of Muslim workers in Japan are likely to have some peculiarities that create different identity problems or coping strategies. The distance between Japanese culture and Muslim culture may make the impact of cultural context on their psychological state more salient. By examining this previously neglected area of research I sought to expand an understanding of identity processes and acculturation.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted in 1998 after one year of participant observation at an NGO office in Tokyo, Japan. This NGO was established in 1987 when the numbers of foreign workers were most rapidly increasing. Support has been given to foreign residents by providing information and advising on various problems related to their lives. It is also characterized as a mutual help group which has tried to create a sense of community among foreigners through various kinds of

Table 10.1 Profile of the participants and types of narratives

ID	*Type of narrative*	*Nationality*	*Length of stay (months)*	*Age*	*Status before coming to Japan*
1	1	Iranian	60	34	College student
2		Iranian	78	28	Military service
3		Iranian	88	28	Military service
4		Iranian	94	32	Family business
5		Bangladeshi	108	30	Computer programer
6		Bangladeshi	120	30	Family business
7		Bangladeshi	121	30	College student
8		Bangladeshi	124	29	Unemployed
9		Bangladeshi	130	34	Unemployed
10		Pakistani	144	28	Unemployed
11		Pakistani	144	34	Employed
12	2	Bangladeshi	107	30	Unemployed
13		Bangladeshi	108	32	Family business
14		Pakistani	114	32	College student
15		Pakistani	117	32	College student
16		Bangladeshi	117	33	College student
17		Bangladeshi	117	34	Employed
18		Pakistani	120	35	College student
19		Bangladeshi	123	33	College student
20		Bangladeshi	124	34	College student
21	3	Pakistani	90	32	College student
22		Bangladeshi	120	35	Unemployed
23		Bangladeshi	120	32	Family business
24		Pakistani	143	34	Unemployed

activities such as cultural events. I participated in group activities as a volunteer staff member and thus became known to the members.[1]

The participants of the study were 24 young, single Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Iranian male workers. They were selected because of certain common characteristics, most notably, their underdeveloped ethnic networks that offered few resources for social support or culture retention. They also have a strong desire for a prolonged stay and a wish for settlement (Komai 1995).

Interview analysis followed the method described by Kvale (1996) in which he suggests reflecting and analyzing the narrative structures employed by the interviewee. This narrative approach emphasizes going back to the original story told by the interviewee and anticipating the final story to be reported to an audience. Narrative here means a story which has plots, including the causal attribution that explains what happened and how it happened, and is an interpretive creation founded upon the meaning and significance which one is able to confer on the experiences of the past (Freeman 1992). By telling a story, individuals can relate the information about their experiences that is most relevant to them and organize this information in a way that is representative of how they see themselves (Harold, Palmier, Lynch, Freedman, and Eccles 2000).[2] Three kinds of narratives concerning identity and acculturation were generated.

Three types of acculturation narratives

Individual interpretation and analysis of experiences and related identities were diverse. However, despite the variety in individual reactions, the participants' social positions and experiences in Japanese society were relatively similar. Two shared experiences especially stood out.

One was the experience of a status gap. Participants tended to describe their family in their home country in terms of high social status, a good standard of living, and academic success. They expressed disappointment at the absence of suitable work at home and limited educational opportunity, and felt that they deserved something better if only they had the opportunity. At home, the image of Japan as a rich and developed country was prevalent, and constructed through the media or by "made-in-Japan" products. Limited prior knowledge created an image of Japan as a place where they could find the chance for success, and encouraged them to come. However, this image was challenged soon after they arrived and found themselves working as dishwashers or factory workers. Most of the participants were of relatively high social class background and were college-educated. The social position of "unskilled worker" was thus something they had never dreamed of. Compared to Japan, their home countries have clearer socio-economic classes with pre-determined appropriate occupations for each class. Thus, the participants often felt they were not in the right social position:

> Foreigners' personalities are not recognized in Japan. I am from a wealthy family.... My family has good social status. I want people to ask what I have studied or about my background, family at home...about myself, the education I have had. I hate being seen with the image of a poor country or with the image of bad foreigners.
>
> (Bangladeshi: 13)

Another shared experience was a perception that their personal characteristics or personal history, which they were proud of, were not recognized, thus threatening the participants' sense of self. The self-image of the participants contrasted with the image imposed by Japanese society. They also confronted Japanese society's meta-narrative of homogeneity that labeled them as outsiders and encountered daily experiences of not being treated equally or being misunderstood. They perceived themselves to be objects of prejudice and stereotypes associated with being underdeveloped, poor, or criminal. Informants felt themselves to physically stand out and therefore to be easy targets of prejudice or overt discrimination:

> They see my face, and think I am a bad person because I am a foreigner. Europeans and Americans are different. Japanese have different feelings toward them. Foreigners here means Asian—people from Pakistan Bangladeshi, Iran, India, like that. Why (is this so)?
>
> (Pakistani: 14)

Despite these similarities, participants made various kinds of interpretations and attributions about their experiences, creating different narratives to make sense of the situations. The result was diverse reactions to their realities and differing emerging identities. Three different styles of narratives will be discussed. One is called, "I am almost like the Japanese." A second is "They do not see who I am." The third narrative is called, "I have become a better Muslim."

First narrative: "I am almost like the Japanese"

One type of story seemed to be, "I am almost like the Japanese." People with this story coped with their reality by accepting and adapting to Japanese ways in language and culture. Eleven narratives were classified as this type, making it the most common one:

> Japanese and Pakistani have different ways of thinking and different sense of, for example, making jokes. So I had to change the channel, depending on whom I talked to. At first, I was confused doing this. It took me about 5 years until I finally became capable of communicating with Japanese without making a misunderstanding or starting an argument. I have found that if I insist on Pakistani way, I am not able to get along with Japanese. You know, Japan is an isolated island country and you need to adapt yourself to the Japanese way, then things go easy. Not only Japanese language skill but also understanding the personality of Japanese is necessary to make relationship with Japanese.
>
> (Pakistani: 10)

The same person reflected upon his 10 years in Japan saying:

> Living in Japan over 10 years, it is gradually getting hard for me to become 100% Pakistani again. I have spent almost half of my life in Japan by now. I feel it hard to go back to Pakistan again because my way of thinking has become totally replaced by a Japanese way.
>
> (Pakistani: 10)

This person used an "assimilative strategy," not because of individual preference, but for a practical need to decrease conflict in daily life. He changed his behavior depending on the situation, like "changing the channel" on a TV. However, he started to feel that the Japanese way had become part of his personality. The ties with his home country had been weakened, while those with Japan had been strengthened. Although this did not mean that he did not value his original culture, he felt he could not fit into the home country again. Together with this change in his sense of belonging, the meaning of Japan changed from that of a temporary residence where a person stayed to earn money to a place where one lived, as shown below:

> Our original purpose of stay was to earn money and we tried to save as much money as possible. But now, we are all almost like the Japanese. We spend our money as Japanese do. None of us save money any more. We have a "normal life" here. Our life is here.
>
> (Iranian: 4)

Participants often explained the differences between the Japanese and themselves, and how they had acquired Japanese characteristics. Food emerged as a common symbol of cultural acquisition. *Miso* soup, *nattō*, and raw fish are stereotypical national foods that foreigners may have some difficulties getting accustomed to. By claiming that they enjoyed those foods, participants showed how they had become like Japanese and that social acceptance by Japanese was therefore reasonable. Here are two examples:

> At first, I could not even stand the smell of miso soup. I then gradually became accustomed to its taste. Now I cook it by myself. I cannot spend a day without it. I am more like Japanese than the Japanese!
>
> (Iranian: 4)
>
> I even eat *nattō*. One day, one of my Japanese friends at work could not eat *nattō* at lunch. So he asked me to have it. A Japanese asking a foreigner to eat *nattō*! I love *sushi*, too. But only Japanese eat raw fish.
>
> (Iranian: 2)

Another common feature of these narratives was the way in which participants talked about the experience of prejudice. While psychological acculturation proceeded and they described themselves as "almost like Japanese," participants were also aware that the majority narrative excluded them. However, they did not criticize the Japanese. Instead they used a majority Japanese perspective in criticizing their group's members as responsible for the prejudice:

> The image of Iranian is getting worse and worse. Japanese used to talk to me so friendly and I had made some good friends. However, it is a bit different now. Japanese come to me and ask "Where are you from?" I answer them, "I am Iranian." Then the people look puzzled, stop talking and leave. Maybe it is because of Iranians. Iranians and Chinese are two main groups who are involved in criminal activities in Japan.
>
> (Iranian: 4)

Although the participants themselves were also the target of the prejudice and felt that they were not accepted by the society, their wish to become full participants of the society was strong. Having a Japanese spouse is one way that an undocumented foreigner might be given special permission for residence and legalize their status of residence under present immigration law. Participants were aware of this legal fact, and also saw it as a source of psychological and even physiological change:

> I have heard that human cells change every seven years. I guess my cells have been changed…mixed of Japanese and Iranian. I am half-Japanese now. If I marry to a Japanese woman, I will probably become 100% Japanese.
>
> (Iranian: 3)

A problem of this narrative is that in order to provide a secure identity, the story of becoming "almost like Japanese" needs to also be shared by the Japanese. However, the majority society and immigration system do not support this story and the participants felt stuck between their home country and Japanese society, and between a sense of being almost Japanese and the reality of their status as an undocumented foreigner. When no change occurred over the years despite their intentions and efforts to be accepted by Japanese society, the diffusion of future prospects and loss of control over their own lives gradually emerged among participants:

> The future?…well, I let it be for now…I would like to run some kind of business. It is hard to decide which way to go…I have not decided yet. I know I have to find something…I have no plan to go back…But, you know, it is hard to make a plan.
>
> (Pakistani: 10)

Some of the participants gave up and stopped making efforts or even wishing for change. One articulated a sense of a person who had lost his voice, overwhelmed by the dominant narrative of a Japanese society which denies the existence of foreign workers or perceives them only as objects of a labor force, neglecting other aspects of them as individual human beings:

> It is stupid to make effort in Japan. No matter how hard you work, you are still treated as a "foreigner." After 10 years of hard work, you are still in the same place…people call you a foreigner. For a foreigner, there is no future. I will go home some day for sure. But for now, I let things go. I do not know what will come after going back home. I know nothing of the present condition of my country. I have to start my life from the very beginning. That gives me a headache…I will just spend time like this until the police catch me.
>
> (Pakistani: 11)

Second narrative: "They do not see who I am"

Another narrative pattern that emerged in the interviews could be called, "They do not see who I am." The narratives here focused on questioning and searching for the reasons for the gap they perceived between their previous status and present situation. The narratives of nine participants were classified as this type. One common similarity was attributing their mistreatment to the media:

> Most of the people who live in rural areas are uneducated . . . they cannot see foreigners as human being. They think we cannot do anything but they see us as just unskilled labor, like animals . . . I do not blame (them). Instead, I blame the media. Japanese just do not care about what is really going on. They just believe the media and what they see on TV. They do not know.
>
> (Pakistani: 14)

These participants ascribed their problems to the stereotypical view of foreigners created by the media and also the ignorance of uneducated Japanese who accepted the information. This interpretation worked to some degree to protect their self-esteem. Their self-concept as educated persons of social status therefore did not need to be revised. For one of the interviewees it relieved his anxiety to think that if only the media conveyed the truth and Japanese society changed, the gap would decrease and mistreatment end. On the other hand, attributing mistreatment to personal characteristics forced them to question their basic foundations as human beings:

> I am educated. I am good looking, attractive, and I am a sportsman . . . But I have made no single Japanese friend until today. Why? What is the problem with me? Can you tell me why?
>
> (Pakistani: 18)

For this person, asking, "What is wrong with me?" was a never-ending question about why he was ignored as an individual. Individuals like this decreased their social interactions, or adopted marginal strategies to maintain their self-image. Although they valued and tried to maintain their original cultural identity, it was not easy because their legal condition limited the possible physical contact with their home country. They also did not have an ethnic community which could function as a base for a sense of belonging or for fulfilling practical needs in daily life. Although they tried to keep their sense of self by identifying with their home country, their separation made this difficult. As a result, they had little social interaction with either of the societies and became marginalized, feeling as if time had passed without bringing them any benefits:

> Nothing has changed from the day of my arrival in Japan. 10 years has passed . . . . I am not talking about money here. I am talking about my life, having family, raising kids . . . all such things necessary for the human being. I have nothing.
>
> (Pakistani: 15)

The sense of wasting a significant period of life and feelings of meaninglessness were highly stressful and threatening to their sense of identity. As in the first narrative, loss of control and feelings of helplessness characterized the psychological state of persons with this story:

> Maybe it is time to go home…I feel like an old man now…. for 10 years, you know. I thought I could do anything when I was young. But now, I am such a wimp. My life is torn apart.
>
> (Bangladeshi: 16)

It is interesting to observe that this kind of feeling was not found among persons who were married in their home country. One married man, who had been away from his family for 10 years described his feelings:

> The money I earn here can make my family's life better. I am so happy about it. Even though I have a hard time here, I am happy. I can endure anything for my family. I am that kind of person…I do not drink alcohol, do not smoke, and do not waste money for my own enjoyment. I did not take a day off for ten years. You know, if I do not work, I cannot get money. On rainy days or even days I was sick I worked. I am proud of myself in this way. I can die for my family's happiness.
>
> (Bangladeshi, married)

This man did not mention how he viewed Japanese people but talked only about the relationship with his family and how proud he was of himself for taking responsibility for them. Although he had been in Japan for ten years and was socially isolated, he had a stable sense of identity as a father of his family and knew why he was in Japan, unlike some of the unmarried participants. At least he had his position in the home country and knew that what he was doing in Japan meant a great deal to his family and to himself.

Third narrative: "I have become a better Muslim"

A third form of narrative might be called, "I have become a better Muslim." In contrast to the first narrative, in which participants identified with being Japanese, in this third narrative participants stressed their distinctiveness and differentiated themselves from the Japanese. They did so by identifying as Muslims. There were four such narratives.

Although all the participants were born Muslim, not all the participants stressed their Muslim identity when they talked about themselves. Those who showed strong religious beliefs indicated that their commitment had changed over time while staying in Japan. Some went through the process of redefining themselves as Muslim and constructing a story to cope with their difficulties. They focused on the religious aspect of their lives, something that they may have previously taken for granted as a crucial part of themselves:

> In Pakistan, I never questioned about Islam because it was always there. In Japan, I started to think about it when I was having a hard time adapting to

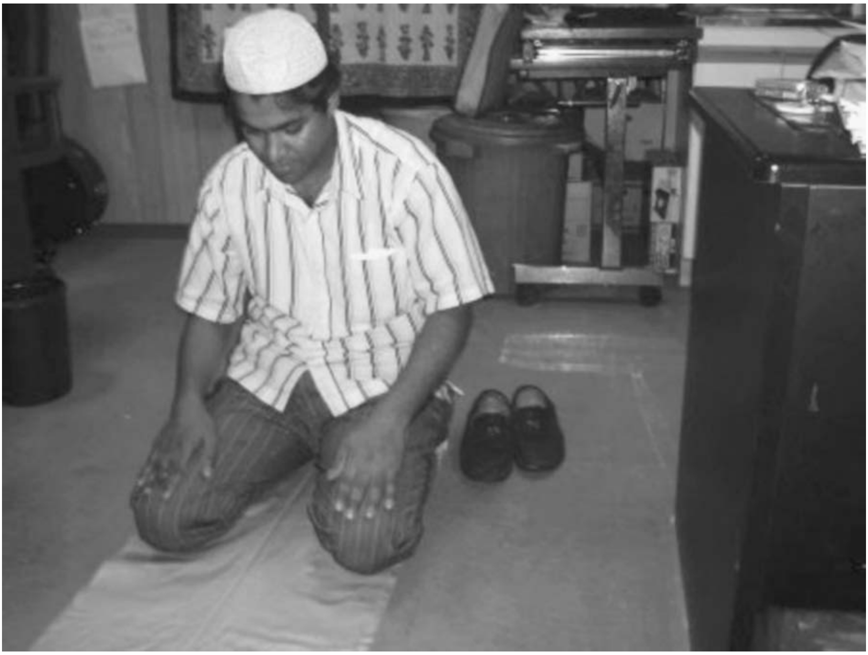

Figure 10.2 Muslim worker in Japan—prayer time in an NGO office. (Photo: Onishi Akiko)

> the new environment. I wondered if God exists and wanted him to help me if he does exist. I studied not only Islam but also Christianity, Buddhism and other religions. After devoting myself to think about it for 2 or 3 months, at last, it was Islam that was left for me. I selected Islam because I was convinced it was the best for me. Now I think have I become a better Muslim than I was in Pakistan.
>
> (Pakistani: 21)

By identifying as Muslim and practicing religious activities such as praying and abstaining from drinking alcohol, these persons felt that they were subjectively selecting their own life and regaining a sense of control. Although it was challenging to observe the Islamic way in Japan where such practices were often misunderstood, religious practices strengthened their identity as Muslim:

> It is possible to adapt myself to the Japanese way. Maybe 80% of Bangladeshi in Japan are doing so—drinking alcohol and so on. But it is not my way. Adapting to the Japanese way is easier. If I change myself a bit, it is easier to earn more money and enjoy life. But that is not what I want. People look at me and think my life is boring with no enjoyment. But I do not wish anything if I have to give up my identity as Muslim.
>
> (Bangladeshi: 22)

Religious beliefs relieved stress by encouraging participants to do their best and leave the results in the hands of God. They developed a new empowering narrative that explained their life in Japan as a path chosen for them by God. Religious belief was also used to diminish cultural differences and the prejudice that they encountered as seen in the following statements:

> I decide my way by consulting with God. I make effort and then let it be. God knows. That is another important point of Islam. You just do your best. I feel less stress. Japan, Pakistan, it does not mean anything to me. I do not mind discrimination. If the relationship with God is strong, there is no such thing as discrimination. I feel sorry for people who discriminate against us, or anybody and who can't believe in God.
>
> (Pakistani: 21)

> (There is) no difference between Japan and my country. There is only one world created by God. It is human beings that separated the world into pieces. Buddhism, Islam and Christianity; they share its origin, it comes from one God.
>
> (Bangladeshi: 23)

Using religious beliefs as a frame of reference, the participants attributed rejection and discrimination to Japan's status as a non-Muslim society, and one that therefore does not have the concept of universalism or brotherhood. They believed that those who deny or conceal the truth as revealed to them through Allah's messages are regarded negatively from an Islamic viewpoint. Thus, it made sense for the participants to think that it was the ignorance of Japanese society rather than they themselves that needed to be changed. These beliefs helped them to feel control about whether or not to accept Japanese culture and to define what kind of person they wanted to be:

> I do not mind learning the good part of Japanese culture. However, some aspects of Japanese culture are not good for me. I mean, it is not good in terms of Islam.
>
> (Pakistani: 21)

These participants "felt sorry" for Japanese who are not able to have a Muslim way of thinking and behaving. Their way of seeing the world enabled them to keep high self-esteem as Muslim. This form of "separation strategy" allowed individuals to construct their identity by identifying with Islam, which is universal and stable across time and space.

Identity narratives

Examining the narratives produced by the participants revealed fascinating insights into the cross-cultural experience of foreign workers from Muslim countries and its impact on identity. These narratives were strongly influenced by a social context in Japan that is relatively monocultural, and in which there is a prevailing ideology of assimilation. The dominant narratives contain negative prejudicial views of Asian foreign workers, which participants attributed to acceptance of faulty or stereotypic information based on limited direct inter-group contact and a media influence that portrays foreign workers as unskilled laborers or criminals. As a result, the huge gap that existed between the participants' self-concept and the imposed images of the mainstream society threatened their identity.

During the process of acculturation, a negotiation of identities took place in order to cope with this gap and to maintain an identity. Accepting the dominant narrative and describing oneself as "almost like Japanese" was one way. Acculturating with the majority, the Japanese, made it possible to reduce daily difficulties, and was chosen as a practical strategy for adjustment. However, the hope still remained that one's original identity and worldview could be preserved and that behaviors and beliefs could be flexibly varied depending on the situation. At the same time, these persons also found that they were inhibited by social attitudes which did not permit their acceptance as Japanese, as well as their vulnerable legal status. They gradually became overwhelmed by the majority meta-narrative and felt a lack of ability to maintain control over their identity. This narrative may involve the psychological repression of racist experience. It closely resembles the strategies defined by both Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre (1997) and Berry (1997b) in which individuals attempt assimilation with the host group by trying to resemble them to the point of internalizing the dominant culture and denying one's own difference.

Other stories stressed the rejection of the dominant narrative, as well as attempts to maintain the original narrative of the self as educated and active young men. These stories focused on searching for the reasons for the gaps they were encountering and making attributions for their causes. The participants attributed their mistreatment to the ignorance of the Japanese as a society influenced by the media. Some struggled to accept the reality that they would have no chance of changing their position as unskilled workers no matter how long they stayed. They had feelings of emptiness and regret. Such self-narratives may remain unchanged for years, with those having them lacking the power to give meaning to their lives and or have much self-esteem. This second narrative appears most similar to the marginal strategy explained by Berry in which there is little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance and little interest in relations with others. In this case, it appears to be more a matter of a lack of possibilities rather than lack of interest because participants do hope to maintain their connection with their home culture but social and legal conditions do not allow them to do so.

In the first and second narratives, individual stories were overwhelmed by a powerful meta-narrative that accepted them only as foreign "workers" or did not accept them at all. Since identity is co-constructed through interaction between the individual and society, their stories failed to give them a secure identity because of a lack of support for their narrative from Japanese society. While some individuals persisted in their stories, others illustrated the ways in which individuals confronted with difficulties that cannot be solved by their personal effort lose their motivation to change the situation and become hopeless (Lazarus and Folkman 1984).

On the other hand, the third narrative showed how individuals with a strong religious commitment maintained a sense of control of their identity and felt indifferent to the dominant narratives. They re-defined themselves as Muslim by incorporating religious identity into a central part of their self-concepts, and asserting its pervasive effect on all aspects of life (Kabbani 1989). The third narrative resembles Berry's strategy of separation in which the individual places value on holding onto the original culture and avoiding contact with the host culture. Although they appeared to be alienated and marginalized, the Muslim identity of these individuals brought stability and coherence over time and space.

Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre's (1997) description of the strategies used by migrants to preserve coherence of identity and to avoid stigmatization and depreciation of identity are especially useful in understanding the third narrative. These individuals cling to, or re-embrace their own values, and re-appropriate religious texts and cultural traditions as a way of escaping from rejection and discrimination. They avoid disparagement, negative self-images, and self-effacing behavior by accepting and increasing the value of their difference.

This strategy of "assertive distinctiveness," in which minorities accentuate their particularity and distinctiveness rather than hiding or denying it, is a way of coping with a socially ascribed inferior social position (Hutnik 1991). Several studies have revealed that Muslim immigrants tend to keep their religious identity more strongly as an important means of self-definition, compared to immigrants with other cultural or religious backgrounds (Bochner 1976; Hutnik 1991; Law 2000). Islamic beliefs—especially the idea of universality and brotherhood—make it possible to see the world without being trapped in the majority's meta-narrative (El-Hadi 1999). This story does not require the approval of Japanese society because Japan is viewed as an ignorant, non-Muslim country.

Because such valorization occurs in opposition to racism and may include a critical attitude toward the host culture that is both individual and collective, it is crucially important that the problems of Muslim immigrants are viewed as part of the broader issues of the host society. Situations of great cultural distance, of social exclusion and discrimination, or of rapid social change, may pose serious threats not only to a person's social identity, but to the society itself. Assimilationist societies that limit choices in acculturation must deal with the consequences of discontent among those blocked from integrating.

Integration, as an attempt to both maintain an original culture and to value interaction with other cultures has been found to relate to better mental health conditions (Berry and Kim 1988). Therefore, it was disturbing that this narrative was not found in this study. It may be an ideal strategy that is largely unavailable to Muslim workers in Japan. Unfortunately, the level of acceptance and openness toward newcomers by members of the dominant group in Japan limits the Muslim workers' identification with Japan and the possibility of their integration (Nesdale and Max 2000).

Since another study of acculturation of foreigners in Japan indicates a preference for integration, it begs the question of why this was not so in the present study (Partridge 1988). An important factor is that in many previous studies, the participants were Westerners and/or international students. Nationality and class must play some major roles in the different results of these studies. In other words, the opportunity for integration may be available for those who are from developed Western countries, but unavailable to Muslim foreign workers. Or options for integration may be available to Muslim foreign students that are not open to Muslim foreign workers.

It was also interesting that compared to other findings about Muslim immigrants, fewer people asserted their Muslim identity in this study. A study of Japanese women who married Muslim men showed that in many cases, their Muslim husbands changed the strength of their religious commitment after their marriage (Onishi 2001a). They especially seemed to value religious rules which related to husband–wife relationships and the ways of raising children. As Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre (1997) noted, people may live by one set of rules during one period of their lives, and then adhere to another set of rules at another time. Thus, it is possible that being Muslim would become more salient and gain crucial importance in their identity narratives at different stages of their lives.

In the present study, the demographic characteristic of the participants as unmarried men may have affected the result. It is possible to assume that as a result of marrying Japanese women and gaining stable status legally and socially, Muslim participants may have more power and more identity options available to them in the society.

Characteristics of Japanese society regarding religion may also have affected the result because people often make self-definitions through comparison with a specific out-group (Breakwell 1986). In Japan, religion plays a relatively small role in people's everyday lives and in their conscious way of thinking. People rarely use religion to represent themselves or to categorize others. While in many societies where major religious groups exist, the persons in this study may have been socially categorized as "Muslim immigrants," in Japan they were categorized as "foreign workers" or just "Asians." Although their religion is salient in Japanese society, it was not an aspect of interest for Japanese people (at least not until 9/11). Other factors, such as race and nationality assume much more importance for Japanese people. This focus in turn influenced the respondents to emphasize these same aspects of their identity.

It is important to note that this data was gathered in 1998. Since the terrorist attacks in September 2001 there has been a proliferation of attention to Islam in Japan. Due to this increased awareness of Islam, Japanese are probably more likely to see Muslim migrants not just as "foreign workers," but also as "Muslims." Therefore, if the study were conducted today, there may be many more narratives, and more complexity, concerning Muslim identity.

Final thoughts

An understanding of identity development following migration to a foreign country requires an examination of the cultural, social, economical, political, and legal contexts in which the individuals exist. The present immigration policy in

Japan focuses only on certain economic aspects such as whether foreigners are necessary to fulfill the impending shortage in the labor force and on their potentially disruptive power on society. However, developing policies without the perspective that migrants are also participants in the society and possible Japanese citizens in the near future will widen the gap between reality and policy. Empowerment is a key concept in providing any kind of support for foreigners in such a vulnerable position (Onishi 2001b).

The responsibility of the media for creating more positive images of foreigners is one area of necessary focus. Schools must also do a better job of developing cultural awareness and tolerance for diversity for the future development of Japan as a multicultural society that allows integration as a strategy of acculturation. Recent momentous events in the world make this task of even greater importance.

Acknowledgment

An earlier version of this chapter appeared in the *Journal of Community and Applied Psychology*, 13: 224–239, 2003. Copyright John Wiley & Sons Limited. Reproduced with permission.

Notes

1 Some of the participants were introduced through snowball sampling. The interviews were conducted either at the NGO office or at the residence of the participants, depending on their choice. Each participant was interviewed individually for 1 to 3 hours. Languages used in the interview were English, Japanese, or both, depending on the individual's language ability and preference. The participants were asked to talk about themselves and their experiences in Japan. If it was not mentioned, inquiry was made regarding motivation for coming to Japan and future plans. Each interview was tape-recorded with the participants' permission and later transcribed. Sixty-four persons participated in the study (avg. length of stay: 88.3 months S.D. = 41.6). To examine the process of psychological change during acculturation over time and the impact of contextual effects to individual experiences, the participants were classified according to several background characteristics: length of stay (shorter/longer than five years), marital status, and motivation for coming to Japan (strength of economic necessity). I focused on those who had been in Japan for more than five years, were unmarried, and had relatively little economic need to stay and earn money. Other participants of shorter stay, married, and with strong economic need were used for the purpose of comparison. As a result, 24 single men (Table 10.1) became participants in the analysis. All had relatively small economic needs in terms of supporting their extended family in their home country. Many of them came to Japan in their early 20s (Avg. = 22.3, S.D. = 2.4, Range, 16–28), had stayed for about 114 months (S.D. = 19.8, Range, 60–144 months), and are now in their 30s (Avg. = 31.9, S.D. = 2.2, Range, 28–35).

2 The stories were analyzed in relation to contextual factors that locate identities within social and cultural contexts that define alternatives and limit choices for migrants. Kvale's steps of analysis were followed by first structuring the complex interview material through transcription and then clarifying the material by distinguishing between essential and nonessential. This analysis attempted to produce richer, more condensed and coherent stories than the scattered stories of the separate interviewees (Kvale 1996). For this purpose, a grounded theory approach was also used and each story was compared with the others for classification based on the patterns of the stories

(Glaser and Strauss 1967). Mishler's (1990) model of focusing on respondents' reports of the changes in their lives, the reasons for these changes, and how they achieved their current identity also informed the interviews and analyses.

Editorial notes

A good overview of Muslims in Japan since this chapter was written, as well as the history of Muslims in Japan, can be found at Kawakami Yasunori, (2007) "Local Mosques and the Lives of Muslims in Japan," http://www.japanfocus.org/products/details/2436 (August 26, 2007) as well as Michael Penn, "Islam in Japan," http://www.asiaquarterly.com/content/view/168/ (August 26, 2007)

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Part V

Transnational, transcultural flows

11 Dejima

Creolization and enclaves of difference in transnational Japan

David Blake Willis

Entering the harbor

Arriving in Kobe in 1980 to live and work at an old, venerable overseas school, my first impressions of this international seaport were overwhelmingly Japanese. How, I wondered, as I settled my family into the tiny house that was to be our home high on the hill overlooking the harbor, could people possibly see Kobe as international?

Sure, it had a history as an extraterritorial port. But that was a hundred years ago. There was a section called Kitanocho with many foreign houses and supposedly even some resident *Gaijin* (White foreigners).[1] A small Chinatown haunted the back alleys of Motomachi, the port area, more a lair for prostitutes and sailors than for anything flashy and cosmopolitan. The Koreans were hurt, hidden, and divided. Kobe was emphatically not San Francisco or New York, the storied diversity of cities like these elusive in Kobe.

Gradually, however, I began to realize that Kobe's "international-ness," as perceived by the Japanese, had much more to do with interior images of difference, images that had clear links to a feudal and isolated past. The foreign communities were here in Kobe but they were very much apart from most of the city itself. Partly by the exclusiveness of the Japanese, partly by choice and selection, the international presence in Kobe could be found in "imagined islands of foreignness." "Imagined communities" like these, constituted through the collective creative visions of particular groups of people, are, of course, now understood to form the basis for many national and ethnic units, becoming a concrete reality in everyday life as they are "imagined" (Anderson 1991).

Though contained within Kobe in our case here, these diasporic communities centered their lives around a number of institutions that were clearly not Japanese: *Gaijin* churches, *Gaijin* clubs, and, above all, *Gaijin* schools, many of which began as "overseas schools" and then gradually became transformed into "international schools."

What I would like to do in this chapter is to draw attention to the phenomena of transnational imagined communities in Japan, communities very much like the small island of Dejima in Nagasaki Bay, which for hundreds of years served as the main and only conduit between Western countries and Japan. One of the most powerful symbols of treatment of the Other in the Japanese context, Dejima continues to occupy an important place in the Japanese consciousness. Literally "Out-Island" or "Exit-Island," Dejima was the space in-between for Japan and its Others in the long Tokugawa period of isolation. As a metaphor of external relations and internal prejudices, Dejima is, in many ways, where the Othering of Japan begins. We are not that far from this image/reality of Dejima, even as we enter the twenty-first century, yet this is not the whole picture either, these dualistic ideas of inside and outside, of native and foreigner.

The historical development of images of *Gaikokujin* or *Gaijin*, the Other as White Westerner beginning with the Portuguese and the Dutch at Dejima, are discussed here followed by a look at the inhabitants of today's Dejimas, cosmopolitan elites who live in special floating islands of transnational community, usually centrally situated around an international school. The members of these communities have been key constituents in the discourse created for and about what is foreign in Japan. As elite players in this drama, these transnational, well-to-do, and for the most part White, Others are also positioned in a dissonant place for the Japanese, at once a model, competitor, and pariah.

In this sense their status is quite different from those other transnational migrants such as Koreans, Chinese, Brazilians, Southeast Asians, and others who are not from elite backgrounds. Nor are most of these transnational elites Japanese Others, like the Ainu, Burakumin, Okinawans, Brazilians, or Japanese women described in other chapters in this book. Unlike these communities, they are harder to ignore or neglect, especially as the media and the news continually focus on their economic dominance, their political power, and their global cultural hegemony.

Many of the images of difference and of Others for the Japanese are derived from Dejima. Today, too, the transnational communities of these "outsiders" center around their own social Dejimas, those international schools where their children are educated, over 20 in Japan at this writing. These communities are the source of many contemporary images of what is foreign and different in Japan. Like Dejima, however, image and reality have been conflated in unusual ways that tell us more about the gaze of a powerful culture and its hegemony than about Dejima itself. Here I would like to look beyond these images for a different picture and a deeper understanding. This chapter thus problematizes the received images on both sides of difference in Japan as we look more deeply at the realities of the lived experiences of "foreigners" in Japan.

The physical and media presence of these transnational White elites is not the only manifestation of White/Western Other in Japan. For the Japanese these *exterior Dejimas* are also mirrored by *interior Dejimas*. The former are represented by the enclaves of foreign communities, the overt manifestations of Otherness in Japan by treaty, residence, or otherwise. The latter are the stereotypes and prejudices held about the Other, mostly by the Japanese, but also by many foreigners, who believe in the myth of being apart from the Japanese.

What has been overlooked, however, in the discussions of privileged White/foreign *Gaijin* communities in Japan on the one hand and a "pure" Japan clamoring for isolation and immersed in xenophobia on the other, has been the extent of leakage and blendings, of those mixings of Japan and its Others that have emerged in exotic new syntheses. In this Othering by the Japanese, paralleled by the Othering in turn by these foreign communities of the Japanese, there is also a transformative discourse at work in a third space which calls for our attention: creolization.

Creolization, hybridization, syncretism, cultural fusion, and *mestizaje* are processes which focus on this interplay of different cultures to create new cultural forms. Originally one of the hallmarks of Black Atlantic aesthetics and politics, this fusion process has now spread worldwide. Like Édouard Glissant, one of the foremost theorists on creolization and créolité, I am concerned with creolization as it relates to the process of globalization, the circulations and exchanges of information, materials, human resources, and various cultural tropes/approaches/styles (Britton 1999; Glissant 2000). Diaspora and cultural politics are part of the equation as well, often in ways hidden from traditional perspectives on Japan. Questions of power are very much involved in any look at creolization, although I prefer to try to situate my own views much more on the cultural imaginaries of transversal horizons and planes of approach.

The image of the port, a place of departure and arrival, an *entrepôt* of the movement of cultures and identities, helps us understand these imaginaries. Kobe has been the site of powerful surges and flows in this regard. The ancestors of many of the Brazilian, Korean, and Okinawan transmigrants spoken of by Kyo, Ishi, and Ueunten in other chapters in this book, for example, transited Kobe with their hopes and fears. For many of them, too, this was the beginning of their own creolization, in fantastic ways none of them could have imagined. Perhaps most importantly, these communities are where we can readily find those people who have transcended the barriers and limitations which, imagining the Other as separate and pure, have been imposed upon us. The reality for many of those who are Other in Japan is in fact a creolized existence.

Entering the harbor of Nagasaki Bay during Japan's feudal era, those Dutch and others who accompanied them were surely wondering, too, what to make of these circumstances of the strange and exotic, a place where they were going to be in a golden cage for a year until the next boat returned and took them away, where their very persons were subject to strict and severe surveillance, and where *us vs. them* was a daily confrontation. But as we shall see, this was not, and is not, the entire story.

Roots of exclusion: Dejima in historical perspective

The Dutch at Dejima, the only Westerners allowed a window, however small, on this mysterious island nation, provided most of the information on Japan from 1640 to 1853. Their firsthand accounts were invaluable in creating images of an imagined community, of Japan as the rest of the world saw it. Likewise, the images received by the Japanese of the outside world were for hundreds of years mediated by Dejima and its Dutch inhabitants. Dejima functioned literally and figuratively as the metaphor of Japan's relations with the outside world. That this tiny island had a disproportionate impact on Japan's modernization can be seen in the initial forays by the Japanese into Western learning, called *rangaku*, literally "studies of the Dutch." Pursued in the Dutch language because that was the only available mode of communication with the West, *rangaku* was actually a generic

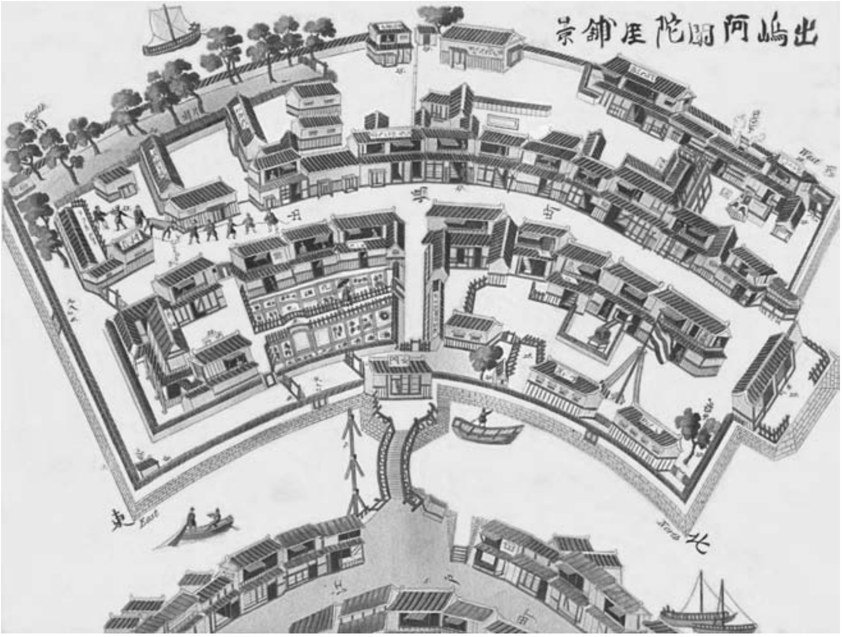

Figure 11.1 Dejima 1780: Western copy of Tomishimaya's Woodblock print by Isaac Titsingh, 1822. (Photo: Wolfgang Michel, private collection)

expression for a wide range of disciplines from medicine to engineering to biology; in other words, modern science.[2]

The origins of Dejima lie in the political turmoil following the early seventeenth-century unification of Japan under Tokugawa Ieyasu. Fear of the Other, especially of a possible usurpation of power by elite insiders utilizing Christianity and supported by the Portuguese, had gripped the Tokugawa government. In 1635 the *Bakufu* ordered 25 wealthy Nagasaki merchants to build Dejima, an island in Nagasaki harbor, for the internment and isolation of suspect Portuguese residents. The clear intent was curtailment of the propagation of Christianity and possible sedition by Europeans.[3] Christian rebellion erupted on the nearby Shimabara Peninsula soon afterwards, resulting in all Portuguese being viewed as serious suspects. They were then sent *en masse* to Dejima. By 1639 all Portuguese had been expelled from Japan, leaving Dejima empty.[4]

The role of Christianity should be especially emphasized here. Subversive in the extreme for multiple reasons, the Christian doctrine of equality, that all people are equal before God, directly challenged the feudal Tokugawa order. In many ways one of the key foundations of the later idea and acceptance of multicultural societies around the world, Christianity in Japan was thus seen as the most dangerous of all outside forces. The vehemence with which Christians were then persecuted, and the fact that even today nearly 400 years later, less than three percent of the Japanese population has become Christian, attest to the severe Othering visited upon this religion and its adherents.

A policy of national isolation towards Western powers and the outside world had begun: *sakoku*. Much has been made of the isolation mentality of the Japanese deriving from this policy, but I would like to argue here that the picture is much more complex, that images *of* and *from* Dejima are operating just as powerfully in the Japanese consciousness today, historically affecting, in turn, how non-Japanese see Japan.

After the events of 1639, the Dutch residents of the trading factory of Hirado, who had been in Japan since the early 1600s, were left as the sole non-Asian representative in the country, a reward for helping out the Japanese against the rebel Shimabara Christians. The Dutch were soon sent to Dejima, too, however, and strictly confined there. By 1641 Dejima was the only place left in Japan with any Europeans, leading to the widespread, long-held image of an isolated and mysterious nation. That at least some of the members of the rather sizeable Chinese community of Nagasaki, along with Koreans who were living in various parts of Japan as potters, traders, and so on, were allowed freer movement is another story which bears closer examination by scholars.

Research by Ronald Toby and others has shown the importance of the actual connections with the rest of Asia, however, especially Korea and China, belying the name *sakoku jidai* (isolation era) and indicating more of a "controlled openness." As he notes, *sakoku*, the word widely used for the "closed country" or seclusion era, invariably associated with the exclusion of foreigners, did not even appear in Japan until 1801 (Toby 1984: 12; see also Toby 2006). The reality for all but the most upper reaches of Japanese society during this time was isolation, separation, and an inward turning, however. These attitudes and approaches strongly conditioned the ways Japanese see Others even today. Toby's careful scholarship is arrayed against a Japanese establishment that holds a firm consensus, facts notwithstanding, of an isolated nation and "isolation era."

The isolation policy affected Japanese and Westerners alike, not only physically but also psychologically. In 1633, for example, the government banned all travel by Japanese overseas on pain of death, though this was not often actually observed, and the severe ban on Christianity for all Japanese is well known. For many years, too, as Goodman has noted, foreigners, especially Europeans, were regarded as the source of most catastrophes occurring in Japan: "For most of these disasters foreigners were blamed both for the sake of convenience and also because many Japanese honestly believed that the violation of Japan by aliens and their despised ideas was seriously antagonizing the *kami* (deities)" (Goodman 2000: 6). The picture then becomes even more complex.

The Other as both a source of amusement, even ridicule, and the Other as powerful guest to be respected and treated with awe are familiar modes of Othering by the Japanese even today. Like the Chinese tribute system, the arrangement was reciprocal, and the Dutch as supplicants received nearly as much as they gave. Ironically, all foreigners were originally called *Tōyō-jin* (Eastern peoples), including Koreans, Chinese, and Europeans, among others. This usage lasted late into the

Tokugawa Era, with the concept and words *Gaikokujin* or *Gaijin* as we now know them taking hold only much later. Only gradually did a need appear for a separate portrayal of Westerners (*Seiyō-jin*). The idea of inside and outside, however, had a deep hold on the Japanese consciousness early on, something which has continued to the present day. Maybe more significantly, the Japanese word for difference, *chigau*, also means "wrong" or "abnormal."

Dejima was thus the first, the most powerful, and the most enduring symbol of the Japanese mentality and approach toward Others. The Japanese colonial empire later classified people as *naichi* (interior) (the so-called *Yamato*, "pure" Japanese) or *gaichi* (exterior) subjects, the colonized peoples, *gai* being outside and *nai* being inside. Again, the metaphor of inside/interior and outside/exterior plays out through the historical record. We also see this in the words used for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Gai-mushō*) and the Home Ministry (*Nai-mushō*). This partly derived, too, from the Confucian view that humankind was divided between the "cultured" (*ka*) and the "barbarian" (*i*), those who followed the Way and those who could have no understanding of this superior moral path (Duus 1997; see also Morris-Suzuki 1996). This included the Ainu or others in the north of the country, who were similarly considered out of the realm of culture (Siddle 1995). The ambivalent recent reception of China and the Chinese in Japan has ironic parallels here, but the history and nuances, of course, go much deeper in the case of the Othering of the Chinese in Japan. See Tanaka (1993) and Tsu (this volume) for attitudes and behavior that might be called Shina-ism, something akin to Edward Said's Orientalism.

More importantly, the general idea of the Other—those on the edge, outside the pale, forbidden, exotic, erotic, and dangerous—begins to take a deep hold in the Japanese consciousness from this period. So much so, in fact, that by the middle of the twentieth century one European scholar of Japan could write that "Before the war *Gaijin* was a term highly charged with feeling for the Japanese, inspiring on the one hand admiration, envy, curiosity, even servility, and on the other hatred, suspicion and contempt" (Maraini, quoted in Williams 1963: 10). As one Japanese scholar stated in the early years of the twenty-first century, "Dejima is an embodiment of Japanese mind and Japanese culture. Even today, 150 years after the abolishment of Dejima, we still have 'internal Dejimas' and that gives us a conflict when communicating with foreign people" (Seki 2002).

While the foreign communities in Japan evoke these "internal Dejimas" for the Japanese, the inhabitants of today's Dejimas also serve a function as purveyors and interpreters of Japanese images and ideas about Japanese culture to the outside world. Often, they are informants for non-Japanese speaking journalists and others who journey to Japan in search of stories and interpretations of the Japanese. As cross-cultural go-betweens they serve a key function in image-making and characterization within Japan of what is foreign and Other.

Foreign/*Gaijin* communities in Japan today: islands man-made and other

When I first came to Japan in 1972, it was still very much a land of "interior Dejimas." Hitch-hiking from Kyushu to Hokkaido, with an extended stay in

Table 11.1 Foreign nationals in Kobe (1871–2006)

	1871	*1893*	*1901*	*1920*	*1930*
Korea (N, S)					11,912
China		1,004	1,700	3,209	6,636
USA		102	193	222	230
UK	116	351	496	451	513
Germany	36	177	240	85	256
Total	152	1,768	3,144	4,733	8,942
	1950	*1960*	*1980*	*1990*	*2006*
Korea (N, S)	14,777	21,731	26,891	27,923	23,102
China	6,841	7,459	7,244	8,204	12,481
USA	102	429	671	1,142	1,265
UK	151	338	425	411	460
Germany	150	241	254	219	210
Total	22,893	31,637	37,743	40,993	44,553

Sources: Nakano 1995, Kobe City Hall, and http://www.city.kobe.jp/cityoffice/06/013/toukei/data/datakobe/dk180306.xls.

Shibamata, Tokyo, I experienced during my two months in Japan a culture resistant to the outside world except on its own terms. Although I had traveled in over forty countries, I had encountered similar wariness of the foreign and different in only one other country, Thailand. People were, however, unfailingly friendly and polite, including children, with their ubiquitous shouting of "*Gaijin*! *Gaijin*!" English, on the other hand, was almost nowhere to be seen outside of platform signs on the Yamanote Loop Line in central Tokyo and at the central stations of major cities like Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka.

Later, after I came to live and work in Japan in the mid-1970s, I found the foreign enclaves situated around international schools. My first job was at a Catholic, international girls' school on the Bluff in Yokohama, the old foreign community above the port. During that time I visited ten other international schools in Japan and observed that they, too, had similar communities. Although some people chose to live apart from these communities, the social pull was hard to resist. Having children in one of these overseas international schools, where one could feel comfortable speaking one's own language and mixing with one's peers in a special "imagined community," meant that, at least for most of the families associated with the school, their life would be greatly circumscribed by circles of difference, of non-Japaneseness.

Yet there have always been those who could be seen as loners or floaters, for whom life in Japan had a special meaning. These are people who have lived both inside and outside the surrounding Japanese society. Even for those deep inside what is often called the *Gaijin ghetto*, the influence of Japan has been inescapable, as anyone who has lived in Japan for some time can attest. Moreover, while the Japanese in their orderly way of approaching the Other saw Dejima and then foreigners in the treaty ports as living in planned, separate communities, the

Table 11.2 Foreign nationals in Kobe (May 2007)

	Number	*Ratio (%)*
Total Kobe	43,947	
Korea (N, S)	22,388	51
China	12,570	29
USA	1,291	3
Vietnam	1,272	3
India	1,068	2
Philippines	881	2
Brazil	651	2
UK	424	1
Australia	274	
Thailand	269	
Canada	240	
Peru	217	
Indonesia	201	
Germany	161	
Others	2,040	4.6

Source: Kobe City Government (in Japanese, Exel file on number of foreigners) http://www.city.kobe.jp/cityoffice/06/013/toukei/contents/datakobe.htm (July 25, 2007).

reality was one of spontaneity and mixing as well. Othering by the Japanese gave foreigners an allure, at least for some Japanese, leading to consequences neither intended nor foreseen.

Elite foreign enclaves like these have been a part of the Japanese landscape since the beginning of the modern era, when foreign communities were allowed into Japan in extraterritorial settlements.[5] The idea that these settlements were beyond the control of Japan, though on Japanese soil, rankled the Japanese, who clamored for their return. This was done late in the nineteenth century, but the idea of separate sections of certain cities, notably Kobe, Yokohama, Tokyo, and Nagasaki, was acceptable late into the twentieth century. There were both residences that were planned and others that were spontaneous, in spite of the Japanese naming of the original treaty port areas as *kyoryūchi*, a sort of confined settlement or concession.

Japanese intentions were clear: that Kobe and the other treaty ports be new versions of Dejima, somewhat expanded but still tightly controlled. An early indication of this in Kobe was construction of the *Tokugawa Dō*, a road high through the Rokkō Mountains from the eastern part of the city to Akashi, skirting the foreign settlement. Built by the government in the late 1860s, the express intention of this path was to have all major traffic totally avoid Kobe and the foreigners (Kōbe-shi Shiminkyoku 1973).

The extraordinary hold which this Dejima image of *Gaijin* communities has on the Japanese imagination, then and now, can be gauged by the numbers of foreigners, which have actually been quite small. This consciousness has traditionally equated anything “foreign” with *Gaijin* and White, yet as a lens this is a prejudiced one indeed. In 1893 there were 1,768 foreigners in Kobe: 1004 Chinese, 351 Britons, 177 Germans, 102 Americans, 133 others.[6] Yokohama had similar figures. A little over a hundred years later, the Kobe foreign community totals 44,000, yet 35,000 of this number are Koreans and Chinese (25,000 and 10,000, respectively), most of whom were born and brought up in Japan (see the essays by Kyo and Tsu in this same volume). Culturally they are essentially Japanese-Chinese or Japanese-Korean. Of the total number of foreigners in Kobe today, only 1,291 are Americans, for example, although there are also an unknown number of binational Japanese/Americans who would not be reported as Americans (see Kanaji and Senzaki 2000: 66–67).[7] The Japanese image of Kobe as having a large *Gaijin* (White) foreign community is a manifestation of the continuing hold of Dejima on the Japanese psyche.[8]

The foreign communities of the Bluff in Yokohama and Kitanocho in Kobe even became, and still remain, improbable tourist destinations with the advent of TV dramas in the 1970s and 1980s such as NHK's *Kazamidori*, the story of *Gaijin/Nihonjin* interaction in the previous century in the *Ijinkan* area of Kobe.[9] *Kazamidori* was based on the true story of a Wakayama woman named Matsura Gin who married a former German POW in the 1920s and set up a German bakery in Kobe. The rousing success of this TV series resulted in the further exoticization of the area, even a kind of Occidentalization, mirrored by the Orientalization of Chinatowns in the United States and elsewhere, where Japanese dressed as nineteenth-century Westerners would give tours of old houses that had been only recently occupied by non-Japanese. Those tourists coming from various parts of Japan to see "Exotic Kobe," as the Kobe City Tourist Bureau announces it, are similar to those who go to Nagasaki in search of the domesticated Other in *castella* (sponge cake), *chanpon* (chop suey), and Dejima.[10]

It was not, however, in one of these illusory settings that I found myself in 1976, when I began living in Yokohama, or later in 1980, when I moved to Kobe, but rather in vibrant transnational communities that were far more exotic in their actual, and very active, lived experiences.

Dejima communities and the floating school

In the mid-1980s a Japanese film was made with an international school in Kobe as its setting. Called *Hyōryū Kyōshitsu* (*The Drifting Classroom* 1987) the school was clearly the Columbia Academy of Kobe, my research and work site. Based on the idea of a time-slip, the multicultural students led by their teacher played by Troy Donahue have a difficult time figuring out where they are or how to get home. It was an apt metaphor for the school and the school community, for they were no longer stationary like Dejima. The Dejima communities associated with the school were, in fact, adrift, floating in a new multicultural sea.

When I joined St. Marie's International School in Yokohama and then later the Columbia Academy (CA), it seemed to me that these varied and striking landscapes radiated culturally from a series of nexus points. These were not just drifting classrooms: they were floating communities. Neither ordinary schools nor ordinary communities, these international schools highlighted processes of transformation, especially radical mixing. Blending American and European curricula with doses of local Japanese color in language or cultural studies; students and their extended families with multiple allegiances (linguistic, national, and cultural); and a faculty/staff bewilderingly complex in their variety and experiences, was considered "normal" at St. Marie's and at CA.

These "school districts" are Dejimas in their own way, too. They exist apart from the local Japanese community on first glance, but like Dejima, there are also interactions, often hidden directly from view, between non-Japanese residents, local Japanese, and others. Beginning with Dejima and continuing into the last half of the twentieth century with those foreign communities living in and around Japan's port cities, the idea of "enclaves of difference" which the title of this paper implies has, in some ways, become less and less salient as a way of seeing Others in Japan.

From 1980–2007 I interviewed hundreds of the members of the school, first, my students, their parents, and colleagues, and then, through an ongoing follow-up study, members of the school's alumni population for the years 1913–1988 (Willis 1986, 1992a,b, 1993, 2001b; Willis and Enloe 1990; and Willis, Enloe and Minoura 1994). What has been most striking is the extent to which the members of the imagined CA community view culture as a flexible, active construct (or set of constructs) for their lives. The characteristics of the members of this diverse school and its alumni population spread throughout the world are strikingly similar. As they circulate in transnational spaces, the new identities these people have spoken about to me are recognizably what have been called elsewhere diasporic identities (Hall 1996), hybrid identities (Bhabha 1994; Werbner and Modood 1997), third spaces (Bhabha 1997), and discrepant cosmopolitanisms (Cheah and Robbins 1998).[11]

Students at CA are often classified by administrators, teachers, and outsiders according to "nationality," and a breakdown this way does reveal great diversity: the student body represents 37 countries. Although a clear majority does not exist for any one group, there are pluralities, notably North Americans, Japanese, Europeans, Indians, and binationals. These diverse subpopulations need to also be considered in light of their birthplace and length of residence in the host country. Over half the students were born in Japan, followed by North America and Europe. These people, along with Chinese, Koreans, and Others, are usually called resident aliens or foreign residents. On the other hand, slightly over one-third of the students are from sojourner families present in Japan less than five years, many of them bicultural in background. The remaining students are Japanese, some returnees, all of whom have spent the better part of their lives in Japan.

The primary mode of experiencing others in Columbia Academy (CA), however, is not through nationality but through cultures, languages, personalities, values, and shared interests. Groups in CA define the boundaries of social relationships. They have their own meeting places during and after school, their own languages, their own interests, and their own roles. Although there were some people who viewed other groups as consisting solely of Americans because they spoke English or solely of Japanese because they spoke Japanese, those holding such perceptions seemed to be newcomers who were usually monolingual. None of the student groups I observed in CA consisted of one nationality alone. Even Japanese groups at CA, as seen by some Americans, actually included Koreans, Chinese, Whites, and mixed kids—if they could *speak* Japanese.

Which brings us to the role of languages in apparent Dejimas like CA. Many students are bilingual and some speak three or more languages. Large numbers claim proficiency in both English and Japanese, especially in conversation, though this has not always been the case. At CA the dominant languages are English and Japanese, but one can occasionally hear German, Chinese, Tagalog, or Korean. Other than Japanese and English, CA students report reasonable fluency in more than twenty languages. Most are bilingual, and many speak three languages or more. The English comes in four varieties: American, British, Indian, and Japanese.

The Japanese spoken comes in Kobe, Osaka, Kyoto, Tokyo, male/female, and other variants, with accented versions from Europe and North America thrown in for good measure. It should be stressed that the Japanese spoken is not the delicate formal language of polite society. Rather, it is a creole *patois* borne from street language, liberally mixed with English vocabulary. It is a CA language, a *chanpon-go*, a *CA-go* (a hotch-potch or potpourri is perhaps the best analogy). The code-switching they use as they speak these languages thus encompasses a switching of cultural roles as well, a phenomenon that reflects cultural change and other dynamics.

Having one's upbringing in Japan means that these inhabitants of apparent (psychic) Dejimas were already learning, even if partly, how to be Japanese. One graduate, the director of a well-known public mental health service in California, put it this way:

> And temperamentally I didn't like psychiatrists so much either but I felt there was a philosophical approach to things and . . . sort of . . . bicultural. You know what I mean? You would take cultural considerations into mind. And those kinds of things, I think, is what led me into psychiatry . . . This is why . . . I think most psychoanalysts are Jewish . . . they grew up with sort of a bicultural experience even if they grew up in New York . . . it's like there is their culture and there's the dominant culture. And I sort of grew up with that in Japan. There was the missionary culture. And then there was American base culture and there was Japanese. And it's like you are looking at and evaluating those things all the time.
>
> (Randolph Breyer, 1964 graduate)

Rebecca, also a graduate from the 1960s, had similar thoughts about identity that reflect on the enclave nature of her early years (or, rather, lack of it):

> Identity? My early years in Japan, I remember lots of pictures of us. A tape of us singing in Japanese. Being the friend of new immigrant kids in America, hanging out with them, especially Koreans and Egyptians, has been

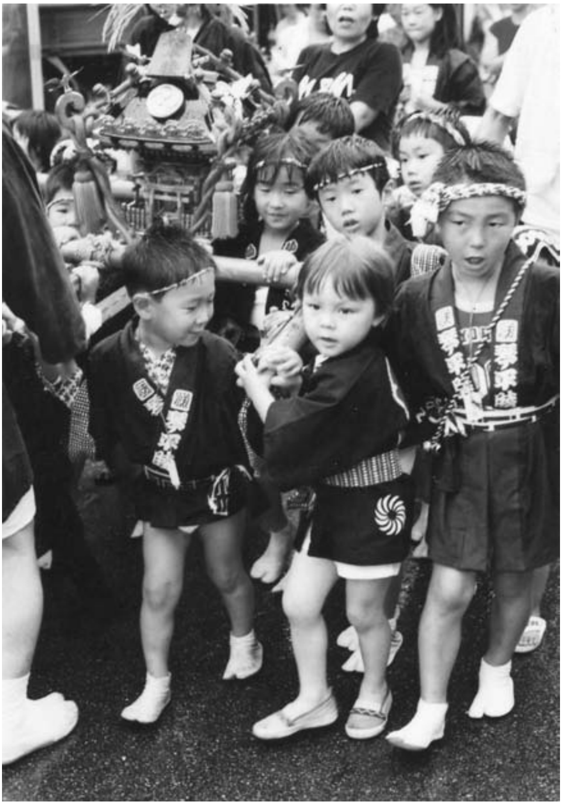

Figure 11.2 Japanese festival, Tokyo, 1980s. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

> very much a part of my identity. That second time we were in Japan I had that third culture feeling, not Japan, but not America . . . I thought of myself as American, in citizenship, in a national origins sense. But I'm broader than the average American in a cultural and a social sense.

Expatriates or locals?

The word expatriate no longer seems appropriate for many of these people. Frequently moving back and forth between countries, these cultural facilitators or go-betweens are not only comfortable in this role but relish it (Zachary 2000). The contexts they choose to live in are deliberate and with a mix of interactions. Many of these people view their lives as works in progress, as creative responses to the multiple experiences of positions and places they have shared with others.

Of course, they also have little control of their interactions in the larger Japanese society, especially in the over-generalized way in which they are seen in impersonal contexts as *Gaijin*. Yet times are changing. There has been a pronounced tendency away from the very impersonal (and to some minds racist)

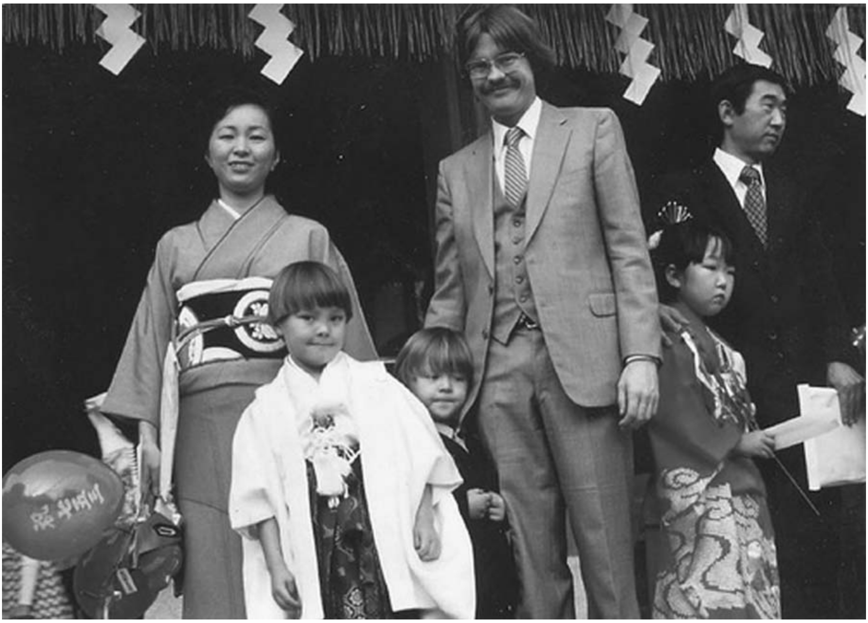

Figure 11.3 Family shrine visit, *Shichi-go-san* (7–5–3) ceremony, 1982. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

Gaijin towards more specific and more complex identifications. The same person may be viewed in contexts of more personal interaction as *ano Amerika-jin* (that American), *Amerika-jin no David* (David the American), *David-Sensei, mata Amerika-jin* (Teacher David, also an American), *David-Sensei* (Teacher David), *Ryūta-chan no otō-san David* (Little Ryuta's Papa, David), or simply *Debido* (David), depending on the intimacy of contact in the workplace and elsewhere.

The question of the marginalization of these various populations is an interesting and complex one, not nearly as simple and clear-cut as the images and stereotypes of Dejima would have it, from either the Japanese or the non-Japanese perspective. The more active deployment of strategies of being inside or outside and the wider range of possibilities in Japanese society is making these Dejima-like images less and less tenable. Rather than personal narratives being decided for individuals, there is more active choice by these formerly marginalized populations regarding who they will interact with and how that interaction will proceed. At the same time, Japanese interaction with the non-Japanese world now comprises a much wider range of responses. Strategies of resistance and the insistence on self-definition are features, of course, not just of marginalized Others in Japanese society, but of many Japanese themselves, especially young people and women.

Cosmopolitan alternatives abound for those with resources, making transnational elites less and less vulnerable to typecasting and ghettoizing.

The niches available for lifestyles and lifecourses have proliferated. Of course, these "emancipatory turns" (see Kelsky on Japanese women in this volume) are very much dependent on social and economic resources, which elites indeed have. The social and cultural capital they acquire in terms of education, money, status, experiences, and so on, cannot be overlooked. The narratives which the members of the alumni community of CA present are thus transnationalized, no longer simply internationalized, a genre represented in the writings of peripatetic souls like Iyer (2001) and Zachary (2000), who explore what Kelsky calls "the increasingly complicated terrain of identity formation in transnationalized capitalist regimes." These people are members, not of ethnic or religious communities, but of transcultural diasporas.

What they share is a common cultural time and space, often in the past, as their anchors. Territory has meaning only insofar as it is a space: Kobe or Kitanocho or Kansai. The land itself has only a secondary meaning for these transients. Their anchors are the spaces of identities, the more plural the better. Their consciousness is double, even multiple, something W.E.B. DuBois (2005) famously spoke of in the context of Black/White relations in America. They engage in the creation of transnational networks of shared meanings and responsibilities for each other. There are few dead ends for these transnationals and transculturals. Most of the time, various exits and escapes are available. The exit represented by the name Dejima thus has multiple interpretations, but what may be most important is that it is more passage than exit. This passage contains within its corridors the yearnings, hopes, and desires of those who have their own interior and exterior Dejimas, be they Japanese, foreign, or both.

Border crossings, fragility, transience: Creole communities in Japanese society

Mixtures of cultures have always been a part of larger cultural landscapes, but usually at the margins, often in ways making them all but invisible. What is different today is the breath-taking speed at which encounters and creolizations are taking place. For graphic realism in this chase for the mestizo, few settings offer as complex and sophisticated data as the Japan-Other matrix, that hyper-drive of cultural blendings.[12] What has been less recognized is the extent to which these mixings have always been a central feature of Japan's discourse with the Other.

Like the invisibility of the Japanese women on Dejima, the mixing of foreigners and Japanese was marginalized, too. The only foreigners permitted to stay on Dejima were men, it was said. But that, of course, is only half of the story, since the privileging of one side of the discourse has historically left much unsaid. It is here that we hope to recover what have been images, however dimly perceived, of fragility and other border crossings. While Japan and Dejima were islands apart from the rest of the world it was easy to sustain this discourse of transience, but just as Dejima eventually became a peninsula and part of the mainland, so too has Japan, however reluctantly, joined the rest of the world.

The women on Dejima, whose voices were quieted or unheard, knew well the importance of the in-between, the processes, and inter-relationships between them and the men of Dejima (Goodman 2000). Their names include Maruyama Yujo, Uriuno, Itohagi, and Sonogi. Although there was an infamous sign at the entrance of Dejima that ostensibly said "Whores only, but no other women shall be suffer'd to go in," G.F. Meijlan, the opperhoofd or head of the Dejima mission in the early 1800s, highly praised these women for "their strict fidelity and affection and appeared to regard such liaisons as temporary marriages" (Dejima display wording, Nagasaki Kyōiku Iinkai 2002). Plaques at Dejima today use the term "courtesan" instead of whore or prostitute. A more recent source delicately puts it as follows: "…there had been on Dejima a lively pattern of hiring Japanese women. This not only met certain requirements of the Dutch residents but also permitted the Japanese authorities to know all the details, even the most intimate ones, of what was going on in the daily life of the trading post."

Sonogi, also known as O-Taki-San in literature from that era, was Siebold's partner. She has been immortalized in the scientific name Siebold gave to the hydrangea (*Hydrangea otaska*), which is from Japan. The immense popularity of *Kazamidori*, as well as these stories from Dejima, testifies to a continuing Japanese fascination with creolization, often in the form of a liaison between a Japanese female and a Western male (Van Rij 2001: 18; Earns 2002).

Later, in the early Meiji period, the famous Nagasaki merchant Thomas Glover took as his bride a woman named Tsuru, the divorced wife of an Osaka samurai. Their son Tommy (Tomisaburo Kuraba) became an important figure in the Nagasaki community at the turn of the century and thereafter, indicating a creative Creolization of cultures which was replicated in other Eurasian settings in Kobe, Yokohama, and elsewhere. Kobe, for example, had many alliances between Europeans/Americans and Japanese. Like the Creole experiences of the Caribbean, these tended to be mostly a replication of the colonial patterns of hegemony, power, and gender, with European/American husbands and Japanese wives.

The times did not always allow for such people, however, and being Creole could become a terrible burden when nationalistic feelings shaded into racist attacks on anyone even somewhat different, such as during World War II. Tommy's tortured story of being both a member of the Nagasaki elite and later a despised representative of the enemy as World War II approached, deserves careful research from the perspectives of creolization. Tommy's house in Nagasaki has numerous photographs and other documentation from his life and era.

The Glover mansion, ostensibly the site of Madame Butterfly (Cio-Cio-San, *sic*, in literature of that time) now competes with the Atomic Bomb Museum as Nagasaki's premier tourist attraction. The Puccini production of that name (said to be Puccini's greatest opera) as well as the Gilbert & Sullivan operetta *The Mikado* (supposedly the most popular light opera of all time), of course had much to do with diffusion of the images of the Japanese as Other in Europe and America. This dazzling example of creolization as Japonisme is discussed in Van Rij (2001). It should also be mentioned that some of the inspiration for these stories of creolization was Loti's classic *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887, 2002).

O-Kiku-San, as she is called in the novel, was in fact Loti's lover and the prototype for Madame Butterfly, who of course lives on in the immensely popular musical *Miss Saigon*.[13]

It is now up to us, many years later, to see that there was indeed a spontaneous community on Dejima, just as there are spontaneous communities of difference, enclaves of foreignness, in various parts of Japan now and at other times historically, which have mixed with Japan. This paper's title implied the idea of an island of ethnic separateness floating in the sea of Japanese society, but what I really want to emphasize is that, however we may see these communities of difference on the surface, as foreign ghettos or whatever other appellation we might concoct for them, the day-to-day reality is something else again. Yes, there are ethnic enclaves, but they are leaky around the seams to say the least.

We may be in a position now to turn our gaze away from national or ethnic units, however efficient such a scholarly cast might have been, and more towards the actual processes of human transactions between groups that originally see themselves as different. It is actually the encounter with the Other, and not the stereotyped images of us and them, that interests us. The focus should thus be not so much on difference, on the one hand, or the surrounding, supposed homogeneity, on the other, but on the process itself of mixing and creation.

The Japan-Other/Other-Japan creolization we are looking at here and now, both people and processes of interaction, are part of a worldwide blossoming of understanding regarding *créolité*, of multiple worlds. One of the first voices of creolization in Japan, though he spoke in softly whispered tones, was the nineteenth century's most famous Creole, Lafcadio Hearn. Although he is not known for this side in Japan, we now recognize him as one of the first modern, public examples of a creolizing Japan, paradoxically so as Hearn is known to every school child in Japan as someone who "*became for the Japanese 'their gaijin' laureate, the single greatest interpreter, in their eyes, of their inmost cultural secrets*." Son of a Greek mother and Irish father, he grew up in Ireland and America and made his early fame in New Orleans, giving the first detailed reports of Creole cultures (Pulvers 2001; Starr 2001). His later remarks on becoming Japanese but not fully being accepted by the adopted country he loved provides an anguished commentary on the discourse of colonial mentalities, prejudices regarding cultural mixing, and the severe Othering of nineteenth-century Japan.

Dejima is thus a reflexive "roots narrative" of cultural transformations as creolizations. It is about how Others in Japan during various eras have imagined, invented, and identified themselves. The modern images of Dejima suggest the shifting cultures of transnational diaspora, those cultures which best reveal the postmodern condition and the search for new public spaces.[14]

Dejima: a final note

Finally, I would like to note the historical and spatial transformations of Nagasaki and Dejima leading up to today, as the symbolism is rich and ironic indeed. The original trading permitted between foreigners and the Japanese merchants of Nagasaki was carried out on a long spit of land extending into the harbor, hence *naga* (long) and *saki* (a cape or spit of land). Literally being held at first at arms' length, this trading later moved into the city itself.

Political turmoil, as discussed at the beginning of this paper, then resulted in the building of Dejima and the concentration of the foreign presence on this island. Whether the name chosen for the island connoted exit (of the foreigners presumably), a gateway to the outer world (for the Japanese), or simply a "jutting-out" (another possible interpretation of the name Dejima), is open to debate. Certainly, like many aspects of Japanese culture it can be read in *all* of these ways.

The beginning of the end for Dejima was on November 9, when a convention was signed opening the land gate from December 1, never to be closed again. The treaty was finally signed on January 30, 1856 (The Conclusion 2002). As the modern era began and with it the end of the Dutch East India Company's factory, Dejima's usefulness had declined. Dredging of Nagasaki's harbor for commercial reasons resulted in one section of the island being carved off and then, later, the entire island being turned into a peninsula. A large scale harbor project designed to make Nagasaki into a modern international port (1897–1904) resulted in waterfront on both sides of the harbor being filled in and loss of the historic island Dejima (Deshima Re-Emerges 2002). Japan's relations with the outside world had swung full-turn again to that of an arm's length relationship with the outside world, engaged, but on its own terms, and at a distance, just as with Dejima's fortunes.

Forgotten and abandoned, Dejima was absorbed by an expanding metropolis, becoming merely an address and streetcar stop, fronted on one side alone by water, a small tidal inlet. I vividly recall my first visit to Nagasaki in the late 1980s when I rode this trolley. Hearing "Dejima" called out dryly after crossing a small bridge, a quite ordinary stop before two sharp curves leading to the old Chinese quarter, I thought that, yes, Dejima has indeed been forgotten.

Forgotten that is until the late twentieth century, when the merchants of Nagasaki realized anew the value of Dejima as symbol and image, this time as a potential draw for tourists. The lack of an impression made by this undistinguished part of downtown Nagasaki made the city fathers blush a bit apparently, and it was announced at the end of the 1990s that Dejima was to be recreated once more as an island. Considerable monies were allocated to the reproduction of the island as a tourist destination, including an assemblage of buildings and careful archeological surveys meant to recall the days of isolation and romance of yore. The long-term restoration plans call for surrounding Dejima by water on all four sides again and the complete reproduction of the fan-shaped island and trading post. This project is expected to cost an enormous amount of money and take many years, since it will mean rerouting of the Nakashima River and redesign of city streets (Dejima: Restoration work 2002).

Dutch relations with Japan historically continue to be a subject of great fascination for the Japanese and Westerners alike (Japan—Het eiland…van de roodharigen 2002). Most astonishing of all has been the success of an entire

Dutch amusement complex built near Nagasaki that has become one of Japan's premier tourist attractions (New Amsterdam in Nagasaki, Japan—Huis Ten Bosch Resort & Theme Park 2002). Huis Ten Bosch can, in some ways, be seen as a late-twentieth-century Dejima, allowing the Japanese to experience Otherness without actually going to another land. It should be noted that this fascination with the Other as White *Gaijin* has extended to the creation of Parque Espana or *Supein Mura* (Spanish Village) (2002) near Ise, not to mention the various Disney parks in Tokyo and Universal Studios Japan in Osaka (Hendry 2000).

Dejima itself, the original locus of Japan and its Other, has once more been changed, this time into a major tourist destination, a stop somewhere between the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum and the mansion of Puccini's Madame Butterfly. One wonders what this means in terms of Dejima's fabled symbolism. It is hard not to conclude that Dejima will once again be an island, this time perhaps looking out to the sea and to the world rather than inwards. Japan and the World will, at the same time, continue to view each other through the lens of Dejima, however much this image may be in transition. An island, an *entrepôt* of ideas and cultures, a place of creolizing mixtures and lively entertainments, Dejima retains its place, transformed once again, in the consciousness of the Japanese and Japan's Others.

Notes

1 *Gaijin*, from *Gaikokujin*, means "outside person" or "outside country person" and until recently mainly described White Westerners in Japan. Non-White foreigners have been variously described as *Chugokujin* (Chinese), *Kankokujin* or *Chosenjin* (Koreans), and so on. Blacks are often described in reference to their color (*Kokujin*) and one also sometimes hears the expression, Whites (*Hakujin*). Some recent immigrants have been described as *Nikkeijin* (Japanese-Brazilians). The usage of *Gaikokujin* is becoming more inclusive, though often through the expression *Gaikokujin hanzai*, foreigners' crimes, a not-so-veiled reference to the antipathy and racism directed against illegal laborers (visa over-stayers) and dubious visitors, most of whom are seen as Chinese. See Weiner (2002) for one take on this experience of being Othered in Japan.

2 "Until the opening of the port as a result of the Ansei Treaty of 1859, or about 218 years thereafter, Dejima played an important role as Japan's only window to the Western world." (Placard at the entrance to Dejima.) A research trip to Nagasaki and Dejima in June 2002 found a well-developed historical site maintained by the *Nagasaki Kyōiku Iinkai* (Nagasaki Board of Education), which is responsible for the historical environs of Dejima today. The most extensive original source on Dejima is Bluss, Viall, Remmelink, and van Daalen (2004). Other sources include Goodman (2000), Jansen (2000), Bodart-Bailey (1998), Von Siebold (1973), Michel (1993, 2000), Mizutani and Nakamura (1998), Kobayashi (1999), Viallé (2000), Verenigde . . . (2002), Dejima-Deshima (2002), Japan—Het Island . . . (2002), Deshima 400 years . . . (2002), and Thiede, Hiki, and Keil (2000).

3 There is a certain irony here as many of Japan's recent venues for globalization have also been man-made islands, marvels of engineering in the major ports of Kobe, Osaka, Yokohama, and Tokyo.

4 Dejima was thus originally a concentration camp, not unlike those built by the United States in the early 1940s to house suspected Japanese-Americans during World War II, including an island in Los Angeles harbor.

5 The foreign community in Japan, especially Kobe, has been carefully documented by Harold Williams, whose papers are housed in a special collection at the National

Library in Australia (2006). See also Williams (1959a,b,c,d, 1963, 1975, 1978, 1984). Williams drew heavily, as I have, from the *Hiogo News* (1879, 1881), *The Japan Chronicle 1868–1918 Jubilee Number; The Kobe Chronicle (Weekly) 1897–1901*; and Kitane (1986) *Nihon Shoki Shinbun Zenshū, Vols. 1–45, 1857*. See also Schwantes (1955), Kobe's Foreign Community (1978), Seton and Seton (1979), ICKAN (1980), Kohyama (1984), Manthorpe (1986), Barr (1988), Rosenstone (1988), Wada (1988), Watanabe (1991), Shinkai (1994), Kobe Gaikokujin (1999), Kobe Shiritsu Hakubutsukan (1999), Kanaji and Senzaki (2000a,b,c), Matsuda (2001a), The Kobe Club (2002), and Kobe Gaikokujin (2005).

6 Statistics from 1907 kept at the Kobe City Hall indicate that this pattern persisted. See "Kobe's Foreign Community 2—Relics of Alien Achievements," *Asahi Evening News*, June 24, 1978. This and other documentation was obtained in the Kobe Foreign Community History Library, founded by the late Allyn Miller and kept at the Canadian Academy in Kobe by Jeanette Banno, as well as the collection of materials on the foreign community maintained at the Kobe Chūo Toshokan by Uehara Toshizo. I would like to thank these individuals for their foresight in establishing and supporting these collections.

7 There are nearly as many Vietnamese (1,197) in Kobe today as Americans.

8 Other foreign communities in Kobe included: Germans (Club Concordia 1929; Refardt 1956), Jews (Engel 2002; Tokayer 2004), Muslims (Kobe Mosque 2006; Zeba 2002), and Portuguese (Da Silva e Souza 1940; Moraes 1979). For information on the Chinese see Nagano (1994), Guo (1999), Chūka Kaikan (2000), and Tsu (in this volume). What there is on Koreans in Kobe appears in works on the Korean community in Osaka, and there has unfortunately not been much research on the rather large Indian community of Kobe. Freemasons were another group within the foreign community, and the first lodge was established in Kobe; see The Asian Masonic Resource (2002).

9 For views of the exotic Westerner in Japan one need look no farther than this tourist area of Kitanocho in Kobe: Ijinkan-net (2002), Kitano-machi (2002), Foreigners' Residential District in Kobe (2002), Ijinkan.net (2002). Other works, many of which further promote Othering of non-Japanese, include Ashimi (1979), Hori, Kodeishi and Doi (1993), and Sakaeiri (1978). This last book, a large picture folio volume, is particularly disturbing: large and beautiful photographs of *Iijinkan* buildings—and no people! One's fantasy/imagination is given free play to invent those Others who inhabited these homes.

10 *Castella* is a Portuguese sponge cake loved by the Japanese and introduced in the sixteenth century, while Nagasaki *chanpon*, a creolized chop-suey-like Chinese dish, is famous throughout the country, even giving rise to a chain of fast-food shops by that name in stores vaguely resembling a Dutch house. There is an interesting page on the Nagasaki Foreign Settlement at Information (2002).

11 They have also been called "Third Culture Kids" (TCKs), a term introduced by John and Ruth Useem in the 1970s that was later popularized by David Pollock. Much of this research and popularization took place in the 1970s and 1980s in North American missionary communities and can be found at www.tckworld.com, a website which indicates a shift in research focus recently to "military brats." The term "Global Nomads" introduced by Norma McCaig and others soon followed. By the late twentieth century the discourse had broadened to a more inclusive approach to anyone with multiple cultural experiences. These global cosmopolitans have been examined in Zachary (2000) and in my own work cited in the references.

12 Creolization in Japan has been examined by Masuda (1999), Matsuda (2001b), and Willis (2001a,b). There have been relatively few studies to date of Creolization by Japanese scholars in any context, Yoshiko Shibata, a Caribbean scholar of Kobe University being one of the exceptions (personal communications).

13 Perhaps not surprisingly, the most popular toy for girls in Japan in the twentieth century was *Licca-Chan Ningyō*, a Barbie-like doll. Although Japanese, Licca-chan is clearly

mixed, her father Pierre being a French musician apparently adopted into the Kayama family. Since her "birth" in 1967, 48 million dolls have been sold. Licca-Chan's website formerly had an eye-opening Japanese view of the Other and the Japanese Self-as-Other (Licca-chan no famirii o shokai suru wa 2002), but this had been changed by 2006 to reflect a bland Pierre with no attribution other than his name and looks.

14 See Douglass and Roberts (2003) and Yoshimi and Kang (2001) for a detailed look at the changes that have begun in Japanese society.

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12 The racialization of Japan

William Wetherall

Race, racialism, and racialization

Race, by any name, is a state of mind. It is also on the minds of states that have signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted by the United Nations in 1965. Some signatory states have been under pressure to racialize their national populations in ways that could increase racialism, if not also unwanted racial differentiation and discrimination. Japan, which acceded to ICERD in 1995, is a case in point.

The formal exchanges between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), which mediates treaty matters for Japan, and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which monitors compliance with ICERD for the United Nations, suggest that both parties fail to appreciate the racelessness of Japanese nationality as a civil status, and also fail to grasp its natural biological complexity as a population. Some parts of these exchanges show that Japan's racial state of mind is either delusional or deceptive, as the Japanese government is either unable or unwilling to acknowledge the legal and anthropological fact that Japanese nationality is an essentially raceless population of people representing most of the world's many races. Other parts reveal that CERD itself is ideologically too racialist to effectively challenge Japan's official racial narcissism.

Before looking at Japan's exchanges with CERD, we need to examine, at some length, ICERD's definition of race in the light of other aspects of race, including geographical and political race, racialism and racism, and racialization and deracialization, especially as they relate to civil nationality. This general discussion will continue after the analysis of Japan's responses to ICERD.

ICERD's definition of race

ICERD defines "racial discrimination" as

> any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin [*jinshu, hifu no iro, seikei mata wa minzoku-teki moshikuwa shuzoku-teki shusshin*] which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal

> footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

In ICERD, racial is anything pertaining to race in an unspecified sense, or to color, descent, or national, or ethnic origin. Such broad parameters allow each state to define race in accordance with the dictates of its own racial politics. The races thus legitimized by recognition and labeling are inevitably political (social, artificial) races rather than geographical (biological, natural) races. Hence virtually all putative races—African, Ainu, Arab, Asian, Basque, black, Caucasoid, Chinese, European, German, Han, Hispanic, Iroquois, Japanese, Korean, Kurd, Mongolian, Mongoloid, Native American, Negroid, Okinawan, Tamil, white, yellow, Zulu, ad infinitum—are political races. The fact that some such "races" may bear a geographical name, or otherwise appear to be a geographical population, does not alter their political artificiality.

Racial politics and nationality

As a biological concept in sciences like evolutionary anthropology, genetic epidemiology, and forensic medicine, race is vaguely useful. Individuals differ genetically, but similar traits may be evident among people who, with some variation, share a common language and culture acquired through upbringing in communities that have inhabited a relatively isolated geographical niche for many generations. Encounters between such local races typically undermine the ecological conditions that favor their emergence and continuity. They may stimulate migration and mixing across stable or changing niche boundaries. Or several local races can find themselves under the suzerainty of a dominating race that sets about altering the political as well as geographical meanings of race.

During the evolution of humans as a species, one can imagine a constant interplay between "geographical" and "political" forces. Part of a niche population might stray, become isolated in another niche, and evolve into a distinct geographical race. Or one local race might encounter another with political consequences varying from peaceful coexistence or negotiated merger to conquest, decimation, and even extinction. Today, however, all populations that qualify as erstwhile or surviving geographical races have been incorporated into multiracial states.

As artificial entities, all states encompass the niches of more than one erstwhile or surviving geographical race. The political nature of such states, rather than geography, are now the principle agents of racial definition. The races a state recognizes and labels within its jurisdiction are now political, since recognition and labeling are determined by racial politics. Only people with the collective political will and power to compel official recognition as a race will be treated as a race under ICERD.

All "race box" races in the United States are artificial political entities. People classified as "white, black, American Indian and Alaskan native, Asian, native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander" do not exist as natural niche races. These broad categories actually cover thousands of races, including hundreds of indigenous tribes that are recognized as racial nations within the civil federal nation. Most of these tribes are scattered, mixed, and assimilated. Only a few still survive, but only marginally, as niche races.

Unlike the United States, Japan does not recognize any race within its nationality, Ainu notwithstanding. Unexceptionally, the population inhabiting Japan includes, in addition to remnants of a few older geographical races, more recent migrants and the descendants of migrants from many if not most of the world's numerous geographical and political races. Yamato, Ainu, and Okinawan are composited political races. If the legendary Yamato people once existed as a niche race, they lost their political innocence at the dawn of Japanese history when they began to expand territorially, conquer, and absorb other geographical races. Most of these races have long since vanished as identifiable entities. The few "historical races" that survive in Japan today are politically composited as Yamato, Ainu, and Okinawan, but the labels are shaky, even historically.

"Japanese," too, is a slippery label. In the United States, "Japanese" can mean either race or citizenship (nationality) depending on the box in which it is entered on, say, a death certificate. In Japan, however, "Japanese" legally refers only to a person who is a national of Japan by virtue of possessing Japanese nationality—a purely civil status having nothing to do with geographical or political race, or with ethnicity by any definition.

There are no race boxes in Japan. There are no legal provisions for racial differentiation and labeling. There is no "Yamato race" or equivalent in Japanese law. "Ainu people" are categorically recognized as a racial minority by the state, but the state does not extend this recognition to individuals. Japanese who consider themselves Ainu do not constitute an ethnic nation within the larger civil nation that comprises Japanese nationality—unlike hundreds of Indian tribes in Canada and the United States and dozens of minority nations in China. "Okinawan people" are not recognized even categorically, which reflects the political weakness of Japanese who consider themselves racially Okinawan and would like official acknowledgment of their existence as a race.

As human beings in their natural state, all Japanese are genetic mixtures of their biological parents. Since the lands now called Japan were originally and continue to be peopled by in-migrants, and race is not a factor in the acquisition of Japanese nationality, the Japanese nation represents numerous putative races and mixtures thereof. But there are no provisions in Japanese law for racially classifying Japanese individuals as African, Ainu, Caucasian, Chinese, Happa, Hawaiian, Hayato, Filipino, Korean, Nigerian, Ogasawaran, Okinawan, Thai, Yamato, or whatever. In Japanese law, Japanese are just Japanese—a raceless nationality.

Racialism and racism

Only "Ainu people" in Hokkaido are to some extent racialized within Japan's raceless nationality. Virtually all people in the United States, however, are subjected to legalized racialization at various times in their life. Informally, of course, racialism and racialization exist in all societies.

Racialism is the belief that race, however defined, is somehow real, and that individuals are by degrees affiliated with one or more races on account of genetically inherited (biological) and/or socially acquired (cultural) traits. Regarding a woman named Suzuki as "Japanese" simply because Suzuki is assumed to be a Japanese "ethnic" name is racialist. It is racialist even if the woman's face seems to be broadly "East Asian" or more narrowly "Japanese." Racialism, then, is an association of people's visible and other traits with racial labels. Passive racialism involves a silent perception of raciality: you see someone and think, "I'm Japanese, he's Ainu." Active racialism involves an expression of such thoughts: you ask the person you see, "Are you Ainu?"

The difference between racialism and racism is subtle. Racialism motivates a person to differentiate and label people according to their perceived or acknowledged race. Racism motivates a person to treat people differently according to their race. Denying someone a job on account of their putative race is racism. Accepting a job offered on account of one's putative race is double racism. Signs saying "No Foreigners" or "Japanese Only" might be discriminatory, but they would not be racist—so long as the differentiation was based on nationality, as confirmed by a passport or other suitable ID, and not on race.

While racism is obviously impossible without racialism, racialism does not necessarily result in racism. The boundary between the two is often vague. Is "Are you Ainu?" merely a form of racialist curiosity or rudeness, when asked only of people who are visually or otherwise thought to be Ainu? Or is the very act of asking someone their race racist, regardless of the purpose of the question or the application of the answer? This is the problem with race boxes, virtually unknown in Japan but a highly evolved, institutionalized, and controversial form of racialism in the United States, where racial privacy is a growing political issue.

Racialism and racism trade off in significant ways. The global trend is toward less racism but more racialism. In several stages during its history, the United States shifted from being a very racialist and racist state to being an even more racialist but less (or at least differently) racist state. Older "bad" racist laws (legalizing segregation and prohibiting miscegenation) were nullified, while newer "good" racist laws (legalizing affirmative action) were introduced. On balance, fewer people are now, at the start of the twenty-first century, affected by formal racism, than midway through the twentieth century. Public support for newer forms of racism, like affirmative action, is also beginning to wane as more people question the long-term drawbacks of reverse discrimination, including stigmatization and divisiveness.

However, the cost of less racism in the United States has been more bureaucratic and public racialism. The legal embrace of "good" racism, to correct accumulated historical effects of "bad" racism, has been motivated by demands for racial equality. These demands have been fueled by an increase in racialism in the form of racial awareness and racial pride. Ethnic studies programs in colleges, and cradle-to-grave multicultural education, have been nurturing such racialism as a solution to racism.

Race boxes, a product of earlier racialism and racism, facilitated the enforcement of yesterday's "bad" racist laws. Now they have proliferated, in order to enforce today's more complex racialist policies and "good" racist laws. The federal government has standardized the most politically significant "races" for the purpose of collecting what race-box proponents regard as politically if not scientifically vital racial data. Race boxes have become mandatory in more federal, state, and local programs, which depend on official racial data for their authorization, funding, and administration.

The interplay of racialism and racism in Japan has been somewhat different. Since race has not been an element of law in Japan, there has been no racialism or racism in national laws, and none to speak of in prefectural or municipal laws. Informally, of course, people in Japan have been as racialist and racist as people anywhere. Yet Japan, too, has been witnessing less racism and more racialism. Racial minorities in Japan in the year 2000 were arguably much less likely to be treated differently because of their race than in, say, 1970. During this period, however, racialism in Japan increased as the existence of racial minorities in all walks of life received more public attention and recognition. In Japan, as in the United States, racial themes have become more fashionable and prominent in education, media, and entertainment. Natural ethnicities are being romanticized and commoditized, and their public faces are increasingly shaped by political correctness.

Racialization and deracialization

One way to eliminate racial discrimination is to publicly celebrate race and racial equality to the point that everyone pretends to respect and treat others without regard to race. Race is a matter of public record. The state racializes its citizens throughout their lives, from birth certificates to death certificates. It hard-wires race into so many venues of life that a citizen cannot escape the rubric of race. Multiculturalist curricula racialize culture to the point that culture becomes a code for race. Race is literally in everyone's face. Race boxes drive politics as more races politically incorporate and vie for larger cuts of the racially sliced social-budget pie. Such is the obsession with race in America.

Another way to eliminate racial discrimination is to regard race as a strictly private matter, as personal as religion or sex. No one, even (or especially) the state, has the right to make another person's race their business. People are deracialized to the point that race never enters into the formal definition of their being. There are no race boxes, and the state's only business is to inculcate racial tolerance to protect individuals and organizations from racial discrimination. Though still inadequate in this regard, Japan is nonetheless a credible candidate for becoming a deracialized state. Whether Japan succeeds in becoming such a state rests on its willingness to abandon racialism as a lens through which to view its nationality, and to resist pressure, from advocacy organizations and publicists with racialist agendas, to racialize its people.

Given the long history and centrality of race in American law, it is not surprising that Americans are becoming ever more racialized today. Japan, though, became a state without recourse to race boxes. Since Japan began to legally define its nationality in the late nineteenth century, principally through local polity (village, town, city) registration of domiciled families, Japanese nationality has been a purely legal status devoid of race or ethnicity, neither of which has been a factor in acquisition at birth or later. In contrast, race was a cause for discrimination in the acquisition of US citizenship, other than through birth, until after World War II.

Scratch the surface of Japan's raceless nationality, however, and the country reeks of officially sanctioned and widely shared beliefs and pride in the myth of Japanese racial homogeneity. Before Japan became a state in the late nineteenth century, people were naturally inclined or socially encouraged to assimilate into the mainstream. After becoming a state, and nationalizing the populations within its claimed sovereign territory, Japan began pouring people with regional, local, and ethnic differences into a very self-conscious Yamato mold. Yamatoization was also the goal of Japan's long-term legal and social assimilation of the populations of Taiwan, Karafuto, and Korea. After it accessioned these territories into its sovereign empire, Japan nationalized their populations as Japanese, and otherwise began extending its internal (prefecture-germane national) laws to these external (nonprefectural) territories in order to integrate them as prefectures.

Despite such earlier attempts at racial homogenization, however, Japan has never racialized its nationality. Nor has its parliament ever authorized the government to racialize its official descriptions of the country's population. MOFA's exchanges with CERD, however, betray a government bent on upholding the Yamatoist facade of homogeneity. Japan's argument against the racialization of national origin is sound. But its objections to the racialization of *buraku* residents and Okinawans, while reasonable, are perversely reasoned. And its Wajinization (Yamatoization) of Japanese who do not consider themselves Ainu epitomizes the racialist narcissism that stands in the way of Japan becoming a nonracialist civil state.

Japan and ICERD

How race affects the lives of nationals and non-nationals in a state's jurisdiction depends on whether the state champions civil (raceless) membership in its society. To the extent that a state's policies appear to favor a particular race, the state will be unable to protect all of its residents from racial discrimination. By this measure the state will fail to meet the standards of civil statehood defined by several UN conventions.

Because all states are racially complex, they need to address racial issues within their borders. The fact that a state may have evolved race boxes to facilitate a description of its population in racial terms is neither surprising (given the predominance of racialism in the human condition), nor alarming (so long as people accept the racialism). The people of the United States have never formally authorized their government to racialize them. The same is true in Japan, though unlike the United States, Japan has eschewed race boxes. Like the US government, however, the Japanese government has been racializing its nationals in ways that color and subvert the quality of their civil nationality and sovereignty. Ironically, evidence of this coloring and subversion is most clearly seen in Japan's treatment of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD).

When Japan acceded to ICERD in 1995, it put reservations on Article 4, which would oblige the signatory state to punish "all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any race or group of persons of another color or ethnic origin." Japan, like other dissenters, has argued that application of the article would violate its own constitutional guarantees of freedom of assembly, association, and expression. The United States and some other countries have placed similar reservations on this article. Such states claim they are sufficiently protecting people from racial discrimination and feel no need to restrict freedoms of speech and other behaviors that do not themselves deprive anyone of their human rights. The point is well taken: if governments were to censor or criminalize racialist or racist attitudes that fell short of overt acts against individuals or groups, they could no longer pretend to be champions of free speech.

In 1966, the United Nations adopted two other major treaties that deal with general human rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Japan signed both in 1978, and ratified both the following year. Japan's reports on ICESCR have dealt with its legal restrictions on employing foreigners in government posts. In its first, 1980 report on ICCPR, Japan claimed it had no ethnic minorities. By its second, 1987 report, the government had been pressured to extend token recognition to "Ainu people" [*Ainu no hitobito*] as an ethnic minority. Since then, ICERD has become the more important treaty concerning racial discrimination.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights oversees compliance with treaties like ICERD, which is monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). A state that is party to a treaty is required to submit reports to the treaty committee. After reading a report, the committee makes critical observations, to which the state replies. This formal process is repeated periodically as required by the treaty.

Japan mediates all UN accords through the International Conventions Division of the Treaties Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. MOFA prepares all reports related to ICERD, submits them to CERD, and replies to CERD's observations, in English. The English versions are officially the "originals" and the Japanese versions are "translations." The two are close, but the English versions sometimes lack the precision and detail of the Japanese versions.

Naturalized Japanese

In its combined first and second report on ICERD, submitted to CERD in 2000, Japan stated:

> The ethnic characteristics of [the population of] Japan are not clear since Japan does not conduct population surveys from an ethnic viewpoint [*minzokusei to itta kanten kara no chōsa*].

This statement is qualified in a footnote on naturalized Japanese which reads:

> The number of naturalized Japanese nationals [*Nihonkoku ni kika shita mono*] was 301,828 as of the end of 1998. The ratio of naturalized people to Japan's total population is not clear since it is difficult to obtain information on the exact number of persons deceased after naturalization.

So far, so good. Japan does not compile data on the ethnicity of its nationals. It counts the number of successful naturalization applicants. Hence it can estimate the total number of foreigners who have become Japanese over the past several decades. But once these foreigners are nationals, they are nationals like all other Japanese. The fact that they did not become Japanese at the time of their birth is not cause for the government to differentiate them. There are no legal provisions for statistically tracking naturalized Japanese, and to do so would arguably violate Article 14 of the Constitution (see below).

Nor is there anything wrong with pointing out that the number of living naturalized Japanese is less than the cumulative number of successful applicants. All people eventually pass away, and the Nationality Law does not extend to the next world. But what about the number of descendants of naturalized Japanese?

Japan collects no data to answer such questions. Yet CERD expects it to describe the ethnic composition of the Japanese nation. The government could hazard a ballpark figure, somewhere around one million, as the number of Japanese who might be wholly, or partly, of recent foreign ancestry. While a guesstimate of this kind would shed no light on the ethnicities of such people, it would show that MOFA's bureaucrats, products of Japan's most elite universities, recognize that Japan's population is undergoing more mixing than would appear.

However, such speculation would also encourage racialization by attaching importance to race, which would undermine the civil, raceless character of Japanese nationality. Seen in this light, MOFA's reluctance to speculate beyond legal facts is laudable. As a legal event, naturalization in Japan has no racial or ethnic significance.

Ainu and Wajin

MOFA's ICERD report goes on to say:

> The Ainu, who lived in Hokkaido before the arrival of Wajin [*"Wajin" to no kankei ni oite Hokkaido ni senjū shite ita Ainu no hitobito wa*], continue to maintain their ethnic identity [*minzokusei no dokujisei*] with continuous efforts to pass on their own language and culture.

Note that *Wajin* is marked in brackets in the Japanese "translation" but not in the English "original." A footnote states that "Wajin refers to all other Japanese, except the Ainu themselves [*Ainu igai no Nihonjin*]."

The report then cites a survey, conducted by the government of Hokkaido in 1993, which estimated that about 23,830 Ainu were living in the prefecture that year. Another footnote observes that, in the survey, "Ainu" refers to:

> The people in the local community who are considered to have inherited the [sic] Ainu blood [*Ainu chi o uketsuide iru to omowareru*] and those who reside with the Ainu people due to marriage or adoption.

The footnote also remarks that:

> A person is not included in the survey when that person refuses to be identified as Ainu in spite of the likelihood of his or her being of Ainu descent [*Ainu chi o uketsuide iru to omowareru*].

The phrase in the Japanese version corresponding to "the likelihood of his or her being of Ainu descent" actually translates "being considered to have inherited Ainu blood." ICERD uses "descent" but not "blood," and the Japanese version of ICERD is faithful to the original. However, the English version of Japan's report to CERD mixes a "blood" metaphor with "descent," while the Japanese version uses only the blood metaphor.

Apart from failing to control the level of formality of its English and Japanese reports to CERD, MOFA romantically, arbitrarily, and extralegally racializes Japanese nationality by dividing the entire population of "Japanese" into only two putative races, "Ainu" and "Wajin." Having stated earlier that it has no nationwide ethnographic data—and having also acknowledged that Ainu population figures do not include people who do not consider themselves Ainu even though someone might consider them to be of Ainu descent—how can MOFA be so sure that all "Japanese other than Ainu" (*Ainu igai no Nihonjin*) would consider themselves descendants of Wajin*?*

Most naturalized Japanese, the majority of whom were once Koreans, would probably not choose to classify themselves as "Wajin," which is written with Chinese characters that can also be read "*Yamato no hito*" (Yamato person). Natural Japanese of Korean or other Asian descents, or of African, American, or European descents, would also probably demur at being reduced to "Wajin."

In any event, "Wajin" is a racialist term used to refer to "Yamato people" as opposed to "Ainu"—not, say, Okinawans. Those who consider themselves Okinawan might well question why MOFA either overlooked their existence, or decided that they ought to be called "Wajin"—when they are likely to call themselves *Uchinaanchu* (Okinawan people) as opposed to *Yamatunchu* (Yamato people).

Okinawans

MOFA did not mention Okinawans or *buraku* residents in its initial ICERD report. Only when CERD purported that these, too, should have been included did

MOFA comment on them and argue, correctly but speciously, that they were not racial minorities.

After Japan files a human rights treaty report, anyone can submit a counter report or other critical comments to the treaty's monitoring committee, which considers such input when making its formal observations. The Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Research Institute (BLHRRI)—the research and publicity arm of the Buraku Liberation League (BLL), the largest publicist for so-called Burakumin—has been the most vociferous over the years in protesting MOFA's reports to the Human Rights Committee (HRC), which monitors ICCPR. The Japan Civil Liberties Union (JCLU) has also submitted counter reports to HRC.

CERD has similarly been petitioned by NGOs and individual critics to pressure Japan to account for alleged omissions in its ICERD reports. CERD responded to Japan's 2000 ICERD report in 2001. After the usual diplomatic praises of progress, CERD got down to business, beginning with the following observation and recommendation concerning the ethnic composition of Japan's population:

> While taking note of the State party's point of view on the problems involved in determining the ethnic composition of the population, the Committee finds that there is a lack of information on this point in its report. It is recommended that the State party provide in its next report full details on the composition of the population, as requested in the reporting guidelines of the Committee, and, in particular, information on economic and social indicators reflecting the situation of all minorities covered by the Convention, including the Korean minority [*Kankoku/Chosen mainoritii*] and the Burakumin and Okinawa communities [*Burakumin oyobi Okinawa no komyunitii*]. The population on Okinawa seeks to be recognized as a specific ethnic group and claims that the existing situation on the island leads to acts of discrimination against it.

Immediately after this paragraph, CERD made the following remark and request concerning the meaning of "descent" and "Burakumin":

> With regard to the interpretation of the definition of racial discrimination contained in article 1 of the Convention, the Committee, unlike the State party, considers that the term "descent" has its own meaning and is not to be confused with race or ethnic or national origin. The Committee therefore recommends that the State party ensure that all groups including the Burakumin community are protected against discrimination and afforded full enjoyment of the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights contained in article 5 of the Convention.

CERD's comments are colored by the sort of romantic language that flaws most analyses of minorities. In the real world, there is no "the Korean minority" or "the Burakumin community," or "the Okinawan community." The individuals who are presumed to collectively "define" or "belong to" a categorical "minority" never truly constitute a "group" or "community" in any country. The "majority" is equally fictitious as a singularity. What one typically finds in all countries, including Japan, are a number of political organizations that vie with one another over their claims to represent the interests of a categorical minority consisting of anonymous and uncountable (at worst, "race box" counted) individuals who are dispersed over many parts of the country, are not necessarily interested in minority politics, and might choose not to be regarded as a "member" of the politically defined categorical minority.

MOFA made no attempt to expose such fallacies, most likely because its bureaucrats, their brains pickled in conventional racialist wisdom, accept CERD's romantic "community" characterizations at face value. Instead, they disputed CERD's interpretation of the scope of "discrimination" in ICERD, focusing on "descent," as follows:

> In the first place, Article 1(1) of the Convention provides "racial discrimination" subject to the Convention as "all distinctions based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin..." Therefore, the Convention is considered to cover discrimination against groups of people who are generally considered to share biological characteristics, groups of people who are generally considered to share cultural characteristics and individuals belonging to these groups based on the reason of having these characteristics.

Immediately after this, MOFA made its first remark on Okinawans:

> Those who live in Okinawa prefecture or natives of Okinawa [*Okinawa-ken no shusshinsha*] are of the Japanese race [*Nihon minzoku*], and generally, in the same way as natives of other prefectures, they are not considered to be a group of people who share biological or cultural characteristics under social convention [*shakai tsunen jō*], and therefore, we do not consider them to be covered by the Convention.

Later in its comments, MOFA made a second remark about Okinawans, which elaborated on the first one:

> We know that some people claim that the population in Okinawa is a different race [*betsu no minzoku*] from the Japanese race; however, we do not believe that this claim represents the will of the majority of the people in Okinawa [*Okinawa no hitobito*]. Also, as described [above], those who live in Okinawa prefecture or natives of Okinawa are of the Japanese race, and they are not generally considered to be a group of people who share different biological or cultural characteristics from the Japanese race.

This is a good example of how politics, not geography, determine what constitutes a "race" in the eyes of a state. The "deracialization" of Okinawa began many decades if not centuries ago, and includes, within the second half of the twentieth century, the reclassification of Okinawan (*Uchinaguchi*) from a "foreign" language to a dialect of Japanese. MOFA's argument would have been more credible had it simply reported such deracialization without coloring it as Wajinization.

Buraku residents

MOFA fought a very significant semantic battle over CERD's contention that residents of so-called *buraku*, or former outcaste communities, are in some sense a "descent" minority and therefore fall within the scope of ICERD. MOFA expressed its contrary opinion regarding "national origin" and "descent" minorities as follows:

> Furthermore, concerning "descent" provided in Article 1(1) of this Convention, in the process of deliberation on the Convention, there was the problem that the words "national origin" may lead to the misunderstanding that the words include the concept of "nationality" which is a concept based on legal status. In order to solve the problem, "descent" was proposed together with "place of origin" as a replacement for "national origin." However, we know that the wording was not sufficiently arranged after that, and "descent" remained in this provision.
>
> Based on such deliberation process, in application of the Convention, "descent" indicates a concept focusing on the race or skin color of a past generation, or the national or ethnic origins of a past generation, and it is not understood as indicating a concept focusing on social origin.
>
> At the same time, with regard to the *Dōwa* issue (discrimination against the Burakumin), the Japanese government believes that "Dowa people are not a different race or a different ethnic group, and they belong to the Japanese race and are Japanese nationals without question."

In order to understand MOFA's concern with CERD's view that *buraku* residents constitute a "descent" minority, certain facts need clarification. First, there are no outcastes in Japan today. To allege otherwise would be discriminatory under the Constitution. Nor are there alive today any former outcastes, for outcaste status was abolished in 1871. There are only residents and former residents of neighborhoods historically associated with outcaste communities. How many present or former residents are descendants of yesteryear's outcastes is not clear. Demographically, though, simply being affiliated with a *buraku* through present or past residence, not ancestry, engenders the risk that a person will incur discrimination from someone who harbors prejudice.

Second, CERD incorrectly refers to *buraku*-associated people as "Burakumin." The term is rarely used in Japanese for good reason: "Burakumin" do not exist. In fact, usage of the term exceptionalizes *buraku* residents (*buraku jūmin*), who generally wish to be labeled the same as non-*buraku* residents—that is, as just people, residents, citizens—or as Japanese, Koreans, or whatever, as the nationality shoe fits. The government, including MOFA, refers to *buraku* as "*dōwa* areas," many of which have benefited from improvement projects that have brought them to par (if not greater than par) with surrounding neighborhoods, thus facilitating integration or *dōwa* (equality and harmony). The exceptionalist labeling of present and former *buraku* residents as “Burakumin” is pandemic in English and other non-Japanese reports about *buraku/dōwa* issues and usually signals derivation from misinformed sources. It is both significant and ironic that the English version of MOFA’s response to CERD perpetuates the “Burakumin” label.

MOFA, like CERD, stumbles through a lot of arguments concerning issues its bureaucrats do not seem to fully understand. After all, MOFA does not itself develop, or oversee, Japan’s policies, such as they are, concerning categorical minorities. MOFA is merely Japan’s diplomatic interface with the outside world and a clearing-house for treaty issues. However, MOFA’s position on the “descent” issue is consistent with government views that have evolved over many decades.

When commenting on vestiges of “status discrimination” (as the prejudicial treatment of *buraku* residents is called), MOFA follows the government’s convention of using *dōwa* as a prefix with more concrete words like district, policy, education, and problem. *Dōwa* comes from the phrase “People’s hearts are the same [do], and their folkways/mores are harmonious [wa]”—which comes from the imperial rescript Hirohito issued when he became the emperor in 1926. The rescript had nothing to do with status discrimination, but in 1941 *dōwa* began to replace “*yūwa*” (integration and harmony) as the theme of *buraku* policy.

The phrase “dowa people” in the English version of MOFA’s comments is not, however, an accurate translation of the phrasing in the statement MOFA was quoting. The Japanese version accurately quotes the statement and, unlike the English version, notes its source. Both the source and the statement are well known. The source is the government’s own Dowa Policy Council Report [to the Prime Minister] dated August 11, 1965. The aim of the statement was to dispel the “racial origins explanation” among other theories about the beginnings of outcaste status in early Japan. The quoted statement is part of a somewhat longer passage that literally translates as follows:

> What has to be clearly asserted, in order to breakdown prejudice among the populace, is that residents of dowa districts [*dōwa chiku no jūmin*] are not of a different [biological] race [*ijinshu*] or a different [ethnic] race [*iminzoku*], but without doubt are [of] the Japanese [ethnic] race [*Nihon minzoku*], [and are] Japanese people [nationals] [*Nihon kokumin*]. In other words, the dowa problem is a problem [concerning] a minority group [*shōsū shūdan*] that receives status discrimination [*mibun sabetsu*] within the Japanese [ethnic] race, [and] the Japanese people.

This passage reflects the view that discrimination against *buraku* residents is based on “social status” (*shakaiteki mibun*), the phrasing in Article 14 of Japan’s Constitution, which provides that “All of the people [*kokumin*] are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin." From the standpoint of Japanese law, "social status" is not a "racial" trait, whence the rationale of MOFA's objection to CERD's attempt to define the "Burakumin community" as a "descent" minority. MOFA's translation of "descent" as *seikei* ("generational lineage") is accurate, and its position that *buraku* residents are not a "racial" minority is correct even if its argument is racialist and otherwise specious.

Racialization by JCLU

In March 2003, the Japan Civil Liberties Union (JCLU) [*Jiyū Jinken Kyōkai*] issued a draft outline [*yokoan*] of a proposed Law on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination [*Jinshu sabetsu teppai hō*]. The proposal came from JCLU's Subcommittee for the Rights of Foreigners, and given the way the proposal would racialize nationality, it is not surprising that the proposal goes even further than ICERD in racializing people.

The JCLU proposal defines "Race" [*jinshu nado*] as "race, color of skin, ethnicity, nationality or national origin" [*jinshu, hifu no iro, minzoku, kokuseki mata wa kokuminteki shusshin*]. Note that the English equates "Race," while the Japanese equates "Race et cetera," with the set of attributes the law would cover. While the English subsumes "race, color of skin, ethnicity, nationality or national origin" under "Race," the Japanese suggests that only "race" is "Race" while "skin color, ethnicity, nationality or national origin" are "et cetera."

JCLU's Japanese term for "national origin" is *kokuminteki shusshin*, whereas MOFA's rendering of ICERD's "national or ethnic origin" is *minzoku-teki moshikuwa shuzoku-teki shusshin*. The semantic ranges of the terms in MOFA's expression are such that it could back-translate as "ethnic or racial origin." In fact, MOFA's understanding of ICERD's terminology is correct: "national or ethnic origin" most likely was intended to mean "ethnic or racial origin," for in racialist contexts "national" is code for "ethnic," while "ethnic" is code for "racial." In other words, "race, ethnicity, and nationality" are typically conflated (increasingly also with "culture") in vernacular contexts—whereas in legal and other technical contexts, their semantic ranges are usually differentiated.

The foundation for JCLU's rendering of "national origin" is unclear. Under Japanese law *kokumin* (national) is a civil, not racial or ethnic term. A *kokumin* of Japan is anyone who has Japanese "*kokuseki*" (nationality), and *kokuseki* has no racial or ethnic requisites. In other states, too, nationality (*kokuseki*) signifying that one is a "national" (*kokumin*) is raceless. Hence "national origin" defined as *kokuminteki shusshin* could not connote anything "racial" unless "national" (*kokuminteki*) is racialized. So here we have a "civil liberties union"—of self-styled civil-minded lawyers—aiding and abetting the racialization of civil nationality, as though to promote racialism—that is, the conflation of *kokumin* (national) with *minzoku* (race, ethnic group).

JCLU's proposal defines "Racial Group" [*jinshu shūdan*] as "any group comprised of persons who share a specific Race" [*tokutei no jinshu nado o kyoyu suru mono kara kosei sareru shūdan*]. Note that the Japanese definition seems to include not only "race" but also "color of skin, ethnicity, nationality or national origin" as attributes that would qualify a "group" [*shūdan*] to be regarded as a *jinshu shūdan* [Racial Group]. The Japanese definition of *jinshu shūdan* [racial group] is therefore inconsistent with the definition of *jinshu nado* [race et cetera]. Consistency would require *jinshu shūdan nado* [racial group et cetera]—not that this would deter most people from conflating all the attributes in the list with race.

ICERD obliges signatory states to adopt anti-race-discrimination laws. However, states are free to decide for themselves such laws are necessary. Ironically, while JCLU disputes the government's argument that Japan does not need such legislation, its own proposal, rather than discourage the idea of "race" and "racialism," would categorically racialize "color of skin, ethnicity, nationality or national origin"—attributes that civil societies are supposed to protect from discrimination. Such is the double-bind that increases racialism in the name of eliminating racism.

Hidden racialism

The Japanese translation of ICERD renders "national or ethnic origin" as "*minzoku-teki moshikuwa shuzoku-teki shusshin*." The semantic range of *minzoku* covers both "nation" in its racial/ethnic sense and "ethnos" or "ethnic group," while *shuzoku* means something more like "tribe" or even "race" in a broader anthropological sense. While this rendering accurately reflects ICERD's conflation of "national" and "ethnic" as racial metaphors, MOFA correctly argues that the "national" of "national origin" could be taken to mean merely the country whose nationality a person possesses when migrating to another country, in which case nationality (*kokuseki*) would be a raceless legal status.

MOFA's objection to ICERD's racialization of "national origin" reflects its position that nationality, as a legal status, is not within the scope of ICERD. Accordingly, MOFA qualified its first of many mentions of foreigners in its ICERD report with a footnote reading:

> In this report, the fact that the treatment of foreigners in Japan has been focused on does not mean that Japan considers distinction based on nationality as the subject of the Convention.

This suggests that MOFA is not sincere in its position that "national origin" and "nationality" should not be racialized. For why mention Koreans and other non-Japanese under ICERD, even for informational purposes—since foreigners are not racialized under Japanese law? For that matter, except for a few self-styled Ainu, mostly in Hokkaido, neither are Japanese. But to take a strictly legalist stance regarding the raciality of foreigners would undermine MOFA's extralegal Wajinization of "Japanese other than Ainu." MOFA's disclaimers about "national origin" and "nationality" are merely facades behind which some overschooled, undereducated bureaucrats can view non-Japanese as the racial antithesis of "Wajin"—without admitting that foreigners are a racial entity under ICERD.

An interesting linguistic feature about the above-quoted Dowa Council statement is its "race, nationality" formula. Though race has never figured in the operation of Japan's Nationality Law, and hence "*Nihonjin*" and "Japanese" are legally raceless, most people speak and write as though there was a racial cline between "*Nihonjin*" (Japanese person) and "*Nihon minzoku*" (Japanese race) on the one hand, and *Nihon kokuseki* (Japanese nationality) and *Nihon kokumin* (Japanese national) on the other.

The common use of "Japanese" (*Nihonjin*) in popular culture, mass media, and even academia to imply "race" (*minzoku*) rather than denote "nationality" (*kokuseki*) is racialism in tooth and claw. Such racialism is innocent to the extent that it is reflexive in individuals who have passively acquired racialist attitudes and have had no opportunity to critically appraise their assumptions about race and nationality. MOFA officials, however, cannot claim to be innocent in their ignorance. Anyone who can argue, in one breath, that "nationality" is a purely legal status and therefore "nation" should not be used with racial/ethnic connotations—and in the next breath virtually equate "Japanese nationals" with "the Japanese race" save a few Ainu and naturalized people who barely count—is either duplicitous or schizophrenic.

While Prime Minister in the 1980s, Nakasone Yasuhiro habitually used "*Nihon minzoku*" (Japanese race) and "*Nihon kokumin*" (Japanese nationals/people) in the same breath, as though he intended one to define the other. His interpreters and translators typically reduced these metaphorically very different expressions to "the people of Japan" or "the Japanese people," both of which are used in the English version of Japan's Constitution to denote people who, regardless of their race or ethnicity, are Japanese because they possess Japanese nationality.

Some Japanese-to-English translators, while admitting that *minzoku* is used with the emotional qualities of "race," prefer softer, less-jarring words like "nation" or "people." Some scholars, too, have argued that "race" is an inappropriate translation for *minzoku*, which they feel is more on the "cultural" than "natural" (biological) side of "ethnic nation" (*minzoku kokka*). However, the prideful nuances of *minzoku*, in its original sense of blood-and-soil *volk*, are actually better reflected by the emotional qualities of "race." Softening "race" to "nation" or "people" merely muddles the boundary between Japanese as a legal status and Japanese as a racialized entity having no foundation in law.

When translating parts of Nakasone's 1986 speech in which he referred to "blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans" in the United States, I rendered *minzoku* as "race." Kunihiro Michihiko, Nakasone's Chief Foreign Policy Advisor, personally conveyed to me, at a very expensive Akasaka restaurant, Nakasone's thanks for the faithfulness of my translation, which showed that his comments had been widely misreported. Kunihiro, a very urbane career diplomat who had been number two at the Japanese Embassy in Washington DC, and later became Japan's Ambassador to China, spoke Japanese the entire time I was with him, and later, in beautiful calligraphy, he wrote to me to express, among other things, his personal opinion that "people" would have been more appropriate. Ironically, Kunihiro's own Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been using "race" to translate *minzoku* in some of its glossy promotional pamphlets about Japan. And "race" has become the standard tag for *minzoku* in MOFA's reports to CERD and other UN treaty committees.

Protection and privacy

The cited exchanges between MOFA and CERD suggest that both parties are shooting in the dark with regard to the racialization of Japanese by their government. Neither party appears to have noticed that no Japanese law permits MOFA or any other government agency to racialize Japan's nationality. The state has never surveyed the diverse people who comprise its nationality as to how they would like to be racially classified, if at all.

The ethnographic history of Japan, and government statistics on recent migration, international marriages, and naturalization, suggest that Japanese nationality is comprised of people with ancestries representing most of the world's categorical races and many mixtures thereof. "What race are you?" would undoubtedly elicit hundreds, even thousands of different racialist responses, from "Japanese" and "Ainu" and "Caucasian" to "part Ainu, part Shamo" and even "half Croatian, a quarter Okinawan, and a quarter African American." But who would write "full Burakumin" or "seven-eighths mainstream, one-eighth Burakumin" in a race box?

"What is your race?" would also provoke responses like "What do you mean by race?" and even "None of your business." Why, in the first place, should anyone be the object of racialization in a country like Japan, where nationality is a civil status, the constitution forbids laws that racially discriminate, and the state has no mandate to classify people racially or otherwise racialize anyone?

When non-Japanese naturalize in Japan, they literally "accede their allegiance to Japan" (*kika*), and as a result they "acquire Japanese nationality." In every respect that should matter in a civil society based on law and legal status, they are Japanese. But the raceless civility of their nationality is often compromised by the prevalent racialist habit of "seeing" them as something other than just "Japanese." For most people, "*Nihonjin*" and "Japanese" are reflexively associated with physical appearance, language, and other traits that undermine the civility of nationality.

Even Sawada Miki, who was mother to hundreds of orphans of mixed racial parentage at Elizabeth Saunders Home, rarely called her children—most of whom were Japanese by virtue of their having been born to unwed Japanese mothers or found abandoned—simply "Japanese." She would say they were "children of Japanese-American mixed blood with Japanese nationality." Or she would refer to them as the "new Japanese race that has suddenly increased in Japan after the war's end." But rarely were they just "Japanese." Racialist terms like *haafu* (half), *kuootaa* (quarter), and *hachibun no ichi* (one-eighth)—the Japanese equivalents of mulatto (one-half black, half-caste, half-breed), quadroon (one-quarter black, quarter-breed), and octoroon (one-eighth-black)—similarly undermine the civility of Japanese nationality.

Americans whose parents or more distant ancestors came from Japan commonly experience being called "Japanese," even though they are Americans. Tellingly, many such Americans reflexively racialize "Japanese" and have trouble "seeing" people who don't "look" a certain way as "Japanese Americans." Legally, though, the connection between *Nikkeijin* (non-Japanese of Japanese ancestry) and Japan is not racial or ethnic "blood" but a paper trail documenting, in most cases, lineal descent, back to a family register in Japan. Legally, Japanese ancestry is a purely civil, not racial, status.

While MOFA is gallantly resisting pressure from CERD to further racialize Japan, its own misguided racialism betrays a lack of faith in, if not a contempt for, the people of Japan whose interests it pretends to serve. MOFA's Wajinization of Japanese nationality reflects the arrogance of bureaucrats who play incredibly deceptive or delusional word games—when they ought to be celebrating the racelessness of Japan's civil nationality, and the natural racial diversity of Japan's population, with an eye toward protecting all people from racial discrimination, including unwanted racialization.

Fortunately, the exchanges between MOFA and CERD have no effect on Japanese law or ethnographics. Japan's Nationality Law silently continues to confer Japan's raceless nationality on all who qualify. And the increasing biological and social diversity of Japan's population, which has been mixing and changing throughout its ethnographic history, speaks for itself to those who listen.

Note on sources

All citations, except as noted, are from public documents available on United Nations and Ministry of Foreign Affairs websites. All transliterations and translations from Japanese sources are those of the author, who is also responsible for all interpretations. See www.wetherall.org for the author's writings on nationality and other issues. See also the author's "Nationality in Japan"—an overview of the development of nationality as a legal entity in Japan and of past and present nationality issues—Chapter 2 in Soo im Lee, Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, Harumi Befu (eds), *Japan's Diversity Dilemmas: Ethnicity, Citizenship, and Education*, Lincoln (NE): iUniverse, 2006.

13 “The invisible man” and other narratives of living in the borderlands of race and nation

Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu

The letter from the Ministry of Justice informed me that I was now Japanese and no longer a foreigner. But I wondered, was it really so easy? Could one become Japanese simply by submitting a few documents to the proper authorities?

The nationality law at the time of my birth in Tokyo had made me a foreigner, forcing me to naturalize as an adult as the only way to become a citizen. Ministry officials told me that my naturalization was easy since my mother was Japanese. But I had always thought that having a Japanese mother made me Japanese, not their stamp of approval. And I am constantly reminded by others that regardless of what the state claims, being Japanese is really a matter of blood.

The subject of blood makes me uneasy. Mine is called “mixed blood.” That must mean that others have “pure blood?” Antagonists in my childhood in the United States decided that I had enough Japanese blood to be called a “Jap.” But in Japan it often seems that I do not have enough to be regarded as Japanese. Japanese friends tell me that my face is American, but my heart is Japanese. Some even say that I am “more Japanese than the Japanese.” I know that I should feel complimented, but I just feel confused. I want to ask them, “What does an American face look like? What does a Japanese face look like?” But usually I just smile.

And why hadn’t I been given Japanese nationality at birth? Simply due to discrimination against Japanese women who had not had the right at that time to pass on nationality to their children. Or was it discrimination against multiethnic people whose fathers were not Japanese? Was this sexual discrimination based on the lingering influence of Confucianism? Or was it racial discrimination embedded in the state’s ideology of ethnic homogeneity? Did it spring from the pervasive mythology of divine origins and a long history of oneness?

Although still blocked from becoming deans and presidents, people without Japanese nationality are allowed to work at national universities. At the time I was hired I did not have Japanese nationality, and when I pointed out that I was being hired under less advantageous conditions than Japanese citizens, I was encouraged to think of my appointment as a kind of affirmative action. Several years later, after I showed them my official “You are now Japanese” letter, I was removed from the short list of foreign professors and my name placed among the Japanese. I was even given tenure a short while later, although the university

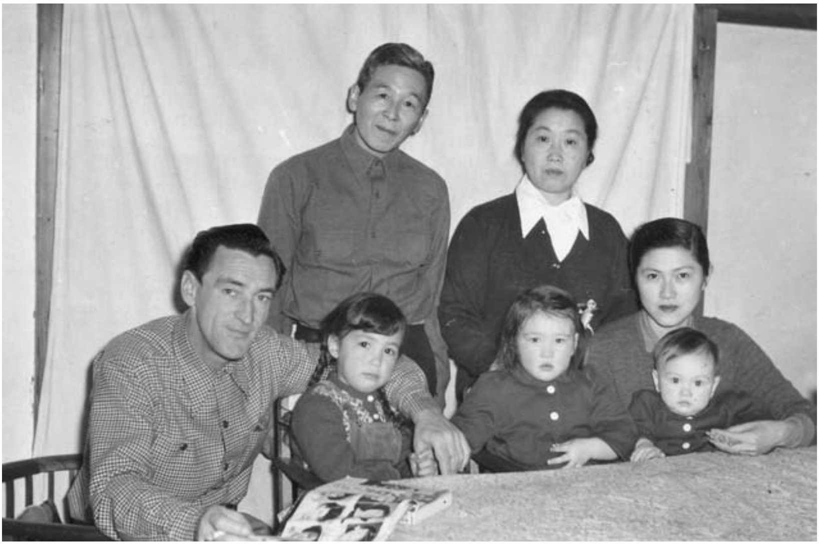

Figure 13.1 Tokyo family, 1953. (Photo: Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu)

insisted that the two were not related. Now when they ask me to lecture on the "foreigner's view of Japan" I say okay, but remind them that I am Japanese and not a foreigner. They just smile and assure me that neither they nor the audience will be bothered by such details.

Life outside the ivory tower isn't much different. When I showed her my passport, the young employee at the airline's counter was so surprised that she couldn't stop herself from blurting out, "You're Japanese?" I just looked at her and let the document speak for itself, and with my new Japanese passport sailed through the immigration check while foreigners waited in their long line. However, when I got to Bangkok, the immigration official there delayed me with the same dumbfounded look and familiar question, "You're Japanese?"

At a baseball game, all my Japanese friends got programs in Japanese, while I was given one printed in English, along with a friendly "Haro." Yet when I took a group of foreign students to watch kabuki, they all received English programs, while I alone was given one in Japanese. A few days later, when I stood at the back of my son's classroom observing with the other parents, one kid stared, pointed, and asked out loud, "Whose father is the foreigner?"

It happened long ago, but I still recall when the young Japanese woman whom I had asked out for our second date told me that her father would not allow her to become serious with an American. I was not serious, but it did seem bitterly ironic since I had once been told by an American woman that her father violently opposed our marriage because I was Japanese. And it did bother me when the real estate agent in Tokyo simply crossed his arms and blocked the entrance to his office refusing to even speak with me. I became angry when another who did allow me in told me that an apartment that I was interested in was not available because the landlord would not rent to foreigners. I told him that I was Japanese. He smiled and said that I might be Japanese in ancestry and nationality, but I didn't look Japanese and therefore I might upset the neighbors. And although I was conversing with him in fluent Japanese, he claimed that what landlords were really legitimately concerned about was the inability of foreigners to communicate.

However, when I did finally find a place to live, the landlord said he was happy to rent to an American. He didn't rent to Blacks, he admitted, but claimed that he had found Whites to be good and trustworthy tenants. He extended himself in helping me to get settled in the apartment and invited me to his home to meet his family. He was especially eager for me to meet his daughter, who loved to speak English and was interested in studying in the United States.

Life in Japan's racial and national borderworlds includes such experiences. But these borderlands are shrouded in the mist of racial and national ideologies and myths. The individuals who negotiate these borderlands are invisible within a society where minorities are either ignored or essentialized.

Beyond monoethnic Japan vs. multiethnic Japan

Japan has long been depicted as a country of Japanese only. The Japanese have been characterized as descending from ancient times in a long and unbroken line up to the present. In other words, Japan and Japanese have always existed much as they exist today. In contemporary Japan a racialistic myth of "the Japanese" is widely shared by its citizenry. The people of Japan are commonly said to form a single ethnic group.

But anthropologists assure us that Japan's origins are multiethnic (Hanihara and Omoto 1991) and it is undeniable that modern Japan took shape through the absorption of frontier societies to its north and south. Its twentieth-century growth, moreover, was fueled by migration from its colonies and, more recently, from other parts of Asia (Oguma 1995). Japanese society today is not, and never has been, a homogeneous and neatly bounded entity. Instead, it is made up of many communities divided by the multiple boundaries of ethnicity, citizenship, and residence.

Still, the monoethnic image survives. While it is no longer possible to deny the existence of minorities and the history of heterogeneity, the genetic mixing of the diverse original constituents is described as complete and therefore irrelevant. The existence of those who are clearly of nonmainstream ancestry may be relegated to the status of the outsider.

During a 2006 lecture at Stanford University, former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto chastised a Japanese participant who described Japan as monoethnic. This is a welcome change from the days when political leaders routinely espoused a view of Japan that ignored this history. Some still do, but minorities have begun to contest the depictions of Japan that denied their existence, forcing more careful characterizations of society. The metanarrative of monoethnicity has been exposed as an ideology and mythology of imagined national community. The multiethnic roots of the majority and the presence of numerous minority groups have been revealed.

Ethnicity and cultural diversity were once issues connected mainly to Japan's militaristic and colonial past. People from the former colonies who migrated or were forced to come to Japan are the remnants of failed policies of the expansion of the Japanese empire. Denial of the diversity that exists may also be an attempt to deny the militaristic but multiethnic past and a desire to negate the failure to Japanize Koreans and Others. The obsession with maintaining an illusion of oneness—of being a homogeneous nation that has evolved naturally since ancient times—makes it difficult for these Japanese to embrace the multiethnic newcomers who are now descending upon the country.

However, in recent years, increased migration to Japan has made the rapidly evolving diversity more difficult to ignore. From the 1970s cultural diversity in Japan has been related to economic conditions and forces of globalization. The influx of Asian women into the sex and entertainment industry was followed by migrant workers in the 1980s to fill the 3K jobs described earlier by a number of authors as *kitanai* (dirty), *kiken* (dangerous), *kitsui* (difficult). Japan also became the destination of students, English teachers, businessmen, and others seeking opportunity in the booming economy. By 1994, some observers referred to Japan as a "multinational" society (*takokuseki Nippon*) (Asahi Shimbun 1994). While the economy has been stalled, the disparity of wealth still motivates people from other countries to seek opportunity in Japan.

And the writing is on the wall—immigration will continue to increase. Grave internal forces of an increasingly aging population with a declining birth rate also result in the need for foreign labor. Today, demographers say that if the current birth rate and immigration trends hold, Japan's population will shrink by nearly half over the next century with the working-age population decreasing by 650,000 annually (Douglass and Roberts 2003). This in turn would cause Japan's economy to shrink dramatically. There is little question that Japan will have to accept millions more foreigners into its society.

Attention to the newcomers who have already come to Japan has also brought a new focus on the minorities that have long existed. From the 1990s there has been more writing on minorities that reveals how Japanese society includes the more indigenous populations of Ainu and Okinawans, as well as other persons of various nonmainstream, ethnic backgrounds who hold Japanese citizenship, particularly Korean (e.g. Denoon, Hudson, McCormack, and Morris-Suzuki 1996; Lie 2000; Maher and Macdonald 1995; Weiner 1997). The resident foreign population is also composed of a diverse group of nationals, the largest group of whom is South Korean.

The focus of this often polemical writing is on the history of discrimination, racism, and victimization. This literature has aimed to expose the true multiethnic nature of society and the monoethnic myth that conceals it. It has greatly expanded our knowledge of minority groups in Japan. However, much of this literature has its own problems. For example, a fascinating study about Africans and African Americans in Japan was titled, *The Japanese View of Blacks*

(*Nihonjin no Kokujinkan*, Russell 1990). It provided a penetrating look into racial attitudes and behaviors in Japan. However, it also reinforced a dichotomy of two mutually exclusive categories of Japanese and Blacks. In reality, Japanese as either a legal or racial category includes individuals who might also be identified as Black. Certainly the same could be said of the categories Japanese and White.

Other minority groups—especially Ainu, Okinawan, Burakumin, Korean, Chinese, and *Nikkeijin* (persons of Japanese ancestry)—are essentialized in a similar manner. They are characterized as solid groups who have been discriminated against by the Japanese. The monoethnic image is replaced by a multiethnic image in which Japanese society is composed of a large majority group and several distinct minority groups. However, the diversity within the groups remains unarticulated. To what extent these groups actually exist as communities also often goes unquestioned. But the borders of these groups are hardly distinct and instead overlap with each other and with the majority Japanese group. Many of these persons have mixed with the majority Japanese population and created the variety of multiethnic people who exist today in Japan.

A new wave of writing has begun to expand depictions of minorities with self-representations that go beyond the invisibility and victimization ascribed by others, including Japanese media, foreign scholars, and self-chosen ethnic spokespersons (Matsuda 2001; Murphy-Shigematsu 2002a; Ryang 2000). This literature illuminates the complexity of the borderlands of race and nation, addressing hybridity and deconstructing the notion of essential minority subject by focusing on complexity and diversity among minorities. While not denying or belittling the importance of discrimination, this writing shows aspects of the intimate nature of daily life for minorities besides those characterized by victimhood. More authors are writing in ways that overcome the rigid binary oppositional framework of colonized and colonizer, minority and majority, oppressed and oppressor.

Beyond marginal vs. multicultural

While there are many experiences of hybridity in Japan, here I will focus on those of persons of identifiably multiethnic ancestries. To illustrate important and politically sensitive dimensions of hybridity in contemporary Japan, the focus will be on Korean-Japanese and American-Japanese.

Research on mixed ethnicity in Japan is consistent with that done in other countries in which the social experiences and psychological conditions of mixed ancestry people have been characterized by two contrasting concepts. In one, mixture creates a condition of marginality—lost between worlds in ambivalence, confusion, and exclusion (Stonequist 1937), with identity conflicts and pathological states (Namihira 1980; Strong 1978; Wagatsuma 1976). Another concept is one in which mixture creates a multicultural person capable of functioning in many worlds (Adler 1974). More recent research has celebrated difference and the breaking down of barriers (Murphy-Shigematsu 2003; Williams 1992).

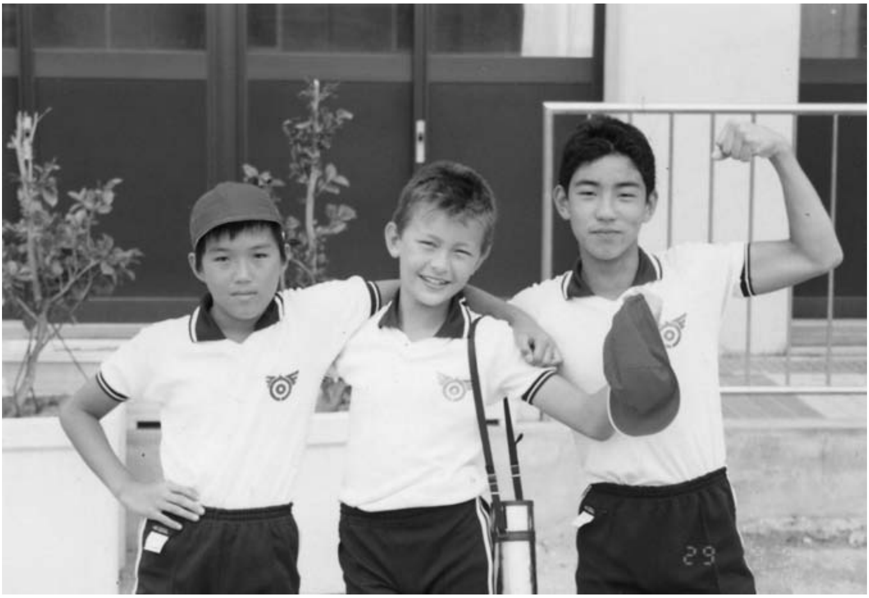

Figure 13.2 Schoolmates, Rokko Island, Kobe, 1990s. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

Postmodern deconstructivist dialogues on culture have shifted the focus from disadvantaged and not belonging, to advantaged, transnational, multilingual, and other ways of describing an existence above and beyond borders and limitations. The development of these concepts has occurred along with evolving social and political conditions. Images of mixed ancestry people have improved as Japanese society moves slowly toward becoming more inclusive.

The evolution of social attitudes and treatment are reflected in terminology used to describe mixed ethnicity. Derogatory terms of the past have been first replaced by neutral and now empowering labels. *Daburu* (from the English "double") is the current politically correct term that counters images of deficiency by asserting endowment. However, *Haafu*, although decried by well-meaning parents and teachers, remains a popular term of choice as a self-identifying label. Its usage represents an active redefining of an inherently racist term.

Mixed ancestry people in Japan are moving away from defining themselves purely as victims and are involving themselves in political and cultural activity which is positive and affirming. Some are actively engaged in the process of developing new conceptions of identity which transcend the old categories of race, class, and nation. These identities challenge essentialist discourses of fixed ethnic groups with innate cultural characteristics, and are fluid and synergistic.

Prevailing conceptions of race and nationality exert a powerful influence on mixed people, who may challenge these definitions by assuming a role in influencing the categories and meanings of race, ethnicity, and nationality

(Christian 2000; Root 1996; Tizard and Phoenix 1995; Zack 1990). This was most visibly seen in the 1990s debate on the multiracial category for the US Census which had major ramifications for the social and political construction of racial and ethnic interest groups.

In many societies, mixed ancestry people exist in a borderland where racial and cultural meanings collide, blend, and force individuals to confront difficult and painful choices (Anzaldua 1987; Willis 2001; Zachary 2000). They may become involved in the development of a synergistic consciousness that tolerates and integrates contradictions and ambiguities. The postmodern concept of hybridity is not simply a celebration of difference but ideally fights the authoritarian tendencies to normalize or homogenize cultures in the name of national, racial, religious, or ethnic interests. Cultural reconstruction may occur in the perplexity of living and making meaning in this disjunctive, liminal space of the borderland (Turner 1969).

The brief introduction in this chapter to a highly diverse "group" of people artificially lumped together for convenience inevitably has the danger of stereotyping. One way of avoiding these depictions is to emphasize the particular through individual portraits (Murphy-Shigematsu 2002b). In an attempt to avoid a generalized depiction of a mythical monolithic group of multiethnic people, I will introduce you to six individuals.

Since 1989 I have been engaged in this study through a variety of research methods including two years of ethnographic fieldwork in Okinawa, four years in an international school in Tokyo, and thirteen years at a Tokyo university. The portraits written here all reflect numerous encounters and talks with young people whom I have come to know in the course of my life over the past twenty years in Japan in which I have been involved in research, education, and counseling regarding this subject.

Gushiken Emiko

"Okinawans see the war in our faces; they see military bases and Americans who took their land." Emiko spoke freely and openly, although this was our first meeting. We had met at a public lecture I gave in 1999 on the topic of mixed ancestry in Okinawa. I saw her in the audience and assumed that she was an Amerasian. In the course of an extended conversation into the morning hours, she confessed her true feelings about me, "When I first met you, I thought, 'Oh, he's *Amerika*.' "

She meant that I was a *Haafu* raised with an American father, in the United States, speaking English; and that I was different from "them." "They" were raised without an American father, in Okinawa, speaking Japanese and some Okinawan. Her simple and direct statement clearly pointed out the differences among "us," even those of the same national origins. American-Japanese are a widely varied group. Those like myself who have been socialized in an American environment, whether in the United States or in American or international schools in Okinawa, have far different experiences than those socialized in an Okinawan or Japanese environment.

"We are called '*Shima Haafu*', " Emiko explained in Japanese. "That means we were raised in Okinawa by our mothers, without our fathers. We are no different from other Okinawans, except for our faces. But when I was growing up, people threw rocks at you, they spit at you, called you a murderer and yelled at me to go home. 'Go home', what does that mean? I am home! Okinawa is the only home I have ever known. When I was in high school I got tired of fighting and stopped going to school."

Emiko had grown up in Okinawa during the politically tumultuous 1970s, marked by the Reversion of the islands to Japan in 1972 and the intense military activities of the Vietnam War.

" 'Can you speak English?' people like to ask us. We feel embarrassed that we can't. But why are we expected to speak English? Just because of this face. They are disappointed too, that we are not fashionable, international *Haafu*, and sometimes think of us as unfortunate kids whose fathers left us behind and whose mothers work in bars."

In our initial conversations, Emiko spoke of being empowered by embracing the term *Daburu.* "The expression makes me realize that I have two ancestries and that is more than most people have." But when we met several months later she was not so sure any more.

She told me, "I think there is also a catch, because it holds up the bilingual, bicultural *Haafu* as an ideal. And at this point in our lives, we can't learn to speak English, we can't go to America, we can't really become *Daburu*. So we need to feel it's okay to be a *Haafu* who can't speak English! Just our appearance reminds people of the American military bases. They have been here forever it seems to us. I too, want them out, but for us *Haafu* they are at least one way of remembering our connection to our fathers. Some Okinawan men have a hard time with us. Maybe we remind them of sex and the domination of their women by the Americans."

Many like Emiko, who have never known their fathers, long for the America they have only dreamed and fantasized about.

"To us, America is the world inside the bases. We can peek through the fences and see a different world that we can never be a part of. We can see the families together barbecuing and playing together. But we can only dream of rolling on the cool green lawn and then return to the reality of walking down the dusty street. Whenever I was bullied, I retreated into a fantasy of life in America where I would look like everyone else, and no one would hate me just for being different."

Despite these longings, I have found that Emiko and many others live their daily lives quietly as part of the mainstream. They usually avoid each other and privately nurture their dreams of being reunited with their fathers, speaking English, and being special. Most marry with locals and their children become less visible than they were and less subject to the kinds of experiences that they endured.

These people are affected by the metanarrative of ethnic purity of the Japanese that clearly excludes them. They are also subjected to the local version of nationalism in which differences among Okinawans are smoothed over in the name of presenting a unified front against their oppressors. And as long as the military bases remain, people like Emiko will be vulnerable to discriminatory treatment as living reminders of the oppressive and sacrificial situation that local people endure.

Her father's race, White, may protect her from some abuse, as those with Black fathers have told me of even more anguished experiences. Being a woman may bring her admiration, jealousy, or uninvited sexual aggression. But now it is her children that she worries about, wondering how many generations will continue to be seen as Others, judged by their faces rather than their hearts.

Kim Young Sook

Young Sook was immediately noticeable in my class, but not by her face. Some Japanese insist they can tell the difference, by glancing at the faces of the students, I was not aware that she was "different." When I looked at the class list, however, her difference was glaring. I was teaching at an American university's branch campus in Tokyo in 1994 and among names like Tanaka Saori, Suzuki Emiko, and Shimizu Aiko, Kim Young Sook stood out. Her family (Kim) and personal (Young Sook) names loudly proclaimed her Korean ancestry.

Young Sook had grown up going to a Korean school, tolerated but unrecognized by the Japanese government. The North Korean affiliation and distinctive ethnic uniforms of these schools make their students the targets of harassment when political tensions flare. Her family's *yakiniku* (barbecued beef) restaurant was started after the war, when they chose to remain in Japan rather than return to Korea. Like most other Koreans, her parents lost their Japanese nationality in 1952, and today Young Sook maintains the ROK nationality she acquired through her father at the time of her birth.

But what I did not know at the time was that Young Sook was of partial Japanese ancestry. I had known her for several months before she mentioned one day that her mother was Japanese.

"I was never close to my mother's parents," she said. "Maybe they rejected us because my mother married a Korean." When Young Sook noticed the quizzical expression on my face, she added, "My grandparents are Japanese."

"So your mother is Japanese?" I said in surprise.

She had mentioned it in passing as though it was of little significance in her life. But I was stunned. Young Sook had always seemed to me to be the very figure of Korean ethnicity; or at least I thought that she portrayed herself in that way.

"If your husband is Korean, then you have to accompany him into the Korean community," she explained.

Her mother had often spoken negatively of Japanese, as though she herself was not one of them. Young Sook felt it natural that she had come to regard herself as Korean, rather than Japanese.

When the patriarchal nationality law was revised in 1985, allowing persons with Japanese mothers to receive nationality, she was eligible but her parents did not register her. She could still easily become a Japanese national today through naturalization, but does not. When I asked her why, she answered clearly and simply, "I can't be Japanese, because I am Korean."

"But why can't you be both?" I inquired. Young Sook smiled condescendingly at my apparent naïveté. "Japan is different from the United States," she reminded me. "If you are Korean, you can't be Japanese."

"But what about Nakamura," I asked. Nakamura was another girl in class who had talked openly about her Korean and Japanese family. Nakamura, along with her father and siblings, like many others of Korean ancestry, were naturalized Japanese citizens.

"She's different. Because her family naturalized and are assimilated Japanese now, they are not Koreans any more."

"Why not naturalize?" I asked. Young Sook's look told me that it was a familiar question to which she had a well-rehearsed response.

"Because of what Japan did to Korea in the past…as long as there is still discrimination against us I think we shouldn't give up being Koreans. And becoming a Japanese citizen isn't easy for us because we have to give up our ethnicity during the naturalization process."

I countered, "That's what people often say, and it's true that in the past you had to give up your name, but I've read that you don't have to even do that now. And why not distinguish between nationality and ethnicity? You could be Korean Japanese."

"That is an American concept," Young Sook reminded me again. "As long as we cannot be accepted as Korean-Japanese, but only as completely assimilated Japanese we cannot naturalize."

We discussed the case of a Korean who was fighting in the courts to be hired for a government job for which she had been rejected on the basis of nationality. Young Sook felt that this discrimination was unjustified and that Koreans should not be restricted from any positions or have their rights limited in any way. She advocates a concept of citizenship based on the rights of residents, rather than nationality. I told her that I found the issue confusing, because the plaintiff's own brother believed that if she wanted the job she should naturalize. But he himself held a job with a local government despite maintaining Korean nationality. And they both have the same Japanese mother.

Young Sook herself confessed to having a Japanese boyfriend. She dreaded revealing this to her parents, and expected to be expelled from the family when she did. Marriage to another Korean was expected, she explained. When I reminded her that more young Koreans marry Japanese than Koreans today, she just shook her head and said, "My father is different; he could never accept it."

Years later when we met accidentally at a subway station, she informed me that she had been hired by a large Korean-owned corporation and now had a Korean boyfriend. Her business card still showed her name as Kim Young Sook and her smart appearance revealed a successful young career woman. Still, I wondered how the decisions she and her parents had made had affected her life course, no doubt both empowering her and limiting her choices.

Nakamura Kaori

Another memorable student I encountered at an American university in Tokyo in 1994 first appeared on a class list as Kaori Nakamura. She revealed her Korean ancestry in a journal she kept as a class requirement for my course, and at my invitation began to come regularly to my office to talk. Mostly it seemed she wanted to talk about being Korean: “When I was a child, I was asked a few times if I was Korean, but I just smiled and evaded the question. If people said anything bad about Koreans, I was quiet, so they wouldn’t suspect me. Some friends in high school may have known. I told some close friends and they didn’t seem to care.” Her Korean father had naturalized before she was born, so she was a Japanese national. During the time I knew her, Kaori went through some name changes that seemed to symbolize her identity struggles. She changed the English form of her name from Kaori Nakamura to Kaori Lee, then to Yong Mi Lee, and back again to Kaori Lee.

“The two always seemed so antagonistic to me. I always felt, if you were Korean, then how could you be Japanese? But I know that both are a part of me.” She began to feel that “as a Korean” going by a Japanese name was no way to live. “It’s just an escape, not a solution to the social problem,” she said. “That way we lose the opportunity of allowing Japanese to face the situation too.”

A year later I encountered her again in my class. To my surprise, the class list once again included a Kaori Nakamura, and when I called out the name, she raised her hand. She stopped by my office the next day and filled me in on what had happened. A trip to the US had brought home some conflicting truths and complex realities. “In the United States, to Americans, I am Japanese. It didn’t make sense to claim to be Korean. In the eyes of others in daily social life in Japan, too, you are Japanese. In the minds of others who know your background you are Korean. In your own mind you are both and other things as well,” she explained.

When I asked about her name changes, she said, “I realized that it is only natural to live with the name you have used your whole life. My parents don’t like getting mail addressed to me in my Korean name. They have worked hard to maintain secrecy and they feel that my actions jeopardize their safety. And my parents would never address me by my Korean name.”

“Besides,” she continued, “the days are gone when we had to work in *yakiniku* restaurants or *pachinko* game parlors. Japanese society has changed. If we have the ability, we can get jobs anywhere. Success depends on the individual. Now we young Koreans can do anything we want.”

“Fighting discrimination every day through my name is just not necessary. My political awareness has grown, but my Korean name just doesn’t feel familiar, like it’s really me. Maybe I am afraid of discrimination, that’s true, but the more important reason is I just want to live naturally. It is convenient and familiar to use a Japanese name. It doesn’t mean anything.”

“Of course, if anyone needs to know, I will tell them without hesitation that I am Korean, but I know that there is a lot more to me. I am also Japanese, and a lot of other things as well. I know that Korea is not my homeland, maybe Japan isn't either, but it is more than Korea. Now that I am more strongly Korean, or I mean, feel more confidence, I don't need to use a Korean name. I can't limit myself just to Korean friends. Nationality doesn't matter. What matters is how an individual thinks and acts in life."

At first, I had to admit that I was disappointed; I wanted her to declare her ethnicity proudly and loudly. I wanted her to be one of the individuals who stepped forward bravely and with their personal story challenged the myth of Japanese society as monoethnic. But I came to respect her choice. After all, she had grown up speaking Japanese, going to Japanese schools, singing Japanese songs, playing with Japanese friends. So was she really being "authentic" by insisting that she was Korean?

Johnson Hideki

"It would be better if my father wasn't around," Hideki told me bluntly. He had started to warm up to me and was now revealing his inner feelings. Hideki had been referred to me for counseling because he was having trouble in school. In his first year in high school he had refused to study and was increasingly engaging in self-destructive behaviors with drugs and alcohol.

He had attended a neighborhood preschool and the first few grades at a Japanese public school, where his Japanese mother said that he was sometimes teased about his dark skin, but otherwise fit in well. Still, his parents moved him to an international school from fourth grade to avoid prejudice and to give him the chance to go abroad later in his life. Although the school was exorbitantly expensive, since Hideki was an only child and both parents worked as English instructors they were able to afford it.

Although he seemed to fit in well during his early years in the school, in junior high he started showing signs of discomfort. He requested that everyone call him by his Japanese name, rather than the American name of Roger that he had been using. He became immersed in karate and talked of returning to Japanese school for high school. What was most disturbing to the family, however, was his complete rejection of his African-American father.

"He can't even speak proper Japanese," Hideki complained. "He has been living in this country for fifteen years, but hasn't learned to read or write either. Everything would be a lot easier if he wasn't here. I like to be with my Japanese family, but I have nothing to say to my dad. We can't communicate because we are from different worlds."

As high school approached, however, Hideki became more concerned about his choice of Japanese school. "I wonder if I will really like it or not. I loved Japanese elementary school, but a lot of kids say that junior high and high school are not very good." He wavered in his decision. Eventually, everyone breathed a sigh of relief when he chose a different path and continued in the international school.

Several years later, when he was about to go the United States for college, he told me, "I think I was afraid of trying to go back to the Japanese school. I didn't know if I would really fit in. I had been in international school for so long, I thought maybe I really was a lot different from the other Japanese kids. It seemed a lot easier to just stay in the international system."

About his father, Hideki felt remorseful. "My dad was the symbol of everything that alienated me from Japan. My dark skin, my cultural differences, were all represented by my dad. When I didn't like myself, I didn't like him either. It wasn't his problem. It was mine. He was different from a Japanese father, but not necessarily bad. I can see that now."

Hideki faced the reality of prejudices and discrimination more directly, and acknowledged negative attitudes toward Blacks. He could identify instances in which he had felt stigmatized or rejected for his dark skin, his curly hair, and whatever they symbolized to his tormentors. He became more able to sympathize with his father's, and, of course, his own position.

"Japanese don't have a good image of Black people. They think Blacks are only good for dancing and music, or playing basketball or boxing. Japanese can't really see Blacks as equals who are intelligent doctors or lawyers."

"I am comfortable in Japan, but it seems best to go to the United States for college. But I may come back after I graduate. This is my home. And attitudes are changing toward people like myself. In the old days, Japanese didn't like dark skin. They were really prejudiced, white skin was better, they thought. But young people don't feel that way. Many of them try hard to get tanned, just so they can look darker. I think they are not prejudiced like older generations. So I think I can come back and work here and live here in the future. I don't know if I can work in an all Japanese company but in an international company I should fit in just fine."

Hideki did come back to Japan, working for a while with an American company. His Japanese language skills and cultural knowledge were highly valued by his employers. However, he realized that he is seen by Japanese clients and colleagues as a foreigner who happens to speak wonderful Japanese, rather than as one of them. He knew that his ability to accept this reality will determine how long he remains in Japan.

Kevin O'Hara

"It's a convenient name, O'Hara can be Irish or Ohara can be Japanese," Kevin said with a mischievous grin. "When I am with Japanese, I may say something about Americans, and a Japanese guy will say, 'but you're American too'. And I will say, 'no way, I'm Japanese.' Or when I am with Americans I might say something about the Japanese and an American will say, 'but you're Japanese too', and I will say, 'no way, I'm American.' I'm just goofing with them, playing with their heads, but I am also serious. I am Japanese and I am American. I let them try to figure out what it means."

Kevin is a dual national, holding passports of both Japan and the United States. He went to Japanese preschool but switched to international school from first grade. Kevin never was a serious student, his mother told me, and though he can read and write English, his Japanese is weak. He appears at first to speak fluently in both languages, but admits that his Japanese lacks propriety.

"How would you describe your identity?" I asked.

"Some teachers like to tell us to say we are 'double.' It makes sense, but we still call ourselves 'half.' In a way, we are both Japanese and American, because we can live in Japan or in the United States. We can speak Japanese and English and are knowledgeable about both cultures. I am a citizen of both countries and through my parents I have received the influence from both cultures. I can't say I love either country. I'm not patriotic or nationalistic. But I have family and friends in both places and have some affiliation with both. There are definite advantages to having a multiple background. I guess we are the future, as some people say."

I was skeptical of the idealistic picture Kevin was painting and pressed him to give me some insight into the difficulties he might have.

"Of course, there are some disadvantages, too. I've never met anyone who is, really double, I mean, completely Japanese and completely American. There are a lot of things I don't know that the average American does; and there are a lot of things that any Japanese knows but I'm not aware of. And if we are honest we would say that we never feel completely a part of any culture. We are always different, no matter where we are. Home for us is really in the heart, we can't easily claim any place as our home.

As I get older and encounter more situations I become aware of both the advantages and limitations of being mixed. In the United States I can see how much less fluent my English is than kids who had gone through their whole life in American schools, speaking only English. It doesn't really bother me, and my mom keeps trying to remind me about my advantages, but sometimes you can't see it that way—all you can feel is that it's a disadvantage. So it's not all easy."

But Kevin really was optimistic and preferred to focus on the good aspects of his situation.

"I guess it really is a matter of reminding yourself about the positive aspects, because in any situation in life there will be positive and negative. There is really no point in regretting and complaining about your past and the cards you have been dealt. The challenge is to make the most out of what you have been given, abilities and opportunities. I realize I have been very fortunate to have had the kinds of chances I have had throughout my life. I think I just have to find the right situation for me, where I fit best, where my talents and experiences can be put to use.

In the future I don't know where I will be. American life is comfortable, but Japan is my home and I'm not sure I will want to live in either place forever. But I can live in either country I feel."

Kevin's charming personality and cheerful manner hid some sobering realities. His parents divorced when he was in high school, and he found himself unqualified to find the kind of work he wanted in Japan. When we gathered on the eve of his departure to take a job in Los Angeles, his mother lamented to me that youth like Kevin who appear so attractive and talented actually end up "falling between the cracks rather than building bridges." But Kevin smiled and reassured her, "Don't worry Mom, I'm going to be right at home in LA!

Takahashi Masumi

A young man approached me after a talk I gave in Tokyo in 1996 on minority identities. He explained that he was "Korean and Japanese" by ancestry, and that he had felt very strange during my presentation because it seemed as if I was describing his family exactly.

I had told the story of a family with a Korean father and a Japanese mother. Due to the conditions in the nationality law the older brother who was born before his parents were married was born as Japanese. The law at that time allowed only the offspring of Korean male-Japanese female couples to become Japanese nationals if the child was born out of wedlock. The next two children, born after the parents' marriage, became Korean.

Masumi's ethnicity was later influenced by his parents' divorce when he was a teenager. He told me that he has never felt close to either his father or his father's family. Masumi feels that it is useless to say he is Korean. He speaks Japanese, went to Japanese schools, and was raised by a Japanese mother. His Korean father left the family and he was never close to his paternal grandparents. Although he says it doesn't really mean anything about his identity, he mentions his Korean nationality.

"When I was in high school, some Korean youth group members came to talk with me. I told them I wasn't interested in their group. They accused me of being ashamed of being Korean. I blamed them for trying to separate themselves and acting different. They were the ones who were keeping prejudice alive, I charged. They angrily said I was hiding in an illusion, that I wanted to be Japanese, but I could never be Japanese, because whether I liked it or not I was Korean! I walked away from them. I thought they were crazy.

I did go to Korea once. I thought I should try to understand my ancestry better. But I didn't like it. I couldn't stand the smells. The whole country smelled like garlic. I expected that I would feel really Korean, but I felt no sense of affinity with the people or the country. It was all very alien and strange. I never learned to speak Korean, so I couldn't communicate, and I couldn't understand what people were saying. I realized that I was just not Korean.

I know that I am a lot more Japanese. I was born and raised in Japan. I speak Japanese and know the culture. But I also don't feel a sense of identity as Japanese either. Because if people know that I am part Korean, they will think of me as Korean. So I don't really think of myself as Japanese either. I just don't think it matters what I am.

If ethnicity is not that important to you, how do you find a sense of identity and community? I asked.

I see more affinity with people with similar interests. It doesn't matter what our nationality is, what matters to me are other issues. For me, I am interested in art, and I find that those who share the same passions are the people I want to be with and feel close to.

To tell you the truth, I get tired of all the talk of ethnicity. Are we supposed to be obsessed about our background, and our identity as Korean? Is that what is supposed to be important to us? If so, how will we ever overcome racial and national divisions? Maybe things would be easier for me if I naturalized, but I don't believe that such legal barriers should exist between people."

As someone who has made it my life work to be concerned about ethnicity, I found it hard to accept Masumi's dismissal of its importance. But as a student at an art institute he derived his passion for life in painting. By my way of thinking should his painting be about Korean themes? Or were my biases also a form of essentialist views that limit the potential of individuals?

Narratives of hybridity

The above stories show glimpses of the lived experiences of young men and women of mixed ancestry in Japan. These experiences are very personal, but are influenced by historical, legal, cultural, and ideological factors. The history of colonization and occupation, nationality laws, family registration laws, extra-legal bureaucratic pressure, and ideologies about race and ethnicity all powerfully influence their identity. The evolving social climate makes the experiences of youth of different eras and generations significantly different.

The long military occupation of Okinawa and the continued use of land by the US military have had a major impact on the lives of mixed ancestry people like Emiko. They remain vulnerable to stereotyping and scapegoating, especially during periods of political conflict. Publicizing their problems has been prompted by both concerns for their welfare, as well as anti-military base sentiments.

In recent years, the formation of a new school in Okinawa for "Amerasian" children has captured considerable media attention and made the Japanese public more aware of the presence of some of the persons of diverse backgrounds in their midst. This school movement for rights for "dual education" for mixed ancestry children has helped to raise the discussion of multicultural education to a new level in Japan. However, the school as a form of segregated ethnic education remains controversial. Despite its ideals, the school in reality emphasizes the English language and an American curriculum over Japanese language and curriculum, so there is a crucial conflict between the importance of an education that may strengthen the multiple ethnic identities of its students, and the costs of such an education that does not aim to prepare students for adult life in the country in which they reside.

On another front, adult children have now intensified their search for their long-lost American fathers. The endings to these stories of search and reunion that have occurred over the years have been more bitter than sweet. But no amount of cynicism can negate the powerful and enduring human need to know our origins that this phenomenon signifies. In recent years, it seems that the fathers are old enough to be accepting, and the now-adult children old enough to be forgiving, so that searches are increasing and becoming more fruitful.

Those of Korean ancestry like Young Sook and Kaori are similarly influenced by historical and political factors that divide Koreans and Japanese. They therefore feel the difficulty of asserting a mixed identity, because of the distance that still separates the groups. The continued belief among some Koreans that ethnicity can only be preserved through the maintenance of Korean nationality pressures those who seek a more synergistic way of living in Japan that embraces both aspects of their mixed background.

Many also struggle with questions of authenticity in asserting Korean identities. Ironically, as they are liberated to express this ethnicity they also confront the reality of loss of any identifiably Korean culture in their lives. They face the contradictions of trying to maintain an identity that is often more of a political statement than an expression of ethnicity or culture.

However, various forms of identity and ways of living are being tried by mixed Korean-Japanese. Some have fought legally to reclaim their "ethnic names" and for the right to live as "Koreans with Japanese nationality." Some are even naturalizing and maintaining their original names. Others are designing names that are combinations of Korean and Japanese elements in ways that are clearly meant to symbolize the hybrid identity they are constructing (Chung 2006; Fukuoka 2000).

Another major impact on their lives is the legal system. Because of the restrictive nationality law, a number of mixed ancestry persons were born without Japanese nationality and some are stateless. Legal treatment of mixed ancestry in the nationality law changed dramatically since the revision in 1985 was enacted. As explained earlier, previously only those with Japanese fathers could receive nationality, unless the child was born outside of marriage and paternity was not recognized by the foreign father. Today, birth to either a Japanese mother or father entitles a child to Japanese nationality.

However, despite the reforms, complications remain. Children fathered out of wedlock by Japanese men are dependent on the father's claim of paternity to receive Japanese nationality. This is especially a problem in the Philippines. Adult children of American fathers are not able to acquire US nationality even if they locate their father and he is willing to declare paternity. The offspring of divorced couples still face difficulties in acquiring nationality due to the complications and expenses of international divorce settlements.

Naturalization is another contested site where identities and laws come together. The decision on whether or not to naturalize has long been the focus of individual and collective struggles over ethnicity. The numbers show clearly that the decision is increasingly becoming affirmative toward naturalization, with more than 10,000–15,000 persons a year taking this step since the mid-1990s.

The lives of mixed ancestry people are also influenced by an ideology of homogeneity. Despite the history of heterogeneity and diversity, and the lack of racial restrictions in the nationality law, there is a widely shared racialistic myth of the Japanese in contemporary Japan. The people of Japan are commonly depicted as forming a single ethnic group and therefore the mixture of diverse original constituents is dismissed as irrelevant. The existence of nonmainstream Japanese such as persons of multiple ethnic ancestries, but also Korean and Chinese residents, as well as Okinawans, Ainu, and Burakumin is either denied, or relegated to the status of outsider.

Ethnic and national identities operate in the lives of individuals by connecting them with some people and dividing them from others. Such identities are often deeply integral to a person's sense of self, defining an "I" by placing it against a

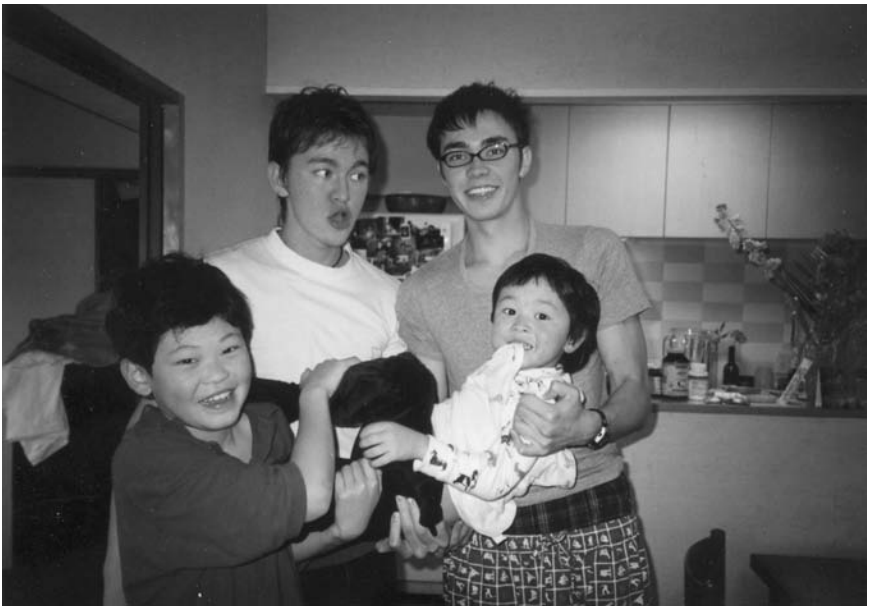

Figure 13.3 Family friends of multiple ancestries, nationalities, and identities, Kobe, 2003. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

background "we" (Appiah and Gutmann 1996). This myth of monoethnicity affects mixed ancestry people by creating an idealized standard of society as homogeneous. Descriptions of the monoethnic society are colored with a sense of pride in the advantages inherent in the "pureness" of Japanese society in contrast to the troubles of multiethnic societies. In the mid-1980s it was remarks of this nature that attracted glaring media exposure and global controversy to high-ranking Japanese government officials, most notably former Prime Minister Nakasone.

This ideology of homogeneity labels mixed people as different from other Japanese (Befu 2001). These persons confront the accepted wisdom that the individual's conception of the self needs to be in tune with society's perception of the individual. In the case of those phenotypically similar to the mainstream, they are encouraged to pass in normal social situations as mainstream Japanese. Those whose appearance makes passing impossible often find it easier to live as foreigners, going along with the common perception of them as different. Insisting on being Japanese is a constant stressor in view of the stereotype of being Japanese to which they are subjected.

These individuals still confront a dilemma: if they pretend or go along with being a foreigner, they may feel dishonest. They realize that by allowing people to wallow in the comfort of having their stereotypes affirmed, they are not changing anything. Therefore, some individuals decide to selectively assert their Japanese identity as a way of fighting against social and psychological barriers to inclusion of those regarded as different. However, they do so with an awareness that they risk lowering their status, for in the mainstream view it is far better to be perceived as a knowledgeable foreigner than a strange, incomplete, or defective Japanese.

Those like Emiko who have been raised without their non-Japanese parent do not have this choice. Without the option of posing as *Gaijin* (foreigners), they must forge a new positive identity as Japanese who are different in appearance and ancestry, but without some of the cultural and linguistic features so envied by mainstream Japanese. They must also struggle against the politically correct tyranny that posits *Daburu* as an ideal and unwittingly denigrates all other ways of being mixed. And those in Okinawa must do so in an environment where the negative sentiments against the omnipresent American military are always potentially explosive.

Greater experience and confidence in one's abilities and knowledge of one's cultural backgrounds lead to a wider possibility of complex, multiple identities. While few individuals may actually serve as "cultural bridges" or even identify as "multiethnic," many do not reject or deny any part of their background. Identity with other multiethnics can transcend and challenge traditional boundaries, but there is also the danger of creating a whole new set of boundaries about what and who are or are not multiethnic.

The appearance of more individuals who do not fit in with popular racial and cultural images is potentially leading to new attitudes. These include persons who don't "look Japanese" but who speak Japanese and possess cultural knowledge such as some American-Japanese *Haafu*. There are also those who "look Japanese" but don't speak Japanese or lack certain cultural knowledge, such as some returnee youth or Japanese-ancestry *Nikkei* from other countries. The increased existence of such persons challenges ethnic boundaries.

Inclusion of older and younger persons in this essay would indicate more clearly that social attitudes are constantly evolving. Considering various other ethnic and racial backgrounds would disclose the differences that exist among the people who could be called mixed or multiethnic. The presentation of persons of different social classes would reveal the enormous differences in acceptance based on financial means.

As can be seen even from the few cases presented here, identity resolutions and assertions vary among different individuals and are also situationally determined. Varieties of perspectives exist and people build connections in different ways. Discrimination and alienation may influence an individual such as Young Sook to identify with only one side, or like Masumi to identify with neither of her ancestries. A person like Kevin may identify differently depending on the demands of the particular situation. Many of those with bilingual and bicultural abilities find that their identity can be fluid and adaptable to a particular context.

Their lives show that the identity choices are more complicated than just being assimilated or maintaining ethnicity. For them, difference is a form of disjuncture, interruption, and fracture, as well as celebration. Maturity may be a willingness to face the contradictions and discontinuities in their own lives and to live with the uncertainty and disjuncture of a changing world.

They face the reality of difficult and painful choices. Nevertheless, some attempt a peaceful coexistence with difference within themselves, in the belief that, at least for them, pursuit of identity begins from this fact of internal diversity and a sense of living in the borderlands. In their daily lives hybridity is not simply the space of a celebratory or utopian self-marginalization but a significant way of challenging orthodox notions of culture and the cultural boundaries of the nation. Their lives thus may be acknowledged as containing thresholds of meaning that must be crossed, erased, and translated in the process of cultural production (Bhabha 1990).

Mixed ancestry persons not only have multiple ethnic origins, but also belong to a whole range of crosscutting communities, each of which can become a focus of identity (Morris-Suzuki 1998). As mixed ancestry persons deal with their own internal multiculturalism, their efforts may become an example of a way for others to work with their multiple identities or multiple selves. Their struggles for empowerment include a rejection of simplistic narratives of victimization and engagement in self-affirming political and cultural activity (Gilroy 1987). Their involvement in the process of developing new conceptions of identity may help society to transcend the limiting categories of race, culture, and citizenship.

Many of the persons described here are involved in a search for identity, solidarity, and connection that is not based on a geographic community. They are not the only ones. Many of us identify with groups and social positions not limited to our ethnic, racial, religious, class, gender, and national classifications. Given the constant flow of people to, from, and around original homelands in today's world, Japan must address the issue of how to construct a society around diasporic diversity. Members of this diaspora might choose to place their transnational identity foremost, while retaining the option of multiple citizenships. No existing conceptions of Japaneseness can contain this large variety of transnationals.

Perhaps more than any other minorities in Japan, multiethnic individuals may challenge notions of cultural nationalism if they choose to act out cultural differences. They cannot be easily dismissed simply as foreigners, for they are also Japanese citizens and of "Japanese" ancestry. They are both insiders and outsiders. Recognition of their existence may help to break down the mental walls erected by the fiction of Japanese uniqueness between "Japanese" and others.

Identities in a more civil Japan

The themes confronting the mixed ancestry or multiethnic individuals in a personal way represent some of Japan's currently pressing problems, problems that mirror those in many other nations. Japan still grapples with coming to grips with its colonial and militaristic past, and its failures in this area have international repercussions. Resolving present-day military and defense policies remains a volatile topic nationally, with particular immediacy in Okinawa, as well as internationally.

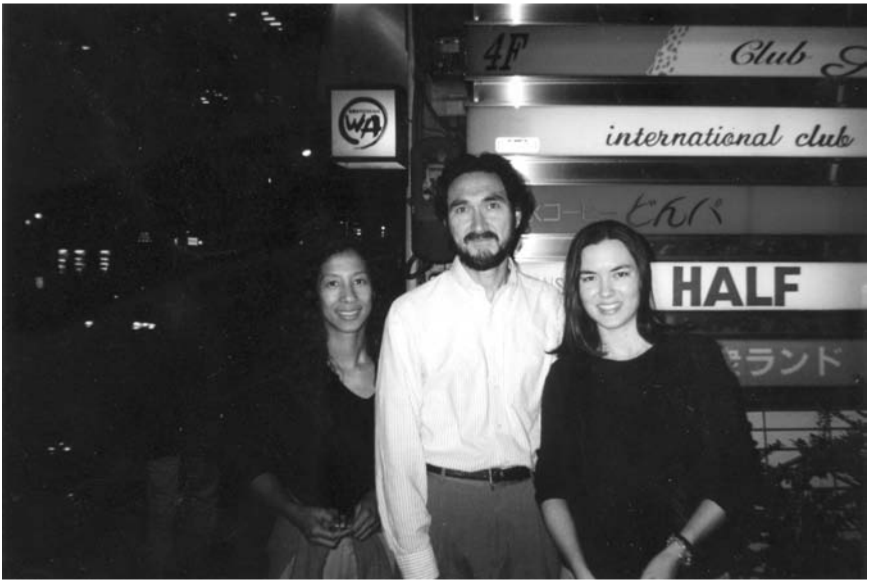

Figure 13.4 Friends of various Japanese and American ethnic ancestries outside "Half," a club in Roppongi, Tokyo, 2001. (Photo: Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu)

Issues of nationality are expressed in the debate on the question of membership and citizenship rights in society (Murphy-Shigematsu 2004). The evolution of the concept of nationality as restricted to those with two Japanese parents to a more inclusive concept comprising the various individuals who live in Japan is clearly occurring. The myths and ideologies of the homogeneity of the nation, so cherished as a source of nationalism, also pose a barrier to the acceptance of many people. Like other societies around the world Japan is being challenged to become more civilized by moving from policies of forced assimilation to respect for diversity and personal choice. Recognition is being given to the existence and contributions of the variety of individuals who comprise the society. As these mythologies of racialism and nationalism are gradually being deconstructed, the boundaries of race, class, citizenship, and culture are slowly shifting.

Mixed ancestry individuals exist today within a Japan that is increasingly acknowledged to be a nation composed of people of various origins. With labor demands rapidly increasing in the face of an ever-declining birth rate, the ethnic composition of Japanese society will become even more varied and diverse. The state and common people are challenged to distinguish between nationality and ethnicity in constructing a new image of what constitutes Japan and being Japanese. Regardless of the interests of the state, individuals of mixed ancestries will continue to seek to identify with all the multiple aspects of their heritage in which they discover personal meaning.

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14 Ethnoscapes and the Other in twenty-first century Japan

David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu

Transcultural borderlands

"What are you? Are you Japanese?" Those who answer yes to these questions are a surprisingly diverse group today. His father is from Iowa, but Jeffrey answers yes because he went to Japanese schools through junior high school and carries both Japanese and American passports. His friend Sho says yes, too, and although the NBA and his Chinese-American girlfriend are more relevant to him than his former life in Shibuya, Tokyo, his gentle, polite manner around elders reveals a core identity that is largely Japanese.

Akemi's grandparents came from Korea, but she answers yes because she was born and raised in Japan and has never lived in Korea. Mariko was born and raised in New York, but she says yes, too, describing herself as a cosmopolitan Japanese. Arturo says yes, adding that he comes from Brazil. Michael comes from Australia, but answers that he is a naturalized Japanese and shows his newly acquired passport to prove it. Nami clarifies that while she calls herself Uchinanchu because she is from Okinawa, yes, she is Japanese, too.

All of the people above would likely say yes to the question, but they might also say no, or even say something else (I'm Japanese, but I'm American, too) depending on who they are talking with, the context, and the moment. The identity assertions of these people reveal an expanding sense of what it means to be Japanese. They challenge stereotypes and create cognitive dissonance in the minds of many mainstream Japanese. This does not mean, however, that their identities are always validated by others. They often encounter doubters who claim that they cannot be Japanese if they have or don't have a certain appearance, speak Japanese imperfectly (or another language perfectly), act in a particular way, or have a name that doesn't sound typically Japanese. Still, their acts of self-definition create new meanings for what it is to be Japanese today.

This book has been about the changing definitions of supposedly stable words and worlds, their nature and their depth, in the Japanese context. All of us routinely have categories in mind when dealing with difference. How do we analyze the categories, reflect upon them, and report on the changes? How will these changes transform our own larger understanding of this powerful society? The answers depend to a large extent on how we talk about societies like Japan's. The chapters above have shown that it is particularly important how the embodiments of these new phenomena talk about themselves in a changing Japan.

An increasingly diverse society has been portrayed here, characterized by complex, overlapping, and disjunctive cultural crossroads, as well as by active borderlands. The images of this cultural dynamic in Japan are of flow, uncertainty, and disjuncture; and they are replacing older visions of stability, order, and systems. As can be observed globally, these cultural flows are transnational and transcultural.[1] One way of making sense of such multiplex interactions is to note the relationships among six dimensions of global cultural flows: *ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, eduscapes,* and *ideoscapes*. Using Appadurai's idea of *scapes* (1990) helps us to understand that we are viewing phenomena very much like landscapes: fluid, irregular shapes that change our perspective according to how or from what position we view them.

The chapters in this book have touched on these and other—*scapes* in different ways. Rather than simply reporting incontestable, objective facts, they have presented constructs of perception laced with experiential and situational referents, landscapes which are the building blocks of new "imagined worlds" in Japan. They are not always the same as the imagined worlds of official, media, government, or business minds, either; or for that matter of conventional, discipline-based academics. They are, clearly, the polyphonic, polythetic voices and reports of those participating in border contexts.

Whether these are traditional borders in Japanese society or new borderlands depends on institutional, societal, and cultural changes as much as the "border experiences" of these people (Murphy-Shigematsu 2004a,b). Identities are "reclaimed" here for individuals and communities, not only as socially constructed but with real epistemic and political consequences as they are publicly and subjectively enacted (Moya and Hames-García 2000). They present a realist position, neither essentialist nor post-modernist, and recognize in their day-to-day lives the variable, dynamic, and negotiated character of identities. These voices provide resources, moreover, to ascertain and evaluate the possibilities and limits of different identities in Japan.

Cultural identities have increasingly been shown to be not only about victimization, but also to be empowering, emotive, and enlightening. Who we understand ourselves to be has consequences for how we understand and experience society, and for progressive social change to happen there needs to be an understanding and familiarity with both past and present structures of inequality as well as empowering successes. The ethnoscapes of Japan have changed, and the chapters here document this change as shared activities in shared contexts.

The Other in Japan: globalization and changing ethnoscapes

Japan has historically alternated between periods of celebration of a diverse, multicultural society and severe spells of xenophobia and persecution of the Other. Both forces are of course present in any historical period. This book has re-introduced the idea of Japan as a multicultural society, but in ways that are more varied and contested than earlier imperial visions of a diverse nation. The existence of Others in Japanese society is gradually being recognized, with discrimination and exclusion occurring at the same time as inclusion and acceptance.

This is a story that reveals new and surprising developments. Others in Japan are very much a part of the transnational cultures of globalization, cultures less concerned with territorial sovereignty and more with regional and transregional flows. We are thus searching for synergies, mobilities, and cooperative networks. What is different today is not only the hardware of the technology of travel and communication but the software of individualized transnational networks and created lives and communities. As Tsing (2001: 462) notes, "Diasporas circulate, bringing the wealth of their cultural heritage to new locations…Circulation is thus tapped for the endorsement of multicultural enrichment, freedom, mobility, communication, and creative hybridity." These networks are dense with imagined interconnections of support and community that take full advantage of the advanced state of Japanese society. One effect is a positive feedback loop that encourages even more people to come to Japan as ethnicity, nationality, and other connections affect the circulations of shifting, contested and constantly renewed channels of communication and exchange.

Moving beyond essentialisms of either Japan or its ethnic minorities thus reveals fantastic, multiple, and heterogeneous complexities. There are, moreover, changing definitions of interests and identities, definitional struggles being especially pronounced. We question the circulation and the selection of certain kinds of people as players, too. What are the social, political, and economic conditions which allow or support some flows instead of others? Many of the flows discussed in the chapters in this book involve not only a global transcending of place but also a local making of places.

Place-making is joined by a kind of "channel-making activity of circulation," too, which is always contested in terms of the evaluation of socio-historical ranks and hierarchies in local societies (ibid.: 473). These are often multiple, overlapping and, at times, contradictory experiences. For many, the phenomena of interconnection and the movement of flows are experienced as exhilarating forms of liberation and transnational social movements. Encounter is a word that can be used to describe many of these experiences, bringing not only engagement but self-examination of roots and routes (Murphy-Shigematsu 2002). Questions of boundary crossing and interconnection then become especially prominent, with some sides resistant to the new possibilities.

One reason that this all looks so new to us in Japan are the sheer numbers involved and because many of the more recent arrivals neither look nor behave like typical Japanese, however that might be defined. Like Europe, where massive waves of peoples of color have recently appeared in White societies, Japan is beginning to see the arrival of people, including the Brazilian *Nikkei*, who are both like them and not like them.[2]

Immigration is a battleground where these different forces of nationalism and identity clash. The adaptation of those people with ethnic ties to Japan is also of great concern, the assumption being that they are easier to assimilate and integrate into the society. Ironically, as Takeyuki Tsuda (2003) has shown, Japanese Brazilians go from being a positive model minority in Brazil, valued in the eyes of the society, to a negative minority in Japan. Tsuda emphasizes the cultural encounters caused by transnational migration that he found in his research as reinforcing local ethnic identities and nationalist discourse, in his case for both the Japanese Brazilians who moved to work and live in Japan, as well as for the local Japanese they encountered. From our experiences and research, too, we note that, yes, this does happen. Yet at the same time we have seen how creolization, hybridization, and cosmopolitanism have either dulled the sharp edges of this process or created entirely new forms of social identity and interactions. Adjustment, adaptation, and resistance come in many forms, not all of them immediately apparent or visible.

The institutionalization of public policy leading to citizenship rights such as residential status, medical and other benefits (even in some areas to voting) have been responses to these changes (Tsuda 2006), despite the absence of national citizenship. Although these reforms in policy could be considered to have come from external, international pressures (Tarumoto 2003), the deeper, more profound changes facing Japan have been internal, dealt with as challenges to identity that have resulted in a mixing of cultures in an era of globalization.

There are also the persistent efforts of Others in Japan to be recognized, respected, and valued for who they are and what they bring to Japanese society. Material changes appearing throughout the Japanese social landscape force us to reconsider, too, how we approach what is familiar as well as that which is strange and unfamiliar. Avocadoes, kiwis, and habañeros are as much a part of daily life in Japan today as sukiyaki, tofu, and ramen. The irony is that the latter, supposedly quintessentially Japanese culturally, were originally themselves from abroad. Mixed in uniquely Japanese ways, now even re-exported to the lands they came from (America and China), they point to the power and centrality of hybridization in Japan.

Such pathways trace the complex realities of cultural flows that have been and are now accompanied by human flows, the increasing numbers of non-Japanese in Japanese society attesting to a vibrant cultural *métissage*. With this globalization come cultures and diaspora that point to futures in Japan that include cosmopolitization and creolization. While what is happening can be seen as the emergence of ethnic communities, it can also be seen as hybridity, as a migration mélange, as a transcultural networking. Multiculturalism has spread to Japan in new and provocatively different ways.

Border spaces: globalization, creolization, and hybridization in Japan

Japanese society is thus in the process of being transfixed, transformed, and transited, the last through increasingly mobile groups and people. Critical new junctures have appeared in the landscape where we can see *moorings* and *mobilities* which represent global, national, and local flows of peoples (Urry 2003). In a country and society not used to this kind of movement and change, transnational encounters are becoming frequent and widespread. Territoriality is fast becoming an outdated boundary marker of social functions and cultural identities, too (Benhabib 2002: 180). The transnationalization of societies and cultures, the easy movements of people across borders, and the ubiquitous spread of the world media all have in common that they are an alternate source of cultural power. The old model of citizenship—residency, bureaucratic categorization and control, democratic participation and cultural membership of Weber and other social scientists—may have been the "ideal type" for Westerners, yet the limitations and problems of this monolithic representation are now apparent.

Events both unpredictable and irreversible in their effects have, of course, led us away from the idea of a steady state, one which seeks balance and stasis as the "normal" model. There are growing forces in Japanese society, trends, and directions which indicate significant "wet" changes in Japanese social landscapes, "liquid modernity" in Bauman's phrase (2000). While spotty and not in place everywhere, these changes are real and are spreading. We see in this a Japan being transformed by 1) new ethnoscapes, 2) new borderlands, and 3) new identities.

As the crossing of borders becomes an inevitable part of any contemporary society, even those who do not migrate from place to place are confronted by the ideas, fashions, and values of worlds far beyond their own national boundaries. What happens in Japan has ramifications in other parts of the world as well, as Japan's cultural and ethnic categories of inclusion and exclusion are projected into other nations. We take up Morris-Suzuki's (1998, 2002) arguments here that culture and identity are something created in the present moment by weaving together the multiple strands of experiences. As she notes, this turns the spotlight on processes and multiple identities that exist in Japan, reflecting the great diversity of the Japanese people themselves, their "radical hybridity" and their "polyvocality" (Benhabib 2002: 25; Bhabha 1997b). Cultures are not solid pieces of a mosaic, but historically fluid and always contested, as they are increasingly decentered, fractured, and multichanneled.

Hybrid cultures and transcultural mixing in Japan reflect a creolization usually thought to occur only in the Caribbean context, but which now can be seen as happening in Japan, too (Matsuda 2001; Willis 2001a).[3] This global emergence of complex relationships balanced between order and chaos helps us view these events as fluid and networked rather than as logical cause and effect processes. Imagining what these new networks look like, and especially their ability to connect many people simultaneously, opens many new possibilities for understanding social events. This shifts the spotlight from isolated analyses of individual factors (all focus points for linear analyses), to what is happening, with whom, where, when, how much, how far, in what directions, and why.

Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (2002) talk about how cultures create templates, what they call "entrenched integration networks," which represent the development of resources in the society for understanding phenomena. Changes in these networks require a certain amount of openness and imagination, a venturing into new landscapes in what they call an amphibious manner, a movement

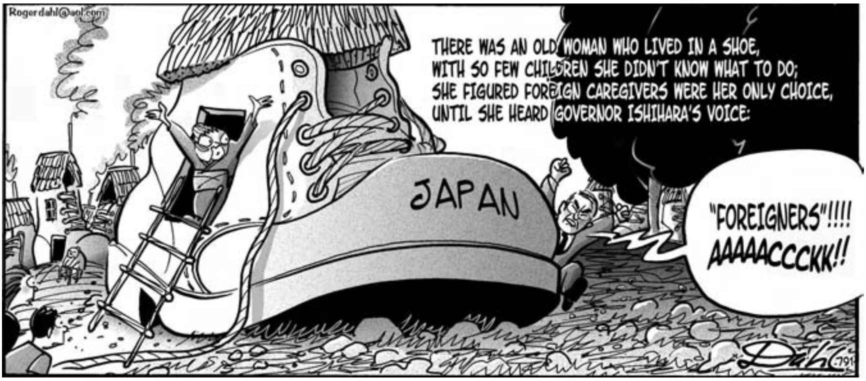
Rogerdahl@aol.com
THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE,
WITH SO FEW CHILDREN SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO;
SHE FIGURED FOREIGN CAREGIVERS WERE HER ONLY CHOICE,
UNTIL SHE HEARD GOVERNOR ISHIHARA'S VOICE:
JAPAN
"FOREIGNERS"!!!! AAAAACCCKK!!
Dahl ©791

Figure 14.1 The old woman in the shoe. (Roger Dahl)

between reason and fantasy. These entrenched integration networks were long resistant to outsiders in Japanese society, but they now seem to have shifted towards an acceptance of coexistence on a long-term basis as indicated in the bellwether phrase *kyōsei shakai*. Looking at public rhetoric even more broadly, we note how the English word "open" has entered everyday discourse in Japan in unprecedented ways. The need to be "open" is understood as a prerequisite to a new society and a new Japan facing a wide range of challenges.

There is, in fact, widespread attitude change in Japan toward people who are different. Some of this is positive and can be seen as integration, if not assimilation, as witnessed by the numerous NPOs and NGOs advocating the rights of foreign workers. Foreigners are far more frequently seen in a variety of roles in the media today than even five or ten years ago, too, even becoming serious commentators on a range of issues.

There has been at the same time, however, the appearance of virulent racism, not limited to Tokyo's Governor Ishihara Shintaro, who has made scurrilous, race-baiting remarks against foreigners in the society, not so subtly targeting Chinese and Koreans. Of particular note is the criminalization of foreigners, especially the reflexive singling out of Chinese legals and illegals as the nub of the crime and gang problem, despite statistics to the contrary (Shipper 2002a,b, 2005). Criminal activity, including over-staying of visas, has been featured prominently in these images, especially of other Asians. Racial profiling has come to Japan, not only by the police, but by the media. A nation-wide survey in late 2003 showed that nearly a third of Japanese wanted to see no more tourists from abroad visiting Japan, showing a correlation in people's minds of tourists, Chinese, Korean, and crime (Herbert 1996; Kakuchi 2003). Japanese views about other ethnic groups have been historically shaped by the elite and especially the mass media, as Herbert (ibid.) notes, partly as a way of asserting political control over their own citizens. Resistance to the Other alone is, however, no longer such a clear option.

Minority maneuvers and unsettled negotiations

The impact of newcomers and the increasing visibility of oldcomers on Japanese identity and individualism are profound and rapidly spreading. This is a society in transition, and the rough edges of change, the networks of diversity, and the pockets of new ethnicities reveal these transformations, some initially unseen yet suddenly ready to propel the flow of events to new and different locations. Nothing is permanent and nothing is pure, much to the dismay of many Japanese traditionalists and others who have bought into the caricatured myths of homogeneity.

Many of the people in the narratives and reports in this book are positioned in hybrid third places which enable us to speculate on new processes at work in Japan as a dynamic twenty-first-century society. Some are "out of place" and "strangers" (Bauman 1997; Said 1999), while others have long been in place, if not always visible. Many embody the ideas of "flexible citizenship" (Ong 1999), and most belong to transnational communities (Brettel 2003; Vertovec 2000, 2001). All of them are affected by globalization. As members of transnational diaspora, many of them have identities that are multiple, rooted like rhizomes in many directions at once, some stronger than others in their connections and growth. The authors of this volume are also located at the critical edge of cultural studies: memory, hegemony, the theorization of movement, new conceptualizations of spatiality, and the critique of authenticity.

Like Clifford (1997) and many others, we are interested in the entanglements that occur at these intersecting regional, national, and transnational levels, the "minority maneuvers and unsettled negotiations" taking place at what Homi Bhabha (1997a) calls "frontline/border posts." These maneuvers have resulted in two recent developments: the UN Human Rights Commission Report of Japan (Diène 2006, Oda *et al.* 2006) and a rethinking by the establishment of Japan's immigration policy (Ajima 2006).

The Diène report on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and all forms of discrimination was an account that needed to be made, however flawed it may have been, as it has drawn attention to Others in Japan. At the same time, Japan has been rethinking its immigration policy, searching for ways to avoid a slowdown in the economy that may result from demographic changes by bringing in more foreign laborers, as was noted earlier. More flexible immigration and support policies are being considered.

On April 7, 2006, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi ordered government officials to look into measures to help society accept foreign workers, saying that, "Whether we like it or not, there are many foreigners who want to come to Japan. We must think about how we can accept those who want to work or settle in Japanese society without friction." But there was also an addendum: "If we accept foreigners beyond a certain scale . . . there must be friction. We must think how to improve the environment and education system in order to let foreigners work comfortably as a steady labor power" (Ajima, ibid.).[4]

Especially serious is the plight of the many children of foreign workers, now over 20,000, many of who do not attend school or who drop out. There is no legal

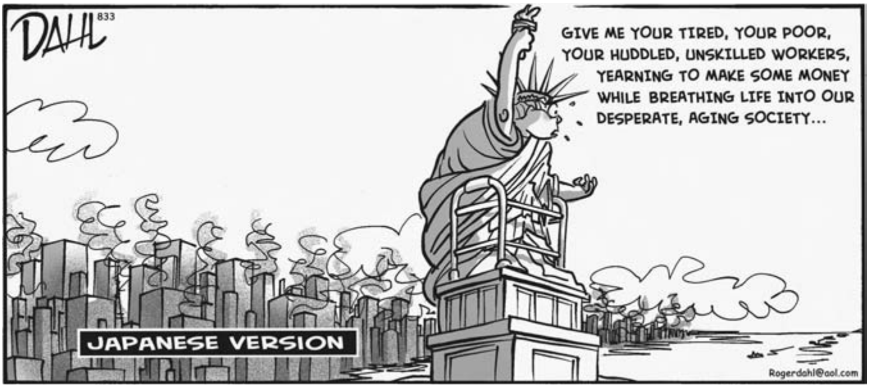
DAHL 833
GIVE ME YOUR TIRED, YOUR POOR, YOUR HUDDLED, UNSKILLED WORKERS, YEARNING TO MAKE SOME MONEY WHILE BREATHING LIFE INTO OUR DESPERATE, AGING SOCIETY...
JAPANESE VERSION
Rogerdahl@aol.com

Figure 14.2 Statue of Desperation. (Roger Dahl)

obligation for them to be in school, and bilingual or multicultural education programs are practically nonexistent (see Ikegami 2001; Ishikawa 2000; Maher 2002; Onai 2003; Onai and Sakai 2001; Shimizu and Shimizu 2001). Moreover, many undocumented foreign workers are extremely vulnerable to human rights abuses as they are denied health and social welfare benefits. Others, with working visas, avoid joining health and social welfare schemes because of the onerous premiums which would detract from their overall wages.[5]

Hidenori Sakanaka, former head of the Tokyo Immigration Bureau and now president of the Japan Immigration Policy Institute, who has said in the past that Japan has failed to address immigrant issues, noted that, "We have been forced to choose between two options. One is to offset a decline in the Japanese labor force with an influx of foreign laborers and maintain the current economic power. The other is to keep tight control on immigration, which means we must accept 'a smaller Japan' in terms of economic power" (ibid.). For now, he feels, the decision has perhaps been made for the former, but the debate continues. The central concepts in the debate about immigration thus seem now to be between exclusion (*haijo*) and acceptance (*hōsetsu*).

Global flows and global networks

Global flows and globally integrated networks are increasingly on view in Japanese society. There are now many world-making flows, "not just interconnections but also the recarving of channels and the remapping of the possibilities of geography" (Tsing 2001: 453). Some have flooded the landscapes in certain parts of Japan while others have been reduced to a trickle, leaving local areas high, dry, and brittle, not far from the feudal landscape of much of Japanese history. Nevertheless, we find these trends moving Japan more, not less, toward a globally networked society (Arquilla and Ronfeldt 2001).

Quantum developments in the fields of physics, biology, medicine, engineering, and communications have also shone light on how we might see human organization and societies in Japan. These new developments have demonstrated that the divisions between disciplines are meaningless, that the real meaning lies in the complex interlocking relationships that are taking place at any given time/times and in any given space/spaces. What the so-called social sciences and physical sciences are now dealing with are actually hybrids of social and physical relations (Wallerstein 1996). These hybrids imply multiple futures, are active and creative, and do not simply exist as mechanical sets of parts and operations. They reflect a cultural form that is spreading rapidly (AlSayyad 2001; Bhabha 1997b; Canclini 1995).

Cultural intrusions, which produce a mixing of newer and older cultural forms, may actually be the "normal" state of affairs. As Homi Bhabha states in Benhabib (2002: 23), "The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with 'newness' that is not part of a continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation." The importance of change, fluidity, networks, multiple times/spaces, feedback, emergence, and unintended consequences have been shown by physics, too, all of which have had enormous impacts on communications theory and the architecture of social construction. In line with this new thinking, the chapters in this book reveal particular societies and imagined communities as networks, rather than as structures (which imply centers, power concentrations, and a vertical hierarchy). This is the new shape of Japanese society/societies.

Following the evolutionary biologist Gould (1989), we view life and the processes of transcultural activity as based on contingency, in contrast to deterministic views or concepts so widely seen in the social sciences. We do not see the evolution of Japanese society, for example, as characterized by a kind of change which leads to progressively greater assimilation to a hegemonic norm. Rather, the contingent, something depending on particular circumstances, is an important feature of the people and communities being described in these chapters.

We note, too, that what is happening in Japan is a good example of going beyond cultural homogenization and ethnic politics. These Manichean opposites, one of convergence and the other of divergence, oversimplify the reality of transnational complexity and global mélange, of a deeper rendezvous of Japan with the world. Like Jan Nederveen Pieterse, we believe that the role of migration and diasporas has long been underestimated in what he calls "the social proclivity to boundary fetishism" (2004: 4). Others in Japan are only a problem when boundaries are essentialized and "ethnic groups" reified.

There are multiple globalizing processes at work, and many of them, including those in Japan, are about hybridization or creolization. These structural or cultural creolizations are marked by the emergence of new mixed forms of social cooperation and the development of translocal hybrid cultures. As Nederveen Pieterse (ibid.) notes, there are two distinct concepts of culture at work here, "territorial and translocal, inward and outward looking," that produce different ways of looking at cultural relations and globalization. Moreover, the mixing of cultures, hybridity, has become an increasingly important way of interpreting what is happening on the ground, with the local changes that are taking place. This does not mean that the borderlands are happy zones of international exchange as envisioned by Sister City relationships and school excursions. There is friction and loss, too, as well as the inevitable resistance from conservatives, precisely because these are, after all, borders.

Not all human experience is sedentary, and what we are seeing, also, is the emergence of transnational communities, not merely ethnic communities, in Japan. These societies on the move reveal how deterritorialization is important and at work as mobility becomes an increasingly important theme that needs to be included in the ways we see societies and social change. They embody a physical, human, and cultural reflection of the practice of "place-shifting," whereby someone can contact and use media from home such as TV programs from anywhere as long as there is an internet connection.

In the end, the importance of Others in Japan is that they problematize boundaries of what are "Japan," "Japanese society," and "Japaneseness." Though there are minority ethnic communities in Japan, their boundaries are fluid. Culture is not imposed from above or generated from below so much as being a terrain of exchange between the two. As Antonio Gramsci (1971, 1994; Crehan 2002) has said, we should seriously question hegemony in any social or cultural context. Culture in Gramsci's view is not fixed by time and space but fluid and highly contextual, a point of view very much in accord with the authors of the chapters in this book as they have explored the contours of a new Japanese society. This terrain is especially marked by resistance and/or incorporation, as *Zainichi* Koreans, Burakumin, women, and others have shown us. Historical processes play a key role: the struggle between dominant and subordinate cultures/classes is, though often intentionally overlooked by those in power, the key focus of social activity and transformation.

The idea of difference in the world as rooted in place is thus rapidly changing. We see this in the new and cutting-edge perspectives on cultural minorities in Japan in the work of John Maher on language policy (2002) and "metroethnicity" (2005), Ishii Yuka on immigration (2003, 2005), Richard Siddle on the Ainu and multiculturalism (2003), Kang Sungjung on being *Zainichi* (2004, 2007), and Mark Watson on the urban Ainu (2007). Where we see these changes happening we find a Transnational Japan, no longer the homogeneous national state (if indeed it ever was) portrayed in the latter half of the twentieth century. We have attempted to explore these borderlands in their hybrid, Creole cultural expressions, with the implications they have for the complexity of life in today's Japan.

Contested terrain: transnational Japan

Strange things are happening in Japan now. During the Fall Sumo Tournament of 2005 the Emperor's Cup was decided in a match between Asashoryu, a Mongolian, and Koto-oshu, a Bulgarian. Taro Aso, one of Japan's leading aspirants to become the next Prime Minister, was telling an audience in Kyushu at almost the same time how lucky it was that Japan was one nation with one race, one language, and one culture. These words, of course, echo the controversial remarks made by former Prime Minister Nakasone and others back in the 1980s. Aso apparently had not checked the sumo ranks, as 12 of the top 42 sumo wrestlers in this *kokugi* (national sport) at that time were foreign-born: seven Mongolians, two Russians, one Bulgarian, one Georgian, and one South Korean.

The shifts are dramatic. Many outsiders are now becoming insiders in Japan. The manager of the winning team in the Japan Series in 2005 was Bobby Valentine, an American who is widely admired. The following year, American manager Trey Hillman led his team to the championship. Nissan was turned around by Carlos Ghosn, a CEO with a Lebanese–Brazilian–French background. And in an article titled "Japan's New Insider Speaks Up for the Outsiders," we learn of Tsurunen Marutei, a naturalized Japanese of Finnish origin and the first blue-eyed Japanese to sit in the Diet (Brooke 2002). The Upper House election of July 2007, moreover, saw not only Tsurunen running for a second term, but the candidacy of Kim Jung Ok, a Korean resident of Japan who obtained Japanese citizenship in 2005; Alberto Fujimori, the former Peruvian President and Pema Gyarpo, a Tibetan immigrant to Japan who became a naturalized Japanese citizen. Other signs of this shift toward diversity include the boom in things Korean, with dramas, food, and music finding surprising and enthusiastic acceptance.

Less obvious but all the more real for being in people's everyday lives are those numerous "foreigners" integrated across the landscape, in factories, restaurants, universities, schools, and local governments. At the same time, Ainu, Okinawans, and Other "insider minorities" in Japan's midst are now more assertive and visible than ever before. To be different in Japan is now fashionable and not just outwardly with a change of hair color or clothing styles, but in terms of individual attitudes, approaches, and personal life directions. The heroes of anime and the objects of cool travel desires are now Others and their cultures, be they Vietnamese, Korean, or African-American (Carruthers 2004; Cornyetz 1994; Solomon 2005). Food, fashion, music, and dance are now being joined by vibrant new expressive cultures and an expansive new individuality.

Transnational communities have been established throughout Japan. Some are even what we might call transnational villages or towns, populated by what Levitt (2001) calls "transnational villagers." Economic, social, political, and cultural capital flows through, to, and from these communities, create global cultures at the local level—and local cultures at the global level. These flows enable people to imagine new roles and new identities. Those Others who are members of these communities have multiple channels through which to pursue transnational belonging. As Levitt notes (ibid.: 203), "the individual and household connections that form across borders reinforce and are reinforced by the transnationalization of organizational life."

Diversity is central to this discourse. What is perhaps most interesting from the perspective of students of Japanese society and identity is how the local communities in Japan are reacting to, reflecting on, and changing in response to this diversity. This is a cosmopolitan moment in Japan. As Anthony Appiah points out in his signal work on cosmopolitanism (2006), we do have obligations to

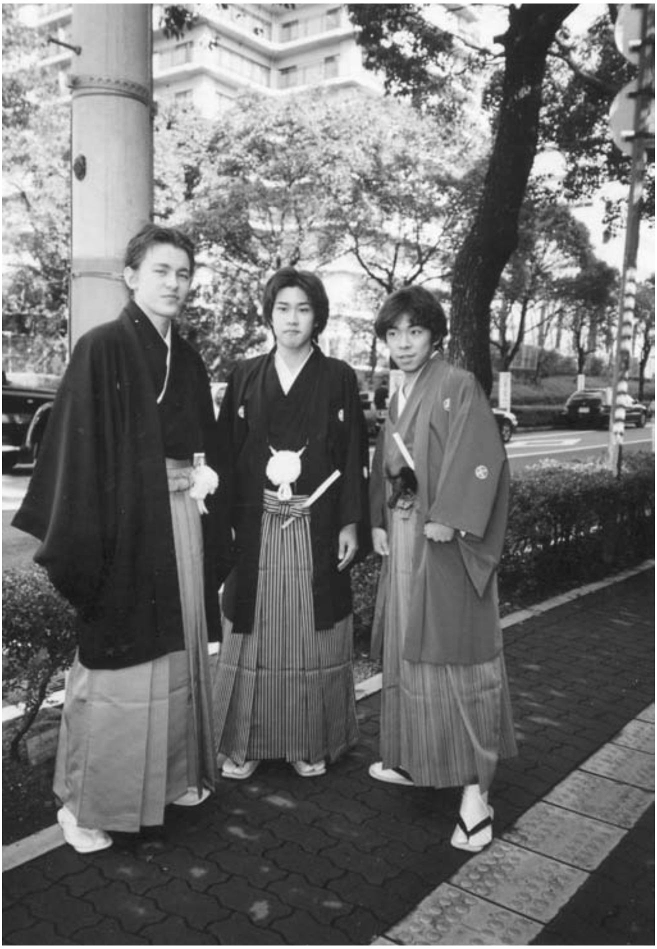

Figure 14.3 Coming of Age Day (*Seijin no hi*), Kobe, 2000. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

others that go beyond those we are related to or with whom we share a common language or citizenship, something which many Japanese are now beginning to understand. The value of cosmopolitan thinking is that it sees both global obligations and the celebration of local differences as important (ibid.; Breckenridge *et al*. 2002; Vertovec and Cohen 2003). Critical cosmopolitanism that is grounded in border thinking, as emphasized by Walter Mignolo (2000), is a good example of what we are talking about here.[6]

Cosmopolitanism is in accord with the way discourse about race in Japan has shifted from *kokusaika* (internationalization), which was a selective choice for the Japanese, to *kyōsei shakai* (the symbiotic society), where globalization is not a choice, as John Clammer noted in a conference on race in Japan at Sophia University in Tokyo in March 2006. Moreover, the context of racial and

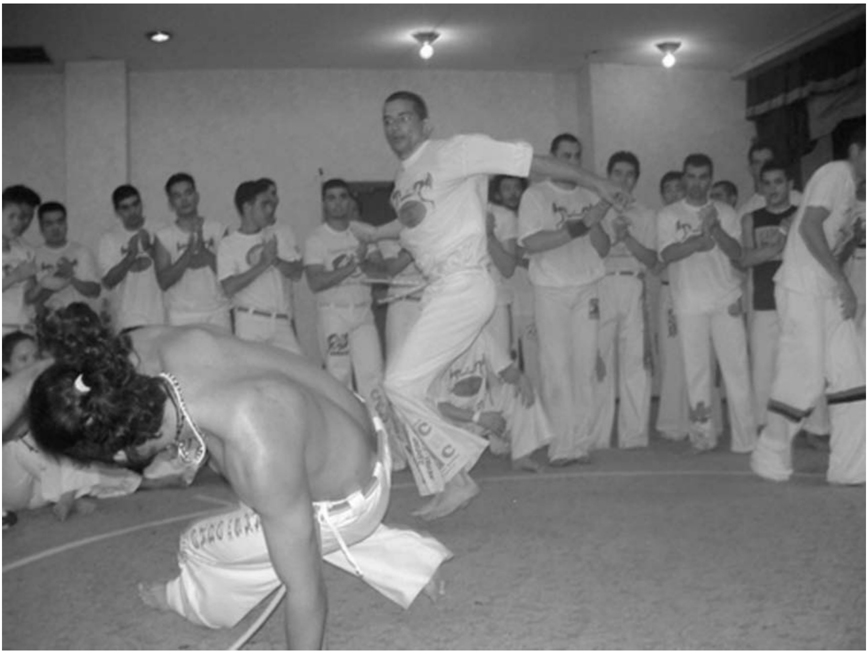

Figure 14.4 *Roda* escape; Capoeira: Brazilians and Others, Shiga Prefecture, 2005. The "roda" is the circle of people within which capoeira is played. Two people enter and play until they get tired, somebody else "buys in," or the Mestre calls them back. The man in the foreground of this picture is performing a rolé to escape a flying spin kick and reposition himself for attack. (Photo: Tatsu Yamato)

ethnic issues has changed. The contemporary interest in cultural flows reveals a new dynamic, belying the tendency to think of Japan as one kind of place. Even the Aomori Airport in deeply rural Japan, has signs in Japanese, Korean, English, and Russian and claims the title: Aomori International Airport. There is a new reality in Japan with new streams of migration and new interfaces. How that will play out should be located in a larger global context.

There is nothing fixed about Being Other in Japan, either. The mobility and transformation of identity/identities is something constantly in your face if you are Other in Japan. It doesn't matter whether you are a University of Tokyo professor or working in a dangerous, dirty factory in southern Nara Prefecture. Unlike most Japanese, who are comfortable in their space and their place, you are either constantly on display through how you look or act. Or concerned about being exposed while you are "passing."

What Others have in common is being located physically, psychically, or culturally on the peripheries of a huge hegemonic society. By and large they are constantly on guard for belittlement, discrimination, and the myriad other ways that they are daily made to feel outsiders, *yosomono*, and *Gaijin*.[7] Others understand what it is to be often confronted with dilemmas of belonging or not belonging. Yet just as there are invisible spaces between Others and the mainstream Japanese (which Others are aware of and mainstream Japanese often are not), those of us who are Others in Japan do have our own spaces on the edges of the society, too. For those of us who are Japanese at the same time as we are Other this is an especially difficult recognition.

This book has thus been about people in the margins of Japanese society. We have been interested in how "Being Other in Japan" is embedded in the experiences, spaces, places, languages, families, work, politics, and other dimensions of life for people who live in the social margins of Japan. We believe that the lives of the marginal reveal important insights into the mainstream. Like Gary Okihiro (1994) we see these people positioned, as many are, at the center of the society, moving democracy forward in dramatic ways because of their experiences with discrimination and marginalization. It is a different way of looking at Japan, one that gives us deeper insights into Japanese society and being Japanese. The mainstream can then be seen not so much as monolithic or homogenous but as deriving its identity in significant ways from its representations of its Others.

How we think about those who are different from the mainstream in Japan also informs those studying in the United States, England, India, China, Australia, and other multicultural societies. Each society is different, of course, yet some common threads can be seen. What is happening in Japan throws new light on these other countries. Landmark legal cases such as the 2001 Ainu land case in Nibutani, Japan's decisions to accept human rights decisions made elsewhere outside of Japan, and civil/human rights trends in general show a willingness to move beyond assimilation and homogenization.

What has been referred to as "the mantra of reform, deregulation and restructuring" in the government and the private sector (Kingston 2001: 127) means a crescendo of change reverberating throughout the society as well.[8] Norms, values, and ways of the past are no longer sacred. Instead, everything is open to question. And it is this questioning and searching for answers that is perhaps the most dramatic of all changes. There is a strong acknowledgment in Japanese society today that innovation and transformation are needed, yet observers are deeply divided over whether a stagnant Japan will remain stagnant, or is on the verge of fundamental change. Serious questioning is going on, leading to both subtle and not-so-subtle transformations.

As the chapters in this book have demonstrated, there is a de-emphasis on homogeneity, coherence, and timelessness in Japanese society today. Multiculturalism in Japan has turned the spotlight onto culture itself in Japan, as Morris-Suzuki (1998) notes, forcing us to reconsider previous images of stability and harmony which the word culture seemed to imply for Japan and emphasizing the necessity of recognizing the multiple identities of individuals. When we began this project we intended to counter stereotypes, whether of Orientalism or Occidentalism, that impeded the understanding of culture and society in Japan. The transnational cultures and peoples presented in these essays about Japan in an era of globalization have done more than that, standing the stereotypes of cultural essentialism on their head, revealing streams of meaning that embrace networks of complexity in human relations.

Culture in Japan, as in many countries, has thus become an increasingly contested terrain as new and old immigrant cultures begin to permeate society. New hybrid forms and identities have emerged which synthesize multiple, older, and more traditional forms of culture. The increasing penetration of Japan by these nonmainstream societies and cultures is happening at the same time as Japanese society finds itself caught in the swirl of global cultural transition and profound local transformations.

The voices in these chapters of *Being Others in Japan* help us to understand the experiences of this new/old diversity and how these voices might be heard from, and projected onto, this changing Japanese landscape. It is an understanding that is sorely needed in the cultural and social interpretation of this very important country and this influential society.

The world is now in Japan, just as Japan is in the world. What Japan shares, or does not share, with other societies has important implications far beyond the borders of this island nation. How Japanese society has responded to these changes and challenges thus offers us new perspectives on the Other and how to respond, or not to respond, to difference in an age of globalization and the transformations of a transcultural/transnational world.

Notes

1 Research on globalization and borderlands that is particularly relevant here includes Hannerz 1992, 1996, 2000; Featherstone, Lash, and Robertson 1995; Appadurai 2000; Eades, Gill, and Befu 2000; Itoh 2000; Iyotani 2001; Yoshimi and Kang 2001; Iwabuchi 2002; Tsuboi 2003; and Nederveen Pieterse 2004.

2 Although the architects of the 1990 Immigration Law did not intend to do so, the law has led Japan to promote what some observers see as a Japanese-Only Policy, much like that of Australia's infamous Whites-Only Policy. The original intent of this policy, as Harumi Befu pointed out in a talk at Stanford University in 2003, was actually to facilitate the return to Japan of small numbers of war orphans (*zanryū koji*), Japanese children who had been left behind in China at the end of World War II. Policy makers did not anticipate that hundreds of thousands of people of Japanese ancestry from South America would use the 1990 Immigration Law to migrate and work in Japan. Yet, while promoting the immigration of those people like Brazilian or Peruvian Japanese, seemingly linked by "blood," the Japanese government has at the same time been denying visas or imposing severe restrictions on those with higher-level skills and Japanese language but who do not have that "blood" connection.

3 See also Papastergiadis 1997, 2000; Werbner 1997; Werbner and Modood 1997; Wicker 1997.

4 To avoid the "friction" that "too many" foreigners would bring, the head of a Justice Ministry panel recommended that the country limit the proportion of foreigners to 3 percent of the population, compared with 1.2 percent now (Reuters 2006). The report clearly states the preference for foreigners who decide to stay in Japan for short or medium-term stays, not for the long-term (Ministry of Justice 2006). Before considering the entry of foreigners, this mid-term report states, Japan should look to women, NEETs, *freeta* (the last two being unemployed or partially employed youth), and the elderly to fill labor needs in the society.

5 They are only following their Japanese compatriots. Many young Japanese have opted out of the pension and retirement schemes entirely, the numbers becoming scandalous in some estimations, representing even 30–40 percent of those who should be paying.

6 Border thinking has been variously described and explored by Anzaldua 1987; Willis 1992; Ong 1999; Mignolo 2000; Willis 2001a,b; Nakamura 2002; Osaka Shi Kyōiku Senta 2002; and Murphy-Shigematsu 2003.

7 *Yosomono* is the term for an unwanted outsider or interloper.

8 Kingston (2001, 2004) has made an explicit point of noting the transformations appearing in Japan, however quietly. This, of course contradicts the standard wisdom of Japan as a conservative society that is not prone to change.

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Afterword

Marginals, minorities, majorities and migrants—studying the Japanese borderlands in contemporary Japan

Roger Goodman

There is a long tradition in social anthropology of studying the margins of a society in order to understand what happens at its core. The study of minority groups in a modern industrial society exemplifies this tradition very well; looking at the way that these groups are defined, excluded and incorporated by mainstream society provides important insights into the changing nature of what constitutes the core values of that society. The papers in this volume exemplify this approach admirably. They also raise important questions which need further exploration and it is some of these to which I want to point in this epilogue.

The common approach to the study of minorities in anthropology has tended to make two sets of assumptions about them, firstly that minorities are excluded from the levers of political and economic power and secondly that they need to be seen in opposition to a relatively homogenous majority culture. The evidence from Japan suggests that both of these assumptions are problematic.

Marginality and minority status

It is a mistake to conflate minority status with marginal status. Minorities may be relatively small in number, such as Whites in apartheid-era South Africa, but far from marginal in status. Equally important, they may be marginal at one point in time, but part of the mainstream at another point. The so-called returnee schoolchildren (*kikokushijo*) in Japan moved dramatically and rapidly during the 1980s from marginal to elite status as their middle-class parents mobilized political and economic power on behalf of their children. What is particularly interesting about the case study of the *kikokushijo*, however, is how when they were believed to be of marginal status in Japan, their marginality was explained in historical and cultural terms which suggested an inevitability in that status (see for example White 1988). This essentialist approach can be seen in another, more recent ethnography of a minority group in Japan, the *Nikkeijin* (Latin Americans of Japanese descent) community which has settled since the early 1990s, which Takeyuki Tsuda (2003: 396) concludes by saying:

> [the Japanese Brazilians] will eventually disappear into the majority populace through cultural assimilation and social mobility because their

> ethnicity is not essentialized. As a result, future generations of Japanese Brazilians in Japan will not remain strangers in their ethnic homeland.

The equally detailed ethnography of Joshua Roth agrees with that of Tsuda on almost all points. In particular they agree on the fact that the *Nikkeijin*, who had been so proud of their Japanese ancestry when in Latin America, were disappointed on the reception they received in Japan and therefore rediscovered their Latin American-ness. Where they differ—and differ dramatically—is in what their ethnography tells them about the position, and the future, of *Nikkeijin* in Japan. Roth concludes his account thus:

> With or without consensus in support of it. Japanese society is becoming increasingly multicultural . . . A more positive multicultural future depends at least in part on government policy that reforms such institutions [as the employment system].
>
> (Roth 2002: 144–145)

In short, while Roth believes Japan will be able to contain within it minority groups, like the *Nikkeijin*, as ideas of Japaneseness become more broadly defined, Tsuda believes the *Nikkeijin* will disappear inside the boundaries of an increasingly tightly defined Japanese society. Both authors seem to feel that their conclusions are positive ones and both that they are derived from their ethnographic data. How therefore do they manage to differ so diametrically? The answer lies not so much in their views of the *Nikkeijin* society (on which, as we have seen, their fieldwork reassuringly seems to agree in most significant features) but in their views of Japanese society and in particular their underlying assumptions of the relationship between the individual and society.

Tsuda sees Japan in very functional terms. He believes that Japanese society sees anything coming from outside as potentially contaminating and hence in need of either rejection or purification before it can be accepted into the society. The *Nikkeijin* are the latest example of a group to threaten the boundaries of Japaneseness and Japanese society has responded, according to Tsuda, by putting up barriers to them, though over time, when their children have been through the Japanese education system and lost their Brazilian-ness (as he suggests in an epilogue is already beginning to happen), then they will be assimilated into the society. Roth, on the other hand, emphasizes that Brazilian Japanese ethnic identity comes from interaction with the Japanese political and economic structures within which the *Nikkeijin* are forced to operate. It is not Japanese society or culture as such that is responsible for the rejection of the *Nikkeijin*, but interest groups within Japan—such as employers, politicians, journalists, and, particularly, labor brokers (hence the word "brokered" in the title of his book). These groups, he says, use the language of culture and history to legitimize the marginalization of the *Nikkeijin* group for their own economic (cheap labor) and political (reinforcement of Japanese ethnic identity) ends. It is in opposition to this marginalization that the *Nikkeijin* have been constructing their own cultural forms (drawing on ideas of Brazilian-ness) and, in time, Roth believes, these new cultural forms will become part of the definition of what it means to be Japanese.

As I have argued elsewhere (Goodman 1990), this is just what happened with the *kikokushijo* in the 1980s, who became symbolic exemplars of what it meant to be an international Japanese. For the *kikokushijo* (coming from upper-middle-class Japanese backgrounds), this process was relatively easy—and indeed the appearance of the *Nikkeijin* in Japan in the late 1980s made *kikokushijo* appear more mainstream Japanese than ever before. But, if the same argument is followed, as their class position strengthens in Japanese society, so the Brazilian *Nikkeijin* will be able to exert economic and political pressure that will lead to their cultural lifestyles being accepted as part of the definition of Japaneseness.

Compared to Tsuda, Roth's view of society is much more flexible in terms of the power (what sociologists these days often call "agency") that it gives to the different actors, even though he recognizes that these same actors are themselves constrained by the political and economic realities of the contexts in which they move. Culture in this context is nothing more than a rhetoric that different interest groups draw on to legitimize their position. Roth's model is also a much more dynamic one than the rather static model of Tsuda. This is an important distinction to bear in mind as we read the individual accounts contained in this volume. To what extent are minority groups passive in the fact of majority society; to what extent do they help to redefine the boundaries of that majority society?

Majority culture

This leads to a second set of questions which need investigation: What constitutes majority culture and how does it define itself? As I have written elsewhere (Goodman 2005: 58), "Who are the Japanese?" became the question which dominated the study of Japan in the 1980s. As the Japanese economy expanded and looked set to become the largest in the world by the end of the century, the government established and generously funded the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) in Kyoto to look at the origins and development of what constituted Japanese culture. The publication of works about what constituted the key characteristics of Japanese society and culture flourished and rather than being categorized by discipline background were increasingly shelved in bookshops under the generic heading of *Nihonjinron* (literally: Theories about the Japanese People).

Some of the authors of these works, such as the psychologist Doi Takeo and the anthropologist Nakane Chie, found that they had written best-sellers which went in to many editions. Towards the end of the decade a powerful critique of this genre also appeared—most notably in the work of sociologists of Japan such as Yoshio Sugimoto and Ross Mouer—which suggested that rather than exploring Japanese culture, the *Nihonjinron* literature was actually part of constructing it. The *Nihonjinron* literature, they argued, was "primordialist" in its view of Japanese culture and ethnicity. Its emphasis was on finding continuities between contemporary Japanese social values and so-called traditional practices and in explaining both in terms of Japanese geography, topography and agriculture. The strength of their critique of this literature was also, in many ways, attestation to their belief in its potency. They saw the average Japanese citizen as powerless to resist its nationalistic message reinforced as it was by the status of the authors, their publishers and their media exposure.

While other authors, such as the sociologist Yoshino Kosaku (1992) and the anthropologist Harumi Befu (1993) gave more nuanced accounts of the way in which different sections of Japanese society received and reinterpreted the *Nihonjinron* message, the social historian Vera Mackie (2003) has developed a much more complex account of the structure of Japanese society itself in which she suggests that the mainstream of Japanese society is actually made up of a very small core of individuals: male, white, heterosexual, white collar and able bodied. In this context, the idea of minority status becomes much more complicated and includes the vast majority of Japanese society: women, manual workers, homo/bisexuals, disabled and so on. The immigrant and ethnic minority is only one among many such minority groups and to privilege it analytically is somewhat problematic. The borderlands come right up to a rather small core which constitutes no more than 25 percent of the population; it may be majority cultures which need to be problematized rather than minority ones.

The increasing complexity of minority status

It is an obvious fact that the number and size of minority groups in Japan has been growing over the past fifteen years, although this is not always reflected in official statistics as the numbers of the largest minority group, the Japanese-Korean population, taking Japanese citizenship has also been increasing. These minority groups thus far, however, have tended to be treated and studied in isolation and this has increasingly become an untenable research position.[1] We need to understand how each of these groups has been formed and operates internally and how they relate with whatever they define at the Japanese state and mainstream Japanese society. At the same time, we also need to understand how they keep up their contacts with their “home” societies and interact with other “minority” groups in Japanese society.

At the same time, we need to understand the changing legal context in which minority status is played out in Japan. Are legal revisions designed to increase or control the flow of immigrant groups? To help them assimilate or to encourage them to move on? Is it possible to have what Willis describes as “denizenship” (rights as a resident) without citizenship (rights as a national citizen)? Can we see the development of hyphenated Japanese populations as exist in the United States and Latin America? The field of new research questions is almost endless and that is why the papers in this volume—which so succinctly demonstrate the current state of knowledge in what is a very nascent research field—are so helpful. What is of even less doubt is the significance of this research topic and the fact that it will grow in importance over the next few decades, and this is the point on which I would like to end.

Japan leads the world in global demographic ageing. The fact that Japan is the most "mature" of the Asian populations can be measured in a number of ways. In terms of population size, for example, it has slipped rapidly down the rankings: it had the fifth largest population in the world in 1950, the tenth in 2005 and is predicted to be the sixteenth by 2050 (United Nations 2005). Indeed, its population is predicted to contract more over the next forty years more than any other developed country outside the former Eastern block countries.

Of most immediate importance is the fact that, in 2005, Japan officially had the oldest population in the world with a median average of 42.9 years and the highest life expectancy at birth (81.9 years). While it is predicted to lose the first of these records by 2050 to China (due to increased longevity and the one-child policy in China), it will retain the record for life expectancy, which is expected to increase to over 88 years. Much of Japan's life expectancy can be explained by the fact that it has the lowest rates of infant mortality in the world—although it should be pointed out that there are some questions about the way that infant mortality is defined in Japan—but one cannot argue with the fact that the number of centenarians increased from 3,600 in 1991 to over 25,000 (85 percent of them women) in 2005 (AP: September 13, 2005), and that Japan has more centenarians per 1,000 members of the population than any other country. By 2025, almost 30 percent of Japan's population will be 65 or over and it will have almost as many people over the age of 80 as under the age of 15; barely two people of so-called working age (15–64) will be supporting every person of "retirement" age, 65 or over.

It is, in Japan, the combination of the unprecedented rapid decline in the fertility rate with rapidly increasing longevity that has led to the sense that the country faces a demographic crisis: some government reports predict that the population size will shrink to half of its present size in 70 years and to a third in 100 years. Significantly, unlike many other OECD countries, Japan had no history of immigrant labor to deal with this demographic transition.

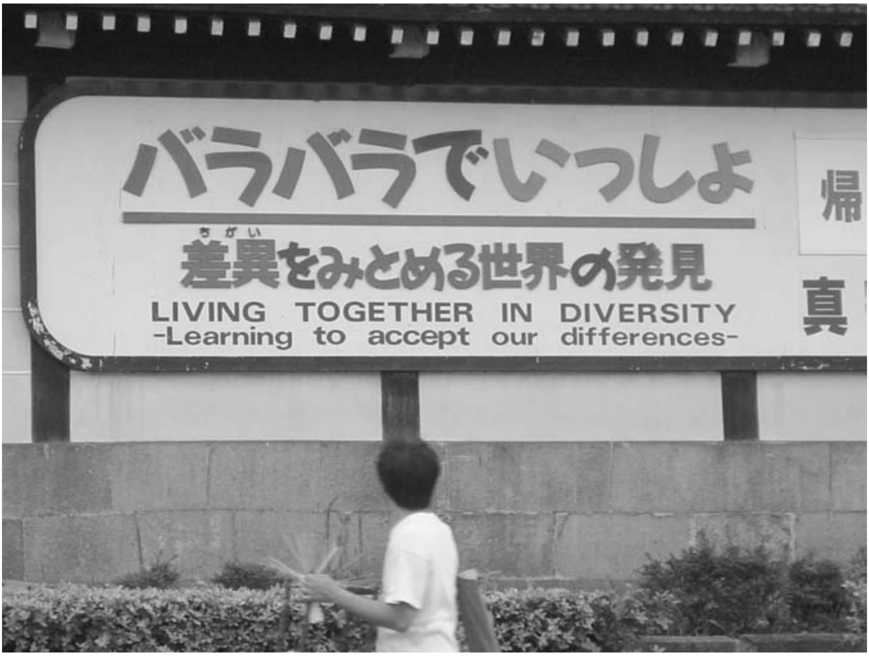
Dealing with the legacy of Japan as a reluctant host of post-war immigration

As Peach (2003) has pointed out, one of the exceptional features of Japanese post-war economic growth lies in the fact that, unlike post-war growth in the United States and European Union, it was not fueled by huge migration. Post-war Japan devised a series of strategies to avoid "contaminating" its population with foreigners. It could make do without importing labor because of the large number of workers repatriated from its colonies after the Second World War, and because women and the elderly provided a very flexible labor force which could be alternatively incorporated in and then excluded from the labor force without leading to social protest.

Japan was so reluctant to receive foreign in-migration that it also avoided the issue by mobilizing rural workers and moving production offshore. The period of the 1950s through the 1970s saw a significant rural depopulation (*kaso*) accompanied by a major shift in industrial structure from agriculture to manufacturing (Minami 1967). A further industrial shift towards services and knowledge-based economy, however, meant a reduction in the proportion of the adult population entering the labor force at a young age due to an increase in the length of education (Minami 1994: 208). At the same time, Japan's adoption of an advanced welfare regime, albeit with corporate dimensions relating to private companies that are stronger than in many European countries (Esping-Anderson 1994), encouraged planned withdrawal of workers from the labor force with advancing age reducing effectively the period spent in the labor force for most males to around 40–45 years. Changes in the demographic structure of the (male) labor force in post-war Japan, accompanied by a shift in industrial structure, thus exacerbated, rather than ameliorated, Japan's issues of labor supply to fuel economic growth and while, to some extent, women still provided flexible labor, their skills remained largely under-used due to patriarchal attitudes within the employment structure (Lam 1992; Saso 1992).

The issue of labor supply became a serious problem in Japan only in the 1980s, at the height of Japan's economic expansion, when more and more, generally small- and medium-sized companies found they could not complete their order books because of a lack of workers. This situation was due to a combination of a number of factors: fewer workers coming in to the labor force for demographic reasons; young Japanese feeling increasingly affluent, well-educated and unwilling to work in blue-collar positions; and an apparently insatiable demand for Japanese products. Given the high value of the yen, there was no shortage of workers overseas willing to fill the vacuum. Japan, therefore, turned reluctantly to foreign labor in the 1980s, thirty years after Germany, France, and the United Kingdom turned to foreign or colonial manpower to solve labor shortages in key sectors. The number of foreign migrants has grown since then, but despite much public debate over the issue, their number actually remains comparatively small even today (Bartram 2000): only 1.2 percent of the total population (or 1.5 million), compared to 3.8 percent (2.2 million) in the United Kingdom (or 6.8 percent if one includes the British-born children of minority ethnic populations, 8.9 percent (7.3 million) in Germany, and 9.8 percent (26 million) in the United States and), although the definition of foreign population varies somewhat across countries (SOPEMI 2000). Significantly, about 40 percent of Japan's total foreign population, or 666,000 out of 1.6 million (in 2000), are actually permanent residents, such as Koreans, who have resided in the country for generations and would not be considered as foreigners in most other countries.

What is clear is that, especially as Japan comes out of recession, the labor force demand will begin to become overwhelming, as has been noted in the first chapter here. According to some estimates, to prevent its population from declining, Japan will need to accept 17 million immigrants between 1995 and 2050 (an average of 343,000 net additions annually), while to maintain the level of its working-age population (ages from 15–64), it will require a total of 33.5 million immigrants during the same period (an average of 647,000 annually) (Papademetriou and Hamilton 2000; United Nations 2000). In the former case, by


バラバラでいっしょ
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差異をみとめる世界の発見
LIVING TOGETHER IN DIVERSITY
-Learning to accept our differences-
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Figure 15.1 Living together in diversity, Higashi Hongwanji Temple, Kyoto, summer 2005. (Photo: David Blake Willis)

2050, immigrants and their descendants would total almost 18 percent of the total population of the country; in the latter case, around 30 percent. As Miyoshi (2003) points out, these demographic and economic shifts, as well as their implications for immigration, are, of course, far from unique to Japan, which is not alone in struggling to balance the need to import foreign labor with the desire to control immigration. Japan nonetheless appears to face a greater dilemma than other industrial countries, precisely because of the strong ideology of homogeneity that has guided its modern nationhood. How can Japan reconcile demographic and economic realities with cultural homogeneity? How should Japan cope with immigration and deal with its sense of nationhood?

As I and colleagues (Goodman *et al.* 2003: 4–5) have argued elsewhere, the answer may lie not in curtailing immigration in the name of cultural homogeneity, but in recognizing that migration, both into and out of Japanese territorial boundaries, has shaped, and will continue to shape, the notion of Japanese homogeneity. To go back to metaphors which were popular in the 1960s in the context of the debate about immigration into the United States, state policies need to coalesce around ideas of assimilation (the melting pot) or multiculturalism (the salad bowl), while recognizing that migrant populations are themselves not passive in the face of state policies nor homogenous in their reactions towards them. What is perhaps at this stage most interesting about the Japanese case is the lack of clarity about the future and the importance on a global stage of monitoring and analysing what will happen. This volume provides an important springboard for this future scholarship.

Note

1 The one exception to this approach has been a number of accounts of Foreigners' Assemblies where members of different nationalities have interacted on behalf of the wider foreign community in certain areas (see, for example, the work of Han Seung-Mi 2004).

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