Producing Japaneseness in Everyday Life:

gendered biographies, locality and community-making among

Japanese women

in southeast London

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Abstract

This thesis examines the diverse lives of Japanese women migrants who live in southeast London. It draws on ethnographic fieldwork to question how social identities are shaped and framed by various relationships in and through migration, with particular foci on gender, life course and locality. The Japanese women who live in southeast London network extensively with their compatriots, reproducing a distinctive 'Japaneseness' and capitalise it in their everyday lives.

While social and cultural reproduction —particularly as this relates to their children—is central within this, their practices are also telling of their own agency in navigating the different registers of their gendered identities. They may be mothers, but they are also daughters, roles that carry with them a range of expectations and that are enacted and performed in different locations and that have enhanced significance at different points in their lives, with both intra- and inter- ethnic communities. Underpinned conceptually by an understanding of migration as an ongoing process, the study builds on existing research on Japanese women's migration—which highlights the diversity of this population—to demonstrate their complex and multiple community making practice and belonging in which they accumulate and deploy locally-specific values and capitals.

By bringing the concepts of translocalism and biographical approach together, this thesis therefore contributes to the understanding of how gender, ethnicity and migration intersect in the everyday lives of these women. Furthermore, in disentangling their complex multi-layered lives and everyday identity negotiations, it speaks further to considerations over agency through the life course and the ways in which social world are both constitutive of and constituted by wider social structures.

Declaration of Authorship

I, Kaoru Takahashi hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: _____ Date:

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Introduction

In the 2011 Census, approximately 21,000 Londoners responded that they were born in Japan (URBS TEAM 2015). The census showed that most of these people live north of the Thames, especially in the boroughs of Barnet and Ealing, where there are nearly 2,500 Japanese. There are fewer Japanese residents in south London. However, having lived in East Dulwich in Southwark, which is the main field site of this thesis and been located in southeast London for five years, I have encountered a lot of Japanese residents in my neighbourhood. At a local Japanese club for children, which will be discussed further below, there are always between thirty and forty children there who have Japanese parent(s) living in the neighbourhood, mostly mothers who have children with their British or other European husband, although some have Japanese husbands or are single.

Interestingly, the northern and western areas, specifically around Finchley, Swiss Cottage, Golders Green, Ealing and Acton tube stations are well known as areas where Japanese expatriate employees and their families live (White and Hurdley 2003), and have good access to Japanese groceries, Japanese educational institutions and Japanese-run private clinics, which continuously attract new Japanese residents.

In contrast, the Japanese population in southeast London has received little attention, not only in scholarly discussions but even among Japanese real estate companies in London[1]. Unlike the areas in which Japanese are concentrated, in north and west London, the southeast area does not have any infrastructure especially beneficial to Japanese (e.g. Japanese

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[1] These real estate companies mainly target the corporate expatriate as their clientele, and often introduce central- (Chelsea, Kensington), north- (Finchley Central, Woodside Park), central north- (St. Johns Wood, Swiss Cottage) and west- (Ealing, Acton) London, as popular areas (JC International Property 2008).

supermarkets, restaurants and groceries). Because of this, Japanese expatriates and their accompanying families, who go back to Japan after a few years and therefore prefer to have a lifestyle similar to the one they had at home (which makes their return to Japanese society easier, especially for children), must choose to live on the north of the Thames. On the other hand, permanently settled Japanese residents can be more flexible about where they choose to live. Having settled down with their family in the UK, and sent their children to local schools, they do not need to take the location of Japanese infrastructure into serious consideration.
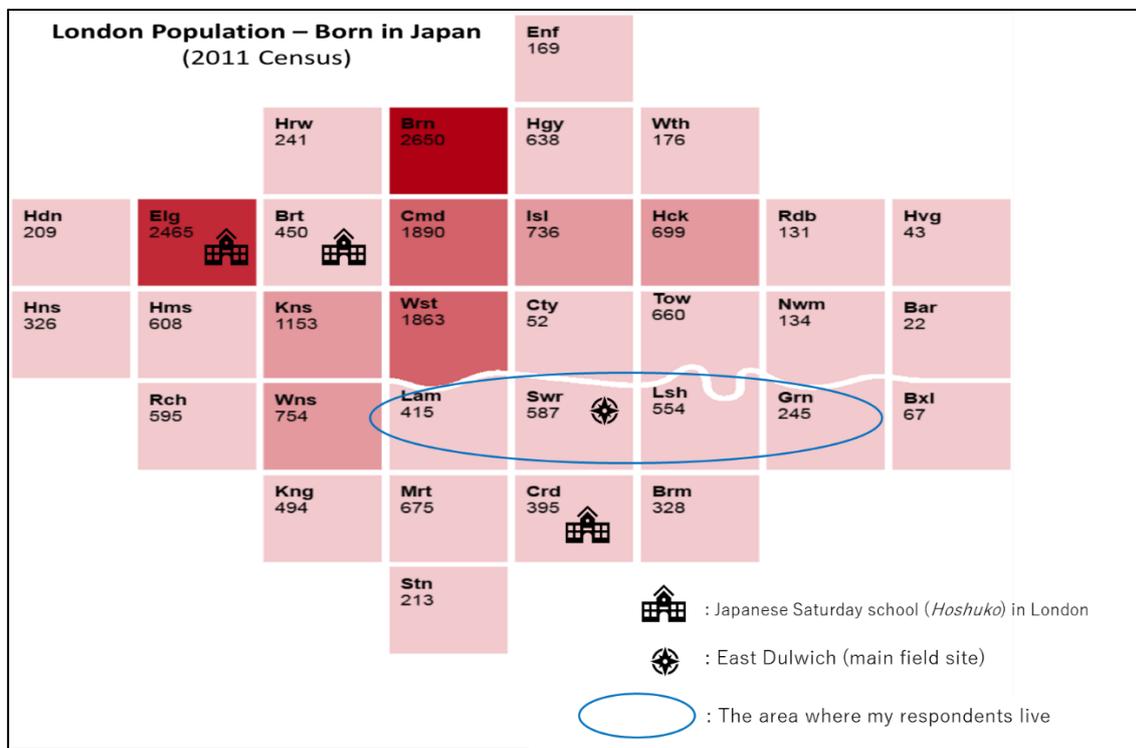
Figure 1 Map: London Population -number of residents born in Japan (URBS TEAM 2015)[2]

To underpin this, there is data indicating that 60% of Japanese expatriates live north of the Thames, and only 40% to the south (Chuzai dotto UK 2016). My respondents in southeast

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[2] Based on the map by URBS TEAM (2015), the symbols were added by the author.

London told me they have a similar understanding, that the Japanese community in the north is an expatriate community that functions like a revolving door and its residents are here only temporarily to fulfil time-limited contracts, while those who live in the south are permanent residents in the UK. Although this knowledge, which draws directly on their own experience, is highly subjective, it is also indicative of the interesting fact that they rarely see any expatriate Japanese in their everyday lives in the local area.

In the borough of Southwark, there are 587 residents who were born in Japan, which is 0.2% of the whole population (URBS TEAM 2015). And it is almost same with some neighbouring boroughs: 0.13% in Lambeth and 0.2% in Lewisham. Because of their small numbers, Japanese residents in London are always categorised in the census as 'other Asians', a category that includes all other migrants of Asian background, except the Chinese, and have been less significant in statistics. Not only because of their small population, but also because there are no stores and services advertising for Japanese staff in the area, the lives of Japanese residents in southeast London have been invisible both on the street and in statistics, and have therefore remained unknown to the wider public.

This thesis is about Japanese women who live in what is commonly understood to be a British middle-class neighbourhood (Jackson and Benson 2014), and whose complex and dynamic relationships with multiple others as they navigate their lives in local space have been overlooked. It all started in the summer of 2012, when I found an advertisement for a spare room in a flat in East Dulwich on an online message board for Japanese Londoners. Even though I had never heard of it and had no idea where it was, after exchanging emails with Yoko, who already lived there, on my arrival in London I headed directly to the flat from Heathrow airport, and stepped straight into East Dulwich, where I have now lived for more

than five years and which has become the central field site for this PhD study. Yoko subsequently introduced me to her Japanese neighbours, who offered me various opportunities to work for them, as a child sitter for their children, as a member of staff at their Japanese food businesses and as a Japanese teaching assistant. It was my role as a teaching assistant at '*Donguri*', a Japanese club for children in East Dulwich, that not only made me aware of the existence of significant Japanese population and community of Japanese women in the area, but also helped me to get myself known more widely among these mothers, which enabled me to get a sense of belonging to the area and establish my position in the local community.

During three and a half years of participant observation in this neighbourhood, through multiple relationships with these Japanese women, I have observed their everyday lives, including many personal transitions, as well as the social and political environment around them. There have been some new arrivals, and some people have left this local Japanese community, or even the UK itself. Some of the women have become mothers during this time, while others have experienced the loss of a family member. Over time, these women have gone through changes in their social and gendered identities, and these could be observed in both their practice and relationships in different and diverse settings: public and domestic, everyday life and festive occasions, private and work, within ethnic boundaries and in the local host society.

Thus, this study makes an empirical contribution to the field of Japanese migration studies not only by its focus on the lives of Japanese women in southeast London which have been little examined, but also because of my unique access to and relationships with the community and its members that developed over time. Drawing on this ongoing ethnographic fieldwork with particular foci on gender and the life course, this thesis examines the diverse lives of

these Japanese women migrants by asking the following questions:

- How are the social identities of Japanese women migrants in southeast London shaped and framed in and through migration?

- What is the shape and meaning of community for them?

- How do they differently understand the value produced by 'Japaneseness' through their various organisations and participation in local activities?

- How do social and cultural discourses influence the narrative production of migration over the life-course?

- How are their translocal emotional connectivities reflected in the ways in which these migrants address multiple identities in their everyday lives?

Teasing out everyday life

The empirical chapters in this thesis (Chapter 3, 4, 5, 6) are centred around a number of vignettes that illustrate my observations of the women's everyday practice as well as their reflexive narratives of migration trajectories and experiences. In this introductory chapter, with the aim of giving a flavour of the themes that will be explored in subsequent chapters, I introduce one vignette below.

Catching flu

16th February 2017

A few days after I came back to London from Japan, I got terrible flu which was one of the worst flus I had ever had with high fever and full body aches. Even though I live with two other flatmates, each of us has a different lifestyle so none of us would find it strange even if we do not see our other flatmates for several days. It was really painful for me to go

shopping to get some food, as well as to cook something to feed myself, given my terribly ill condition. When I was lying down in my small quiet bedroom, staring at the plain white ceiling, feeling dizzy, extremely negative thoughts entered my head that made me reflect on my situation: if I become unconscious now, who will find me and how long will it be? How can they make contact with my family in Japan, as nobody knows either their phone number or email address? Until then, I thought I was always connected with my family and friends in Japan and they can know my situation anytime on Facebook. However, once I became ill I realised how precarious my situation was. Fortunately, a few days later, my flatmate noticed that I was unwell and sent me a text asking if there was anything she could do to help. It was interesting that we communicate each other via text though we live in a same small two bedroom flat ⋯ I really appreciated her kindness in offering help, even volunteering to take me to a hospital in the middle of the night if I felt terribly sick–luckily that never happened.

Simultaneously with this, I had a text from Mika[3], who is the mother of twin boys and used to be my regular client for my child sitting services. As the boys have grown up, I have had fewer opportunity to work for her, but still I kept in touch with her occasionally. A few weeks ago, when I was still fine, I asked her if she wants to have any of the *Okonomiyaki* sauce[4], which my former flatmate Yoko had left. On this day, she replied to accept my offer with a few weeks' delay. In our conversation via text, I told her that I was ill and had been in bed for a few days. She was about to come to Sainsbury's which is just a few minutes' walk

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[3] A pseudonym is used for all the respondents in this thesis.

[4] *Okonomiyaki* is a Japanese street food which is like a savoury pancake - made with batter and cabbage, topped with special sweet brown sauce made from vegetables and fruit. As Yoko and I used to work at a food stall at the weekend market in Brick lane selling *Okonomiyaki* together, she had left a lot of spare sauce when she went back to Japan.

from my flat, and kindly asked me if there was anything I want her to get from the supermarket. While I really appreciated her sweet consideration, as I had already enough food and drink that I bought on my first day of being ill, I declined her offer.

However, after a while she sent me a text and I found that she had left two bags full of food in front of the door of my flat. In the bags, there were not only some things she had got from Sainsbury's (yogurt, rice pudding, fruit juice, chicken soup, easy peeler oranges and flowers), but also from her house (homemade rice cake, Japanese *somen* noodles[5], honey pickled quince and Japanese nutritional supplement). I thought that these mixtures of British and Japanese remedies appropriately demonstrated her accumulated experience and knowledge from living in London for more than 10 years, through looking after the health of her family as a mother of two young boys. She mentioned that we cannot trust the medical institution in the UK, therefore we have to be more conscious to take care of our health by ourselves. For example, the Japanese supplement she gave to me was not a medicine, more like nourishment made from garlic extract. I had seen Mika often give it to her sons when they were sick. It indicates that she wanted to improve the fundamental immunity of her body through organic products to protect her health, rather than rely on chemical products, seeking for passing health.

Eventually it took nearly two weeks for me to fully recover enough to visit Mika who lives 15 minutes away from my flat by bus to say thank you as well as bring the *Okonomiyaki* sauce that I promised to give her. She welcomed me into her makeshift kitchen-diner, which used to be the children's play room, with a cup of coffee and Japanese rice crackers. While she was busily preparing dinner for the boys, coming and going between the makeshift dining kitchen and children's bedroom where the fridge is now temporarily situated, Mika

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[5] *Somen* is a thin noodle made from flour.

told me that she can understand how painful and lonely it is to be ill abroad from her own experience when she first came to the UK as a student. She said that it is important to help each other, which for me reveals a lot about the strong caring network within the community of Japanese women living in this part of London. With consideration for one of her sons who was ill on the day, she cooked Japanese *udon*[6] noodles in hot soup which is easy of digestion for the dinner and invited me to stay to enjoy it with them. I know that Mika is a great chef, because whenever I took care of the boys, she always prepared dinner for us and I always ate with them. It was a great joy for me to have her home-made food again for the first time in a long time, especially after spending a lonely time in bed for weeks. As usually Mika has dinner with her husband later, I had the tasty hot noodles with the boys. Not only Mika, but also my flatmate and other Japanese whom I talked about this experience said the exactly same Japanese phrase "*Komatta tokiwa otagai sama*", meaning that we should help each other when anyone is in trouble. Having no family nearby who they can ask for instant support, it seems that the relationship with other Japanese women living in the area has a significant meaning for them, offering them a strong bond based on empathy.

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[6] *Udon* is another type of noodle, made from flour, which is thicker than *somen*.

Figure 2 Photo: The gifts from Mika

What is described here is a scene of everyday life. However, understanding that migration is not just about people's mobility, but is rather a cultural phenomenon (Halfacree and Boyle 1993), and this vignette offers fruitful insights into individuals' ongoing negotiation with societal norms and values. The next few paragraphs unpack this vignette to draw out the ideas and key concepts of this study. These will appear repeatedly in the empirical chapters to follow and will be further developed to address the questions I asked above.

● **Gendered identity and the life course**

As illustrated in the vignette, Mika first arrived in London as a student, but has since met her husband, got married and become the mother of two boys. While there are some studies of Japanese migrant mothers (Igarashi and Yasumoto 2014; Lim and Skinner 2012; Maehara 2010), transformations in their gendered identities have been little examined, in particular as they take on the new role of parenthood, which also transforms their practice, relationships and capital accumulation as they navigate their life as a Japanese mother at different scales. Along with the aging of their parents in Japan, their identity as a daughter comes to the surface and shapes their everyday lives differently (Liamputtong 2006). I have tried to make this

visible through a focus on migrants' biographies of settlement. The intersection of gender and the life course through migration, and how they rework their identities as a "good" mother or "good" daughter by negotiating sociocultural norms and available resources will be further discussed in Chapter 3, 4 and 6.

- **Multiple relationships -reflexivity and positionality**

My relationship with Mika originated as one between child-minder and client. I was also a Japanese teacher for her sons, and she sometimes invited me to parties at her home as a local friend. Such multiple relationships, which go beyond that between the researcher and the researched are not only limited to my friendship with Mika, but extend also to many of my respondents in this research. Owing to such multiple relationships and positionings in the field site, reflexivity is a key element (Reeves et al. 2008). In the vignette, Mika empathises with my suffering when I had the flu because she experienced a similar situation when she was a student. Similarly, having shared similar experiences to my respondents in London, I could know or guess their emotional conflicts, especially in relation to their family in Japan (while as a researcher I needed to be aware that this was only a *partial* understanding). Thus, sharing the same experience, background and social space would help me to understand my respondents' emotional negotiation. These will be addressed in Chapter 2 and 6.

- **Transnational/local network**

In the vignette, the description of both the bags of gifts left by Mika, and the dining table at her house, demonstrate the significance of Japanese groceries in her everyday life. These Japanese foodstuffs, which are often sent by her family from Japan, brought by her parents when they come to visit her in London, or bought by herself when she goes back to Japan, tell us not only about her transnational material network with her home country, but also about how she maintains emotional connectivity with Japan through daily practices such as cooking

and eating Japanese food in London, which is a multi-sensory experience that directly evokes emotion. Also, by cooking Japanese food for her sons, she practices her own (but also a collectively shared) understanding of being a Japanese mother in southeast London. Thus, the mothers' transnational- as well as local-connectivity with home tells us about their locally developed mothering practice. This is covered below in Chapters 1, 4 and 6.

- **Accumulation of capital through practice**

Of the two bags Mika left for me, one was filled with British groceries from a supermarket and the other with Japanese foods from her home. This is a vivid illustration of capital she has accumulated throughout her life in both Japan and the UK. Her practice of caring in the Japanese way may be underpinned by her own childhood memory of being cared by her mother. Simultaneously, she demonstrated her understanding of local practices of caring, largely shaped by her identity as a mother, by offering me generally nutritious and highly digestible foods from Sainsburys. It is interesting that Mika mentions that she has had to be knowledgeable about how to care for her own and her family's health because she considers the NHS unreliable. In this regard, we can see that her caring practice has been shaped by her own biography, in which she was brought up in Japan by a Japanese mother and is raising her children in London, as well as by institutional structures in the UK. And her struggle to navigate her life in these circumstances has enabled her to accumulate this locally specific form of capital. The way my respondents learnt about locally available resources, and reproduced new cultural practices through various relationships, is introduced in Chapters 4 and 5.

- **Communities of practice**

This vignette also indicates that there are shared values and practice between Mika and I, which is 'doing Japaneseness'. The reason I offered her *Okonomiyaki* sauce, which she

accepted, is because we both share the practice of cooking Japanese food at home, and therefore I knew that the sauce would be a valuable thing to give. Also, the fact that not only Mika but also my other Japanese neighbours said that "we should help each other", perhaps means that they all have same understanding of caring for each other in the community. In this regard, I consider that this community is neither just an ethnically- nor a geographically-shaped local community, but rather 'communities of practice' in which people engage together 'in the doing of social life and in the negotiation of meaning' (O'Reilly 2012b: 30). Within the communities of practice, the Japanese women come together to negotiate the meaning of living in southeast London as Japanese (often as Japanese mothers) and re-evaluate the practices of 'doing Japaneseness' such as cooking, educating, working and socialising. It is a space for co-learning how to be an appropriate 'Japanese woman in southeast London' and by sharing the same understanding and practice, people develop a sense of belonging to the locality. This idea that the way their identity and practice are shaped is not an individual project, but a community structure is hinted in Chapters 3 and 4.

- **Japaneseness in everyday life**

This observation captures Mika's practice of Japaneseness in her homemaking and caring for her sons as a mother. Here, Japaneseness has significant value by being practiced through the interplay of her gendered identity as a mother in domestic space. I consider that practicing Japaneseness reconstructs her cultural, social and gendered identity as a 'Japanese mother in London' - therefore, Japaneseness is not a manifestation of national identity. All the empirical chapters in this thesis observe that my respondents demonstrate different ways of featuring Japaneseness in their everyday lives and that these interplay with gender, time (temporality, life course) and place (locality, transnational networking) in complex ways. This will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

Understanding the complexity of Japanese women's migration experience

The research questions addressed in the following chapters are strongly underpinned by the idea that migration is not a one-off movement, but is rather an ongoing process (Benson 2011; Halfacree and Boyle 1993; Ni Laoire 2000). There is a body of academic research concerned with the contemporary migration of Japanese women that has explored the arrival and settlement of these women in different parts of the world, mostly English speaking countries such as Canada (Kato 2009, 2010), Australia (Hamano 2015; Kawashima 2010; Mizukami 2007; Nagatomo 2012; Takeda 2012), the US (Fujita 2009; Igarashi 2015), the UK (Fujita 2009; Wada 2014) and Malaysia (Ono 2014). With a focus on the highly feminised aspects of Japanese migration, these studies have contributed to developing discussions of how women's socio-economic and cultural circumstances in Japanese society marginalise and motivate them to leave Japan and cross national borders as part of a 'self-searching' project (see Kato 2009, 2010; Kawashima 2010). They carefully examine Japanese women migrants' motivations, emphasising that they are not victims of Japanese patriarchal society, but rather that they actively transform their unstable employment conditions into the opportunity to quit their jobs and 'escape' from Japan (Kato 2010)[7].

Admittedly, these approaches, which focus on how social structure shapes individual mobility

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[7] On the contrary, Kato (2010) points out that Japanese young men who are more deeply trapped in patriarchy both physically and mentally are likely to be victims of this social structure. She argues that while Japanese women who can see hardly any future job prospects in patriarchy may decide to escape from Japan. However, if patriarchy is the 'unequal power distribution among men based on seniority' young men, who expect to be power-holders once they reach a certain age, 'have a double-sided, 'half-advantageous and half-disadvantageous' status in Japanese society' (2010: 59).

give us a seemingly convincing explanation of the feminisation of Japanese migration. However, I argue that we cannot fully understand complexity and changing nature of the migrant experience of these women through these works. First, it is a mistake to see the Japanese women who live in the same time as a monolithic group. In her study of Japanese working holiday makers in Australia, Kawashima says that '[A] major "push factor" is thought to be women's limited opportunities due to gender oppression in Japanese society, especially in the work domain' (Kawashima 2012: 1). She focuses especially on the so-called time of "*shushoku hyougaki* " ("the Employment Ice Age", see Chapter 1) which is commonly understood to have been between 1993 and 2005 - the era of economic stagnation that impacted on youth employment in Japan (Kawashima 2010). She argued that 'working holiday makers of this generation were 'a group of people who reacted to widespread social anxiety and economic unrest by seeing transnational mobility as a way forward' (2010: 272), and that facilitated a gender imbalance in Japanese migration. While this analysis offers a comprehensive understanding of the social background of Japanese 'escape' migration, we have to bear in mind that decisions and choices in life are 'not made in isolation and are intimately bound up with the personal and environmental context' (Ni Laoire 2000: 234) of one's life. It is also argued that 'although the term 'life-course' somehow suggests that the path through life is collective -for example, how a cohort born at a similar time experiences historical events together and moves through their life stages - it is in fact a highly individualized path (Izuhara 2015: 62). Since life change decisions are made through an interplay of both structural constraints and internal intentions, we need to consider what the 'seeds of migration' (Findlay and Li 1997: 35) is for these women, and why it has been created in a particular Japanese social climate.

Also, although there has been detailed consideration of the social and cultural circumstances

of women in Japan, especially around the working environment, it has been based on the premise that women are just the counterpart of men, highlighting their disadvantaged and marginalised position in society. In their focus on such conflicts of gender, previous studies have illuminated the frustration and disappointment of women migrants with Japanese society. However, I argue that viewing these women only through the frame of gender dichotomy may overlook their agency. There are Japanese women who migrate because of their interest in studying or to follow a long-cherished dream, as well as those who maintain a strong emotional attachment to Japan, and we therefore need to keep an open mind to understand the diversity of their experiences, which are not only constituted by gender. In addition, it is important to be aware that an individual migrant's arrival and settlement might not necessarily be made on the same terms. In simple terms, some women who originally came to the UK to study English have stayed, settling down through marriage with British husbands, while others who came to study art, with the intention of becoming artists, have now found work in London as child-minders or market stall holders selling Japanese food products. In this regard, 'migration is not always fully plotted out in advance' (Benson and O'Reilly 2018: 157), and it is an ongoing journey of compromise, re-evaluation and negotiation (Amit and Knowles 2017).

This thesis contributes to studies of Japanese women's migration by highlighting the embeddedness of migration within everyday life (Halfacree and Boyle 1993; Ni Laoire 2000), an insight that has been missing from past studies. I have shown how my Japanese women respondents came to the UK, and then stayed put, following different and diverse trajectories (see Chapter 3). They have experienced various 'process of transition from childhood to adulthood, from school to the labour market, to household and family formation' (Ni Laoire 2000: 234) involving geographical relocation around the world over time before their current

settlement in southeast London. Throughout this process, they have negotiated their changing position in society and subsequent transitions in their identity as Japanese, as a woman, as a mother, or as a daughter, through different relationships. While the institutional structures that are represented by the Home Office visa regime for migration control, and cultural norms concerning marriage, child-rearing and caring largely shape these women's multiple identities, this thesis also demonstrates the ways in which they understand the different and changing intersectional meanings of gender and ethnicity in different settings and use their agency to try to better and more easily navigate their lives in London.

In addition, I consider that part of the originality of my study lies in its focus on the community and the diverse local sites of their social lives. There are some studies of Japanese women's migration that demonstrate significant awareness of their complex emotional ambiguity and identity formation within transnational space (Fujita 2009; Maehara 2010; Wada 2014), yet their focus is limited to the individual; by investigating women's narratives, they discuss how life in a different cultural space influences their national and cultural identity. However, I argue instead that how the migrants' multiple identities are shaped and how they navigate their everyday lives cannot be understood without consideration of their community practice. Consequently, in this thesis, my field work has been carried out at various sites in south London. The weekly *Donguri* lessons take place in a church; its annual autumn festival is organised by borrowing a local playground, and its summer camp takes place on a camp site - which all happens in East Dulwich and the Dulwich area. My respondents' regular sports training (introduced in Chapter 5) is held in a gym in Camberwell. I observed some Japanese women working as stall holders selling Japanese food or handmade crafts taking part in weekend markets in Herne Hill and West Norwood. I have visited homes in Brockley, Forest Hill, Honor Oak Park, Tulse Hill, Sydenham and Brixton. As I mentioned earlier, there is no

obvious Japanese site in these southeast areas, therefore the social lives of these Japanese women can be found only in a particular place and at particular moments.

In my fieldwork, I have observed that my respondents share some practices, mostly practices related to child rearing. Interestingly, some of these are specifically for the purpose of cultural reproduction (Chapters 4 and 6): for example, cooking Japanese food at home, taking children to Japanese lessons and decorating the house with Japanese objects. At the same time, they also share local versions of everyday practices; sending their children to local nurseries and schools, taking children to local after school activities. Moreover, they share practices for themselves, such as information about newly opened local restaurants or a local gym. Understanding the nature of 'communities of practice' (Wenger 2009) in which people come together to negotiate meaning, I explore how they construct their new identities as 'Japanese mothers in southeast London' through co-learning relationships within the community.
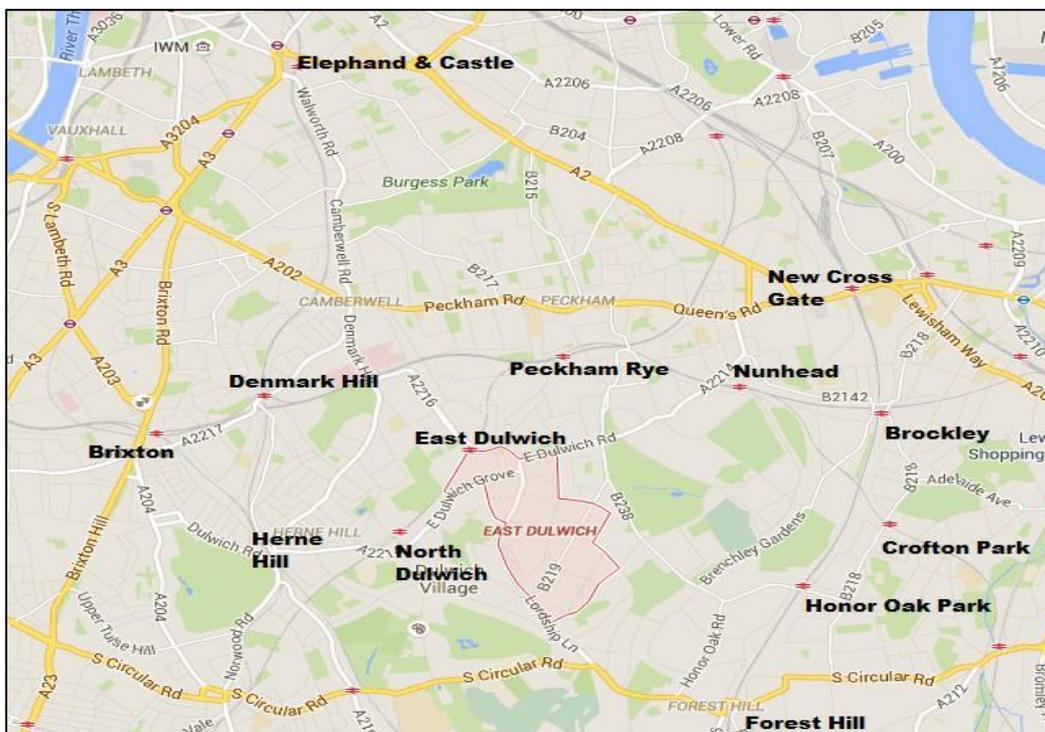
Figure 3 Map: East Dulwich and neighbouring areas (Google Map)

The thesis also investigates their multiple belongings to different communities whose members are not only limited to Japanese but extend to non-Japanese neighbours (Chapter 5). Through observations of their different ways of participating in the local community, I discuss how my respondents differently understand their identity and how this can be seen from their practice and performance of Japaneseness. Japanese migrants' interaction with other local residents in their host society has been little studied, and this insight adds an often-overlooked perspective which highlights the fact that migrants' everyday experience is not necessary ethnicised.

Biographical approach and translocalism

Thus, to understand migration as a lifelong project in which these women keep negotiating their changing gendered identity, this thesis brings a biographical approach and translocalism together as its main conceptual frameworks (see Chapter 1). Adopting a biographical approach to migration studies was advocated by Halfacree and Boyle (1993) since it enables migration to be conceptualised 'as part of individual biographies as well as social structures' (Ni Laoire, 2000: 229). Situating the passage of time and the fluidity of identity as the central concern of this thesis, the biographical approach that captures the social world as 'a series of associations and entanglements in time-space' (Gregory 2000 cited in Halfacree 2004: 242) was a key part of illuminating the complex everyday life experience of my respondents.

On the other hand, translocalism was adopted with the aim of highlighting the women's multiple identities and sense of belonging on various different scales (local, national, transnational, translocal). As can be seen in the empirical chapters (Chapter 3, 4, 5, 6), this is a study of women whose everyday life is highly localised in a particular part of London. Yet

while it uncovers the way in which these women construct their localised identity through communities of practice, their everyday practice also demonstrates their strong emotional and material attachment to Japan or to a particular part of Japan. Moreover, the emotional distance between London and Japan is differently experienced over the life course (e.g. when a migrant or one's parents get old, she might feel a stronger attachment to her home town).

In this regard, the aim of this thesis is to develop the idea that migrants' lives are seamlessly linked temporally from the past to the present and future, as well as geographically beyond national borders. While the biographical approach enabled me to explore the meaning of 'time' in migration, translocalism gave me an insight into the role and significance of 'place'. Bringing together these two concepts enables significant depth to be developed in understandings of the migration experiences of these women. This approach also enables us to see gender not just as a fixed category, and to explore the ways in which it intersects with other categories such as ethnicity, race, age and class, which are differently experienced in different times and spaces. It contributes to illuminating these women's multiple identities as well as their complex community building, in which they maintain strong commitment to particular localities on different scales, and that shift over the life-course. By illuminating how these women's ongoing negotiation involves both individual and structural changes of circumstances, this thesis argues for the validity of these concepts for teasing out the entanglement between individual life-path formation and wider social structure.

Biographical approach and Bourdieusian concepts

As already discussed, in a biographical approach migration is reconceptualised not as a one-off movement that is read in fragments, but as a part of one's biography, telling about both the past, the present and the future (Halfacree and Boyle 1993). That is to say, a biographical

approach enables discussion of how the individual's accumulated cultural, economic and social capitals can shape their everyday life experience as a migrant differently. Bourdieu's concept of habitus is also introduced, to describe 'internalised structures, dispositions, tendencies, habits, ways of acting, that are both individualistic and yet typical of one's social groups, communities, family, and historical position' (Oliver and O'Reilly 2010: 56). Then considering habitus as the mirror of an individual's entire collective history, a biographical approach in migration studies might elucidate how the habitus inscribed on the migrants influences their relationships following their migration to the local community.

Some researchers are critical, suggesting that it is optimistic to consider that migration may reset the social class of migrants in their home country and enable them to have a brand-new life. For example, looking at British lifestyle migrants in Spain, Oliver and O'Reilly (2010) argue that they keep re-inscribing the same class positions through distinctive habitus and economic and cultural capital, claiming that 'despite movement to a new field, there are ultimately limits to the possibilities of reinventing and transforming habitus' (Oliver and O'Reilly 2010: 63). Therefore, it is claimed, migrants make an assessment of their compatriots based on the social and cultural values they have brought with them.

On the other hand, Erel (2010) explores the mechanism of validation of cultural capital of Turkish migrants in the UK and Germany. According to her, a migrant group differently validates their cultural practices by gender, class and ethnicity among themselves, and these cultural practices obtain meanings and validations differently according to context: local, national and transnational. She found that migrants actively created new forms of migration-specific cultural capital that worked effectively to represent their cultural and political presence in the society of residence, as well as embracing their original distinction. That is to say, Erel (2010) finds a mutability of capacities into capital that demonstrates how what is

valued might change through migration, which is a highly useful insight.

Inspired by Erel's findings (2010) I am interested in the process in which the validity of cultural capital accumulated in Japan, and both within and outside the Japanese community in London is questioned, as well as the migrants' response to it. Although the women often acquire, accumulate and lose cultural capital unexpectedly during the process of migration, this 'cannot be reduced to individual resources but is bound up with wider historical, socio-political and institutional factors' (Erel 2010; 654). Similarly, Ong (1999) suggests that culture gives meaning to action, and culture itself becomes transformed in the space of global mobility. With a particular focus on Chinese migrants in Western countries, she also claims that culture-making is a process of cultural self-theorizing and re-envisioning in relation to fluid power dynamics.   This idea is valuable as it will help to highlight the migrants' creative and strategic agency - how as individuals and as a group, migrants create new cultural resources in migration and translate them into a form of capital which can be appreciated in its local context.

Chapter summaries

With a particular focus on changing gendered social identities through various relationships, the migration experiences of Japanese women in southeast London are unpacked through the chapters of my thesis. Their ongoing negotiation, translation and imagination of different cultural spaces in everyday life, and their complex and multiple community constructions are vividly illustrated by their biographies and this is highlighted in the ethnography chapters.

Chapter 1 explores the two main theoretical frameworks of the study: the biographical approach to understanding migration, and translocalism. Critically assessing past studies of Japanese women's migration that fail to illuminate the ongoing process of negotiating multiple

identities in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, locality and life-stage throughout their post-migration lives, it argues that my study can offer a significant insight into agency in and through the life course and the ways in which social worlds are both constitutive of and constituted by social actors.

Chapter 2 lays out the feminist research methodology that supports my research, and how this helps illuminate the complex interplay of gender and migration, and introduces the research methods that are adopted. It also provides an introduction to East Dulwich in southeast London, locating the Japanese women who are the focus of my study within this urban locality, and reflecting on my own entry into, and position within, this community of women.

Chapter 3 introduces my respondents' stories of arrival and settlement, which demonstrate the diverse trajectories of their migration. Taking account of the individual, structural, cultural and geographical context, it explores these stories to reveal the various constraints on their agency, as well as how they creatively challenge such external forces and navigate their own lives through relationships with other Japanese in the neighbourhood.

Questioning how "being a Japanese mother" in a different cultural space is understood and performed in the community, Chapter 4 explores their home-making practices. Through an observation of their daily practices within the family, such as eating and educating, it illustrates the dynamism with which they simultaneously facilitate both their family's life in local society, and the reproduction and reconstruction of Japanese cultural identity. It lays out the expectations and obligations attached to their role as mothers that are socially and culturally embedded in gender discourses, and the influence of these on the women's everyday lives.

Chapter 5 discusses the women's different ways of participating in the local community. Adopting multiculturalism as a key concept, it investigates how they are aware of the

'difference' between their own culture and others, and capitalise on this 'difference' as a way of adding diversity to the community as well as establishing their sense of belonging to it. It also demonstrates that these women flexibly construct multiple cultural identities, not only through interaction with their own ethnic group but also with the majority group -which highlights the social construction of one aspect of identity.

Highlighting their social identity as daughters, Chapter 6 examines the transnational emotional connectivities of these women with their families in Japan. It asks how their everyday life is continuously shaped by the aging of both the women themselves and their parents, shedding light on cultural discourses of caring, gendered expectations, and emotional attachment with multiple locations. As well as this, it also argues for the importance of a biographical approach that opens a space for discussion of how an individual's upbringing and family relationships still exercise a certain influence over their post-migration life.

Finally, the conclusion revisits the research questions and considers how these have been answered through the exploration of my respondents' everyday lives in the empirical chapters. By highlighting the findings that fill the gaps in our partial understandings of Japanese women's migration in past studies, it argues that 'Japaneseness', which is a transferrable value for these women, is differently understood and performed in various relationships to shape their everyday lives. Understanding migration as individuals' continuous negotiation with changing political and social structures, it highlights the importance of a longitudinal approach to migration studies in the future.

Chapter 1 Theoretical frameworks - Migration as an ongoing process

Introduction

This literature review chapter first outlines previous approaches to migration and gender, followed by a brief history of Japanese migration. This historical background gives a sense of the wider contexts that shape migrants' lives and how they have been studied. After highlighting what has been missing in past studies of the feminisation of Japanese migration, a biographical approach is introduced. This is a useful tool for conceptualising 'migration as part of individual biographies as well as social structures' (Ni Laoire 2000: 229). The other key conceptual framework in my study – translocalism – is also discussed. Focusing on their strong commitment to particular localities rather than to the nation-state, the complexity of migrants' community building process can be revealed by translocalism. The chapter concludes that by adopting both a biographical approach and translocalism as theoretical frameworks, my study of Japanese female migrants in southeast London may contribute not only to understanding their motivation and experiences, but will also be able to demonstrate the validity of these concepts for considering how individual life-path formation is involved in social structures.

Migration and gender

One of the main foci of my research that is particularly significant in understanding the diverse lives of Japanese women migrants in southeast London is the gendering of migration,

which has become a central component of contemporary migration discussion. It is neither simply because women have outnumbered men in processes of international migration (Castles and Miller 2009) nor that researchers have realised that the migration experiences of men and women are different, but rather because it opens up a space to discuss how the migration flow is shaped by institutional and socio-cultural circumstances. That is to say, by taking gendered motivation and experience into consideration, my research aims to elucidate 'the social construction of masculinity and femininity, the differential meaning of private and public as workplace, gender-specific evaluation and the differential consequences of migration experiences of male and female migrants in the context of being couples, parents and families' (Lutz 2010: 1650–1651). These cannot be investigated by conventional approaches, which overlook the specific patterns and experiences of women migrants (Boyle and Halfacree 2002; Lutz 2010; Pedraza 1991; Silvey 2004).

While an absence of female researchers in migration studies is noted to be one of the reasons for this gender biased situation (Lutz 2010), it is more convincing that a tendency to see migration through the lens of economic factors has made men, who are breadwinners and decision makers, the main actors in migration flow and marginalised women as the passive followers of their male partners (Anthias 2000), or else as victims of a household strategy in which parents expect a remittance from a daughter who migrates abroad (Hoang 2011; Lutz, 2010). However, by stepping back from a preconceived notion that understands migration as the result of rational calculation (in other words economically motivated), the multiple and complex nature of female migration motives, which are often deeply linked with 'their gendered obligations, care responsibilities, loyalties, family ties and like' (Lutz 2010: 1659) – will come to the surface.

With respect to this mushrooming interest in female migration, Lutz (2010) has recognised

four stages in its development. Initially, the primary focus was to illuminate particular patterns and processes commonly found among female migrants (the *compensatory approach*). The second stage highlights the specificity of women's roles in the migration context (the *contributory approach*) to counter the conventional patriarchal approach. However, with the appearance of ethnic minority and immigrant female researchers after the mid-1980s, the focus of research shifted from finding commonalities among migrant women to questioning ethnic and racial diversity and power relations between women migrants, which had previously been understood as monolithic. For example, Anthias claims that 'the use of the gender category must avoid homogenizing women's experiences and practices and must be undertaken in relation to how gender intersects with other social divisions, such as ethnicity, "race" and class' (Anthias 2000: 16). This intersectional way of conceptualising gender, which suggests it is not a single unique variable that determines one's migration motivation and experience, but a socially embedded category influenced by other social divisions, has been further developed in 1990s.

Thus the significance and contribution of migration and gender research not only illuminates female-specific processes of migration and settlement that a neo-liberal economic approach overlooked, and foregrounds the different social positioning of these migrant women. It also enables further debate about the agency of these women, exploring how their everyday lives are constituted through the negotiation of cultural and socially gendered expectations over the life course. All of this resonates with my research interests, in which the challenge is to question and disentangle the complex situation whereby migrants continually negotiate multiple identities in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, locality and life-stages. The paragraphs that follow explore the historical background of Japanese migration, with the aim of outlining research that has attempted a nuanced understanding of Japanese female migration and

uncovering what is still missing in this field.

The History of Japanese migration and women

It was 150 years ago when five Japanese noblemen arrived in the UK with the ambition of learning about advanced Western culture and technology to contribute to the modernisation of Japan, which was still a feudal state operating a policy of political and cultural isolation called *sakoku* (closed country)[8] at that time (University College London n.d.). A few years later in 1868, the *Meiji* Era (1868-1911) began and the Japanese government officially embarked on a radical transformation of society, politics and commerce towards Westernisation (Fujimoto-Adamson 2006) dispatching intellectuals and political leaders to the US and Europe. Although most ordinary Japanese people were not allowed to go abroad for private purposes until 1964, when overseas travel was liberalized, global mobility of non-elite Japanese did exist in various forms before that, such as labour migrants and military personnel.

The first wave of migration was a government-encouraged project aimed at solving overpopulation in rural areas in the early twentieth century, and the main host country for Japanese emigrants was initially the US. However due to the US National Origins Act of 1924, which restricted their acceptance, and gave priority to emigrants from other parts of the Americas, Brazil took over as the place that accepted Japanese labour for its coffee plantation farms (Izuhara and Shibata 2001; White 2003). By 1941, therefore, the number of Japanese emigrants to Brazil had reached 202,025 (White 2003). Although this relationship was severed during the Second World War, the movement to Brazil resumed in 1952 and Japan

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[8] To be precise, even during this period, trade with overseas was managed with careful control in a limited area of Nagasaki, the southernmost island of Kyushu, meaning that Japan was never totally isolated and could learn ideas, technologies and commerce from the Dutch and Chinese (Tamari, 2016).

sent more than 250,000 emigrants in total, until the last emigrant ship, *Nippon-maru*, in 1974. It is said that there are 1,300,000 descendants of these Japanese emigrants (*Nikkei*) in Brazil, which is one of the largest Japanese diaspora in the world. This demonstrates how understanding migration flows requires a nuanced understanding of the contexts in which it takes place and of its consequences; in this instance the domestic circumstances of both the migrants' home country and the receiving country, and international relations.

However in terms of gender and migration, as is the case with other early migration studies that see the man as the prototype migrant actor (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000), studies of Japanese migrants also failed to find female migrants' subjectivities by seeing them as pitiful and submissive women who had to leave their place of origin to support their husbands. For example, there were two different types of women called 'migrant brides' in Japanese history – one of them is the picture bride, who emigrated mainly to the US mainland or Hawaii before the war, or to Brazil after the war, to marry Japanese emigrants who had already settled down in their destination countries, through 'picture marriage'[9]. The other type is the war bride, who married GIs after the Second World War and migrated to the US with special permission. Not only were picture brides often disrespected by the host society, which considered picture marriage a barbarian and immoral custom ignoring romantic emotion between the couple, which was a core of marriage in the US, they were also represented by Japanese researchers as poor victims at the mercy of fate, or women with a passive role in a patriarchal society. Likewise, a pitying attention was paid to the war brides who were often looked down on by Japanese society, as 'humble women getting married with erstwhile enemy' (Shimada 2009).

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[9] In this first wave of Japanese migration, it was difficult for emigrant men to find a marital partner in their destination countries for legal, social and cultural reasons (Yanagisawa, 2009). Therefore male migrants had to find a partner with help from their family and go-betweens in Japan and bring over a wife whom they had never met before (Halliday and Croix 2013).

New approaches focusing on these women's narratives have successfully illuminated their subjectivity and will to migrate that had previously been overlooked. Extensive interviews with Japanese-American residents in California between 1978 and 1983 by the Japanese historian Nakano - 'the Issei Oral History Project (IOHP)' - have revealed that for some picture brides a marriage to an unseen husband was not something imposed but an exciting chance to realise their dream of going abroad (Shimada 2009). Interestingly, a study by Storrs (2000), that explores her mother's narrative of her experience as a war bride, also shows how her subjectivity has been shaped by complex processes of compliance and resistance, choice and constraint, strength and weakness (195). Thus these two cases of early-stage Japanese women's migration show that migrants' motives and experiences cannot be understood without considering historical and social circumstances, structural constraints, cultural framework and biography, which would also be a useful lens through which to understand the contemporary migration of Japanese women.

Gendered motivations of Japanese contemporary migration

In order to find out what causes the feminisation of contemporary Japanese migration, in which 70 percent of Japanese migration to the UK and the US is dominated by women (Fujita 2009), a large volume of studies focuses on examining how their motivation is deeply tied to job climate and social norms in Japan (Bui et al. 2013; Fujita 2009; Izuhara and Shibata 2001; Kato 2013; Kawashima 2010). As is often discussed, Japanese young people faced an 'Employment Ice Age' between 1995 and 2005, in which job scarcity due to economic stagnation was a serious problem and everyone, especially women, struggled to get a full-time position (Kawashima 2010; Kato 2013). Kawashima analyses Japanese women's frustration at '[J]ob insecurity, lack of professional rewards, an increasing sense of job mismatch, and a

culture of overwork' (Kawashima 2010: 272), and suggests that they must have found a period of living abroad to be a solution that enabled them to acquire 'a more desirable life course' (2010: 271) to escape from their unsatisfactory situation. Interestingly, this shows that while these women were forced to take disadvantageous positions in the patriarchal Japanese job market, this also gave them the freedom and opportunity to quit their casual and low-status jobs to embark on a project of self discovery abroad (Kato 2009; 2013). In this rendering, they seem to be no longer the victims of Japanese patriarchal society, as was the case with old Japanese women migrants.

Nevertheless, here I would like to emphasise that migration is not a one-off movement, but it is an ongoing process in which migrants continually negotiate their aspiration and reality. Facing with not only changes of circumstances around individual, family and community, but also larger social and political structure, migrants make ongoing adjustment and modification with flexibility and creativity to keep moving one's life (Amit and Knowles 2017; Benson and O'Reilly 2018). It is therefore necessary not only to investigate the structural conditions that facilitate migration, but also to have insight into their everyday life experience and their life course as (migrant) women. Admittedly, some researchers have already attempted to focus on women's post migration lives to illuminate these negotiation processes, particularly highlighting their ethnic, classed and gender identity and how its transition influences their community-making. In her interviews with young Japanese 'cultural migrants[10]', Fujita (2009) analyses how their ethnic identity changes through her finding that they are likely to develop a 'national' identity as Japanese, rather than to cultivate a 'transnational' identity, while Kawakami (2009) explores how the self-image of Japanese 'internationalist women[11]' changes

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[10] Cultural migrants are those who move to London or New York, drawn by the particular culture in these global cities, such as art and dance. (Fujita 2009)

[11] Internationalist women are quite ambitious women who feel frustration with gender inequality in

before and after their migration to a Western country, which is closely related with classed identity among Japanese women migrants. She reveals the harsh reality that while internationalist women try to distinguish themselves from other migrants (especially expatriate wives), in reality they suffer from failing to find a job that matches their professional ambitions or abilities. A study by Kurotani (2007) of middle-class Japanese expatriate wives shows how the relationship between husbands and wives changes positively after migration, which is based upon the wives' dedicated support for their family.

Each of these studies may contribute to illuminating the diverse profiles of Japanese female migrants such as young working holiday-makers, wives in international marriages, retired migrants and expatriate wives, as well as demonstrating how their experience as migrants is differently shaped by different variables; age, marital status, timing of migration, nationality of their husband and with/without children. However these studies are conducted separately and no attempt has ever been made to incorporate groups of Japanese female migrants with different social positions into one study, to discuss the power relations or dynamic networks among these women. For example, it is often suggested that migrants find that they would never talk to some of their compatriots if they met in their own country, due to their different class origin (Oliver and O'Reilly 2010). In such a situation, what is a woman's motivation and purpose in taking part in the local Japanese community despite having little in common with other members except for her nationality and gender? It could be to pass down the Japanese language and culture to their children by associating with other mothers, to find comfort by talking in their mother tongue, or for economic reasons to secure revenue by doing business in the Japanese community.

Japanese society and move to Western countries in pursuit of equal opportunities and career potential (Kawakami 2009).

Needless to say, each of them must have more than one reason to be a part of the ethnic community – while they find multiple meanings in participation, such meanings are also transient and will change as their gendered identity changes through the life course. Exploring the transient nature of the significance of the migrant community for each Japanese female migrant does not just contribute to filling the gap not investigated by past studies of Japanese migration and gender, however. It also speaks to further considerations of the complexity of community-building in general migration studies by demonstrating that it is not simply shaped by nationality but rather by multi-layered distinctions.

The Imagined West

The term 'the Imagined West' is often used by researchers to discuss the media influence on Japanese women's migration (Bui et al. 2013; Fujita 2009; Kawashima 2010; Kim 2011). The idea comes from Appadurai that 'electronic media and mass migration have their joint effect on "the work of the imagination"' (Appadurai 1996 cited in Fujita 2009: 34). Although imagination itself is not something new in human history, an expansion of electronic media use throughout the world in the past decades has allowed 'ordinary people to be exposed to a variety of images of foreign countries and enabled them to deploy their imaginations in the practice of everyday lives' (Fujita 2009: 34). Criticising Appadurai for overlooking an effect of the cultural hegemony in "the work of the imagination", Fujita (2009) then discusses that Japan, which has been historically influenced by Western culture, has cultivated the image of the West as 'modern' and 'civilised', especially through the modernisation process in the *Meiji* period (1868-1911), and after defeat in the Second World War. Therefore when these inherited preconceived notions are synergised with the images given by electronic media, which are a chaotic mixture of fiction and reality as well as traditional and pop culture, 'the

West' makes its appearance as an attractive place for Japanese people. The image of 'gender equality', 'cosmopolitan' and 'individualism' appeals especially to women and evokes their *akogare* (longing) for migration (Kim 2011).

However the concept of the 'imagined West' shows certain limitations. Although it is a convincing and handy idea for trying to understand how the complexity of both the historical background dating back to the nineteenth century, and the current social circumstances of Japanese women, have increased their motivation for migration, I would like to suggest three approaches that will strengthen the usefulness of this concept: consideration of biography, diversity of imagination, and the ongoing imagining process in post migration life.

First, there is little examination of how each individual understands and cultivates the image of the West, or of how it is translated into action in various ways. No matter how enormous the influence of the media, it is obvious that how it impacts each individual and how excites their imagination can never be homogeneous. In addition, realising what is imagined involves the socio-economic circumstances of individuals. In this regard, Benson argues 'in order to understand how imagination is translated into action, there is a need to focus on the embodied interplay of biographies, individual circumstances, structural preconditions, privileges and constraints, as well as culturally significant imaginings' (2012: 1682-1683). Therefore one needs to consider the process in which individuals understand and react to a certain image of 'the West', in diverse ways.

In this context, the second suggestion is about the diversity of imaginings themselves. The original concept of 'imagined West' might have worked when people's access to information was limited within mass media. However, nowadays an expansion of social media has led a plethora of information in which it seems there is less influence of mass media, but people have obtained more channels to access information that could fuel their imagination. Not only

can people easily hear vivid stories of the experience of living abroad from someone close, they can also experience foreign culture without leaving their country at all. Admittedly still these newly emerged media and the abundance of information sources seem to play a prominent role in promoting a certain image of the 'West'; however, I suggest that the image of the 'West' is no longer as monolithic as it used to be. This image was described as 'gender equality', 'cosmopolitan' and 'individualism' in previous studies (Kim 2011). Rather, with these newly diversified modes of communication, people may have obtained more space for imagination, in which each individual can make a choice about which information to believe, according to taste. In my research, while keeping the 'imagined West' as an important concept for scrutinising the feminisation of Japanese migration, I would like to focus on the diversity of their imaginings.

Third, previous studies used the concept of the 'imagined West' as a useful lens through which to understand Japanese women's motivation to migrate, but did not show any attempt to employ it to explore their post-migration lives. Nevertheless, considering migration as an ongoing process, I argue that how migrants' preconceived image of their destination country keeps changing throughout their everyday lives as migrants should not be overlooked. Migrants may aspire to be integrated into the local community while they try to distinguish themselves from their compatriots (Benson 2010). It is important to focus on the process in which their 'imagined West' is gradually crystallised when migrants are exposed to the 'real life' of people living in the 'West'. Their encounter with both local people and their compatriots stimulate the migrants' imagination that shapes their aspiration for an 'ideal lifestyle', which some people can realise while others come to a compromise.

In addition to proposing these new approaches to the conventional 'imagined West' concept, I suggest another dimension of imagination to discuss the migrants' ongoing life project.

While reproducing their own 'imagined West', the migrants also reproduce their 'imagined Japan' in their post-migration everyday life. I often encounter scenes in which the Japanese migrants decorate their home space with Japanese objects, dress their children with Japanese clothes, and make Japanese ingredients such as tofu and natto[12] at home, giving me an impression that they try to establish a 'Japanese lifestyle', based on their 'imagined Japan', through extra effort in their everyday practice. Interestingly, they do not try to reproduce a Japanese lifestyle in exactly the same way they did in Japan; instead I often find a sense of retrospect in these situations. For example, they often display antique Japanese traditional craftworks such as U*kiyo-e prints*[13] or ceramics in their home space. An owner of Japanese restaurants, who is also my landlord, decorates her restaurants with vintage Japanese store signboards full of nostalgia, that remind us of the *Showa* era (1926-1989), especially the early post war period of the 1960s-70s. Regarding the food *natto*, in Japan people normally can get them from any supermarket, and even in London actually we can easily find them at Japanese groceries around SOHO. Therefore, it is very unusual to make them at home.

In studies of lifestyle migrants who pursue a rural idyll, their imaginings are often described as romantic or nostalgic (O'Reilly 2014a). However, in contrast to such nostalgic imaginings, in conventional studies that are about their local settings, the 'imagined Japan' is obviously quite different, as it is something about their home society that is created in retrospect in their post migration life. A question therefore arises about what it means for these migrants to recreate the imagined Japanese lifestyle, which they have never experienced even in Japan, in London? This may be partly underpinned by individuals' emotional attachment to multiple

[12] *Natto* is a traditional Japanese food made from fermented soy beans.
[13] *Ukiyo-e* means 'Pictures of the Floating World'. It is generally associated with colour woodblock prints, illustrating the images of everyday Japan such as landscapes, beauties and actors. It was mass-produced for popular consumption in the Edo period (1615-1868). (Victoria and Albert Museum, 2012)

places, both London and their hometown in Japan, which will be further discussed in relation to the concept of translocalism later in the chapter. Otherwise, these Japanese women living in southeast London may share a certain collective imagining of 'Japanese lifestyle' and 'Japanesenss', which is continuously reshaped through interactions with both local residents and compatriots in their everyday life. Such collective imaginings may both shape and be shaped by agency, according to O'Reilly (O'Reilly 2014b), who suggests that in this regard they constitute both action and structure. In this way such imaginaries help us to understand migration as an ongoing process. Questioning how Japanese women reflexively understand 'Japan' in a different cultural space as migrants, and how we can find such embodied 'imagined Japan' in their daily practice would then open up a space for a discussion of their active and creative agency.

Admittedly, the role of imagination within the decision-making process of migration is significant enough to be a key concept in my research. However by taking a critical view on the 'imagined West' discourse for the reasons mentioned above, I distinguish myself from existing studies on Japanese migration that embrace the corrective influence of imagination. Reflecting a deeper understanding of the nature of imagination that requires careful consideration of its social and cultural embeddedness as well as its interplay among individualised biographies, trajectories and actions (Benson 2012), this study is motivated to uncover the diversity of imagination and how it variously shapes migration outcomes. Furthermore, the continuity of imagination and its transformational aspect, which projects one's future aspiration and past memories, will be illuminated by a conceptual and biographical understanding of migration as an ongoing process in my study. By taking this approach, and keeping a distance from the traditional idea about imagination as sporadically emerging and short-term power, I expect to reveal how the continual interaction and

interconnection between structures and agents constitute and reproduce social life and everyday life practice (Benson 2012; O'Reilly 2012).

Biographical approach

Thus my research aims to uncover the complex relationship between structure and agency through the diverse life trajectories of migrants. As the discussion of previous studies of Japanese migration has illuminated, we cannot understand the experience of migrants by taking a single approach; either by examining the social and historical background of the migrants' sending country, or by focusing on migrants' personal subjectivity. It is also necessary to take a longitudinal perspective that understands migration as a long-term project. Thus, I anticipate that a biographical approach, which tries to conceptualise 'migration as part of individual biographies as well as social structures'(Ni Laoire 2000: 229), will offer a new understanding of Japanese migrants' life trajectory that has never been examined. The following paragraphs explore how a biographical approach can be a useful conceptual framework for disentangling the complex decision-making process of migration, as well as for understanding the concept of migration as a cultural construct.

The importance of a biographical approach in migration studies was put forward by Halfacree and Boyle (1993), to cast doubt on the prevailing approach rooted in a philosophical dichotomy between macro and micro: while one is looking at the socio-economic and material aspects encouraging migration, the other gives more focus on the decision-making process of the individual. Halfacree and Boyle (1993; 2002), who believe that a decision to migrate does not come from a dramatic watershed event in circumstances but rather occurs within the messy "hurly-burly" of everyday life, identify a limitation in the approach that looks for a logical and coherent manner in the decision making process of migration, arguing for a

nuanced understanding of migration that occurs in a more discursive way. They then try to reframe migration itself through a biographical approach that situates migration within everyday life. They also criticise the emphasis on the pushes and pulls of origin and destination that may render potential migrants as passive agents, overlooking the way in which the individual formulates and deals with various constraints, obstacles and stresses. Therefore, to capture appropriately the intentions implicated in the migration decision, they call for in-depth investigation of the biographies of migrants.

Through their account, Halfacree and Boyle (1993) make a strong case for the biographical approach as a methodological and also a theoretical contribution to migration studies (Ni Laoire 2000). How we can understand migration and its integration with social structures, human agency, culture, identities and everyday practices, is the main concern for Halfacree and Boyle (1993) who claim that migration is a history that involves all our past, present and future. In a biographical approach, the main questions of interest are 'how people "produce" a biography in different cultural contexts and social situations, and which conditions, rules, and patterns of construction can be observed in this process' (Apitzsch and Siouti 2007: 5). In this rendering, a biographical approach should be distinguished from a life-history technique as a methodological tool that documents individuals' personal history as data through interview. Considering biography as a social construction, which 'constitutes both social reality and the subjects' worlds of knowledge and experience, and which is constantly affirmed and transformed within the dialectical relationship between life history knowledge and experiences and patterns presented by society' (Fischer-Rosenthal and Rosenthal cited in Apitzsch and Siouti 2007: 5), it would enable the biographical approach in migration studies to open up further space for discussion. Transcending the structure-agency divide and addressing concerns with reflexivity (Ni Laoire 2000), migration studies becomes more than

an attempt to understand human mobility and its background –it offers a realm in which we investigate how individuals negotiate with societal norms or values in their everyday life and make various decisions to shape their own life trajectory.

An important focus in a migration study with a biographical approach is to elicit the taken-for-granted values that affect decision-making. Existing migration literatures have often tried to find a simple watershed moment that can explain decision-making by dating back only a little before migration. Studying the Irish rural young migration, Ni Laoire (2000) suggests that although most of her respondents gave their reasons for migration as either job-related or educational in the questionnaire survey, in-depth interviews revealed a myriad of inter-related influences and pressures on the decision to migrate that were concealed in the survey. She finds that her respondents' decision to migrate had its roots in their childhood and was shaped by their constantly changing set of values and aspirations (Ni Laoire 2000: 237). It is argued that 'a job offer, or a place on a university course, was the justification or trigger for a move that had been contemplated for a long time for a number of reasons, including a desire to travel or to escape the local area' (Ni Laoire 2000: 237). Similarly, evaluating its potential for discovering 'the meaning of migration and the perceived identity of the "other" place and society'(Findlay and Li 1997: 35), Findlay and Li encourage a biographical approach for migration studies. They claim that 'the "seeds of migration" lie in the individual's life course rather than just in an external trigger event' (1997: 35), therefore the study of migration should extend its scope to consider their past and expected future biographies.

This approach, in which migration can be understood as a lifelong project negotiating 'between the various structures, desires and values pulling in different directions'(Ni Laoire, 2000: 238) would be useful to shed light on Japanese female migrants' life trajectory in my study. As I have already mentioned, existing studies of Japanese female migration are likely to

place greater emphasis on the decision to move. However, that is not the only decision which the migrants have to make –they are also often under pressure to make a decision to stay or return. In this regard, Ni Laoire (2000) emphasises that any decisions are not made only on the basis of their immediate circumstances, but that we can find their roots in the early part of a biography and re-evaluated continually throughout that lifetime. Therefore, the adoption of a biographical approach in my research aims to unfold the multi-layers of decision-making involved in migration, illuminating not only how the structures involved in life-path formation such as education system, labour market and marriage/divorce, but also how social and cultural everyday practice constructs shaping their values and norms that have been cultivated over a long period of time by individuals, provide constraints and choices for their decision (Ni Laoire 2000).

The concept of migration as a cultural phenomenon is one of the main arguments to which a biographical approach can contribute. This is because the biographies of migrants often uncover how migration and migrants are seen within the cultural context of both their home and host societies (Halfacree and Boyle 1993; Ni Laoire 2000). The discourses of migration in each society may range from positive to negative (eg: adventuresome, admirable, courageous, exiled, socially downgraded etc.) and these are neither universal nor fixed. Rather they are more subjective and change in relation to various factors such as historical background and international relations. For example, as already introduced, Japanese female migrants had an entirely different socially constructed image in the past: the picture bride was celebrated for her devotion to her Japanese husband abroad, the war bride married to a GI was branded a traitor. Obviously, such opposite perceptions of these women come from World War II as a historic event that promoted a positive image of the picture bride while inculcating a negative one for the war bride. Thus a biographical approach enables us to understand the

fluid nature of migration that materialises in the discourse of social and cultural context. Furthermore, it also illuminates the ambiguity of images of femininity that could be positive or negative according to the context.

Ni Laoire (2000) suggests a further development in the relationship between migration and social discourse; focusing on the situation in which there is a coexistence of traditional and modern modes of society, discourses and ideologies that create a contradiction, she suggests a new understanding of migration as a response to these contradictions. Admittedly, we can find various contradictory values in different forms of migration such as freedom vs. conservativeness in lifestyle migration, materialistic vs. post-materialistic life in retirement migration, and gender-equality vs. patriarchy in Japanese female migration to Western countries. Hence it can be seen that migration is derived from an aspiration for different cultural values and is a project to realise it. Then she claims the necessity of deconstructing these societal norms of migration and highlighting the struggles of migrants that lie behind them, because 'each individual can draw on a range of available discourses in making, and talking about a migration decision' (Ni Laoire 2000: 240). This approach helps us to highlight migrants' subjectivity by investigating how they understand local social norms of migration, how their biography affects their interpretation and how their understanding of the local culture of migration affects their decision making process.

Translocalism

Kelly and Lusis (2006a) explain that although conventional migration studies have seen migration consisting of two separate sets of processes, operating in places of origin and arrival respectively, in reality the lives of migrants have been more complex. They say that '[I]t is now understood that immigrants do not simply start new lives as "the immigrant": instead,

they frequently maintain strong linkages with their place of origin' (Kelly and Lusis 2006: 837). According to them these linkages vary from economic, social, cultural, political, institutional to emotional, but research often overlooks this complexity, failing to observe the way that these merge seamlessly in lived experience. So as a conceptual framework that enables us to piece together the situation in which 'migrants are both "here" and "there", they introduce the idea of transnationalism. Since its appearance in 1990, the term 'transnationalism' has been extensively employed in migration studies to understand 'the fact that large numbers of people now live in social worlds that are stretched between, or dually located in, physical places and communities in two or more nation-states' (Vertovec cited in (White 2011). In the following paragraphs, after exploring the concept of transnationalism, I will turn to discuss the validity of 'translocalism', which is the view considering migration 'as being from locality to locality rather than nation to nation' (White 2011).

Kelly and Lusis (2006) introduce two different approaches to interpreting transnationalism. On the one hand, scholars locate the concept at the scale of the individual to see the construction and maintenance of social networks both in their place of origin and in their settlement across borders. On the other hand, some 'take a wider perspective, insisting that a critical approach to transnationalism should incorporate global structures of inequality, dependence, and power' (Kelly and Lusis 2006: 832) aiming to incorporate global structural power relations such as colonialism and capitalism into the analysis of the lived experiences of migrants. What these two approaches have in common is that they are both all about 'nationality'. In this regard, as 'many scholars of transnationalism have been particularly interested in the impact of transnational ties on state borders, citizenship and migrant integration, it is hardly surprising if the term is often used with particular focus on the portability of 'national' cultural and political identities' (White 2011). White (2011), then

describes the way that the transnational migrants bring their culture of their home nation state into their destination country and maintain it with little cultural openness to their host society.

However, I maintain that methodological nationalism, which tries to understand the social world within a nation state framework, has limitations for uncovering the ongoing identity constitution of migrants and their everyday life experience. For example, studying Italian migrants to Switzerland and their return migrations, Wessendorf (2007 cited in White 2011) finds that these migrants feel a strong attachment to the places they settle rather than to the nation-states. White (2011) also mentions that new generations of Polish migrants in the UK do not struggle to maintain their Polishness, rather they are keen on their local identity. Similarly by making a reference to the notion of 'translocality' by Appadurai (1996), Conradson and McKay (2007) infers that 'the formation of migrant selfhood is usually more closely related to localities within nations than to nation-states' (168).

The term 'translocality' is coined by Appadurai (1996) to 'describe the ways in which emplaced communities become extended, via the geographical mobility of their inhabitants, across particular sending and destination contexts' (Conradson and Mckay, 2007: 168). It is understood that this new form of multi-located subjectivity connecting the origins and destinations of migrants is embedded in the emotional and affective state with their family, friends and community in particular locations (Conradson and Mckay 2007). This idea demonstrates how global mobility retains the distinctiveness of particular places for migrants rather than eroding the distinctive characters of places and making the globe one depersonalised space. However, translocalism is by no means a concept that substitutes for transnationalism, with a loss of national identity. In this regard, an example of a Filipina nurse working in the UK is introduced. According to Conradson and McKay (2007), maintaining

emotional affiliations to family and friends in her home village, '[W]hile she will be a "Filipina" to her UK co-workers and patients, among her nursing colleagues from the Philippines she will more likely be known as a person from a particular locality, named by village and province' (169). Thus migrants obtain multiple and selectable identities demonstrating their emotional global cartography which is constantly reflected in their everyday life.

Highlighting the relevance of locality, I consider that translocalism illuminates the complexity of migrants' community building that is not simply shaped by nationality but rather by multi-layered distinctions. Considering the case of my research, there is a need to investigate how the lives of Japanese female migrants in southeast London are shaped in terms of translocalism. I find that there are reasons beyond nationality that facilitate their association with each other; coming from the same area/city in Japan, having children in the same year, living in the same area in London etc. Focusing especially on their affinity with their place of origin in Japan, an observation of their everyday life in London reveals that in reproducing their culture, they project an identity that belongs to a particular area of Japan, not just a reproduction of 'Japaneseness'. Also, while investigating how their attachment to a Japanese locality influences their life in London, it is also important to explore how they find their locality in a particular area of London.

To underpin these ideas, a conversation with my landlord lady during a sample fieldwork would be useful. She is from Sakai in Osaka, a Western commercial city in Japan and also an owner of *Okonomiyaki* (Japanese style pancake) restaurant in Brixton. Throughout her seventeen year life in south London, she finds similarities between these two places for their ethnic diversity within the working class. She explained that since there were a lot of socially outcast people such as Japan born Koreans and *Burakumin* (modern-day descendants of a Japanese feudal outcast group) in Sakai, she was considerably educated about this issue to

prevent further discrimination at school from other students. However when she came to London and had chance to talk with Japanese coming from other areas in Japan, she was very surprised to know that they did not learn so much about it, or even did not know of the existence of these outcasts. Another similarity between south London and Osaka she has found is strong family ties. She told:

> "My second son, he has a lot of Black friends at school. Actually, I think most of his friends are Black. And then he often learns slang from them, such as 'fam' (meaning family) and 'brother' as well as how to use these words. Then, as I and my first son, we don't know these words, we sit on the table together at home and learn such new words from him. I always feel their warmth and love to their family from their language."

Through her conversation, I felt sure that 'love of family' has a significant meaning to her. She also said:

> "As being Japanese, we never express our feeling to the family like by saying 'I love you, mom', have we? But when I grow up, I realised that love is not shown only by words. You know, mother will put a coat on her child when the wind is cold as well as fix up its collar. Now I understand this is the 'love'." (Field Notes)

From here, I can see that while finding some similarity between south London and her home town of Osaka, she also retrospectively realised her happy childhood memory of being loved by her mother in Osaka when she herself has also become a mother in south London. The name of her restaurant is called '*Okan*' which means mother in Osaka slang. For her, the restaurant is not a 'Japanese' restaurant but rather an 'Osaka' street food restaurant. It is because she

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wants to deliver her colourful childhood memory of Osaka to her customers in Brixton through the food she grew up with (Sakurai n.d.).

Additionally, the level of migrants' affinity with their locality in London will be enhanced when they become mothers and start to consider their childrens' social setting, an idea which is underpinned by Kulu and Milewski (2007). In their study of family change and geographical mobility, they highlight that childbearing is an important trigger of mobility in relation to housing and environment, in which migration from urban to surrounding suburban or rural areas is identified. It obviously occurs with the intention of giving their children a favourable environment, therefore there are fewer moves when the children reach school age out of concern for their psychological well-being. Conversely, it is worth considering that their children's graduation may detach the parents' affinity from the locality since they will then have more options about where to live. Their research also reveals that single individuals are more likey to move than married ones (Kulu and Milewski 2007).

Exploring further considerations regarding life trajectory and affinity with particular localities, I put forward the idea that locality can no longer be understood as spatially grounded and is instead constituted through relationships (Benson 2010) as it confirms the usefulness of the concept of translocalism. Individuals' everyday lives are continuously shaped by various anxieties that are embedded in social and personal accounts and sporadically aroused during different life-stages, and I argue that such anxiety may largely influence their perception of locality. For example, migrants who have just arrived in London may easily get acquainted with other Japanese migrants just because of their shared nationality. In this regard, which area of Japan they come from has little meaning for them as they establish a social network as a transnational agent. However, after staying in the UK for a long time and when they confront their aging parents in Japan or their own aging, they may acquire a stronger affinity with their

locality in Japan over that in the UK. Taking the transition of their relationships in various life-stages into additional consideration, my research offers an insight that discusses translocalism not only in geographical terms but also via migrants' biographical and emotional status.

On the other hand, by stretching the implications of translocalism, Hall and Datta (2010) acknowledge its possibility and significance in urban ethnography for observing cultural and ethnic diversities in public space. In their study, translocalism is not used just as a concept contrasting with transnationalism. Instead, they develop the concept to frame interconnected mobilities across different spatial scales within and beyond the nation-state such as homes, neighbourhoods, cities, and regions. Analysing the shop front signs of over 200 stores along the Walworth Road in south London, Hall and Datta (2010) attempt to illustrate the dynamism with which 'migrants have varied loyalties to different places and these loyalties are constructed through complex negotiations with these places'(Hall and Datta 2010: 71). These visualised images of the multi-lingual signscape of Walworth Road, that often display a range of spaces, places and connections such as 'Afro Caribbean and Mediterranean' or 'Eritorian and Italian food', are understood as a representation of deterritorialisation and disembeddedness from places expressing the mobile identity of these retailers, while facilitating that of customers as well.

However, considering the case of the Japanese community in southeast London, their translocal connections to different spaces and places are not visible in public spaces like the street. Even though there are considerable numbers of Japanese people living in that area, there are very few Japanese restaurants and grocery shops. Nevertheless, I suggest that this does not mean that Japanese migrants are absent from translocal public space –they may find

a particular affinity with other Asian groceries such as the Chinese or Vietnamese shops on the street, where they can buy some familiar foods that are similar to those in Japan (see Chapter 5). Investigating such situations may illustrate how their mobile identity is stretched broadly not only between London and their origin in Japan, but also sometimes expands flexibly enough to awaken their belonging to 'Asia'. In addition, it is worth observing migrants' homes as private space where their translocality, which is invisible in the public space, is visualised. How migrants materialise and embody their mobile identities and attachment with multi-places through their home making –interior decorating, selection of dishes and celebration of cultural events - should be revealed by careful observation. A combined method incorporating migrants' narratives and observation of their home space would be a useful approach to ascertaining their translocal identities.

Conclusion

Striving to contribute to an understanding of trajectories of migration and settlement, as well as how migrants' social worlds are constituted within and beyond the home, this literature review has explored the various strands of literature on migration and gender, as well as on a biographical approach and translocalism which I find to be useful theoretical concepts for my research on gendered identity and negotiation of migrant women. The significance of, and contribution made by, migration and gender studies offer more than just shedding light on how the process of migration and settlement are differently shaped between men and women. Rather, it offers a new realm in which migrant women's active agency, as they negotiate with societal norms or values in their everyday life and make various decisions that shape their life trajectory, will be investigated.

It is repeatedly emphasised that the decision to migrate does not come from 'a relatively sudden change in circumstances' (Halfacree and Boyle 1993: 335) but rather 'a large number of issues will be entangled in and expressed through the migration' (339) as a result. The biographical approach in which the 'seeds' of migration, that are often unconscious even for migrants themselves, are reflexively analysed by tracing the individual's life history, is significant not only as a useful methodological tool but also for making a theoretical contribution by transcending the structure-agency divide (Ni Laoire 2000). Additionally, adaptation of translocalism enables me to inquire further into the migrants' sense of belonging and how that shapes their everyday life. It reveals that migrants display fluid and multi-layered affinity with particular places that is influenced by the transition of their gendered identity or relationship with specific others including their family. Such understandings of their continuously changing networks contribute to illuminating the social and cultural background of their participation in the local compatriot community as each of them has different reasons and motivations for taking part in or keeping distance from social activity.

By adopting these conceptual frameworks that complement each other, my study of Japanese female migrants in southeast London contributes to the development of a nuanced understanding of the experience of migration as a lifelong project. In addition, I expect that the contribution made by the disentanglement of the migrants' complex situation in which they keep negotiating their multiple identities in such terms as gender, ethnicity, age, locality and life-stage will not be limited to migration studies, but will offer a significant insight into agency in and through the life course, and the ways in which social worlds are both constitutive of and constituted by social actors.

Chapter 2 Methodology –local life through multiple relationships

Introduction

What we learn from the literature review chapter is that Japanese women's migration has been studied through a particular frame of marriage as represented by 'migrant brides' and 'GI brides'. And even in studies of contemporary Japanese women's migration, the focus has been on particular categories, such as working holiday makers, trailing spouses and highly skilled career-oriented women, and this limits further understanding of the lived experience of migration in which the women undergo transitions in their gendered and social identities through the life course.

My own encounter with Japanese women in southeast London since 2012, however, has given me a totally different impression from any of those described in past studies. They are neither women who have failed to find belonging in Japan's highly gender-segregated society, nor women who escaped abroad (Bailey 2007; Kawakami 2009) to enthusiastically pursue their imagined freedom and female agency in Western society (Kelsky 2008), nor women who sacrificed their careers to follow their relocating husbands and support their families' lives in an unfamiliar environment. As I have briefly described in the introduction, they have diverse backgrounds and different lengths of stay in the UK (see Chapter 3 for detail). While their husbands are the main breadwinners in most cases, Japanese wives often also take part in economic activity, which gave me an impression of them as independent, rather than as 'submissive' wives. Their everyday lives are highly embedded in the local area, although they also maintain

strong emotional and cultural attachments to Japan. To address the gaps between existing studies and what I found in my ethnographic research on their everyday life, my research was designed to answer following questions:

- How are the social identities of Japanese women migrants in southeast London shaped and framed in and through migration?

- What is the shape and meaning of community for them?

- How do they differently understand the values produced by 'Japaneseness' through their various organisations and participation in local activities?

- How do social and cultural discourses influence the narrative production of migration over the life-course?

- How are their translocal emotional connectivities reflected in the ways in which these migrants address multiple identities in their everyday lives?

This methodology chapter first offers a brief overview of East Dulwich, the main site of the research. It also explains how I got access to, and became a part of, the Japanese community in southeast London and how I embarked on my research by tracing a timeline dating back to my first presence in the area in 2012. I will then tease out my research design, by arguing that ethnography is a valid way to explore the research questions above, and that it can contribute to a new understanding of Japanese women migrants' lives. Following an introduction to the research methods used, the chapter lays out the feminist research methodology that underlies my research, to reflect my unique positionality in the field. Acknowledging the transformative effect of research on both the researcher and the researched, I look back on how the research process itself showed how 'we' construct the social world, the emotional transformations I went through, and how shifts in my position in the field as well as my relationships with the women

influenced the way I understand the social world.

Setting the scene

East Dulwich is a suburban residential area in southeast London, part of the London Borough of Southwark. Not only does it have good access to central London by National Rail, there are various restaurants, organic grocery shops, a cinema and a library, as well as a small farmers' market each Saturday in its shopping area along Lordship Lane. The landscape of this high street has changed dramatically, especially during the last ten years – notably, some popular restaurants in Shoreditch or Brixton have opened new branches, while East Dulwich has also seen the recent arrival of an independent wine store and an organic bakery café. At weekends, the street becomes filled with white, relatively young parents with small children in buggies in search of ingredients for home cooking, who wait in long queues stretching out of a butcher's or fishmonger's shop. Its unique appeal, especially for white middle-class residents, is easy to identify in the new stores in Lordship Lane that boast 'organic' and 'sourdough' products, 'craft beer' and 'avocado toast', while on the same street there are still old-fashioned curry restaurants, chicken shops and newsagents.

To underpin this phenomenon, statistics show that the average age of East Dulwich residents is 33 and that 72% of them have White ethnic backgrounds – this figure is significantly higher than that of London's population overall, in which White ethnic groups account for 60% (Office of National Statistics 2007). The ratio of other ethnic populations in East Dulwich is as follows: Black 15%, Mixed 6% and Asian 6%. The Japanese population is included under 'Other Asian', within the Asian category that makes up only 2% of the whole population of the area. As stated in the Introduction, the

lives of Japanese residents in the area have been invisible both on the street and in statistics.

Locating myself in East Dulwich –from resident to researcher

It was in the summer of 2012 that I first stepped into southeast London and I have been living there with two flatmates ever since. On checking the online message board where Japanese Londoners exchange various bits of useful information such as job offers and room-shares, an advertisement for a room available to rent in East Dulwich caught my eye; I was attracted to the relatively reasonable rent and good access to the university in central London where I was studying at the time. Without seeing the room or the neighbourhood in advance, and after exchanging several emails with the occupier, I landed in London (from Tokyo) and made my way from Heathrow to the flat, which was located in a block that had originally been built as council housing.

In this way, the connections that led me to settling in East Dulwich led me inadvertently to the site of my fieldwork. Yoko, with whom I had made contact before arrival, was one of the occupiers of the flat, and was entrusted with room-management by her landlord and old friend Chizu, who lived nearby with her British husband and children. Through Yoko, I was introduced to a Japanese neighbour, Seiko, and also given opportunities to work as a child sitter for Mika, who also lived in East Dulwich. Eventually, I realised that these local social networks that connected me with the everyday lives of Japanese women in the area were also the networks that these women had discovered in their early days in the neighbourhood and that they now depended on. Through such daily interaction with local Japanese women, I developed a vague idea that there seemed to be a certain number of Japanese women living in the neighbourhood. However, I never

knew what was going on among those local Japanese and had no particular academic interest in them at that time.

In September 2014, after going back to Japan for six months to prepare to study for my PhD, I returned to the same room in the same flat in East Dulwich where Yoko was still living. From January 2015, after recommendations from Yoko and Chizu, I started to work as an assistant teacher at a local Japanese after school club for kids, named '*Donguri* (acorn) club' every Friday afternoon. Alongside this, I started to work with Yoko at a Japanese food stall in Brick Lane market in East London every Sunday. This food stall was initially set up by Chizu, more than ten years ago, but was taken over by Yoko as Chizu wanted to dedicate herself to her restaurant business in Brixton. In retrospect, I can clearly identify these as milestones in my experience that made me aware that there was something interesting going on around Japanese women in southeast London: my participation in *Donguri* allowed me to discover that there were more than thirty Japanese mothers living around the area, a surprisingly large number. I also noticed the fascinating fact that these women featured 'Japaneseness' in various ways at different scales in everyday life – teaching their children the Japanese language in the community, running a Japanese food business for the wider public and cooking Japanese food for the family at home, while they simultaneously navigated local life –sending their children to the local English school and socialising with local mothers.

Thus, I had an increasingly strong motivation to explore and understand their complex everyday life experiences as migrant women and how they navigated this within the local setting through various relationships. I also found myself already located in the field and that I had gained access to the prospective participants through my role as a teacher at *Donguri*. I then decided to start to research this group of Japanese women in

southeast London as my PhD research and embarked on pilot fieldwork in the summer of 2015.

Mapping Japanese women's lives in southeast London

From an early stage of my research, I realised that despite the annual major events in *Donguri* club such as summer camp and autumn festival (see Chapter 4), it seemed that the purpose of their activity was neither to claim ethnic solidarity as Japanese, nor to introduce Japanese culture publicly to the local area. Rather I found that these events were held in a more relaxed and inward-looking way – to enjoy themselves or to pass down Japanese culture to their kids – ultimately making their existence in public space invisible.

This invisibility is possible because the everyday lives of this community of Japanese women are naturally embedded in existing resources and facilities in public space without creating a 'Little Japan' (like a China town in SOHO) for them. For example, regarding education, *Donguri* club takes place in a church located on the northern edge of East Dulwich, which offers its meeting room not only to *Donguri* club but also to various other community activities such as a children's woodcraft class, and ballet and Tai Chi lessons. During the weekdays, their children mostly go to the local primary or secondary schools, while some also go to the '*Hoshuko*[14]' (supplementary Japanese school) on Saturdays in Croydon, which hires the local school's classrooms (Lewis 2005, also see Chapter 4).

For their day-to-day shopping, the women rarely go to central London to get Japanese

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[14] *Hoshuko* is a Japanese complementary school which was created with the support of the Japanese government. For more detail, see Chapter 4.

food ingredients, instead they use Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Chinese grocery stores or organic food delivery services creatively, depending on their purposes (see Chapter 5). Some of them drive together to go to New Malden, located way down south and known as Korean town, to find Japanese ingredients as well as any Asian foods they are curious to try. Having a profound knowledge not only of how to cook Japanese food with local ingredients, but also of how local people cook in the British way, they share and exchange useful information to reproduce and recreate their Japanese lifestyles at home.

For these Japanese women, their ethnicity does not determine the extent or pattern of their social activities. They take part in various recreational activities such as yoga, playing sports, singing and music lessons among other local students. They also take up a wide range of options for eating out or drinks at local pubs in East Dulwich, posh newly opened Italian restaurants in Peckham or cheap old-fashioned Chinese restaurants in Camberwell – which are flexibly chosen depending on the situation; a night out with Japanese friends, a special dinner with their husband or a family meal out. On this point, their lifestyle is no different from Japanese people living in Japan, who enjoy a huge variety of entertainment without paying particular attention to pursuing anything 'Japaneseness' in their daily lives. With a lot of choice about what to do, where to go and with whom to go out, these Japanese women in southeast London spontaneously map their everyday lives among the existing social settings of the white middle class. Thus I thought it would be fascinating to investigate how they set up their daily lives in East Dulwich and surrounding areas, as it may demonstrate the unique ways in which they appreciate the white middle-class lifestyle, while they simultaneously create a Japanese identity and 'Japaneseness'.

Brief observation of their everyday lives also showed me that their networking is not simply or monolithically shaped by their nationality but rather by multi-layered distinctions. For instance, their hometown in Japan often shows the significance of their association with their compatriots, as if their similar taste in various activities (e.g. music, sports and food) is largely influenced by their social and cultural backgrounds. I also realised that although their social location as women largely influences their association (for example it is quite natural for single women to hang out with other single women, while those with children are more likely to associate with fellow mothers) – Japanese female migrants also demonstrate multiple other relationships not determined by life-stage, and are connected to many people, such as friends, colleagues, employers and employees, and traders and customers on different occasions.

Admittedly, social networking among women (especially mothers) based on their life-stage or social background is not unique, and is certainly also ubiquitous in Japanese society. However, a study by Jitsukawa and Sunagami (2012) introduces the notion that full-time housewives in Japan experience a transition in their friendship networks through pregnancy and childbirth. According to Jitsukawa and Sunagami, while they gradually lose contact with their old school friends, housewives build extensive and close relationships with '*mama-tomos* (friends who get to know each other through their children)'.

On the other hand, my observations highlight the complex and entangled networking of the Japanese community in which women with different social positions and gendered identities (mothers, single friends, students and working holiday makers) are involved, in a variety of capacities - as home helps, through economic activities and simply to have fun. This situation can be explained by their existence as migrants with no (Japanese)

family (especially parents) nearby, who in Japan often provide domestic help for daughters, which makes their networking quite unique. Such complex and dynamic associations cannot be elucidated if a researcher focuses on one particular community, such as 'a group of *Donguri* mothers', questioning how the community is constituted, as it is obviously oriented around their life-stage as mother. Therefore, in order to highlight the diversity and multiplicity of relationships that shift on the basis of time (life course) and space (location), I understand each individual as an active and flexible agent who navigates the dynamism of Japanese women migrants' networks, in which different spheres of their lives intersect.

Designing my research – why ethnography?

Rather than collecting individual life stories as sporadic sample data through interview-based research, I adopted ethnography as my method, and conducted participant observation in which I followed various occasions and relationships among the women to uncover the interplay of their changing gendered identities and negotiations of lived experience. In addition, rather than seeing my environment as a field in which to test my findings against existing theories, I approached the diversity of these women's life trajectories and everyday experience through my interaction and conversations with them, locating myself within their community as an entry point for thinking about my research questions.

Conceptualising social life as an outcome of the structure and agency interaction through the practice of everyday life, participant observation and ethnography were well suited to my research (O'Reilly 2012a). Both make space for reflexivity in the research process to examine how the researcher's own positioning in the construction of social life affects

its understanding (O'Reilly 2012a). '[E]thnography should not begin with a rigid hypothesis to be tested, but rather proceeds with some basic ideas or interests and then is continually shaped and reshaped through immersion in the setting or community' (O'Reilly 2012a: 29). To illuminate the fluid and flexible nature of ethnographic research as well as its sophisticated inductivism, O'Reilly (2012) defines ethnographic research as interactive-inductive.

As explored in the literature review in the previous chapter, I found that a biographical approach and translocalism were useful conceptual frameworks for my research, that explored a seamlessly connected migrants' life from past to present, and from local to global. Concerning the intersectionality in the identity negotiation of Japanese women migrants, in which various social divisions such as ethnicity, gender and class become evident (Shinozaki 2012), a biographical approach was expected to make a contribution to migration studies both methodologically and theoretically through its focus on social structures, human agency, culture, identities and everyday practices (Halfacree and Boyle 1993). With this approach, I aimed to highlight their subjectivity not just as 'a migrant' but as 'a woman' who has been and will keep negotiating her changing gendered identity as a part of a lifelong project. Furthermore, with the aim of understanding how such mobile social positioning influences their affinity with particular places, I discussed the validity of translocalism.

However, although these concepts offered an important guideline for me to navigate my research questions on the diversity of Japanese migrant women's life trajectories and their ongoing construction process, at the same time I had to be very careful that my research design should be neither trapped in, nor rely too heavily on these frameworks. Understanding ethnography is not straightforward but is 'the outcome of continual

theorizing and research practice' (Skeggs 1994: 73), I always had to be flexible with theoretical ideas as well as with the research process itself that could be adapted or discarded as the research progressed (O'Reilly 2012a).

Data collection

I received ethical approval from the department in July 2015 (see appendix), and conducted pilot fieldwork in the summer of that year, followed up with research until August 2018. Because I lived at the research site in East Dulwich, my observation was conducted throughout my everyday life. As mentioned earlier I already had relationships with Japanese women in southeast London, most of them through my position as an assistant teacher at *Donguri* club, therefore recruiting participants was not difficult. In total, five semi-structured interviews were conducted as a part of the pilot research with those who responded to my email asking for participants (which was sent via a *Donguri* club mailing list over the summer with the permission of the *Donguri* organisers), while observation of their informal gatherings and everyday life was carried out on a continuous basis.

After passing the upgrade examination in July 2016, in early autumn I sent out another email call for participants via the mailing list. This timing was carefully planned, not just because I had to wait for people coming back from holiday or visits to Japan over the summer season, but also because it was just before an annual *Donguri* autumn festival where I expected to talk with some of mothers face to face. Furthermore, since the new term starts every September and there are always new members at *Donguri*, it was a good opportunity to remind even those who did not wish to take part in my research of my other role as a PhD researcher, rather than as an assistant teacher at *Donguri*. As a

result, I conducted six more interviews with people who replied to the email or directly expressed an interest in participation between 2016 and 2017.

In the end, throughout my fieldwork, I talked with more than fifty Japanese women in southeast London, and this thesis is based on findings from and observations of these encounters, including eleven semi-structured interviews. The purpose and process of the interviews will be further explained in the next section, but I mostly asked my respondents to reflect on the biographical journey that led them to their current life in southeast London. I wanted to learn about their individual experiences in depth rather than making assumptions about these women's lives. Moreover, the interview itself was used to expand my networks beyond people that I already knew, and also served to build up rapport with them.

Therefore, the eleven women I interviewed were not selected in an arbitrary manner but as volunteers. While there are certain advantages to such a self-selecting sample, including speed and the relatively low cost of sample collection (Lavrakas 2008), care should be taken about the potential risk of volunteer bias (Salkind 2010). Volunteer bias can be explained as 'the systematic error resulting when participants who volunteer respond differently from how people in the general population would respond' (Rosnow & Rosenthal 1997 cited in Demir et al. 2017: 53). Salkind (2010) also argues that volunteers and non-volunteers are fundamentally different in various ways such as their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds as well as personal characteristics.

With the aim of avoiding volunteer bias as much as possible by increasing the rate of volunteering (Salkind 2010), in my recruitment email, I highlighted that my research interest lay in their everyday experience and would not involve any sensitive or threatening topics, as well as emphasising anonymity and confidentiality. I also ensured

a relaxing and comfortable atmosphere for the interviews. As a result, a table showing data on the profiles of those who participated in interviews (see Chapter 3), seems to show a good balance in terms of the women's residential area in southeast London, the timing of their arrival in the UK, children's ages, husband's nationalities and marital status. Yet, I fully acknowledge that not only the 11 interviews, but also almost all of my encounters with roughly 50 other Japanese women in southeast London were enabled by my positionality as a *Donguri* assistant teacher in East Dulwich. Because of this, I am aware of the limitations of my research: I could not have reached the wider population of Japanese women in southeast London,[15] and my findings are almost certainly constrained by this fact.

However, the purpose of my research was neither simple generalisation nor representation of the life of Japanese women in southeast London as migrants, but rather to explore individuals' life trajectories and how their multiple identities are constructed and enacted through various relationships that shift along with their life course, as well as how this affects their everyday practice. In this regard, I assume that worries about volunteer bias are less significant for my research. For example, despite my limited access to Japanese women in London, my ethnography has successfully illuminated diverse distinctions within them (expatriate Japanese residents in North London, *Hoshuko* mothers and other groups of Japanese mothers in southeast London) by investigating the narratives of my respondents in southeast London. I often found that respondents talked about their own identities through narratives about other

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[15] One of the participants kindly offered to forward my 'call-for-participants' email to a mailing list for a local Japanese socialising group based in Forest Hill to which she also belongs. However, in the end I did not receive any reply from them and therefore I ended up having interviews with those from the *Donguri* network. This indicates how my already existing personal contacts were important in recruiting the participants for research.

Japanese women, especially mothers in London by indicating how they feel that they are different from them (see Chapter 4), which contributed a lot to understanding their complex sense of belonging and identity negotiation. Here again I emphasise that what I want to produce through this study is not an accurate demographic report of different types of Japanese residents in London. My concern is always in how a group of people understand themselves and shape their social world through various relationships, and this does not always reflect 'reality'. In this regard, I argue that there was little negative impact of sampling that was shaped by my positionality in the field to approach my research interest.

Interviews

I used life history interviews in my fieldwork. I expected these to help me understand the continuity in my respondents' lives from Japan to London, as well as transitions in their gendered identities. In my pilot fieldwork, I first conducted semi-structured interviews based on questions I set in advance. However after carrying out several interviews, I realised that such pre-arranged questions limited the vibrancy of conversation, while I often found an interesting topic once the conversation had strayed from the main questions. Based on this experience, it was better to start with a broad open-ended question like 'please tell me your personal history' and then leave the control of conversation to the participant.

Interviews were mainly held in their homes –sometimes at a kitchen table, or on the sofa in the living room, which gave me an opportunity to observe their private space, and explore their home-making process; how they decorated inside their homes to make themselves and their family feel relaxed; what objects and practices at home told me

about their emotional attachment with their family 'here and there'; whether there were any shared home practices and habits among my respondents. Interviews lasted between one and a half and nearly two hours, and my respondents always asked me what I would like to drink on my arrival and kept topping up my empty cup as our conversation continued. I realised that this situation, in which the interviewee could demonstrate her control in the way she treated the interviewer, might have had a subtle but positive effect to let the both the interviewer and the interviewee feel an equal presence in the space. Considering that for feminist ethnographers the elimination of hierarchical power relationships between the researcher and the researched that affect narrative production is crucial (Naples 2003), the interviewing environment I had with my participants allowed us to have relaxed and enjoyable conversations based upon mutual respect (O'Reilly 2012a).

While the life history interviews contributed much to my data collection, owing to the various fascinating episodes shared by my respondents, I realised that the process itself was also meaningful in building relationships that enhanced the quality of ethnography (O'Reilly 2012a). Having had little chance to talk with mothers between classes at weekly *Donguri*, the interviews were precious opportunities for us to have one-to-one conversations in a private space. During the interviews, all the participants asked me many questions about myself, ranging from general questions to private ones – what was my major at university, what was the research about, how old was I, when did I come to the UK, what did I do before I came to the UK, did I have siblings, did I have a partner, what do I want to do after finishing the course, do I want to stay in the UK or go back to Japan, am I self-funded or not? and so on. This is a frequently shared experience among feminist researchers (Oakley 1981; Shinozaki 2012; Skeggs 1994; González-López 2010).

Disclosing my multiple social identities outside of *Donguri* not only gave new dynamism to the relationship between myself and my respondents (discussed later), but the new relationships built between us through interviews also enabled me to add further depth to my observation and analysis of their everyday lives afterwards.

Participant observation

By observing their everyday lives, I discovered how these 'unmarked phenomena', unnoticed ordinary actions and events during the course of 'everyday' social interaction (Labaree 2002), inscribed the women's multiple social identities. The observation explored their daily routines, such as home-making (including shopping, picking up children and domestic work), showing how their everyday lives were shaped by the domestic role associated with their gendered identity as wife or mother, as well as their informal gatherings with compatriots, neighbours and friends that brought their multiple social belongings into the light. These were shaped by their nationality, age, life stage, the local area where they live and their common interests.

Part of the value of participant observation to this research was to elucidate the meanings of everyday practices that were often unconsciously shaped by the women's different and changing social identities through various relationships. Such unconscious behaviour could not be uncovered in an interview, because respondents may assume that it is of too little value to share with the interviewer. In my fieldwork, I sometimes participated in social activities that my respondents had taken part in for years as a family tradition (for example, the Tambourelli camp in Chapter 5), and this enabled me to discover the accumulated social and cultural capital of those women over time. Also (as introduced in Chapter 4), my observation of the ways in which my respondents

organised and participated in an annual festival gave me a valuable insight into how their localised identity and sense of belonging were performed through practice (such as cooking, socialising and dressing), without even realising it themselves. Furthermore, the mundane domestic scenes in which my respondents spent time with their families were also rich in data that spoke eloquently of how they had brought past experience and future projection together to navigate their current lives in southeast London (see Chapters 4 and 6). Thus, even though there are temporal and spatial limitations to the extent to which a researcher can either participate or observe the lives of respondents, participant observation still enabled her to gain fascinating sources that indicated a broad background of personal history and actors' aspirations for the future.

Another rationale for the use of participant observation in this research can be found in my interest in the idea of 'communities of practice' as a conceptual tool (see Introduction). This suggests that '[t]he concept of practice connotes doing, but not just doing in and of itself. It is doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do' (Wenger 1998 cited in O'Reilly 2012a: 8). Having realised that there is a shared set of values among the people of East Dulwich, and that the Japanese women actively take part in its reproduction through their everyday lives, which feeds their sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, I wanted to explore this dynamism, where people transform their identity and practice through migration not simply as an individual project or on the basis of ethnic category, but rather as something that can be understood within the context of community. Thus, in order to understand such interactional aspects of social life, participant observation was the obvious choice -it enabled me to be present in the specific moments and spaces where my respondents got together, to learn in detail at first hand how their relationships shaped their lives.

Thus, interviews and participant observation were adopted to complement each other. Not only could I collect rich and valuable data using this combination, but it also contributed a lot to building up a relationship with my respondents that helped me to share in their construction of their social world, and the same understanding of it.

Reflexivity and positionality

Reflexivity in ethnography does not only refer to the design of theory and the research process, it also requires reflexivity from the researcher, who is called upon to reflect carefully and deeply upon his/her own positionality. 'This is especially relevant in the social sciences, in which the socially constructed nature of "reality" has been hotly debated by feminist philosophers and critical social scientists' (Haraway 1988; Harding 1992; Plummer 2001 cited in Shinozaki 2012). The establishment of feminist ethnography has been located as a challenge to the conventional positivist approach, which has been criticised for its exploitative power hierarchies between researcher and researched. While social researchers with positivist approaches try to exclude any emotional interaction or engagement with participants, to maintain their value-neutral position, critical researchers have realised that such an approach strips away context, reducing the situation to general themes and calculable recurrences that cannot illuminate the voice of those who are oppressed and powerless in society (O'Reilly, 2009). As a result of such debate on the academic act of constructing knowledge, feminists have made an effort to establish a new epistemological methodology that is based on a more egalitarian and reciprocal relationship with research participants (Skeggs 1994; O'Reilly 2009; Shinozaki 2012).

Thus, positional reflexivity has become a crucial prerequisite for researchers to

demonstrate their considered awareness of power relations. Although it is difficult to eliminate the hierarchical power relationships between the researcher and the researched that affect narrative production, feminist ethnographers adopt reflective strategies to help them be conscious of and dissolve the ways in which domination and repression are reproduced, both in the research process and in the products of their work (Naples 2003: 37). In this rendering, Shinozaki (2012) suggests that positional reflexivity 'entails reflecting upon where one is positioned in society in terms of class, gender, ethnicity as well as questioning fixed binaries, such as insider vs. outsider, powerful vs. powerless' (1814). Criticising migration studies that pay more attention to the nationality of migrants and overlook the way this intersects with other social divisions (eg. gender, class, stages in the life cycle and ethnicity), she advocates an awareness that the positionality of both researcher and researched is intersectionally constituted, because 'different social divisions get prioritized in specific moments, constituting contexturalized positionalities' (Shinozaki 2012: 1818). Similarly, Gunaratnam (2003) argues that 'race and ethnicity are not objective, stable, homogeneous categories, but are produced and animated by changing, complicated and uneven interactions between social process and individual experience' (Gunaratnam 2003:8). That is to say, the behaviour and narratives that the researcher observes in ethnography are produced through a dynamic interaction between the participants and the researcher. DeSouza (2004) also emphasises the dynamic interrelationship of the research process by understanding that the idea of the researcher-as-participant helps researchers reflexively develop an awareness of how their presence affects both the outcomes of the research and the process itself. Shinozaki (2012) concludes that '[i]n the feminist and critical social science debates, there is hardly any disagreement that we arrive at partial,

contextualized knowledge' (1823).

Reflexivity -a Japanese woman studying Japanese women

Simply stated, this is a study of Japanese women by a female Japanese researcher. In terms of the broad category of Japanese women living in southeast London, I could assume myself to be an insider, in a position equal to my participants. However, I had to be carefully aware of the dynamic interplay of social differences and complex identifications that the matching of one social identity may fail to take into account (Gunaratnam 2003). As there are multiple distinctions within this group of women (e.g. age, marital status, whether they had children or not, being involved in *Donguri* club or not, their hometown in Japan, educational background, work experience, etc.), it is not a simple question to ask myself whether I am an insider or outsider. In accordance with the claim made by some scholars (Labaree 2002; Naples 2003; DeSouza 2004) about the uselessness of such an insider/outsider dichotomy for its situational uncertainty, I did not further determine myself as either of these, occupying a position which, as I have outlined before, was more complex.

Like the insider/outsider discussion, there has also been an attempt to distinguish between the observational and the participation elements of participant observation, which O'Reilly (2000) criticises as a false dichotomy. As she acknowledges, the balance swings constantly between observer and participant during fieldwork, and I have also found my position swinging between the two.

Understanding the nature of ethnography in which the social world is co-constructed through the interaction of researcher and researched, and all dimensions of one's humanity including cognitive, spiritual and emotional aspects are equally important in

the production of knowledge (González-López 2010), the following paragraphs unpack my multiple and shifting positionality in the field.

Exploring the social world through my multiple positionality

I had limited connections with other Japanese neighbours during my first year in East Dulwich in 2012. Being busy studying for my master's course, I spent most of my time at school in central London, and that gave me little sense of belonging to the area. I still remember well the day of my first encounter with *Donguri* at the local church where it was held, on an errand for my flatmate. Once I entered the waiting room, where a group of Japanese mothers were chatting, I felt some of them cast a puzzled glance at me. Instead of being welcomed as the same as them - a Japanese woman living in southeast London, which I slightly expected, I found myself very uncomfortable in that space which distinguished our differences: local mothers who were permanent residents and a newcomer student – that gave me a sense of alienation.

However, my affinity with the area, and how other people in the area recognised me changed, first through my role as a child sitter and later as an assistant teacher at *Donguri*. I had already established good relationships with key people at *Donguri* club, such as those with Mika (we were child sitter and client) and Chizu (lodger and landlord); I had previous working experience in Japan that had developed my correct use of the Japanese language, and my social status as a local PhD student – all of these elements, which I did not think of as highly valuable, seem to have given me certain advantages to get the assistant teacher position at *Donguri* in 2015. Furthermore, my new role as a '*Donguri* no sensei' (a teacher at *Donguri*) has enabled me to earn more trust from the members, and resulted through word of mouth in my receiving more offers to work as a

child sitter for their children, and sometimes even the children of non-members of *Donguri*.

The table (Figure 4) illustrates my multiple and shifting relationships with some of the research participants who appear in the following empirical chapters of this thesis, from the time of my first appearance in the area. Prior to the start of the research, I already knew some of the participants either personally or professionally. As Loveday (2015) highlights, negotiating existing relationships can be challenging, but also beneficial; it requires careful attention to power inequalities between myself and the participants caused by my multiple positionings in the field. For example, I became a teacher or a sitter for their children, a colleague, a flatmate or an employee on different occasions.

The table clearly shows how my involvement with *Donguri* contributed a lot to my ability to recruit research participants. And at the same time, it also demonstrates how the respondents and I constructed new relationships through research –such as child sitter and client, or customer and hairdresser – as these occurred after interviews where we spent time developing a mutual understanding. It is important that such multiple relationships are not only limited to myself and my respondents, but those respondents also have multiple relationships each other –such as employer and employee, or hair dresser and client –other than their friendship or commonality as Japanese mothers. Thus, along with gaining trust and establishing a network of Japanese women in the area through my participation, my role also helped me to learn how their networking functions.

	Research timeline	author (Kaoru)	Yoko	Chizu	Mika	Seiko	Kayo	Maria	Ayako	Takako	Ai	Sumiko	Saki	Mai	Haru	Ayumi
area		East Dulwich	East Dulwich	Brixton	East Dulwich	East Dulwich	Honor Oak Park	Herne Hill	Honor Oak Park	East Dulwish	New Cross Gate	New Cross Gate	Tulse Hill	Honor Oak Park	Brixton	Forest Hill
chapter			Chapter 6		Introduction, Chapter 4, 5	Chapter 5	Chapter 3	Chapter 3	Chapter 3, Conclusion	Chapter 3	Chapter 3, 5	Chapter 5	Chapter 3, 4	Chapter 6	Chapter 3	Chapter 3
2012	MSc	moved to East Dulwich	flatmate	landlord	child sitter	neighbour										
2013																
2014	PhD	start working at market	employer at market													
2015	Pilot fieldwork	start working at Donguri / join playing tabmourelli				colleague at market	Interview	Interview				Interview	Interview	Interview		
2016	Fieldwork		tambourelli mate / Interview			tambourelli mate	child sitter		Interview	Interview				child sitter / hair dresser		
2017		start working at restaurant / tambourelli world cup	back to Japan	employer at restaurant	left Donguri	colleague at restaurant					Interview / child sitter	moved to Germany		transferred to Hoshuko	Interview	Interview
2018													left Donguri			

Donguri related relationship

Figure 4 Table: Researcher's changing relationships with participants

When I worked as a child sitter, other mothers at the school gate often talked to me when I went to pick up the children, which gave me an insight into how Japanese mothers have an extensive network of both Japanese and non-Japanese mothers. Also, I was once asked to go to a local swimming pool to pick up the children from another Japanese mother who took care of them with her own son. This gave me an opportunity to see how these mothers help each other as well as how they habitually use local public spaces in their daily lives. What impressed me about these experiences is that they are so well used to managing a child sitter. My 'clients' normally texted me a brief schedule of the day the night before, including what time I need to pick their children up, and whether they have any after school activities or not. They also often prepared a hand-written note on the table in the kitchen with detailed instructions: what I need to prepare for their dinner, what study they have to do, what time they need to take a bath and go to bed. These well organised and systematic practices told me that handling the child sitter, sometimes with a help of other mothers, has been a part of their everyday lives for many years, and that I am participating in their life in the same way as their former Japanese sitter.

Negotiating the swinging relationship

In my fieldwork with the mothers of *Donguri* students, even though my research was nothing to do with my position at the club, most of them called me 'Kaoru sensei (meaning teacher Kaoru)' during our first interview, which indicates a hierarchical relationship. In addition, although all of them were older than me, they often used honorific Japanese (or sometimes mixed of honorific and casual language) in our conversation – it seemed that they still slightly felt unsure about how to treat me,

whether as a teacher or as a young research student curious about their lives. On the other hand, when I had informal conversations with other mothers whom I knew prior to my work at *Donguri*, they always called me 'Kaoru chan', recognising me as a junior friend and talked to me in casual Japanese. In the Japanese language, the use of honorific titles and expressions, which are usually determined by age, social status and intimacy, make the relationship either close or formal.

Multiple relationships, such as 'child sitter and client' and 'researcher and researched' may be anticipated as an uncomfortable situation for both parties. However while I appreciated the opportunity to gain more access to research participants' lives, my respondents also showed favourable responses to helping me carry out my research, with an understanding of my multiple positionings. So I found that the situation was not awkward, but rather that we had a shared interest. Although the conditions that they expected a child sitter to fulfil varied from person to person, I found that generally one was required to be trustworthy, live in the neighbourhood and have good Japanese language skills. Especially regarding Japanese language skill, due to their long residence abroad, I often heard these Japanese mothers lacking confidence in their own Japanese language skills even as they wanted their children to learn correct Japanese. Thanks to my flatmate Yoko, who spread the good word about my 'Japanese skill' and my role at *Donguri*, which underpinned my credentials, they found me an ideal person with whom to entrust their children.

In addition, they seemed to feel more relaxed if there was any way they could help with my research, when they asked me to take care of their children. As I always tried to accept any job offer, even until late at night or in response to an urgent request in the early morning, they may have found that their participation and contribution to my

research reduced their sense of guilt. However such a seemingly win-win relationship between my respondents and I needed constantly to be examined carefully with active reflexivity. I needed to be aware that my positionality as a researcher should never put too much pressure on those who needed me as a child sitter to contribute to my research. In a similar way, I also had to be careful not to be exploited as a child sitter by blindly accepting any job offer, no matter how much I needed more research participants.

I also took care to remind them sporadically of my research interest in their everyday lives even though I had already explained this in our first meeting. This is because I often found interesting conversations or practices in our casual meetings as friends or at their houses while I was child sitting. To cope with those situations, I adopted ongoing verbal consent in which I asked them if I could quote a specific part of the conversation or take a photo of their home space to be used for my thesis. This was not simply to get their approval, but also intended to remind them of my continuing interest in their daily practice, which was likely to be forgotten as we built up multiple relationships other than that of researcher and researched.

Reflexively thinking back on the relationships between myself and the respondents, despite the multiple roles we performed on different occasions, I feel that our relationships were to some extent deeply underpinned by our different levels of experience of life in London. As they had already experienced major life events as women (such as marriage and giving birth), had been in the UK for longer, and had accumulated knowledge of local life in southeast London, I found that the women often saw me as a young newcomer wanting to learn how to navigate local life. They often showed me sympathy, as they once also came to the UK as students and struggled to find a balance between work and study, as well as to live abroad away from their families (see the

vignette on this in the Introduction). Some of the interviews were accompanied by their nutritious homemade food and they often invited me for lunch, dinner or picnics to treat a single student who always ate alone. In our conversations, what they told me often sounded like something I might experience in future decades –caring for elderly parents in Japan and their own health issues. In this regard, the stories they shared were not simply heard as 'their' story, but rather my projected future and their reflection on the life course often intersected and produced shared emotions between us. Such experiences of the co-construction of the social world through interaction with my respondents has largely influenced the conceptual framework of this thesis - gender and the life course.

Even after extensive fieldwork, I continually had opportunities to see my respondents in the workplace or on the street, and they were often concerned with the progress of my writing and encouraged me a lot. When I finally finished writing the thesis in summer 2018, some of them celebrated its submission with a drink or gift, and Yoko, who had left the UK in 2016, even had a bottle of champagne delivered to me from Japan. From these reactions, even though my multiple relationships with respondents seem complicated, we built up mutual understanding and favourable relationships based on sympathy and respect for each other, to carry on this project that partly belongs to them. No matter that it is unavoidable to be trapped in pitfalls such as an unequal power balance or biased positionality, we can say that this sensitivity to power is a significant attribute of feminist researchers, who remain continuously vigilant about the relations in which they are inscribed (Skeggs 2013).

Conclusion

Through an extensive discussion of my research design, focusing especially on reflexivity

and positionality, this chapter has demonstrated careful consideration of how knowledge about the lives of Japanese female migrants in southeast London has been produced through my ethnographic encounters. Aiming to illuminate the complex multi-layered distinctions and flexibly shifting identities among those Japanese women, I have argued the validity of feminist ethnography for this study. Acknowledging the fluidity of gender, race and ethnicity, feminist ethnographers consider that these are 'not objective, stable, homogeneous categories, but are produced and animated by changing, complicated and uneven interactions between social process and individual experience' (Gunaratnam 2003: 8). With this understanding, conventional methodological dichotomies such as insider/outsider and participation/observation might be less significant, especially for ethnographic research, because each actor involved (both the researcher and the researched) has multiple identities and the boundaries of such dichotomies fluctuate at different times, and in different places and relationships.

I had to be fully aware that I was not objectively investigating 'their' social world, but I was also a part of that world –nothing was merely simple data collection, and my age, gender, nationality, socio-cultural background, affiliation, personality and access to the participants –all of these have affected the knowledge produced in this study (O'Reilly 2012a). During the seven years that I have spent in southeast London where I have gradually built up relationships with those Japanese women, my accumulated knowledge and experience and my position in the area have changed a lot, and this has influenced my relationship with respondents as well as my interpretation. The more my life has become deeply rooted in the area, and the more I share various everyday experience with other Japanese women, the more I have felt I can understand their feelings and emotions. While this could be advantageous for thick description and deep

understanding of their practice, I acknowledge the limitations of such interpretation since it is all filtered through my own experience.

Therefore, it is important to highlight that knowledge as an outcome of ethnographic research remains partial and contextualised, which is caused by the constantly changing positionality of the researcher and her relationship with the researched, and vice versa. Despite the relatively long duration of my presence in the field, yet it is just one moment in their long lives, that go on after this research. In addition, many stories remained untold. However, the way in which ethnography can contribute to exploring the complexity of the social world is not diminished by these limitations. It is argued that 'we can produce valuable accounts of the social world which take into account (and even take advantage of) who we are and how we experience that world ourselves' (O'Reilly 2012a: 222). I also believe that the sensitive awareness to positionality and reflexivity discussed in this chapter has effectively contributed to my observation and interpretation in empirical chapters that follow, in which I have unfolded the meaning of the Japanese women's practices and relationships in everyday life.

Chapter 3 Diverse Lives

Introducing my co-conversationalists

I start by providing a brief introduction to my respondents, Japanese women living in southeast London. For this study, I have spoken with fifty-four Japanese women at various occasions in everyday scenes in southeast London, and had conducted semi-structured interviews with twelve of them. They are aged between their early thirties and their fifties, and have been living in the UK from ten years to over twenty five years. Their reasons for coming to the UK fall roughly into three categories: to study for a degree at UK university after graduating from high school; to learn English, after working for several years in Japan; or to marry a husband they have already met in Japan. Before settling here, most have already visited the UK (especially London), while travelling, doing a semester abroad, or during a training or business trip. For some, London is not their final destination and their trajectories involve succession of choices to adjust the change of circumstances, demonstrating migration as an ongoing process of negotiation (Amit and Knowles 2017; Benson and O'Reilly 2018). They later move on to other countries such as Singapore and South Africa due to their husbands' job transfers, or back to Japan. Most of them are married and their husbands are from a British (white, black or Asian ethnic) or other European background such as Italian, German or Irish, or American and Japanese. They met their husbands at university, school, their workplace or at social occasions (such as parties or clubs), and moved to southeast London using the birth of their children as the opportunity and spur, which I will discuss further later in the chapter.

	Ayako (47) Tokyo	Takako (50) Miyazaki	Ai (40) Miyagi	Yoko (45) Fukuoka	Chizu (43) Osaka	Sumiko (43) Osaka	Maria (50) Tokyo	Saki (42) Kanagawa	Mai (41) Kanagawa	Haru (39) Hyogo	Kayo (42) Tokyo	Ayumi (35) Saitama
husband	British (White)	British (Black)	British (White)		British (White)	German	Japanese	British (Chinese)	British	British (Chinese)	Japanese	British
children	1	2	2		2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2
area	Honor Oak Park	East Dulwish	New Cross Gate	East Dulwich	Brixton	New Cross Gate	Herne Hill	Tulse Hill	Honor Oak Park	Brixton	Honor Oak Park	Forest Hill
1990	Arrival at UK (19)											
1991	married	Arrival at UK (23)										
1992	divorced (got visa)											
1993												
1994	MA at RA											
1995		came back to UK										
1996	got job											
1997		married	Arrival at UK (19)									
1998				Arrival at UK (25)	Arrival at UK							
1999						Arrival at UK (23)						
2000							Arrival at UK (32)					
2001							moving (Herne Hill)					
2002		1st son					married 1st son	Arrival at UK (26)				
2003			married			married						
2004									Arrival at UK	Arrival at UK	married	
2005			came back to UK 1st daughter	graduation	married 1st son			married			1st son	
2006		1st daughter	moving (Brockley)						moving (London) married			
2007		moving (East Dulwich)			2nd son	moving (New Cross Gate)		1st daughter				Arrival at UK (Forest Hill)
2008						1st daughter	2nd son				2nd son	
2009									moving (Forest Hill)			
2010	moving (Forest Hill)							moving (Tulse Hill)	1st son	married		Arrival to UK (27) married
2011	1st son		1st son		1st son					moving (Singapore)	moving (Honor Oak Park)	
2012										1st son		moving (Forest Hill) 1st son
2013						2nd son				moving (Brixton)		
2014												1st daughter
2015									1st daughter	1st daughter		
2016				went back to Japan		moving (Berline)						
2017												

Figure 5 Table: Overview of my interview participants

One of the most heard stories about their initial interest in the UK is about culture, including rock music, fashion, films, architecture and art, and quite a lot of my respondents work in related industries in diverse ways. Ayako came to London to study art at university and has been working as a graphic and web designer. Mika and Ai studied fashion at university in London, and now work as freelance distributors for an interior design company and a fashion brand respectively. There are also self-employed market stall holders like Seiko and Yui who sell handmade crafts and children's clothes. Apart from such art related industries, there are some women who work in the food industry - like Chizu who runs her own restaurants, Haru who supports her husband's restaurant business, or Ai who organises Japanese food cookery lessons in her local area (see Chapter 5). My respondents also include full-time homemakers like Takako and Ayumi, and full-time office workers like Mai.

The six short profiles of my respondents below aim to highlight their diverse trajectories, both to and from London, that inspire them to give different accounts of migration.

'I don't know if this is good or bad, but this is a twist of fate'
Ayako (age 47, 28 years in London)

> It has been more than twenty-five years since Akemi came to London to study art at university when she was eighteen. She had a strong interest in UK rock music in her teens, and often tried to translate the lyrics of her favourite songs into Japanese, which enabled her to build up her confidence and interest in the English language. For her, studying art at university in the UK was the best way to fulfil her interests in both art and life in the UK. When she was twenty, in her first year at college, she fell in love at first sight with a British man, and got married, although this did not last long and she divorced after a year and a half. However, because she has gained permanent residence through marriage, Ayako had no worries about trouble with her visa, and chose to undertake an MA course as a 'home student'. When she finished the course, she was able to get a job as a graphic designer and has been working since then. Ayako

now lives with her British partner and her son, born in 2011, in Forest Hill.

'I'm still here.'

Maria (age 50, 18 years in London)

Maria came to the UK in 2000 after working for ten years as a writer for Japanese fashion magazines. She wanted to learn English in London, but also to take a break from work for a while, as for ten years in Japan she had not been able to take any holiday at all. While she studied at an English language school, she also took a course to learn how to teach Japanese to foreigners by extending her student visa status. Then she met her Japanese husband, who had already been working in the UK fashion industry for ten years, and they had their first child in 2002. She was not strongly inclined to stay in the UK at the time, and had even considered going back to Japan to give birth and raise the baby alone. She said: "I almost decided to go back to Japan. I was going to give birth in Japan (...), it wasn't a big issue even if we didn't live together. I didn't consider giving birth here (in the UK). But somehow, we agreed to have the baby here, live together and bring him up here. So I'm still here (laughter)."

In search of a better place for her children

Sumiko (age 43, 17 years in London)

Sumiko, who came to the UK in 1999, studied design at art college, started work at an architects' studio in London after graduation, and married her German husband, Max. Because things were tight financially, they moved from North to South London where they could buy a house with more bedrooms on the same budget. But although Sumiko finds her current living environment nice, she thinks that living in Berlin would be a better option, considering the future of her three children.

"Well, we have been thinking to move to Berlin... It's a place quite similar to London where different cultures are coexisting. Also tuition fees are free! You know, neither of us have any family here. ... The housing price here is too expensive! If we could afford to buy a three bedrooms house easily, we may not have considered moving. But unfortunately our income is not high enough..."

Anxiety for her mother-in-law, whose dementia is advancing, and the prospect of

being close to her husband's brother added further encouragement to Sumiko's and Max' plan to move to Berlin. In 2016, just one year after I had this interview with Sumiko, Max had got a job in Germany and she left London and moved to Berlin with her family.

A decision to go 'home'
Yoko (age 45, 18 years in London)

In 1998, Yoko came to London where she wanted to live because of her love for British culture. After studying at several English language schools and adult education art courses, she entered Camberwell College of Art to study fine art and started her career as an artist after graduation. Since she got a residential visa in 2008, she has gone back to Japan every winter to spend the New Year with her family. However, every time she goes back to Japan, she feels very comfortable at home and the idea of going back permanently often crosses her mind, so this prospect has become more realistic in the past three years.

"When I go home for a month every winter, during the first two weeks I often feel 'oh, I miss my life in London'. But once I overcome it and have been at home for nearly four weeks, I come to think 'well, I might feel more comfortable here (at home in Japan) now'. Then the time comes to go back to London. That's what has been happening to me every winter."

She finally decided to leave London, where she lived for eighteen years, and go back to her hometown, Fukuoka, to support her family business at the end of 2016. Being single, even though she had spent 18 years in London, Fukuoka (where she has family) is a 'home' to go back to.

Global relocation following her husband.
Haru (age 39, 6 years/5 years in London)

After graduating from university in Perugia, Italy, Haru returned to her home town of Kobe, which is in the Western part of Japan, and through her work at a prefectural board of education met her husband, Yang, who was living in Japan and teaching English in a school. However, as he was interested in working in the financial sector,

he went back to the UK two years later and began work at a stock company in London. Even though Haru had a 'good job' at the Italian embassy in Tokyo, she decided to quit and moved to London in 2004, due to the difficulties of a long distance relationship,.

After a smooth transition to a partner visa, Haru started to work at a travel agency in London which she also quite enjoyed but then Yang was transferred to Singapore with work in 2010. She then married him officially and moved to Singapore, where she gave a birth to her son in 2012. However, this was not her last relocation – as her husband Yang decided to make a dynamic career switch, from stock trader to ramen (Japanese noodle) restaurant owner and went back to London in 2013. Yang now has a market stall as well as two restaurants in South London, Haru has worked hard to support him at his restaurant, and has also given birth to her daughter during this time.

'I really, really didn't like this country.'
Ayumi (age 35, 8 years in London)

Ayumi met her husband James, who was in Japan to teach English, in her hometown of Urawa when she was a high school student. After three years James had to go back to the UK but they continued a long distance relationship. In 2010, Ayumi moved to London to live with him and they finally got married when she was twenty-seven. Even though she had visited the UK several times and knew what it was like to live in this country, she reflected on her early days and told me that she was shocked by the cultural differences between the UK and Japan.

"In Japan, since I lived with my family, I could use all my income for myself. But here (as I was not working at that time) I lost any income, the exchange rate for pounds was expensive and no one cooked for me… I had to adjust to all these changes in my life. I really, really didn't like this country. You know, not only bad weather; also I didn't like that everything doesn't happen on time (such as trains and deliveries). So it took several years for me to get used to."

Now Ayumi is the mother of two children and is thinking about going back to work when her son starts school in two years, although as yet she has no idea what she

wants to do.

These vignettes illustrate the diversity of my respondents' stories of their arrival in London, which was differently perceived by each of them - for some, it was a place they had dreamed of visiting or living, while for others it was nothing more than a husband's home country. As the cases of Ayako and Maria demonstrate, even those who really wanted to come to London, did not expect to stay here so long, and consider their current situation (in which they have settled down with their family) the fruit of serendipity. On the other hand, the case of Yoko has different dimensions - she spent ten years here to get residence in the UK, but this does not necessarily mean that her stay is permanent, and she has decided to go back to Japan eventually. In this regard, as the recent studies argue (Amit and Knowles 2017; Benson and O'Reilly 2018), their stories are full of contingencies and they have been making complex choices about arrival, settlement and departure incrementally, at different stages in their life course including career changes, marriage, giving birth, children growing up and the aging of wider family members. Along with their changing values at different life stages, they constantly re-evaluate their situations and navigate their lives. Thus 'migration is not always fully plotted out in advance' (Benson and O'Reilly 2018:157), but is rather a continuous project of adjustment, re-evaluation and negotiation.

Migration stories as biography

The following paragraphs look more closely at my respondents' accounts of migration. As discussed in the literature review chapter '[T]he decision to move, to stay away, to return may have its roots in the early part of one's biography and may be constantly reassessed throughout that lifetime' (Ni Laoire 2000: 238). When I asked these women to tell me about their

migration, the stories they shared were not only about their mobility but also about their lives, covering their pasts (childhood memories and school age aspirations), presents (negotiation in daily lives) and futures (anxiety and ambitions). Thus a biographical approach to migration studies illuminates 'the world as a series of associations and entanglements in time-space' (Gregory 2000 cited in Halfacree 2004: 242). Also, the stories are not just about their personal histories but these are interwoven in a complex way with various wider structural and material conditions (the most prominent example here is visa status, which determines what one can or cannot do). So it seems that 'biographies are best understood as analytical devices, socially constructed and attuned to the wider historical and material conditions that continue to structure experience' (Benson and O'Reilly 2018: 141). With this understanding, we can investigate how individuals highlight particular moments in their lives, how these are reflexively related to their migration, how their perceptions of the world are influenced by structural conditions and how these impact on their everyday practices by exploring migrants' biographies.

My conversation with Kayo took place at a dining table in her house before she went out with her husband Takashi for a concert in central London, on an evening when I visited to look after her two sons. A tall bookshelf behind the dining table was filled with Japanese books from a wide range of genres including novels, essays and comics. Perhaps influenced by the fact that she is such a keen reader, the way she responded to my questions was as if she was telling someone else's story quite objectively, very clearly tracing out multiple indications strewn through her past to bring her to London.

      Kaoru: How long it has been since you come here?

Kayo: I came here in 2007, so it's eight years!

Kaoru: Before that, what did you do in Japan?

Kayo: I was an office worker, and it's been three years since I got married with Takashi, and my son Kouta was two years old at that time. It was like we were standing at 'stage 1' as a new family.

Kaoru: Then why did you move to London?

Kayo: Well, since when I was a schoolgirl, I was really interested in the culture of London, especially 1960-70s music and fashion for long time, and then had a dream to study in London which was unfulfilled - this is one foreshadowing (of my migration).

On the realistic side, my husband has been working as an IT engineer and he also had a dream to work in Silicon Valley in the US and he had been looking for the opportunity. He once went to the US by himself for job hunting and studied English in preparation. But eventually he found that it was difficult for him to work in the US due to visa issues, and luckily he had got a job in the UK. Then we moved to London.

Kayo appears to be a 'trailing spouse' who had to follow her husband, and had no choice in the matter. However, by plotting her accumulated interest in UK culture and interpreting her teenage dream as foreshadowing, she understands her relocation not as accompanying her husband, but as an opportunity to realise her long-cherished dream. Structural restrictions made it difficult to get a visa in the US, which was the first priority for her husband Takashi, and he had to compromise and change his destination to the UK. Even such misfortune and an improvised twist in their destination was interpreted positively by Kayo as 'something I could wish for nothing better' to rationalise the migration as her own experience. According to Benson and O'Reilly, '[W]hen migrants explain their migration as a conscious choice, linked to their personal histories and sense of self, they thus produce reflexive accounts that (re)align their sense of identity with their actions' (2018: 142). In this Kayo's case, their

migration to the UK was not a conscious choice. However, the way she reflects her teenage dream and how the unexpected obstacles to their planned route to the US have eventually lead to their life in the UK demonstrate her 'interpretive subjectivity' (Silvey and Lawson 1999), which has shown her control over the navigation of migration as a family project, is illuminated

Stories of marriage - negotiation of cultural norms and structural conditions

"I don't know why it was declined even though Steve was born and grew up in this country." （Saki）

This quotation is taken from a conversation with Saki, one of my respondents, who met her husband when she was a student in London. Like Saki, some of my respondents met their husbands in the UK when they were staying on student visas (mostly short-term study visas which allow a maximum stay of 11 months), got married, and settled in London. As has been described '[I]n a world in which ever greater numbers of people are crossing borders and working, studying or going on holiday abroad, it is normal for people of different national backgrounds to meet, sometimes grow to be friends, and sometimes fall in love with each other' (Beck-Gernsheim 2011: 60). However, Saki's quote demonstrates her confusion when faced with the complicated process for cross-border marriage, and an unexpected rejection by the Home Office, as well as highlighting the fact that as a student she had not been under the same sort of scrutiny as when trying to stay. This illuminates the situation of migrants who have to go through a difficult process of institutional scrutiny to stay put with their partners in the UK as a 'normal' consequence of their intimate relationship. In this section, by looking at the vignettes of Japanese women who married British husbands, we can see how marriage,

a seemingly private life event, was largely shaped by the wider social and political structure and cultural norms.

Marriage migration has been a central concern of political arguments over immigration policy in European countries; the underlying government perspective is the desire to control the entry of migrants who strive to gain geographical mobility and settlement by (what is perceived as) a misuse of marriage (Eggebø 2013; Benson and Charsley 2015; Wray 2016). However, at the same time, current political discourse and media representation of marriages of convenience (which are also referred to as sham marriages or marriages for immigration advantage) has been criticised both for causing a moral panic (Benson and Charsley 2015), and because procedures taken to prohibit marriages of convenience often impact on genuine marriage as well (Eggebø 2013: 774). Wray stresses further that 'the critical factor here is that intimate and defining relationships are pitched against macro policy decisions' (2016: 1). In order to protect the premise of romantic love as the foundation of marriage in Western societies, as well as to manage and control marriage-related migration, a binary distinction is established between genuine and fake marriage (Benson and Charsley 2015: 39). As a result, an ironic contradiction has emerged that in a process of spousal migration, a couple have to present evidence to legitimate their relationship as 'genuine' based on romantic love. However, such a tick-box process to prove they fulfil the criteria for institutionalised 'real' marriage itself overpowers romantic elements in the marriage experience.

Saki (42, 16 years in London)

After her arrival in London in 2002, Saki extended her short-term study visa for English language school every year. However, after four years a regulation changed and she found that she could not extend her visa any more. She was already living with her current husband,

Steve, at that time and thought they were going to marry at some point anyway, so she decided to take the opportunity to apply for a partner's visa.

> "I thought that I can apply for switching at least one month before it expires, but then it was declined by the Home Office and I had to go back to Japan just two weeks before it expired. I was not allowed to stay. I don't know why it was declined even though Steve was born and grew up in this country. He was so irritated by me and complained 'why you didn't prepare for it earlier!' I was then frustrated and felt 'why should I be blamed for this!?' So once I went back to Japan I made an application for the visa from there. It was not romantic at all, and we quarrelled over it. But I thought it was not a serious issue, because we were going to get married sooner or later, so the timing did not make any difference."

Takako (50, 27 years in London)

Takako lived with her boyfriend (and later husband) Peter, but due to her visa status as a student visitor (a short-term study visa), she was not allowed to work.

> "In order to be together, there was no choice left for us except for getting married. I needed to find a job and work for our life. Yes, it (the marriage) was just really for getting that document (which allows Takako to work)."

She shared many episodes that told how she suffered from the economically difficult situation of relying on a single income (Peter's), such as a shortage of gas and electricity. Having been stressed by these miserable circumstances, Takako was really eager to marry as soon as possible to work in the UK and secure her income, but Peter hesitated and procrastinated about getting married for a while.

"I found that British men are very careful about marriage. For me, the order is completely opposite but it is not unusual to see a family here which has three children but where the parents are not married. I feel that most men do not want to get married officially because they are afraid of making a commitment. For me it sounds very weird since having children must be a bigger commitment than marriage.

Such men's wary attitude toward marriage is surprising. And my husband was one of them. The poor living environment at that time was so depressing and I felt a sense of inferiority for having no income. Even if I just went out shopping in the neighbourhood, I had to borrow a bus fare from my boyfriend every time. It was so unbearable.

I had been doing a part-time job since I was a school girl and always secured my income by myself. I always worked a lot and saved a lot, but then at that time I couldn't work and couldn't get any income. It was mentally painful for me, and I took out my anger on him and made bad feeling between us."

In 1997 two years after they started cohabitating, in spite of Peter's reluctant attitude, Takako successfully encouraged him and finally completed all the procedures for marriage and got a valid visa to work in the UK. On the same day she got the visa at the Home Office in Croydon, she looked for a job on an information bulletin and applied for a sales assistant position at a Japanese department store in Piccadilly Circus where she worked for three years.

As the vignettes demonstrate, these Japanese women fell in love with their partners and established their lives as couples prior to marriage. However, when facing the fact that their student visa had expired (as in Saki's case) or that she could no longer secure the material means to life without working (Takako's case), spousal visas are one of the only remaining routes by which they can settle in the UK. Having already considered getting married at some point in the future and with no option for a long-distance relationship between Japan and the

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UK, it was a natural choice for them to marry and stay put in London where they have a place to live, ways to secure their income and social networks of friends, rather than move to Japan or other countries. In this rendering, it is argued that '[C]ontemporary intimate relationships are not freed from economic and social structures. Rather, material circumstances, such as money and a shared household, bind people together' (Eggebø 2013: 776). Thus, no matter how closely their relationship is bound by their affection for each other, when and where they get married are inevitably framed by this sort of circumstance.

Also, even though their stories demonstrate that they experienced a certain degree of stress during the application process, it should be highlighted that these Japanese women have the economic and social privilege that enables them to reflect on their experience as a funny story to share. During the process, since a fiancé visa (which is officially called 'Marriage or Civil Partnership Visitor visa') was only applicable from outside the country, both Saki and Takako had to leave the UK once and come back after the application; this implies that they had sufficient economic capital to cover the extra travel cost. Also, even though they often complained about how they had to go to the bother of making up a complicated pile of documents for their visa applications, they said very little about serious troubles and anxiety experienced as a result of the scrutinising process. Takako even told me that she had very much enjoyed her short stay of several months in Japan while she was waiting for the approval and issue of her fiancé visa, and that she spent time doing a part-time job or going to a concert of her favourite pop group. This relatively relaxed attitude of Japanese women could be interpreted as a reflection of immigration control towards marriage migrants assuming that marriage is closely linked with gender, race, class, age and culture (Wray 2016).

Wray suggests that immigration control creates 'an informal and unarticulated hierarchy of acceptable marriages for regulation' (2016: 1) in which such categories interplay in a complex

way. The study by Charsley and Benson (2012) introduces data on rates of refusal of applications for Leave to Enter as spouses/partners to the UK in 2010, and it reveals significant differences in results by country of origin as well as gender. The data demonstrates 'the high percentages of refusals for South Asian, (Black) African and predominantly Muslim countries', while in contrast, the lowest rates of refusal are for the US, Canada, Australia and Japan (2012: 22). Interestingly, Japanese female applicants (along with other predominantly White, English speaking and of Christian heritage nationals) experience lower levels of refusal experience a low chance of refusal.

Thus, migration governance is stratified, and some people are scrutinised and/or refused to a far greater degree than others – in a complex, racialised and gendered way. Fortunately, as can be seen from my respondents' stories as well as from the data above, marital unions between Japanese women and British men are regarded as 'acceptable' in this process. Charsley and Benson argue that 'doubts over the genuineness of marriages may be used to bolster the case for refusals on other grounds' (2012: 22). There are different understandings and marriage practices in different cultures, and 'love or a close relationship *before* marriage is not universally considered a prerequisite for a successful union' (Charsley and Benson 2012: 18). However, because the Home Office scrutinising process, which aims to control immigrants, imposes the decision-makers' own understanding of what a 'genuine' marriage should look like (Wray 2006), those people whose marital practices require complicated judgements about the genuineness of marriage (e.g. arranged marriages or gifting of money upon marriage) face difficulties in their application.

In addition to such ethnic, gender and cultural identity debates, Sirriyeh (2015) has argued that class is also important. Class here does not refer just to the economic dimension, but also to the social and cultural dimensions that judge the morality, respectability and lifestyle of

possible immigrants (Sirriyeh 2015: 230). Charsley's and Benson's (2012) analysis suggests that the lower level of refusals for countries with high economic standards might be because their populations are judged to have little financial incentive for immigration fraud. On a similar note, Sirriyeh (2015) considers that migration policy, which adheres to a class-based moralism, applies a filter to accept 'good citizens' who are not simply consuming welfare services, but who rather strive to take control of their lives, become self-sufficient and make a contribution to the nation.

However, it should also be carefully acknowledged that immigration control is not simply gendered and racialized, but that an applicant is simultaneously gendered and racialized (Hall 2002). Drawing from Black feminist theory, which challenges researchers to uncover complex and diverse experiences of intersectional identity between gender and ethnicity, Hall (2002) argues that gendered and racialized assumptions about women in general often produce discrimination for many women, because of 'their membership of a particular ethnic group, which is considered as undesirable by the British immigration authorities' (57). For example, it is suggested that while a South Asian wife immigrating to the UK to join her husband is less problematic, a British-born wife calling a partner to the UK is often viewed with suspicion, as it contradicts the racialized stereotypical image of submissive South Asian woman[16].

Fortunately, as we have seen, Japanese women are given the social privilege to go through a relatively smooth transition from student to Marriage or Civil Partnership Visitor visa. However, at the same time, it is also largely owing to the authorities' assumption that Japanese women's immigration is predominantly led by their husbands, who are British citizens, and that Asian wives play a secondary role. The immigration of a Japanese wife to join her British

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[16] Such images of highly traditional and submissive stereotype of South Asian women are embedded in the colonial tradition, and this image has been widely spread along with an expansion of cultural diaspora by increased Indian migration in the Western hemisphere (Jiwani 1992).

husband be regarded as less-problematic, not only because there is little difference in marital practices between their cultures, but also in the context of a common understanding of 'a relationship between a masculine, Occidentalized geographic imaginary (the West) and a heteronormalized, feminized East'[17] (Bailey 2007: 602). To underpin this, stronger emotional stress and tension were expressed in the narrative of a Japanese woman who tried to stay put in the UK as single (see Yoko's story in Chapter 6). I consider her exhaustion was partly caused by the gap between her profile, as a single independent Asian woman, and the racialized stereotypical image of the dependent Asian wife. Thus we cannot simply make 'mono-causal explanations of gender and racial oppression' (Hall 2002: 57).

The common feature among my respondents' stories about marriage was that they mainly talked about the practical process (how they went through it), and I rarely heard about romantic moments with their husbands or emotions. This might be, to some extent, something to do with Japanese culture in which people do not express love openly, especially if they see me as 'an academic researcher'. However, I consider that it is also caused by the institutionalised immigration control process as it has been argued. Even though the reasons for marriage and marriage-related migration are mixed and multiple, involving romantic love, affiliation, social and economic prosperity, future stability and security, well-being and happiness (Wray 2006; Charsley and Benson 2012), the scrutinising process demands applicants to draw only on objective facts to legitimate their 'genuine' marriage, and other

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[17] Similarly, it is argued that it is not only the historically inscribed image of War brides (see Chapter 1), Orientalism discourse and hierarchical political relations, that continue to characterise western-Japanese interaction in the modern arena, contribute to the normalization of marital unions between Western men and Japanese women (Takeda and Mathews 2009). It projects an image of western men as egalitarian and sensitive while Japanese men are seen as oppressive and insensitive -and because of this, a racialised and gendered image has been constructed in which 'Japanese women seek romantic relationships and international marriage with western men' (Kelsky 2002, cited in Takeda and Mathews 2009).

precious and romantic memories of their relationship must be left covered up.

Thus, their stories of marriage eloquently illuminate the complex interplay of multiple elements such as a meeting their partner, timing, economic circumstances, cultural norms, structural forces and emotion. And exploring the biographies of these women has highlighted their agency, not only as they negotiate with wider social structures and the norms and expectations of those around them, but also as they give reflexive accounts of their experience that underpin their subjectivity and control of life (Benson and O'Reilly 2018).

Life-course: changes of life stage, environment and practice

This section focuses on how my respondents encountered other Japanese women in their local area and how meeting them came to have significant meaning for them in their shifting life-course, social position and accumulated capitals. It has been claimed that there has been little attention to 'how migrants access existing networks or establish new ties in the 'host' society', and the dynamic nature of friendship/acquaintance networks that change over the life-course should not be overlooked (Ryan 2007: 298). In particular, becoming a mother dramatically changes relationships with friends, and other socialising practices. Spending much more time at home and in their local area, the women who gain the new position of being mothers would 'actively seek out other mothers to spend time with and as a form of support' (Bryne 2006: 1004). Likewise, most of my respondents told me that they did not have many Japanese friends in London until they gave birth to their children, but that becoming a mother changed both their patterns of socialising and their emotional attachment to the neighbourhood. The dramatic change in life circumstances brought about by having children gave them a sense of

anxiety, pressure and stress about coping with this change in their environment, and drove them to construct a social network of their peers – a group of Japanese friends with whom they can share various emotion and local knowledge.

For example, Ayumi and five other Japanese women who were all living in southeast London and expecting their first baby at similar times met each other through an Internet community site for Japanese living in London. One post read: 'anyone who will give a birth at NHS this year, let's make a friend circle to exchange information?'. Expecting her first baby, this woman must have felt mounting anxiety, not only personally, but also provoked by the cultural and institutional differences between Japan and the UK about how to give birth and raise a child. Even though they have not met each other in real life, it seems that making friends with people to whom she could speak Japanese and sympathise with was encouraging for her.

Studies of migrant women and those whose socialising practices changed in different phases of the life course have highlighted that migrant women made new friends and established new networks when their children were young (Oakley 1992; Ryan 2007). In my study, many of the Japanese mothers got to know each other in public spaces such as the street or the park where they took their children. In some other cases, there was a mediator who drew two Japanese mothers living in the same neighbourhood together. In the case of Takako, it was a member of staff at the local swimming pool where Takako went in the last month of her pregnancy with her first child. There was a Japanese girl working at the pool and having seen that Takako was expecting her baby soon, she told Takako that there was another Japanese mother who often came to swim with a small child. Then she was introduced Keiko and expanded her Japanese mother friend network in the local area, East Dulwich.

I did not know about the community of Japanese women in southeast London until I started working at *Donguri*, a Japanese after-school class for children in East Dulwich (see chapter

4). However, through my conversations with them, I realised that they had already established a small-scale network of Japanese mothers in each neighbourhood as we have already seen in the cases of Ayumi and Takako. They already knew each other even before they gave birth to children and were socialising to exchange useful information to navigate their life in London. Their topics of conversation have been changing as their children have grown up, from talking about breast feeding to discussing play-group and nursery and this has enabled them to accumulate knowledge about available resources in their local area. When the children started talking and the mothers began thinking about how they could encourage their children to learn Japanese language and culture, they heard about *Donguri* from their friends and thus small-scale groups of Japanese mothers converged into a large community. (As far as I found, there are small groups based in Tulse Hill, Honor Oak Park, Brockley and East Dulwich.) It is a calm but largely dynamic flow of Japanese women forming a group or community around children which is like small streams from different directions merging into a large pond.

This underpins the idea that a social network is neither simply spatially bounded nor static (Ryan 2007). As time passes, people readjust to expanding the scale of what counts as 'local' to have dynamic interaction with other mothers. Of course, as is argued by Ryan (2007), such negotiation in establishing new local networks is not migrant specific, but is common to many mothers with young children. However, having studied the practices of Irish migrant mothers in the UK, she emphasises that 'it is important to acknowledge the ways in which their situations as migrants may shape their particular support needs and the types of local networks they access and establish' (302). The following paragraphs then introduce the vignette of my respondent Kayo, discussing how her internalised social structure as a migrant mother affects her practices of navigating her everyday life and constructing a sense of belonging to the local area. It illustrates how she tried to establish a local network from scratch as a migrant mother,

although she had no knowledge about available local services and facilities. The question of how such a dynamic community, created by these Japanese mothers, impacts on the lives of other Japanese women's everyday experience in the neighbourhood is also discussed here.

Life in a village in London as a mother

Kayo (42, 11 years in London)

Kayo talks how her exploration of the area in the early days, in search of available English courses and child care, helped her to learn how and where she could access valuable information.

> I brought a bottle of water and a snack for my son from home, and we explored different area in south east London every day. You know, at that time we didn't have smart phones, so I had to search about the area where I would go on the day at home on the Internet beforehand. It was like pioneering a new area every day. One day I went to East Dulwich, and on another day went to Herne Hill…, just in search of any information that could be valuable for me. I came to learn that I could find interesting flyers at local libraries. I explored a lot to find my English course and child care for my son.
>
> In Tokyo, I feel that most information is provided for the whole of Tokyo, such a big city. But here, I find 'the local' is very rooted in a very narrow definition of local-ness. For example, not everyone goes to the centre to work, but many people do work locally, as well as doing personal errands here. Soon after I settled, I noticed that a variety of information is provided at a local level and that people's lives very much rely on it. I think I've been aware of it through child-rearing. I've discovered that many baby sessions and various group meetings are usually held at a community hall, a library and the Forest Hill swimming pool. Then I realised that I could make myself keep busy for a whole week just within the distance of a bus ride.

When Kayo talked about her perception of the place where she lives now, the 'London' in her

story is described very differently from the 'London' that is commonly imagined in a tourist landscape. As Kayo clearly articulates, 'local' in London is for her a place she can explore within a bus ride or on foot pushing a buggy. I consider this vignette tells not just how she has developed an emotional attachment to the area through adventurous exploration around various local, publicly available services for mothers and children, but also provides rich insight into how the unique shape and function of London as a city, which is 'a city of villages'(Scanlon 2016) contributes to that process.

In this regard, the following quote from Kath Scanlon's article helps us get an idea of how living in London is like a village life. Scanlon is both a research fellow at LSE and a resident in Forest Hill:

> "I call myself a Londoner but really, I live in a village: Forest Hill, SE23. My kids went to the village primary school, I meet my friends in the village cafes (or pubs, of an evening), and the pound-a-bowl fruit and veg man often gives me a free punnet of something as I'm a regular. One of the best things about my village is how easy it is to get to the rest of London—but really Forest Hill has almost everything I need." (Scanlon 2016)

She goes on to highlight the characteristics of such London villages, which have 'an intimate, walkable layout; a central hub with shops, a GP surgery and a school, an emerging sense of people' to suggest further development of functional communities in London (Scanlon 2016). Surprisingly, these features of village life mirror those that Kayo discovered in her local exploration. Having almost everything needed for daily life in a relatively small enclosed area, their everyday practices such as shopping and socialising are localised -and such localised everyday practice contributes to changing the residents' image of London.

As Scanlon says, the villages in the southeast part of the city are functional for access to central

London which is less than 20 minutes on the train, and owing to their hilly geographical location, famous landmarks of London such as London Eye, Shard and St Paul's cathedral are visible from these villages. I feel that this is a good distance for the village people, both physically and psychologically, with a good view of the metropolis in the distance. For them, London is not the city of a tourist imaginary, a busy place full of people and global retail chain stores, but a village which has an intimate community of people and small independent local traders on a high street.

On the high street of East Dulwich (Lordship lane), there is precisely 'everything - all that we need' within 15 minutes' walk on either side of the street. We can find a post office, a dentist, two supermarkets, five pubs, many cafes and restaurants, charity stores, a cinema, a sport club, barbers and hair salons, a DIY shop, dry cleaning stores, chicken shops, a fishmonger, a butcher, veg stores, wine stores, gift shops, flower shop etc - all of them on the same street, and surprisingly these stores not only cover a diversity of residents' needs, but also cater to the demands of those from different class backgrounds. For example, there is both an M&S and a Co-op to choose from, as well as both fashionable French cafés and traditional British working-class caffs. There are also nurseries, primary schools, GPs, banks and churches around this high street. In particular, because it has the best primary schools, families with small children move into the area to be in the right catchment area, which has given East Dulwich its nickname: 'nappy valley' (*The Times* 2007). Therefore, a rich variety of family-friendly amenities (especially for young mothers) can be easily identified in East Dulwich; a local pub which organises a year-end disco for children, a clothes' store offering children's and maternity wear, an ante-natal yoga class and large parks. Thus, it is not just a village that offers 'everything needed' for the residents, but has significant meaning for mothers, who can comfortably navigate their everyday lives around children while remaining rooted to the local

community.

And an important thing is that the ways in which the everyday lives of village residents are rooted to the local are deeply related to local authorities' spatial organisation in London, as they have considerable control over what happens in their local areas and can shape the infrastructures that run through them. As mentioned earlier, the available choices of state primary schools are determined by residential zone. It is similar for medical services, to receive which people have to register with local GPs, which means they cannot just pop into any hospital in the city but first have to make an appointment with the local GP. The child care services like baby and toddler groups work in similar ways and are often introduced by the local GP. So it is not straightforward to go to another area for child-related activities, etc., given that these are supplied at local level. Even sports clubs are managed by the local council which offers advantageous membership to local residents, and this helps us understand the background to the encounter between Keiko and Saki at the swimming pool introduced earlier. Thus, the infrastructure for residents, and local authority resources that sometimes limit the mobility of the residents creates a situation in which the everyday practices of families with children, especially mothers, happen only within and around the village.

Having investigated these facts, the expansion of the Japanese community in southeast London can be understood as not just a lucky coincidence, but rather as partly the result of local developments since the 1980s that have made the area a family friendly middle-class urban village, and the spatial organisation done by local authorities. After they settle, the Japanese mothers establish their lives in the village, and their daily engagement in childrearing in such a walkable local environment has enabled them to encounter other Japanese mothers

close by.

Kayo's first contact with another Japanese mother in southeast London was an encounter with Mika, who she met in Dulwich park. Thinking back to the encounter, Kayo describes it as 'pure luck', as not only are they approximately the same age, but they also have sons of exactly the same age. Since then, their families, including Kayo's Japanese husband and Mika's British husband, have become very close. Kayo heard about *Donguri* from Mika when their sons became three, and so joined a larger community of Japanese mothers. Interestingly, in my conversation with Saki, she said she had met Kayo when she was in the park with her daughter, and that she also heard about *Donguri* from Kayo. Having moved from north London to the southeast of the city, for Saki it was her first contact with another local Japanese mother. Mai also told me recently that she met Kayo on the street where they both live. Kayo had just moved from Forest Hill to Honor Oak Park when she spoke with Mai, who was with her baby boy. Since she was already a member of *Donguri*, Kayo introduced Mai to this Japanese community for Mai future reference. In addition, Kayo also appeared in my conversation with Ai, who lives in Brockley.

> I heard a rumour that there's a Japanese woman who had just moved to London and talked to any Japanese in the neighbourhood. It's a couple of Japanese, so everyone thought it's a rare case. And then after a few years, when I started to go to *Donguri*, I met Kayo finally and found out, "Wow, it was you! The person, a mysterious Japanese lady who talked to any Japanese at Sainsbury was you!"

This could not have occurred in a suburban town where people have to drive their children to a school or drive to do their daily shopping; in that situation, these encounters between Japanese people on the street could not happened. As we have seen, Kayo's narrative

illustrates how she explored a strange land to navigate her new life with family, and it highlights her excitement and enjoyment at discovering different forms of urban life between Tokyo and Japan. However, at the same time, the repeated appearance of Kayo's name in my conversations with other women, demonstrate her anxiety and desperate effort to construct a social network with other Japanese people. As Ai mentions, this is a 'rare' case of a Japanese couple who may have had limited access to information due to their cultural capital (lack of English language proficiency and basic knowledge about life in the UK such as education and health care), and it is not difficult to imagine why Kayo had to make such a huge effort to acquire social capital in the neighbourhood. Understanding the value of becoming a member of a community of Japanese mothers from her own experience, Kayo must have tried to talk to other Japanese mothers and introduce them to *Donguri* in the same way as Mika had done with her. I consider that this practice of recruiting newly arrived Japanese women is common and is underpinned by their sympathy for one another as migrant mothers. And through this learned practice, the community of Japanese mothers in southeast London has been expanding not only geographically but also temporally through many generations.

Selective access to the community for singles

Although this Japanese community has been expanding around children as an important social hub, it also has significant meaning for Japanese residents who are single. In the days immediately after their arrival in London in 1998, Yoko used to share a flat with Chizu in Camberwell. Their friendship has not changed since Chizu got married and had children, and rather than just being godmother to Chizu's first child and working as a baby sitter for them occasionally, Yoko has become very close to the whole family, including Chizu's British husband, parents-in-law, and sister/brother-in-law. When Chizu started to build up her social

network in the Japanese community as her son grew up, Yoko also got to know other Japanese mothers and become a part of the community by establishing her presence as 'a reliable Japanese girl', by looking after Chizu's children and taking them to *Donguri* or school.

And through Yoko, who was my flatmate, I was introduced to job opportunities in the community, such as childminder or assistant teacher at *Donguri*, that made me 'visible' to other Japanese residents in the neighbourhood. Whenever I find familiar faces on the street or at a supermarket and spend a couple of minutes chatting, I feel that I am a local. However, it does not mean that this sense of belonging is equally experienced by any Japanese living in this area. For example, my other flatmates, Reiko and Misa, who work full-time in central London, have no interaction with other Japanese residents in East Dulwich and would never encounter familiar faces at Sainsbury's. This shows that it is not a community simply bounded and shaped by ethnicity and locality which can be joined by any Japanese living in the neighbourhood, but rather relationships - how someone is involved and what resources they can contribute to the community - matter.

On the one hand, this community offers a space where the Japanese mothers can get access to valuable information and resources they need for bringing up their children in London, as well as sharing various emotions. On the other hand, the single women, who offer child care support by working as babysitters or child minders or Japanese teachers, receive economic benefit from this community. Being a local resident familiar with the area, being quite flexible about working hours and frequency, and having already worked for other members of the community, Yoko, who is an artist and myself as a student are considered to be convenient resource or the mothers to navigate their life in southeast London. I well remember my own experience after working for one of these mothers, it seems that my contact details were shared with her friends, and I had a babysitting job offer from a mother I had never met. I have got a

place in the community because of the skills and dispositions I bring as a flexible student who lives locally and can be seen as reliable because of teaching at *Donguri* – that are valued by these women.

However, in this community, it is not only such supply and demand relationships that connect Japanese mothers and single women, there is also straightforward mutual assistance. For example, as I wrote in the Introduction, when I got terrible flu and had to stay in bed, precious foods and flowers were left on the front steps for me by Mika, for whom I often worked as a child minder. Another example is that when Seiko's washing machine broke, I offered her the use of the one in my flat until she got a new one. Seiko is not only a neighbour but also the mother of one of my students at *Donguri*. Thus, although the mothers and single women in this community basically inhabit different circuits of social and geographical mobility due to their different lifestyles, the circuits do come into contact with one another occasionally in everyday life, for various complex motivations including economic interest and the spirit of cooperation.

Emotional geography -different accounts of sense of belonging

When my Japanese women respondents described the local area where they live, I often heard narratives highlighting in particular how the dramatically the area has changed in the past ten years. These narratives had in common the way they contrasted the gloomy, poor and dodgy past and the fashionable, family friendly and middle-class present. Interestingly, they also demonstrate ambivalent emotions - a mixture of celebration and a sense of nostalgia for the changing landscape. Furthermore, these narratives both demonstrate pride in their knowledge

of the history of the place (to which newcomers have no access), and a strong attachment to the area itself.

For example, the dramatic change in Lordship Lane in East Dulwich is described by Takako. When she first moved to the area to live with her boyfriend (and current husband) at the 'shabby house' he owns, about 15 years ago, she thought 'I must have moved to a horrible place'.

> There were no restaurants and stores at all in Lordship Lane – except for rundown newsagents, betting offices and Laundromat. I regret why I came to such an isolated place, because the whole town was very depressing. The residents were either old people or the people so called... 'petty criminals'? When I was reading a local newspaper, there were articles reporting a sneak thief in the neighbourhood and all the criminals were from East Dulwich! (Takako)

Yoko also mentions the changes in East Dulwich:

> Yes, I know how East Dulwich looked before, because I had a friend living there for a long time. It was very different from how the area looks now, indeed!
> I have been observing the change in East Dulwich, and as I was living in Camberwell at that time, I always thought "Wow, I wish Camberwell would also change like that..."
> Camberwell hasn't changed at all! Even though now it's started changing, but the start was quite slow.
> Well, I think this area has been changing a lot. In Camberwell, nice old stores have closed down these days. The atmosphere in Camberwell used to be more hippy-like. Peckham... I don't know so much about Peckham, since I know only dark images. I feel Camberwell is more edgy. I guess East Dulwich is a place for families.

Although Yoko was envious of the changes in East Dulwich and wished the same changes would happen to Camberwell, she shows her regret at the loss of old local stores and the invasion of newly opened and stylish restaurants in Camberwell nowadays. Her remarks also showed the clear distinction she makes between Camberwell and East Dulwich, despite these being less than 1.5 miles away from one another. This distinction seemed to be made to highlight her sense of belonging to Camberwell, where her vivid student life memories are embedded, rather than her current home in East Dulwich, which is a popular area for families with small children.

Ai talked of her strong emotional and material attachment to Deptford, which is only 0.6 mile away from her house in Brockley, where she enjoys daily shopping at Vietnamese supermarkets and hunting for a bargain at junk market.

> It's quite fun to visit Junk Market. Most of this "trash" (pointing at a pile of bottles, boxes and frames in the kitchen) in my house is from Deptford. This "trash" is all my treasure. If you visit there for the first time, you may think "Why are they selling such trash?"...
>
> The other day, I had a chance to go to Chelsea for business after a long time. It was very different, and I thought "Wow, it's so posh". Everything was expensive, and people were not nice. I thought I prefer to go to Deptford to encounter unique fellow. It's much more fun to be talked to by a drunkard and fend him off. (laughter)

A contrast between Chelsea which is a well-known rich area of London, and Deptford, seems to downgrade Ai's social position. However, it rather successfully illuminates her pride to be an established resident. Ai's representation of finding beauty in trash from Junk Market and knowing how to manage an encounter with a drunk man on the street, gives a vivid impression

of her as a confident woman with a strong sense of belonging to her locality.

Similarly Chizu, who opened her own *Okonomiyaki* restaurant in south London seven years ago and has been working in the area ever since, is aware of the dramatic change in the local landscape of south London, which is evident in the way she talks about the customers of her restaurants.

> In its early times, people still didn't know so much about Japanese food, so customers often popped into my restaurant expecting to have sushi -because this is the only thing they imagine as Japanese food. Or even they didn't know a difference between Japanese and Chinese food and asked me 'Do you have fried rice or chow-mein?' But these days, not only do most of the customers know what *Okonomiyaki* is, but also they can use chopsticks very well, and you see, there are a lot of white young professionals who know a lot about Japanese culture and Japanese food.

While Chizu's perception of change is a reflection of the contemporary culinary scene of London as a metropolis, in which people have learned about the great diversity of food from all over the world (Cook et al. 1999), it also clearly tells about the gentrification of this neighbourhood, which has received an influx of 'hipsters' (see Wessendorf 2013; Hubbard 2016). Although it is clear that the success of her business, which allowed Chizu to open her second Japanese ramen restaurant in Brixton, in 2016, is largely due to such changes and the new population of the area, at the same time, the way she talks about her locality demonstrates her strong emotional attachment to its fading essence of 'working class authenticity' (Hubbard 2016: 2). As mentioned above, in the literature review, she finds similarity between her hometown Yao in Osaka, Japan and Brixton for their working class ethnic diversity, which develops her sense of belonging to both places. Frequent encounters with inebriated

pedestrians on streets, the nasty smell of marijuana, and the taste of greasy fried chicken at Morley's after work - all these multisensory experiences of Brixton are unique and like nothing she had ever experienced in her hometown. However, these are translated into something that evokes Chizu's nostalgia and constructs for her a translocal emotional network between the two places.

Ultimately, having explored how these Japanese women talk about their local area, and the ways they intimate their sense of belonging, and are shaped by the gentrification that each experiences in a different way, I found that they seemed proud to know the history of this faded and shabby area, now transformed into a popular place that attracts white middle-class families as well as hipsters, and that they remain capable of exploring the still seemingly cheaper parts. All this develops their love for the locality. My respondents include both relative newcomers like Kayo (see the previous section) and those who have lived in the area since before gentrification. However, there is no conflict between them and not much difference in their everyday lives. Considering that they have been able to keep living in the area despite rising house prices and they can afford to navigate their everyday lives on the fashionable and gentrified high street, I argue that those 'native' Japanese women are still privileged both economically and socially. Regardless of the length of time they have been resident, they still shop at M&S or the Co-op (both on Lordship lane, East Dulwich) depending on the situation, as well as going for drinks to local old-fashioned pubs or edgy and fashionable rooftop bars in Peckham.

According to Hubbard 'the hipster is an ambivalent figure, urban yet pitched against the values of the consumer city, dismissive of fashions but also highly fashionable' (2016: 2):

However, we would do well to remember that the ironic consumption of working class culture, the kitsch and the retro is not something that is affordable to all. 'Poor chic' does not involve the simple purchase of, and display, of second hand or discount goods. It requires serious disposable income to clean and restore such goods, turning the merely shabby into 'shabby chic'. Working class authenticity is cherished, but in the process it's symbolically consumed until little trace of its 'dirty' working class background remains. When hipsters move into previously devalued or working class spaces, the results are then often immediately apparent in aesthetic changes and 'improvements' to the locality, and these are ones that can involve forms of symbolic violence as the hipster habitus comes to dominate. (Hubbard 2016: 2–3)

In this way, Ai's appreciation of the culture and people of Deptford could be interpreted as consumption of working class culture, in which she turns 'trash' from the market into decorative objects in her kitchen, along with her other vintage collections. Also, even though Chizu shows respect and sympathy for working-class traditions and people in Brixton, she has the privilege of sufficient capital to be both consumer and supplier of hipster culture - selling authentic Japanese meals that enable her customers to enjoy a unique and fashionable food experience. However, what I want to argue here is not whether these Japanese middle-class women are categorised as hipster or not. Rather, I want to highlight the cultural and economic capital that enables them to navigate their everyday lives among different social landscapes in their local areas, and how such practice contributes to the development of their sense of belonging to the neighbourhood. Their evaluation of their locality is influenced by various factors: they have changed along with their life stage; the place has changed with gentrification; and the population of the area has change and so have their relationships with other people. Along with these all changes, these Japanese women flexibly change their daily practice to navigate their everyday lives and update their emotional geography based on their

changing sense of belonging.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the Japanese women's diverse routes to settling in London, and their further global and local mobilities in which they keep negotiating and re-evaluating their changing surroundings as they navigate their everyday lives. Their trajectories, community making process and everyday experiences have been revealed to be continuously shaped by wider social structures and material conditions that influence individual agency at different levels and scales. My respondents' stories are plotted in their reflexive accounts of their decision making, in which they navigate major life events such as marriage, studying, changing career, moving and returning to Japan by negotiating with structural, cultural and personal constraints (such as visas, house prices, tuition fees, family care, etc.). I argue that close attention to migrants' biographies enables us to understand individuals' ongoing negotiations through their physical mobility and emotional attachment to multiple places, both globally and locally, in their everyday lives.

My focus on the process of Japanese community-making around children in southeast London, has also shed light on the complex interplay of gender, ethnicity, place (locality) and time (life-course). A recent social constructionist approach has seen that gender and ethnicity are ongoing sociocultural performances and that they are enacted and maintained on a daily basis by means of social interaction (Fenstermaker and West 2013 cited in Hu 2016: 62)). Gender and ethnic identities are seen to be fluid and 'efforts are exerted to mark the presence or absence of these identities' in different locations and timing (Hu 2016: 64). In this regard, my observations in this chapter underpin this idea by demonstrating different ways in which the women navigate their lives in southeast London. As we saw, some of my respondents enacted

their gendered and ethnic identity as a 'Japanese mother' to become a part of the community in East Dulwich. And moreover, because their everyday mothering practice is deeply rooted in the local area, these Japanese mothers simultaneously develop a strong sense of belonging and a local identity as 'southeast Londoners'. However, the same neighbourhood is differently experienced by single or childless Japanese women. These selective and flexible identity performances and their interplay with both life course and locality will be further discussed in the following empirical chapters (Chapters 4,5 and 6).

The exploration of my respondents' biographies in this chapter has made clear the fluidity of belonging. Acknowledging the dynamic and complex interplay between gender and ethnic identity and time and place, this chapter has shown that the women's sense of belonging to a particular locality is not stable. This is because 'belonging' is not simply constructed in relation to place, but is developed through relationships with people and everyday practices embedded in place. The women's changes in gender identity over the life course (eg; becoming a mother) or the growth of a child are able to easily revive the value of the place in their eyes, and allow them to re-evaluate their lives in the neighbourhood as well as their practice there.

This chapter has demonstrated the diversity of Japanese women living in southeast London. It is easy to categorise them into a single group as 'Japanese women migrants' who on the one side often become institutionally racialised and sexualised subjects, but on the other side possess the social and economic privilege that enables them to exercise global mobility and settle anywhere. However, the focus on the community of Japanese women in this chapter has illuminated diverse local mobility circuits and their dynamic relationships with each other, which have been little examined in the previous studies of Japanese migrants.

The next chapter focuses on the particular gendered and ethnic identity of my respondents as 'Japanese mother'. Its aim is to investigate this diversity in their intersecting identities in

more detail. By exploring the ways they perform their identities as Japanese mothers through their everyday practice, it will demonstrate not only that the label 'Japanese mother migrants in London' is not monolithic, but also how the ways in which the mothers try to distinguish themselves from other Japanese mothers show their localised identity as well as their future projections.

Chapter 4 Becoming a mother

Introduction

This chapter focusses on Japanese migrant mothers' agency in community-making around their children, by exploring their everyday practices. There is a body of literature on Japanese migration and recent studies have been discussing the socioeconomic background of this in relation to globalisation and postmodern society in which people migrate as a part of self-searching project (Fujita 2009; Kato 2009; Kato 2010; Kawashima 2010; Kato 2013; Hamano 2015). In particular, studies of Japanese women migrants in Western countries focus on their gendered social agency and the way they reconstruct it through their transnational experiences (Takeda 2012; Igarashi 2015). Authors of these studies share a similar understanding of Japanese society as patriarchal, where the prevailing social norms on gender shape and restrict women's life experience, which leads them to ask whether women can be relatively less restricted from these socially constructed gendered expectations once they are outside Japan. By exploring their narratives, these scholars have demonstrated the diverse experiences of Japanese migrant women. However, while there is growing attention to the field of migrant mothers in feminist approaches to migration studies (Dyck 2017), there are still few studies of Japanese migrant mothers (Maehara 2010; Wada 2014; Hata et al. 2017).

Feminist migration studies have been challenging the 'prevailing stereotypes of migrant women as passive, backward and oppressed by their patriarchal cultures' (DeSouza 2004: 467). Their focus on migrant women's everyday practices and ongoing processes of identity construction through negotiation with the social context has illuminated women's active agency (Liamputtong 2006; Gedalof 2009; Erel 2011; Hoang 2011; Dyck 2017). In particular, migrant mothers' practices of everyday care for other household members in reconstructing a

stable home used to be invisible, but this 'embodied work of mothering, such as childbirth and childcare, and the work of reproducing cultures and structures of belonging, such as the passing on of culturally specific histories and traditions regarding food, dress, family and other inter-personal relationships' (Gedalof 2009: 82) has now come to the surface, shedding light on the complex ongoing processes of negotiation, improvisation and compromise in everyday life. For example, Gedalof (2009) argues that reproduction in migration is 'a complex and dynamic process of identity constitution' (96) for migrant mothers. They have to make multiple decisions for their families in a new space, including what to wear, how to dress and what to eat, and these are activities in which they have to actively negotiate with difference. A never-ending string of subtle re-inventions and adaptations all contribute to constructing migrant mothers' new identities.

In my research with Japanese migrant mothers in London, by adopting this feminist approach to migration studies, which highlights mothers' decision making processes in their daily home making practice, I expect to illuminate aspects of their agency that have not been discussed in earlier studies of Japanese migration. As mentioned above, Japanese migration has been often analysed at the macro or structural level, such as post-modernity and globalisation. While such an approach contributes to understanding their motives for migration as well as investigating 'how individuals are still shaped by social, historical and cultural discourses' throughout their experience as migrants (Kawashima 2012: 37), they limit our observation of the way individuals react to and resist these socially embedded structures. However, as revealed by existing migrant mother studies that focus on everyday practice at the micro-level (Gedalof 2009; Erel 2011; Hoang 2011), I observed that my Japanese women respondents continuously reconstruct their new identity as 'Japanese mother living in southeast London' through the cultural reproduction practices they engage in for their children. By paying careful attention

to their everyday mothering practices, I have tried to show in my ethnography how they navigate their children's lives in London through a process of offering or relinquishing various life opportunities on the children's behalf, in conversation with the past and the future. I have tried to show how this ongoing decision making process is visible in their material culture and translocal relationships with their friends and family.

The mothers' agency

The central concern of my thesis is to explore the complex everyday lives of migrants, as they negotiate socially and culturally constituted gendered expectations over the life course. I hope that focusing on how these migrant women understand and practice the concept of motherhood will contribute to making their agency in this negotiation visible. According to O'Reilly (2012), such 'agency comes from their habitus being as much an individual as a group one, from the fact that an individual is at any one time the bearer of any number of role positions and is subject to a diverse range of norms and expectations'. That is to say, an individual who has multiple identities framed by different socio-cultural maps continuously enacts his/her internal structure with 'communities whose members each have their own internal structures and structural constraints and opportunities, power, knowledge and reflexivity' (O'Reilly 2012: 29) . When a woman lives as a migrant in London, on the one hand her practice may include reflexive action that acknowledges different aspects of her identities as a Japanese woman, a mother living in London and a daughter raised by Japanese mother, it will also encompass negotiation with the social and cultural norms and expectations of both Japanese and British society.

A study by Lim (2015) of South East Asian migrant mothers (especially Chinese and South Korean) in England, suggests that the traditional Confucian patriarchal values of both China

and South Korea continue to influence their post-migration lives and shape their image of being an ideal mother in England. The study reveals that their engagement with their ethnic communities seems to have a significant impact on the maintenance and reproduction of the cultural heritage of their country of origin. Not only does this community fulfil their material need for food and services from China and Korea, it also operates as a socialisation hub for migrant mothers, and so has become a space where culture and gender ideology are reproduced. As a result, Lim finds that while Chinese mothers are encouraged to carry on their work after marriage and children following Mao's socialist ideology, the narratives of Korean stay-at-home mothers indicate 'the dominance of Confucian patriarchal norms and strongly gendered beliefs and attitudes of women and men' (Lim 2015: 10).

Another study (Wada 2014), of Japanese women in mixed marriage couples in the UK, demonstrates how the cultural identity of these women changes through their life course, floating and swinging between their Japanese cultural identities and newly gained British cultural heritage. Drawing on Hall's (1990) notion of a cultural identity that is fluid and keeps transforming, Wada writes:

> Thus Japanese cultural identity for woman was not something which stayed unchanged throughout their life course, but was something which underwent changes as a result of their trajectories of life. Moreover, this transformation of cultural identity was an irreversible process, as once acquired, it was hard to ignore. Learning customs and values of British society and acquiring new resources to live in the UK throughout their migration process, women broadened their cultural horizons, and on this new stretch of perspective, Japan gained a relative value. (Wada 2014: 190–191)

However, while Wada emphasises the positive aspects of migration, in which women's

experiences contribute to the reconstruction of their new hybrid identity as Japanese living in the UK, it should not be overlooked that at the same time they also have to give up opportunities or lose resources that they had in Japan. In such circumstances, migrant mothers have to engage in continual decision-making about what they should prioritise and what should be compromised both in relation to their families and themselves. Therefore, a focus on the migrant mothers' 'thoughtful, purposive and strategic' daily practice (O'Reilly 2012: 29) to better navigate their families' lives, helps us to understand the way their agency contributes to the construction of new values and cultural identities that constantly change through their life course.

The focus on everyday life: a methodological note

Being privileged to enter the homes of these Japanese women as a child sitter, I had many chances to observe not only their private space but also how they live in that space. This gave me a great opportunity to explore the detail of their everyday life, which has enabled me to write the thick description of my ethnography. Feminist migration scholars have been working to make visible the women's agency in their lives by questioning how taken-for-granted practices in their homes, as well as locally, have wider significance (Dyck 2017) and emphasised the importance of 'everydayness'. This is based on the belief that a careful examination of migrants' everyday lives will help us to understand how such daily practices sustain 'larger places, structures and process'. In addition, the focus on everyday life is significant – it offers a counter-perspective to stereotypes and adds 'texture' to migrant experiences (Ho and Hatfield née Dobson 2011). Following these ideas, I intend to challenge the stereotypical image of migrant women as passive followers by revealing the agency of my Japanese women participants in my ethnography, as well as how their 'seemingly insignificant

norms, values, objects and routines' in daily life can tell us about metanarratives such as translocalism and the life course.

The interviews in the first part of the following ethnography were conducted in my participants' houses, at the dining tables where they usually sit around with their families or on the sofa in their living rooms with a cup of tea. Although this is a common situation for ethnographers when they conduct interviews as part of fieldwork, it enables the participants to be relaxed and talk casually. The second part of the ethnography in this chapter is mainly based on my observations when I visit their homes as a child sitter. As a child sitter, I was allowed to step into their kitchens, and open their fridges and cupboards, which offered a wide range of insights into what they eat and how the food is served. Standing in the kitchen, taking the mother's place in cooking and having dinner with their children sitting around the dining table was an experience that gave me precious knowledge about their everyday practices.

Another uniqueness of my methodology is that part of my observation of the mothers' daily practice was derived from their absence. Ironically, the fact that the mothers wanted me to visit their house as a child sitter meant they needed to go out –therefore I could not observe how they spent time and performed their mothering role at home. However, even though the mothers were absent from their home space, there was much knowledge to be got from the situation. As my ethnography illustrates, the children's behaviour enabled me to vividly imagine how the mothers spent time with them, while what the mothers expected me to do as a child sitter in their absence gave me an idea of how they understood their role in the household. Thus, owing to the unique relationship I was able to establish with my respondents, and my access to their private space, the ensuing ethnographies demonstrate the subtle but significant moments in which the Japanese mothers actively navigated their families' everyday lives that constructed their cultural identity through their practices of mothering.

The community around children

This section demonstrates how the Japanese mothers distinguish themselves from others based on their decisions about their children's Japanese learning environment. For parents who have different ethnic backgrounds, how they maintain and transmit their ethnic and cultural heritage to their children are major concerns. It is argued that the ways in which they negotiate and challenge racial and ethnic 'dilution' and cultural loss (Song and Gutierrez 2015: 696) show complex understanding of their 'individual biography and family history, residential and class location, minority or majority status, and personal of cultural beliefs' (Edwards et al. 2010: 964). As the majority of my respondents married non-Japanese husbands and their children have more than two different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, I have seen those Japanese mothers' ongoing strategies to encourage their children to be aware of their Japanese background as part of their identity – both outside and inside the home; among these, the most significant strategy is sending their children to a Japanese after school club, *Donguri*.

Donguri is an after school activity club voluntarily organised by Japanese parents living in southeast London who take their children to *Donguri,* at a church in East Dulwich every Friday, to learn about Japanese language and culture. The students, who are between three and eleven years old, are roughly divided into four classes by their age or Japanese proficiency and take a class which is between forty and fifty minutes. I have been working as an assistant teacher at *Donguri* since 2015 along with another teacher. While all the administration of *Donguri* (including hiring teachers and organising the seasonal events of camping, the mini sports festival in June, an autumn festival in October and the Christmas party in December);

and all the accounting (including collecting membership fees and maintaining the waiting list) are managed by mothers -representatives of each class, the content of the teaching is wholly entrusted to the teachers.

For the younger students, the teachers spend time singing and doing PE along with Japanese music and learning the Japanese alphabet (*Hiragana* and *Katakana*) by playing simple card games. For the older students, they prepare handouts to practice writing and reading Japanese short stories as well as learning elementary Japanese *Kanji* (Chinese characters). However, not only because all the students go to local British schools but also because only a few students have two Japanese parents, most of them also spend time with their English-speaking friends and family in their daily life. Therefore they are likely to speak English even during class at *Donguri* as that is much easier and natural for them.

Having been involved in *Donguri* for four years, I have found that one of its key characteristics is the mothers' expectation, which is not that their children become fluent Japanese speakers, but that they become familiar with Japanese tradition and culture in an enjoyable way. Even though their Japanese is still limited when they graduate from *Donguri* after six years, the mothers are very happy and proud of their children when they see them handwriting halting Japanese letters on Mother's Day and Father's day, making clumsy origami crafts for *Setsubun*[18] (which is on February 3rd), the Girl's festival (on March 3rd), the Boy's festival (on May 5th) and the star festival (July 7th), and giving messy performances of Japanese singing and dancing on special occasions. Thus in this community, what is valued is not that their children acquire a high level of proficiency in Japanese, but rather that they have opportunities to learn Japanese culture and socialise with other children who also have Japanese cultural

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[18] *Setsubun* means the day between two seasons (from winter to spring) and people wish for health and happiness for the coming New Year by throwing roasted peas both inside and outside their houses.

origins – this is habitus and capital which is a field-specific way of understanding and appreciation shared by its members.

An interesting finding from my interviews is that when the mothers talk about the reason why they send their children to *Donguri*, they always make reference to *Hoshuko* which is another well-established Japanese complementary school in south London. *Hoshuko* is a Japanese complementary school which was created with the support of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)[19] which attempts 'to reproduce the same standard language, literacy and cultural practices in London as in Japan' (Lewis 2005: 59) by teaching Japanese language and literature to children from six to fifteen years old. Using the same textbooks as elementary schools in Japan, the students at *Hoshuko* study Japanese intensively, aiming to achieve the same level of comprehension as those of the same age in Japan through this once a week opportunity. There is only one subject (Japanese) taught at *Hoshuko*, and the students take regularly scheduled tests and receive feedback and evaluation from teachers. Because of its state-sanctioned status and structured curriculum, there are said to be more expatriate Japanese families who send their children to *Hoshuko* on the basis that their children will be able to adjust to school life back in Japan after their stay of several years in the UK. However, there are also Japanese families who have permanent residency in the UK but choose *Hoshuko*, since they want their children to learn Japanese in a formal manner.

These two Japanese learning settings for children in South London are therefore completely different in terms of their organisation, teaching, purpose and clientele. My respondents often define the distinction between them as 'relaxed', 'laid-back' and 'slow' *Donguri* versus 'well-

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[19] See Lewis (2005)

organised but strict' *Hoshuko*. Interestingly, at the same time, they highlight the distinction between themselves - people who choose *Donguri* - who have a relaxed attitude toward their children's Japanese education, and the other mothers, who prefer *Hoshuko*, who are of an enthusiastic and ambitious disposition.

For example, choosing *Hoshuko* may allow their children to gain more cultural capital (a certificate from a state-sanctioned educational institution and high Japanese language proficiency) that enables them to study or work in Japan in the future. However, at the same time, the intensive study at *Hoshuko* demands great effort not only from the students but also from the parents – all their Saturday mornings get taken up by classes and the students are given a pile of homework to practice their Japanese writing and reading, and this needs to be supervised by the parents every day. Even if a student is absent from the class for any reason, their homework is delivered to their home so that they do not fall behind in class the following week. Knowing that this is the lot of the *Hoshuko* mothers, my respondents often describe them respectfully, as 'enthusiastic' and 'hard working'.

On the other hand, my respondents label themselves 'less enthusiastic' and 'less patient', which carries connotations of self-degradation, for not choosing *Hoshuko* and not being ambitious for their children's education. However, I could see that this attitude is underpinned by confidence and a sense of pride in their decision. By choosing *Donguri*, they allow their children to have more time to engage in various other opportunities such as playing football and cricket, learning piano, flute, cello, drawing, taekwondo, karate and going to Cub Scouts with other local children. Thus deciding between *Donguri* and *Hoshuko* is not just about what level of Japanese they want their children to achieve, but rather it is made by negotiation with other available options to take part in local mothering practices. In this regard, my respondents are trying to 'do Japanese mothering' differently from those who choose *Hoshuko*.

The question 'Why do you take your child to *Donguri*?' was automatically converted by the mothers into questions about who they are and who they are different from. Their lack of intention to cultivate their children as people compatible with Japanese society might make them reaffirm the fact that they and their family are deeply rooted in the UK society. This may foster the construction of a social identity as a Japanese mother living in London who places higher importance on her children's social engagement and interaction with local friends than on their acquisition of Japanese language. In this light, using such self-degradation to make distinguish themselves from other mothers can be understood as self-identification and self-justification.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that although these Japanese mothers locate those who choose *Hoshuko* as 'other' as part of distinguishing themselves, it does not mean that there is an inviolable boundary between the two groups, and they often socialise as Japanese mothers living in the same area in London. In this regard, I consider that Japanese mothers in southeast London constitute a social field -while people share similar class background, taste and disposition, the small groups with different values conflict each other (Bourdieu 1998; 2000). Their preference for *Donguri* may be the result of a variety of considerations (including their husbands' nationality and his level of Japanese comprehension; the scope of their transnational networks - including their relationship with their families in Japan; local geography – such as the distance from their home to *Donguri*, and their ability to drive, etc However, at the same time, the decision is probably driven by habitus which can be defined as 'internalized structures, dispositions, tendencies, habits, ways of acting, that are both individualistic and yet typical of one's social groups, communities, family, and historical position' (Oliver and O'Reilly 2010: 56). The ethnographies presented below explore the extent to which my respondents' habitus enables them to construct their particular social

identity in this field as a "Japanese mother living in southeast London" as well as illustrating how their habitus justifies their practice.

Shared identity as 'those who gave up'

I encountered many cases in which mothers had taken their children to *Donguri* when they were small, but had decided to quit and transfer their children to *Hoshuko* in Croydon when they were six, to let them learn Japanese 'seriously'. For the parents, making this decision – about whether to transfer their children to *Hoshuko* or to stay at *Donguri* - seems to be a significant watershed moment; and even after this, a distinction between 'us' (we who chose *Donguri)* and 'them' (those who chose *Hoshuko*) still exists and reappears as a key element that highlights the different way in which they position themselves, both as Japanese and as mothers.

For example, Ai, whose Welsh husband speaks very fluent Japanese, clearly articulates that 'we' who go to *Donguri* and 'they' who go to *Hoshuko* are different groups of people. Having heard from her husband about people who were forced to go to *Hoshuko* in their childhood, for whom studying Japanese eventually became traumatic, Ai talks about her decision as below.

> Ai: Well, *Donguri* is a group of people who had decided not to go to *Hoshuko*, so we are different group of people. I often hear that the culture at *Hoshuko* is quite different, as if small Japan is brought in. ... Some people force their children to go there even if they don't want to, but some children quite enjoy studying there. But you know, our '*Donguri*' is a group of families who have 'given up' like that (laughter).
> Kaoru: The reason why you think learning Japanese seriously as less important, is this because that you think yours and your family's lives will be based in this country?
> Ai: Hm yeah, I feel that there's no need to be pushy. I used to consider sending my

children to *Hoshuko* once, but my husband said that won't make sense. He had a lot of friends who had Japanese parents and went to *Hoshuko* when he studied Japanese at university, but they couldn't speak Japanese well and my husband could speak better Japanese (even though he is Welsh and non-native Japanese speaker). He often heard how they didn't like to go to *Hoshuko* and had trauma of learning Japanese at that time. Then he thinks that studying Japanese at *Hoshuko* is nonsense. Of course, I cannot say this in front of my friends who send their children to *Hoshuko*. I understand how it requires all family's efforts.

When their children were still small, Ai tried not to speak to them in English to encourage them to speak to her in Japanese. However what happened was that they stopped talking to her even in English and had conversations in English just between themselves and their father). This made her feel isolated at home and she toned down her hard stance. Here, the way she talks about herself and *Donguri* strongly indicates solidarity and a sense of belonging, as represented by the words she chose to use -'we' and 'our'- strongly demonstrating that this is a group of people sharing the same values. Although 'giving up' may superficially sound negative, implying her (and their) slight sense of guilt at not being 'enthusiastic', at the same time, the trade off for Ai and the other *Donguri* families is believed to be a relaxing and enjoyable Japanese learning and teaching experience for both their children and themselves.

Takako, who has a son (sixteen years old) and a daughter (ten years old) made a similar distinction between *Donguri* and *Hoshuko*.

Takako: I think those who go to *Hoshuko* are very hard working. I'm so impressed with their efforts. I'm sure that I cannot cope with such a lot of homework, and I cannot get along with other mothers. I hear that there're many very enthusiastic mothers who are 'VERY JAPANESE'. I often hear about them and that terrifies me!

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Kaoru: For example?

Takako: I think the way of speaking must be different (they use polite Japanese). And everyone has to be very considerate and careful not to bother others. ... Just the thought of it makes me shiver! It's not laid back like *Donguri*.

When they talk about school life at *Hoshuko*, it is often described as a 'well-organised', 'disciplined' and 'institutionalised' Japanese-style education. According to these expatriate wives, there are many Japanese mothers who have spent most of their lives in Japan and have just moved to London take their children to *Hoshuko*. What concerns Takako is whether she will be able to get along with such 'Japanese mothers who have learned the common sense and social skills required to make things go smoothly in Japanese society through their education and working experience in Japan – and participate in school events with them at *Hoshuko*. Situating those 'other mothers' as 'VERY JAPANESE' – as mothers who have a different habitus in terms of their manner of speaking and mindful attitude in that Japanese microcosm, Takako recognises herself as someone who has become 'localised' - a different type of Japanese with a different habitus, living in southeast London.

As a member of *Donguri* since it was first established, it is perhaps surprising that Takako, with her autistic son, was initially afraid of joining such a group of Japanese mothers. Interestingly, the anxiety which she had about *Donguri* at that time quite resembles the one now she has about *Hoshuko*, such as what she should do if her son disturbs the class and bothers other students or their mothers. According to her, he could not sit still during class and sometimes did not come out from under the table, which she found upsetting and embarrassing. However, it was not only her son who was troublesome at *Donguri;* other boys also often disturbed the class by their mischievous behaviours. Having experienced such distressing situations many times in the company of her fellow *Donguri* mothers, Takako must

have learned over time how they reacted and learnt to deal with them, what was and was not acceptable behaviour, and the common understandings of *Donguri* shared by the other mothers –and all this has embodied herself and other mothers as their habitus. This habitus has been shaping their practices - the 'relaxed and laid back' thinking and attitude of those who go to *Donguri* and these ways of thinking have been reproduced to accept new members who have similar values and capitals.

Constructing shared values

The interviews clearly demonstrate that the choices they have made as they navigate their children's lives in London largely contributes to constructing, simultaneously, the women's own identity as 'Japanese mothers living in southeast London'. Sharing similar ideas, values, future ambitions and identities, these Japanese mothers find a sense of belonging at *Donguri,* at which they have arrived after long consideration, negotiation and compromise around the question of how they can pass on their Japanese cultural heritage to their children while maintaining their identity as Japanese living in London. Interestingly, in what might seem to be a challenge to the institutionalised Japanese education system at *Hoshuko*, each Japanese mother described their personal goal for their children's Japanese comprehension level in similar terms: 'enough to be able to read and write Hiragana and basic Kanji' (Ai), 'to be able to read Japanese comic books in original language' (Takako) or 'to be able to write a letter to his grandparents in Japan' (Ayako). Far from adopting the learning structure and evaluation system based on Japanese society, these personal goals arise out of their everyday practices in London with the aim of maintaining their transnational kinship with family or interests in Japanese culture.

Furthermore, even though Ai labels herself and other mothers who come to *Donguri* as those

who 'gave up', it does not mean they have given up on their children learning Japanese. As Takako and Ayako mentioned, although they stay away from intensive Japanese study and let their children to do whatever they want to do for the moment, they also expect that their children will choose to take Japanese at GCSE and study it intensively at secondary level. Until then, they try to maintain their interest in basic Japanese at *Donguri* and at home. This shared ambition seems to be very strategic, because they understand British education and its institutionalised value system very well, and try to utilise their children's Japanese cultural capital to their (children's) advantage.

That is to say, these Japanese mothers may have given up raising their children to be the same as Japanese people who have grown up in Japanese society. However, they share the idea of bringing up British children with additional competitive cultural capital in British society, which in some way underlies their personal ambition to transcend their Japanese cultural identity, consciously or unconsciously.

In addition, it should not be overlooked that the distinction between *Donguri* and *Hoshuko* is something to do with lifestyle choice and socioeconomic capital. As far as I could see, there is a mixture of mothers at both *Donguri* and *Hoshuko*: those who work full- and part-time, as well as housewives. However, parents who send their children to *Hoshuko*, as I mentioned above, have to spend time supervising their children's homework every day[20]. If the parents work full-time and it is difficult for them to support their children, they often hire a Japanese child minder or tutor to do this for them. Moreover, as well as allocating a portion of their limited time on weekdays, they have to devote the whole of Saturday mornings, which might otherwise be valuable family time, to attending *Hoshuko* in Croydon. The decision to go to

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[20] A common Hoshuko homework is *Ondoku* (oral reading) –the children have to read a Japanese textbook aloud and the parents have to fill in an evaluation form by checking its accuracy, speed and emotion, with dates. Obviously, this can only be supervised by a mother or father who can understand Japanese.

Hoshuko, therefore, is not just a result of parents' strong desire for their children to learn to the same standard as Japanese children in Japan. Rather, it is a family project in which Japanese parents and their partners (mainly Japanese mothers and their husbands) have to negotiate their available time and resources. Having heard a lot about how hard it is to send their children to *Hoshuko* from their friends, the *Donguri* mothers showed their respect for, and understanding of, the other mothers' efforts in the interviews, but also justified their own decision as the result of family negotiation.

This classification of Japanese mothers by the choices they make about their children's Japanese learning environment thus speaks eloquently about 'who we are', 'who we are not' and 'what we share', drawing boundaries around the habitus' of the localised *Donguri* mothers and the *Hoshuko* mothers of "Little Japan". The decision to go to *Donguri* is justified by the solidarity they share with other members of the community who share the same values and the same plan for the future. That is to say, while my respondents made an active decision to choose *Donguri* because they had empathy for its philosophy, this was partly shaped by their internalised practical knowledge that allowed them to see the world in a distinctive way.

Everyday cultural reproduction at home

In the previous section, I discussed how the Japanese mothers construct their identity as 'Japanese mother living in southeast London' through their choice of a Japanese learning environment for their children. In this section, the focus shifts to their home space to explore how their Japanese identity and reproduction of their cultural heritage is practiced in their everyday lives. Recent studies of migrant mothers often highlight the process through which the work they undertake to re-imagine, re-invent and re-produce their home space enables them to re-make new identities (Gedalof 2009; Dyck 2017). In everyday life, no matter

mundane it seems to be, the migrant mothers' home making process could be understood as the 'materialization of identity' (Gedalof 2009: 93). For example, what they cook for their children, the tables manners they teach, their hopes for their children, the discipline they try to teach and the living space they create for their families – all these quotidian everyday practices reflect their lived Japanese history as well as their acceptance of a newly learned local forms of parenting. However, although these household practices seem to be particular to individual mothers, they can be read, as the group practice underpinned by shared values of Japanese mothers in southeast London.

In my observation of their everyday lives, I noticed that there is a certain set of values shared by my respondents such as home cooking, consideration for food safety (using an organic food delivery service) and an appreciation of seasonal events. On the one hand, the ways in which they practice these values are diverse and individually creative. However on the other hand, I find that these symbolic ways of expressing their values enable them to draw a boundary between themselves and other groups, to maintain what it is to be a Japanese mother in southeast London community (Longhurst 2008: 76). By illuminating such subtle but significant moments, in which they practice the shared values of the group in their everyday live, this chapter explores the habitus of Japanese mothers living in southeast London.

Mika (British husband and two sons)

Mika, who lives in East Dulwich, is the mother of twelve-year-old twin boys and used to be my childminding client. Every time I visited her house to look after the boys, I followed the instructions she left on a piece of paper on the table in the kitchen. These were always very detailed, outlining a time schedule and To Do list for the boys as well as what and how I should prepare the dinner, what homework subjects I should get the boys to study, which music

practice I needed to ask them to do, and what time they should go to bed etc. Whenever I was there, Mika had usually prepared a Japanese menu beforehand, so that all I needed to do was reheat the dishes or add easily cooked vegetables to serve. Her cupboards were full of beautiful Japanese handcrafted pottery she bought when she went back to Japan. This pottery collection was quite exceptional, but in other respects the tasks were much the same as those I was asked to carry out when I went to any other Japanese mother's house as a child minder. They not only prepared Japanese food but also pasta, curry and roast chicken, and always served salad or boiled vegetables with the main dish, an indication that homemade cooking and feeding well-balanced meals to their families are part of their everyday value system and practice.

One day, soon after I started working with Mika's sons, I was going to serve a main dish and side vegetables on the same plate, to save the washing-up. But without saying anything, one of the boys took a small plate from the cupboard and moved the vegetables onto the separate dish, not in complaint, but in a very natural manner correcting the new child-sitter, who had done it differently from their mother. That was how I learnt how Mika usually serves food in daily life, which is in the Japanese *Kaiseki* style where each different food is served on an individual plate, to entertain people not just by how they taste but also by how they look. Obviously, this told me that Mika's priority is not about reducing the time and effort of washing-up, but about creating a pleasant atmosphere for her family with tasty food on beautifully arranged dishes, not just for special occasions but on an everyday basis.

On another day, when I prepared rice, miso soup and a main dish with chopsticks, again the boy took spoons from the kitchen drawer to drink the miso soup. The Japanese way to drink miso soup is by lifting the bowl closer to the mouth with one hand and using chopsticks with the other hand to eat the ingredients. Then when I saw the boys drinking the miso soup in the same way as ordinary soup, with the bowl on the table, spooning the broth to their mouths, I

was delighted to see their unique understanding of a mixture of Japanese and English food culture. At the same time, it reminded me of the 'relaxed' and 'laid-back' values that are emphasised and championed by the *Donguri* mothers, with their embodied habitus that clearly portrays a localised and improvised understanding of the way to eat Japanese food.

As the boys were adolescents, they rarely spoke to me and there was little conversation between us. Yet, when dinner was ready and I called them to the dining table, they said '*Itadaki masu*'[21] before they started eating, as well as '*Gochisou sama*[22] when they had finished eating and left the table. Whenever I did something for them, such as giving them dessert, or passing a blanket when they are playing a TV game in the cold living room, they never forgot to say '*Arigato*'[23] to me. Such subtle communication demonstrated the boys embodied Japanese cultural capital, eloquently highlighting the way Mika had fulfilled her responsibility for cultural reproduction through cultivating Japanese socialising skills, that the boys practice in their everyday lives at home.

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[21] These are common phrases for Japanese to say before and after they eat meaning 'I'll take this food' and 'I had it' in direct translation respectively. They show one's appreciation for those who cooked, who made its ingredients and even for life and nature.

[22] See 21

[23] This means 'Thank you' in Japanese.

Figure 6 Photo: Ai's Kitchen cupboard

Likewise Mika's, Ai's cupboard is also full of mix of Japanese and British dishware.

Saki (British-Chinese husband and a daughter)

Saki has been working as a hairdresser throughout her life, both in Japan and London. She currently works at a hair salon in London Bridge three days a week, and also cuts friends' hair at home on her days off. Saki gets up before 6 o'clock in the morning to prepare breakfast and dinner for her family. I went to her house as a childminder for her 10 year old daughter, May, while she worked, and always found Saki's well-prepared dishes in the kitchen. As she gets home late on work days, she thoughtfully organises a well-balanced nutritious dinner that her husband, Steve, can easily feed to May and himself after work, at around 6pm. For example, when spaghetti Bolognese is on the menu, a pot filled with slowly cooked meat sauce is left on the cooker as well as already boiled pasta, while on other days she prepares stewed pork chops or beef, couscous and boiled vegetables, all ready to reheat and serve. Saki's cooking repertoire is not limited to Western food, and when she's not at work she often cooks Japanese food such as Tempura and noodles, pork gyoza (dumplings) and Tonkatsu (deep fried pork fillet).

However, I never saw her leave Japanese food for her husband to serve when she is working, which could be out of consideration for her British-born Chinese husband, making it easier for him, by serving up familiar food. Once Saki told me that:

> It's no problem for me to wake up early in the morning, because I get used to it. I know, if I just let Steve to do everything from scratch without leaving anything, he would have take-away dinner every time!

Thus, she also understands that home cooking is a part of her mothering practice and a valuable aspect that shapes her everyday life.

Although she keeps the interior decoration of her house, a large three bedroom house in Tulse Hill, very simple and tidy, she amuses visitors by decorating a small corner of the bathroom with seasonal miniature objects for New Year, Easter, Halloween and Christmas. Also, on the wall behind the dining table, there are carefully selected photos capturing memorable family moments –their Chinese style wedding, May as a baby, and to celebrate May's seventh birthday when she wore a Japanese *kimono*[24]. In addition, a set of beautiful traditional Japanese wedding dolls are displayed in the dining room in March to celebrate the Japanese girl's festival (March 3rd), like a Christmas tree in December. It was common practice among my participants to celebrate traditional Japanese events, which are usually deeply related to wishing healthy and happy growth to the children. Having spent their childhoods in Japan with their Japanese families, these traditions have been internalised by my respondents, and

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[24] This custom is called 'Shichi-go-san', which means seven, five and three. It is a Japanese annual event to celebrate healthy growth of daughters aged three and seven, and sons aged three and five. They are dressed in *Kimono* and taken to a Shinto shrine for pray.

reappear as the structuring aspect of the habitus, reproducing their childhood rules and discourses in a different field of domestic life in southeast London.

Figure 7 Photo: seasonal miniature objects at Saki's home

The tradition is that parents have to put away the dolls as soon as possible after the festival, otherwise their daughter's marriage will be delayed, and because of this I was able to see these beautiful dolls at Saki's house for only a few weeks between late February and early March each year. Interestingly, I saw the same Japanese wedding dolls at Chizu's house in Brixton, not just in March but displayed in the living room throughout the year. With two sons and no daughter in her family, Chizu obviously displayed the dolls in a different context. The natural interpretation was that being an only daughter herself, the dolls were given to her by her parents when she was small, and had been displayed at her home in Japan in her childhood. For her, these dolls must be a symbol to remind her not just that her parents wished her happiness, but also of her identity as a Japanese daughter. Thus, while Saki and Chizu share

similar childhood histories, memories and understandings of the cultural value of the wedding dolls, each practices the tradition in the UK in a slightly different way, adding original meanings to this practice. While Saki follows the tradition, Chizu re-interprets these dolls as a symbol of her transnational kinship. I found it interesting to see how this case illustrated both the reflexivity of individual agents, which left room for improvisation and creativity, and the way their actions are always 'to some extent circumscribed by previous events and experiences' (O'Reilly 2012b: 29).

Figure 8 Photo: Japanese traditional dolls celebrating the Girls' festival at Saki's home

Although I have focused on the daily practices of three mothers in the ethnography presented in this section, throughout my fieldwork I found many shared practices, underpinned by shared values, among these Japanese mothers. Hiring a Japanese childminder, using a professional cleaning service, cooking healthy and nutritious food for the family, letting

children learn various after-school lessons and going to watch a play at the Barbican when famous Japanese actors and actress are on –these common practices among my respondents are possible because they share similar cultural and economic capital. These forms of capital have been brought with them, as well as acquired in the new setting, enabling them to engage in the game of becoming an appropriate "Japanese mother in southeast London" in this field (Oliver and O'Reilly 2010: 59).

Donguri matsuri -a celebration of shared values

This last section of my ethnography describes the *Donguri matsuri* (festival), which is a distinctive occasion for exploring how shared values and habitus are practiced and reproduced within this community of mothers and children. *Donguri matsuri* is an annual event at *Donguri,* which takes place every autumn at Dog Kennel Hill Adventure Park in East Dulwich, and where there are food sales, workshops and performances. While all the organising is done by the mothers, the event is open to everyone, and visitors consist of a mixture of family, Japanese friends, local school children and their families, neighbours and even those who used to come to *Donguri* but have transferred to *Hoshuko*.

The most outstanding aspect of this event is the richness of the *Donguri* mothers' cultural capital. As the flyer for the event, designed and printed by one of the mothers, highlights, the most popular special content of the festival is "*an array of Home-made dishes made by mums!*" (*Donguri matsuri* flier 2016). The mothers bring a variety of home-made (mainly Japanese) dishes such as Udon noodle soup, curry rice, sushi and cakes, which are sold at very reasonable prices from between 50p to £2.00. Those who have been at *Donguri* for a long time have accumulated knowledge and experience and know what to cook and bring. Takako told me 'I don't have a big repertoire, so I've been baking the same cake every year'. She brings a

scrumptious Victorian lemon sponge cake, while Ai cooks beautiful fish or vegetarian sushi rolls every year. As Takako said, basically the menu has been almost same for the past four years as far as I could see, but this does not mean that their cooking repertoire is limited. Rather, it underpins their accumulated practical knowledge about what food is popular, will take minimum cooking effort and cost the least, which food is easier to carry, and what creative twists are necessary to keep the food in good condition all day. For example, Ai chooses smoked mackerel as an ingredient for her sushi. Not only this is safer choice than using fresh salmon or tuna (the standard options for sushi), but smoked mackerel is a very popular, much cheaper and easy to get ingredient in the UK. Although *Donguri matsuri* itself is a 'relaxed' and 'laid-back' space which take place with minimum preliminary discussions and no time schedule on the day, and includes a lot of improvisation, it is obvious that a good deal of experiences and accumulated practical knowledge of those mothers enables this cultural and social space to be reproduced every year.

The mothers' rich capital was also observable at the workshops. The activities for the workshops are also almost same every year (such as Origami, Japanese calligraphy and Yo-yo scoop) as well as who is in charge of which. Among them, face painting is the most popular activity and there were always some children waiting for their turn to be painted at this stall. Having UK arts degrees, Kazuko and Sayaka are in charge of the face painting every year, and entertain the children by painting various Japanese animation characters, animals or flower designs on their faces with special colourful paint and professional skill. Kazuko and Sayaka are not in an artistic minority in the *Donguri* community; quite a lot of other mothers, as well as their husbands, have studied or are currently working in the field of art, architect, film and fashion.   I often saw these other mothers and fathers (who had similar cultural backgrounds and taste, but could not get to the *Donguri* lessons regularly) at the festival, enjoying a chat,

or exchanging knowledge of their creative interests throughout the day.

Figure 9 Image: *Donguri* matsuri flier 2016

The way mothers practiced their cultural identity through their clothes was another highly significant way of understanding their shared values within this field. At *Donguri matsuri*, some mothers get their children into *yukata* or *jinbei,* which are traditional but casual Japanese costumes similar to a *kimono*. In Japanese culture, a local '*matsuri*' is often held during summer and it is quite common for people to wear these costumes to go to *matsuri*. In this context, then, it is not strange to see children wearing these costumes at *Donguri matsuri,* to enjoy the festive Japanese atmosphere. However, what I found interesting is that some of the mothers put on Japanese vintage *haori* (a short over-garment for a *kimono)* or a shorter length *kimono* on top of their normal clothes just like wearing a causal jacket. When I first saw this unique combination of Japanese traditional garments with Western casual fashion, it

reminded me of the misrepresentation of Oriental objects in old Hollywood films, as when an actress put on a *kimono* as a substitute for a dressing gown. However, what these mothers were doing was neither something like representing an imagined Japan nor simply performing their Japanese cultural identity. I believe that this was a symbolic way of displaying their solidarity, creativity and local subjectivity. Initially, the way they adopted *haori* in this situation may have started as just a substitute for *yukata* –while wearing adult *yukata* is very complicated and requires knowledge and many items, they can wear *haori* by just putting it on. However, now it seems that wearing *haori* has become an important element of this festival – a sort of uniform for *Donguri* mothers to distinguish themselves from other visitors. They deliberately wear *haori* in the 'wrong' way, in comparison with the traditional Japanese way, because it is their own way, and thus the 'right' way to demonstrate their social identity as *Donguri* mothers. To borrow an expression used by Takako earlier, I might say that here is a group of people who are different from other 'VERY JAPANESE' people. This self-identification allows them to engage in this unique practice, which involves an original understanding of Japanese culture to highlight their localised identity.

Regarding this, I still vividly remember a conversation between Kayo and Yoko at *Donguri matsuri* two years ago. They were talking about the mothers' colourful *haori,* and Kayo mentioned that she wished she could have one. Having already decided to go back to Japan at the end of the year, Yoko offered to give Kayo her old one as she neither used nor needed it. At the *Donguri matsuri* the following year, I saw Kayo wearing the beautiful red *haori* given to her by Yoko. Interestingly, on the one hand, for Kayo, who is the mother of two sons and a member of *Donguri*, *haori* is something desirable and valuable, but for Yoko, on the other hand, a single non-member of *Donguri* who was leaving southeast London very soon, it did not hold any specific value (Yoko was not even wearing it at the festival).

As this section has demonstrated, at this annual festive situation, various community values, such as home-made things, appreciation of art, family ties and creativity are manifested through food, workshop and costumes. This ongoing process enables them to make a boundary between themselves and others, and reaffirms the sense of belonging and solidarity among its members.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the Japanese womens' everyday practice of motherhood southeast London in both public and private space. It has argued that seemingly individual 'creative self-making project and their outcomes in practice' (Oliver and O'Reilly 2010:63) are negotiated with dominant cultural values. Close attention to the community they build around their children has also revealed that there is a collectively shared imagination of Japanese motherhood which is locally contextualised and practiced. The chapter has demonstrated the creation and maintenance of shared values within this community of Japanese mothers, as well as the fluidity of the habitus that slowly changes by learning values and practice from others in the community.

I have demonstrated the diversity among 'the Japanese mothers in London' via a discussion of the choice they make between two different Japanese language learning environments for their children. As we have seen, the decision is the result of long contemplation and negotiation of personal circumstances. However, it also involves making a rational calculation about the capital accumulation that each option offers, both for themselves and their children in the long run. In this regard, their decision to take their children either to *Hoshuko* or *to Donguri* can be understood as a manifestation of their collective identity and a projection of the values that tell us who they are, where they belong and who they are not - as a means to

distinguish themselves from another group of Japanese mothers.

My observation of their homemaking practices has demonstrated the transnational emotional connection that my respondents have to their families and their memories of Japan, which shapes their everyday life in London. Not only objects, such as Japanese tableware and traditional dolls, but also their daily practices, such as cooking and greetings are creatively re-interpreted and re-imagined as a way to perform their newly constructed cultural identity as a 'Japanese mother in southeast London'. As the case of *Donguri* matsuri has shown, such re-imagined Japaneseness is not made at the individual level, but at the community level. It has been argued that people have "a power to define the 'right kind' of culture, which they can use to distinguish themselves in relation to others" (Oliver and O'Reilly 2010: 59). And here, it does not matter whether this 'right' culture is authentic in relation to its original context or not. Rather what is meaningful for them is to have same understanding and practice, and to reproduce this 'right' culture within the community that contributes to constructing their strong sense of solidarity. In this regard, becoming a Japanese mother is not an individual practice, rather it is a learning practice within the group.

Considering that ethnicity is an ongoing sociocultural performance, it 'is not something that is simply passed on from generation to generation, taught and learnt: it is something dynamic, often unsuccessfully repressed or avoided' (Fischer 1986 cited in Hu 2016: 63). This chapter has highlighted my respondents' sociocultural practice of motherhood, in which they have to make various decisions about what aspects of Japanese identity to pass down to their children, at the same time as they strive to learn and practice local forms of mothering.

Chapter 5 Social Lives

Introduction

This chapter explores different approaches to community making by Japanese women in southeast London. The previous chapter focused on their community making and practice around children for cultural reproduction and discussed how their everyday practice of being and becoming a 'Japanese mother in southeast London' reflects their shared values, which contributes to establishing their sense of belonging and solidarity within the community. Existing studies on Japanese migration have largely seen them as an isolated ethnic group or cultural enclave and there has been little consideration of how they socialise with local residents. Admittedly, these studies have illuminated their struggles to live in, and negotiations of, different cultural spaces as well as the complexity of identity transition and their emotional experiences (Fujita 2009; Takeda 2012; Kato 2013). However, what has been overlooked is how the everyday lives of Japanese migrants involves mundane encounters outside the Japanese community in their local settings that enable them to construct a sense of belonging to communities not by ethnicity but by other social groupings.

In my fieldwork, I have seen and heard a lot that my respondents socialise not only with their Japanese friends but also with non-Japanese populations: these could be their neighbours, colleagues, old friends from English school, their husband's friends and families or friends with common interests. In those situations, they go to a local pub to drink, invite friends to their houses, go out for lunch, travel together or play sports. Though such everyday social interaction is routine for those who have families and send their children to local schools, it is worth investigating to challenge the conventional dualistic arguments about migrants'

experience as either assimilation or an ethnic 'bubble' (Kurotani 2007; Colic-Peisker 2010), since what they practice is much more complex. In this chapter, I intend to demonstrate that while the migrants share certain values that give them a sense of belonging to their ethnic community, as the previous chapter has illustrated, at the same time they share different values and embody a habitus that allows them to be a member of local community. This is because they enter the social field of the neighbourhood, which is not bounded by ethnicity but where membership and position is differently determined, simultaneously with the field of Japanese migrants.

In order to highlight the inter-relational process of community making between migrants and local residents, the concept of everyday multiculturalism, which 'advocates studying ordinary interactions as an important part of understanding inter-cultural relations' (Ho 2017: 5) may be useful in navigating the argument in this chapter. This enables us to uncover how people live with difference and how cross culture is experienced as mundane, as well as to question how such mundanity is intersected by wider social, cultural and political processes (Wise and Velayutham 2009: 2–3). Also, as in the previous chapter, Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, value, capital and field (Bourdieu 2000) will be used as analytical tools to interpret my observations. While the lens of multiculturalism may highlight the cultural openness and celebration of diversity in the community, I expect that these Bourdieusian concepts will demonstrate practices to which people in the community unconsciously adhere (Robbins 1991) thus illustrating their shared values and practice. In doing so, it will explore the internal structure of a community in which people encounter cultural differences, develop understandings and construct hybrid culture as well as an underlying set of rules, resources and stakes embedded in a specific social field (Oliver and O'Reilly 2010).

With the aim of discussing such dynamic community making by migrants, two vignettes are

introduced in this chapter. The first vignette introduces a group of people who enjoy a unique self-invented sport called 'Tambourelli'. By incorporating into the chapter an ethnographic note from my participant observation that reflects my experience and perception of taking part in a World championship tournament camp in Devon with some of the women taking part in the research, it explores ways that open-ness to cultural diversity is experienced and contributes to constructing their sense of belonging to their locality. The second vignette is based on an interview with a respondent who organises a cookery class with other Japanese mothers in Telegraph Hill, southeast London, in which they share their knowledge of how to cook home-made Japanese food with their neighbours. Exploring the 'intra- and inter-ethnic relations among diverse residents in the neighbourhood' (Wise and Velayutham 2009: 13) will help us to understand how they are aware of the 'difference' between their own culture and others, and capitalise on this 'difference' as a way of adding diversity to the community as well as establishing their sense of belonging to it.

Everyday Multiculturalism

Scholarly attention to everyday multiculturalism has been increasing, with the expectation that this will open up a wider space for understanding cultural diversity that may challenge conventional policy-oriented approaches (Ho 2017; Noble 2009; Semi et al. 2009; Wise 2014; Wise and Velayutham 2009). It is argued that an 'everyday multiculturalism perspective explores how cultural diversity is experienced and negotiated on the ground in everyday situations such as neighbourhoods, schools, and workplaces, and how social relations and social actors' identities are shaped and reshaped in the process' (Wise 2014: 156). By focussing on how everyday multiculturalism is practiced, we can see the ways in which people handle difference; on the positive side, it could be by developing cross-cultural understanding

and friendships; alternatively it might reveal the reproduction and reflection of existing social hierarchies and inequalities (Ho 2017: 5) that shed light on unequal opportunity for inclusion in the community. Thus, situating everyday multiculturalism as an important concept, this chapter offers a nuanced understanding of the way my Japanese women respondents constructed relationships and identities.

When I talked with a Japanese woman who had just moved to London on a youth mobility scheme (also called a 'working holiday') a few month ago, she said: 'I finally feel that I've got used to finding myself living in different country'. Although this comment was made in a mundane everyday situation, this casual conversation clearly suggested to me the significance of focussing on everyday multiculturalism. A geographical relocation seems to be a dramatic moment in one's life, entailing encounters with social, political, cultural and environmental differences. However, it has been articulated repeatedly in the previous chapters, migration is an ongoing process - therefore no matter how dramatic are the relocations and encounters with difference they experience in the initial stage, migrants' lives go on and such differences gradually become part of their everyday life. In the meantime, they find jobs, start going to work or school or get married and have a new family.

In this rendering, the Japanese woman's comment above depicts well the transition: it is a process in which difference and extraordinariness come to be experienced as ordinary. I consider that everyday multiculturalism is an approach that explores how migrants live with difference, developing acceptance of others in local settings as well as becoming accepted by them, to make an open and diverse community.

In this sense, community is an inseparable concept for the study of everyday multiculturalism. According to Wise, it challenges a notion of 'ethnicity' as a monolithic premise of research or analytical starting point, and 'takes an interactional, typically place-situated approach to

understanding the dynamic nature of urban multiculture' (2014: 156). By focussing on a group of people who share the same community rather than categorising them by ethnicity and their daily inter-cultural and ethnic relationships, an everyday multiculturalism approach aims to understand the multiple and complex process of 'super-diversity' lived by people (Wise 2014).

In addition, I would like to highlight reciprocity within a community as another significant concept for discussion (Colombo 2010; Wise and Velayutham 2014). Scholars of everyday multiculturalism argue that community is a space in which hybrid culture is produced, which has a co-learning function; they stress interdependence rather than unidirectionality by suggesting a word 'conviviality' (Shan and Walter 2015). In their study of Chinese residents who use community garden in Canada, Shan and Walter (2015) find that their respondents learn how to grow vegetables through an exchange of objects (vegetables) and non-objects (knowledge and care) with their 'garden friends'. The accommodation of difference and co-constructional aspects are important features of everyday multiculturalism that demonstrate how the individual is an active vessel in which is constructed the daily practice of a member of the community.

However, scholars of everyday multiculturalism are also aware of scepticism about cross-culture and conviviality. In her 2017 study, Ho expresses anxiety about the reproduction of existing social hierarchies and inequalities, or fostering white privilege in which white middle-class extract value from multi-ethnic other. In addition, the ideas of the commodification of diversity (Ho 2017: 5)or commodified cosmopolitanism (Radice 2009: 151) are raised as negative consequences of the tendency to celebrate cultural diversity. It is noted that 'commodified cultural cosmopolitanism is a cultural con-trick reducing ethnocultural difference to just another kind of branding, another way into our wallets' (Radice 2009: 151)

a significantly change from its original meaning of inter-cultural relations and practice in everyday life. Admittedly, it seems to be no simple task to distinguish such commodification of diversity from an 'ideal form' of everyday multiculturalism, especially at the site of my research, which is a neighbourhood of middle-class enclave or bubble (Butler and Robson 2003: 1797; Jackson and Benson 2014: 1200). In the following ethnographies, I intend to carefully examine and discuss how my respondents achieve everyday multiculturalism by encountering, understanding, negotiating and exchanging difference.

A community of sports

This vignette demonstrates how a minor sport - 'Tambourelli' - and a camp for its World championship constitute a cultural experience of 'difference' encountered by some of the Japanese women respondents.

Tambourelli World Tournament in 2017

In the summer of 2017, I joined a camp in Devon to participate in the World Tambourelli tournament with some of my Japanese respondent mothers and their families. I had heard about 'tambourelli' when I met my ex-flatmate Yoko in 2013. It had its origin in another sport called 'tamburello' which was born in Italy – players with a disc shaped like a tambourine hit a rubber ball to each other inside a court. Then tambourelli was invented by Martine, the British father of Roth (who later married Chizu, a friend of Yoko) who lived in Scotland. He played this with his friends by adopting a shuttlecock instead of a ball, as well as setting a net in between the players.

Since Yoko invited me to her weekly training in Camberwell, southeast London last September, I have been taking part in it as much as possible simply for my own pleasure. It sounds very

strange that I can join the 'World tournament' even though I am a beginner and have less than a year's experience of playing this sport. However, at the same time, I have heard a lot of her friends, both Japanese and non-Japanese, who do not show up at the weekly training, saying that they have been to the camp to take part in the championship –including her colleagues at her market stall and a local jazz club and Chizu's Japanese mother friends and their families. Having collected fragmented information from them, I have gradually figured out that the camp is an open and welcoming space for anyone, even those who have never played tambourelli, and a lot of participants join in not just to win the games, but rather as one of their family summer events.

For me, not only it was first time I had taken part in this tournament, but also camping itself was a totally new experience. Therefore, I asked Seiko, who is an experienced player and a regular member of weekly training to give me instructions about what I needed to prepare, what I should wear, how to get to the camp site, etc. This time, I borrowed a sleeping bag from Mika, who also came to the tournament with her family and asked Seiko if I could share her tent with her and her family. The mother of three daughters (nineteen, fourteen and ten years old respectively), who always brings her youngest daughter to the regular training, Seiko has been taking part in this camp with all three daughters almost every year by herself – as her British husband is neither interested in playing sports nor camping and prefers to stay at home. It sounds as though it is not an easy job for a mother to travel with three daughters with tents, sleeping bags and other lots of camping equipment by herself without a car. However, by asking her friends who drive to Devon to load some of her belongings in their cars, she has for years been managing to lead a party of girls (sometimes her daughters bring their friends as well) every summer.

Unfortunately, this year Seiko could not arrange transport since her friend's car was already full

with guests and their belongings, so we had to take a packed train with bulky luggage from Paddington station to Devon. When we arrived at Totnes station, Jiro (an old friend of Roth's who came to the UK from Japan to join this camp) was there to pick us up and take us to the camp site, which is ten minutes distant by car. The tournament takes place on a corner of a huge farm which belongs to the local organic farming company that partly sponsors this event every year. As Yoko used to describe it, this place is in the 'middle of nowhere', and not meant to be a camping site. On our way there, we crossed an old stone bridge over River Dart and a railway that made me feel we were going away from ordinary life and getting into the wilderness. Because of this location, Jiro, Roth and some other volunteer members had arrived there one or two days earlier to set up a kitchen tent, tambourelli courts, a bonfire and even a temporary toilet to transform the place into an official venue for the World Championship that would go on for the next three days.

Figure 10 Photo: Tambourelli World Tournament 1
(The camping site)

There was light rain when we arrived. Then Seiko started pitching a large tent for four people very quickly and efficiently almost by herself, as I had no idea how to help her due to my lack of experience. After it stopped raining, she took us to the kitchen tent where two women were cooking soup and cutting bread and cheese to prepare for the welcome dinner. They were dressed in typical hippie fashion with dreadlocked hair and relaxed psychedelic tie-dyed T-shirts and pants, Seiko told me that they were sisters and were among the organisers of the competition who have known each other for more than ten years. Having observed how Seiko and her daughters kept greeting those who arrived one after another in a friendly way, I realised that this is a small community where people gather once in a year and catch up with one another and their changing and growing families. To begin with, seeing this accumulation of long history among the people arriving who all shared knowledge of each other's family backgrounds, I felt slightly uncomfortable to be a newcomer. However, such anxiety soon disappeared when I found familiar faces arriving.

Chizu arrived with her younger son, her old school friend Kyoko from Japan and her younger son by the next train. Chizu's and Kyoko's elder sons are the same age, and they had arrived earlier with Roth and Jiro (and all of them stay at Chizu's house together) from London to set up the campsite. I had met Kyoko for the first time at a party at Mika's home just a few days before the camp in East Dulwich, London. She has been a friend of Chizu since they were at high school in Osaka, Japan; they have kept in touch with each other for more than twenty years and caught up whenever Chizu came back to Japan. This year Kyoko visited Chizu with her two sons for twenty days and also went to Sweden with Chizu's family to visit Roth's sister, and they learned how to play tambourelli during their stay. Having little experience of camping in Japan, I had shared both anxiety and excitement about it with Kyoko when we met at the party, and I felt relieved to see her again there.

Mika, who lent me a sleeping bag, arrived with her husband, twin sons and parents, who were visiting from Japan, by a car. I had met her parents at the same party. Having found that we both have family roots in Niigata, which is in the North Western part of Japan, her mother and I felt quite familiar each other and were pleased to meet again at the camp. Considering her parents' age (her father is eighty-four and her mother is eighty), Mika let her sons sleep on their own in a tent while she stayed at a local inn with her husband and parents and came to the site every day. As it had been an annual event for her parents to visit Mika in London and stay at her house over summer to escape the summer heat in Japan, Chizu and Seiko already knew them. The friendly and casual relationship between Mika's parents and Chizu in particular was like the one between real parents and daughter.

Edward and his son Jake also came from East Dulwich, and I knew them because I had worked as a child sitter for Jake and his little sister for a short period. As I never saw Edward and Jake at the weekly training, or heard that they played tambourelli, I did not expect to meet them there. This time, it seems to have been a father and son trip and his Japanese wife Yuko and daughter were not there. When Seiko and I found out that the two of them had arrived in a big car, Seiko muttered: 'We should have asked Edward if he could load some of our stuff, as there must have been free space. We should ask when we return'. Finally, we found Russel and his son Toby setting up their tent next to ours. They are regular training members in Camberwell, London and although I played tambourelli with them every week, I felt it was nice to meet them in a different setting and was also excited to watch them playing in the tournament as I knew that they were really good players. Thus, having found familiar faces around, my initial anxiety about being a newcomer and outsider in this temporary small community in Devon disappeared and I realised that it was as if a part of my southeast London community had been transferred to this camp.

There were about fifty people taking part in the tournament throughout the three days, who came from a wide range of age groups and different areas; Devon, Scotland, London and even from Germany. In the evening of the first day, after having the dinner cooked by the organisers, we had a draw to choose a partner to play with in a pair as well as opponents to play against. From the morning of the next day, based on the result of this draw, each player had to find their opponents and also ask someone to be a judge and play matches in six outside courts simultaneously. Basically, each player had to play three games in the first-round group and only the top two players from each group could make the championship round. Interestingly, there was no particular opening ceremony or timeline to follow but all the players, even children, knew what to do and tried to make arrangements to play all their assigned games. And despite this self-organising aspect of the tournament and the mixed level of the players (while there were absolute beginners from London, the German players were very serious and have regular training three days per week), all the players were serious when they were playing and both players and audiences got excited.

Figure 11 Photo: Tambourelli disks and a shuttlecock

Though most people came as part of a family, there was no boundary between families and both children and adults enjoyed spending time with their fellows respectively -the children often swam in the river nearby and the adults enjoyed chatting between the games. It was nice to see that Kyoko's two sons, who cannot speak English and looked hesitant to swim in the wild river at the beginning, had become good friends with other boys and girls and were playing together. Having known each other for a long time, Seiko and Chizu often talked with the organising members to catch up on how they had been since they met last year, and they also gossiped about them in Japanese. Seiko said that as she has known these people for more than ten years, she knows so much of their personal histories even she does not want to know actively. Every morning, Mika brought her parents to the site by car, and they watched people playing games with interest and even tried to play together. I could see how Mika cared about them by occasionally asking her mother if she wanted a blanket when they were sitting around a bonfire in the evening, or offering a chair when they came to watch the game. However, this does not mean Mika accompanied with them all the time and she often let them walk around freely just by themselves. In such situations, sometimes Chizu talked to them to see if they were comfortable enough.

What I really enjoyed at the camp was the food cooked by the organisers three times a day. They even made an instant pizza oven from a drum can and we had a freshly baked pizza made from homemade dough for lunch on the second day. Chizu also cooked Japanese fried noodles for another lunch, and Jiro cooked seaweed mixed rice balls for breakfast. For this purpose, they had brought a lot of Japanese food ingredients from London or Japan. After eating, each of us had to wash our own dish by ourselves in the river. On the first day, when we went down to the river with used dishes, Seiko told me that it works well if we grab handful sand from

bottom of the river and rub it to the surface of the dishes and rinse. Not just this but also placing a scoop of sawdust into the temporary toilet after use and jumping into the river when one got sweaty – these practices, which were common in the camp were very surprising to both me and Kyoko at the beginning. However, it did not take long until we got used to this outdoors environment and on the third day Seiko and I changed into swimsuits and went into the cold river where children were swimming to rinse our sweaty body and hair in the stream. Even though Kyoko did not come into the river, she also washed her hair directly by kneeling down on the bank.

Figure 12 Photo: Tambourelli World Tournament 2

(People jump into the river)

Learning the rules, playing the game

Even though the camp was a temporary community and the people who participate are not the same every year, I found that this was a community constructed by those who share the same enjoyment of this minor sport, as well as entailing various cultural values. While not all

the participants played tambourelli on a regular base (some of them even had never played it before at all), as long as people followed certain 'rules' and share the same values embedded in the field, it seems that people could feel that they were accepted by the community. For Seiko, Chizu and their families who have been coming to this camp and who had been familiar with tambourelli for many years, it seems that cultural difference has become normalised and unremarkable. Moreover, there was little significance in their ethnicity in this community that was formed around tambourelli. I found that 'people deal with each other as individuals rather than as members of an ethnic group' (Ho 2017: 5) as if underpinning the way in which everyday multiculturalism dissolves unfamiliarity (Noble 2009: 61).

Rather than drawing a boundary by ethnicity, in my observation of the community I considered that the players tended to distinguish each other by where their regular training was based and how it was reflected in their playing styles. For example, I heard Seiko say 'The German players are really good at playing technically, but I like the way Toby or the 'Devon boys' play –it's showier and looks as if they are dancing. It is much fun to watch'. This illustrates that she is proud of her local 'team' mates (even though there is no team category at the tournament) as well as highlighting the distinctions she made between players in relation to their style of play and locality. Her accumulated experience of both weekly training in London and once-a-year participation in the tournament for more than ten years have not only enabled her to make distinctions between the other players, but her embodied playing style must also have developed her identity as a team member from southeast London.

Even when they were not playing the game, the sorts of values shared by the community were clearly demonstrated, especially values around food. All the meals were prepared by the

organising member and these were basically healthy vegetarian and vegan-friendly handmade dishes. One evening when we were sitting around a bonfire, Chizu cooked a spicy hot noodle, filled a pot and brought it to the bonfire so that people feeling peckish could fill their stomachs. She had brought some ingredients such as noodles and sachets of soup stock from London, and had deliberately chosen the one made from seaweed instead of fish. This demonstrates Chizu's experience of accommodating difference and her acquired understanding of the rules of this field. Through her cooking and considerable choice of ingredients to accommodate vegetarian and vegan preferences, she showed her understanding of the shared values that enabled her to foster a sense of belonging.

Thus although the tambourelli camp seemed to be a relaxed open space, people were 'unconsciously adhering to practices which had been consciously constructed for their own particular society' (Robbins 1991: 86). The post-materialistic life without electricity, consciousness of organic food and unstructured tournament matches – were all aspects of the camp that highlighted its free atmosphere. But at the same time I found that there was an unspoken rule that the participants should appreciate and enjoy them, including any inconvenience, without being frustrated. According to Bourdieu, field is 'a given set of circumstances within which an agent is currently living, experiencing and acting' and it 'contains its own cultural logic, and its own power structure, power struggles, formal structures of control' (O'Reilly 2012b: 18). There was no salient power of control in the field of the tambourelli camps that I observed, yet I consider that the people there were playing a game to maintain the camp as a 'community'.

It has been argued that '[T]he logic of our practice is embedded in the requirements of the field, practically mastered by its participants drawing on their accumulated forms of capital'

(Noble 2013: 351). At the camp, like Chizu and Seiko, those who had already accumulated cultural and social capital that enabled them to know what to wear, what and how to eat, with whom to communicate and how to behave seemed to have a certain autonomy to obtain their comfortable roles at the camp. On the other hand, like Kyoko and I, for those who had not accumulated the necessary forms of capital, it was a pedagogic process (Noble 2013) in which we transformed our habitus to make ourselves fit into the community's rules so that 'the game' could be carried out smoothly. As the vignette demonstrated, although we were slightly shocked at the beginning to spend a few days at the camp without a flushing toilet or a shower, once we learned the 'rules of the game' (Bourdieu 2000), we accommodated both the rules and resources (as represented by the hand-made temporary composting toilet and the stream running nearby) to become players on the field. And such newly obtained similar habitus enabled us to construct a sense of belonging to this community and a condition to be accepted by the community.

One interesting thing is that this community around tambourelli is not place-bound, but rather a temporary free-floating field for people who share the same set of cultural values and rules, as has been observed. However, at the same time, I find that for my Japanese women respondents, it functions to foster their sense of belonging to the southeast London locality. As was the case with Seiko, I also found myself being proud of Toby who successfully made it to the finals in the tournament - I consider this is because we regularly play together in London and I find a kind of solidarity in the idea of 'team Camberwell' by sharing the extraordinary space and experience at this camp.

Also, after we came back from the camp to London, Edward and his son Jake who had never played tambourelli before started to show up at the regular training in Camberwell almost every week. Initially, the encounter of these Japanese women with tambourelli started when

Roth's sister Isabella shared a flat with Chizu and Yoko in Camberwell almost fifteen years ago. Being taken by Indy to the camp, Chizu met Roth and they got married and have been visiting this camp as a family until now, while her Japanese friends and their family have also come to take part in. It seems that without the network of Japanese women centred on Chizu and Yoko, the tambourelli community could not have expanded in southeast London in the way it has. However, as each member has different access to this unique sport of tambourelli, we cannot simply analyse their practice by categorising this community as one formed around ethnicity or one that is built around children. Also the fluidity of a community should be borne in mind because the growth of children and life changes among its members would change the nature of this community.

Community participation through Japanese cooking

"I feel that there're similar people living in this area. I don't know, it is just because I live in this area, but I feel we all have similar interest in art or other stuff. When we had the referendum and the election recently, I felt that we all have similar opinions. I thought 'Oh, they are the British middle-class people who have open mind for arts and different cultures'. I don't know, is such meeting with people who have similar thought in this neighbourhood just a coincidence? Or having similar socio-economic background that enables us to live in this area -does it also allow us to encounter such British middle-class people? Though I often think about it, I have no answer to this question."

 (Ai, a hostess of Japanese cookery lesson in Telegraph Hill)

Telegraph Hill as a research field

My second vignette is drawn from an area called Telegraph Hill in southeast London. Here, I introduce how my respondents understand their cultural identity as Japanese women living in

the 'middle-class enclave' and construct a sense of belonging to the local community by exchanging their knowledge and adding diversity through their food practice. Telegraph Hill is a 'small self-contained residential area' (Butler 2008: 143) bounded by Nunhead and Brockley. Having investigated gentrification in inner London and carried out his research in this area, Butler illustrated the struggle of middle-class residents who distinguished themselves from other middle-class groups in London by displaying their particular habitus with strong social relations and a concern for social inclusivity and diversity (see Butler and Robson 2003; Butler 2008).

In his interviews with the residents in Telegraph Hill, Butler (2008) found a shared view among them that the area is socially mixed in terms of classes, ethnicities, genders and sexualities that was highly meaningful to them. It was also underpinned by a census in 2011 that showed the average age of residents was 33.0 and that 50.6% of them had a White ethnic background, followed by 30% Black, 7.9% mixed/multiple, and 7.7% Asian ethnic background, which shows wider diversity than East Dulwich, which is dominated by White people by more than 70% ('Telegraph Hill 2011 Census Ward' 2011). However, while the residents in Telegraph Hill demonstrate a habitus that celebrates diversity and difference, he argues that 'it is a rather esoteric diversity that is being sought out' (Butler 2008: 145).

> 'It is actors and social workers rubbing along with solicitors within the middle-class habitus. "Getting along with the neighbours" matters, not just because that is how village life *ought* to be but also because it provides the social networks that can help them negotiate their way through the potentially hostile waters of living in one of the most deprived areas of South London... . It is a diverse area but the impression comes across that this is a backcloth to actual interactions that take place amongst a remarkably homogeneous middle-class group for whom proximity to the city, similar people and property values matter a great deal.' (Butler 2008: 145-146)

Interestingly, his critique of the 'homogeneous middle-class group' resonates with my respondent Ai's impression of her life in this area, introduced at the beginning of this section. 'A homogeneous community which celebrates diversity and difference' sounds a very odd and contradictory idea, however the quote clearly demonstrates that Ai unconsciously understands the unique nature of this community, from the inside, as a member. And this is a rationalisation of Butler's (2008) critique which claims an illusion of diversity and a limitation of multiculturalism.

This vignette introduces Ai and her fellow Japanese mothers' multicultural community making practice in Telegraph Hill. Its objective is to portray a new aspect of community making by the side of 'others' which has been little examined. Studies of multicultural neighbourhoods often focus on the narratives of dominant British middle-class residents and how they perceive 'others' (Butler 2008; Butler and Robson 2003; Jackson 2014; Jackson and Benson 2014). Yet while Ai has a White British middle-class husband, she also recognises herself as an ethnic minority who could be seen as a racialised 'other' in this community. Thus, on the one hand, the paragraphs that follow investigate how they learn what cultural values are appreciated in the neighbourhood, how they take advantage of their difference and how they convert their own cultural capital to other forms of capital to obtain their position in the local community. On the other hand, they also hint at a limitation of multiculturalism by questioning uneven opportunity for inclusion in the community making process.

The start of *MIKI meshi*

Ai has been living in Brockley more than ten years with her British husband and two children. While she has been working part-time to support her friend's business, or as a freelance distributor in the fashion industry, she also has been working as a caterer of Japanese food at a

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local cafe with her Japanese friends for four years on an irregular base. They call their group *Miki meshi* – Miki is a common woman's name in Japan and also the letters M-I-K-I are selected from the letters contained in the members' names (Ai, Minako, Kanako), while '*meshi*' is a masculine way of referring to food in Japanese. I thought that this nomenclature not only showed the strong bond among the women, who are close in age, have children of similar ages, live in the same neighbourhood and share a love of cooking, but also successfully highlighted the uniqueness of their activity, in which Japanese women offer casual, homemade, everyday Japanese food, not fancy or 'haute cuisine' meals.

In my interview with Ai, she told me how their activity as *Miki meshi* started.

> "First, Kanako used to work at a cafe in Brockley and she baked cakes there. The cafe originally had a market style health food shop with a kitchen where Kanako worked, and we've heard that they can let us use its kitchen in the cafe to do something. As I have always talked with Minako that it'll be nice if we could do something to do with cooking, as we both like it, I took initiative, suggested to both Minako and Kanako, and arranged to borrow the kitchen in the cafe and organised pop-up restaurant several times. There was a space for twenty people in the cafe, and we organised a menu for three courses. Unfortunately, the cafe had closed down and we had no idea what to do then. But luckily, the owner of a community cafe in Telegraph Hill whom I already knew has invited us and offered the place and we have already done pop-up Japanese dinner evening there three times."

When they first started to use the cafe in Brockley, they found that there were still many extra things to buy or necessities to add creative improvisation to the cooking process, even though they were allowed to use the kitchen freely. For example, in order to serve a soup dish they had to prepare *domburi* (soup bowls) as there were no appropriate ones at the café. Also, they had to give up cooking *tempura* because an electric hob in the kitchen was not suitable for cooking

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fried food. Since then, they have learned that it requires a certain amount of money and time to start up a business in a new setting, and after the café closed they were very careful about finding another place and took a while to restart at the one in Telegraph Hill.

"Though we had some offers from people who could let us use their places for our pop-up restaurant, it took nearly one year to come back. If it's too far, that's a bit troublesome –honestly we are not so enthusiastic to do this as 'business' seriously (laughter). And it's also troublesome to sort out the issue with equipment, but on the other hand, if we do it only one-off, we cannot have any profit. As long as we spent certain time and money for preparation, then we need to do it continuously for several times to make enough profit."

After an interval in which they experienced various conflicts, for example between business and enjoyment, or between taking less trouble and being uncompromising, *Miki meshi* restarted its pop-up restaurant in 2016 with just two of the women, Ai and Minako, while Kanako had some maternity time off. The first Japanese cookery class was hosted by Ai and Kanako in early 2017.

In the first part of the vignette, above, it should be highlighted first of all that Ai and the owner of the café in Telegraph Hill knew each other prior to their collaboration, even though Ai lives in New Cross Gate. I imagine that she had grown an extensive social network in the community through taking her son to the local primary school in Telegraph Hill. In Butler's work, this school is described as having 'a strong middle-class atmosphere and is an important institution of the local public sphere' in which adults establish child-centred network and maintain connections (2008: 143). In the interview, Ai told me that she has good British friends there among her fellow mothers, and that they often go for drink in the neighbourhood. Therefore, it must not have been difficult for her to be connected to the owner of the

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community café which is a social hub for the local residents.

It is also worth noting that it was the cafe's owner who invited *Miki meshi* to become one of their pop up restaurant traders. On the cafe's website there is a list of local traders who have offered ethnic culinary diversity as pop-up events for local customers, including Persian, Vietnamese, Palestinian, Spanish and so on (*The Hill Station Cafe* 2013). This is literally a demonstration of habitus in Telegraph Hill which celebrates the diversity and difference argued by Butler (2008). The collaboration of *Miki meshi* with the community café is therefore a very natural consequence, as the cultural difference it offers coincides precisely with the values shared within the local community.

In addition, I consider that they were welcomed as part of the community not only because *Miki meshi* offers 'ethnic' food culture, but also because of their concept: local mothers offering authentic homemade everyday Japanese food, carefully prepared, with appropriate dishes and cutlery and without compromise, which was clearly demonstrated in Ai's interview. I suggest that the members of *Miki meshi* learned the values of appreciation of homemade cooking, beautiful presentation and table settings through their everyday lives in a middle-class neighbourhood. Therefore, even though they may be (more or less) unaware of the game they are playing, the significance of *Miki meshi* may be that it shows the women, who have learned community specific values, strategically converting their own cultural capital (as Japanese) into other forms of capital such as economic (a local business opportunity) and social capital (the sense of belonging to a community).

Sharing their way of navigating local life

Ai showed me a leaflet that they prepared for the participants as she talked to me about their recent cookery lesson at the cafe. It was a recipe book designed by Kanako's husband – A4 size

with many colourful photos nicely laid out, to show how to cook basic Japanese food using ingredients accessible in London. I saw immediately that it had taken a lot of time and effort to make such professional looking cookery book. Ai told me that she had cooked a prototype at Kanako's house and took photos of it to make the leaflet, as well as to elaborate the process for the day – what they should prepare beforehand and what information should be shared. Ai said "We cannot make this event just for one off, because otherwise our all efforts and investments would not be paid off" as a joke, but after looking at such a well-made leaflet I had to agree with her.

Figure 13 Image: from *MIKI meshi* recipe booklet 1

The menu of the day was rice, miso soup, simmered mackerel with miso, pickled celery and string beans with sesame sauce. This combination, which consisted of rice, soup, a main dish

and small side dishes, is a typical set menu of Japanese food. These are not dishes commonly found at Japanese restaurants in London like sushi, ramen (noodle soup) or tempura, but rather offer a taste of a mother's home cooking. The *Miki meshi* team chose this menu deliberately, not only to introduce this typical Japanese comfort food to non-Japanese participants, but also because most of the ingredients for the menu are relatively easy to find at a local supermarket. For example, even though there are hundreds of variations of miso soup, she chose a combination of leek and potato as these are common vegetables in the UK, and reason for choosing celery for the pickles was the same. In the recipe book, not just the cooking process, but even basic preparations such as how to wash and cook Japanese sticky rice and how to make fish broth are carefully introduced with photos and captions. In particular, fish broth is a very important element in Japanese cooking, and two versions are introduced: bonito flakes are used for the authentic way, but in everyday cooking people usually use instant bouillon powder to make soup, which is cheaper and easier.

Furthermore, the most impressive thing about the booklet was the information about where people can find particular Japanese ingredients in the local area. Despite the careful consideration given to using accessible ingredients in the menu, recipes still required some special ingredients that could not be found at a local supermarket. So two local grocery stores in New Cross Gate are introduced in the booklet to show where they can buy soy sauce, rice, miso, instant fish stock, tofu and other ingredients.

Figure 14 Image: from *MIKI meshi* recipe booklet 2

Figure 15 Image: from *MIKI meshi* recipe booklet 3

(Ai and I were talking while looking at the leaflet)

Kaoru: I didn't know that there are such stores in New Cross Gate.

Ai: Oh, didn't you? This store is quite good. Do you know the Marquis of Granby, the pub on the corner? It's just near there, should be the one next to the Chinese medicine store. Though it's very small, it has not only Japanese foods but also Korean and Taiwanese. In Deptford, there are a lot of Vietnamese stores and you'll find Vietnamese and Thai foods but not so many Japanese. But here, it has a lot from Japan, Korea and Taiwan; even frozen *abura-age* (fried tofu) as well as soy sauce and miso.

Kaoru: So you don't go to the centre (to buy any Japanese foods)?

Ai: Only when I want to buy 'good' soy sauce and miso, I might go. But rest.. (I would buy at local stores).

Do you know this one? It is also nice. You know the VENUE, the large building on the corner? When you down the road next to it, you'll find this store. It's a kind of health food store, and you can find organic miso and good oils from *Clear Springs*.

Here, I was surprised that even though I am a student of Goldsmiths College which is just around the corner from these grocery stores, I did not know anything about them at all. This clearly highlighted the different ways of navigating everyday life between residents and a student, for whom the area is just a place to commute. Being deeply rooted in the area with her family, it has been crucial for Ai to learn such specific local knowledge as where she can get acceptable quality Japanese ingredients at an affordable price to sustain her everyday cooking practice at home. Interestingly, at the same time, as this is ethnicity-specific information that "Telegraph Hillers" without an Asian ethnic background are unlikely to access themselves, this local knowledge has become Ai's original and unique cultural capital which is highly valuable for "Telegraph Hillers" to navigate their everyday multicultural life. To support this argument, both *Miki meshi's* choice of menu and the detailed recipe book reinforce a strong impression that what they expect from the participants is not to learn how

to cook Japanese food for a special occasion. Rather by sharing a recipe for typical homemade Japanese food, participants are enabled to celebrate diversity in everyday practice by adding a Japanese menu to their home cooking repertoire. This is particularly underpinned by this introduction of local stores. There are two well-known Japanese groceries in Piccadilly, in central London – which have a variety of good quality products, as Ai mentioned, but are also quite expensive and not suitable for daily use. On the other hand, the stores in New Cross Gate introduced in the booklet, may not have the best quality products but what they stock is affordable and suitable for everyday cooking.

Thus, *Miki meshi's* activity carefully considers how participants can practice everyday multicultural lives, and in doing so, Ai and her *Miki meshi* colleagues successfully practice the Telegraph Hill community habitus, which appreciates diversity and difference, and constructs their sense of being fellow spirits (Butler 2008).

"Happy multiculturalism" for everyone?

Throughout our conversation, Ai's strong attachment to the local community was demonstrated. Since settling in this area, she has made a lot of local friends, both Japanese and non-Japanese mothers through her children's schooling, which now seems to have become a fundamental ground of her social life. Without clear boundaries between fellow mothers, neighbours and good friends, she has found companions for both drinking and doing a half-business/half-hobby activity from the local area. And this is because, as Ai reflects, she shares similar interests, a philosophy and a set of values with the neighbours, which make her feel comfortably embedded in the area. However, it should not be overlooked that such multicultural everyday life is not realisable for anyone -rather, the case of *Miki meshi* tells us how important it is to share a set of values that are appreciated in the community to become

a part of it. Ai's lucky and curious encounters with people – her fellow Japanese mothers, who have similar interests and a passion for homemade cooking, the owner of the community cafe who offered her premises to *Miki meshi* to support their activity, and the eleven neighbours who were interested and attended the Japanese cookery lesson - all this was possible because of similar habitus.

In my interviews with other respondents (even though they never came up for discussion as unpleasant experiences within the community in an obvious way), I observed inconspicuous but indisputable feelings of friction among those who seemed to socialise well with their middle-class neighbours.

Sumiko, living in Telegraph Hill

"I'm getting along with a group of fellow mothers well, and they often ask me to go out together. I mean, I'm good friends with each of them, but once they get all together, they are VERY middle-class, and I don't like to be a part of it -because I often disagree with them.

… They are all a similar type of English people, who are very conservative but haven't realised that they ARE conservative. Even one of them said 'I love the mixed culture of London', but then when we talked about secondary school choice, she said 'I XXXX Black'. I'm shocked and found that she's so conservative, but as all other people have similar view, they don't think that's strange."

In neither our face-to-face conversation nor my recorded data could I pick up Sumiko's exact words about what the other mother said. However, the way she lowered her voice and showed her hesitation to mention the word out loud made me understand that what the other mother had said must have been discriminatory to black people. This narrative reminds me of Byrne's (2006) study of middle-class white mothering practices in London, which investigates the

ways in which middle-class white mothers talk about their openness to difference and desire for a 'mixed' environment at school in the choices they make for their children. It reveals that although they clearly embrace difference and an idea of multiculturalism, they also consider that it has to be restrained, to create a 'good mix' (Byrne 2006:1015) – which should be neither 'too many black people' nor 'white dominance'. Because '[T]he presence of too many raced and classed 'others' appeared to threaten the desired stability' (1008), and may disturb the reproduction of the classed and raced subjectivity of their children which the middle-class mothers wanted to pass down. Thus, her study illuminates the performativity of mothering practice, in which gendered, classed and racialized discourses are inscribed and repeated. Being aware of this performativity of middle-class mothering among her English friends, Sumiko's narrative vividly illustrates her discomfort at finding that she might have counted as a racialized 'other', contributing to white middle-class mothers' desire for difference. On a similar note, Maria talked about her own position among English mothers.

Maria, living in Herne Hill

(Talking about her English proficiency)

"I often talk with my Japanese friends who also have Japanese husbands that basically we are *Miso-kkasu* (someone left out of a group). We are left out of a conversation when they are discussing something very important. When the English people speaking vigorously, I cannot understand what they are talking about. ⋯ Sometimes I wonder why yet I can be a part of this group of mothers despite I cannot speak good English. It's only me who cannot speak English within the group, because usually those mothers who cannot speak English make their own group (with fellow non-native English speakers). That's my question. And then I think that such middle-class mothers try to think and act liberal, so that's why they can take me into their group."

As far as I could see, I had the impression that both Sumiko and Maria were getting along well with their fellow school mothers and had good communication skills. However, these dialogues demonstrate that through their daily interaction with middle class mothers, they are sensitive to their different values and ways of thinking as well as to the language barrier between themselves as an ethnic minority and the 'others'. Both reflexively revealed the uncomfortable sensation of realising that there are some people who are excluded from the community, even while they are accepted.

In the case of Maria, even though she has been accepted by the group of British mothers, she sees herself as a kind of wallflower because of her English ability. Actually, having lived in London for eighteen years and worked as an English-Japanese translator, Maria's self-evaluation of her English skill must be lower than her actual level. Then, considering the fact that she shares such negative labelling of herself with her friends who also have Japanese husbands, I inferred that this may come from a lack of the cultural capital required to share the values embedded in the conversation among her British fellows, rather than from the language ability itself.

Furthermore, Maria's use of the term 'take me in' seems to hint at an uneven balance between those with the power to decide who can be/not be a group member and those who are judged to be part of the community. Such an 'intentional exclusionary practice on the part of the elites or middle classes' (Atkinson 2006 cited in Blokland et al. 2016: 4) might result in the creation of an 'illusory' homogeneous group of people who celebrate diversity and difference. As is the case with Sumiko, having realised how her fellow English mothers see her, in the context of middle-class mothering practice, Maria described her identity as a Japanese mother as being part of an ethnic minority in the context of this relationship.

However, I also would like to highlight that these Japanese mothers are not merely passive

agents whose racialized subjectivities are exploited by white middle-class mothers. Their choice of school is also popular with white middle-class mothers - those who search for a 'good mix' environment – and as such the Japanese mothers could also be seen to take part in the reproduction of middle-class identity appreciating '[O]penness to difference and multiculturalism fitted into general liberal desires for freedom, creativity and friendliness' (Byrne 2006:1008). On the one hand, they acknowledge their racialized subjectivity, but on the other hand, they actively accept middle-class values and perform their classed identities through their mothering practice – and could then be inscribed with the identity of Japanese middle-class mother. Thus, it has to be carefully observed that an opportunity for multicultural community making is not given equally to everyone - there are complex power dynamics among those who have different accumulations of capitals, as well as gendered, classed and racialized identities.

Conclusion

The weekly tambourelli training in Camberwell always begins with participants marking the court onto an existing badminton court by lining a smaller square with masking tape and extending poles to stretch a net between them to a higher position. These preparatory processes, which must have been repeated hundreds of times, show that tambourelli is far from a major sport, requiring as it does both creativity and effort to customise the existing setting. In addition, the smooth way that regular members carry out the setting-up highlights their years of accumulated experience. And all these processes seem to represent the community making process around tambourelli in which all the members participate in creating, setting and sharing the same values and rules by which the game is played.

With the aim of demonstrating different ways in which Japanese women intervene in everyday

multiculturalism and community making, this chapter has explored two vignettes that narrate my respondents' experiences. Each case has explored social spaces with their own set of values and rules, as well as the process through which the Japanese women (including myself) construct a sense of belonging to these spaces by learning and practicing those rules. However, in the case of *Miki meshi*, I observed that they experienced a subtle but noticeable tension (which was absent from the tambourelli community).

In the tambourelli community, members' experience within the space was neither shaped by nor limited by their ethnicity, gender and age. Rather, their accumulated place-specific forms of capital, such as experience and skill in playing tambourelli are more valued, and these are underpinned by their local training bases. Therefore, as long as the participants understand and follow the rule of the game and the field, as well as the background philosophies like post-materialism and sportsmanship, people can establish a degree of sense of belonging to this community.

On the other hand, the case of Miki meshi also seemingly demonstrates that these Japanese women share the same values as other residents of Telegraph Hill, who appreciate cultural diversity in everyday life. However, from careful attention to their narrative about their cookery lesson experience, I argue that a good understanding of what other people in the area value and expect allowed these Japanese women to strategically perform a specific role by offering a carefully crafted 'cultural package' to meet their expectations. In this regard, although these women acknowledge the value of their cultural capital, they do not necessarily value them in the same way, and to the same degree as other 'Telegraph Hillers'. Here, what was observed was neither their embodied disposition nor unconscious acts as habitus, but their calculated performance to accommodate their belonging in a space which has already established its own rules.

Furthermore, this performance could be understood in relation to fluid gender and ethnic identity as it translates into a particular image of Japanese femininity and motherhood. As the ethnography in this chapter has explored, *Miki meshi*'s unique appeal to the local people resides in its authenticity, delicacy and ordinariness, and these are foregrounded by their social and ethnic identity as local Japanese mothers - it should not be run by a professional Japanese male chef based in a posh restaurant in central London. Thus, these Japanese women's gender and ethnic performance should be understood as a manifestation of their full knowledge about locally embedded values and a strategy to establish their sense of belonging to this 'multicultural' community.

On the other hand, at the tambourelli camp, we observed Chizu cooking Japanese noodle soup for the participants one night. Also, while the female members among the organisers always worked hard at the cooking, the male participants contributed physical labour such as setting up the compost toilet and making a pizza kiln. However, these are not a performance of their gendered or ethnic identity, rather could be understood simply as division of labour according to their field of expertise. Each member tried to offer their own available capital, which demonstrated the organic and dynamic functions in community making where people share the same values.

However, it should not be overlooked that my respondents' various multicultural experiences were possible only because they already had a 'gatekeeper', who gave them access to, and taught them the rules and values of the community. Possession of a British husband or a child who attends a local school allows my respondents to build up a fundamental social network that enables them to learn the local habitus and accumulate further cultural capital that can be transferred to other forms of capital. Conversely, those who do not have the capital to share a set of values appreciated by the community might be excluded from such multicultural

community making. In this regard, this chapter has illustrated the way that unequal opportunities for inclusion for the community are determined by the accumulation and possession of locally specific capitals.

To conclude, this chapter has demonstrated the diversity and complexity of community making by ethnic minority migrants at a local scale. It has also revealed multiple practices of everyday multiculturalism; it does not mean just the respectful coexistence of difference, but also that people 'use difference as one of their main tool for interaction, communication and attribution of meaning' (Semi et al. 2009: 74). However, considering the fact that multiculturalism is inseparable from community, we have to understand its fluidity as well - the changing demographic of the area, social and political circumstances, the dominant discourse of wider society, and an individual's life course: all these micro and macro changes could alter the power dynamic between the migrant and the majority group that determines values in the field.

Chapter 6 Being a daughter in transnational family

Introduction

This chapter presents various ways of maintaining transnational family kinship with a particular focus on the parent and daughter relationship - my respondents and my own. The previous chapters investigated the practice of community making that contributes to the Japanese womens' construction of a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood. However, such a sense of belonging is not limited to the place where they are currently living, and their everyday lives demonstrate an ongoing strong attachment to their home country, sustained by material and emotional interaction with their family in Japan. Advanced transport and communication technology services have enabled migrants to stay connected with ease to their far away families; direct visits by plane, online communication via skype, email and other social networking services, and receiving everyday commodities in airmail parcels. In addition to these networks mediated by physical and online communications, through memories and imagination derived from objects from their home country and photographs of their families, or through everyday activities like cooking, shopping and child care, migrants stay emotionally connected to their families. Understanding the ongoing transnational identity of the Japanese women who maintain her emotional attachment to multiple places, 'here' and 'there', seamlessly in lived experience and practice (Kelly and Lusis 2006), this chapter explores how they negotiate the role of 'caring Japanese daughter' in their everyday lives in southeast London through transitions in their gendered identity. By focusing especially on their emotional experience, the chapter aims to uncover the way that Japanese norms of caring in a

parent and daughter relationship shape the women's emotions and practice in London.

Both from the interviews with my respondents and my own experience as a daughter living away from my parents, I have noticed and experienced a dramatically changing emotional relationship as a member of a transnational family according to age and surroundings throughout the life-course -when a daughter is young, her parents would be worried about her health and security in a foreign country. Once she gets married and becomes a mother, she might develop an appreciation and a respect for them. And when her parents are older, she feels insecure or uneasy thinking about them ageing and how she can offer care at a distance if needed. Regardless of whether they are positive or negative, the emotional experiences of the daughter-parent relationship often impact a migrant's mobility and settlement as well as the ways in which she shapes and interprets the social world around her (Svašek 2008). This chapter unpacks these emotional experiences in relation to life-course and gender, and how it shapes these women's practices as well as their relationships across transnational space.

The relationship between daughter and parents and the corresponding emotional experiences they encounter seem to be highly personal. However, asking questions about what shapes their emotions, what it is like to be a 'good daughter' and what emotional response to their parents they think is the 'correct' one in a particular cultural context, can illustrate emotion as the embodied experience of dominant discourse or shared values (Walsh 2012). Particularly in the case of Japanese cultural norms, caring is characterised as 'familistic' with a 'family-centred' welfare system regime, and therefore responsibility for elderly care in Japanese households is shouldered primarily by women (Yamashita and Soma 2017). Although these women had already left their parental homes and had their own life in London, they expressed a sense of 'debt' in our conversations, and a belief that they do not fulfil their obligations as daughters. This is because they understand the 'generational contract', which is the norm of

'reciprocity', 'governing how individuals accept and provide support involving rights and responsibilities, and credits and debts' between parents and children (Izuhara 2004: 650). Individual action and practices motivated by emotion, and sharing this same emotion with others also contributes to building a sense of belonging to a community. I often saw that my respondents shared not only the cultural norm of the parent and daughter relationship, but also the difficulties and dilemma of not being able to achieve the status of this imagined 'caring Japanese daughter' because of the distance, and that this shaped their shared identity as 'Japanese transnational daughters living in southeast London'. And even though my situation is slightly different from most of my respondents (because I am single, have no family in London and my parents are slightly younger than their parents), having partially shared in their lives in southeast London enabled me to understand how they make sense of their social world. Thus, by exploring the emotional labour of these women as they work to sustain a 'sense of family' across distance (Svašek 2010: 867), this chapter builds an argument about how my respondents construct and maintain their identity as 'Japanese transnational daughters living in southeast London' and practice it in their everyday life, that also highlights the interplay of migration, gender and the life-course.

In the following sections, different relationships between a daughter and her parents are described. The first is the case of Mai, who has small children and whose parents' visit regularly, travelling from Japan to London over summer to help with her childcare and housework. This case explores how Mai's changing gender identity since becoming a mother has also enabled her to be aware of herself as a daughter, which has created feelings of gratitude and guilt. The second vignette introduces the relationship between Mika and her ageing parents. Similar to the first case, she also has her parents to stay long-term over the summer, but this is not so that they can support her family, but rather to care for them. The

feelings of worry and anxiety she expresses demonstrate her interpretation of local geography (which areas are safe or not safe), as well as how she projects her plans for the future. The third is also about the relationship of a woman with aging parents. By introducing a conversation with a woman who talked of her future anxiety about caring - both for her parents and herself, I hope to illuminate the ways she tries to negotiate the distance through emotional, material and financial support. In the fourth case, I introduce a woman who decided on return migration to Japan. It is argued that 'the possibility of return migration for woman can be associated with their family relations, both with their family in Britain (if any) with their original family in Japan' (Izuhara and Shibata 2001: 579). It might also involve other factors such as one's entitlement to welfare benefits, work experience, existing social networks and marital status (Izuhara and Shibata 2001). The example introduced here underpins this idea by disentangling the reasons for her decision to go back to Japan after contemplation of the individual, cultural and socio-political circumstances. Finally, in the last part of the chapter, I am going to reflexively discuss my own emotional experiences of having my parents visit me in London. Understanding my parents' deep concern for their daughter living abroad, I carefully crafted the way I presented my local area and everyday life to them, in an effort to reduce their anxiety. Here, I intend to discuss such 'emotional accounts of place' and the power relations behind them (Jackson 2014). I also explore in this part the way my life in a different cultural space has gradually changed my way of interpreting the social world around me, and how this has unconsciously affected my relationship with my parents. Thus, this chapter demonstrates the complexity and diversity of migrants' transnational family relationships, as well as the validity of emotion as a sociological lens to understand the migration experience.

Emotion and migration studies

It is argued that 'emotions have become a much more central and widely adopted framework in migration studies' (Walsh 2012: 43). Admittedly there is a growing number of migration studies that focus on the emotional dimensions of migrants' mobility and everyday experiences to explore their socio-cultural identity claims (Walsh 2012; Hata et al. 2017) and practices in sustaining their transnational family bonds (Svašek 2008; Skrbiš 2008; Ryan 2008; Svašek 2010; Maehara 2010). Acknowledging that 'emotion should not be seen in the realm of pure individuality but in an interactive world lived by mind and bodies' (Maehara 2010: 955), these studies have contributed to uncovering a particular social discourse that underlies emotion. For example, feelings like the frustration and disappointment experienced by white British migrants in Dubai are interpreted as a claim to white superiority in a postcolonial context (Walsh 2012), while the sadness and sense of guilty shared by migrant women can indicate particular expectations from their families back home in terms of remittances, caring roles, behaviour and life choices (Ryan 2008: 309).

In order to understand this sort of interplay between an individual and the social world, 'emotion culture' is claimed by Hochschild (1979) to be an important concept. Hochschild argued that there are 'feeling rules' and 'display rules' – and these define appropriate emotional performance in specific situations (Ryan 2008: 300). Ryan's evaluation of Hochshild's work suggests that 'it brings together socio-cultural and structuralist perspectives with an awareness of the ways in which emotional reactions may be rooted in bodily process' (Ryan 2008: 300). Migration is a process of relocation and settlement, and in this regard, a migrant has to learn 'feeling rules' in the new place, at the same time as negotiating the maintenance of transnational family ties that often requires the emotional work of following 'feeling rules' in the home country. And these 'feeling rules' are differently experienced

according to gender, ethnicity, social roles, age and various other factors, and function as a driving force for social action (Svašek 2008). Thus, migration can be understood as 'an ongoing emotional journey' (Ryan 2008: 301) in which a migrant develops their own view of the world, influenced by both society of origin and arrival (Albrecht 2016).

Taking a pragmatic approach to her study of Japanese mothers' child-rearing experience in London, Hata (2017) discusses her respondents' emotional responses to the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11th in 2011, in which they shared their feelings of mourning the victims as well as worrying about their families in Japan. Similarly, in my interviews I also heard that some of my respondents organised a fundraising event with fellow Japanese mothers in the neighbourhood after the disaster. Faced with the worst natural disaster of our time, which happened in their home country, emotions such as anxiety, fear, uneasiness and sympathy for their family, friends and people suffering in Japan were shared within the Japanese community in southeast London. This not only evoked their national identity as Japanese, but motivated them to do something for their country, and must also have fostered the solidarity of the local Japanese community in southeast London. This is because the disaster mercilessly revealed the vulnerability of communication technology in this type of emergency situation, the uncertainness of the future, and the geographical distance between London and Japan that prevented instant physical support for their families. It was all also extremely frustrating for my respondents. Having reaffirmed the reality in which they are living, and finding they shared emotions with other Japanese in London, must have increased their sense of belonging to the local community as well as their emotional attachment to their family in Japan. Thus the 'emotional life of migrants is often characterised by contradiction, as migrants are morally pulled in different directions in social networks that stretch over large distances' (Svašek 2008: 216).

It is possible to critique existing sociological studies of migrants' emotion on the basis that they take a pathological approach which focuses on negative emotions such as illness, anger and anxiety, and ultimately failed to challenge the image of migrants as passive victims of circumstance (Albrecht 2016). However, as argued by Skrbiš (2008) '[M]igrant stories are linked with the experience of adjustment, settlement, nostalgia, a shattered sense of belonging, renewal, loss, discrimination, abrupt ending, new beginnings and new opportunities -all potent sources of emotions' (236). Thus, my respondents' experience of disaster in their home country, recounted above, demonstrates multiple layers of emotion: behind the explicit feelings such as sympathy and sadness, are embedded other layers of emotions like empathy and appreciation for ordinary life, which 'drives the establishment of new forms of attachment amidst the experience of the here and now' (Jones et al. 2014: 3–4). Understanding the complex interplay among family ties, migration, emotion and place belonging, this chapter carefully investigates the ways in which migrants actively negotiate an uncertain environment to shape their own lives (Albrecht 2016: 31) as well as how they control their emotions.

A mother caring her grown-up daughter

July 16th 2017

"It has been two weeks since my parents arrived and have been staying with us in London. My parents are willing to help me -my father drops and picks up my children from nursery and school, and my mother does all the housework –I really appreciate their support. (It seems that my mother is much better at cleaning than a cleaner who comes regularly, so I'm thinking to ask the cleaner not to come during the summer until my mother leaves.)

When I go to the office for work, I leave home with a tasty lunch box made by my mother in the morning. When I come home, children are already at home and the

dinner is ready. What a spoiled life! Thanks to my parents, I can do more night out these days. I'd like to enjoy this summer with an appreciation for my parents who always support me."

September 12th 2017

"After staying with us for ten weeks, finally my parents went back to Japan. It was the day when the new term started at Marcus's school. My parents and I always talk about anything without secret or hesitation each other, and because of this we often came into conflict. However, the time I spent with my parents was precious and valuable for sure. And I do believe that it is same for my husband and children as well.

I understand how difficult it is for my parents who are quite old to take a long flight from Japan to the UK, and even to live in a foreign country. I have no idea how I can thank them who always support me with a lot of love –regardless whenever, wherever and whatever situation I'm in.

I feel I am a perpetual spoiled daughter who cannot catch up with my mother's homemaker skills at all –both in terms of child care and house work. It was a great opportunity for me to spend time with my mother who is a great mentor of life for ten weeks to learn a lot of things from her nearby. I won't forget this experience and try to keep improve myself."

Regarding the transnational care and support given by parents to migrant children and grandchildren, King and Vullnetari (2009) refer to 'transnational grandparents', who travel frequently between their countries of origin and the country where their children and their family live. Their study of Albanian migrants in Greece introduces a similar family practice in which Albanian elderly parents visit their son and his family in Greece over winter. During their stay, the mother does the household chores while the father looks after his great-grandchildren, taking them to nursery or to the park – which is exactly similar to the pattern adhered to by Mai's parents in London. However, King and Vullnetari emphasise that such

family visits and transnational care are not available to everyone, and depend in a vital way on 'migrants' legal status and the ability of their parents to access travel documents' (2009: 33), which is often made difficult by the high cost of visa applications as well as complicated highly bureaucratic procedures. This fact further underpins the privileged global institutional position of my respondent Japanese families in southeast London, [25] as well as their socioeconomic privilege at an individual level. The parents in this context, who offer high quality domestic help and childcare through their frequent visits, can be considered valuable 'social capital' (Ryan 2008: 305) as well as rich cultural and economic capitals for the Japanese mothers, helping them negotiate between motherhood and career with less stress.

In Mai's blog posts, her ambivalence is clearly demonstrated. On the one hand she acknowledges and appreciates the value of the 'social capital' she is lucky enough to have, but on the other hand, she has a sense of guilt and inferiority when she compares herself with her mother, who offers the best quality cleaning, cooking and child care support for the family. For working middle-class Japanese mothers in southeast London, it is not unusual, but rather common practice to hire a babysitter and a cleaner to help maintain the balance between housework and work. In this context, what Mai does is normal and nothing to be ashamed of. However, the ten weeks she spends with her parents, seeing the ways her mother cares for the family, with all the cooking and cleaning, might have also triggered Mai's childhood memories of being looked after by her mother.

Thus, she experiences guilt and shame as a result of comparing her own everyday practice as a mother with the way her mother used to do it (and even now is doing) for her. It has been argued that '[I]ntergenerational lifestyle conflict common to families everywhere may be more

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[25] Having 190 countries as visa-free travel destinations, Japanese passport is ranked as the strongest one in the world followed by Singapore and South Korea (Adams 2019).

marked in transnational families where cultural and generational divides combine to produce yawning age gaps between family members' (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002 cited in Ryan 2008: 307). No matter how well Mai understands that her own childrearing environment as a working mother in contemporary London is very different from that of her mother who was a housewife in Japan forty years ago, the physically shared time and space as two 'mothers' for ten weeks seems to undermine Mai's confidence that she is following the 'right role-model' as a mother in London.

In addition, we can read in her monologue the sadness and impatience that come from her awareness of a fragile status quo that is susceptible to change because of their ageing and possible deterioration of their health. In view of their age (her parents are in late sixties or seventies, and Mai is in late thirties), in general it is the parents who need care; however, in this case, it is the daughter who still receives generous support from her parents. There is a Japanese gendered cultural expectation of family duty, in which daughters are responsible for looking after their elderly parents, that makes Mai express herself as 'spoiled daughter' in a self-deprecating way.

Here, I would like to consider how proximity affects one's emotional experience. In her study, Svasek argues;

> 'even though long-distance family connections can be maintained through the creative use of communication technology, return visits have a specific quality that cannot be reproduced "from a distance". The multi-sensorial dimension of co-presence, the ability to see, hear, smell and touch each other, and to interact emotionally within the same time/space frame, allow for a unique form of intimacy which is irreplaceable by communication at a distance.' (Svašek 2008: 219)

In this rendering, Mai's complex mix of feelings is obviously evoked by co-presence with her

mother in which they eat, sleep and talk in the same house. In particular, I consider that eating (food consumption) must be one of the most significant actions in multi-sensory experiences, since it directly appeals to various human senses through sight, smell, texture and palate, which all vividly evoke embodied memories and emotions. Thus, we can imagine how her mother's homemade food, the taste of which is familiar from childhood, can easily remind Mai of her social identity as a daughter. No matter how she perfectly performs the role of 'good working mother in London' by following local cultural practices, as well as understanding intergenerational and intercultural lifestyle differences between the UK and Japan, it seems that her own mother has been unconsciously elevated to an imagined role-model. Therefore, once the deeply etched memories are stimulated by multi-sensory experience during their visit, she compares herself in her own capacity as a mother against her own mother, and finds herself lacking, which results in a low self-evaluation.

However, when the focus shifts to the mother's side, she makes a different evaluation to her daughter. In summer 2015, which was prior to her blog post, I visited Mai at her Victorian four bedroom house with a lovely back garden in Honour Oak Park. She was expecting a second baby at that time and her parents had been visiting from Japan, again staying for ten weeks to support her. When I visited, Mai was not yet home from work and her parents welcomed me to her house. Because they were expecting me, as Mai had told them I was coming, her parents looked very relaxed and made me a cup of tea while we casually chatted and got to know each other.

Mai's mother Masako showed me a couple of photos of Mai's wedding in Japan, which were displayed around the house, as she told me how they had invited her husband's family and friends from the UK. She also told me a lot about Mai's husband, John, who graduated from

Oxford university, and who, along with his five brothers, had graduated from the renowned traditional boarding school. She told me that their father, who lives in countryside, used to work as a practicing doctor, is a member of a gentlemen's club, has a yacht and takes his family sailing when Masako visits Mai for a holiday. I could see that Masako had gained access to a totally new world through her daughter's marriage to a British husband, and it seemed that she quite enjoys this opportunity.

I noticed that Masako feels very proud, not only of her son-in-law John who has a well-off family background, but also of her daughter, Mai, who met him when she was also studying in Oxford and later married him. In her early twenties, Mai had already had a clear vision of herself studying abroad in the future. Then after working for several years to save enough money, she quit her job as scheduled and came to the UK for her degree, and eventually got married and had her own family. Mai may have not expected to settle in the UK with her own family initially, but for Masako, Mai is a daughter to be proud of because she has been making a 'perfect' life-course; marriage, children and working in a foreign country, achieved by navigating her life all by herself.   Some studies indicate that when their post migration lives fail (especially their marriages), women may experience a sense of disapproval and shame that deters them from a reunion with their transnational family (Ryan 2008; Maehara 2010). To put it the other way around, a 'successful' migrant is someone able to maintain a tightly knit relationship with their family in home country, and this can be convincingly demonstrated in Mai's case.

The co-learning relationship between a mother and a daughter

I also realised that Masako has respect for her daughter's London lifestyle, and directs herself to learn the local values and practices. During my stay at Mai's house, Masako asked me to go

to the nursery with her to pick up her grandson, Marcus. The nursery was located within walking distance from the house when we got there Masako managed Marcus's pick-up from nursery staff very smoothly. In walking around the local area with Masako, I could see she was quite familiar with the local geography as well as with Mai's and Marcus's daily routine, knowledge she must have accumulated through repeated long visits to the UK to stay with them.

I often saw from Mai's blog posts that every time she invited colleagues, neighbours, and old school friends to her house, Masako welcomes guests with homemade cooking, taking special care to meet guests' expectations and cater to their dietary restrictions (she cooks not only Japanese, but also beef steak or vegetarian dishes). Thus, similar to the ways Mai has Mai learnt locally shared values and practices, Masako has learned them from Mai, which makes her a part of the community. When Marcus has a playdate with his school friends, Mai has posted that Masako and her husband take them to a park or to the museum instead of her. Here again, by taking care of the children, Masako may have learned how it is common for mothers in the area to work outside the home and help each other, which has developed her understanding of Mai's mothering practices.

In our conversation, Masako told me;

> I'm so surprised and impressed to see when the British gentlemen make a cup of tea for a guest! Like John or the husband of Marcus's piano teacher, they ask me "would you like anything to drink?" so naturally and offer me a glass of water or a cup of tea.

There is an old saying in Japanese that 'men should not be allowed in the kitchen', which is indicative of patriarchy and the unequal gendered division of domestic labour. It seems that

Masako still has such an old-fashioned image of married couples, therefore an encounter with such "British gentlemen" must have been eye-opening for her. By accumulating experience through her stay in London, she may have been gradually learning about a different sort of relationship between a married couple, and trying to understand such diverse values.

Thus, my observation revealed that through emotional experiences such as a sense of guilt, appreciation, sadness, pride and respect, both daughter and mother interpret and re-shape the world around them (Svašek 2008). This process involves not only their current experience, but also childhood memory, biography, and shared values in particular contexts to re-construct or re-affirm a transnational family bond between them.

A daughter caring for her aging parents

In the case above, Mai's emotional experience as a 'spoiled daughter' might have come from a power dynamic between a daughter and her parents (especially the mother) in which her mother Masako demonstrates her own power by taking control of the housework for Mai's family both inside and out of the home. This section, explores the shift in power relations between a daughter and her parents that accompanies the aging process, and how this shift illuminates different emotional experiences and practices.

Mika's parents, who are both in their eighties, visit Mika almost every summer from Japan and stay at her house in East Dulwich for a month. During these summer visits, Mika, her husband and sons and her parents all used to go to the Lake District by car, but last year they left her parents at her house and went by themselves. Mika thinks it is good for both her parents and herself to reduce stress – and three generations travelling together (the parents in their eighties, Mika and her husband Mathew in their forties, and her sons in their teens) must be

exhausting, as each of them prefers a different pace of everyday life, and there are communication difficulties between Japanese and English. Thus, as she has grown up children, Mika's parents' visit to London is not about supporting Mika's everyday life in the same way as Mai's parents; rather it is an opportunity for Mika to take care of her parents, although they effectively spend their time in the UK quite independently and freely without relying too much on Mika.

When they got home from camping in Devon (see chapter 5), Mika and her family then went to the Seychelles for a holiday and her parents went to Paris with their friends, a couple from Japan also in their eighties. While Mika was on holiday, these friends came from Niigata, Japan to London, to stay with Mika's parents before travelling to Paris by taking a Eurostar train from St. Pancras station. Before they travelled, Mika had been really worried about letting her elderly parents travel to Paris alone with their (also elderly) friends, because of the risk of health issues, crime or other trouble. She even asked me to share my experience of being targeted by a pickpocket in the Metro in Paris with her parents to remind them to be careful. In order to minimise both her anxiety and the risk of trouble, Mika had arranged a taxi from her house to St. Pancras station beforehand, as well as a local guide in Paris to ensure they had a safe and comfortable trip.

This shows clearly that it is the daughter who cares and worries about the parents. Not only because they are old, but also because, having lived in London for a long time and built a strong attachment to the area, she has gained the power to determine her parents' behaviour during their stay. Interestingly, while Mika showed little concern about how the parents and their friends would do at their house, she expressed strong anxiety about their visit to Paris. This is an illustration of her emotional geography, in which she draws a boundary that articulates her own and her family's comfort zone. Mika's accumulated cultural, economic and

social capital allows her to make a judgement about where is safe/dangerous, and without this she could not make all the arrangement of the trip, or make her large four-bedroom house available for her parents and guests to stay. In this sense, I think that for Mika, being able to offer a comfortable and enjoyable summer holiday experience to her parents by exploiting all available resources, including her knowledge and experience, is part of her role as a caring daughter. By undertaking all this organisational and emotional work, it seems that Mika herself has become valuable social capital for her parents.

One day in September 2017, I visited Mika's house again to return the sleeping bag which I borrowed from her for the camp. It was already several weeks since her parents had gone back to Japan. Mika told me that since they left she had been busy helping her friend to organise a summer course in fashion management at the university where she studied. To be involved in academia, supporting young students to develop their unique ideas and design from a concept, was a completely new experience for Mika, but she reflected that it was good for her to keep herself busy after the summer holiday.

> Mika: I think it was good for me, because every time my parents left I felt a sense of emptiness... so good to keep myself busy this time.
> Kaoru: Even Mika-san (who has been here for such a long time), do you feel like that?
> Mika: Because they are getting older and older every time I see them, so you know...

The emotions experienced by Mika after her parents' went home must include sadness and homesickness as well as a slight sense of release. Some of my respondents said that even though their parents used to come to London every year, they do not come any more because

they are getting older. Otherwise, every time they leave, elderly parents say "This might be our last visit to you", which is a sign that they are getting older. Sharing such experience with her friends, Mika must also be aware that she might not have many chances left to see her parents in London.

No matter how a migrant maintains their emotional attachment to their home country, being separated from their family after a temporary reunion reminds them of the geographical distance between them, as well as of the different social space where they are each living. This is the intolerable emotional strain experienced by a migrant who has family in two different places, having to juggle her multiple belongings and subjectivities. In order to handle this, Mika found that working with her friend contributed a lot to healing her 'emotional exhaustion'. I think that rather than a simple strategy to keep herself busy, so as not to have any mental capacity to think about her parents, this is rather deliberate emotional management to reaffirm her sense of belonging 'here' through her friend and her work, as well as her family in London (Maehara 2010).

Anxiety for the unforeseen future

Although Mika and other Japanese women in the southeast London community are strongly aware that in the near future they will have to confront the fact that their parents are getting older, and express anxiety about it, I have not yet come across a case where someone was faced with the problem of care for their parents in Japan. In my interview with Saki, she told me she was worried about this, and described her insecure feeling of not having any reference person around.

> "I think this is an issue for us (Japanese women in London) –how we should do with
> our parents. I really want to ask anyone (other Japanese women) older than I, 'how

do you do with your parents in Japan?' I want to talk with not with those in the same generation like forties or fifties, but with those in sixties and living here. I guess in Japan, there're a lot of cases of '*roh-roh kaigo* (elderly care by the elderly)', like a sixty-year-old daughter looks after her mother who are in eighties at home. But then I wonder in the case if a daughter lives abroad like us, how does she cope with the situation? I really want to know about it."

Even after we had begun talking about another subject, Saki was still thinking about this elderly care issue. She came back to it:

"(muttering to herself) how I should do with '*roh-roh kaigo*'... According to an acquaintance of an acquaintance, she sends remittance... she exchanges pound to Japanese yen, 20,000 yen or something like that (and send it to her parents in Japan). It may be not enough and I don't know how it is used... If we're in Japan, it is common either to take care of our parents directly or to support them by remittance, isn't it? It makes me think... it often pops into my mind. (talking herself) But I don't think it now, it's not time to think yet..."

Here, Saki's deep anxiety about the uncertain future is clearly demonstrated. Interestingly this also told me that although she has a tight knit network with her fellow Japanese mothers in the neighbourhood, the community is formed around children and is quite homogeneous in terms of their generation (between their early thirties and early fifties), none of them has a clue about this question of caring for their elderly parents in Japan. Thus, Saki's skewed (in terms of age) social network of Japanese in London increases her anxiety for the future. In addition, it also shows that having established family ties in London, the option of going back to Japan in the future is not up for consideration. The knowledge that she will not be able to offer any physical care for her elderly parents when they need it drives her to anxiously imagine various alternatives to offering hands on care, which are represented by the idea of

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sending money.

In a practical sense, there is no single solution these issues about care, and her family structure (whether she has any brothers or sisters in Japan) and socio-economic circumstances will largely shape the way they are able to cope when the time comes. Nevertheless, in Saki's monologue above, it seems that she frames herself and fellow Japanese mothers in a single category of 'daughters living in London' that highlights their shared social identity as well as their corresponding culturally embedded obligations to their family, and the expectation of finding a 'correct answer' to 'what should it be as a caring Japanese daughter in the community'. By sharing the same anxiety and anticipating future action, they might experience 'emotional resonance' (Maehara 2010: 965) that shapes their subjectivities (Svašek 2008).

Thus, the two sections above have explored different types of transnational care and various emotional experiences within that, as well as dynamic and interactive relationships between the care giver and those who receive care. As the literature on transnational care argues (King and Vullnetari 2009; Krzyżowski and Mucha 2014), the way my respondents cared for their elderly parents in Japan involved financial, personal, and emotional practice. This was evident in their concern about future expenses, in looking after them directly during their stay in London, and in expressing gratitude and a sense of debt through a blog post. And, as we have seen, 'the boundary between caregiver and the care receiver is more often blurred in a mutually dependent care relationship' (Huang et al. 2012: 132), enacted according to the stage of the family life course. In this regard, scholars argue that this type of socioeconomic transfer in which migrant children care for their elderly parents would be more significant in the world where we see the growth of aging societies (Krzyzowski and Mucha 2014).

Return migration as a daughter

While my respondents who married and had their own family in the UK did not mention about an option of going back to Japan to care their parents, the situation is different for an unmarried woman. Yoko, who had decided to go back to Japan after living in London for seventeen years, always said that although there was no single reason for her decision, it had something to do with her family. Her father runs his own business where her mother and brother also work. When she goes back to her home town in Fukuoka, Yoko also works for her father's company, helping her mother who works as an accountant. Her parents are in sixties and still look quite young and healthy, but Yoko thinks she should think seriously about going back to Japan before anything happens to her family. If something should happen it would be too late to consider whether she should go back to Japan or stay in the UK. It seems that she wanted to help her family and start taking over their work gradually while their health is still good, to reduce their burden. Her brother's recent divorce seems like another sign that she should think about what she can do as a family member. Yoko has often said 'they (her family) have let me do as I like for nearly twenty years here in London' while they have been doing the family business.

> Kaoru: Why have you started to consider going back to home? You told me that there's no single reason, but gradually the idea pop into your mind.
> Yoko: Well, yes.. maybe something to do with 'family'. I thought what should I do being single here.. I guess I've come to reach an age when I miss my family. I feel I got old[26]!
> Kaoru: You're still young! But I think I know what you mean. I also often think something that I would never care about in my twenties, such as aging of my parents.

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[26] Yoko was 43 years old when we had this conversation in 2016.

Yoko: That's true, I'd also never cared.

Kaoru: But one day, suddenly I realised that they're quite old! In my twenties, I was just thinking about myself, but then when I became thirty and noticed that my parents are already in their sixties.

Yoko: Indeed...

Yoko: There was a period which I didn't go back to home for four years. Actually I couldn't go back, because I was going to get a residence visa and I was too anxious about it[27]. Once the issue had almost settled down, I came back and met my family after so long, and then.. I realised 'Oh gosh, I forgot that everyone get old'.

Kaoru: Four years' interval must have been quite long.

Yoko: Exactly, it was..

Kaoru: Didn't you feel miss family at that time?

Yoko: I might have thought that I wanted to go back to Japan.. but yet I couldn't afford to think of anything but myself (especially getting a resident visa) at that time, so didn't consider it seriously. But since then I have gone back to my home to see my family every year.

On another day, Yoko told me that her mother has been trying to persuade her to come back home for many years and she feels that she has been beaten down, finally, although she reflects that the situation would be different if she were married and had her own family here. Being a grownup and independent individual, I often felt that the sense of responsibility that Yoko has assumed toward her family seems to be too much. However, on unravelling the threads of

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[27] Interestingly, this illustrates a great contrast, during the visa application screening, with Takako who applied for a "Marriage or Civil Partnership Visitor visa" and described her nonchalance about the process in Chapter 3. Having a relationship with a British citizen, even though Takako was troubled by the application process, there was little anxiety and uneasiness about failing to be allowed to settle in her narrative. On the contrary, Yuko's conversation illuminates her physical and emotional exhaustion with the application process. It tells us that the different life circumstances of these women and the degree to which there is comfort in knowing that their application relies on a relationship.

my conversation with her, I discovered that there are some intricately intertwined circumstances and considerations among Yoko's family members: if she were married, if she were not self-employed and had a stable job in the UK, if her family did not run its own business and if her brother did not divorce etc... . If one of these situations were different, Yoko and her family might have come to a different decision.

From this conversation, we can see that it is largely her identity as a member of a family rather than as an individual that underlies her decision, and that this might be shaped by Japanese cultural norms of caring. In 'familistic' and 'family-centred' welfare system regime, gender is an important determinant for elderly care within Japanese households and responsibility is shouldered primarily by women (Yamashita and Soma 2017). And it is also common that a daughter-in-law (specifically the wife of the eldest son) undertakes the care responsibility for her parents-in-law. This is understood as a generational contract in which 'the eldest son had a duty to succeed the family and (his wife) to provide care for their parents/parents-in-law in co-residency and, in return, inherited the entire family wealth' (Izuhara 2004: 649). In Yoko's case, it can be understood that the divorce of her brother (the only son in her family) and loss of her sister-in-law, who was supposed to have been the caretaker of Yoko's parents (in theory), could have partly convinced Yoko to go back to Japan to take that responsibility.

In their study of migration and old age, Izuhara and Shibata suggest that 'return migration could be an option for those who had retained stronger social and family ties as well as the financial means to support their later life in the country of origin' (2001: 579). In the case of Yoko, having a family which runs its own business, and being expected to succeed her mother in the job, even though she had no employment history in Japan prior to her migration to the UK, she did not need to worry about her job, income and place to live after her return to her

hometown, and that must have been a strong force driving her decision to return.

However, while these individual and familial practical circumstances might have been decisive factors underlying her decision to return, her narrative demonstrates that this is merely one among multiple other factors, including emotional reasons. The way she said '(the family) has *let me* do as I like for nearly twenty years' implies that she was allowed to be away from family and less involved with family business, while her brother has been working with her parents, which demonstrates her sense of debt. The seventeen years that she has been away from her family and Japanese society do not make Yoko relatively more free from Japanese cultural norms of how to be a 'responsible caring daughter'. Rather, it seems that she has accumulated frustration and guilt at not being (able to be) a caring daughter for her parents throughout that time. Arguably, the rising tide of her emotional distress has not been in direct proportion to the time she has been away. I imagine that it must have started rising sharply when she became aware of her parents' aging.

Although culturally and socially constructed obligations are experienced and negotiated differently by migrant daughters, such family-related emotional distress is not unique to Yoko, and can be found in other studies. For example, a study of migrant women in Australia and their aging families in Italy suggests that having a strong belief in the inter-relationship between "well-being" and a "good parent/child" relationship, migrant daughters and mothers manage to reproduce a sense of 'co-presence' in diverse ways (see Baldassar 2008). Similarly, Vermot's study on Argentinian migrants to the United States and Spain demonstrates the emotional conflict of women, caught 'between her mother's expectation and her own interpretation of her role in relation with her family as a migrant' (2015: 141). Vermot argues that transnational communications via new technologies have enabled migrants' families to express a lack of co-presence, which may trigger a sense of guilt among them. It is suggested

that even if the mother of a migrant does not intend to make her daughter feel guilty, both virtual and physical conversations between a mother and a transnational daughter remind the daughter that 'she has transgressed social norms' (141). Although attention to the role of a woman as a daughter is as yet limited in migration studies compared with attention to transnational motherhood (Takeda 2012), a growing number of attempts has been made to unpack the complex emotional experience of transnational daughters.

In addition to these personal and cultural factors, extending over a long period of time, institutional and political circumstances have affected Yoko's decision. Even though she has got a residence permit, once she has been away from the UK for two years, this will be invalid. After deciding to go back to Japan, Yoko was concerned about this and even considered applying for a British passport that would enable her to be more flexible about coming back to the UK in the future. However, after the Brexit referendum, Yoko said that she was no longer interested in a British passport. Here again, Brexit must not have been the only reason to give up applying for a British passport, and she must have seriously considered both the cost and her future plans (how realistic is it likely to be for her to come back to the UK). Nevertheless, it indicates that Brexit has significantly changed the meaning and value of living in the UK for Yoko. Yoko sometimes used to say jokingly that she wanted to move to France, to live by the sea, which she thinks is a good place for artistic inspiration. In this regard, her life in the UK had been valuable, since it also gave her mobility and settlement within the EU. However, Brexit has changed the value of the British passport that used to allow her to move to other EU countries, as well as the value of British society which used to embrace the diversity and multi-cultural values brought by immigrants. And at the same time as Brexit has diminished the value of life in the UK, in Yoko's understanding, her emotional attachment to her home town Fukuoka and her family there has increased due to her parents' aging and her

brother's divorce. Thus, her decision to go home demonstrates the 'multilayered, biographical and complex nature' of migration (Ni Laoire 2000: 241), in which a succession of decisions and trajectories come about through the entanglement of individual, cultural, socio-political circumstances and negotiation among multiple-identities.

Understanding others through my positionality

In this final section, I reflect on my own experience as a daughter in a transnational family. Throughout my fieldwork, in which my respondents have shared their emotional experiences, I have found that my feelings for my family in Japan and the way I shape my everyday life in London are largely influenced by them. The interpersonal relationship between a researcher and research participants is implied by Jenkins, who says that 'feeling and emotion are powerful motivational factors in the design and conduct of research projects and shape the relationship between the researcher and his/her object of study as well as understanding and interpretation' (Gray 2008: 937). Admittedly, my motivation to understand my respondents' everyday experiences as migrant Japanese women has been underpinned by my own emotional encounters, including sympathy, envy, awe and fear. In the following self-reflexive narrative, I investigate a how a migrant daughter's relationship with her parents and the emotions aroused by it shape her social world, while her social world is also shaped by her 'specific socio-cultural and structural context' (Ryan 2008: 300).

Like my respondents, I also have regular family visits from Japan. However because I am single, the purposes of their visits are simply sightseeing, reunion and bringing foods from Japan. They have a once a year opportunity to travel abroad to see me, and I try to take this opportunity to show my appreciation for their emotional, financial and material support for

my life in London by being a good host and travel guide during their roughly ten days stay. Like Mika, using all the knowledge, experience and social capital I have accumulated in London I plan carefully for them so that they can have great holiday, which I feel is my obligation as a daughter. However, despite my intention to be an obedient, cheerful and kind daughter, in reality, such temporal and physical proximity to my parents is not straightforward. The time we have lived apart each other has made me insensitive to the reality of their aging, and I realise that sometimes a travel schedule I have planned has too much squeezed into it for them to cope with. Then, once things do not go to plan because they walk too slowly and need long breaks, I feel disappointed with myself for not being aware of their needs, as well as feeling irritation and frustration. In addition, because they understand the frustration I feel about the gap between the plan and the reality, my parents often show appreciation and a sense of guilt toward me, which further highlights my failure to be a 'good caring daughter'. Thus, while I try to take care of my parents in a way that takes into account their age and my 'territoriality' in London, I always feel that they don't want to be a bother to me by causing me to care about them too much. This power dynamic between us generates a complex emotional experience that effectively re-constructs my world and life.

When I take my parents around London, I realise that I need to make sure they do not worry about me and arbitrarily choose 'acceptable' everyday scenes to introduce them to. For example, I take them to typical tourist sites such as Buckingham Palace, Greenwich and the museums, but slightly hesitate to show them around my local areas, like Brixton and Camberwell where I work - even though these areas in south London are much more familiar places for me than other places. However, I interpretively contrast tourist sites, which symbolise British royalty, whiteness and history with my neighbourhood, which represents multicultural, ethnically mixed and modern London, and make a judgement about which is

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more appropriate to show my parents. In the process, I understand and internalise my parents' expectation of their transnational daughter's life (they expect me to not be involved in an unsafe environment), and to respond to such expectations, I manage what I should show them as well as what they do not need to see.

In this process, I find that I judge things through my sensory experience of multiculturalism (Wise and Velayutham 2009). The animated conversations heard in different languages, lively music and exotic flavours of spices coming from restaurants, colourful fashion and people's hairstyles, the trash and the smell of marijuana on the street -all these aspects of the place have contributed to the development of my emotional attachment to the south London area. However, being aware of my social identity as a daughter, the place suddenly becomes 'unacceptable' in relation to my parents, as an expression of a strategy of physical avoidance of potential fear and harm (Svašek 2010). Behind this, there is the thought and the realisation that no matter how ordinary this scene of lively multiculturalism is for me, my parents (who are visitors and unfamiliar with such ethnically diverse society) might not only imagine themselves to be vulnerable (Svašek 2010), but also get anxious about their daughter who works in the area until late in the evening. Such a reconstruction of local geography based on the negotiation of 'imagining the imagined social world' in a daughter-parent relationship is 'not necessarily based on racist ideology', rather it is 'rooted in embodied emotional dispositions' (Svašek 2010: 874).

I have discovered that on the one hand, my social identity as a daughter affects the way in which I experience emotions, while on the other it also has a curious impact on how I express my feelings using my body. Having lived in London for five years, I have learned and embodied physical expressions of emotions from my local friends as well as my respondents. We hug

each other hello and goodbye, and hold someone round the shoulders when we want to show sympathy for sadness – it took me a while to learn these emotional expressions and practice, but I have gradually embodied them so that I can practice them naturally without any hesitation. Although this sort of communication using body language is uncommon in Japanese society, it has become the habitus of the Japanese community in London, and such physical practices of emotional expression are commonly used even between Japanese. However, interestingly, no matter how much I feel I have got used to this custom, I cannot practice such physical communication with my parents. And even my respondents, the Japanese mothers who hug and kiss their children on a daily basis say that they would not make such physical contact with their Japanese parents. In my case, I understand that if I hug my parents, they might find the encounter with such different cultural practice awkward - not only because of the physical contact with their daughter, which is unusual in their cultural context, but also because their daughter has been living in a different social world where she has accumulated and embodied different habitus from them.

Whenever I see off or am seen off by my parents after our short and temporary reunion, I feel so painful and lonely going back to my life living apart from my family again. Especially, after a temporary return to Japan, when I come back to London, I always have to ask myself 'what is my reason to go back to London?' My respondents also often express similar sadness at leaving Japan after their annual visit, but they have their own family and have established strong family-ties in London, and that is sufficient reason for them to come back. However, being single myself, no matter that I have good friends, a course of study and work in London, I feel these are not sufficient reasons to overcome the emotional exhaustion of separation from my family, compared with my respondents. On such occasions at the airport, I always imagine how it would be less stressful if I could hug my parents to show my appreciation and love for

them, as well as receiving emotional comfort through the warmth of human bodies. Then, instead of hugging each other, I shake hands with my parents, as I see them off. It is a slightly awkward moment for us, but at the same time it is a compromise between a daughter and her parents who have different habitus', which allows them to exchange and reassure one another of their care, appreciation and love with little body contact.

I have also bought two mugs for my parents for Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day These are nothing special, just mass produced items I found at a local Sainsbury's, but each of them has a boldly printed message on the side: 'Mum, thank you' and 'Number One Dad'. Even though we have Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day in Japan, and there is a similar custom of sending flowers, presents and cards, I have never seen that sort of product there, designed to meet the demand for specific seasonal events, with simple and direct messages. The printed messages on them may have become a mere façade, and have lost their original meaning. But for me, following this British tradition and sending such commercialised objects to my parents makes it easier for me to deliver in a natural way the true emotions I am embarrassed to speak face-to-face. Such "transnational objects" manifest continuing reciprocal relationships between a sender and a recipient, and their tangibility obliges their owner to embody the internalised presence of the absent and longed for people and places (Baldassar 2008). In her study, Baldassar observed transnational family relationship of Italian migrants. She found that various inanimate objects such as photographs, cards, paintings, and even small polished pebbles had a significance that could indicate emotional attachment to place and relationship. She argued that

> The importance of the "tangibility" of these objects, which might be described as their "emotionality", that is, their ability to be "felt" or at least to be used as a conduit for emotion and feeling by proxy, is in many instances more important than their content.

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The activity of touching and seeing ⋯ these items renders them important expressions of emotion and obligation. (2008: 258)

Thus, the content of these objects is less important, but rather people make emotional communication by "reading between the lines" of reciprocal practices, such as the frequency, timing and choice of gifts. In my case, since Mothers' Day in the UK and in Japan are on different dates (the Mothers' Day in Japan is one month later than in the UK), whenever I see such products and cards in a shop, I need to buy and keep them for a month so that they can be delivered at the right time in Japan. Following Baldassar's argument, such careful attention to the timing of a gift could be interpreted as a negotiation of my absence and emotional management to ease a sense of longing for each other.

When I went back home to Japan and saw my parents using these mugs for breakfast every day, I felt that even though the social worlds inhabited by daughter and parents are culturally, temporally and geographically far apart, such ordinary objects effectively work for the transnational family as 'inner dialogues' (Svašek 2010: 868) with the absent family member to maintain strong ties between them.

Figure 16 Photo: Mugs as demonstrations of transnational kinship

Conclusion

This chapter has explored various ways of understanding and practicing being a 'caring Japanese daughter' in a transnational family. Using my positionality reflexively, it has illuminated the ongoing negotiation of the mother-daughter relationship both at a distance and in proximity as it changes over the life course. A Japanese word '*Oya-kou-kou*' (親孝行: directly translated as 'filial piety') is often used to describe the practices and norms through which children express their gratitude to parents, and this implies reciprocity between them. Even though they understand that parents' care for children does not expect anything in return, my respondents demonstrated their sense of obligation to care their parents. And the idea '*Oya-kou-kou*' may not only include diverse types of care shown by children for their parents, including financial, material, physical and emotional support, but may also be differently understood in the context of gender as this chapter has shown. Having the Japanese cultural and gendered understanding of caring, my observation of these women who are living in a different cultural space has revealed the emotional labour they do to maintain their transnational ties and obligations to family members both "here" and "there" (Ryan 2008: 302).

In particular, this chapter highlights the internal conversation between past, present and future that guides the activity and practices of being a caring daughter. To be precise, 'being a mother' or 'the aging of parents' - these life events or natural phenomena caused by the passage of time evoke individual childhood memories or concern for the future. And then the varied emotions that arise as a result of these reflections shape and embody a woman's social identity as a transnational daughter. In addition, having lived away from their home country, the women have learned specifically local values while accumulating various forms of capitals

in London. Then, the daughters actively negotiate and re-interpret 'what it is like to be a caring Japanese daughter' in their situation and try to practice it by deploying their accumulated various forms of capitals for their parents' benefit. This illuminates the complex interplay of transnational relationships with the life course, as well as the way they perform and practice their gendered and ethnic identity within it.

Focussing on moments and scenes in which these transnational families experience proximity and co-presence, this chapter has also explored diverse ways in which emotion functions in the everyday experiences of migrants. I observed that my respondents share their emotion with other members of the community and that this fosters their solidarity and sense of belonging to the locality in London. However, on the other hand, it also seems that this local geography, to which we Japanese daughters have become so attached, was often curated and presented differently to our parents - something I consider to involve the emotional negotiation of how the social world is imagined by the other. I also observed that their emotions are mediated not only by objects, but also by the practice of multi-sensory experience in daily life and that these intermittently evoke their transnational family ties. In this regard, the boundary between 'here' and 'there' is not always salient. Their emotional distance from Japan is unstable and fluctuating, swinging between different emotions and experiences over the life course.

Conclusion

Communities of practice –performing one's identity through relationships

> Belonging is not to a fixed community, with the implication of closed boundaries, but its more fluid, seeing places as sites for performing identities. Individuals attach their own biography to their 'chosen residential location, so that they tell stories that indicate how their arrival and subsequent settlement is appropriate to their sense of themselves. People who come to live in an area with no prior ties to it, but who can link their residence to their biographical life history, are able to see themselves as belonging to the area. *This kind of elective belonging is critically dependent on people's relational sense of place, their ability to relate their area of residence against other possible areas, so that the meaning of place is critically judged in terms of its relational meanings.* (Savage et al. 2005: 29, emphasise by author)

Throughout the empirical chapters, this study has explored diverse trajectories and everyday experiences of Japanese women in southeast London. Even though most of them had little personal ties to the area and their settlement was not carefully plotted in advance, the biographical interviews and observations of their everyday life clearly illuminated their sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, which has been developed through changing relationships with others along with life course. Having been aware that 'there are similar people living in this area' (Ai's quote in Chapter 5) in terms of socioeconomic background as well as cultural and political interests, regardless Japanese

or non-Japanese residents, they find that they are 'appropriate people' to live in the area, and keep learning and practicing how to 'be social' (Cohen 1985) in community -this process embodies a solidarity among those who share the set of value and engage in reproduction of that value within network of people.

The quotation above underpins this idea that sense of belonging is developed as a process of constant negotiation of rationalizing, learning and practicing to be a member of community where people 'internalise new ways of behaving and thus shape the habitus' (Benson and O'Reilly 2018; 260). Regarding such understanding of community, which is not a mere geographical territory, but as a structure that shapes people's practice and action, and vice versa, is conceptualised as communities of practice by Wenger (1998). The concept sees communities as 'sets of people they share time with and who shape their understandings, hopes, and dreams, and who offer constraints and opportunities, through norms, rules and expectations' (Benson and O'Reilly 2018: 260). By adopting this concept, this thesis highlights that the Japanese women's everyday life in southeast London is not simply shaped by their gender or ethnicity. Rather, their multiple identities and practices are shaped through relationships with others, and these women also actively engage in the process of giving meanings to their practice that reproduces shared values among them.

This conclusion first revisits the validity of communities of practice as conceptual frame with the aim of highlighting contributions made in this thesis. A caricature of 'East Dulwich mummies' will be introduced there to argue how this concept enables us to have better understanding of multiple identities and multi-layered belongings of these women which is not simply shaped by ethnicity. Then it returns to the research questions,

exploring these further through the empirical findings presented throughout the thesis. These will be further discussed in the following section where I highlight how the two theoretical frameworks of this research, namely a biographical approach and translocalism, have contributed to the study of migration; and furthermore, how bringing these concepts together allows us to understand the complex interplay between individual life-path and social structure.

Being a mother in East Dulwich as localised practice

At the beginning of this thesis, I stated that this is a study about the Japanese women who live in East Dulwich, a neighbourhood commonly understood as British middle-class (Jackson and Benson 2014). I intended to unpack their complex and multi-layered relationships in this local space, asking how their practices shaped their social and gendered identities as they navigated their everyday lives. Although the number of sociological studies specifically focusing on this area are limited (Jackson and Benson 2014; Scanlon 2016; Hata 2017), the name of East Dulwich can often be found in diverse news media or on estate agents' websites, advertising it as rich in local amenities that appeal to young middle-class families:

> "I want to live in… East Dulwich"
>
> 'East Dulwich is often called the Crouch End of the South. Expect mums, prams and a Gymboree in your local café. Sitting between its posh older brother (wealthy Dulwich Village) and its wayward little sister (trendy Peckham) it feels like it takes a bit of both and still feels like you are not in central London.' (Mellor 2014, The London Economic)

"East Dulwich: City cash flows into new nappy valley"

'Once the haunt of student doctors and resting actors, East Dulwich is now a suburb of choice for young families and bonus-loaded buyers, says Susan Emmett.' (2007 'East Dulwich: City cash flows into new nappy valley, The Times)

"Backlash as East Dulwich café owner defends asking mum to take crying baby outside in south London's 'nappy valley'" (Simpson 2018, Evening Standard)

As these quotes from web articles and headlines explicitly show, this area has symbolic identity –it is not simply an attractive place for families, but its distinctiveness is shaped through the figure of the local (middle-class) mother. An abbreviation, 'EDMs', meaning 'East Dulwich Mummies' has even been introduced by The Independent news website (Merrick 2013): suggesting that mothers in East Dulwich are recognised as a group of women who share a certain type of values and practice. The article reads:

I am an EDM – an East Dulwich Mummy. There are quite a few of us: we push our Bugaboos or shepherd our scooter-riding toddlers around Dulwich Park in leafy south London. We drink frappe lattes at the coffee shop and buy our globe artichokes from the greengrocers on North Cross Road (if we don't grow them ourselves). We shop at an upmarket second-hand clothes swap shop. We are the middle-class mummy cliché. We are the distilled version of

the smug mothers on Mumsnet. You may laugh at us, with our play date "business cards" ("Isobel, 3, free Mondays"). (Merrick 2013, The Independent)

By abbreviation 'EDMs', it caricatures the significant lifestyle and consumption patterns of a group of mothers in the area, those who have small children, high interest in consuming organic food, with good financial sense, who appreciate their strong social network, and are ambitious to send their children to good schools (Merrick 2013; The Times 2007). In the morning and at lunch time, admittedly, local cafes and pubs are filled with mothers accompanied by babies in their buggies, and in the afternoon streets and busses are crowded with children with their mothers or nannies. The image of mothers who walk side by side on Lordship lane, with its range of organic fishmonger, butchers, vegetable stores, wine shops and cheese store, as well as a boutique for children's clothing and a charity shop is symbolic of East Dulwich.

However, through my daily life in this area, I have noticed that 'EDMs' do not refer only to the white British, and mothering in East Dulwich is a practice that includes women from a range of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which disturbs the caricature above. I see mothers who seem to have just dropped their children at a nearby school enjoying a chat in Italian at a local café in the morning, and hear a young nanny speaking to a small girl in Spanish on their way home from school. And as has been illustrated throughout this thesis, my respondent Japanese mothers share some of the same values and practice as local mothers: the Japanese mothers shop at those organic stores, socialise at local pubs and hire a British private tutor for their children. Their other practices, such as hiring a Japanese nanny or organising Japanese educational activities around children seem to be ethnic practices, demonstrating their concern about

reproducing their Japanese cultural heritage. However by understanding this neighbourhood as communities of practice (O'Reilly 2012b; Wenger 2009) where people negotiate the meaning of motherhood in East Dulwich and mutually learn how to be a part of this middle-class neighbourhood, these should not be seen as just highly ethnicised practices underpinned by their Japanese identity, but are in fact common practices that they share with other local mothers foregrounded by their shared values as EDMs.

Understanding the fluidity of gender and ethnic identity as well as their socioculturally constructed aspects (Hu 2016), this thesis has explored Japanese women's everyday practice and social relationships with others in community-making and -participation. Ethnographic studies of migration often focus on particular relationships or sites to understand migrants' everyday experience and ongoing negotiations – whether this is in educational space (school, university), the workplace (office, hospitals), a group sharing the same interests (sports, music, volunteering), domestic space (home making) and so on. However, in reality, the social world that constitutes one's life is more complex and the different sphere intersect in various ways. Therefore, we cannot simply determine that if a group of people with the same ethnic background share a particular practice, it is shaped just by their ethnic identity. As I have argued, using the example of EDMs, understanding the local context of migrants' everyday lives - where their life is located, what value is embedded in the space, what values they share -enables us to uncover the complex meanings of their practice. Thus, by not focusing on a single everyday location, but on the locality where different spheres of their life intersect, this thesis contributes to a comprehensive understanding of migrants' struggle for value in the social field.

Community as boundary-expressing symbol?

Having highlighted the significance of 'community' in this thesis, yet I am also aware of some critiques of it which I address in this section. First, the boundary setting character of community has to be carefully acknowledged (Cohen 1985). A. Day argues that while 'community' implies its shared cultural identity within it, it simultaneously strikes up boundaries (2011). It is anticipated that the similarity and sense of belonging articulated within a community would be maintained and experienced through performance, but that might also evoke sense of discrimination or elimination to the other (Cohen 1985; A. Day 2011). It is also argued that there has been an assumption that 'communities are good thing, and that individuals ought to be prepared to subordinate their selfish interests and desires to the common good' (G. Day 2006: 14). Moreover, a criticism of overuse of 'community' merely referring some set of people such as 'migrant community', 'ethnic community', 'gay and lesbian community' –which often celebrate a false sense of caring and solidarity and fail to aware diversity within them (G. Day 2006). Admittedly these arguments precisely hint pitfalls which the conceptualisation and use of 'community' may fall into; it may be used (either strategically or unconsciously) to make distinction and eliminate others who challenge the shared meaning within the community by its members, otherwise, it might imply uneven power balance that determines who is majority and who is minority by categorising certain group of people from perspectives of policy making or academic research.

Another common critical view towards 'community' is given by obsessed notion of romanticism and nostalgia, calling for a recovery of lost humane bond in this modern highly individualised society (G. Day 2006). This idea of 'lost community' reminds me a notion of 'village' which I often heard in my conversations with my respondents. Those

Japanese women often described their social networking in southeast London as if they are living in a village where 'everyone knows everyone else and their business'. This is more notable within Japanese women network, yet also applicable to their social relationships with local non-Japanese residents. I have also frequently experienced that Japanese women whom I met at random know each other via different route, and this has given me an impression that how close and small world we are all living. I have observed many occasions that when one needs specific information (e.g. does anyone know someone doing architect? Or does anyone know a good builder to paint walls?), her friends easily and quickly offer the information requested to sort out. Understanding who their neighbours are as well as what background/ professional knowledge and skill they have got, this social network functions as an infrastructure where people can gain valuable resource to navigate their everyday life in the area. In this rendering, their use of 'village' seems to come from their appreciation of such pre-modern face-to-face daily interaction and sense of security underpinned by their shared knowledge, despite their life in urban setting.

Following the earlier criticism on community for its boundary expressing aspect, this notion of 'village' also indicates limited membership of their social world –'we all know each other' might mean 'those whom we don't know are not our member' on the opposite side of the same coin. Looking back to my first encounter with *Donguri* (Chapter 2), the way the Japanese mothers gave me a glance was something towards a stranger and I clearly felt a boundary between them and I. Also, my observation on how *Donguri* mothers make distinction from other Japanese mothers (Chapter 4) is a good example that underpins how their performance of community identity embodies the boundary with others. Then it is claimed that we should not be intrigued by idyllic and romantic

image of the term, and carefully aware that '[U]nderstanding of community will be very different among those who succeed in being included than from the viewpoint of those who are left out' (G. Day 2006: 173).

While I partly agree with those criticism, I also argue that we need to take multiplicity and fluidity of community into consideration. As my transformative experience of getting an access to *Donguri* community can tell (Chapter 2), one may be included to a community by learning and practicing its shared value over time. Also, even though *Donguri* mothers distinguish themselves from *Hoshuko* mothers, they also belong to the same community in different scales, such as Japanese mothers in southeast London, or mothers in East Dulwich. Thus, even one is left out from any community, it does not always mean isolation from society since people yet may be able to find one's place to belong to other. As biographical approach in this thesis has uncovered, people finds different level of attachment to communities along with their life stage that also shape their practice and identity. And due to such continual turnover of members, the shape of community, including shared value, identity and practice, would be continuously transformed. As G. Day argues, 'community' is highly problematic term (2006: 2), however, a concept of 'communities of practice' enables us to capture community as a social interaction among individuals and external condition rather than objective entities.

Unpacking gendered biographies and meaning of community

In terms of such fluid nature of community belonging, it has been extensively observed in the empirical chapters. As the quote in the beginning of this chapter indicates, the

Japanese women's relationships are not enclosed within fixed boundary. Rather, having multiple belongings at different scales and understanding different values appreciated in each community, they have demonstrated capacity and ability to acting out social life as practice (O'Reilly 2012b). By looking at how the research questions have been addressed by the empirical findings, this section highlights significance of communities of practice as a space that shape one's performing identities.

- How are the social identities of Japanese women migrants in southeast London shaped and framed in and through migration?

We have seen that these women continuously construct multiple and multi-layered identities through migration and that these are shaped by gender and ethnicity, and differently framed by time and location. A gendered and highly localised identity as a Japanese mother in southeast London was developed through their relationships with other local Japanese mothers (Chapter 4), but the same person can also develop an identity as a transnational daughter who has a mother in Japan (Chapter 6). However, gender and ethnic identities are socially constructed and therefore fluid, and 'efforts are exerted to mark the presence or absence of these identities' in different locations and at different times (Hu 2016: 64). As we saw in Chapter 5, the Japanese women demonstrated control of their own identity, performing it differently in different fields.

- What is the shape and meaning of community for them?

Observing the everyday lives of my respondents revealed their multiple belongings to different communities where they share values and learn practices with each other. Chapter 4 demonstrated that sharing the same future projection and values, *Donguri* mothers construct

their own understanding and practice of a localised style of Japanese mothering while making a distinction between themselves and other Japanese mothers in London. Chapter 5 also explored different sorts of community participation by these women. In the case of the tambourelli camp, the community around the sport offered a space where people's position in the field was equal, and about the shared enjoyment of playing sports. However, in the case of *Miki meshi*, the local community is understood as a field where people struggle for a stake in social capital that enables them to construct a sense of belonging to the space. Understanding the value of the community, my respondents capitalised their cultural background and performed expected 'Japaneseness' for other local community members.

● How do they differently understand the value produced by 'Japaneseness' through their various organisation and participation of local activities?

As the response to the previous question briefly shows, in the case of *MIKI meshi*, we have seen that the Japanese women created capital from 'Japaneseness', understanding that it is valued by the local residents, who appreciate diversity in the community (Chapter 5). On the other hand, the *Donguri* community often appeared as the place where people valued 'Japaneseness' in the same way, and shared co-created practices to develop their identity as '*Donguri* mothers', making themselves distinct in particular ways from other Japanese mothers in London (Chapter 3, 4). A later section of this chapter, 'Japaneseness through multi-layered identities', discusses in more detail how 'Japaneseness' and its value are differently understood at particular times and places.

● How do social and cultural discourses influence the narrative production of migration over the life-course?

In Chapter3, we have seen that the idea of genuine marriage in the Western context, which is underpinned by pure romantic love, has often disturbed the Japanese women's settlement in the UK through marriage and as a result they feel that their marriage was 'nothing romantic'. This shows that the interplay between cultural norms of marriage in Western society, and social discourses on migration and marriages of convenience, and the UK institutional visa scheme have largely shaped their experience and self-evaluation of their marriages. Chapter 6 also addresses this question through an investigation of their gendered identity as a mother and as a daughter. We saw that even a confident mother who has learnt and been practicing local mothering practices still evaluates herself as performing poorly relative to Japanese cultural norms on motherhood. Similarly, the Japanese cultural norm of being a 'caring daughter' shapes one's emotions and makes her feel guilty for not fulfilling her obligations to far away family.

● How are their translocal emotional connectivities reflected in the ways in which the migrants address multiple identities in their everyday lives?

This question is largely related to the previous one and was therefore addressed simultaneously with Chapter 6. There, we developed the understanding that translocal emotional experience is deeply connected with the passage of time and shifting gendered identities. Becoming a mother or rediscovering of one's identity as a daughter through the aging of parents changes their emotional distance from 'home'. In order to negotiate physical distance between themselves and their families in Japan, various ways of managing emotion, such as exchanging gifts and inviting their parents to London were observed. Also, by sharing the difficulty of living away from one's parents as well as the emotional experience caused by this difficulty, these women foster their solidarity and sense of belonging to the locality in

London.

Biographical narratives of Japanese women

Ongoing adjustments

Conceptualising migration as an ongoing project, this thesis aimed to offer profound insights into Japanese women's migration experience in the context of everyday life that have been little examined in past studies. As I argued in the Introduction, the existing studies of Japanese women's migration have focused on motivation, especially investigating the 'push factor' embedded in Japanese society (Kato 2010, 2013; Kawashima 2010, 2012). However, by adopting a biographical approach as one of its theoretical frameworks, this study has revealed the significance of time in the study of migration and illuminated these women's 'capacity to improvise, to navigate a change of course, to make new choices, to respond to new possibilities' (Amit and Knowles 2017: 166). It is important to acknowledge the fact that life is messy rather than neatly organised, and it is the same for migration: 'it is more likely to involve a succession of choices over the course of changing circumstances' (Amit and Knowles 2017: 166), and 'there is a certain degree of serendipity involved in it' (Benson and O'Reilly 2018: 157). Through a biographical approach which 'conceptualise[s] migration as part of individual biographies as well as social structures' (Ni Laoire 2000: 229), I have shed light on these Japanese women's agency as they navigate their lives, and the ongoing adjustment and modification this involves.

Furthermore, my observations show that such 'adjustment and modification' occurs around 'Japaneseness' which I understand as a transformable value in everyday life of my respondents. The biographies of these Japanese women in this thesis have demonstrated that their arrival

and settlement might not necessarily have happened on the same terms. In terms of governance, in most of my respondents' cases, they were granted settlement in the UK as spouses to their British (or EU) husbands and as dependents, within the fixed category of 'Japanese women'. However, what I observed in my research is that after they enter and settle, these women experience different social, gendered and localised identities through their life course, involving diverse adjustment and compromise. As Chapter 3 illustrates, many of them explained reflexively that their initial reason to come to the UK was their interest in British culture such as art, music and fashion. However, through marriage, settlement and becoming a mother, their narratives and everyday practices demonstrate that 'Japaneseness' has come to have a certain value in their life in London. That chapter shows that these Japanese women enact their gendered and ethnic identity as 'Japanese mother', and that to pass down a Japanese cultural heritage to their children as well as to construct and maintain a social network with other Japanese mothers in the local area, they have become a part of the *Donguri* community in southeast London.

This community mobilised around children is not simply for their children's education, rather as has been repeatedly observed, it is a social hub for these Japanese mothers to exchange information about local shopping, schooling, doctors and entertainment which is valuable for navigating everyday family life in the local area. In addition, through their relationships with other mothers in this community, some of my respondents gained job opportunities. Saki has been working at a Japanese hair salon for more than five years. It was an opportunity introduced by Masumi, another *Donguri* mother, whose old flatmate is an owner of the hair salon. Also Kayo, Maria and Seiko used to work part-time at a Japanese restaurant owned by Chizu.

These examples of work in a Japanese-related environment are not rare. In fact, quite a lot of

my respondents do work that is connected with a certain 'Japaneseness', including working in a Japanese restaurant, as a translator between English and Japanese, teaching Japanese at a university, a freelance coordinator for Japanese clients, etc. These women may not have imagined themselves working at these Japanese places in London when they arrived, dreaming of British art or cultural experiences. However, having settled down in London with their families and considering how they can cope with both work and family life, especially raising children who still need to be dropped off and picked up from school, such job opportunities in the local area are convenient. Moreover, these are job opportunities in which their already-accumulated skills and knowledge (e.g. Japanese haircutting, Japanese customer service, knowledge and experience of Japanese cooking, the Japanese language) give them particular advantages that make life easier.

I feel I can understand my respondents' experience because I also share, in part, their lives and trajectories to London and settlement in southeast London. After my encounter with Yoko, who was my flatmate, I was given various job opportunities to work for these Japanese mothers in south London (see Introduction and Chapter 2) such as an assistant teacher at *Donguri*, child-minder, working at a Japanese food stall and restaurant. Even though I came to London to study for my degree at a British higher education for my degree as well as to improve my English, I have found that my daily life has become largely embedded into this local Japanese society. However, I have had to compromise, because my first priority has been to study. But after learning something totally new, I preferred to have part-time jobs in which my already accumulated experience and knowledge (such as Japanese language and knowledge of Japanese food) are considered to be advantageous and valuable. I thought this would allow me to save time and effort, outside my university studies. Therefore, even though I was not especially fond of working with children, my job as a Japanese teaching assistant and

child-minder were convenient opportunities for me, because the native cultural capital of my Japanese language ability was highly valued, and they were all local so I did not have to travel. And I realised that once I had work experience with local Japanese residents, this experience, in which I perform 'being a Japanese who has the value of Japaneseness', is seen as valuable capital and brought further job opportunities within the local Japanese community.

In migration, it is often found that an individual's accumulated cultural capital has been evaluated in unexpected ways and this process cannot be simply reduced to individual resources but is bound up with wider historical, socio-political and institutional factors (Erel 2010). However at the same time, a group of migrants can demonstrate their ability not only to create new forms of cultural capital, but also to construct new systems and institutions that validate these cultural capitals within the society of residence (Erel 2010). This idea offers a highly significant insight to understand our experience in the southeast Japanese communities which only circumstantially revolve around Japaneseness. Seemingly, it may have been a compromise or an adjustment to work in such a Japanese environment in London, especially for those who imagined their life in the multicultural global city of London as part of a long-cherished dream. However, as their circumstances change, along with their changing gendered identity, as they become mothers, their interest shifts towards how they can navigate their lives with and for their families in southeast London. Then these women demonstrate their strategic capacity to understand how their Japaneseness may be transferable into valuable cultural, social and economic capital in the local context, which makes their highly localised lives in southeast London easier. Thus, the biographical approach in this thesis has contributed not only to illuminating the complexity of these migrant women's life trajectories, which are not linear but more twisted and entangled, but also how the way they make adjustments to these trajectories is largely shaped by their accumulated capital and their

understanding of its value.

Arguing for the recognition of migrants' ongoing adjustment and modification through social interaction, Amit and Knowles draw on Ingold (2004) to argue:

> 'When the same paths are repeatedly trodden, especially by heavy boots, the consequences may be quite dramatic, amounting in places to severe erosion. Surfaces are indeed transformed' (Ingold 2004 cited in Amit and Knowles 2017: 167)

This quote implies the cumulative effects of small-scale actions and choices which migrants take to respond to changed circumstances. In the case of my respondents, these sorts of work opportunities, around Japaneseness, may have begun on an individual scale through serendipity. However, once they become a part of one's everyday life and similar practices are followed by other Japanese mothers, it becomes the established pattern to capitalise on their Japaneseness to navigate their lives in southeast London. And when one person has to leave her job, she introduces another local Japanese woman who brings the same value and use of Japaneseness to the position. By sharing the same understanding and use of the value embedded in Japaneseness, the practice of working by taking advantage of their Japaneseness is established and maintained among the women. I found that this ongoing reproduction of practice, and the way the community functions around a reliance on the practice of Japaneseness demonstrates that these Japanese women have constructed a new system that validates the cultural capital created through Japaneseness. Thus my observation on the everyday practice of Japanese women has also revealed how they make ongoing adjustments and modifications by relying on a combination of knowledge, experience and improvisation (Amit and Knowles 2017) through the creation of cultural capital and a validating system for

it.

Changing circumstances, relationships and the value of Japanesensess

The biographical approach to migration suggests a longitudinal perspective that understands migration as a long-term project. Therefore, even though my ethnographic research with these women is complete, and what I draw out from these findings are limited to the ethnographic present, the findings of the research are well-placed to consider, in broad terms, these women's futures—how they will respond to changing circumstances and relationships?

Life after Brexit

The lives of migrants are significantly shaped by large political structures, and a striking example must be the social and political landscape around Brexit. The referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union, where the vote to leave was won by a small majority took place in the middle of my fieldwork. In my ethnographic research following the referendum, it became clear that this was a political moment that caused some of the Japanese women taking part in the research to reconsider their position in British society and to reflect on how they understood their own identity through their relationships with colleagues and family, and how these have fluctuated. For example, in an interview with Ayako, it was evident that the news of the UK referendum had changed her perception about 'who are the migrants'.

> After the UK referendum, I have gradually come to be aware "well, I am a foreigner here".
> (seeing the news about a new law that asks all employers to report the number of 'foreign' employees as well as to give reasons why the job has to be given these 'foreigners' not British.)

My workplace is very liberal, that is a newspaper company –all people there are very liberal. But one day I talked with my colleague making joke, "How will you answer if you're asked, why this job has to be done by YOU not by any other British? What kind of extra value would you render to us?" (Then Ayako emphasises many times) You know, it was a joke! I responded "But I can understand Japanese! British cannot speak Japanese". Well, it was absolutely joke situation, but at the same time I felt that such thing may become common ... (being asked to explain her strength that British do not have).

This explicitly highlights the fact that she has almost never considered herself as a 'foreigner' in her life in the UK. As we saw in Chapter 3, having received permanent residency through her first marriage, she has never gone through the trouble of trying to stay in the face of the strict visa regime that is commonly experienced by other Japanese women. This might also suggest that as a UK resident Ayako had experienced little difficulty in her daily life in the UK either in or outside work, and therefore had little awareness of herself as a migrant. However, this perception of herself has been dramatically overturned by the referendum. In her conversation with her colleagues, she says that she explained her strength lies in her Japanese ability. However, having made it into a joke, it seems that Ayako might ask herself whether her Japanese language skill is a truly convincing reason for her employer to secure her position at the company. I consider that the way she values her Japaneseness fluctuates because of the anti-migration social climate in the UK, and that makes her feel nervous about the stability of her employment in the UK after Brexit. Working at a newspaper company as a web designer, Ayako may have had little necessity to evaluate her Japaneseness and capitalise on her ethnic and cultural capital, which has been done often by other my respondents. However, the political and social change brought by the UK referendum have obliged Ayako to ask herself what her job is, whether it requires any Japaneseness, and what the value of Japaneseness is?

Ayako also describes how she observes her surroundings have changed since the referendum.

> My partner Matt, his sister lives in Dorchester. When we visit her, even though I
> had never become aware of it before the referendum, I've realised that there's no
> black people at all –All white. Then I think "that makes sense". Also when I visit
> such countryside, I'm often mistaken for Chinese.

Her partner, who is disappointed with the result of Brexit, has considered getting Irish
passports for him and their son.

> His father is Irish, so Matt says that he's going to get an Irish passport that enables
> him to move to EU countries. And our son, having Irish grandfather enables him to
> obtain Irish passport too. Once he has it, it'll be easier to renew it rather than
> applying for it after the Brexit. So he thinks to get them now.

However, Ayako herself does not have any idea of abandoning her Japanese passport[28].

> I don't think that there's any difference between a UK passport and a Japanese
> passport. My parents are still in Japan and I feel myself as Japanese. If there's any
> advantage to choosing other passport, I may consider. But you know I need to think
> about my parents. If they are gone, then I may change my mind. But if I still have a
> Japanese passport, it may give another future option to my son…

This illustrates how Ayako sees the social world around herself has changed since the
referendum - in recognizing herself as a migrant and as a racialized 'other' in British society,
she feels lost in claiming belonging to Britain. Simultaneously, she talked about her identity

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[28] The Japanese nationality law does not permit the dual citizenship for Japanese.

in which she feels closer emotionally to Japan where her aging parents live. Ayako gives several reasons why she prefers a Japanese passport to a British one, and there is a negotiation between her two different gendered identities: as a daughter and as a mother, involving future anxiety and projection. Like Yoko (Chapter 6) who has re-evaluated the value of a British passport, Ayako values it less in this circumstance of Brexit and judges that she does not need to get one. On the other hand, she values her Japanese passport, because it secures her emotional transnational connectivity with her parents in Japan, as well as the practical opportunity to offer care for them when needed. In addition, Ayako considers that it will offer her son the opportunity and mobility of living in Japan for study or work in future. However, she acknowledges that the value of Japanese passport for her may change if she loses her parents sometime in the future, which highlights how the relationship with her family in Japan is significant for her evaluation of her Japanese passport, rather than Japan itself. Thus Ayako's narrative has vividly illustrated that an individual's life is shaped by both individual and political choice and involves one's past experience, current position and future projection. A biographical approach enables me to illuminate these Japanese women's diverse, creative and adaptive strategies, over their dynamic life course in relation to both individual and structural circumstance changes (Hu 2016).

Changing meaning of locality

Along with such changes in political structure, changes of individual circumstances also largely impact the shape of individuals' lives as well as the meaning of community for them. Some of my respondents are the mothers of children who are aged around 10 or 12, and during my four years of involvement, I have seen their children graduate from *Donguri*[29] as well as from

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[29] *Donguri* offers classes for children from those who go to nurseries to those in Year 6 at primary school.

local primary schools and start at secondary school, which brings a big change of circumstance for them. Graduation from *Donguri* means that they lose a regular weekly opportunity to meet other Japanese mothers. Also, most of the mothers, who used to drop their children off at school and pick them up at the end of the day stopped doing it, and let the children go to school and come home by themselves or with friends once they start going to secondary school[30]. Following these changes, I had less opportunities to work for some mothers as a child-minder, because mothers find that their children do not need to be attended by an adult all the time during their absence. These mothers then also have spare time to use for themselves.

With more time available, they may not need to find jobs in the neighbourhood, and may not find it necessary to consider how they capitalise their Japaneseness to get a job. Their changing circumstances may allow them to take an adult education course to acquire new skills or knowledge that will allow them to access a job that is not bounded by their cultural or ethnic background as Japanese. To maintain the emotional connectivity of a social network of local Japanese mothers, they may establish a new community for socialising, which is not organised around children, but is now for themselves. For example, I heard that Seiko and some of the mothers whose children have just graduated from *Donguri* are considering organising a choir and have been looking for people to join as well as someone who can lead them.

Despite the change of individual circumstances, their identity as a 'Japanese mother in

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After that, they graduate from *Donguri*.

[30] Even though it is not strictly laid down by law, the British government introduces a guideline about childcare on its website that:

- children under 12 are rarely mature enough to be left alone for a long period of time
- children under 16 shouldn't be left alone overnight
- babies, toddlers and very young children should never be left alone

(*GOV.UK* n.d.)

southeast London', which has been constructed and developed by creating and sharing the value and practice of 'doing Japaneseness' in the community, may not completely fade out but be identified and experienced differently. Their other identities, which might be 'Japanese woman in London' or just 'Londoner' and involve a re-evaluation of their ethnicity, gender and local identity, might overpower it, shaping their practice and relationships in everyday life differently. Through these relationships and social interactions with others, these women may go through a creative process of adjustment and modification with a combination of newly acquired cultural capital and the capitals they have already accumulated to navigate their lives to go forward (Amit and Knowles 2017; Erel 2010).

Japaneseness through multi-layered identities

I adopted translocalism as a second theoretical framework, to consider the role and significance of 'place' in migration, especially in relation to one's belonging and identity. Throughout the empirical chapters, I illustrated how the everyday lives of my respondents are highly localised in southeast London, which is mainly because of their gendered identity as mothers. However, their relationships, narratives, practices and emotional experiences are continuously shaped in a complex way by their emotional and material connectivity with 'home'. Finding such strong and complex links with the place of origin and its maintenance by migrants, Kelly and Lusis (2006) argue that it is important to see the seamlessly merged lived experience of migrants who are both 'here' and 'there'. Translocalism is a useful framework for illuminating such 'multi-located subjectivity' that connects multiple places in the world, where emotional attachment is embedded in families, friends and communities (Conradson and Mckay 2007). With this framework, this thesis contributes to understanding how migrants retain the distinctiveness of particular places at different scales (national, local,

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transnational, translocal), and how these places exercise specific meanings through relationships to obtain and maintain migrants' multiple identities.

Able to choose between such multiple and selectable identities, my respondents' practice and perform Japaneseness in different ways in everyday life; this could be on special festive occasions such as local *Donguri matsuri* (Chapter 4) or at larger scale commercial events such as *Hyper Japan*[31] and *Japan Matsuri*, in their everyday mothering practice (Chapter 4) or in workplace such as running Japanese food stalls or restaurants. The Japaneseness which I observed in their everyday life should neither be understood simply as a manifestation of a renegotiated and heightened Japanese "national" identity (Fujita 2009)[32] nor explained as cultural capital in a 'rucksack approach' which 'views particular cultural resources and practices as ethnically bounded' that migrants bring them and that may or may not fit with the 'culture' of the country of residence (Erel 2010: 645, 656). This is because, as the empirical chapters in this thesis have illustrated, my respondents demonstrated different ways of featuring Japaneseness in their everyday lives and these are drawn from their multiple identities, in the complex interplay of gender, time (temporality, life course) and place (locality, transnational networking).

In this section, I have revisited each empirical chapter to highlight how the Japanese women have mobilised their distinctive Japaneseness at particular times and places. Erel (2010) argues that '[I]n order to understand how cultural capital signifies distinction and produces recognizable social identities and positionalities, it is important to consider the meanings the

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[31] A commercial event hosted by a company called Cross Media to introduce Japanese pop culture.

[32] In her study of young Japanese cultural migrants to New York and London, Fujita (2009) argues that those who have faced various obstacles due to their position as ethnic minority and racialised 'other' in the host society, start to re-imagine 'Japaneseness' and 'return' to confirm their strong attachment to 'homogeneous' Japanese national identity (2009: 173)

actors give to cultural practices' (p.656). By questioning '*who*' my respondents are doing or being Japanese *for*, as well as where and when they create (or do not create) capital from Japaneseness, I intend to illuminate how they understand themselves within the multiple belongings and relationships that shape their identities.

Japaneseness for settlement

As I argued in Chapter 3, although these women had both the social privilege and the autonomy to move to London to navigate their own lives, once they tried to stay put in the UK with their husbands, they suddenly realised that they were situated as dependent agents with no control over their marriage and settlement. We saw how an institution and structure like the Home Office and UK immigration policy, which often rely on gender-based assumptions (Wray 2015) made these women recognise themselves as racialised 'others' in British society. Through the complicated and stressful process of cross-border marriage, we saw how my respondents came to be aware of various labels that categorised and highlighted the differences between the couples (e.g. nationality, gender, immigration status etc). By going through a different scrutiny process from their husbands, these women embody their gendered and ethnic identity as 'Japanese migrant woman'.

Chapter 3 also revealed that their gendered identity as mother has largely motivated them to construct a strong network with their fellow Japanese mothers in the local area. It showed that these women strive to access the available local facilities and resources for child rearing and integration in the dominant society. I also emphasised that the construction of an ethnic community served multiple functions for them; it is not simply for cultural reproduction and making compatriot friends, but it has a more significant meaning as a place to learn and exchange specific local information about child rearing in their mother tongue. This group of

Japanese mothers often talked about schools and education - which primary or secondary school is good, how their children prepared for SATS, which subjects they choose for GCSE - and I was always surprised to hear their profound knowledge of the reputations of local schools and school teachers. Thus, the community of Japanese mothers can be understood as an important social hub to help them find their way through the educational landscape of London where their children grow up. Therefore, sharing the same ambition to navigate their local life, 'Japaneseness' in this context must be a strategic tool to access specific useful local capital easily. In this regard, the findings of Chapter 3 contribute to challenging the binary divide between ethnic enclaves and integration - since the migrants' ethnic community is not something that disturbs their integration, but rather something that helps the ethnic minority to integrate with the dominant society.

Japaneseness as practice

In Chapter 4, we have seen that for my respondents, having the same understanding of 'Japaneseness' and how to practice it in their daily lives is significant for the construction of solidarity and a sense of belonging to the locality among them, because it also contributes to their distinctiveness in relation to another group of Japanese mothers (like *Hoshuko*). In this regard, it is communities of practice (O'Reilly 2012b; Wenger 2009) in which people practice the same understanding of 'Japaneseness' that in turn gives meaning to their practice of being a 'Japanese *Donguri* mother in southeast London'. Thus it has been illuminated that the 'migrants create new forms of cultural capital and validation in migration' (Erel 2010: 649) and this is not only through interaction and negotiation with dominant society, but also within the ethnic minority group itself. They demonstrate power and agency to define what the right kind of culture is, as well as what is valuable practice in the community (Oliver and O'Reilly

2010). This also highlights that 'being a southeast London Japanese mother' is a co-learning, rather than individual practice.

There are various resources that are used to re-imagine what 'Japanesensess' is, and what it is like being a Japanese mother, such as their own memories of childhood when they were educated in Japan, the stories of friends raising their children in Japan, TV or internet news about education and the environment surrounding children in Japan, and the experiences of their Japanese friends in London, who send their children to *Hoshuko*. Here, based on fragmentary and often biased information, their image of Japan (especially in relation to childrearing) is of intolerance, and an organised, less flexible education system that endorses cramming. In addition, their image of *Hoshuko* relates to these images of Japanese society itself due to its status of being officially supported by the Japanese government. And then *Donguri*, which is often understood as countercultural to *Hoshuko* is highly valued by my respondents, who do not sympathise with 'mainstream' Japanese education.

In Chapter 1, by referring to the idea of the imagined West which is often assumed as the driving force of migration from East to West (Fujita 2009), I argued that it is important to consider the process in which individuals understand and translate certain images made by the media in different ways. Pursuing this idea, I consider that Chapter 4 has revealed the ways in which my respondents imagine 'Japaneseness' through diverse information sources and translate such imagination into action. The everyday practices of the *Donguri* mothers' demonstrate their creativity and flexibility about reproducing their own 'right' ways of being/doing Japanese in London - at home, they use Japanese dishes to have homemade food which is a mixture of Japanese food and other dishes, but the language spoken around the table with their husbands and children is mainly English. They celebrate Japanese seasonal events both at home and at *Donguri*, but these traditions are not strictly adhered to; rather

they enjoy the process of recreating Japanese foods, costumes and objects to celebrate these events within the limits of the available resources, an ability underpinned by their locally accumulated capitals. I found that the 'imagined Japaneseness' which is shared by *Donguri* mothers not only creates and shares value and practice, but also functions as an alternative institution for validating cultural capital within the society of residence (Erel 2010).

Japaneseness as strategy

A social construction approach considers that 'ethnic groups are not bounded cultural entities to which people naturally belong, but are rather social constructions that emerge from continuous social interactions between the migrant and the majority group and within migrant groups themselves' (Barth 1969 cited in Green and Staerklé 2013: 7). As was seen in Chapter 5, my respondents interact a lot with the majority group in their everyday lives, and they learn what is valued as well as what is common practice in the local social field -which enable them to contemplate how they can capitalise their ethnicity and reconstruct a new cultural identity to locate themselves in a new field.

In the case of *Miki meshi*, the way they carefully organise Japanese homemade cookery lessons for the local residents could be understood as their performance of 'imagined Japaneseness', however this 'imagined Japaneseness' is not the same as the one that appeared in Chapter 4. While the Japanese women use imagination to construct their new identity as a 'Japanese mother in southeast London', which shapes their practice both at home and in the community of Japanese in the local area, this 'imagined Japaneseness' performed by the team *MIKI meshi* is based on how the majority group in the area imagine them. Having understood what practices and capitals are valued by the residents in the area, these Japanese women deconstruct their 'Japaneseness', which is a capital they already possess, and re-evaluate the

values within it by negotiating with local values, and re-constructing an 'imagined Japaneseness' to perform.

The team at *Miki meshi* skilfully incorporates the locally embedded middle-class values such as organic, homemade, ethnic and locally sourced not only into Japanese cooking practice, but it is also the Japanese mothers themselves who offer this opportunity. As Chapter 5 has already argued, the value of *Miki meshi* is foregrounded by their Japanese femininity and motherhood whose image of domesticity resonates to the expectations of the dominant society. Regarding such intersecting identities of gender and ethnicity, Hu argues that 'people creatively invent and re-invent their own intersections and the meanings for such intersections, drawing on the social and cultural materials available to them' (2016: 229). Following this argument, I consider that these Japanese women's performance of their intersecting identities involves strategic navigation of their social integration in the local community. Through this performance, in which they introduce the depth and diversity of Japanese food and cooking by adopting locally available space and materials, they negotiate with the way that the dominant society understands them and try to raise the value of 'Japaneseness' and thereby establish their position in the field. For these women, 'Japaneseness' is a transformable value from which they can create different forms of capital (economic and social capital) that encourage their sense of belonging to the community.

On the other side, in the community making practice of tambourelli, we saw little evidence of 'Japaneseness', which I think was because this is a community activity where the participants take part in the process of creating values and rules, then members' position in the field is not determined by their ethnicity or gender. Having understood this, they do not need to perform their gender and ethnic identity, and instead they can develop another highly localised identity as a southeast Londoner. This shows that gender and ethnicity are a sociocultural performance

for social interaction (Hu 2016) and differently performed in different situations. In this regard, Chapter 5 has shown not only different ways of being a Japanese woman and making a way through life in southeast London, but also the womens' agency to control and optimise an image of themselves - which presents them as a multicultural ethnic 'other' or not.

Japaneseness as emotional management

Chapter 6 argued that, while my respondents follow 'correct' local mothering practice in London in which they juggle motherhood and career by adopting available resources such as cleaners and babysitters, their own mothers, who raised them in Japan are still significant as a reference point by which to evaluate and judge their own mothering practice in London. As we saw in Chapter 4, there are multiple forms of 'Japaneseness' imagined by these Japanese mothers in southeast London and they actively select a localised style of 'Japaneseness' in which they create different values and practices of motherhood from another imagined 'mainstream' Japanese lifestyle. By sharing the same understanding and evaluation of this 'Japaneseness' and performing their own 'correct' way of being Japanese mother in southeast London as community practice, they have demonstrated their strong attachment to the locality as well as confidence in what they do to navigate their local everyday lives as mothers. Having a different evaluation system, it seems that my respondents had distanced themselves from Japanese social norms and freed themselves from fulfilling the role of nurturing and educating children within a patriarchal family structure as expected of a 'good mother' (Igarashi and Yasumoto 2014).

However, this chapter has illuminated that physical proximity with their mother and the time spend together as a 'daughter' often undermined their confidence in their mothering practice in London. Comparing themselves with their mothers who had been domestic and devoted

for the family as a major educator and caretaker, these women feel sense of inferiority and re-evaluate themselves as if they have not made enough effort to be a 'good mother' like their mothers -this is experienced as sense of guilty by them. Since '[g]uilt is expressed and experienced when individuals feel that they are not following ideological norms and expectations' (Sutherland 2010 cited in Igarashi and Yasumoto 2014: 467), here, I consider that this dilemma is not a simple matter just between a mother and a daughter. Rather, it demonstrates that the normative obligations and responsibilities of motherhood in Japanese cultural context which once these mothers have distanced from have been evoked through the proximity with their mothers, and it disturbs the value they have created and shared within the community in southeast London.

In this regard, it has revealed the different meaning and validation of cultural practice according to the different scales; local and transnational (Erel 2010). Even though they have learned and accumulated specific local capitals to be a 'Japanese mother in southeast London' in the local community, within their transnational relationships, between mother and daughter, Japanese social norms still exert their influence over these women and they intermittently reflexively re-evaluate their practice, which they expressed as various emotions. These Japanese women have constructed and maintained the values and practices around their own understanding of 'Japaneseness' within the community, that enables them to build up their new cultural identity as a 'Japanese mother in southeast London'. However, this is not the only foundation of their identity, and as I have already argued, they have multiple validating systems and the flexibility to adjust and modify their practice and identities on different scales (Lopez Rodriguez 2010).

Thus translocalism, a concept that helps us understand an individual's multiple belongings on

different scales, has enabled us to uncover their multi-layered identities. Then, by focusing on the ways these women understand and use 'Japaneseness', which is a transformable value, through different relationships on various occasions, it has illuminated the way their identities are shaped and transformed in complex ways by both individual circumstances and wider social structures. As we saw, through the strict visa regime for migration control or the challenging social climate around Brexit, while my respondents feel that 'Japaneseness' has been reduced to a category, they come to strongly reaffirm their identity as a 'Japanese woman who is married to a British husband' or just as 'Japanese'. Also, 'Japaneseness' is differently understood and capitals are created from Japaneseness for different purposes: to navigate their way smoothly through the local landscape, and to manage their own emotions and distance from their families in Japan. These practices interplay with temporal transitions (changing individual and structural circumstances) in a complex way. However, by bringing a biographical approach and translocalism together, this thesis successfully 'highlights the mutually constituent and mutually shaping nature of the identities that are simultaneously present in a given social situation' (Hu 2016: 68).

The diverse lives of Japanese women

Throughout the pages of this thesis, by exploring the everyday lives of my respondents, my research makes a significant contribution by illuminating the diversity of Japanese women migrants. As we saw in Chapter 1, historically Japanese women's migration has been seen through a frame of marriage, and individual biographies have been overlooked (Shimada, 2009). Having focused just on their arrival to accompany their husbands (both in the cases of 'migrant brides' to Brazil and 'GI brides' to the US before and after the Second World War), it seems that an assumption about 'submissive Japanese women who can migrate only through

marriage' has been established. And this socially and historically inscribed image may still exist in studies of contemporary Japanese women migration which see them through the particular frame of visa categories, as trailing spouses (Kurotani 2007), working holiday makers (Kato 2013; Kawashima 2010) or marriage migrants (Hamano 2015). The Japanese women in these studies have always been understood in relation to the men - their husbands - who take the initiative in migration, or as the "victims" of patriarchal Japanese society, and reproduce an image of submissive Japanese women migrants, overlooking their subjectivity and rational choice to migrate.

Regarding migration studies that give growing attention to the category of gender, it is argued that we have to be mindful not to homogenise women's experiences and practices, and then have to incorporate an insight to consider how gender intersects with other social divisions, such as ethnicity, age, class and race (Anthias 2000). In addition, recent studies claim that just being aware of such intersectionality is yet not enough to understand the distinctiveness of migration experiences (McCall 2005; Hu 2016). As I argued in the Introduction, while there are some studies that focus on Japanese women's migration (Hamano 2015; Kawakami 2009; Kawashima 2010, 2012; Kelsky 2001), they have often failed to illuminate the diversity within this category as well as investigate 'how different components rise above one another in specific situations' (Hu 2016: 70).

In my thesis, using the biographical approach offered an ideal framework to investigate not only the diversity of Japanese women migrants, but also to consider why multi-layered distinctions within this group of women occur by incorporating insights from a long time-scale covering the migrants' pasts, presents and futures. Taking both the individual's life course and changing social circumstances into serious consideration, it has revealed how migrants find the significance of gender and ethnicity different, and the impacts this has on

their understanding and performance of intersecting identities. Furthermore, having translocalism as another framework has provided an insight into their multiple belongings and complex community making process. Understanding these Japanese womens' multiple belongings, this thesis has revealed their active agency, to demonstrate their global and local emotional cartography through their practice in everyday life.

It might be easily misinterpreted that migrants' ethnic practice in everyday life is a manifestation, maintenance or appreciation of one's re-negotiated ethnic identity. However, this thesis has revealed the complexity of the everyday practice of migrants who weave their multiple identities through various relationships and belongings. Having developed an understanding of their complex-community making, which is not bounded simply by nationality, and their ongoing negotiation with changing both individual and social circumstances, I have found that Japaneseness is a transformable value for my respondents that enables them to mobilise themselves smoothly among their multiple identities. They socialise with other Japanese mothers to exchange valuable local information to navigate their life as a southeast Londoner, they create and maintain shared value around Japaneseness to develop their solidarity as *Donguri* mothers, they practice Japanese cultural norms of caring to be a transnational Japanese daughter, and they have created cultural capital from Japaneseness to share with other local residence. Thus, with creative and flexible use of Japaneseness in different relationships, these women demonstrate their rational choice to navigate their life through migration.

In the Introduction, I highlighted the invisibility of this Japanese community in southeast London, and I now consider this as evidence in support of my argument: Japaneseness is a transformable value which enables the women not only to construct multiple identities but

also to flexibly perform those intersecting identities differently to navigate their lives after settlement through various translocal relationships. What these women want to achieve is neither acknowledgement of their ethnic presence in the local area, nor the dissemination of Japanese culture to the wider public, but rather, as I have stressed, to smoothly navigate their lives in southeast London while maintaining other, translocal/national, relationships. Because they are successful at navigating the local - sending their children to local schools, socialising with friends at local cafes and shopping at local stores and supermarkets, with the strategic and selective use of 'Japaneseness' on these occasions - their presence has remained invisible within this local landscape, unmarked in the retail and leisure landscape, or in the celebrated image of the area. In this respect, neither the small population nor the less significant presence of a group of migrants in the neighbourhood means that it is less valuable as a research focus. Rather, by questioning this invisibility as a starting point of research, this thesis has successfully illuminated the complex ongoing negotiation of these migrants across time and place.

By bringing a biographical approach and translocalism together with gender and ethnicity, this thesis has made a sociological contribution to the conceptualisation of migration as an ongoing process. Understanding 'Japaneseness' as a transformable value for these migrants, I have argued that their everyday practice of 'Japaneseness' involves the strategic deployment and selection of their multiple identities to navigate their lives on different scales. By illuminating the diversity and complexity of their experience, that could not have been illustrated by studies that focussed on motivation or particular visa categories, this thesis has contributed to the study of Japanese women's migration. Furthermore, considering gender and ethnicity not as a category but as sociocultural phenomena that are experienced through everyday life, it has contributed to migration studies by highlighting the women's ongoing

negotiation through the life course.

Further research that attempts to improve our understanding of the changing circumstances on micro- (individual), meso- (family, community) and macro (social and political) scales, needs to adopt a longitudinal perspective. In terms of changes at a micro level, it has been ten years since *Donguri* was first established, and therefore the original members have almost all left and the group's membership has completely renewed itself. A focus on how the change of members (each of whom followed a diverse trajectory to arrive at *Donguri*), changes the shared value of collective practices and the meaning of the community, would open new space for discussing multi-layered distinctions within this community of Japanese women by generation. In addition, their parents' aging will become a significant issue that brings dramatic change in the relationships and practices of transnational families.

Also, throughout my research, I often heard about the existence of other small communities of Japanese women in southeast London, in Honor Oak Park, Brockley and Deptford, which I could not reach in this study (see Chapter 2). Having seen how the unique locality of East Dulwich contributed to shaping the ways in which my respondents transformed their identity and practice, extending my exploration and comparison to other local Japanese communities in southeast London will offer valuable insight into how people construct their identities through their relationship with, and sense of belonging to, place.

Furthermore, as there is no existing demographic data on the Japanese population in southeast London, conducting an extensive survey to discover numbers, area and timing of settlement, to create a statistical summary of this population will offer profound

insights for further analysis, especially for investigating the socioeconomic background of their mobility and settlement. It will be a valuable groundwork in uncovering the dynamic interrelationship between the individual life course and social structure that shapes their experience.

Finally, even though this thesis has demonstrated diverse experience among Japanese women, there remains room for further discussion in terms of class and race, and especially how Japanese mothers' experiences are shaped differently by their husbands' class and race. Even though most of my research participants are from middle class families in Japan, and their husbands are also middle class, there must be some cases in which women experience either upward or downward social mobility through marriage and migration. Their husbands' race must also play a significant role in shaping the women's mothering practices and social relationships. In this way, exploring the complex interplay between gender, class and race will illuminate multi-layered distinctions and diversity among Japanese mothers and their ongoing negotiation of the life-course.

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Appendix

<u>**Department of Sociology – PhD Dissertation 2014-15 Ethics Form**</u>

CONFIDENTIAL

GOLDSMITHS, University of London

Department of Sociology Research Ethics Committee

NAME OF APPLICANT:
(please print)

> Kaoru Takahashi

COLLEGE E-MAIL
ADDRESS:

> ktaka002@gold.ac.uk

STUDENT NUMBER:

> 33352285

This form should be completed in typescript and returned to the Department of Sociology PhD Administrator (Bridget Ward). All students should have read the ESRC and BSA guidelines on ethics (and equivalent ones, such as the AAA or ASA). The decision of the committee regarding your application for ethical approval will be relayed to your dissertation supervisor.

1.   **Title of proposed project:**

> Understanding lived experience of Japanese women in London

2.   **Brief outline of the project, including its purpose:**

> Focusing on Japanese women living in southeast London, this research aims to investigate how these women experience and variously navigate living in London, a different cultural space. It also documents the constitution—the diverse social and economic backgrounds of members—and formation of the Japanese ethnic community in this locale, to consider how the impact of engaging in this Japanese community affects these women's experience of living in London alongside the other networks they might engage in.

3.   **Description of Methods of Data Collection:**

> The project is ethnographic, and uses participant observation in daily life as its primary method. This will take place both in their domestic environments and in public space as I hope to capture a sense of their social worlds as these are constituted within and beyond the home. I will also be conducting a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews with participants.

If the research involves human participants (whether living or recently deceased) or animal subjects, please continue. If the research involves historical, textual or aesthetic

data or secondary data already in the public realm and does not directly involve the observation or direct engagement with human or animal participants, then please jump to Question 18.

4. **Specify the number of and type of participant(s) likely to be involved. For example, how many people are you going to research? Are those people under 18 years old? Are they cognitively disabled? Are they patients in a hospital? Or young people in a youth club?**

> My PhD research includes indepth ethnographic research with 15-20 Japanese women living in London. They are of all ages. It will not include any 'vulnerable' people.

5. *State where the data collection will be undertaken. For example, will you be conducting interviews in a university room (in which case have you asked permission) or in a cafe or at home? You need to ensure that your respondents are safe from harm, but also that you are safe!*

> My research will mainly take place within participants' houses and in public and private spaces in an around the neighbourhood where they lives. Many of my participants are already known to me through the Japanese community in the area. Furthermore, as a further safeguard, I will make sure that a close and trusted friend will be aware of my whereabouts at all times, and I will report to them when I start and finish my fieldwork.

6. **State the potential adverse consequences to the participant(s), or particular groups of people, if any, and what precautions are to be taken.**

> No.

7. **State any procedures which may cause discomfort, distress or harm to the participant(s), or particular groups of people, and the degree of discomfort or distress likely to be entailed.**

> The community is intimate and cohesive, and I am aware that some may have a feeling of obligation to take part in my research if the others participate. I will make certain that people willingly take part and do not feel under any obligation to do so. The cohesiveness of the community also means that it is of utmost importance that I build up relationships of trust with the participants in the research as this will be the foundation of the project. I will be careful to make assurances that anything told to me in confidence will be upheld.

8. **State how the participant(s) will be recruited. (Please attach copies of any recruiting materials if used).**

> Having lived in the area for two years and I am a part of the community; I've already built up a social network within it, which will help me for the recruitment. Once I start my research, I will use snowball sampling to make sure that I recruit widely within the community.

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9.   **State the manner in which the participant(s) consent will be obtained (if written, please include a copy of the intended consent form).**

> I will explain about my research orally in the beginning of interview with each participant.

9a.   Will the participant(s) be fully informed about the nature of the project and of what they will be required to do?

> Yes. They will be informed through ongoing informed consent as is appropriate for an ethnographic project of this nature.

9b.   Is there any deception involved?

> No

9c.   Will the participant(s) be told they can withdraw from participation at any time, if they wish?

> Yes. Considering their personal circumstances, I'll try to be flexible to understand their withdrawal from or delay of participation.

9d.   Will data be treated confidentially regarding personal information, and what will the participant(s) be told about this?

> Yes. I will promise them that any confidential information they share will not be used for any other purposes.

9e.   If the participant(s) are young persons under the age of 18 years or 'vulnerable persons' (e.g. with learning difficulties or with severe cognitive disability), how will consent be given (i.e. from the participant themselves or from a third party such as a parent or guardian) and how will assent to the research be asked for?

> This research will not include such 'vulnerable persons'.

9f.   Will the data be anonymous?

> Yes

9g.   How will the data remain confidential (i.e. how will you keep any confidential data safe)?

> The recorded data and the transcript will be saved in an encrypted folder in a hard disk, which will be kept in my room.

11.   **Will the research involve the investigation of illegal conduct? If yes, give details and say how you yourself will be protected from harm or suspicion of illegal conduct?**

> No

12. Is it possible that the research might disclose information regarding child sexual abuse or neglect? If yes, indicate how such information will be passed to the relevant authorities (e.g. social workers, police), but also indicate how participants will be informed about the handling of such information were disclosure of this kind to occur. A warning to this effect must be included in the consent form if such disclosure is likely to occur.

No

13. State what kind of feedback, if any, will be offered to participants.

If any of them is interested in my research, I will make a non-academic version of brief summary of my final findings for them. Otherwise I will make an opportunity to invite the participants to make presentation of my final research, as well as thank to their participation.

14. State your expertise for conducting the research proposed.
For example, if you are researching young people, have you ever worked in a youth club or a local school? Or have you ever done any courses that might equip you better to conduct your research?

I took 'Core Qualitative Research Method' course at Goldsmiths, which gave me a basic knowledge of qualitative research.

15. In cases of research with young persons under the age of 18 years or 'vulnerable persons' (e.g. with learning difficulties or with severe cognitive disability), or with those in legal custody, will face-to-face interviews or observations or experiments be overseen by a third party (such as a teacher, care worker or prison officer)? If so, we will need to see an authorised letter indicating this.

My research will not involve young persons or 'vulnerable persons'.

16. If data is collected from an institutional location (such as a school, prison, hospital), has agreement been obtained by the relevant authority (e.g. Head Teacher, Local Education Authority, Home Office)? If so, we will need to see an authorised letter indicating this.

My research will not include any data which is collected from an institution.

17. For those conducting research with young persons under the age of 18 years or 'vulnerable persons' (e.g. with learning difficulties or with severe cognitive disability), do you have Criminal Records Bureau clearance? (Ordinarily unsupervised research with minors would require such clearance. Please see

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College *Code of Practice on Research Ethics*, 2005). Please provide evidence of such clearance.

> My research will not involve young persons or 'vulnerable persons'.

18. **Will the research place you in situations of harm, injury or criminality?**

> No

19. **Might the research cause harm to those represented in it? If so, how?**

> No

20. **Will the research cause harm or damage to bystanders or the immediate environment?**

> No

21. **Are there any conflicts of interest regarding the investigation and dissemination of the research (e.g. with regard to compromising independence or objectivity due to financial gain)?**

> No

ALL APPLICANTS

Please note that the Committee should be notified of any adverse or unforeseen circumstances arising out of this study. Significant changes to the research design should be notified to your Supervisor and relayed to the Committee.

Signature of Applicant:	Date:
Kaoru Takahashi	01/07/2015

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TO BE COMPLETED BY PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR

Please note that the Department Research Ethics Committee should be notified of any adverse or unforeseen circumstances arising out of this study or of any emerging ethical concerns that the Supervisor may have about the research once it has commenced.

Has the student read the ESRC and BSA guidelines on ethics (and equivalent ones, such as the AAA or ASA)? [Approval will not be granted unless the student has demonstrated to the supervisor that they have read such documents.]

Yes/No (Please circle)

Has there been appropriate discussion of the ethical implications of the research with yourself as Supervisor?

Yes/No (Please circle)

Are the ethical implications of the proposed research adequately described in this application?

Yes/No (Please circle)

Signature: Principal Supervisor: **Date:**

MBenson	4/07/15

PLEASE PRINT: Name of Principal Supervisor

Michaela Benson

Signature of approval:
Chair of Research Ethics Committee   Date:

PLEASE PRINT: Name of Chair
Research Ethics Committee