Thesis Title

Cultural Migrants:

The 'Imagined West' and the National Identity of Young Japanese in Tokyo, New York City, and London

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the joint effect of media and migration on national identity. It particularly aims to explore (1) how people conceive the idea of migration to Western countries for symbolic reasons; (2) how migrants experience their sense of national identity in their host country. To answer these questions, I conducted a case study of twenty-two young Japanese. By using 'multi-sited ethnography', I followed their migration process from Tokyo to New York City/London (and to Tokyo) over three years.

The first question is based on Arjun Appadurai's theory of the relation between media and migration. Following this theory, I show how the media lead potential migrants to construct their 'imagined worlds'. Having been exposed to a large quantity of images conveyed by the media, some respondents begin to imagine NYC to be very 'similar' to Tokyo and believe that they can live a 'normal' life with better prospects; others imagine London to be the place where they can acquire 'cultural capital' for their art careers. Thus, they conceive the idea of migration to these particular regions of their 'imagined West'.

As for the second question, however, I argue that the media do not always enable migrants to develop transnational identities, and here I challenge the emerging orthodoxy in theories of transnationalism. In this case, the key is the 'homogeneous' Japanese national identity which the young migrants bring with them. Because Japan is generally considered 'racially homogenous', they are not much aware of issues concerning 'race' and ethnic relations while living there. After arriving in NYC or London, however, their race becomes 'marked', and various obstacles become visible to them in their everyday lives. Consequently, they renegotiate their sense of Japaneseness in significant ways, and often develop a stronger attachment to their nation of origin than they had prior to migration.

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Introduction

> Many young Japanese are drawn to the birth place of hip-hop, New York City. They often support themselves with low level jobs while trying to make it as artists, and many return home once their visas expire. But while they're here, they leave an indelible stamp on New York night life. (*The New York Times*, May 25, 2003)

> Within the art world, the increasing number of Japanese artists studying in London over the last decade has heightened awareness of Japanese culture. …The presence of Japanese art students and Japanese artists working in Britain will have a subtle but deep impact on the British art scene. (*Vogue UK Edition*, November 2003)

When I lived in New York City as a postgraduate student from 1998 to 2001, I met a considerable number of young Japanese who came to the city in an attempt to 'make it' as artists. For example, three young men with tanned skin and dressed in hip-hop fashion, often stopped in at a Japanese grocery shop near my university in Upper West Manhattan, as the shop manager kindly gave them free food sometimes. These three young men formed a dance team, Lina World (named after an amusement park in their hometown in Yamagata, a prefecture located in the northeast region of Japan), and then came all the way to New York City, wishing to become successful in the birthplace of hip hop. To my surprise, their dream almost came true – they won second place in the

Super Top Dog contest in Apollo Theatre's Amateur Night[1] in Harlem, and later appeared in the associated TV program, *Showtime at the Apollo.* One night, in an *izakaya* (Japanese-style bar or restaurant) in Midtown East, my friends introduced a young woman to me. She was an official dancer for the New Jersey Nets of the National Basketball Association (NBA) and also one of the finalists in an audition for a Broadway musical, *the Lion King*. She told me that it was difficult to win auditions in the city, as she had to compete with many strong-minded girls from all over the world. In addition to these relatively successful youngsters, I met a number of amateur film directors, scriptwriters, photographers, graphic designers, painters, musicians, rappers, singers, dancers, hairstylists, and others who dreamed of becoming the next Takashi Murakami[2] or DJ Kaori.[3] Of course, I had met such aspiring youths in my hometown, Tokyo, but it appeared as if the majority of young Japanese in New York City were aspiring artists.

Subsequently, I moved to London in 2002 to do my Ph.D. I was surprised to observe many young Japanese participate in cultural production in London too. For instance, some girls were selling handmade clothes in Spitalfields Market, some young men were organising a monthly event called 'Tokyo Mania' in Club 333 in Old Street, and some young women were working as hairstylists in beauty salons near Piccadilly Circus, hoping to become as successful as fashion designer Wakako Kishimoto[4] or product designers Shin and Tomoko Azumi[5] some day.

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[1] The Apollo Theater Amateur Night began in 1934 in Harlem. Two-time winners compete in the Top Dog competition, and three-time winners compete in the Super Top Dog championship. The grand prize winners include Ella Fitzgerald, Stevie Wonder, James Brown, and The Jackson Five.

[2] The artist/curator Takashi Murakami lived in New York City to participate in the P.S.1 International Studio Program in 1994. After returning to Japan, he founded his production studio Kaikai Kiki. He has had many solo shows in Japan, USA, France, Sweden, and other countries, and is internationally recognised for his collaboration with designer Marc Jacobs for the Louis Vuitton fashion house.

[3] Ueda Kaori moved to New York City in 1992 and began DJing in popular venues such as Limelight, Tunnel, Twilo, and Sound Factory. She joined a famous DJ team, Funkmaster Flex's Big Dawg Pitbulls, and worked with DMX, Herbie Hancock, etc., and also did DJing in private parties for Michael Jordan, Mike Tyson, and other celebrities.

[4] The fashion designer Wakako Kishimoto graduated from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, and began textile business with her husband Mark Eley in South London in 1992.

Indeed, these young Japanese whom I met in New York City or London tended to have similar backgrounds and lifestyles. After finishing high school or college, or quitting their jobs in Japan, they moved to New York City or London with their parents' financial support or their own savings. Some followed a conventional way of *ryūgaku* (studying abroad), by attending college or vocational school. But many others found a new way of participating in cultural production overseas – they acquired student visas through English language schools, as a means of 'legally' staying at their destination. Actually, many of them often skipped or rarely attended school, but instead practised dance or played music in studios, made drawings in their rooms, or worked in clothing shops or beauty salons. These young Japanese tended to attempt to stay at their destination as long as possible, changing their visa status between different categories (such as tourist, vocational or language student, and academic student). The majority of them did not have legal full-time jobs, but often (illegally) took up low-wage jobs at Japanese restaurants, grocery stores, or hostess clubs, when their funds started running out. They usually spoke elementary English and spent their everyday lives with Japanese friends and flatmates.

Thus, the issue arose in my mind, 'Why are so many young Japanese moving to New York City or London to become successful artists?' When I raised this question with young Japanese themselves, American or European students and researchers, international students from East Asian countries, or other people around me in New York City or London, most of them quickly recognised the same trend, as they had also

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Their clients included Alexander McQueen, Jil Sander, Versace, Yves Saint Laurent, and so on. They also established their original brand, Eley Kishimoto, and have participated in London collection since 1995.

[5] Product designers Shin and Tomoko Azumi formed a team called 'Azumi' (but they dissolved their team after their divorce). They graduated from the Royal College of Art, and then established their studio in London in 1995. They won numerous awards for their designs, and their furniture is in the permanent collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum in Britain.

seen crowds of such young Japanese in the city. Some of them asked me back, 'Why don't they try to succeed in Tokyo? What do they think about Japanese culture?' or 'So, they came all the way to the city, but why do they always hang out with Japanese peers?' But no one, including myself, was able to answer these seemingly easy questions well. I thought this youthful migration was fascinating. But at the same time it seemed somewhat odd. This is because I could not imagine such a large number of Western youths moving to Japan or any other non-Western countries for the purpose of participating in cultural production (although I have seen in person and through the mass media a small number of Western youths migrating to Japan out of a passion for Japanese traditional art or popular culture, such as ukiyo-e or anime). Wondering what these uneven flows of young people signified, I began to investigate young Japanese 'cultural migrants'.

National Identity, Media, and Migration

This study is about the stories of twenty-two young Japanese. I followed the process of their migration from Tokyo to New York City or London (and to Tokyo) over three years. In doing so, I aim to explore the central thesis that while young Japanese are led by ideas derived from the media to migrate to 'the West', once there they renegotiate their sense of Japanese national identity. Why should the thesis be explored? Is it theoretically important? In order to make these points clear, I want to introduce two research questions.

The first question, which originally motivated this study, concerns how a large number of young Japanese have conceived the idea of migration to Western cities for the purpose of cultural production. So far, a considerable amount of research has explored how people migrate from economically developing countries to industrialised and/or Western countries (e.g., Mexico to USA, or China to Canada), and theories of international migration tend to focus on economic and/or political factors. But such approaches are not applicable in this case, as young Japanese migrate for cultural reasons. Moreover, these young people do not fit into conventional categories of Japanese migrants,[6] such as company transferees, entrepreneurs, or academic students.[7] If so, how can we account for this young Japanese migration?

Following Arjun Appadurai's theory of the relation between media and migration (1996), I would propose that the media have influenced their mobility. That is, the media have diffused information and visual images of the United States and Western European countries in Japan, constructing an image of 'the West' over a long period. Young Japanese have grown up being exposed to Western European and American architecture, dance, drawings, fashion, films, and music, as well as the landscapes of cities and tourist attractions. Subsequently, they have begun to imagine themselves living there.

Here it is important to carefully look at how they imagine their lives in their destination. Previous studies have argued that other young migrant groups moved to the West in search of a 'modern' lifestyle (Mai, 2001; Sabry, 2003), or that young Japanese women moved to the West with 'desire for the white man as fetish object of modernity' (Kelsky, 2001). However, Japan has long since developed its own sense of a 'modern' lifestyle. These young Japanese come from the middle class in the country, and indeed, could enjoy the same economic standard of living at home as middle-class young people do in New York City or London. If so, one might ask what makes them migrate to the West. As I will show later in this study, their main reason for migration derives from their specific ideas of 'the West'. That is, some young Japanese imagine New York City to be very 'similar' to Tokyo, and believe that they can continue to lead a 'normal' life with more prospect of success; others imagine London to be the place where they can acquire 'cultural capital' for their art careers. These factors influence how they actually carry out their migratory projects to their 'imagined worlds', or what I would call their 'imagined West'.

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[6] One may consider that such cultural migration is long-established, because studying high culture in Western countries is common among children from elite families in non-Western countries. However, this is not the case. Nowadays, a large number of young Japanese from the middle class are moving to Western cities.

[7] Of course, it may be possible to categorise young Japanese who acquire student visas as 'international students'. However, regardless of their visa status, they commonly aim to 'make it' as professional artists or to gain experience in the field of cultural production in Western cities. Therefore, I want to classify all young Japanese who migrate for the purpose of engaging in cultural production as a cohort in terms of their purpose in migration

The second question deals with identity experience during the post-migration period, and addresses the theory of transnationalism. In the past decade or so, a number of researchers have begun to argue that migrants are forming new transnational identities or communities across national boundaries, by using the newly developed means of communication and transportation (e.g., Appadurai, 1996; Basch et al., 1994). Indeed, previous studies report that today a considerable number of migrants (e.g., West Indians or Mexicans) routinely move back and forth between their homeland and their destination; such migrants often belong to political organisations and develop informal personal networks with peers in their homeland, as well as in other parts of the world.

Based on these presumptions, at first, I expected to observe a similar process whereby young Japanese would produce hybrid cultures, as discussed in many previous studies of other migrant groups. However, during my fieldwork, I soon realised my assumption was wrong. I seldom observed my respondents producing hybrid cultures or transnational identities. Rather, they begin to renegotiate their sense of being 'Japanese'. While many other migrants are considered to develop transnational identities, why do these young Japanese, who strongly hope to participate in Western culture, hold onto their sense of Japaneseness?

A critical point is that the image of 'the West' is seldom the same as the experience of the reality that migrants encounter in their host country. In fact, 'expectations'

(Foner, 1998:176) remain an important factor for the perception of the host society after migration, and migrants tend to hold an 'idealised' image of their destination.

Particularly, in this case, the key is the 'homogeneous' national identity which these young Japanese bring with them. That is, Japan is one of the nation-states that have constructed a strong national identity, and the majority of the Japanese believe their nation to be 'racially homogenous'. Because of this belief, in Japan, most people are not much aware of issues concerning 'race' and ethnic *relations*. Indeed, as I will show later, before migration, the young Japanese were hopeful that they would lead a new life, mixing with American/British people, but were seldom prepared for the social and racial discrimination that awaited them. After arriving in New York City or London, however, their race became 'marked', and various obstacles became visible to them in their everyday lives. As their 'imagined West' turned out to be at odds with their actual experiences, they began to renegotiate their sense of Japaneseness in significant ways.

By exploring the central thesis with these two questions, I want to reconsider the joint effect of media and migration. That is, following Appadurai, I will show how today the media induce potential migrants to imagine their possible lives in national spaces other than those they were born, and how they find particular symbolic meanings in their migratory projects. However, I will also argue that the media do not always enable migrants to develop transnational identities, and here I challenge the emerging orthodoxy in the general discussion of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism. Instead, I will attempt to show how media and migration can work in the opposite way – that is, media and migration lead migrants not to transcend but to renegotiate or even heighten their sense of national identity, under particular historical and social conditions.

Definition of a Term: 'Cultural Migrants'

In the Oxford English Dictionary (Second Edition, 1989), the word 'migrant' is defined as 'one who or something which migrates'; and the verb 'migrate' is defined as (1) (of an animal) move from one habitat to another according to the seasons, (2) (of a person) move to a new area in order to find work, and (3) move from one part of something to other.

As these definitions suggest, the term 'migrant' often implies one who migrates for economic reasons. However, in this study, 'migrant' does not necessarily correspond to 'economic migrant'. Indeed, in the past few decades, people began to migrate for a variety of purposes besides business or labour, as the volume of international migration has grown, and more and more countries have been crucially involved in these movements since the 1980s. For example, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) now has twenty classifications of legal immigrant – 'family-based immigration', 'employment-based immigration', 'adoption', 'asylum', 'diversity lottery', 'immigrant religious workers', 'physicians in underserved areas', 'refugee', and more. In addition, the USCIS issues 'nonimmigrant' visas for those who plan to stay for only a certain period in the United States There are many classifications ranging from A to V[8] (USCIS, 2005). As these classifications illustrate, today the reason for migration has greatly diversified.

Moreover, 'migrant' in this study does not necessarily correspond to the legal term of 'immigrant' whereby one takes up a permanent residence in the host country. In the case of the USCIS, it distinguishes 'immigrant' from '*non*immigrant' for legal purposes, and issues nonimmigrant visas for those who plan to stay in the U.S for only a certain period. However, many foreign residents who have acquired such a nonimmigrant visa attempt to change their status to permanent resident while staying in the host country. On the other hand, many permanent residents wish to return to their homeland in the future, but continue to hold onto their immigrant visa for business, political security, or other purposes. Therefore, for this research, the term 'immigrant' or 'migrant' in the narrow sense is not useful, as it cannot properly describe people's actual intention and forms of migration. Based on these ideas, for the purpose of my study, I define 'migrant' simply as 'one who moves from one country to another'. By using the term 'cultural migrants', I try to describe people who migrate for cultural purposes[9] other than economic and political ones.

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[8] These are 'foreign government officials (A)', 'visitors (B)', 'alien in transit (C)', 'crewmen (D)', 'treaty traders and treaty investors (E)', 'academic students (F)', 'foreign government officials to international organizations (G)', 'temporary workers (H)', 'foreign media representative (I)', 'exchange visitors (J)', 'fiancé(e) of US citizen (K)', 'intracompany transferee (L)', 'vocational language students (M)', 'workers with extraordinary abilities (O)', 'athletes and entertainers (P)', 'international cultural exchange visitors (Q)', 'religious workers (R)', 'witness or informant (S)', 'victims of a severe form of trafficking in persons (T)', 'victims of certain crimes (U)', and 'certain second preference beneficiaries (V)'.

Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1 reviews theories and case studies concerning the interrelationships between national identity, media, and migration. Chapter 2 investigates the case of Japan. It looks at how Japanese national identity has been constructed over a long period, and how past Japanese migrants experienced their sense of Japaneseness through their migration to Asia, America, and Europe. Chapter 3 explains the methods used in my fieldwork. It delineates how I followed the migration process of the twenty-two young Japanese from Tokyo to New York City or London (and to Tokyo) over three years, by doing 'multi-sited' fieldwork. Chapter 4 investigates how the young Japanese imagine 'the West' under the influence of the media, negotiate their sense of being Japanese, and then actually carry out their migratory projects. Here I explain the various factors influencing their migration – 'pull' and 'push' factors, migration systems, and cultural-ideological links between Japan and the United States or Britain. Chapter 5 explains how the young Japanese reinterpret their sense of Japaneseness, as they become consciously involved in 'race' and ethnic relations in New York City or London. In particular, I will delineate the process whereby they redefine their sense of being Japanese, referring unconsciously to discourses of *nihonjinron*. Chapter 6 examines how Japaneseness is gendered, focusing on the ways in which female respondents both conform to and resist the images of 'Japanese women' as 'submissive' or 'exotic' held by American and British people. Chapter 7 investigates how my respondents' sense of Japaneseness is affected by language, cultural values, and ethnic organisations and institutions that link them with their peers in New York's or London's Japanese community. Here I also look at whether and how they develop their sense of belonging in relation to the local 'ethnic' Japanese community in their host country. Chapter 8 explores how these young Japanese reconstruct their perception of 'home'. In so doing, their use of transnational media and back-and-forth mobility are looked at. The final chapter answers the two research questions and states my conclusions. It reviews how the young Japanese migrants experience and renegotiate their sense of national identity, and how the media and other social factors affect the process.

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[9] Similarly, in his essay on Japanese migration to Paris in search of artistic, musical, and other cultural opportunities, Kazuhiko Yatabe mentions that 'on a heuristic level, it is probably not false to consider this migration to be "cultural", as opposed to economic or political migration' (Yatabe, 2001:30).

Chapter 1 National Identity, Media, and Migration

As already stated in the Introduction, the objective of this study is to explore the two questions: (1) how do the twenty-two young Japanese conceive the idea of migration to New York City or London for the purpose of cultural production?; (2) how do they experience their sense of Japanese national identity in their destination city? This chapter aims to review migration theories and case studies concerning these questions, and attempts to account for (a) how potential migrants conceive the idea of migration to Western countries for symbolic reasons; and (b) how migrants experience their sense of national identity in their host country. To begin with, some of the key concepts in these questions – 'nation', 'identity', and 'national identity' – will be looked at in turn.

1.1 National Identity

What is the 'Nation'?

In the Oxford English Dictionary (Second Edition, 1989), 'nation' is defined as 'a large group sharing the same culture, language, or history, and inhabiting a particular state or area'. In a similar way, many scholars list the elements of the nation in their definitions. One famous example is Anthony D. Smith. He defines a nation as 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members' (Smith, 1991:14).

Other scholars focus on the consciousness of the members of a nation. Max Weber suggests that one might well define the concept of nation in the following way: 'a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own; hence, a nation is a community which normally tends to produce a state of its own' (Weber, 1948:176). Benedict Anderson considers that the nation needs to be 'imagined' by its members:

> I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community — and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (Anderson, 1983:5-6)

In fact, as John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith remark, there is no agreement among scholars about 'subjective' and 'objective' factors in the definition of nations; Weber also notes that nations are too various to be defined in terms of any one criterion (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994:15). In this context, this study follows especially Anderson's definition and considers the nation to be 'imagined' by people who migrate, as well as by those who stay put.

What is 'Identity'?

According to Stuart Hall, there are two models of the production of identities. The first model assumes that there is some intrinsic and essential content to any identity which is defined by some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. The second model stresses the impossibility of such fully constituted, separate and distinct identities (Hall, 1996a:2; Grossberg, 1996:89). As Hall explains:

> In contrast with the 'naturalism' of this definition, the discursive approach sees identification as a construction, *a process never completed – always 'in process'.* It is not determined in the sense that it can always be 'won' or lost', sustained or abandoned. Though not without its determinate conditions of existence, including the material and symbolic resources required to sustain it, identification is in the end conditional, lodged in contingency. Once secured, it does not obliterate difference. The total merging it suggests is, in fact, a fantasy of incorporation. ...Identification is, then, a process of articulation, a suturing, an over-determination not a subsumption. There is always 'too much' or 'too little' – an over-determination or a lack, but never a proper fit, a totality. (Hall, 1996a:2-3, emphasis my own)

In addition, Ernesto Laclau (1990) notes that identity construction 'is always based on excluding something and establishing a violent hierarchy between the two resultant poles – man/woman, etc.' (Hall, 1996a:5-6). These arguments suggest that the process of identity formation can never be completed; and identities exclude certain elements and characteristics and marginalise certain categories. As identities are constructed through difference or in contrast with the Other, some identities are associated with positive meanings, while other identities are associated with negative meanings.

Moreover, Hall points out that social identities are always constructed in specific historical and institutional sites:

> Precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies. Moreover, they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the making of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally-constituted unity – an 'identity' in its traditional meaning. (Hall, 1996:4)

Thus, the second model emphasises that identity is an entirely cultural and social, even an entirely linguistic, construction (Grossberg, 1996:90); and that identities are constructed under the influence of power relations in historically specific contexts.

The Construction of 'National Identity'

Based on Hall's analysis, we may infer that 'national identity', which is a form of social identity, is also constructed within specific discursive formations in historically specific contexts. In fact, since the 1980s, the question of the origin of the nation and nationalism has been widely discussed, and broadly speaking, there are two opposing perspectives on these issues. From the historicist approach, some scholars maintain that the nation and nationalism are rooted in a long, continuous historical process. Anthony D. Smith, for instance, maintains that ethnic community is the primordial basis of the nation, explaining that 'ethnies' or ethnic communities are transformed into nations either through the state-sponsored route or through the smaller-community route (Smith, 1991:68-9).[10]

The alternative approach sees the nation not as an essential community but as a social construct, although this approach shows various views on how nations emerge. Benedict Anderson has developed one of the most influential theories of this type, and explains that the convergence of capitalism and print technology and the diversity of human language create the possibility of a new form of 'imagined' community, which sets the stage for the modern nation (Anderson, 1983). From another perspective, Ernest Gellner argues that industrialisation is the key to the emergence of the nation and nationalism.[11] In his view, 'nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist' (Gellner, 1964:169). Eric Hobsbawm supports Gellner's view and argues that 'nationalism comes before nations. Nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round' (Hobsbawm, 1990:10). As he notes, national traditions, which appear or claim to be old, are often quite recent in origin and sometimes 'invented'. Societies since the industrial revolution have naturally been obliged to invent, institute, or develop new networks of convention or routine more frequently than pre-modern societies (Hobsbawm, 1983:1-3).

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[10] In the former route, as an ethnic state becomes more centralised and bureaucratic, it incorporates the middle classes and outlying regions through military, fiscal, judicial and administrative processes. It welds disparate populations into a single political community based on the cultural heritage of the dominant ethnic core. The latter route began from smaller, demotic communities whose ethno-religious self-conceptions are exchanged for more political ones. Small circles of educator-intellectuals are intent on purifying and mobilising 'the people' through an appeal to the community's alleged ethnic past. To do this, they provide cognitive maps and historical moralities for the present generation, from the golden ages of the communal past (Smith, 1991:68-9).

[11] According to Gellner, agro-literate societies had no room for nationalism. The ruling class and the majority of agricultural producers or peasants were rigidly separated due to their cultural differences. However, in modern industrial societies, the standardised educational system attained universal literacy and a high level of numerical, technical, and general sophistication. People became a mobile workforce, and were increasingly uprooted from basic social units such as kinship. A new type of social integration based on language and culture became possible. (Gellner, 1983:8-52; Yoshino, 1992:77-8).

The question of the origin of the nation remains a hotly contested issue, and a fuller examination, which might ultimately resolve these questions, is beyond the scope of this study. However, it is possible to say that national identity itself is a modern artefact. Whether nations are transformed from ethnic communities, 'imagined', or 'invented', these approaches note that such political and social changes first occurred in the modern era. If identification is always practised within discourses in historically specific contexts, the state needs to create homogenous spaces of 'nationness', in order to strategically pursue a single national identity, when the nation emerges in modern times. Arjun Appadurai well describes this process:

> The nation-state relies for legitimacy on the intensity of its meaningful presence in a continuous body of bounded territory. It works by policing its borders, producing its people, constructing its citizens, defining its capitals, monuments, cities, waters, and soils and by constructing its locales of memory and commemoration, such as grave yards and cenotaphs, mausoleums and museums. The nation-state conducts throughout its territories the bizarrely contradictory project of creating a flat, contiguous, and homogenous space of nationness and simultaneously a set of places and spaces (prisons, barracks, airports, radio stations, secretariats, parks, marching rounds, processional routes) calculated to create the internal distinctions and divisions necessary for state ceremony, surveillance, discipline, and mobilization. (Appadurai, 1996:189)

The Reconstruction of National Identity

According to Kosaku Yoshino, the above conventional theories of the nation and nationalism have tended to confine themselves to the process of ideological manipulation whereby elites 'invent' national identity and impose it on the masses through state-sponsored education. Therefore, more attention should be paid to the subsequent maintenance and re-enhancement of national identity in established nations (Yoshino, 2001:142; 158).[12] Indeed, in recent years, a number of researchers have begun to argue that globalisation[13] greatly contributes to the reconstitution of national identity, by transforming the conditions upon which the established national identity was based (Guibernau, 2001; Gupta and Ferguson, 1999; Hall, 1991; Morley, 2000; Morley and Robins, 1996): for example, more and more people are crossing over 'a common territory'; the influx of foreign media and popular culture dissolves 'a common public culture'; and an increasing number of foreign residents diversify 'common legal rights and duties' within a territory.

In this context, the ideas of 'homeland' and 'home' are attracting much attention. As Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson note:

> ...as actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, ideas of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient. It is here that it becomes most visible how imagined communities come to be attached to imagined places, as displaced peoples cluster around remembered or imagined homelands, places, or communities in a world that seems increasingly to deny such firm territorialized anchors in their actuality. (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997:39)

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[12] In his view, discourses on national distinctiveness and commercial products in the heritage industry are not only 'produced', but also 'reproduced' and 'distributed' by cultural intermediaries, as well as 'consumed' by ordinary people in the cultural marketplace (Yoshino, 2001:142; 158)

[13] According to Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash, 'globalisation' has become an increasingly influential paradigm in the human sciences in the 1990s (Featherstone and Lash, 1995:1). So far, various conceptualisations of globalisation have been presented. For example, Roland Robertson notes that 'globalisation as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole' (Robertson, 1992:8). Anthony Giddens defines globalisation as 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa' (Giddens, 1990).

On the one hand, such a strong attachment to the homeland is considered to lead to extreme forms of identity politics. That is, in response to the globalising process, many people are now seeking 'protective strategies', which are centred around the conservation of bounded and coherent identities. This may take the form of the resuscitated patriotism and jingoism (Robins, 1991:41). On the other hand, it is argued that new communities that span national boundaries are being formed now. In this process, people become culturally transnationalised, by incorporating practices and ideologies from two or more regions or countries (Grosfoguel and Cordero-Guzman, 1998:359). Thus, globalisation is considered to have significant impacts on the reconstitution of national identities or on the formation of new identities. However, the pattern of identity formation under globalisation is still in question. It would seem, therefore, that further investigations are needed. The central thesis of this study is based on these theoretical arguments which problematise the process whereby national identity is reconstructed, particularly in relation to international migration.

1.2 'Imagined Worlds' in the Homeland

1.2.1 How Does International Migration Begin?

Neoclassical Economics Theory

In the era of European colonialism, a large number of people migrated from Europe to the Americas,[14] and later, to Oceania (Castles and Millers, 2003:51). Drawn from the analysis of these conditions of mass migration from Europe, the earliest systematic theories of international migration were established in the late nineteenth century.

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[14] The peak of the industrial revolution was the main period of British migration to America: between 1800 and 1860, 66 % of migrants to the United States were from Britain, and a further 22 % were from Germany. From 1850 to 1914 most migrants to America came from Ireland, Italy, Spain, and Eastern Europe, areas in which industrialisation came later. It is estimated that 54 million people entered the United States between 1820 and 1987, but the peak was this period from 1861 to 1920, during which 30 million people came (Castles and Millers, 2003:51-7).

These theories were derived from neoclassical economics: at the macro level, international migration 'is caused by geographic differences in the supply of and demand for labour'; at the micro level, 'individual rational actors decide to migrate because a cost-benefit calculation leads them to expect a positive net return, usually monetary, from movement' (Massey et al., 1993:432-3). This approach emphasises the 'push-pull' nature of international migration: 'push' factors include demographic growth, low living standards, lack of economic opportunities, and political repression, while 'pull' factors are demand for labour, availability of land, good economic opportunities and political freedoms (Castles and Miller, 2003:22).

After the 1960s, however, it became necessary to reconsider this approach, because massive labour-force migrations emerged throughout the world (Sassen, 1988; Massey et al., 1993). In particular, since the mid-1980s, international migration has rapidly grown, and the volume of immigration has grown and its composition has shifted. In the case of the United Sates, the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act had unexpected results. Latin American and Asian origin residents were able to use family reunion provisions to initiate processes of chain migration, which brought a major shift in ethnic composition. In the 1951-60 period, Europeans made up 53 % of new immigrants, but in 1999, Europeans were only 15 % of all immigrants, while 46 % came from the Americas (excluding Canada) and 30 % from Asia (Castles and Miller, 2003:90). In Western Europe, temporary labour recruitment from less-developed European countries, such as the Mediterranean countries, Ireland, and Finland, and also inflows of workers from former colonies led to the formation of new populations between 1945 and the early 1970s (Castles and Miller, 2003:69). By the 1980s, even countries in southern Europe – Italy, Spain, and Portugal – which only a decade before had been sending migrants to wealthier countries in the north, began to import workers from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East (Massey et al., 1993:431).

Nowadays, more and more countries are crucially involved in migratory movements throughout the world (OECD, 2004).

The old approach to international migration was unable to explain these complicated situations. Consequently, migration researchers have developed new theories in the past few decades. At present, however, there is no one dominant theory of international migration. In one of the most influential theoretical studies, 'Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal', Massey et al. note:

> At present, there is no single, coherent theory of international migration, only a fragmented set of theories that have developed largely in isolation from one another, sometimes but not always segmented by disciplinary boundaries. Current patterns and trends in immigration, however, suggest that a full understanding of contemporary migratory processes will not be achieved by relying on the tools of one discipline alone, or by focusing on a single level of analysis. Rather, their complex, multifaceted nature requires a sophisticated theory that incorporates a variety of perspectives, levels, and assumptions. (Massey et al., 1993:432)

Among such a variety of theories, 'world systems theory' and 'migration systems theory' are often regarded as the most influential ones (e.g., Castles and Miller 2003; Massey et al. 1993; Faist 2000; Grosfoguel and Cordero-Guzman 1998).

World Systems Theory

Building on the work of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974), a number of sociological theorists have linked the origins of international migration to the structure of the world market (Massey et al., 1993:444). In particular, Saskia Sassen offers a new understanding of labour force movement. As she argues, poverty is held to be a basic migration push factor in neoclassical economics, but this raises two questions. First, why are *not* all countries with extensive poverty countries of emigration? Second, why is it that large-scale emigration in what are today the main sending countries started when it did and not earlier, since many of these countries were poor long before emigration commenced? (Sassen, 1988:5).[15]

Sassen pays attention to the effects of direct foreign investment. In her view, direct foreign investment expands export manufacturing and export agriculture, and this has an additional disruptive effect on traditional employment structures. In export manufacturing, this disruption is mediated by a massive recruitment of young women into newly created jobs. Meanwhile, an expanding global market generates a new kind of economic centre, 'global cities',[16] in which banking, finance, administration, professional services, and high-tech production tend to be concentrated. It creates a strong demand for services from unskilled workers (Sassen, 1988; 2001). Sassen notes:

> Foreign plants are a factor establishing linkages with the U.S., especially cultural ones. The workers mobilised into wage-labour on plantations or world market factories probably are only a small share of those that make use of these linkages. But they are part of the linkage for potential emigrants. On the other hand, those employed in services and office work necessary for the export sector are more likely to become part of the pool of emigrants. *The ideological effect* is not to be underestimated: the presence of foreign plants not only brings the U.S. or any other 'western' country closer, but it also 'westernises' the less development country and its people. Emigration to the U.S. emerges as an option. In an 'isolated' country, that is one lacking extensive direct foreign investment, emigration would be quite unlikely to emerge as such an option. (Sassen, 1988: 20, emphasis added by YF)

Sassen's theory, therefore, connects the macro level with the micro level. In other words, direct foreign investment generates 'the ideological effect', i.e., cultural-ideological links between the sending country and the receiving country (the macro level), and these links lead to individual decisions to migrate (the micro level).

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[15] For instance, Haiti was poor long before massive emigration began in the early 1970s. The Dominican Republic had considerable unemployment, underemployment, and poverty long before large-scale emigration began in the mid 1960s (Sassen, 1988:5).

[16] 'Global cities' are cities which function in four specific ways: first, as highly concentrated command points in the organisation of the world economy; second, as key locations for finance and for specialised service firms; third, as sites of production, including the production of innovations, in these leading industries; and fourth, as markets for the products and innovations produced. According to Sassen, leading examples are New York City, London, Tokyo, Frankfurt, and Paris (Sassen, 2001:3-4).

Migration Systems Theory

The world systems theory, however, is criticised by many migration scholars. This is because the theory emphasises the interests of capital as all-determining, and leaves many aspects of the migration process unexplained. Another approach, 'migration systems theory' has emerged out of such critiques, aiming at a more inclusive and interdisciplinary understanding. The basic principle is that any migratory movement can be seen as the result of interaction among the macro-, meso- and micro-structures (Castles and Millers, 2003:26-7).

The macro level includes economic structure (the political economy of the world market), political structure (interstate relationships, the laws, etc.), demography and ecology (population growth, availability of arable land), and any other relationships and practices established by the states of sending and receiving countries (Castles and Millers, 2003; Faist, 2000). The micro level is the decision-making individuals. It focuses on individual motivations, such as values, beliefs, and expectancies (Faist, 2000:31). In addition, 'the meso level' has been attracting increasing attention from researchers in recent years. This includes agencies and institutions in the migration industry, such as recruitment organisations, lawyers, agents, smugglers and other intermediaries (Castles and Miller, 2003:28).[17]

Thus, according to the changing conditions of international migration, the theories of international migration have developed from neoclassical economics theory to migration systems theory. However, these theories discuss neither how the media play a role in the migration process (regardless of the claim among many researchers that, partly because of the developed means of communication, international migration has grown since the 1980s), nor how people migrate for symbolic reasons, in addition to economic or political reasons. Therefore, let us look at a different approach. It is Arjun Appadurai's theory of 'the work of the imagination'.

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[17] Once international migration has begun, private institutions and voluntary organisations arise to satisfy the demand created by an imbalance between the large number of people who seek entry into capital-rich countries and the limited number of immigrant visas these countries typically offer (Massey et al., 1993:450).

1.2.2 Media and 'the Work of the Imagination'

In his *Modernity at Large*, Appadurai argues that electronic media and mass migration have their joint effect on 'the work of the imagination'. Cinema, television, video, computers, and telephones have transformed the ways in which people imagine themselves and everyday life, because of the sheer multiplicity of the forms in which media appear and because of the rapid way in which media move through daily life routines. People tend to construct 'imagined selves' and 'imagined worlds' or to make scripts for possible lives, by being exposed to the media – whether in the form of fantastic film plots, news shows, or documentaries (Appadurai, 1996:3-4).

Appadurai remarks that of course the role of imagination is not a new feature in human history. Imagination, however, has begun to play a newly significant role. For one reason, as electronic media have come into wide use throughout the world in the past decade or two, imagination has broken out of the special expressive space of art, myth, and ritual. That is, electronic media have allowed ordinary people to be exposed to a variety of images of foreign countries and have enabled them to deploy their imaginations in the practice of everyday lives. As a result, more people than ever before imagine routinely the possibility that they will live and work in places other than where they were born (Appadurai, 1996:5-6). As he puts it:

> Here the images, scripts, models, and narratives that come through mass mediation (in its realistic and fictional modes) make the difference between migration today and in the past. Those who wish to move, those who have moved, those who wish to return, and those who choose to stay rarely formulate their plans outside the sphere of radio and television, cassettes and videos, newsprint and telephone. For migrants, both the politics of adaptation to new environments and the stimulus to move or return are deeply affected by a mass-mediated imaginary that frequently transcends national

> space. (Appadurai 1996:6)

Appadurai's theory offers a useful analytical framework for exploring the role of media and symbolic meanings in the migration process. However, it seems that Appadurai has not discussed a critical point: how the power relations in culture affect 'the work of the imagination'. He does not fully probe this point, because he considers:

> What these arguments [of the Media-Cultural Imperialism theory] fail to consider is that at least as rapidly as forces from various metropolises are brought into new societies they tend to become indigenised in one or another way ... The new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing centre-periphery models (even those that might account for multiple centres and peripheries)'. (Appadurai, 1996:32)

Nevertheless, it is still necessary to carefully examine how the hegemony of American and Western European media and popular culture influences 'the work of the imagination'. The United States and Western Europe have been exposing a large quantity of media and popular culture to the rest of the world since the 1960s, while a large number of people have been migrating to the United States and Western Europe over the past few decades. It is possible, as Ulf Hannerz notes, that 'the distribution of culture within the world is affected by a structure of asymmetrical, centre/periphery, relationships', although 'the cultural processes of creolization are not simply a matter of a constant pressure form the centre towards the periphery, but a much more creative interplay' (Hannerz, 1992:261;265). For this investigation, a crucial question is: how does the power of Western media and popular culture affect the ways in which people plan and carry out migration?

The Flows of Western Media and Popular Culture

The transnational flows of media and popular culture became a particular academic research area and political agenda in the 1960s, as a clear trend was found: media traffic flowed one-way from the big exporting countries, mainly the United States, and to a much lesser extent, Britain, France, and Germany, to the rest of the world (Varis, 1974; 1984).

Hebert Schiller has attempted to theorise this phenomenon and initiated the most influential and controversial theory, Media-Cultural Imperialism theory. Following Wallerstein's modern world system, he argues that the imbalance in the circulation of information and popular culture is largely influenced by 'the advanced, industrialised centres' or 'core' countries of the global structure. American-owned multinational corporations acquire economic profit as well as provide in their imagery and messagery the beliefs and perspectives that create and reinforce their audiences' attachment to consumerism in the rest of the world (Schiller, 1969:21-32).

Many researchers, however, criticise this theory, arguing that the expansion of U.S. media into international sales and investment could be better understood as a natural logic of a business cycle rather than as the result of systemic imperialism (Straubhaar, 1991:41). Other researchers also claim that in the Media-Cultural Imperialism approach there is simply an assertion of the manipulative and ideological power of the media, without empirical evidence (Tomlinson, 1991:40). Ithiel de Sola Pool contends that 'other things being equal, consumers pick local products' (de Sola Pool, 1977:143). Indeed, such preferences for national and regional television programmes to American television programmes have been observed in East Asia, Europe, and South America (Antola and Rogers, 1984; De Bens et al., 1992; Ito, 1990; Tracey, 1988; Waterman and Rogers, 1994). A series of audience studies on the consumption of a popular American television series *Dallas* also have shown that there was no 'hypodermic needle' or strong direct effects on its audience.[18] Furthermore, some anthropological studies argue that local people tend to 'appropriate' foreign media and popular culture in various ways.[19]

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[18] According to Ien Ang (1985), the popularity of the show was a complex phenomenon without a single cause, but owing a good deal to the intrinsic pleasure to be derived from its melodramatic narrative structures, and these had no necessary connection with the power of American culture or

Schiller criticises these studies, saying, 'How can one propose to extract one TV show, film, book or even a group, from the now nearly seamless media-cultural environment, and examine it (them) for specific effect?' He claims that transnational corporations from other developed countries, e.g., Philips of the Netherlands, Lever Brothers of Britain, or Sony of Japan, have emerged as new major players in the world capitalist system. Thus the domination still exists today, but it is better understood as 'transnational corporate cultural domination' (Schiller, 1991:15; 24).

How can we account for these complicated phases of global cultural flows? Stuart Hall syntheses a variety of standpoints and offers a persuasive interpretation of this problem:

> Global mass culture has a variety of different characteristics but I would identify two. One is that it remains centred in the West. That is to say, Western technology, the concentration of capital, the concentration of techniques, the concentration of advanced labour in the Western societies, and the stories and the imagery of Western societies. ... The second most important characteristic of this form of global mass culture is its peculiar form of homogenization. It is a homogenizing form of cultural representation enormously absorptive of things, as it were, but the homogenization is never absolutely complete, and it does not work for completeness. It is not attempting to produce little mini-versions of Englishness everywhere. Or little version of

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the values of consumer capitalism. In a similar vein, Tamar Liebes and Elihu Katz (1990) suggest that viewers, including Jews, Israeli Arabs, and new immigrants from Russia, interpret the television programme in quite different ways, depending on their cultural backgrounds (Tomlinson, 1991).

[19] For example, Daniel Miller investigates the consumption of an American television programme, *The Young and the Restless* in Trinidad. He finds that Trinidadians watch the soap opera and compare its characters' everyday activities, which can be described as the world of gossip, scandal, and confusion, and their own. This has contributed to their refinement of the concept of Trinidad as the culture of 'bacchanal', or the essential character of Trinidadian society. Miller argues that 'we should not assume that the term "global" connotes the massive homogenisation presupposed by the debate on consumer culture' (Miller, 1992:163-82). Similarly, Richard Wilk illustrates how the beauty pageant has been imported in Belize. As global media create a contrast between foreign shows and contestants and local ones, Belizeans come to recognise that the Belizeans have a different standard of beauty from those of the global pageants. Wilk's conclusion is that the television show creates the widespread awareness of 'the difference' rather than replicates uniformity (Wilk, 1995:110-33).

> Americanness. It is wanting to recognize and absorb those differences within the larger, overarching framework of what is essentially an American conception of the world. (Hall, 1991:28)

From these arguments, it becomes clear that Western media and popular culture are not likely to induce people to migrate as a means of simply 'westernising' their values. However, we should not conclude that the power of Western media and popular culture has no influence over 'the work of the imagination'. In fact, two case studies report that the media have led young Albanians and Moroccans to migrate to the West not only for economic and/or political reasons but also for other symbolic reasons. Since the theoretical debate concludes that, in general terms, the media do not 'westernise' local people in any simple sense, how can the role of media in these studies be explained?

1.2.3 Migratory Projects to the West: The Cases of Young Albanians and Moroccans

Young Albanian Migration and Italian Satellite Television

A large number of young Albanians have migrated to Italy, partly because of Italian Satellite television. By 'migratory project', Nicola Mai refers to 'the wider discursive processes by means of which Albanians have come to perceive, describe, and situate themselves with respect to their wider social and cultural environment – whether this be Albania or Italy' (Mai, 2001:95).

Under the Communist regime, Albanians had experienced a lack of contact with the outside world. However, they have come to associate freedom and democracy with a higher level of material wealth, specifically with the possibility of purchasing Western commodities. These perceptions have been 'reinforced' by foreign television. The great majority of Albanians secretly tuned into Italian television and radio every night since the 1960s, even though this was strictly forbidden until 1985. For them, the appeal of Italian programmes was their radical difference from cultural products available in Albania and their potential function to make tangible an aspect of life that the local culture was lacking – a cultural landscape of pleasure and beauty. Many young Albanians associate the possibility of choosing a 'modern' lifestyle with the Western world and see migration as the only way to follow both a 'modern' and 'normal' lifestyle (Mai, 2001:96-103; 259).

Nonetheless, family is still the main focus of identification and the main source of values for young Albanians. The function of Italian television-watching is 'a catalyst': on the one hand, it has offered young Albanians an illusory account of Italian society; on the other hand, by having provided alternative models of subjectivity, Italian television stimulates social change and has been involved in the gradual re-negotiation of youth identities on the Albanian social and cultural scene (Mai, 2001:266-7).

Moroccan 'Mental Emigration' and Western Media

In Morocco, according to Tarik Sabry, young people consume far more Western programmes than Moroccan or Arabic programmes; in particular, the upper and middle classes are the least interested in local programmes and prefer to watch mainly Western satellite channels. In addition, about 80 % of young Moroccans have a desire to emigrate, 95 % of whom want to emigrate to the West. They hope to do so, not only and purely for economic reasons, but also because of other symbolic reasons such as their interest in Western culture and education (Sabry, 2003:114-5).

The long-term consumption of Western media has greatly contributed to young Moroccans' 'structure of feeling' (Williams, 1977). Many young Moroccans have, in a sense, mentally emigrated to the West inside Morocco, even though most of them are not able to physically emigrate, due to their lack of access to visas or funds. For those from Olfa and Old Medina, American and British popular music is their preferred symbolic ‘Heimat’ with which they wish to identify and which fulfils their desire to belong to a different world.

These young Moroccans, however, do not identify with the West and still see themselves as being Muslims. Although not all of them practise Islam, or agree with some of its hegemonic cultural practices, it is still very much a force that binds young Moroccans as a people. The ‘thereness’ of the West in the Moroccan popular imaginary signifies the geographic, economic, and cultural ‘unreachability’ of the West. ‘Mental emigration’, therefore, is perceived by many young Moroccans as a symbolic means of change, emancipation, and most importantly as an ‘alternative’ to hegemonic cultural practices within Moroccan society (Sabry, 2003:160-266).

Thus, the role of Western media and popular culture in young Albanian and Moroccan migration was that it allowed youths to make a range of cultural comparisons between their homeland and the West. As Sabry argues, the reactions to Western modernity were not simple ones of westernisation but more contradictory ones of ‘rejection’, ‘acceptance’, ‘negotiation’, and ‘contradiction’ (Sabry, 2003:258).

To sum up, a large quantity of Western media and popular culture provide local people with a large amount of visual images of Western countries, instead of ‘westernising’ them in any simple sense. This leads to the construction of a particular image of ‘the West’, as well as a particular image of each image-sending country (such as the United States or Britain), in each image-receiving country.[20] In this process, cultural- ideological links are established between a Western country and a receiving country.[21] By using these images as their cultural frame of reference, potential migrants recontextualise themselves in relation to their image of the West. They imagine their possible life there, and negotiate their sense of national identity, by referring to these constructed images of the West. All these things affect the process whereby individuals find particular motives to migrate.

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[20] Even in countries where domestic media and popular culture are dominant today, Western media and popular culture may have had great influences over their construction of these images in the past, and the influences may still remain.

[21] Here I should clarify one thing, regarding the theoretical arguments I reviewed earlier. As we have seen, Sassen argues that ‘ideological effects should not be underestimated’, explaining how foreign-owned factories do indeed play an important role in ‘westernising’ the developing country and its people and how significant cultural-ideological links are then established. How are we to interpret the difference of emphasis between Sassen’s analysis and the case studies I refer to? My

'Illusionary' Worlds

Finally, an unanticipated consequence of the above interplay between media and migration should be discussed here. That is, the image of the West before migration tends to be an 'illusion'. As Mai notes:

> When in interviews I asked Albanian young people who had migrated which expectations were not met in their first encounters with Italy, invariably the answer was that they had expected life to be easier, they had not expected to work so much for so little money or with so few prospects. ...They did not expect to struggle so much to find a decent job, nor to work more than 10 hours a day for salaries inferior to those of their Italian colleagues. ...This common tale of disillusion helped to shatter the idealised image of Italy as a landscape of material wealth and freedom. This is compounded by the widespread diffidence at best and racism at worst with which many Italians 'welcomed' Albania's migrants. (Mai, 2001:104)

Sabry argues that a whole image of the West was created for young Moroccans by Western media, which depicted it as a place of freedom and abundant opportunities. But what those of them who physically migrated found was a world that is very different to the one depicted for young Moroccans in Western media texts. As his interviewees who migrated to London explain:

> Young Moroccans see the west as a paradise. We thought our happiness was only achievable if we crossed the border and that is why we are all here. We found a

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assumption is that local people working at foreign-owned factories are more likely than others to be westernised because they are supposed to be trained under a foreign corporate system. However, when it comes to watching foreign television programmes at home or with family members or friends, this process is not likely to have such a strong influence on viewers, even though foreign television is able to provide a great storehouse of images of the United States and Western European countries, if they lack the experience of working in a western cultural environment.

> different world to that portrayed by the media, and we have been swallowed by the stomach of the West. (Maoui, age 31)
>
> I thought that, once here, everything would be easy. I thought I would be completely happy, but things are really difficult here. We do have some sort of independence, but I doubt it's worth the sacrifice of leaving everything behind, our families and our friends. (Razzack, age 29) (Sabry, 2003:226-8)

The key to such migrants' subjective experiences, according to Nancy Foner, is 'expectations'. In her study of Jamaicans, who left for London between the 1950s and 1960s, the migrants had little idea of the prejudice and discrimination that awaited them. Jamaica was then a British colony, and they thought of themselves not just as Jamaican but as British citizens. Brought up with a respect for British culture and people, most expected to have the right to live and work in Britain and to be treated, as they had been taught they would be, on the basis of merit, rather than colour. Yet they soon realised that to most English people they were, as blacks, considered lower class and inferior to whites. By contrast, Jamaicans who came to New York were not so shocked by the racial situation. By the time of large-scale immigration to New York, most Jamaicans learned about U.S. racism though the mass media and from friends and relatives who had gone there earlier (Foner, 1998: 176-7). Similarly, as Mary C. Waters notes, most West Indians in New York City were part of a migrant network – they migrated to the city because they already had friends or family members there who had written, visited, or called back home with information about life in the U.S. Most commonly they had heard two things about America – that it was a land of opportunities that rewarded hard work, and that it was a place where whites discriminated against blacks. However, even West Indians who had visited New York before migration later found that their expectations proved to be at odds with the reality or racism they experienced there (Waters, 1999: 79-80).

These studies report that Western media and popular culture convey a large quantity of images about the destination, without telling potential migrants much about race-related problems there. So it is difficult for them to know the actual possibilities for employment or housing available to them in advance. If a considerable number of people have migrated to the same destination and have informed their families and friends about their experiences, potential migrants are less likely to have such misleading images. Even so, their images of their destination, based perhaps on their hopes, still tend to be better than the reality that awaits them.

1.3 Identity Experience in the Host Country

1.3.1 How Do Migrants Experience Their Sense of National Identity?

The Assimilation Model

In the early period of migration studies, a number of researchers investigated the experiences of European immigrants and their children who arrived in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At the height of European immigration to the United States, the urban ecologists of the Chicago School established the first sociological paradigm of assimilation. According to this approach, migrants become assimilated into American society and transform their homeland-based national identity into the national identity of their host country. Since then, current scholarship in the United States has generally followed this research tradition (Gordon, 1964; Park, 1922). Robert E. Park and Ernest Burgess define assimilation as 'a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups, and by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them into a common cultural life' (Park and Burgess, 1921).

Cultural Pluralism

However, due to the growth of Latin American- and Asian-origin immigrants in the United States since the 1960s, American sociologists began to question whether the tendency to structurally assimilate is stronger than the tendency to retain ethnicity, and these questions led to the rise of the cultural pluralist school (Grosfoguel and Cordero-Guzman, 1998:351). The pluralist approach criticises the assimilation models as too 'simple' to explain the experiences of post-1965 immigrants. In the assimilation model, it was predicated that migrants adopt the language and culture and achieve economic security for oneself and social mobility for one's children; consequently, by the second generation, most people become 'hyphenated' Americans; by the third generation, the descendants of the original immigrants are presumed to be thoroughly American. In these 'straight-line assimilation studies', successful incorporation into American society was automatically associated with loss of ethnic, social, and cultural attachments (Waters, 1999:327-9). However, the pluralist perspective argues that ethnic assimilation is not inevitable and very few people have ever become 'unhyphenated' Americans or just 'Americans'. Even when ethnic intermarriage occurs, there is still evidence that ethnic identity is maintained.[22] Some researchers point to continued high endogamy rates, continued socioeconomic and attitudinal differences among ethnic groups even into the third and fourth generations, and continued self-identification of individuals as ethnics as evidence that assimilation is not imminent (Waters, 1990:5).

It should be noted that the assimilation and cultural pluralism approaches originally evolved in the context of the early European immigration to the United States, and are not applicable in all cases. For example, Britain, which had been an emigrant-sending country and has only become an immigrant-receiving country in the past several decades, has unfolded quite a different theoretical approach. In British scholarship, as Caroline Nagel notes, American-derived assimilation models have long been regarded as inapplicable to the British context. Instead, British scholars tend to interpret immigrant-host society relations in terms of exclusion, racialisation, and difference. British migration studies are concerned with the discursive construction of racial categories and the manner in which such categories come to be viewed as 'natural' (Nagel, 2002:259-62).

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[22] For example, while the descendants of immigrants may intermarry with other races or ethnicities and exhibit few ethnic cultural traits, this does not mean that they no longer identify as Italian or Polish (Waters, 1999:327-9).

Transnationalism

The assimilation school and part of the cultural pluralism school have theorised that migrants abandon their old patterns of life and uproot themselves from the homeland, in order to adopt, incorporate into, and/or assimilate, if to different degrees, to the new patterns of the host country (Grosfoguel and Cordero-Guzman, 1998:359). However, in recent years, many scholars argue that the categories used by the cultural pluralism school are incapable of explaining the social relationships that an increasing number of migrants establish across transnational spaces.

Proponents of transnationalism argue that one aspect of globalisation is a rapid improvement in technologies of transport and communication, which make it increasingly easy for migrants to maintain close links with their areas of origin (Castles and Millers, 2003:29). These debates on transnationalism were stimulated by anthropologists Linda Basch, Nina Schiller, and Cristina Blanc. In *Nations Unbound*, they argue that 'deterritorialised nation-states' are emerging, with potentially serious consequences for national identity. And they define transnationalism as 'the process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement' (Basch et al., 1994:7; 22). The concept of 'diaspora' is often employed in this approach. Most definitions emphasise the marginal status of the groups which, although they have settled outside their lands of ethnic origin, still maintain strong sentimental or material links with them (Sinclair and Cunningham, 2000:18).

Based on these ideas, many researchers have begun to argue that today migrants are developing transnational identities, i.e., identities that do not develop from one culture (the sending country) to another (the host country), but rather transcend nation-states in a way that changes that individual and both societies. This new scholarship on transnationalism reflects a postmodern concern with the multiplicity of identities which an individual maintains, and the varieties of different experiences that migration holds for those of different class, gender, and regional backgrounds (Waters, 1999:90).[23]

As we have seen, theories of identity formation have developed from assimilation/ group-oriented theories into differentiation/individual-oriented theories. This suggests that the process of identity formation should be understood in terms of individual experiences in particular historical and social contexts, rather than in terms of the collective experience of a migrant group. In fact, previous case studies[24] have found that migrants tend to show various patterns of identity transformation even in the same migrant group; and these patterns are differentiated by particular social factors – i.e., 'race' and ethnic relations, gender, class, language, religion, and media.

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[23] Transnationalism has been attracting many scholars across various academic disciplines. However, many American sociologists still support cultural pluralism and criticise the notion of transnationalism as quite exaggerated. John Lie trenchantly describes their point of view, as being based on: 'Their ignorance of the sociological scholarship, their disregard for numbers and generalisations, and their abstruse theoretical terminology and endless neologism. Nonetheless, hard-headed empiricism must confront our inescapably transnational world. It is bad sociology to ignore the changing reality that the new ideas and terms seek' (Lie, 1992:305)

[24] Among a variety of studies, I examine mainly the case studies of 'first-generation' migrants 'who live in New York City or London', because their generation and destination are the same as those of the twenty-two young Japanese. These studies show how specific social contexts in these two cities are likely to affect new migrants' identity transformation.

1.3.2 Social Factors: 'Race' and Ethnicity, Gender, Class, Language, Religion, and Media

'Race' and Ethnic Relations

For all migrants, 'race' and ethnic relations are the key to their identity experience. As discussed earlier, migrants tend to hold an 'idealised' image of 'the West' before migration, without knowing the substantive degree of racism that they are likely to encounter in their destination. Particularly, for new migrants, the difference in race and ethnic relations between their homeland and their destination is critical.

In the case of West Indians in New York City, according to Mary C. Waters, they come from societies that are pluralist and contain a number of different racial and ethnic groups, with a sense of their subnational identity as blacks. But this racial identity is very different from the identity of American blacks. West Indians have a strong sense of personal efficacy and ambition because of growing up in a society in which blacks are the majority. The culture of the white European is still seen as superior, but there are few whites who represent that culture. Instead, the middle-class blacks have political and economic power in the independent society. By contrast, in the United States, many black Americans live in poverty and blacks are a stigmatised minority. When other people conflate West Indian identity with that of black Americans, West Indians find themselves at the bottom of their new society. Most West Indians attempt to distance themselves from black Americans, and their national and regional identities become much more salient and stronger (Waters, 1999:65; 91-3).

In her research on Irish women in London, Breda Gray argues that these women belong to the dominant racial and ethnic group in Ireland; however, after migrating to London, they come to find themselves to be subordinate because of their ethnicity. The category 'white' in England has become a code-word for 'English'. The same white women's body is inhabited in Ireland as an unmarked 'white' body, but in England the intersections of Irish, gender, and racial identities render the same body 'marked' and not quite 'white'. Although some women feel defensive about their Irishness, others begin to refuse to be seen as 'ethnic' and attempt to 'act white' (Gray, 1996:93-9; 2004:132-48).

Gender

Gender is another crucial factor: firstly, the 'standard' of femininity/masculinity affects migrants' identity experience; secondly, due to gender differences, female migrants are more likely to have opportunities for being included in their host society. Many Irish women in London find that femininity is tied up with Englishness. These women's embodiments of Irish culture are represented as falling short of the 'whitely script' in their apparently 'unladylike' use of language, humour, and manners. Even so, dominant, masculine, racialised stereotypes of the Irish, such as the repeated invocation of 'Paddy', tend to make Irish women's potential for inclusion greater than that of Irish men. Following the gendered 'whitely script' at least offers 'inclusion' to Irish women in ways that may not be available to Irish men (Gray, 1996:257-74). In the case of second-generation West Indians in New York City, girls tend to have more access to the mainstream society than boys. They are under greater restrictions and control from parents than are boys. As a result, they have less pressure to 'act black' from peers, are less likely to be involved in delinquency, and see more opportunities in their future (Waters, 1999:315-23).

Class

Class also has an influence on migrants' identity transformation. Waters argues that in New York City, the ethnically-identified young West Indians are most likely to come from 'middle-class' backgrounds. They do not reject their parents' hard-working culture, but rather reject the American social system that would identify them as 'black American'. By contrast, the American-identified young West Indians tend to come from 'working-class' backgrounds. Instead of rejecting black American culture, they embrace many aspects of it and undergo assimilation to black America: they speak black English with their peers and accept the peer culture of their black American friends. In fact, most of the American-identified teenagers in the inner city often experience explicit and subtle discrimination by white police officers and passers-by in the streets. Therefore, they are aware of the negative images held by whites and the wider society of black Americans. They accept an American black identity, also accepting the oppositional character of that identity – traits and characteristics that are the opposite of those valued by the majority group (Waters, 1999:290-302; 307).

Language

The 'standard' language of the host country is also an important factor. Among first-generation West Indians in New York City, middle-class migrants are proud of their use of 'standard' English, because their accent is the only way of showing that a person is 'West Indian'. Language plays a large role in ensuing that they be seen as different from black Americans (Waters, 1999:76-9). In a similar vein, many Irish women in London recount their experiences of being made to feel outsiders by reference to their 'inadequate' grasp of the English language. They often have their English corrected, because the Irish accent and manner of speaking are identified as incorrect and inferior to 'the Queen's English'. Irish identity can be concealed when necessary, at least until they speak. To secure the sign 'white English' or 'British' requires more than the appearance of whiteness: it is also a way of behaving, a manner of conduct (Gray, 1996:264-5; 2004:2-274).

Religion

For some migrants, religion plays a large role in their identification. Particularly, those who have a strong attachment to their religious identity are less likely to hold on to their sense of national identity. John Eade investigates the case of second-generation young Bangladeshi Muslims in London, and finds that most of them embrace the term 'British' but reject 'English' because of its associations with white people and notions of indigenous culture. What is more, whether being born in Bangladesh or the offspring of Bangladeshi migrants, they frequently choose to describe themselves as 'Bengalis' rather than as 'Bangladeshis'. They tend to distinguish between Bengali Muslims and 'other Bengalis', who are principally Hindus. They are sensitive to the way in which the Bangladeshi nation-state has been associated with the Bengali language and culture, as Islamic culture is more important than Bangladeshi national culture for them. Constructions of Islam as a primordial identity can create in individuals an uneasy sense of having to choose between religion and nation. Some reconcile the competing claims by referring to composite, hierarchically ordered identities – as British Bengali Muslims, where Islam is the most important element. But others look beyond the national frontiers of Britain and Bangladesh to other Muslim nations and to a worldwide Muslim community that transcends existing national boundaries (Eade, 1994:377-9).

Media

Finally, the role of media must also be considered here.[25] On the one hand, it is discussed that transnational media often lead first-generation migrants to hold onto their homeland-based national identity. Kevin Robins and Asu Aksoy report that in the mid 1990s, Turkish cable and satellite television services began to be provided for Turks abroad. And this has enabled first-generation women who do not understand English to watch Turkish television, imagine their 'home', and hold onto Turkish-Cypriotness (Robins and Aksoy, 2001:695-6). In the case of first-generation Hong Kong Chinese in Britain, as Lee Siew-Peng explains, older migrants heightened their sense of belonging to an imagined Hong Kong community, after satellite Chinese television started broadcasting in the 1990s. Although the older migrants consider Britain to be physically their home, emotionally they still regard Hong Kong as their 'home'. Their physical presence in Britain does not automatically imply a sense of national belonging (Siew-Peng, 2001:143-55).

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[25] In the past decade, a considerable number of studies have been made on the relationship between the role of media and the formation of transnational communities: for example, studies on television and Chinese, Vietnamese (Cunningham and Sinclair, 2000), and Iranians (Naficy, 1993; Sreberny, 2000); video and Thai (Cunningham and Sinclair, 2000) and Yugoslavs (Kolar-Panov, 1997); the Internet and Greeks (Panagakos, 1998); and newspapers and Italians (Fortier, 2000). However, most such studies do not focus on the issue of identity transformation. Therefore I want to refer primarily to the case of Turkish women in London, which particularly investigates the role of transnational television in the transformation of their 'Turkishness' (Robins and Aksoy, 2001; Aksoy and Robins, 2000).

By contrast, second and later generations show quite different attitudes. Transnational media sometimes lead such migrants to transcend their sense of national identity. In the case of young Turkish women in London, some are bilingual in Turkish and English. By watching Turkish satellite television in Britain, these women learn more about Turkish culture and people, and experience the 'passage' or mobility between British cultural space and Turkish cultural space. As a consequence, they find a new sense of Turkishness and begin to feel more comfortable about living in British society. As Robins and Aksoy argue, when these Turkish women talk about identity, or about their customs – about what it means to be Turkish-Cypriot – they are not thinking about cultural and political attachments to a 'national' community. In their view, the varieties of Turkish Cypriotness cannot be captured through an imposed matrix of identity boxes (Robins and Aksoy, 2001:700-9).

1.4 Conclusion

Now we can account for (a) how potential migrants conceive the idea of migration to Western countries for symbolic reasons and (b) how migrants experience their sense of national identity in their host country. Firstly, as electronic media have come into wide use throughout the world in the past few decades, more and more people begin not only to imagine a sense of belonging to their homelands, but to imagine routinely the possibility that they will live and work in national spaces other than those they were born. Throughout the world, people have been exposed to a large quantity of mass-mediated images produced in the United States and Western Europe; and these images lead potential migrants, especially young people, to hope to live in the West for symbolic reasons as well as economic or political reasons. These flows of Western media and popular culture induce people to recontextualise themselves in relation to their image of the West, to imagine their possible lives there, and for some, to actually carry out their migratory projects.

Appadurai is sceptical both about the total homogenisation or westernisation of culture and about models of this process founded as a simple centre/periphery relation. The two case studies of young Albanians and Moroccans also rejected the idea of the homogenisation of culture. However, as for the directions of the cultural flows in question, both of these case studies imply that the centre/periphery relation might be still relevant, supporting Hannerz's view. Further investigations should be made on this relationship between the flows of Western media and popular culture and the flows of young migrants in the light of the centre/periphery relation.

Secondly, migrants often find their previous image of 'the West' to be an 'illusion' after arriving in their destinations. This is precisely because 'diaspora space' is 'inhabited not only by those who have migrated and their descendants but equally by those who are constructed and represented as indigenous', as Avtar Brah notes (Brah, 1996:181). In other words, migrants enter spaces and places full of other people, and become involved in the power relations of 'race' and ethnicity, which are different from those in their homeland. Living in such spaces, migrants begin to reinterpret their sense of national identity: some renegotiate their sense of their homeland-based national identities, while others develop their sense of their host-country based national identities or even transnational identities. These processes are affected by individual backgrounds as well as by historical and social contexts in the homeland and the host country – gender, class, language, religion, or the media, in addition to 'race' and ethnic relations. In this context, it is necessary to closely examine what makes one identity formation similar to, or different from, another.

The next chapter will examine the case of Japan. Based on the above arguments, I will first look at how Japanese national identity has been constructed and reconstructed in specific historical and social contexts. Next, I will investigate (a) how Japanese people have conceived the idea of migration to foreign countries and (b) how they have experienced their sense of Japaneseness in their host country.

Chapter 2 'Homogenous' and 'Unique': The Construction of Japaneseness and Japanese Overseas

> Japan has one nation, one civilization, one language, one culture and one race. Only Japan has such unique characteristics. (in a speech made by Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Taro Aso, in Fukuoka in October 2005)

> [In Japan] the small territory is closely packed with people who are racially homogenous and highly educated. Because of this manpower, Japan still maintains its position as the second economic superpower, though Japan was defeated in the Greater East Asia War and even exposed to atomic bombs. (in a speech made by the former Economic, Trade and Industry Minister Takeo Hiranuma, in Sapporo in July 2001)

> What is more remarkable is that, whether in the West or Southeast Asia, the Japanese community is alienated from the host society. This is not simply because the Japanese are bad at foreign languages, but because the Japanese society is structurally very different from other societies in terms of the form of social groups. (Chie Nakane, in *Tateshakai no ningenkankei*, 1967:64)

2.1 The Construction of Japaneseness

2.1.1 The Elements of Japaneseness

In Japan, discourses about 'the Japanese' first appeared as a form of discussion of nationality (*kokuminsei*) in the early Meiji period (1868-1912). Later, the concept of 'culture' was imported by Japanese intellectuals under the influence of German philosophy, and 'Japanese culture' became another important issue in the Taisho period (1912-26) (Nishikawa, 1995:162-3).[26] Among Western countries, the United States has produced the largest number of publications dealing with *nihonjinron*, and has had a great influence not only on Japanologists in Western countries, but also on intellectuals in Japan (Sugimoto and Mouer, 1982:31). Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1947) has become the most influential model for discourses of *nihonjinron* during the postwar period.[27] Under the influence of Benedict's work, the first boom of *nihonjinron* discourses occurred in Japan in the late 1940s and 1950s. This boom concentrated on the 'introspection' of the Japanese during the Second World War and set the ground for the second boom of *nihonjinron* discourses in the late 1970s (Yoshino, 1992:32). According to the Nomura Research Institute, 698 books and articles on *nihonjinron* were published in Japan between 1946 and 1978. This popularity continued into the 1980s and 1990s (Yoshino, 2001:150).

Thus, as shown in the beginning of this chapter, 'thinking elites' (Yoshino, 2001:150), ranging from intellectuals, critics and journalists to diplomats and even business elites, have long discussed Japanese national distinctiveness. Some of the most popular ideas in such discourses are 'homogeneity', 'assimilation', 'appropriation', 'taciturnity', 'ambivalence', 'non-logic', 'situational ethics', 'emotionality', 'groupism', 'interpersonalism', 'verticality', 'dependence', and 'high-technology'.

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[26] Like Nishikawa, some researchers distinguish discourses of the Japanese (*nihonjinron*) and discourses of Japanese culture (*nihonbunkaron*). However, here I want to call both types of discourses '*nihonjinron*', as I consider that these two genres very often overlap.

[27] Benedict explored the coherent 'patterns of Japanese culture' behind seeming contradictions in Japanese behaviour. She stressed the hierarchical nature of order in Japanese society, introducing many well-known concepts in discourses of *nihonjinron*, such as '*bun*' (one's place in society), '*on*' (normative obligation)', and '*giri*' (socially contracted dependence)'. Furthermore, she considered the characterisation of Japan to be '*haji no bunka*' (shame culture), in which individuals are controlled by social threats to personal honour and reputation (Yoshino, 1992:33).

Homogeneity

The most frequently discussed and widely believed idea is that Japan is a 'homogenous' nation. In particular, after the Second World War, many intellectuals and politicians began to emphasise this homogeneity as the national distinctiveness. According to Eiji Oguma, such discourses of *nihonjinron* have the following four characteristics. Firstly, from ancient times, Japan has been occupied by a single homogeneous nation, and has been a peaceful, agricultural state with no experience of conflict with alien nations. Secondly, the Imperial Family were not conquerors who came from overseas. Rather they symbolised the unity of the cultural community of this peaceful nation. Thirdly, from time immemorial, the Japanese nation has lived on a remote island-country and had had little contact with alien peoples. As a consequence, the Japanese lack ability both as diplomats and as warriors. Fourthly, Japan is a homogenous nation-state, so that historically, it has been peaceful, and remains so today (Oguma, 2002:322).

Assimilation and Appropriation

The Japanese capacity for the assimilation of the foreign has also been characterised as a great quality of Japaneseness. Numerous scholars and political leaders, such as Kokichi Shiratori or Shinpei Goto, maintained that this capacity was not only a characteristic of Japanese culture but also was a manifestation of Japanese superiority to the West. In the post war period, critical commentator Shuichi Kato's two essays on *zasshu bunka* (the hybridity of Japanese culture), originally published in 1955, initiated the postwar discourses on Japanese cultural hybridity, arguing that Japanese culture in everyday life was hybrid. The practice of cultural appropriation has become a well-accepted feature of the prosperous Japanese nation. Many people in Japan now hold the view that the capacity for absorption and indigenisation of foreign cultures is uniquely Japanese (Iwabuchi, 2002:57-9).

In Western societies, the Japanese are also known for their willingness to borrow or imitate. An essay collection, *Remade in Japan* (1992) delineates Japan's 'ongoing creative synthesis of the exotic with the familiar, the foreign with the domestic, the modern with the traditional, the Western with the Japanese'. This book argues that the genius of the Japanese lies not in invention but in adaptation, as the Japanese are considered to have appropriated a variety of foreign cultures – e.g., Korean pottery, tombs, and textiles, Chinese script and scripture, Dutch science and medicine, French education, English colonialism, German militarism, and American egalitarianism, corporate efficiency, and popular culture (Tobin, 1992:3).

Taciturnity, Ambivalence, Non-logic, Situational Ethics, and Emotionality

The nature of Japanese language and communication is another important feature in discourses of *nihonjinron*. For example, scholar and television commentator Masao Kunihiro (1974) was one of the most explicit contemporary exponents of this view. He notes, 'Japanese tend to be taciturn, considering it a virtue to say little and rely on non-linguistic means to convey the rest. Verbal expression is often fragmentary and unsystematic, with emotional, communal patterns of communication'. This idea is echoed by many others, and the linguistic and communicative mode of the Japanese is very often characterised by taciturnity, ambivalence, non-logic, situational ethics, and emotionality. By contrast, the Western mode is characterised by eloquence, dichotomous logic, rigid principle, and rationality (Yoshino, 1992:12-3).

Groupism or Interpersonalism, Verticality, and Dependence

Japanese social structure is also regarded as an important element of Japaneseness. It is very often characterised by groupism or interpersonalism, verticality and dependence. In contrast, Western society is characterised as having the opposite characteristics: individualism, horizontality and independence (Yoshino, 1992:17-8). In one of the most influential studies, *Tateshakai no ningenkankei*[28] (1967), anthropologist Chie Nakane claims that the concept of 'vertical society'[29] can explain Japanese forms of social organisation and interactions. In her view, the overall picture of Japanese society is not that of 'horizontal' stratification by class or caste[30] but of 'vertical' stratification by institutions or groups of institutions. Thus the Japanese are considered as group-oriented people who think and interrelate with others within the framework of a group (e.g., the upper-lower hierarchical relations between seniors and juniors within a school or a company) (Nakane, 1970:24-5). Another influential book, '*Amae' no kōzō*[31] (1971) supports this idea of vertical relationships. In the field of psychology, Takeo Doi argues that in Japanese society, the attitude of *amae* (dependence) is prolonged into adulthood, thereby accordingly shaping an individual's entire attitude towards other people. This socialisation process enables the persistence of the vertical social structure (Yoshino, 1992:17-8).

High-Technology

A relatively new aspect of Japaneseness is high-technology, which has widely been discussed since the 1990s, as a result of Japan's success in the field of economy and technology. As David Morley and Kevin Robins point out, many Japanese began to claim Japan's superiority to the West by reference to this idea. Sociologist Hidetoshi Kato (1991) asserts that Japan can be projected as 'the greatest "machine-loving" nation of the world', a culture in which 'machines are priceless friends'. In a similar way, Shintaro Ishihara, novelist and governor of Tokyo, claims that Japanese technological superiority now puts it 'on the verge of a new genesis', and, in contrast, European and the United States are on the verge of decline[32] (Morley and Robins, 1995:147-9).

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[28] The English translation is *Japanese Society* (1970).

[29] In her view, the essential types of human relations can be divided, according to the ways in which ties are organised, into two categories: vertical and horizontal. This basic concept can applied to various kinds of personal relations. For example, the parent-child relation in vertical, as the sibling relation is horizontal; the superior-inferior relation is vertical as opposed to the horizontal colleague relation (Nakane, 1970:24).

[30] For example, she thinks that where the coherence of the village community is unusually strong, the links between members of the occupational groups are weakened and the village unit may create deep divisions among members of the occupational group. This is a prominent tendency in Japanese society. Throughout Japanese history, occupational groups, such as a guild, cross-cutting various local groups and institutions have been much less developed in comparison with those of China, India, and the West (Nakane, 1970:25).

[31] The English translation is *the Anatomy of Dependence* (1973).

2.1.2 Discourses of *Nihonjinron* as Ideology

The above ideas of Japaneseness are widely believed by many people both in Japan and in other countries. However, these ideas are best understood as reflections of 'ideology', rather than academic findings on common characteristics of the Japanese (Nishikawa, 1995:190). Some researchers have revealed the non-academic nature of discourses of *nihonjinron*. For instance, the anthropologist Harumi Befu argues that characteristics of the Japanese are very often over-simplified. A certain culture may be observed among part of the Japanese population (e.g., Zen culture), but discourses of *nihonjinron* tend to take it for granted that such a culture is widely shared among the Japanese. Particularly, some traditional cultures are very often stressed as the basis of national distinctiveness, although these cultures are actually practised by a small number of people in Japan. In addition, some characteristics are overemphasised (e.g., groupism, vertical relationships, or the Japanese-style management). Once certain aspects of Japan are generalised as the essence of Japaneseness, then, these are very often applied to all Japanese people (e.g., all Japanese love machines). Furthermore, discourses of *nihonjinron* seldom recognise that Japanese culture contains inconsistencies, although there are always contradictory elements in a culture or a society (Befu, 1982).

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[32] However, in response, the West has begun to associate Japaneseness with technology, in order to reinforce the image of a culture that is cold, impersonal, and machine-like, an authoritarian culture lacking emotional connection to the rest of the world. And the West claims its technological hegemony and the central position of modernity (Morley and Robins, 1995: 167-73).

In a similar vein, sociologists Sugimoto and Mouer regard *nihonjinron* as an ideology. Methodologically, many discourses of *nihonjinron* are based on authors' impressions gained from their personal experiences, rather than designed empirical and comparative studies. Many Japanese intellectuals stay abroad or Western Japanologists sojourn in Japan only for a short period and interact only with people in the higher classes. Nevertheless, they tend to believe what they have experienced in these restricted social occasions to be characteristics of the nation.[33] Sugimoto and Mouer also point out that, indeed, many Japanese show characteristics that are opposite to those described in *nihonjinron* discourses, and exemplify how individualism is practised among many Japanese (Sugimoto and Mouer, 1982:83-213).

Particularism vs. Universalism

The ideological nature of *nihonjinron* discourses becomes clearer when we look at the ways in which they shift between 'particularism' and 'universalism'. Here it is useful to look at Nishikawa's discussion. He introduces the two chronological classifications of discourses of *nihonjinron* made by Yoshio Sugimoto and Ross Mouer as well as by Tamotsu Aoki:

> Sugimoto and Mouer's classification
>
> 1. the prewar and Second World War period (1930-45): theories of 'national culture' are introduced, and intellectuals begin to evaluate Japanese national culture highly;
> 2. the decade following Japan's defeat (1945-55): theories of American democratisation become popular, and Japan is regarded as a backward country;
> 3. the era of high economic growth (1955-70): Japan's development is discussed in terms of the universal process of modernisation;
> 4. Japan as an established world economic power (1965- the 1980s): new discourses

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[33] This is exemplified by Chie Nakane who remarks that 'for example, when I stayed in America, I was greatly impressed by Chinese scholars. When they were talking in college and I passed by them, they always switched from Chinese to English. Chinese people have a manner that they should not make a barrier between them and others. This is a contrast to the Japanese who unconsciously and consciously show that there is a barrier between us and others' (Nakane, 1967:48).

of *nihonjinron* arise, attributing success to the nation's uniqueness.
(Sugimoto and Mouer, 1982:49-66)

Aoki's classification

1. the first period (1945-54): recognition of negative uniqueness;
2. the second period (1955-63): recognition of historical relativism;[34]
3. the third period (1964-83): recognition of positive particularism;
4. the fourth period (1984-): shift from particularism to universalism.[35]
(Aoki, 1990:29)

As we see, both of these two classifications similarly point out the following changes: from 1945 to the mid 1950s, discourses of *nihonjinron* tended to criticise Japan's particularism. Then, until the mid 1960s, Japan's economic growth was understood in terms of the universality of modernisation. Finally, as Japan became one of the world economic powers in the 1980s, discourses of *nihonjinron* began to appraise positively Japan's particularism.

Significantly, Nishikawa argues that discourses of *nihonjinron* have repeated the same pattern since the Meiji period. That is, historically, 'a period of Westernisation' has come first, and then, 'a period of nationalism' has always followed. The former period tends to criticise the Japanese and celebrate universalism, while the latter period tends to affirm Japanese national and cultural superiority and defend particularism. In his view, the period of Westernisation between the Meiji Restoration and the 1880s is quite similar to the period of Westernisation between 1945 and the 1950 after the Second World War. In both periods, due to pressures from the Western powers, Japan had to quit taking a nationalist attitude and aim to become a Westernised or Americanised country. Hence, many intellectuals became critical of the Japanese and

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[34] In Aoki's view, this period attempts to find the location of Japanese culture in relation to Western cultures.

[35] This period attempts to overcome criticisms of Japan's uniqueness, which increased mainly due to Japanese-style management that contributed to Japan's economic growth.

Japanese culture at that time (Nishikawa, 1995:163; 170-3).[36]

After these periods of inward-looking critique, nationalism was once again extolled. Following Japan's successes in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), nation-building reached a turning point. State power, founded on the Emperor system, was strengthened and nationalistic discourses began to emphasise the superiority of the Japanese (Nishikawa, 1995:181-2).[37]

Between the 1960s and 1980s, we saw another period of nationalism, which corresponds to Sugimoto and Mouer's 'new discourses of *nihonjinron*' and to Aoki's 'recognition of positive particularism'. For instance, as noted earlier, Nakane's *Tateshakai no ningenkankei* (1967) and Doi's *'Amae' no kōzō* (1971) praised Japan's uniqueness, exploring 'vertical relationships' or 'dependence'.[38] These became best-selling books in Japan. In this period, another influential book, Ezra Vogel's *Japan as Number One* (1979) was also published, addressing a question of what America could 'learn from Japan'. This has also translated itself into attempts to reassert national self-image and self-esteem by recovering the essence of American difference (Morley and Robins, 1995:165). As ordinary Americans have little interest in Japan, it sold only 40,000 copies in the United States. However, this book, which acclaims the bureaucracy and social structure of Japan with extraordinary enthusiasm, became a best-seller in Japan (Nishikawa, 1995:163; 181-7).

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[36] For example, according to Nishikawa, Yoshio Takahashi's *Nihonjinshu kairyōron* (1884) suggested improving the Japanese race, by promoting intermarriage with other races, while novelist Kunio Kishida's '*Nihonjin kikeisetsu*' (1948) discussed the abnormality of the Japanese race; politician Arinori Mori's '*Eigo kokugokaron*' (1872) suggested that the nation should abolish the Japanese language and replace it with the English language, while novelist Naoya Shiga's '*Kokugo mondai*' (1946) suggested replacing it with French (Nishikawa, 1995:170-3).

[37] For example, a typical discourse was developed by a classical Japanese scholar, Yaichi Haga, in his *Kokuminsei jūron* (1907). Here he lists the distinctive national traits of the Japanese, such as 'loyalty', 'patriotism', 'respect for the family name', 'politeness', 'gentle dispositions', and so on (Nishikawa, 1995:181-2)

[38] According to Nishikawa, these studies used new words and perspectives, but their structures are basically the same as the past discourses. For example, in *Tateshakai no ningenkankei* (or Japanese Society), Nakane uses the concepts, 'vertical relationship' (the upper-lower hierarchical relations), as well as '*ba*' (location) when explaining the groupism of the Japanese. But indeed these concepts were just the rephrasing of the same concepts, which were discussed by Ruth Benedict in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1947), such as '*on*' (normative obligation)', and '*giri*' (socially contracted dependence)', as well as '*ie*' (family) (Nishikawa, 1995:185-6).

Interestingly, Naoki Sakai explains the reason why Japan emphasises its particularism. In his view, Japan does so because the country needs to express '*iiwake*' ('justifications' or 'excuses') to the West. The point is that 'the West' is not simply a geographic category:

> [The West] is a name for a subject which gathers itself in discourse but is also an object constituted discursively; it is, evidently, a name always associating itself with those regions, communities, and peoples that appear politically or economically superior to other regions, communities, and peoples. Basically, it is just like the name 'Japan', which reputedly designates a geographic area, a tradition, a national identity, a culture, an ethnos, a market, and so on, yet unlike all the other names associated with geographic particularities, it also implies the refusal of its self-delimitation. ...In short, the West must represent the moment of the universal under which particulars are subsumed. Indeed, the West is particular in itself, but is also constitutes the universal point of reference in relation to which others recognise themselves as particularities. (Sakai, 1988:476-7)

Japan attempts to become part of the West in order to confirm its superiority, but at the same time, it recognises the impossibility of being accepted as part of the West. Consequently, Japanese political leaders and intellectuals begin to justify Japan's cultural uniqueness, explaining how Japanese people and culture are different from Western people and culture. Thus, Japanese national identity is always constructed in relation to the universality of the West. As Sakai also puts it:

> Japan's uniqueness and identity are provided insofar as Japan stands out as a particular object in the universal field of the West. Only when it is integrated into Western universalism does it gain its own identity as a particularity. In other words, Japan becomes endowed with and aware of its 'self' only when it is recognised by the West. Therefore, it is no accident that *nihonjinron* discourses mention innumerable cases of Japan's difference from the West, thereby defining Japan's identity in terms of deviations from the West. (Sakai, 1988:487)

In discourses of *nihonjinron*, it is very often repeated that 'we are Japanese because we have unique practices and we cannot get rid of this and that'. In this way, politicians and intellectuals continue to attempt to justify not becoming part of the West to Westerners in discourses of *nihonjinron* (although the majority of their audience are Japanese). Hence, the main drive behind the production of discourses of *nihonjinron* is not simply that there is a cultural difference between the West and Japan. Rather, discourses of *nihonjinron* are produced because Japan continues to fail to become part of the West. However, their insistence on Japan's peculiarity and difference from the West is nothing but the positing of Japan's identity within Western terms. This, in return, establishes the centrality of the West as the universal point of reference (Sakai, 1988: 486-7; 1996:20-4).

The Myth of Homogeneity

Moreover, the dominant paradigm of homogeneity is proven to be a relatively new idea. In an influential study of the genealogy of the Japanese, Eiji Oguma argues that during the prewar Great Japanese Empire, 'the mixed nation theory', which saw Japan as a *multi*-national empire, dominated discourses of the Japanese. This theory contends that since time immemorial, Japan has successfully assimilated a large number of alien peoples and immigrants. The blood of immigrants thus flows even in the veins of the Imperial Family. Therefore, it is argued, the Japanese nation excels at ruling and assimilating alien peoples, and this experience should be used to carry out Japanese policies of expansion and assimilation (Oguma, 2002:321).

In Oguma's view, the way in which the modern Japanese state was formed also helps to explain why the 'mixed nation' theory was able to emerge:

> ...the Meiji government embarked on the process of creating a modern state as a way of escaping the danger of being colonised by the Western Powers. Moreover, the Meiji government argued that it was necessary to secure defensive position in the areas

> surrounding Japan, in order to prevent them being used as beachheads for any future attack on the archipelago. …As a result, these regions [Hokkaido, Okinawa, Taiwan, and Korea] were annexed and became part of Japan. The residents were 'granted' Japanese nationality, and assimilationist policies centred on Japanese language education and Emperor worship were implemented. (Oguma, 2002:326)

The 'homogeneous' nation theory became generally accepted after the Second World War. The government used the theory in order to reconstruct the nation in the particular social context of the postwar period. As Oguma explains:

> …the myth of ethnic homogeneity dovetailed with the postwar Symbolic Emperor System, the loss of confidence in Japan's international status produced by the defeat in 1945, and the psychology of the isolationist 'one-state pacifism' where many Japanese, tired of war, came to feel that they did not want to become involved in any international disputes.

Later, due to a further homogenisation of lifestyles produced by high economic growth rates from the 1960s, the myth of the homogeneous nation became firmly established. Overall, one might say that the transitions in the discourse on the 'Japanese' constituted a movement which used the theory of homogeneity to protect Japan when it was weak, but used the 'mixed nation' theory to assimilate other peoples when it was strong in relation to foreign countries (Oguma, 2002:321-3).

The above arguments made by Nishikawa, Sakai, Oguma, and others have revealed that Japaneseness is a fluid, unstable notion, which can be either 'particularistic' or 'universalistic' and either 'homogeneous' or 'mixed' in particular historical contexts. Nowadays, in Japan, its population (127 million) consists of various ethnic groups. It is estimated that there are a considerable number of Ainu (25,000-300,000), Okinawans (1.6 million), Burakumin (2-3 million) Koreans (700,000-1million), Chinese (200,000), children of mixed ancestry (10,000-25,000), and other foreign nationals (150,00-700,000) (Lie, 2001:4-5; MIAC, 2004). And the fact that Japan is a multiethnic nation is now accepted by many intellectuals, journalists, and politicians in the country.[39] Nevertheless, due to the strategic diffusion of Japanese national identity during the postwar period, the majority of the Japanese still believe that Japan is a 'homogeneous' nation, which consists of the only one race (or *jinshu*), one ethnic group (or *minzoku*), and one nation (or *kokumin*). According to John Lie, Japanese people tend to regard Okinawa as a region and its language as a dialect and Koreans and Chinese as foreigners. The most serious problem is the persistence of discrimination against these people. Fearing obstacles in employment and marriage, many of them attempt to pass as 'ordinary' Japanese and hide their ethnic background (Lie, 2001:4-5).

However, this situation might be changing. Because of the globalising process, more and more people are interacting with people of other nations throughout the world, and Japan is not an exception. The number of Japanese going abroad increased rapidly from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. Since a large number of Japanese have experience living in a foreign country and observing Japan from the outside, they might have come to recognise the constructed nature of Japanese national identity. In the next section, let us look at the actual experiences of Japanese who migrated to foreign countries in the past and recent past.

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[39] For example, the novelist and politician Shintaro Ishihara (at present, he is the Governor of Tokyo) insisted in 1968 that Japan was a homogeneous nation-state that had no parallel anywhere in the world. However, with a change in international affairs, he converted to the mixed nation theory. In 1994, he wrote that 'it is absurd that some people argue that Japan is a unique homogenous country', stating instead that 'the Japanese are a mixture of all Asian nations' (Oguma, 2002:346).

2.2 Negotiating Japaneseness through the Migration Process

2.2.1 Past Migrants

The Meiji period saw the first recorded large-scale emigrations from the shores of Japan. The government began to directly sponsor sending emigrants in 1868 as a form of contract labour migration to Hawaii, partly in order to alleviate domestic population problems, and partly to expand economic opportunities and territories abroad. By 1910, there were 130,000 Japanese living in the United States, mostly on the West Coast, and large communities had also begun to be established in South America, especially in Brazil and Peru (Goodman et al., 2003:5-6).

Around the turn of the nineteenth century, in Japan, there were a number of magazines, books, and pamphlets specifically devoted to *tobei* (or 'crossing to America'). More specific in their goals, these writings were aimed at young people who were convinced that their prospects for achievement lay on the opposite shore of the Pacific Ocean. *Tobei shimpo* (News on crossing to America), a monthly that began publishing in 1907, boasted sales in eighty bookstores in Tokyo the following year. *Tobei zassi* (Crossing to America magazine) and its successor, *Amerika* devoted their pages to matters concerning the United States. In addition, popular journals such as *Seiko* (Success), which were published for a general audience, nonetheless attached primary importance to American examples in their interpretations of the success ethic. All of these publications taught, entertained, and stimulated young adults who were, or desired to become, part of the rapidly forming *chūryūkaikyū* (the middle class) in those days (Sawada, 1996:92-3).

Under the influence of these media, many Japanese moved to the United States, in order to improve their economic conditions, and the first-generation Japanese migrants or *Issei* settled down in the country as their new home. White America, however, did not see them as entitled to become American (Spickard, 1996:32). Japanese migrants on the West Coast encountered racism that drove them into ethnic enclaves and strengthened their sense of ethnic solidarity (Takaki, 1989:212). For those who migrated to New York City, especially those possessing a little capital and education, the possibilities seemed unlimited. However, despite their backgrounds and the cultural knowledge about the United States they gathered in Japan, the majority of the Japanese who came to New York were unable to live up to the expectations and dreams they carried with them. Most of them faced lifelong bachelorhood, unskilled or semiskilled domestic labour, and an income that at best barely supported the comfortable, independent middle-class standard of living they hoped for (Sawada, 1996:16; 39-40). The *Issei* saw they had been doomed to be 'foreigners' forever (Takaki, 1989:212).

As generations change, according to Stephen Fugita and David O'Brien, Japanese migrants have structurally 'assimilated' into mainstream life. The later generations of Japanese Americans, such as *Nisei* (second-generation Japanese Americans) and *Sansei* (third-generation Japanese Americans) in the 1970s, tended to live in predominantly white neighbourhoods, have white friends, participate in mainstream community affairs, and intermarry in significant numbers with white Americans. But at the same time, these Japanese Americans retained high levels of involvement in their ethnic community and perceived all members of their ethnic group as 'quasi kin'. The successful person in these Japanese American communities was one who displayed, along with his or her other talents, an appropriate amount of modesty, self-effacement, and identification with the group so as not to create conflict or embarrassment. As Fugita and O'Brien note, because of this strong sense of the 'homogeneous' national identity which the Japanese migrants brought with them to the New World, the Japanese Americans could adopt major elements from other cultural systems without totally sacrificing social relationships within the group[40] (Fugita and O'Brien, 1991).

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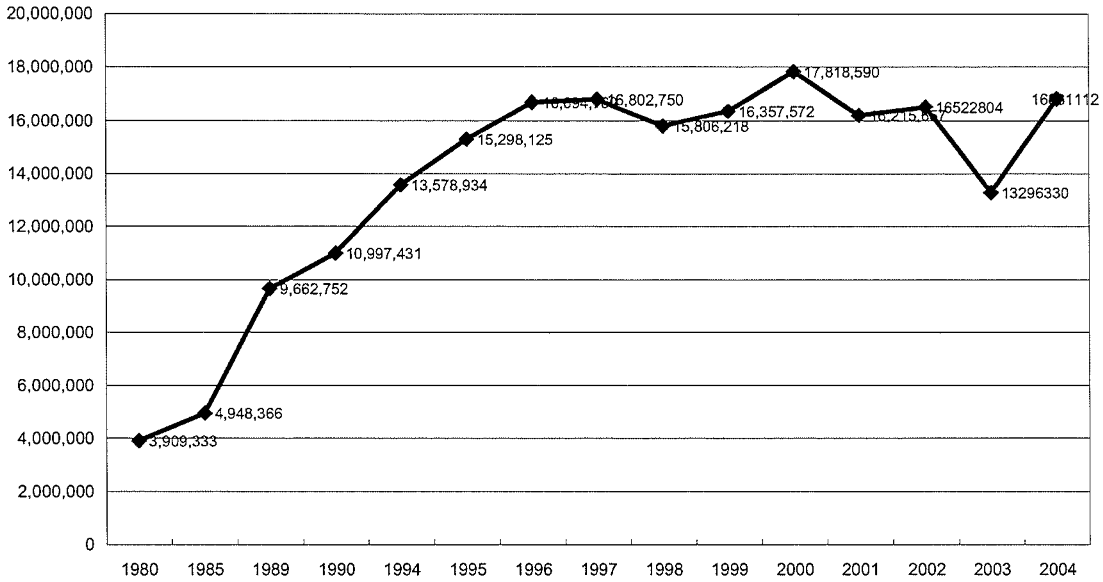
[40] In this study, it seems that Fugita and O'Brien also believed that Japan was a 'homogenous'

Figure 2.1

Japanese Who Went Abroad 1980-2004



Source: Based on the Ministry of Justice of Japan, *Shutsunyūkoku Kanri tōkei*, 1981-2005.

2.2.2 Contemporary Migrants since the 1970s

Since the mid 1990s, more than fifteen million Japanese have gone abroad every year for the purposes of sightseeing, business, or studying abroad (MOJ, 1981-2005) (Figure 2.1). Moreover, the number of those who reside overseas for longer than three months (known as *zairyū hōjin*) has increased since the 1980s. Their number reached 961,307 in 2004, including 302,304 permanent residents in foreign countries (MOFA, 2005). Under these conditions, four types of Japanese migration have attracted researchers' attention. First, the conventional out-migratory movements from Japan have grown since the late 1980s, primarily due to Japanese corporate developments in manufacturing and later financial services. Japanese companies have established foreign branches and plants worldwide and have sent out their (mostly male) employees. About 60 % of *zairyū hōjin* is constituted by such company employees

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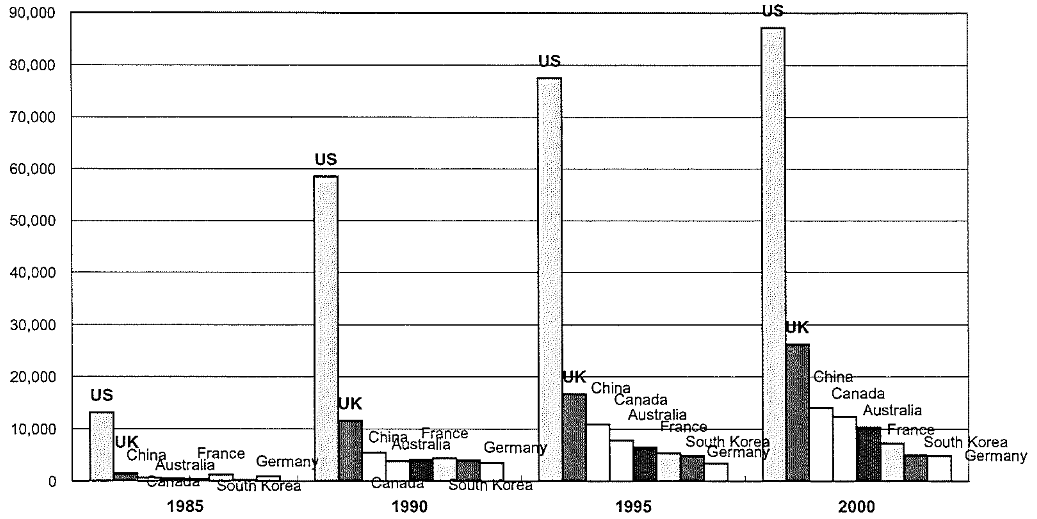
nation. In this sense, both the researchers and their respondents had a belief in their Japaneseness as an essential identity.

Figure 2.2

Japanese Who Studied Abroad and Countries of Destination 1985-2000



Source: Based on the Ministry of Justice of Japan, *Shutsunyūkoku kanri tōkei*, 1986-2001.

and their family members (Goodman et al., 2003:7-9). Second, besides these male company transferees, an increasing number of Japanese women have been voluntarily migrating to the United States, Western Europe, Australia, and Hong Kong, in search of career opportunities abroad (C. Sakai, 2003; J. Sakai, 2000; Sato, 2001). Third, learning English and/or acquiring academic degrees in foreign countries has become popular among young Japanese since the late 1980s.[41] Only 20,470 young Japanese studied abroad in 1985, but the number increased by almost ten times to 193,779 in 2000. According to the Ministry of Justice of Japan, their top destinations in 2000 were mostly English speaking countries, such as the United States (87,157/44%), the United Kingdom (26,297/14%), China (14,072/7%), Canada (12,430/6%), and Australia (10,369/5%) (MOJ, 1986; 2001, Figure 2.2). Fourth, due to the expansion of Japanese residents overseas, contemporary Japanese immigrant entrepreneurs have been on the rise in large cities in North America, Western Europe, or Asia. Their businesses are found in a variety of service, retail, restaurant, and professional industries and often rely on a market of fellow Japanese customers (Hosler, 1998). In addition to these types of Japanese migrants, Harumi Befu points out 'international marriage', 'volunteer spirit', 'the discontent (with Japan)', and 'the drifters'[42] as the reasons why Japanese migrate to foreign countries (Befu, 2000:6-9; 2001:26-38).

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[41] This is partly because the boom of the Japanese economy raised the exchange rate of yen to the U.S. dollar and British pound in the late 1980s making American/British educational fees more affordable (e.g., the 113-yen average rate of 2003 is twice the purchasing power of the 221-yen rate of 1985).

A number of case studies have recently been made on such Japanese overseas, and most of these studies have investigated demographic attributes, corporate cultures, entrepreneurship, expatriate communities, and women's new lifestyles (Befu, 2000; 2001; Glebe, 2003; Hosler, 1998; Machimura, 2003; Sato 2001; Sedgwick, 2001; White, 2003; Wong, 2001; Yatabe, 2001). However, the issue of identity is explored by only several studies – Japanese male company transferees and female assistants working for banks in London (J. Sakai, 2000), Japanese male company transferees in Singapore (Ben-Ari, 2003), Japanese female 'lifestyle migrants' to Australia (Sato, 2001), Japanese women in Hong Kong (C. Sakai, 2003), and 'internationalist Japanese women' who have migrated to America and other Western countries (Kelsky, 2001). As these studies show, Japanese men and women have experienced their sense of Japanese national identity in quite different ways according to their gender.

Pattern 1: Male Company Transferees

As Roger Goodman et al. note, Japanese corporate management style is distinctive, because companies have sent out their male employees, as technical advisors, middle managers and executives, training and recruitment staff, and various lower-level clerical staff to service the needs of these management groups, under career structures that reflect the strongly patriarchal nature of Japanese company employment. This expects complete loyalty from those working in the lifetime employment system. Part of the pattern involves the 'rotation principle' under which most overseas placements are intentionally short-term in nature (often 3-5 years, in some cases, 10 years or more). Such placements attempt to prevent employees from moving away from the ethos of the company as well as from changing their job with their experience overseas (Goodman et al., 2003:8-9). Some such Japanese male company transferees have lived in London or Singapore since the 1990s, and they show very similar attitudes in terms of identity negotiation. In short, they continue to have a clear sense of being Japanese, invariably believing Japan to be 'homogeneous' and culturally 'unique'.

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[42] By 'the drifters' or 'the indeterminate', he means young Japanese who 'left Japan rather aimlessly or out of boredom'. He considers that such young Japanese 'are formally still studying, but they differ from the more serious college students who go abroad to acquire skills leading to a professional career and who tend to enrol in well-known schools like Harvard, Oxbridge, or the Sorbonne. These less serious students have generally been less successful in education in Japan. Their parents are wealthy enough to send them to Tokyo, and to pay for room and board in addition to paying college fees if they can get into college, but they generally cannot. The parents calculate that sending their children abroad for schooling is not much more expensive, and so they enrol them in institutions for which a student visa can be obtained, such as community colleges in North America or language schools' (Befu, 2000:36-7). I consider that some of these young 'drifters' are also 'cultural migrants', and part of these two categories overlap.

Bank Managers in London

In London, as Junko Sakai reports, Japanese bank managers come from higher class family backgrounds than average Japanese, have worked for large corporations in Japan, and belong to the elite of Japanese society. International financial business requires these Japanese men to enter local business networks, which dominate financial business in the city, and to associate with well-educated, middle-class British staff. Therefore, these Japanese men come to have two contradictory centres to their imagined worlds. They admire the West as more civilised and more progressive but, on the other hand, they continue to claim their own cultural superiority. These Japanese managers are going back and forth between two centres, but their minds do not go beyond the boundaries of Japanese society even though they are physically abroad. They have the feeling that they will never have views like those of the West in terms of business, management, gender relationships, and way of life (J. Sakai, 2000:173-8).

Company Transferees in Singapore

The Japanese company transferees in Singapore do not regard local culture as more progressive. Rather, one central role of the Japanese businessmen is to be 'cultural mediators' who teach Japanese customs and manners to local employees. This is a very widespread Japanese self-conception. The Japanese men tend to believe that Japanese culture is so 'unique' that only certain people can participate in it and few foreigners can cross over into the 'real' part of the company.[43] Eyal Ben-Ari argues that the Japanese experiences at the workplace and in leisure pursuits in Singapore seem to lead to very little internationalisation – neither in the sense of creating contact with locals or other foreigners, nor in the sense of a greater awareness of the cultures of others. Instead, there is a very strong and widespread conception among Japanese expatriates that they must maintain the appearance – the demeanour, language, and attire – of being Japanese. For these people, going overseas is not so much a process of 'going international' (*kokusaika*) as 'going national' (Ben-Ari, 2003:116-30).

Pattern 2: Women Who 'Voluntarily' Migrate

In contrast to these Japanese company male transferees who are 'rotated' by their company and thus sent for short stays abroad, many Japanese women have 'voluntarily' migrated to America, Asia, Australia or Europe. Junko Sakai suggests that Japanese women migrating to Britain after the 1970s should be called 'spiritual migrants', as distinct from economic migrants. The distinguishing characteristic of this new migration was held to be that the motivation of these female migrants was not based on economic reasons, but on a constructed image of the West. For them, the idea that women could have more freedom in Britain than in Japan was the main motivation

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[43] In addition, as Ben-Ari notes, the consumption patterns of their families evince similar traits, centred on reproducing a peculiarly Japanese ambience in Singapore. Many families prefer cooking Japanese-style food at home. Their leisure pursuits include golf, tennis, swimming, Mandarin and English classes, and local cuisine cooking, very often run by Japanese (Ben-Ari, 2003:126-7).

(J. Sakai, 2000:215). In a similar vein, Machiko Sato notes that female settlers in Australia since the 1970s appear to be 'lifestyle migrants'. Some women seek to enjoy a more easygoing life without being tied to family obligations, while others want to have a spacious house with many rooms and a large garden in a 'foreign' environment (Sato, 2001:2). Karen Kelsky calls educated, single, and urban Japanese women who have international experience 'internationalist Japanese women'. She explains that many Japanese women thus migrate to the West for professional opportunities, personal liberation, and particularly, romantic or erotic self-expression (Kelsky, 2001:2;6).

In addition to these women migrating to Western countries, many others moved to Hong Kong due to the impact of the 'Hong Kong employment-seeking boom', in the 1990s.[44] In this case, the media are considered as one of the important migration-inducing factors. Chie Sakai explains that the main reason for this boom is discrimination against female workers in Japan; and the second is the fact that after films and popular songs from Hong Kong were introduced into Japan, these cultural products improved the image of Hong Kong for the Japanese. Throughout the 1990s, Hong Kong was a major tourist attraction for the Japanese; moreover, a number of Japanese women began to consider that Hong Kong was fairly Westernised and 'a place of equality' in terms of gender and other attributes (C. Sakai, 2003:135-8).

Many Japanese women have thus migrated to London, Australia, America, or Hong Kong, expecting to find better working opportunities and new identities in these locations. However, J. Sakai's (2000) and Sato's (2001) studies show opposing results to C. Sakai's (2003) and Kelsky's (2001) studies.

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[44] In 1989, female Japanese private company staff members numbered only 66, but by 1999, the number increased to 1,469 (C. Sakai, 2003).

'Spiritual Migrants' in London

As J. Sakai notes, the attempts of the Japanese women migrants in London to gain new identities has largely been unsuccessful, for, on the whole, they are still living as Japanese, on the periphery of the Japanese corporate system and Japanese expatriate community in London. After having lived in London for decades, they have realised that the equality they sought has turned out to be an illusion, and found that they have been excluded from promotion in the male-dominated Japanese corporate system. Some of them moved to foreign banks in London, when Japanese businesses were flourishing in the late 1980s and Japanese employees were necessary for these foreign banks in order to do business with Japanese companies. However, once the Japanese market declined, they were often made unemployed.

Most of these women are married to British or European husbands, which is one of the key factors in their deciding to stay in Britain. However, because of their being ethnic 'minority' women, and because of their financially insecure situations, their husbands tend to exploit these women by controlling their relationships and finances. These women have few friends, and almost none have British friends, even though they are married to British husbands. This is often because they have spent most of their time in Japanese companies and did not have enough time to improve their English to socialise with local people. Although they often deny their Japaneseness and define themselves as neither Japanese nor British, their only choice is to live as Japanese women, pretending to adhere to the Japanese men's images and to the British images of them (J. Sakai, 2000: 222-36).

'Lifestyle Migrants' in Australia

Many Japanese women have migrated to Australia, according to Machiko Sato, partly because they have a strong interest in living in a non-Japanese society and a yearning for a multicultural way of life, and partly because they harbour negative images about some aspects of Japanese society and thus find satisfaction in escaping from it. Nevertheless, these women still had to regard their residency in Australia as only a phase in their lives and have every intention of returning to Japan at some stage. Even if they become qualified for Australian citizenship, few of them actually apply for it.[45] They feel that there is little incentive for them to take up Australian nationality because it gives no additional advantages, apart from voting rights at federal and state elections. The strong loyalty of the Japanese to their nationhood and the notion of 'we Japanese' are deep-seated concepts, even in the minds of these Japanese women who have voluntarily chosen to live overseas (Sato, 2001:157-60).

As we see, J. Sakai (2000) and Sato (2001) argue that Japanese migrant women often come to renegotiate their sense of Japaneseness, although they originally hoped to find new identities or live in a multicultural way. By contrast, C. Sakai (2003) and Kelsky (2001) report that Japanese women find hybrid and cosmopolitan identities through their migration process.

'Internationalist Japanese Women'

As Karen Kelsky argues, many ambitious and educated young Japanese women migrate to live in Western countries for several years or have Western boyfriends, because 'the turn to the foreign' is the most important means currently at women's disposal to resist gendered expectations of the female life course in Japan. For these women, America is the country which is most powerfully associated with the West. Kelsky sees Westerners as an eroticised and racialised form of power, in which the liberatory potential of the West is intertwined with the desire for the white man as a 'fetish object of the modernity'. In her view, these young Japanese women can feel equally at home both in Japan and the West. They tend to resist any essentialising identification of the self with either Japan or the West: they sometimes regard themselves as 'Japanese', but sometimes speak as 'internationalised globalists' and distance themselves from what they consider the insular, exclusive, narrow-minded world of Japanese male corporatism. 'Internationalist Japanese women' can move lightly across different identifications, and in this sense, they enunciate 'a diasporic identity' (Kelsky, 2001:4-6; 215-6).

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[45] This is reflected in the figures which show that Japanese migrants have a lower level of citizenship acquisition than any other nationality in Australia. Only 20 % of those Japanese permanent residents apply for it (Sato, 2001:157-8).

Locally-Employed Women in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, as C. Sakai notes, through their relationships with local people and other foreigners, Japanese women rethink being Japanese as a 'resource' that they can make use of. In Japanese firms, they can do their jobs more easily than local employees, because most of their customers are Japanese in Hong Kong. For them, multiculturalism in Hong Kong is not conceived in terms of equal coexistence, but as a mode of power relations between ethnic groups which they can use to their advantage. These women compare different cultural identities (such as Hong Kongese, Japanese, Asian, and Western), and often come to adopt a position somewhere between that of Japan and that of Hong Kong, according to individual situations. Even if male managers expect them to act as Japanese women and take care of Japanese men, they are able to renegotiate their identities. For example, a woman says:

> Those who live in Hong Kong the same way as in Japan don't accept me. They tend to consider that I am too impertinent for them. Actually I don't care what they say, rather I enjoy observing their way of thinking, but they dislike me. They don't consider us as Japanese. They only consider us as Japanese when they want to do so, and at other times they consider us as Hong Kong people. Basically, these kinds of Japanese look down on Hong Kong people, so they also look down on us. They criticise us about small matters, saying that we couldn't do that although we are Japanese. In a sense, I think our position is very painful. (C. Sakai, 2003:145)

Thus C. Sakai argues that the Japanese female transient workers in Hong Kong can negotiate their identities, in order to get away from Japanese social conventions which they find oppressing (C. Sakai, 2003:140-6).

From these studies of Japanese migrant men and women, firstly, it becomes clear that the process of identity negotiation is highly gendered. On the one hand, Japanese men tend to hold onto their sense of Japanese national identity. They were not able to or did not want to assimilate into foreign culture and society, and made efforts not to lose their Japaneseness, hoping to return to their homeland in the near future. On the other hand, Japanese women, who are more likely to be marginalised in Japanese society, tended to attempt to find new identities that transcend their Japaneseness in a new place.

Secondly, in the cases of Japanese women, the social contexts of their destination greatly shape their experiences. C. Sakai contends that Japanese women in Hong Kong can have choices when negotiating their national identity. However, this is because these women have moved to another part of Asia. Japanese tend to regard Japan as superior to Asia, but they regard the West as occupying a higher position in some senses, than Japan, even though they still claim a cultural superiority for Japan. It is not possible for those migrating to the West to freely renegotiate their Japaneseness. Japanese women in England and Australia rarely transcend their sense of Japaneseness, contrary to their original hopes, while the Japanese women in Hong Kong believe that they can choose their identities.

As for Kelsky's case, she has opposing views to J. Sakai's (2000) and Sato's (2001) studies conducted in Western countries, as she concludes that (1) Japanese women migrate to Western countries with a strong desire for Western modernity (while the other two argue that Japanese women migrate with hopes of having a different lifestyle or living in a more egalitarian society in terms of gender); and (2) thus Japanese women develop diasporic or cosmopolitan identities (while the other two conclude that Japanese women tend to renegotiate their sense of Japaneseness). One might think that these studies have reached opposing conclusions because of the difference in their samples. But we can find similar narratives by young Japanese women (e.g., their resistance and conformity to Japaneseness) in both Kelsky's and Sakai's studies. So the differences in their conclusions seem to derive from a difference in their interpretations of their material. These contradictory points will be examined in my case study.

2.3 Conclusion

Japaneseness began to be discussed as national identity during the Meiji period, and Japanese national identity has subsequently been constantly reconstructed by the government, as well as by intellectuals, the market, the media, and other institutions and agencies, both in Japan and in the West to this day.

Under these conditions, a large number of Japanese have migrated to foreign countries. Only C. Sakai's study of Japanese women in Hong Kong explains how these migrants conceived the idea of migration to their destination city. That is, media and popular culture from Hong Kong contributed to their migration, making these women believe that the city was 'a place of equality', in terms of gender. Other studies do not explore this question, but report that many Japanese female 'spiritual migrants' or 'lifestyle migrants' have 'voluntarily' moved to Australia or England for symbolic reasons.

In most cases, international migration does not weaken their sense of Japaneseness. First-generation Japanese Americans had to hold onto their Japaneseness due to severe social and racial discrimination; and the later generations have become 'Japanese American', but continue to have a strong sense of 'peoplehood' among its ethnic group.

Today, male company transferees tend to hold onto their sense of Japaneseness, while 'voluntarily' migrating women tend to attempt to transcend their sense of Japaneseness, but often in vain. In short, common patterns in their identity negotiation are: (1) first-generation Japanese migrants tend to negotiate or heighten their sense of Japanese national identity; (2) Japanese women are more likely to attempt to find new identities that transcend their Japaneseness; and (3) Japanese who migrate to Western countries tend to be confined within their Japaneseness, mainly because of race and ethnic relations in their host country. Thus, race and ethnic relations and gender are critical factors in the identity negotiation of Japanese migrants.

However, opinions differ on two issues, which are important to the two questions in this study. First, in relation to Japanese women migrants, Kelsky (2001) stresses that the constructed image of 'Western modernity' exerts a pull on the minds and bodies of Japanese women which leads them to migrate there. On the other hand, J. Sakai (2000), Sato (2001), and C. Sakai (2003) explain that Japanese women have migrated to England, Australia, and Hong Kong, hoping to find working opportunities for them or new identities. Second, while Kelsky contends that Japanese women can develop a 'diasporic identity', J. Sakai (2000) and Sato (2001) argue that Japanese men and women very often come to renegotiate their sense of Japanese national identity (these two researchers suggest that the 'homogenous' national identity which the Japanese migrants bring with them contributes to this process).

Based on the above arguments, the case of young Japanese 'cultural migrants' will be investigated, by closely examining the opposing viewpoints. The next chapter will explain the methods used in my fieldwork.

Chapter 3 Methods: Multi-Sited Ethnography

3.1 Sample and Research Design

As already stated, the objective of this study is to explore the two main research questions: (1) how do the twenty-two young Japanese conceive the idea of migration to New York City or London for the purpose of cultural production?; (2) how do they experience their sense of Japanese national identity in their destination city? And these questions will be investigated through my fieldwork, which is based on what George E. Marcus calls 'multi-sited ethnography'. This mobile ethnography takes unexpected trajectories in tracing a cultural formation across and within multiple sites of activity. I particularly use one 'tracking' strategy, which he calls 'follow the people'. That is, a researcher follows and stays with the movements of a particular group or initial subjects (Marcus, 1995:95-6; 106). Thus I recruited a group of young Japanese in Tokyo before their departure and followed their migratory process to New York City or London from January 2003 to September 2005.

Selection of the Sites

As explained in the Introduction, I designed this research project based on my observation of young Japanese 'cultural migrants' in my everyday life both in New York City and in London, and these two cities were chosen as the sites of my

Table 3.1

Populations of Japanese Nationals Overseas Top 50 Cities in 2004

	City	Population		City	Population
1	**New York City**	**60,451**	27	Suzhou	5,771
2	Los Angeles	46,507	28	Gold Coast	5,606
3	Shanghai	34,122	29	Boston	5,450
4	Hong Kong	25,541	30	Kuala Lumpur	5,253
5	Bangkok	24,260	31	Atlanta	4,471
6	**London**	**23,402**	32	Oakland	4,377
7	Singapore	21,437	33	Buenos Ares	4,374
8	Vancouver	19,939	34	Brussels	3,828
9	Sydney	19,234	35	Amsterdam	3,790
10	Paris	16,097	36	Brisbane	3,742
11	San Paulo	15,855	37	Perth	3,645
12	San Francisco	15,413	38	Portland	3,514
13	Honolulu	13,659	39	Guam	3,443
14	Sannoze	9,183	40	Munich	3,199
15	San Diego	9,074	41	Sacramento	2,964
16	Manila	8,956	42	Tianjin	2,907
17	Taipei	8,933	43	Dalian	2,823
18	Chicago	8,498	44	Milan	2,816
19	Melbourne	7,773	45	Frankfurt	2,720
20	Seoul	7,689	46	Canton	2,594
21	Peking	7,589	47	Houston	2,476
22	Detroit	6,981	48	Tsingtao	2,430
23	Jakarta	6,978	48	Columbus	2,430
24	Toronto	6,501	50	Shenzhen	2,339
25	Düsseldorf	6,000		Other	438,295
26	Seattle	5,978		Total	961,307

Source: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, *Kaigai zairyū hōjin tōkei*, 2005.

fieldwork. Governmental statistics also suggest that New York City and London are among the cities which attract the greatest numbers of such young people from Japan: the United States (87,157, 44.9% out of the total number) and the United Kingdom (26,297, 13.6%) had the largest and second largest populations of Japanese nationals studying abroad in 2000 (MOJ, 2001) (Figure 2.1); among Western cities, New York City (47,549, 7.2%) and London (23,402, 3.6%) had the largest and third largest number of populations of Japanese nationals who stayed abroad for more than three months (or *zairyū hōjin*) in 2004 (MOJ, 2005) (Table 3.1). Furthermore, New York City and London, like Tokyo, have common features that make them 'global cities' (see Chapter 2), and these are 'links' which connect these global cities in terms of migration, which I investigated.

Recruiting Participants in Tokyo

In the sampling process, I considered that if I could conduct regular in-depth interviews combined with participant observation with just 15 to 20 people—from the time of their departures, through the periods spent in their destinations, to the time of return to their homeland — rather than more superficial interviews with 30 to 40 people, results of this study would be the more valuable. I therefore attempted to find more than 20 young people who met the following conditions for my sample: (1) they planned to migrate to New York City or London, (2) were between 18 and 30 years of age, (3) would be living in their destination city for the first time, (4) would be engaging in cultural production, and (5) would depart within one year (due to my research schedule).

In fact, finding suitable participants was one of the most difficult tasks for this multi-sited ethnography. If we are in New York City or London, in schools, shops, or streets, we can easily find young Japanese who have migrated to the city to engage in cultural production. But it is difficult to find young Japanese who plan to migrate for such reasons before their departures, because there is no specific place where such young people gather. At first, I tried to recruit young people in a wide variety of places in Tokyo – the British Council, the U.S. Embassy, the library at the Japan-U.S. Educational Commission, the Information Centre of Japanese Student Services Organisations, travel agencies, and 'study abroad' agencies. I soon found out that the British Council and the Visa Services office at the U.S. Embassy saw many more young visitors passing through than the other institutions, and decided to go to only these two places.

I spent many days waiting for young people in the British Council and in front of the U.S. Embassy. Right after I saw a young woman or man coming to these institutions, I approached her or him, introduced myself as a postgraduate student writing a thesis, and asked if she or he met the five conditions for my sample. People I talked to often turned out to be short-term tourists, travel agents, or academic students whose interests were in areas outside of art or culture, so I had to repeat this process hundreds of times, in order to find enough participants.

It was particularly difficult to recruit people in front of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Because of the 9.11 terrorist attacks in New York City in 2001 and threats thereafter, many police officers guarded the U.S. Embassy, lining up in front of the entrance. They sometimes interrogated me as to why I was standing all day in front of the U.S. Embassy. These police officers were very understanding, when I explained that I was a postgraduate student and doing research concerning Japanese migration to the United States. But I had to be careful not to offend them or disturb their work.

Since it took time to recruit young people around these institutions, I also tried to find participants by posting messages on the Bulletin Board Systems of several popular websites for Japanese people visiting or living in New York City or London.[46] I briefly described my research project, the five necessary conditions for participants, and my email address to which people could reply.

All in all, it took about six months to find enough participants. Even then, after their first interviews, 9 participants gradually dropped out, because they decided not to migrate to New York City or London due to family or health problems, changes in their destination city, or lack of funds. As each participant dropped out, I had to find a replacement. In total, the first interviews were conducted with 32 young people who met the necessary conditions in Japan, and 23 of them indeed migrated to New York City or London (but later one dropped out from my sample due to illness). These include eleven people recruited at the British Council and in front of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, and nine people recruited through the websites. Young people I had interviewed helped me get three more people, by introducing me to their friends. In this way, I gained 'entree' into the first site of multi-sited ethnography, Tokyo.

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[46] Vivinabi New York (http://newyork.vivinavi.com/JA/), Bulletin Nuts New York (http://www.nyct.net/~nuts/), ADD7 (http://www.add7.net/), MJ Board (http://www3.mediajapan.com/wwwboard/mjboard.html) for the New York group, and Vivinabi London (http://london.vivinavi.com/JA/) and Rice Wine (http://www.ricewine.f2s.com/) for the London group.

It should be noted that I never asked any institutions to introduce me to young people. From my experience in participant observation, I knew that it is sometimes risky to ask institutions, particularly large ones such as the British Council, to introduce people. It may take a long time to gain 'entree' due to bureaucratic procedures. What is worse, I knew that if they refused my request, they might not then allow me to recruit people by myself in the building. So I preferred directly approaching individuals, in order to avoid such risks.

This sample of twenty-two young Japanese clearly only represents a tiny fraction of the population of young Japanese who migrate to New York City or London for the purpose of cultural production. Thus the results of this study cannot be generalised. Instead, this is a case study which aims to explore the process whereby they experience their sense of Japaneseness, rather than the social conditions of the whole of the relevant population. Drawing on my experiences meeting young Japanese in New York City and London, however, I do regard various members of this sample group as having some of the relevant typical characteristics of many Japanese migrants with cultural aims, as I will describe later in Chapter 4. This study therefore aims to throw light on the *process* through which various social factors (both in their homeland and in their host country) contribute to the subjective experiences of such young Japanese.

The First Interviews in Japan

The first interviews with twenty-one of the young Japanese were conducted in the Tokyo area before their departures. The other first interview, with one participant, was conducted in Nagoya. The age of these young people ranged from 19 to 30 at the time of their departure and the average age was 25. Sixteen were brought up in the Tokyo Metropolitan area and six in the provinces. College was the highest school level attended by fourteen people, and high school by eight. All of them come from middle-class families. Ten planned to go to New York City, while twelve planned to go to London. Fifteen were female and seven were male. Their more detailed profiles are listed in Table 3.2 (see p.81).

For those who planned to leave for New York City or London soon, their first interviews were conducted on the day they were recruited in the British Council or in front of the U.S. Embassy. But for those who still had not decided on the date of departure, those who had several months before departures, or those who were recruited through the websites, I made appointments by email or telephone later on. Most of the interviews were conducted over one to two hours in cafes and tearooms in the Tokyo area, using an interview guide (Appendix 1). As my interview guide was open-ended, they could freely talk about whatever they liked.

In addition to these participants, in Tokyo, I found eight more young people in their 20s from broadly similar social backgrounds, who had no plan to migrate, who I recruited to use as a 'control group'. Three of them were college students, who were introduced to me by a professor in a university. Five of them were friends of the main participants, and these five people were also engaged in cultural production in the fields of art, fashion, or music. They were asked the same questions, following the same interview guide. Yet they were also asked why they did not want to migrate, unlike their friends.

Table 3.2 **The New York Group** (*Age is at the time of their departure)

	Name	Age *	Sex	Occupation before Departure	Education	Home town	Father's Occupation	Date of Departure	Date of Return	Residence in NYC
1	Yoko	27	F	Part-time jobs	College	Tokyo	Ex-company employee	24/7/2003		Elmhurst (Japanese roommates), Astoria (a Japanese boyfriend)
2	Mayumi	26	F	Contract office worker in the accounting department of a large company	Junior college	Tokyo	Self -employed	16/9/2003		Midtown East (school accommodation), the East Village, Upper West
3	Haruka	22	F	Dance school student	High school	Tokyo	Company employee	1/11/2003		Brooklyn, Queens, Harlem (a Japanese roommate)
4	Rie	27	F	Contract office worker in an IT firm	Junior college	Saitama	Company employee	8/11/2003	21/01/ 2005	Midtown East (school accommodation)
5	Makoto	29	M	Full-time graphic designer in a design office	High school	Osaka		5/1/2004		Astoria (a Rumanian roommate), Harlem (Japanese roommates)
6	Atsushi	25	M	Hairdresser at a branch of a hair salon company	High school	Saitama	Self-employed	9/11/2003	06/02/ 2004	Brooklyn, (school Accommodation) Harlem, Astoria (Japanese roommates)
7	Fumiko	26	F	Part-time worker at Tokyo office of a foreign advertising company	University	Tokyo	Bank clerk	10/01/2004		Brooklyn (college accommodation), the East Village (a Hispanic boyfriend, a Japanese roommate)
8	Nana	20	F	Part-time salesperson at an electric appliance shop	High school	Gifu	Osteopath	26/1/2004		Astoria (a Japanese roommate)
9	Toru	25	M	Full-time sales person for 5 years, and then Part-time jobs	High school	Tokyo	Tax accountant	29/1/2004		Brooklyn (Japanese roommates)
10	Chihiro	23	F	Part-time salesperson at a stationary shop	Junior college	Hokkaido	Company employee	7/7/2004		Harlem (an American roommate)

	Name	Return to Japan during Stay in NYC	The First Interview	3 months -	6 months -	10 months -	16 months -	The Last Interview in Tokyo	Estimated Period of Sojourn
1	Yoko	Dec 2003 to Jan 2004, Dec 2004 to Jan 2005	Jul 2003 in Tokyo	19/10/2003 in NYC (3m)	20/4/2004 in NYC (9m)	24/7/2004 in NYC (12m)	30/5/2005 in NYC (1y10m)		1 year but changed to open
2	Mayumi	Jun 2004, Dec 2004 to Jan 2005, Aug to Sep 2005	Aug 2003 in Tokyo	12/12/2003 in NYC (3m)	18/4/2004 in NYC (7m)	31/7/2004 in NYC (11m)	30/5/2005 in NYC (1y8m)		2 years - until March, 2005 - changed to open, until graduation
3	Haruka	Feb 2004, Dec 2004	Aug 2003 in Tokyo		16/4/2004 in NYC (6m), 28/7/2004 in NYC (9m)		1/6/2005 in NYC (1y7m)		1 year or more, but changed to open
4	Rie		Sep 2003 in Tokyo	20/4/2004 in NYC (5m)				21/7/2005	1 year until Jan 2005
5	Makoto	Oct 2004	Aug2003 in Tokyo	17/4/2004 in NYC (3m)	27/7/2004 in NYC (7m)	19/12/2004 in NYC (12m)	28/5/2005 in NYC (1y5m)		1 year, but changed to open
6	Atsushi		Sep 2003 in Tokyo	9/2/2004 in Tokyo				13/7/2005	Open, but changed to 3 months
7	Fumiko	Once a year	Aug 2003 in Tokyo		29/7/2004 in NYC (7m),	23/12/2004 in NYC (12m)	31/5/2005 in NYC (1y5m)		2 years but changed to open
8	Nana	Oct 2004	Jan 2004 in Nagoya	13/4/2004 in NYC (3m)	26/7/2004 in NYC (6m)	21/12/2004 in NYC (12m)	30/5/2005 in NYC (1y4m)		1 year but chanted to open
9	Toru	Apr to May 2004, Jun 2005	Jan 2004 in Tokyo	14/4/2004 in NYC (3m)	1/8/2004 in NYC (6m)	20/12/2004in NYC (11m)	26/5/2005 in NYC (1y4m)		3 months, but changed to open
10	Chihiro		Jan 2004 in Tokyo	12/12/04 in NYC (5m)					Until Dec 2004

The London Group

	Name	Age *	Sex	Occupation before Departure	Education	Home town	Father's Occupation	Date of Departure	Date of Return	Residence in London
1	Nozomu	26	M	Full-time fashion designer	Design school	Fukushima	Retired	17/7/2003	Aug 2004	Angel (a Japanese flatmate)
2	Yayoi	19	F	Part-time jobs	High school	Tokyo	Art dealer	11/9/2003		Sidcup (college accommodation)
3	Kumiko	25	F	Full-time layout designer	Art college	Tokyo	Owner of a design office	18/9/2003		New Cross (college accommodation), Vaxaul, Brixton (British flatmates)
4	Ryo	25	M	Part-time jobs	Music college	Saitama	Owner/editor of a publishing house	19/9/2003		North Finchley (homestay, European & Japanese flatmates)
5	Mihoko	30	F	Full-time receptionist	University	Tokyo	Deceased (owner of a bag shop)	21/9/2003		Kentish Town (an American flatmate), New Cross
6	Emi	23	F	Freelance illustrator	Design school	Tokyo	Guard of a security company	12/10/2003	Sep 2004	Shepherd's Bush (Bedsit), Brick Lane (Japanese flatmates)
7	Sayaka	27	F	Assistant at an art college	Art college	Tokyo	Civil servant	3/1/2004		Saffron Walden, New Cross (college accommodation)
8	Wakana	26	F	Full-time graphic designer	Art college	Tokyo	Designer	Mar 2004		Russell Sq. (college accommodation), S. Kensington
9	Jun	22	M	College student	Art college	Osaka	High school teacher	11/4/2004		East Finchley (homestay) , Oval (Chinese flatmates)
10	Aiko	20	F	Student	Fashion school	Saitama	Deceased	11/4/2004	Sep 2005	Aldgate (Chinese, Korean and Japanese flatmates)
11	Shota	22	M	College student	University	Yamanashi	English teacher in a high school	2/9/2003	Mar 2004	Bristol (a British flatmate)
12	Natsuko	24	F	Work full-time at a small publisher	Art college	Tokyo	Freelance journalist	10/1/2004		Leeds (college accommodation)

	Name	Return to Japan during Stay in London	The First Interview	3 months -	6 months -	10 months -	16 months -	The Last Interview in Tokyo	Estimated Period of Sojourn
1	Nozomu	1 week in Mar 2004	Jul 2003 in Tokyo	29/10/2003 in London (3m)	23/2/2004 in London (7m)	30/6/2004 (11m), 11/8/2004 (13m) in London		17/7/2005	1 year
2	Yayoi	Dec 03 to Jan 04, Jul to Sep in 04, Jul to Sep in 05	Jul 2003 in Tokyo	30/11/2003 in London (3m)	12/5/2004 in London (7m)	7/12/2004 in London (1y)	26/6/2005 in London (1y9m)		4 years but changed to open
3	Kumiko	Dec 03 to Jan 04, Jun to Aug 04, Sep 05	Jul 2003 in Tokyo	29/11/2003 in London (3m)	22/5/2004 in London (8m)	20/11/2004 in London (1y2 m)	9/9/2005 in London (2y)		2 or 3 years but changed to open
4	Ryo	Parents often came to see him	Jul 2003 in Tokyo	3/12/2003 in London (3m)	10/6/2004 in London (8m)	13/11/2004 in London (1y2m)	7/10/2005 in London (2y1m)		1 year, but changed to open
5	Mihoko	Dec 2004 to Jan 2005	Sep 2003 in Tokyo	5/12/2003 in London (3m)	31/3/2004 in London (6m)	14/7/2004 in London (10m)			2 years, but changed to open
6	Emi		Aug 2003 in Tokyo	25/2/2004 in London (4m)	5/7/2004 in London (9m)	16/9/2004 in London (11m)		22/7/2005	1 year
7	Sayaka	July to Sep 2004, July to Sep 2005	Dec 2003 in Tokyo		27/5/2004 (6m), 27/11/04 in London (10m)				3 years
8	Wakana	Dec 2004 to Jan 2005	Sep 2003 in Tokyo	23/6/2004 in London (3m)					1 year, changed to open
9	Jun		Dec 2003 in Tokyo	13/7/2004 in London (3m)	9/12/2004 in London (8m)				4 years
10	Aiko	Nov 2005 to spring 2006	Sep 2003 in Tokyo	16/7/2004 in London (3m)	24/11/2004 in London (7m)		17/10/2005 in London (1y4 m)		1-2 years
11	Shota		Jul 2003 in Tokyo	6/12/2003 in Bristol (3m)	10/3/2004 in Bristol (6m)			5/8/2005	7 months
12	Natsuko	Apr to Jul 2004	Jul 2003 in Tokyo	8/04/2004 in London (3m)					3 years

The 'Following' Interviews in New York City and London

After their departures, the 'site' of my multi-sited research moved to New York City and London, as I followed these young people's journeys. Meanwhile, I made frequent contacts with each of the twenty-two young Japanese by email and telephone, in order to keep track of their new address, email addresses, and phone numbers in New York City or London. Some did not reply to me for the first few months after their arrivals, and I worried very much about this, but ultimately all participants contacted me later on. Subsequently, I began to conduct interviews with each participant once every three to four months during their stay in the cities. Since I lived in London during this period, I flew from London to New York City three times every year. As one participant moved from London to Bristol, I also went there twice.

Each interview usually took two or more hours, sometimes using interview guides (Appendix 2). In order to conduct interviews, I visited their residences and hangouts – e.g., an apartment room in Brooklyn, an English language school in Gramercy Park, a dance school in Midtown, a Starbucks Coffee shop in the East Village in New York City, as well as a flat in the Angel district of Islington, a college in Lewisham, a coffee shop near Brick Lane, a pub in North Finchley in London, and many other places. I also 'hung out' with my respondents on other occasions than interviews, when they asked me to go out with them. This happened in London, where I lived, more frequently than in New York City, where I was only a visitor, during this fieldwork. Nonetheless, in my sojourn, we hung out in Little Italy and Chinatown, shopped for cosmetics in the East Village in New York City; saw a movie in Piccadilly Circus, did window shopping in Selfridges in Bond Street, visited galleries in Cork Street, and met their friends in Leicester Square in London. To this extent, my research is more than an interview-based study, since I observed their everyday lives and also participated in them to some extent.

The 'Returnee' Interviews in Tokyo

The last interviews with five young Japanese, who had returned to Japan by early August 2005, were conducted in the Tokyo area between July and August in 2005. They were asked to look back upon their experiences of their migratory projects to the West. At the beginning of this research, I had expected more people to return to Japan and settle down there, but the rest (seventeen people) continued to live in New York City or London (although they often went back and forth between their destination city and Tokyo for vacations or other reasons).

Collecting and Analysing Data

In total, I conducted approximately 100 interviews with these young Japanese from January 2003 to September 2005 (details of all interviews are listed in Table 3.2). All interviews were recorded, and about ninety percent were transcribed and coded in Japanese. The transcribed data are about 300,000 characters in total (approximately 100,000 words in the English language). Then the relevant parts of the transcribed narratives were translated into English to be quoted in this study. The narratives presented in this study are not simply based on my memory or fieldnotes, but on these young people's own words. Participant observation was useful, as a back-up to the interviews, as I could see for myself their actual personal networks, daily routines, lifestyles, and English proficiency levels apart from their own descriptions, and I could get a better sense of what they really meant or implied in their comments in their interviews.

The number of email correspondences between my respondents and me reached 1,200, as I tried to keep contact with them as often as possible, in order to keep tracking them over three years. Even when they did not reply to me for a while, I sent them emails regularly, just saying hello. These emails were used in order to ask about their personal backgrounds and some questions which I forgot to ask during interviews.

3.2 Research: Epistemological and Ethical Problems

As discussed in the previous chapters, the Japanese government, intellectuals, and other institutions have constructed a version of Japanese national identity through *nihonjinron* discourses. One might say that I am 'constructing' a story of young Japanese migration too. Indeed, a social constructionist approach would deny that our knowledge is a direct perception of reality; rather, we construct our own versions of reality between us. If we accept that all forms of knowledge are relative and historically contextualised, it follows that the notion of 'truth' becomes problematic, and there can be no such thing as an objective fact (Burr, 1995:6). James Clifford explains how the notion of reality or 'truth' has been reconsidered particularly in the West:

> The critique of colonialism in the postwar period – an undermining of 'The West's' ability to represent other societies – has been reinforced by an important process of theorizing about the limits of representation itself. There is no way adequately to survey this multifarious critique of what Vico called the 'serious poem' of cultural history. Positions proliferate: 'hermeneutics', 'structuralism', 'history of mentalities', 'neo-Marxism', 'genealogy', 'post-structuralism', 'post-modernism', 'pragmatism'; also a spate of 'alternate epistemologies' – feminist, ethnic, and non-Western. What is at stake, but not always recognised, is an ongoing critique of the West's most confident, characteristic discourses. Diverse philosophies may implicitly have this critical stance in common ...New historical studies of hegemonic patterns of thought (Marxist, Annaliste, Foucaultian) have in common with recent styles of textual criticism (semiotic, reader-response, post-structural) the conviction that what appears as 'real' in history, the social sciences, the arts, even in common sense, is always analyzable as a restrictive and expressive set of social codes and conventions. (Clifford, 1986:10)

There are a large number of ethnographic studies, including those on Japan and the Japanese, written by Western ethnographers, and it follows that these ethnographers have told us 'truths' from the West's point of view, which are 'inherently partial' (Clifford, 1986:7). I – a Japanese postgraduate student – am going to tell a story about Japan and young Japanese, but my truth is also inherently partial. I do not think that I am simply fabricating a story based on my assumptions, but my negotiations with these young Japanese and interpretations of their narratives are inevitably shaped by my background, and I cannot write an account which transcends the social codes and conventions of the cultures which I have internalised. Now let me reflect upon the context in which I conducted my fieldwork.

The Influence of My Background

Some people say that an interviewer should keep a low profile in relation to their respondents, because his or her profile is likely to affect the ways in which respondents behave and talk in front of the interviewer.[47] However, others also suggest that an interviewer should establish rapport by talking to respondents about what he or she has in common with them.

I used the latter strategy. I considered that the similarity of my background was of great advantage in studying young people who are 'Japanese' (mostly from the Tokyo area), come from middle-class families, and are migrating to New York City or London. When they asked about my own background, I told them that I was also born and raised in Tokyo, had parents who have professional jobs, and had studied in New York City and London as a postgraduate student. This enabled me to establish rapport with them, as they could regard me as an 'insider' in terms of class, ethnicity, and interest in

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[47] For example, if respondents get to know their interviewer is older or younger, or comes from a higher or lower class, they may hesitate to express their opinions for specific issues. However, if they do not know much about the interviewer's background, they may be able to talk more freely.

New York City/London. Particularly, since I planned to ask many questions about their childhood, family, relationships, careers, and their life plans, I had to gain a degree of 'trust' from them. If I had been silent regarding myself during this relatively long period of fieldwork, they may not have answered my questions, regarding me as untrustworthy.

However, like so many 'solutions', this strategy caused a problem too. Since I told them that I had lived in New York City and London for several years, most respondents regarded me as having more experience of being abroad. So, they sometimes wanted to know my opinions, after I asked them questions concerning culture, people, and society in their host society. Some researchers adopt a 'dialogical' approach and give information and advice to their respondents during interviews. But I attempted not to give information or express my opinions. Since these newcomers tended to see me as an old-timer, I was afraid that my opinions would have too much influence on their views. I therefore always tried to be just a 'neutral' listener, saying, 'Well, I agree with you' or 'There are various views, so it is difficult to say…' Most of them indeed liked talking about themselves far better than listening to my story, and seldom interrogated me further. On one occasion, a male participant, Ryo said to me, 'I like the way you listen to me. Many people just want to talk about themselves. My father, who is a journalist, is like you. He just listens to other people without imposing his opinions'. From his words, I infer that they tended to see me as a listener rather than an advisor or a commentator.

The Influence of My 'Body'

Even so, as Ruth Frankenberg points out, no presentation of self is really 'neutral' (Frankenberg, 1993:31). My body and nonverbal signals could send messages. I was an interviewer who appears to be a 'Japanese woman' in her '20s to 30s', but if another interviewer, say, a 'white man' in his '40s to 50s' were to conduct the interviews with them, the young Japanese would be very likely to negotiate with him in a different way.

In my case, one other factor also affected their negotiations with me. It is gender. During my multi-sited fieldwork, I adopted a strategy of 'following people'. Let's suppose that a woman sends a man a lot of emails, asks to come to see him again and again, and ask about his childhood, girlfriends, or even future marriage plans. He is likely to consider that she has an interest in him (if he is heterosexual). Some of the male participants, whose lives had nothing to do with academic practices, appeared to misunderstand my intentions at some points: some intentionally hid the fact they had a girlfriend, some told dirty jokes on occasions, and the youngest male respondent sounded once or twice as if he were trying to protect himself from me. These things did not happen in conversations with female participants. What I could do was to behave in a little more distant manner (in most cases, I tried to use more polite and formal expressions) to male participants, in order to emphasise that my main purpose was not to be on intimate terms with them or that I was not a stalker. At the end of the day, I do not deem these issues to have posed a problem with the male participants. However, I infer that the female participants tended to talk about particular issues more frankly in front of me than the male participants.

Another factor, 'age', worked in a different way. I am older than all the participants (the oldest being one year younger than me and the youngest twelve years), and they treated me as a friend or a big sister. One might presume that Japanese would be likely to care about age differences in the light of the 'vertical relationships' that characterise the culture. Yet few treated me in an overly respectful manner. This is probably because they regarded me just as a student, dressed in casual fashion like them. And I did not tell them my age unless they asked. So, I consider that unlike gender, my age did not affect their negotiations with me to a significant extent.

I should note that one female participant, Mihoko is almost the same age as me, and I found it easy to develop rapport with her. I tried not to meet any specific participant too often, as this would affect my relationships with participants, yet, she sometimes called me, and I replied. I hung out with her a little more often than the other young people. I could not avoid this. But still, whenever I met her, I tried to watch my words and not to give away much information or express my opinions concerning all the issues related to this study, although I cannot be sure of how much influence I had on her negotiations with me.

'Japanese' Writing 'Japanese'

My interpretations and analysis of young Japanese migration are also affected by my personal background, cultural practices, knowledge, and academic training, which have been acquired in specific historical and social contexts. Probably, I had the advantage of understanding my interviewees quite well because of my 'Japaneseness'. I may have been able to correctly grasp the meanings of their descriptions, implications, and nonverbal signals, as I grew up with a similar family background and education, as well as having a similar general lifestyle, interests and desires, and exposure to the same television programmes and popular cultural products in the same age. But this could be a disadvantage too. I may have overlooked some important findings, taking this for granted as 'common practices' for all people; and I may have unconsciously seen and interpreted things in the light of my own cultural and ideological perspectives. I am unable to precisely examine these points by myself, because a person cannot completely step outside of his or her own perspective, no matter how hard he or she tries.

Moreover, it is often pointed out that in writing texts, ethnographers systematically exclude parts of their observations and utilise rhetoric to empower their messages. In my case, as already explained, I coded the narratives of the study's participants and directly quoted those sections that appeared to express their thoughts concisely. Then I translated these quotations from Japanese into English. I intervened between their own words and the texts in multiple stages – screening, translating, and writing.

Therefore, I consider that I am writing my own version of a story about young Japanese migration, just as other ethnographers write their own versions of stories (but it is also possible that my conclusions might be similar to ones made by other ethnographers on the same questions). I would not claim that I am telling the only truth. Rather, this study should be read as one which is conducted by me, an individual with a particular background.

Payment

One of the most common ethical problems during fieldwork is whether a researcher should pay participants or not. I did not pay anyone cash, partly because I could not figure out how much an appropriate payment would be and partly because I wanted to establish rapport with them rather than relationships based on money.

Thus, one might ask why these young people participated in this fieldwork and also agreed to be interviewed without dropping out over such a long period. In fact, from the beginning in Tokyo, young people, who met the five necessary conditions, rarely refused to participate in this study when they were asked in front of the U.S. Embassy or inside of the British Council. Perhaps, they expected to meet new people and experience something new through their migration; and they thought it would be helpful to keep in touch with me, as they had never lived abroad and had few acquaintances in New York City or London. What is more, I suggested that if they participated in my projects, I would translate their applications for visa and educational institutions from Japanese into English, so that they did not have to pay fees to 'studying abroad' agencies. But I never introduced anyone to them or helped them find their accommodation, as I did not want to affect their migration process. As for the paperwork, if I had not done it, they would have had to pay fees for agencies. In either case, most of them could not do it all by themselves due to their elementary English skills.

In addition, in Tokyo, New York City, and London, I usually paid for their coffee, tea or snacks, and often for lunches and dinners at places they liked, such as Brooklyn Diner in Midtown Manhattan, Veniero's Cafe in the East Village, Yoshino in Piccadilly Circus, and many other places. So, for some young people, one of the motivations to come to see me may have been to get free meals.

However, the main reason why the young Japanese came to see me consistently seemed to be that they liked to be listened to. Herbert J. Gans says simply that most people like to be interviewed, because they are flattered by being listened to and paid attention to (Gans, 1979b). I agree with his view. Indeed, many young Japanese often replied to my emails, saying, 'I have good news to tell you' or 'You will like this story'. These young people are not particularly important figures in society. Few people besides me would listen to their stories very seriously for hours at a time. Furthermore, as I asked them to talk about their current situations and future plans in each interview, some interviewees considered my interviews a good occasion to reflect upon their lives. Of course, I admit that what I got from them (the data for this study) is much greater than what they got from me (free English translations, free meals, and a serious listener to their stories). I am truly thankful for their precious time and kindness.

Confidentiality

Before their first interviews, I told all participants that I would use pseudonyms in this study instead of their real names. All of them agreed to this. As readers will find later, they talked about their discriminatory ideas, sexual relationships, shameful experiences, and other private matters. I feel I gained their 'trust'. But at the same time, some young Japanese may have forgotten the fact that their narratives would be used in this study while they were enthusiastically talking about their experiences in a friendly atmosphere. Therefore, I did not quote very private matters which might make them feel uneasy if they read this study, or the part of their narratives which they told me to treat as 'off-the-record'.

Chapter 4 The 'Imagined West' in Japan

4.1 Introduction

Rie, Female, aged 27:
Rie's background is typical of women in Japan who carry out migration after working for several years as an *OL* (an acronym for 'Office Lady'), that is to say, a female office worker. Rie was brought up in a suburb of Tokyo in Saitama prefecture. Her father is a company employee, her mother a housewife. She had had aspirations to become a professional dancer since her childhood; but, at the age of 20 after graduating from a junior college, she gave up on her dance ambitions and began working as a contracted office worker in an IT firm. A second hope she had always had was for *ryūgaku* (studying abroad). A visit to New York City in her early 20s deeply impressed her, and she thought she would be happier pursuing dance there. As her desire for migrating became deeper, she continued to work and save money for several years to realise her migratory project. Finally, she left for New York City in August 2003.

Haruka, Female, aged 22:
Haruka is representative of many young women in Tokyo today, belonging to a popular subculture. She has long hair dyed blonde, is well tanned, and her attire follows the fashion trends of American female R&B singers. Her father is a company employee in architecture, and her mother is a housewife. She also has an older brother. After dropping out of high school, Haruka earned a high school diploma by distance learning. Subsequently, she began attending a dance school in Tokyo, following her great interest in American black artists such as Janet Jackson. Her dance school offered a programme for sending students to overseas dance schools, which she decided to participate in. Haruka's father is willing to support her in New York City, expecting her to learn English. She flew to New York City in November 2003.

Toru, Male, aged 25:

Before migrating, Toru was a 'freeter' [a young person who chooses to live on a series of part-time jobs rather than find a permanent one; this is a Japanese vernacular term combining 'free' with 'arbeiter', German for 'worker']. He was brought up in a suburban area of western Tokyo. His father is a tax accountant, his mother a piano teacher, and his younger sister works full-time. Toru himself had worked as a full-time sales employee at a firm for five years following high school, but quit and worked through a series of part-time jobs such as bartending. He thinks he is somewhat of a problem for his family. Recently, he developed an interest in pop art, began painting, regardless of his lack of formal training, and determined to become a professional artist. Later, he left for New York City in January 2004.

Nozomu, Male, aged 26:

Nozomu is among many young Japanese migrants who had relatively stable career backgrounds prior to migration. He was brought up in a prefecture in the Tohoku region, 120 miles from Tokyo. His parents still live there, and he is the youngest among their three sons. After graduating from high school, Nozomu came to Tokyo to attend a fashion school. Subsequently, he worked as a fashion planner and designer in a small clothing company. During this period, he visited China, Korea, and the United States for business several times, and began to think that English language skills, experience abroad and network-building in Europe would help his career. Although the president of his company has given him an open invitation to return to the company anytime, Nozomu plans to migrate to London in order eventually to establish his own design office. He departed for London in July 2003.

Sayaka, Female, aged 27:

Sayaka's migratory project fits a very conventional type: she aims to receive a college degree abroad to better her career prospects. Her parents work as civil servants in public prosecutor's offices. Following graduation from an art college, Sayaka worked as a teaching assistant in the college for a few years. Meanwhile, she won an award for her artwork, and began to think about studying art abroad, in order to develop her abilities. She actually carried out her plan to leave for London in January 2004.

In Tokyo, I conducted my first interviews with the twenty-two young Japanese between January 2003 and January 2004. The above biographies are about some respondents' lives in Japan before their departure. This chapter aims to explore the first research question in this study: how have these young Japanese conceived the idea of migration to New York City or London for the purpose of cultural production? As discussed in Chapter 1, the migration studies literature suggest that various factors on the micro-, meso- and macro-levels all affect the migration process. Therefore, first of all, 'pull' and 'push' factors and the migration systems will be looked at. Next, cultural-ideological links between Japan and the United States or Britain – that is, the construction of the young Japanese migrants' 'imaged West' and the role of the media – will be explored.

4.2 Factors in Young Japanese Migration

4.2.1 'Push' Factors

The Rise of Youth Unemployment Rate

The most important 'push' factor in young Japanese migration is the rise of the youth unemployment rate. Significantly, their working conditions have had an influence over their motivations to emigrate from Japan. Of the ten persons migrating to New York City, seven held jobs prior to their departures: a hairdresser, a graphic designer, two salespersons, three office workers; of the other three, two were unemployed and one was a student. Of the twelve persons migrating to London, nine were previously employed: a fashion designer, a layout designer, an illustrator, two graphic designers, a teaching assistant, a receptionist, and two office workers; the other three were students. About half of them have worked only as part-time employees in small- or middle-sized firms. As to their educational background, two- or four-year college was the highest institution level attended by fourteen people (New York City –5, London – 9), and high school by eight (New York City – 5, London –3). None have graduated from a first-rate college. Thus one general characteristic of their social backgrounds is that they are not what might be considered members of societal elites.

With regard to their parents, those in the New York group have a householder working as a bank clerk, three company employees, an architect, a tax accountant, a shop owner, a chiropractor or a retired; those in the London group have a householder working as a company employee, an art dealer, two designers, a journalist, a civil servant, a shop owner, a high school teacher, a security guard, or a retired (see Table 3.2). Thus, with a few exceptions, most of their parents are white-collar employees, professionals, or the self-employed in the middle class. It follows that most of the young Japanese interviewed take occupations that will earn less than their parents' occupations, and are descending in the scale of social stratification. These employment prospects can explain why these young people, especially those who are over the age of 25, decide that they have to change their living conditions:

> After I graduated from college, I had a full-time job but then I quit. So, I went to an art school in Tokyo. But after that I couldn't find an attractive job. I am working part-time now. Then my parents suggested I study abroad. (Fumiko, female office-worker migrating to New York City, age 26)

> I have to achieve something. I think this is my last chance. I will not come back. Of course, I will come back to Japan, but mentally I will not come back and will make all efforts to achieve something over there. I will try hard everyday. I wouldn't have such an opportunity as long as I am in Japan. When I come back to Japan, I have to get a stable job. I don't have much time left before getting to the age I'd have to settle down. If I'm not able to achieve anything, I will be a cook at worst. (Toru, male salesperson migrating to New York City, age 25)

These restricted work opportunities constitute the most common problem among young people in Japan today. According to Yuji Genda and Masako Kurosawa (2001), the Japanese economy has been experiencing a recession since the early 1990s, and the unemployment rate reached a historical high of seasonally adjusted 5.3% in 2001.

Particularly, the youth unemployment rate has risen, reaching 12.4% among males of 15 to 24 years, making them the group most affected by the recession. Since the early 1990s, there has been a steady decline in the proportion of new school graduates obtaining full-time jobs, and only 55.8 % of new college graduates had full-time jobs in 2000. The high aggregate unemployment rate at the point for workers entering the labour market not only reduced the likelihood of workers finding full-time jobs at that time, but also reduced the quality of job matches and thereby increased likelihood of future turnover(Genda and Kurosawa, 2001:465-88).[48]

In addition, a separate estimation by gender revealed that, among males, university graduates were more likely to obtain full-time jobs than non-university graduates. On the other hand, among females, the probability of obtaining a full-time job is almost the same regardless of whether one has graduated from college or vocational high school. This also implies that a difference in the probability of obtaining a full-time job between genders is the highest for college graduates.[49] Unsurprisingly those worst hit by the recent increase in the aggregate unemployment rate are female university graduates who majored in 'arts' (Genda and Kurosawa, 2001:465-88).

Even if young women can find jobs in companies in Japan, their future prospects are often limited. In 2004, the number of the total women employed is about 22,030,000 (41.1 % of the total employed), and clerical workers have come to account for 32.5% of the number (MHLW, 2005). Conventionally, young female clerical workers are called *OL* (an acronym for 'Office Lady'),[50] and opportunities for these *OL* to be promoted into management are very limited (Ogasawara, 1998:151-3).

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[48] When the unemployment rate is high, it becomes difficult for young people to find jobs that match their skills and interests. In addition, it becomes impossible for many young people to obtain positions in the companies of their first choice; some young people can find jobs only in the companies of their second, third, or other choice. When young people are working for companies that they are not interested in, they are very likely to change their jobs, once they encounter troubles or problems (Genda, 2001:79).

[49] This finding sharply contrasts with observations in most other OECD countries, where differences in employment probabilities across educational attainment are greater for females than for males and where gender differences are generally greater at lower levels of educational attainment. This peculiarity is probably due to the male-dominant nature of Japanese company employment, which prefers male over female employees (Genda and Kurosawa, 2001).

Furthermore, the expansion and feminisation of part-time workers have occurred in many countries, and Japan is not an exception. Japanese companies have increased the hiring of non-regular workers, who accounted for 23.6% of employees in 2004. Women accounted for 69.3% of temporary workers in 2004, and they work primarily in service sector industries in large urban centres, especially Tokyo (Weathers, 2001:201-4; MHLW, 2005).

Although women still have more restricted future prospects than men, nowadays many young women hold the hope of pursuing successful careers. The percentage of female students enrolling in universities increased from 20.8% in 1985 to 34.4% in 2003 (2004, Cabinet Office). About 80% of young women in their 20s and 30s consider that they should continue to work through or after childrearing years.[51] In 2003, 21.2 % of female worker respondents answered that they hoped to be promoted to section heads, department heads or even presidents,[52] while 8.6% hoped so in 1986 when the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was implemented (MHLW, 2004).

These analyses of the youth labour market make apparent some of the migration-inducing factors. The rapid increase of the number of young Japanese studying abroad began in the late 1980s, and continued in the 1990s, when the steady decline in the

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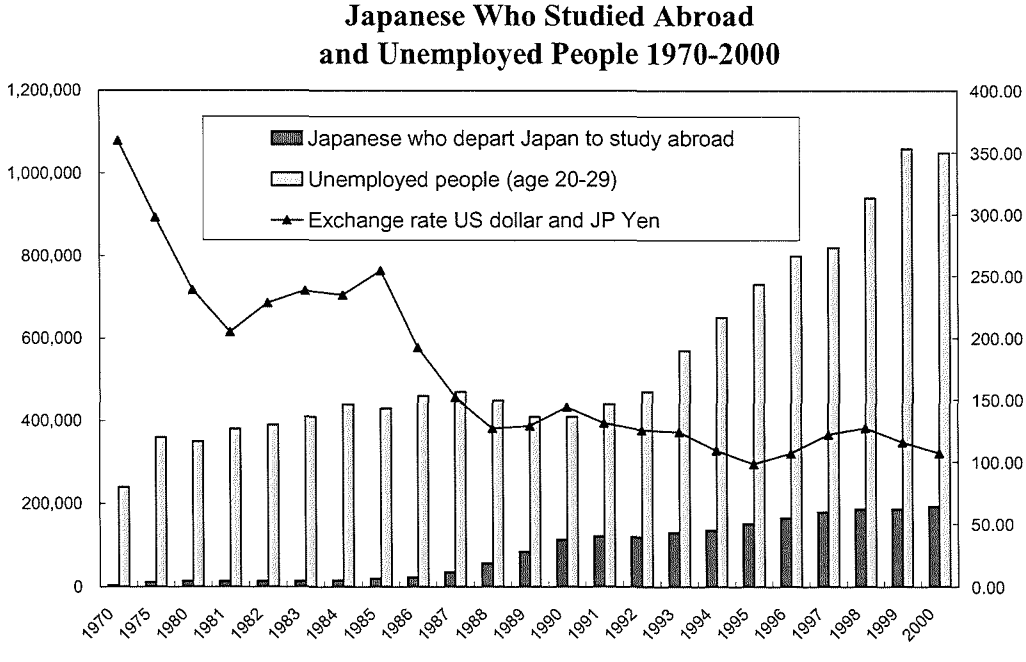
[50] Tasks assigned to *OL* usually involve processing, elementary accounting, and photocopying or facsimile tasks. They are also often responsible for various chores such as serving tea to their male colleagues or to company visitors, wiping desks, cleaning ashtrays, or answering telephone calls. Sometimes they are asked to run errands, ranging from delivering documents to buying train tickets (Ogasawara, 1998).

[51] In a survey, 37.5% of female respondents in their 20s and 45.5% in their 30s answered that women should continue to work through childrearing years, and 40.9% in their 20s and 38.4% in their 30s answered that women should resume work after childrearing years. Moreover, about 70% of male respondents in their 20s or 30s also answered that women should work through or after childrearing years. This is mainly because young men today have recognised that they cannot earn enough income by themselves to support their (future) family due to high unemployment rates, the growth of part-time contracts, and the standardisation of low salaries (Cabinet Office, 2004).

[52] However, only 2.3 % of department heads (or *buchō*) and 4.2 % of section heads (*kachō*) in all companies that employ 100 or more workers were women in 2003 (MHLW, 2004).

Figure 4.1



Source: Based on the Ministry of Justice of Japan, *Shutsunyūkoku kanri tōkei*, 1971-2001, Statistics Bureau, Management and Coordination Agency, *Labour Force Survey*, 1971-2001, and data published by Bank of Japan, 1971-2001.

proportion of new school graduates obtaining full-time jobs began (Figure 4.1).

Most respondents said that they did not cling to their jobs and chose to quit them, in order to live in New York City or London. The particular difficulty faced by women in obtaining full-time jobs, as well as the limited prospects for their future careers, corresponds to data stating, both in my sample and in governmental statistics, that about 70% of young Japanese who go to live in the United States or Britain are female (Figure 4.2; 4.3).[53]

I also interviewed eight young Japanese who have no plans to migrate as a 'control group'. All of them are also interested in living abroad, but they have chosen to stay in Japan. Among them, students of a top-ranked university in Japan show critical attitudes towards young people migrating to foreign countries for cultural production:

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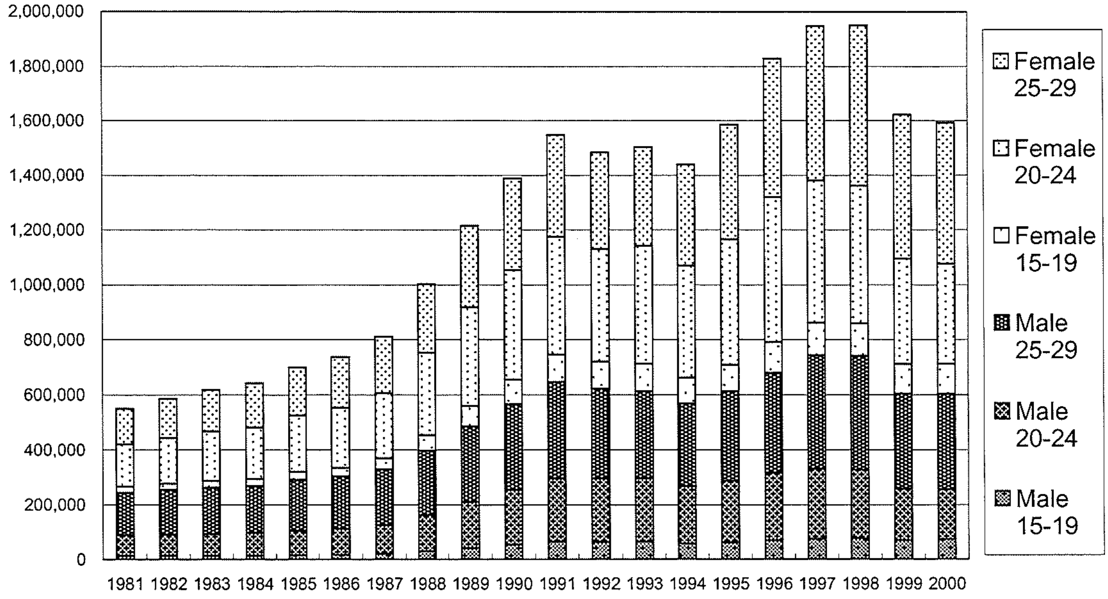
[53] While I was recruiting young Japanese in front of the U.S. embassy and in the British Council in Tokyo, the majority of young visitors were female. Therefore, the majority of the sample of this study also became young women.

Figure 4.2

Japanese Who Went To the United States 1981-2000 (Age 15-29)



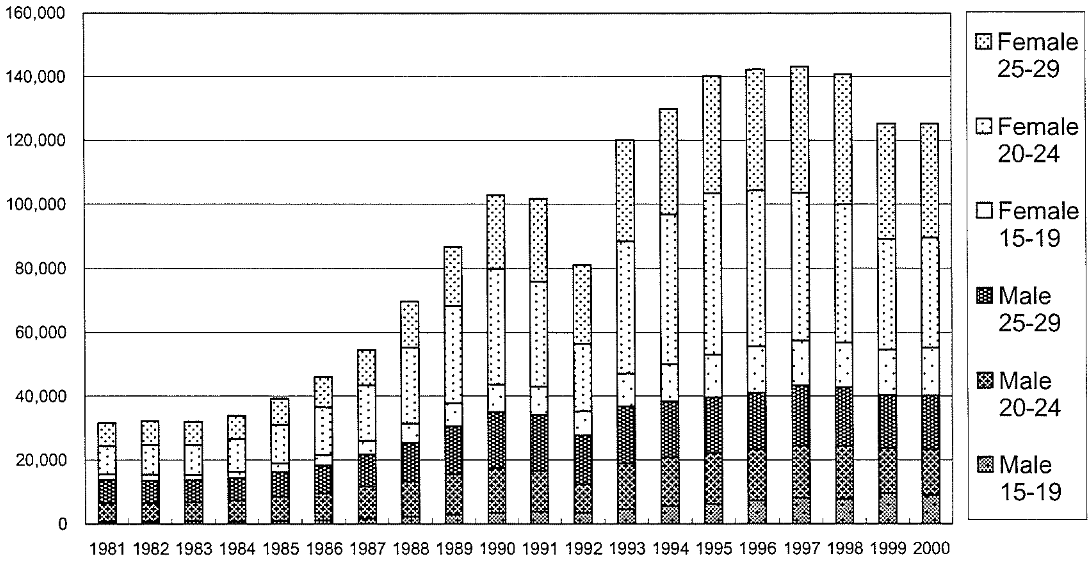
Source: Based on the Ministry of Justice of Japan, *Shutsunyūkoku kanri tōkei*, 1982-2001.

Students of this college can find jobs in companies 'around us'. That is, top-ranking companies. My friends say they cannot find good jobs, but they can find positions at least in Fujitsu or Panasonic. When my friends aren't satisfied with the positions they have found, they wait until the following year and find a good job after all. ... In my opinion, if they [young people who migrate to the Western cities for the purpose of cultural production] really want to be successful and think about it seriously, they should rise in Japan first and then challenge themselves in foreign countries. I think they just want to go abroad. (Naoki, male college student who wants to be a teacher in a private high school, age 23)

I think that not all foreign things are useful in Japan, as long as I live in Japanese society, in Japanese culture. Studying abroad is good, but we need to know much about Japan. We have our own way. ...After all, young people who have excellent educational backgrounds can manage things very well in Japan. An old classmate in my junior high school flew somewhere overseas as the entrance examination for college in Japan was too difficult for her. She was not

Figure 4.3

Japanese Who Went to the United Kingdom 1981-2000
(Age 15-29)



Source: Based on the Ministry of Justice of Japan, *Shutsunyūkoku kanri tōkei*, 1982-2001.

> a good student. Her parents seemed happy because they thought their child was studying abroad. They thought it was the same as a good educational background. They bragged, like, my daughter is studying abroad. (Kyoko, female student who wants to be a psychologist, age 22)

Other young people, who engage in cultural production in Japan and are in their early 20s, also feel that they had better pursue their careers in Japan:

> I've worked for this company for only eleven months. I want to keep this job. If I can find a job in a foreign country and I'm sure I can earn money, I would want to go to work abroad. (Asami, female salesperson of a boutique, age 23)

> I didn't study abroad probably because I thought I had better pursue my career in Japan. I want to go abroad for my work in the future, but it seems difficult to start from scratch in a foreign country. (Yuka, female freelance illustrator, age 24)

Thus, those who have recognised that they have few prospects in Japan are more likely to plan to emigrate from Japan, while those who have bright prospects or still have some opportunities in Japan are more likely to pursue their careers in their homeland. It is important to note, however, that this 'push' factor explains only part of the migration process. As described above, some people plan to emigrate from Japan for cultural reasons, even when they have good prospects in Japan.

Family Relationships

Another 'push' factor is family relationships. In spite of the fact that their incomes are low and their demographic has a high unemployment rate, young Japanese generally enjoy an affluent lifestyle (Yamada, 1998; 1999). This is precisely because they can depend economically on their parents. Owing to the boom of the Japanese economy after the Second World War, the average salary of Japanese males continuously rose between 1975 and 1995 (Miyamoto, 2002). The respondents' fathers, who started working between the 1970s and 1980s, enjoyed these increasing salaries as well as the stable corporate seniority system, and gathered considerable savings, the average amount of which is estimated as the largest in the world. In the Japanese employment system, which is changing these days, their fathers' generation continues to enjoy 'vested rights' (Genda, 2001:63) both in increasing salaries and in the corporate seniority system, while young people suffer from a relatively high unemployment rate and low salaries. As a result, the differences in wages and in savings between parents and their children have become considerable (Miyamoto et al., 1997; Yamada, 1999; Genda, 2001).

Thus, there has been a conspicuous increase in the numbers of unmarried men and women living with their parents.[54] It is said that about 70 % of people in their 20s live with their parents. Because 'mutual support' is a distinct characteristic of the family system in Japan (which is similar to those in southern European countries such as Italy), parents tend to support their children even after they have reached their 20s or 30s (Miyamoto, 2002). In any event, the 'for the children's sake' ideology ensures their offspring a good quality of life (Miyamoto et al., 1997:81-9). According to the results of a survey conducted near Tokyo, 80% of the interviewees between age 25 and 39 who lived with their parents considered living with their parents 'comfortable' because they 'do not have to feel loneliness', they 'do not have to pay much living expenses', and 'mothers cook and wash for them'.[55] However, at the same time, 50% of them felt they 'want to be left alone sometimes' (Miyamoto, 2002:26). Some female respondents explained why they want to be independent from their families:

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[54] The ratio of single people is rising particularly sharply among the 25 -35 age groups. Whereas in

> I want to live by myself. If I stay in Japan, I have my friends and family. I depend on them. So I've decided to do what I can in New York City. (Mayumi, female office worker migrating to New York City, age 25)

> Another reason for studying abroad is that I want to be away from my family. I have always been too close to them. I feel as if this relationship would continue forever. ... It is good to discuss things with my parents sometimes. But I have had no chance to decide things by myself. I want to know how much I can do when I am alone. (Kumiko, female layout designer migrating to London, age 25)

Moreover, views of romantic love have changed: socialising between unmarried men and women has become less restricted, and today it is common that young people in Japan have sexual relationships outside of marriage. The high unemployment rate and low salary, as well as a comfortable life with parents and changes in romantic

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1975 the ratio of single people in the 25-35 age group was 48.3% in the case of men and 20.9% women, by 1995 the ratios had risen to 66.9% and 48.0%, respectively.

[55] Unmarried men and women living with their parents hardly do any housework at all; if they have an income, they only pay around 10% to 20% of it to their parents for living expenses, and they are free to use the rest as disposable income (Yamada, 1998:36).

relationships, have emerged as some of the causes of the declining number of marriages in Japan. Consequently, there is a growing tendency for economically weak men and women who hope to keep a high standard of living, to remain unmarried (Yamada, 1998:33-5). Some young women also talked about the reason why they prefer going abroad to getting married in Japan:

> I may be happy if I continue to work as a part-time office worker and then quit the job when I find someone to marry. I have seriously considered this way of life. But I want to learn English and want to live abroad. (Mayumi, female office worker migrating to New York City, age 25)

> My parents tell me to marry as soon as I can. I am the only girl in my family and I've reached a marriageable age. If I live in a foreign country for three years, I'll be over the age of 30. So they are telling me I won't be able to get married then. But I don't have a strong desire for marriage. Few of my friends have gotten married yet. Some are working, and others are studying. I have no reason to rush into marriage. Maybe there is a difference of attitude between my parents' generation and my generation. I'm not thinking that I will never marry, though. (Sayaka, female college assistant migrating to London, age 27)

As seen in these narratives, many of the young Japanese interviewed feel that they have reached 'a dead end' in Japanese society, as they cannot see a bright future for their careers and marriage prospects. They can enjoy an affluent lifestyle by depending on their parents, but they are dissatisfied with their life, in which they find it difficult to take on interesting full-time jobs or start an independent life with a partner. They therefore have begun to search for a way to escape from their environment and to find a new place where they can lead a more fulfilling life. Emigration often emerges as an option. As most of the young people said that their parents financially support them while living abroad, economically, migration is not difficult for them.

4.2.2 'Pull' Factors

American Popular Culture/ European High Culture

The first and foremost 'pull' factor is the cultural opportunities in New York City and London. All of the twenty-two young Japanese consider New York City or London to be the most suitable and attractive place to engage in cultural production, because these cities are the birthplaces of a variety of arts and popular culture and there are many educational institutions for the arts. They also expect that there might be working opportunities in the cultural industries in these cities.

The New York group and the London group have different types of plans to engage in cultural production. Those in the New York group plan to engage in jazz, house, and hip hop dance, pop arts, hairstyling and makeup. In this group, while Fumiko aims to receive a master's degree in graphic arts, others plan to go to dance school and have auditions, or to bring their drawings to galleries by themselves. All of the young people migrating to New York City are interested in American 'popular culture'. Most have long wanted to live in New York City, while some have considered going to Los Angeles as another option. Yet all hope to migrate exclusively to the United States.

By contrast, the majority in the London group plan to engage in the field of graphic arts, fashion, drama arts, architecture, piano, and photography in an academic context. Nine aim to receive a certificate, diploma, or B.A. or M.A, while three have a goal to make cultural products and present them somewhere outside educational institutions. Overall, all are interested in European 'high culture'. For them, migration to London was one of many options. Some first considered migrating to somewhere in Europe, while others considered going to the United States. Hence, while some people in this group have been interested in British culture, others chose to migrate to London after evaluating which destination matches their interests and future careers.

The English Language

Another 'pull' factor is the English language. Most of the young Japanese interviewed are eager to acquire skills in speaking English, regardless of whether or not they indeed seriously study English. They have decided to go to New York City or London, partly because they seek opportunities for speaking English. Many of those who plan to migrate to London once considered other options, such as going to France, Germany, or Italy, but finally decided to go to London because they can learn English there.

This enthusiasm for learning English is not peculiar to these young Japanese, but reflects domestic situations in Japan. English classes are required from junior high school in Japan (generally American English), but learning English beyond compulsory education is popular among Japanese people as well. It is estimated that more than 600,000 people attend English language schools and the English language industry had become a JPN¥670 billion [about US$600 billion] industry in 2003. Furthermore, a large number of Japanese take English qualification examinations every year.[56] Meanwhile, there is a backlash against this trend, and intellectuals argue that speaking English is not simply internationalisation but Americanisation and leads to the domination of English speaking nations (Hasegawa, 2002; Tsuda, 1991). In this context, some critics maintain that it is necessary to internationally promote the use of the Japanese language (Hasegawa, 2002). However, on the whole, a large number of Japanese are eager to achieve English proficiency and my respondents follow this popular pattern of learning English.

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[56] Among the examiners of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Computer Based Test (CBT), those whose mother tongue is Japanese are the largest group (60,114), Korean are the second (52,506), and Chinese are the third (45,355) in 2000-2001. However, the overall English skill of Japanese is relatively poor: as to TOEFL, the average score of Japanese examinees has always ranked below the fourth from the bottom among all participant countries since the early 1990s (Hasegawa, 2002).

4.2.3 The Establishment of Migration Systems

As more and more young Japanese have been going abroad for the purpose of cultural production in the past decade, commercial and public organisations have established the migration systems and have provided them with a variety of channels to migrate to Europe and North America. The first type of organisation is the travel agency. Conventionally, Japanese travel agencies sell short- and long-term foreign tours through which participants can study at English language schools in the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. In recent years, however, many Japanese travel agencies, including the top three companies, Japan Travel Bureau (JTB), Kinki Tourist, and Nihon Ryokou, have begun to sell short- or long-term foreign tours through which participants can study both language and arts and culture in Western countries. For instance, Kinki Tourist sells 'Learning Italian plus Fine Arts' (in Rome or Florence), 'Learning Spanish plus Flamenco' (in Madrid) and 'Learning English plus Aromatherapy' (in Sydney) and so on.[57]

The second type is the vocational school. Many vocational schools, such as dance, fashion design, hairstyling and makeup, and vocal schools, incorporate study abroad programmes into their courses. Students in these schools can attend affiliate schools in New York City, Los Angeles, Paris, or London, after finishing courses in Japan.

The third type is the prep school. Some educational companies opened art courses in cramming schools in Tokyo that help students to enter art colleges in Britain and in the United States. These courses help students improve their English skills, produce portfolios, and write essays. Likewise, a prep school named Bunsai Art College invites staffs from Central Saint College of Art and Design in London and other art colleges in

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[57] There are some small travel agencies that specialise in *Art Ryūgaku* (studying arts abroad). For example, J-New York sells exclusively cultural tours to New York City, London, Paris, or other foreign cities, such as 'Dance with English (New York, L.A., or London)', 'Vocal Lessons in New York', or 'Experience in Paris', with the advertisement slogan, 'You can learn a foreign language as well as dance, singing, makeup, fashion, or design at the same time!'

Britain. They give lectures, evaluate portfolios, and conduct interviews and help students enter foundation courses in these art colleges.

The fourth type consists of governmental organisations. The British Council and Japan-United States Educational Commission put advertisements in fashion magazines and information on their official websites to promote study in Britain and in the United States. These organisations have libraries and computer facilities where anyone can read books and gather information on how to study abroad and provide college prospectuses for free. They often hold lectures that give instruction on how to apply for various programmes, how to get a visa, how to study, and how to generally get by in these countries. The British Council also has an English school.

Most respondents have used at least one of the above organisations to migrate to New York City or London. This is partly because at first they did not know how to gather information about English language schools, vocational schools, and colleges in their destination as well as about visas. But, after they got to know how to get applications, many still did not arrange things by themselves because they could not fully understand the contents of visa applications written in English, or could not negotiate with English speakers overseas on the phone. As long as they utilised those organisations and, in most cases, paid for it, Japanese staffs arranged their plans and prepared materials for them and they did not have to write and speak in English. Thus the migration systems function to a great extent.

From the fact that 'push' and 'pull' factors and the migration systems are working in young Japanese migration, it follows that particular cultural-ideological links, which connect Japan and the United States or Britain, have already been established. This interconnection seems to have prompted these young Japanese to perceive immigration to New York City or London for the cultural purposes as both meaningful to their lives and as available to them.

4.3 Cultural-Ideological Links: the Image of the West

4.3.1 The Two Ideas of 'the West'

Modernisation, Americanisation, and Globalisation

Historically, Japan has experienced two important periods regarding influences of Western culture. The first period began when Japan opened its doors to trade and contact with the outside world in 1854. The Meiji government sent scholars and leaders to Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. The idea was to learn as much as possible about Western agriculture, industry, education, banking, trade, government, arts, and the routines of everyday life, and to return home with knowledge that would enable Japan to grow strong. In addition, there were many unofficial trips, as travel to Western countries became a rite of passage for the Meiji elite (Tobin, 1992:12-3).

The second period follows Japan's defeat in the Second World War and the arrival of General MacArthur. Since then, the United States has had a great influence on the Japanese at large and has had a closer political, economical, and cultural relationship with Japan than any other foreign country. According to Shunsuke Tsurumi, during the U.S. Occupation, people daily witnessed the gestures of Americans in the streets, at least in the big cities where U.S. soldiers were stationed. They set models for the exchange of gestures between boys and girls. Tsurumi argues that the shift to these new values was felt to be a necessity which had to be accepted. But the idea that the new values were the only universally acceptable ones, as the Occupation seemed to assert, was something the Japanese could not readily accept, although they did not openly criticise them (Tsurumi, 1987:1-12).

As Shunya Yoshimi argues, American military facilities that once existed in Tokyo had a great influence on Japanese youth culture.[58] During the late 1950s, two 'Americas' had begun to appear. On the one hand, as it had been born on the American bases and in the military recreation facilities in Ginza, Roppongi, and Harajuku, there was an 'America' that was an object of consumption, whether through material goods or as media images. This 'America' gradually lost its associations with military violence. On the other hand, there was also an 'America' that came from Yokosuka and Okinawa and figuratively embodied violence. It became the object of anti-base protest. At about the time Japan entered the era of high economic growth in the late 1950s, a fault line opened up between the two 'Americas'. The 'America' embodied in such places as Ginza, Roppongi, and Harajuku, and the 'America' of Yokosuka and Okinawa came to seem like entirely unrelated entities. The former 'America' came to be understood as if it had existed from the very beginning entirely at the level of consumer culture. With the latter 'America', however, this positive cultural dimension of fashionable consumerism and affluence was erased from the picture, and overwhelming attention was drawn to the problems of pollution, violence, and prostitution emanating from the bases. America ceased to be a matter of direct and concrete daily experience after the American military withdrew from urban areas, and 'America' became less direct and more mediated. But the images of 'America' continued to affect people's consciousness (Yoshimi, 2003:438-44).

During the 1950s and 1960s, the mediated images of 'America' had been conveyed by television broadcasting, which commenced in 1953. In the early period, programming was filled by American Westerns, detective stories, and situation comedies – for example, 22 American programmes were broadcast in 1957, and the figure increased to 54 in 1963. Among the twenty top-rated television programmes of August of 1962, to take a specific instance, five were American programmes: *Ben Casey* (50.0%), *Lassie* (35.6%), *Disneyland* (32.2%), *Little Rascals* (29.9%) and *M-Squad* (27.5%) (Abe, 1970).

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[58] In the case of Roppongi in central Tokyo, military headquarters, barracks, and housing for military personnel were not returned to Japan until around 1960, and thus had remained under the influence of the American military throughout 1950s. TV personnel, Rockabilly singers and their associates began gathering in Roppongi, and the area gradually developed its present image as a place for fashionable and colonial-style nightlife. Likewise, the development of Harajuku into a young people's fashion town cannot be explained without reference to 'Washington Heights', which was once a residential facility for American officers. The place became a symbol of 'American affluence' appearing suddenly like a mirage amid the surrounding burnt out ruins, barracks, and black markets. In the 1950s, shops targeted at officer's families came to line the streets in the area (Yoshimi, 2003:438-41).

The generation of the parents of the respondents spent their childhoods and youths in the early postwar period. Therefore it seems that 'America' as an idea and as a material reality had a great influence on them. Nowadays images of the United States continue to be influential in Japan. The majority of respondents say that they hear about 'America' more frequently than any other foreign country through the media and by word of mouth. The United States, however, does not seem the only and/or foremost interests for many of them:

> I have a lot of interest in South Korea, as well as America. Once I considered living in the country. I often watch Korean films. (Mayumi, female office worker migrating to New York City, age 25)

> I've been interested in Britain. For me, America is not a foreign country, but something different. Maybe I don't like the country. American is like a religion. It's scary. Of course, before I became interested in UK rock, when talking of a foreign country, I used to recall America. (Kumiko, female layout designer migrating to London, age 25)

Their interests are diversified partly because 'America' has been internalised into Japanese culture and society. As Yoshimi argues, after the 1970s, 'America' ceased to be the object of admiration and resentment. By this time, Japanese people had appropriated American culture to a great extent and had transformed their view of 'America'. As a consequence, 'America' lost its distinctiveness as a symbol of admiration and has become part of everyday life in Japan (Yoshimi, 1996:201).

What is more, the new media systems launched in the 1990s have allowed young people to access information and images from various foreign countries other than the United States. In recent times, while American programmes were rarely broadcast in primetime on Japanese terrestrial broadcasting (Hagiwara, 1995; Kawatake et al., 1996), multi-channel systems with American, Asian, European, and other foreign programmes were commenced, and the penetration rate of video in households reached 98% (MPHPT, 2003). The penetration rate of the Internet in the population also reached 61 % and more than 90% of Japanese in their 10s and 20s were Internet users in 2004 (MPHPT, 2005). Advanced means of transportation have enabled them to visit various foreign countries. In 1981, 50% of young people (age 15-29) who departed from Japan went to the United States, but in 2000, only 33% went to the United States, while others went to a variety of countries. Similarly, in 1980, 63% of Japanese people who went abroad for the purpose of study left for the United States, while 7% went to Britain; in 2000, however, only 44% went to the United States, while 14% went to Britain (see Figure 2.2 on p.64) (MOJ, 1981;2001).

'The Classical West' and 'the Contemporary West'

Under these conditions, the twenty-two young Japanese conceive two major ideas of 'the West'. Originally, in the Japanese language, there are two types of words closest to the English phrase, 'the West'. One is *ōbei,* whose Chinese character, *ō* represents 'Europe" and *bei* represents 'America'. The other is *seiyō,*[59] whose Chinese character *sei* represents 'west' and *yō* represents 'ocean'. Both words are usually translated into

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[59] In addition, there is another word *seiō,* which can be translated into the English word, the West. The Chinese character *sei* represents 'west' and ō represents 'Europe' (*sei-ō* or west-Europe). I did not ask my respondents about the meaning of this word, because this word is very similar to *seiyō* in terms of pronunciation and usage, and these two are sometimes interchangeable. In addition, these days, *sei-yō* (west-ocean) is more widely used in mass media and academic texts as a word signifying the West than *sei-ō* (west-Europe).

'the West'. Most respondents consider that *ō-bei* (or Europe-America) means the United States, and to a lesser extent, Europe; *sei-yō* (or west-ocean) corresponds to Europe or West Europe, which is particularly symbolised by France. Some respondents also say that *ōbei* or *seiyō* is the place where white people live. More than half of the respondents, however, say that they have seldom carefully thought about where the West is and have only a vague idea of it:

> Actually, I've never thought about it [what the West means]. *Seiyō* is opposite to the East, isn't it? Well, it's white. Where is *ōbei*? My impression of *ōbei* is not white. *Seiyō* is medieval. *Ōbei* is contemporary. (Yoko, female part-time worker migrating to New York City, age 27)

> *Ōbei* is America. I think we know more about America than other foreign countries. I feel America is the most similar to Japan. *Seiyō* is Europe, somehow, France. Britain is not sophisticated enough. France is more sophisticated. (Rie, female office worker migrating to New York City, age 27)

> *Seiyō* is Europe. I have only a vague idea of it. I don't think we use the word so often. *Ōbei* is Europe and America. (Makoto, male graphic designer migrating to New York City, age 29)

> From *seiyō*, I recall Michelangelo's oil paintings. It's Western Europe, inland, from Belgium to Austria. When it comes to *ōbei*, I think of America. Maybe we don't use the word *seiyō* often. News media usually use the word *ōbei*. In that case, it is usually about America. *Seiyō* is related to Western art history or Western cuisine. (Kumiko, female layout designer migrating to London, age 25)

These young people tend to think *ōbei*, which corresponds to America and, to a lesser extent, Europe, is 'now', 'contemporary', and 'popular'. In contrast, they tend to think of *seiyō*, which connotes Europe, and most especially France, as 'cultural' and 'classical'. The latter seems to be because *seiyō* is often seen in textbooks in the field of arts and history. For example, they remember the words, 'Western art history', 'Western cuisine', 'the history of Western clothes', and 'Western medicine'. According to those who mentioned France, French culture was often introduced in art or history classes in school. Thus, for them, at least two ideas of 'the West' exist. As each respondent has a slightly different idea about where the West is, it is difficult to define the borders of the West in their mental geographies.

This point becomes clearer when we look at their mental maps (see Appendix 3). Before migration, all respondents were asked to draw a world map and write place names on it. They drew a variety of world maps consisting of unique shapes of continents and national boundaries, which show some significant patterns. Firstly, all of them put Japan at the centre of the world, just as Japan is at the centre on many maps of the world printed in Japan. Moreover, on their world maps, Japan tends to be larger than Japan is on the Mercator projection or azimuthal equidistant projection world maps. So Japan is both at the centre, and 'large', in their own mental geographies. Secondly, some people, especially those in the New York group, put Japan much closer to the United States (see Mental Map 2, 3, 4, 7), compared to regular world maps. Atsushi even put New York City on the west of the North American continent (see Mental Map 1). As mentioned earlier, many of these young Japanese said that they heard about America most frequently in their everyday lives in Japan, and it seems that they also imagine Japan as literally very close to America, geographically. Thirdly, they tended to focus on the West far more than the rest of the world: that is, all respondents drew either the North American continent or the United States; nearly all respondents drew either Europe or European countries; however, most respondents omitted the Middle East; and about one fourth of the respondents omitted Asia and Africa. In their mental geographies, therefore, the West is very significant, whereas 'the Third World' is often forgotten. One good example is

Mihoko's map, which places Japan between Europe and the United States (see Mental Map 19).

However, when asked, 'Do you think Japan is part of the West?', no one noted that Japan was included in the West. Instead, most of the young Japanese said that Japan was part of Asia because Japan and Asia were similar in terms of 'appearances' 'culture' 'race' 'mentality' or 'geography'. This is probably because they are influenced by Japan's new 'Asian' identity widely diffused in the 1990s.[60] Nonetheless, many respondents have a great sense of affinity to 'America' and assume that their everyday life in America will be almost the same as their everyday life in Japan. Some people even emphasise that they do not long for 'America' but they long for '*living in* America':

> I think life in America is the same as life in Japan. I don't admire America. But I long to live abroad. My image of America is that people lead lively, fulfilling lives, so I think it's better for me to live in such a place. (Nana, female salesperson migrating to New York City, age 20)

> I think Japan isn't so different from America. For instance, there are many Japanese players in the American professional sporting world these days. I feel familiar with America. Of course, I guess it's not totally the same. (Atsushi, male hairdresser migrating to New York City, age 25)

> When I travelled to New York City, I found people live in the same way as people in Japan. In fact, I could have guessed that before going to New York City. …In the morning, they get on a train. On the weekend, they go to the cinema. I didn't find much cultural difference. (Makoto, male graphic designer

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[60] According to Koichi Iwabuchi, in the 1990s, the rise of global Asian economic power has pushed Japan to once again stress its 'Asian' identity, as Japan could not neglect Asia as a vital market for its products. Then, the question of how to 'return' to Asia has re-emerged as an important and economic and political issue for Japan. Economic motives for the return to Asia have often been disguised with nostalgic racial and/or cultural justifications. For example, the president of Fuji Xerox claimed: 'Just as Gorbachev once declared that Russia's home was in Europe, so it is only natural for us to say that Japan's home is in Asia, not in the United States or Europe'. (Iwabuchi, 2002:12-3).

> migrating to New York City, age 29)

> I think few [Japanese] people admire America or Britain. Rather, they admire a person like me who can go abroad. I mean, they admire people who actually carry out living abroad but don't admire America itself. Many people don't have the courage to live abroad. One of my friends says he's satisfied only with travelling to Osaka [in Japan]. My best friends are like that. (Toru, male salesperson migrating to New York City, age 25)

By contrast, the young people planning to migrate to London tend to consider *seiyō* to be the most eminent in terms of art and culture. However, when it comes to their everyday life in Europe, they also assume that it will be the same as their everyday life in Japan:

> In London, I want to lead a 'normal' life that is similar to my life in Tokyo, meeting a lot of people, going out to have fun, or working as a graphic designer. … I think Western art, for example, Italian art or French Art, is supreme. (Wakana, female graphic designer migrating to London, age 26)

> When I travelled to New York City, I found that Americans lead a simpler life than I had expected. The city wasn't as clean as cities in Japan. They eat fewer dishes than Japanese people. Maybe each person has one's own eating habits, but in Japan we usually have a set meal but they eat only soup. … I think Japan has become *seiyō-ka* [or 'westernised'] more than America [her definition of *seiyō* is Western Europe, especially France]. Japan imitates *seiyō* too much. America is idealised in Japan. (Natsuko, female office worker migrating to London, age 23)

On the one hand, many respondents have a great sense of affinity to 'America'; on the other hand, some respondents, especially those who plan to migrate to London, consider European art and culture to be the most eminent and Europe to be mentally a little far from themselves. However, as to their everyday life in the United States or

Europe, many respondents expect that it will be almost the same as their everyday life in Japan.

In Nicola Mai's study of young Albanian migration to Italy, as noted in Chapter 1, his interviewees, especially younger ones, tend to consider the possibility of leading a 'modern' lifestyle, which is often associated with 'to go out at night', 'to be completely independent from parents and general opinion', 'to be emancipated from a conservative mentality', and, most of all, 'to live together with their partner without marrying', as key factors in the development of their migratory project (Mai, 2001: 258-9).

In the case of the young Japanese in my study, 'to be independent from parents' is also one of their reasons for migration. Nevertheless, none of them referred to a 'modern' lifestyle, when they talked about their migration plans. For one reason, the modernisation of Japan began in the late nineteenth century, and the country has long since developed its own sense of a 'modern' lifestyle. Consequently, Japanese people today seldom talk about ambitions for a 'modern' lifestyle, since this has long been a 'normal' lifestyle for them. Another reason may be that although family life is still regarded as important, nowadays young Japanese have much freedom and they are usually allowed to go out at night or to have relationships based on romantic love.

Furthermore, it is important to note that these young Japanese rarely regard the West as the place of 'progress'. When Tarik Sabry asked his respondents the same question in his focus group interviews, young middle-class Moroccans regarded it as 'Europe', (e.g., France, London, or Spain), or 'the United States'. In so doing, they associated the West with 'superiority', 'progress', 'development' and 'safety' (Sabry, 2003:163-74). By contrast, none of my respondents particularly associated the latter ideas with their image of the West.

Clearly, these young Japanese do not migrate in search of a 'modern' lifestyle or 'progress' in a general term, which is among the important migration-inducing factors in the cases of young Albanians and Moroccans. If this is true, what has led them to carry out their migratory projects to New York City and London? In order to answer this question, their image of each destination city should be examined.

4.3.2 The Image of New York City

Most of the young people migrating to New York City have long had a great interest in American popular culture and have had much access to images of the city conveyed by American television programmes and movies as well as by Japanese television programmes, magazines, and websites. Subsequently many of them actually travelled to New York City. Significantly, those who have visited the city have quite a positive image of it:

> I think New York City is exciting. Everything is expensive in the city. People who love New York City go to the city. ...When I have travelled there for the first time, I felt it was like a dream, as I was standing in the birthplace of hip hop, I was standing in the place which I have seen on MTV. (Mayumi, female office worker, age 25)

> I often watched American television programmes. *Beverly Hills 90210, Full House, Ally McBeal.* I've watched American programmes since I was in junior high school. I've been interested in America for a long time. I don't know why. As for movies, I only watch American ones. I like *Soul Food.* I love black culture. ... I spent two weeks in New York City. I had expected so much. My friends told me I shouldn't expect so much because I would be disappointed. But New York City was exactly what I had expected! (Haruka, female dance school student, age 22)

> My image of New York City is urban and stylish. I've read a [Japanese] magazine that had a feature article about Soho. I had watched [an American television drama] *Beverly Hills* sometimes. ...I travelled to Canada and New

> York City and stayed for five days six years ago. I actually went to Soho that I had read about. I had a lot of good impressions, so I felt I want to live there. Maybe I saw only good parts of the city as I went for sightseeing. (Rie, female office worker, age 27)

> I sometimes read newspaper articles about New York City. I also read books on how to travel or how to live in New York City. ...I like BET [Black Entertainment Television] very much. I often visit their website on the Internet. I can't understand English well, so I just see images. I like Missy Elliot [a female rapper]. ...New York City was beautiful and fun. People looked lively. ...When I went to see a Broadway musical, I thought it was as great as I had expected. I went only for sightseeing, but I was so moved. (Nana, female salesperson, age 20)

A few respondents have never been to New York City. Yet they also come to hold a particular image of the city mainly through the media. As Toru says:

> I imagine people wear long coats [in New York City]. They are eating Macdonald's hamburgers. There are many galleries. There is the Empire State Building. ... I sometimes read travel books. I've read art books in the library. I have seen *Basquiat* and *Taxi Driver*. They are so impressive. I sometimes watch CNN. (Toru, male salesperson, age 25)

When asked 'Do you think speaking English is cool?', almost all respondents migrating to New York City said, 'Yes'. Most people emphasised that they had always wanted to be able to speak English in order to communicate with foreigners:

> I hated English until my last year in high school. But I got to like it after I had travelled abroad for the first time...If I could speak English, I could talk with many people. I think it would be so good if I could speak English. To learn both English and dance, the only option is to go to New York City.... I think speaking English is cool. English is a common international language. I think English is the first. Chinese and French come after that. (Nana, female salesperson, age 20)

> I have thought speaking English is cool since I was a kid. When I was working for a hair salon, a foreigner asked me for directions. I couldn't understand what he was talking about. I just heard the world, *subway*. So I told him how to get to a Subway sandwich shop as I didn't know what subway meant at that time. I regretted not understanding what the foreigner said. … As English is a common international language, it is best to be able to speak English. If I could use English, I could talk with people even when I go to France. (Atsushi, male hairdresser, age 25)

Thus these young people tend to believe that New York City is 'urban', 'stylish', 'beautiful', 'fun', 'lively', and 'exciting' and that speaking English and communicating with foreigners is 'cool'. Because they have been exposed to American television programmes, movies, and music, it can be inferred that American popular culture, as well as their travel experiences, have affected their image of New York City and their interests in cultural production and learning English in the city. Hence we might assume that 'America' is still an object of admiration positively charging their desires to migrate. However, according to their accounts, it turned out that 'admiration' is not a reason for migration. Most importantly, all young people in this group take an interest in the so-called American dream and emphasise that New York City is the place where everyone can have a chance at *success*:

> I want to know the limits of my ability in New York City. I went to sightsee the first time, and went to attend a language school the second time. This time, I will go to New York City to learn what I can do. … In New York City, I feel at ease. I have led an easy life in Japan without making any efforts. When I was in my early 20s, I worked as an *OL* and spent all my money on having fun. Then I realised I had nothing. …I have always dreamed of New York City, dreamed of America. (Mayumi, female office worker, age 25)

> I plan to stay in New York City for a year. But to be honest, I want to stay for five years… Actually, I want to stay in New York City until I'm successful,

> until I make it. ... If I stay in Japan, I always simply follow fashion. I just spend money on clothes. It's useless. (Haruka, female dance school student, age 23)
>
> This time, I will train myself in New York City. Everyone says you will just have fun, though. I want to know if I can rise in the world. ... I want to stay until I am satisfied with myself. (Nana, female salesperson, age 20)
>
> I want people in New York City to evaluate my works of art. ...I want a challenge [=*charenji*], I want to know the limitations of my abilities. (Makoto, male graphic designer, age 29)
>
> I am going to New York City to fight. As a means, I'll bring my drawings. ...I want to change myself. ...I will go to the gallery that found Basquiat. I will first fight there. Since I was working as a salesperson, I can sell my drawings. ... I want to be a well-known figure. (Toru, male salesperson, age 25)

As discussed earlier, most of the young Japanese migrating to the New York City have recognised that they have few prospects in their careers in Japan, although they could still live an affluent lifestyle, depending on their parents. In the meantime, they have been much exposed to American popular culture, as well as to images of New York City conveyed by Japanese media. This has led them to perceive that there are many stories of success in New York City, and to start planning to migrate to the city. These young people expect to start their lives over and to create a more fulfilling life in a new place.

It should be noted that their idea of making a success is not the same as the old American dream, or the desire to enjoy an economically better life held by the past Japanese migrants to New York City at the turn of the nineteenth century (see pp.61-2). As Japan has achieved economic development, Japanese people's basic values and goals have shifted from giving top priority to economic growth, to placing increasing emphasis on the quality of life. According to Takatoshi Imada, statistics show that many people in Japan indeed have begun to attach importance not only to 'having', or occupation, income, and education, but also to 'being' or identities and lifestyles since the 1980s (Imada, 2000:7-9). Today, many young Japanese who can financially depend on their parents, including my respondents in the New York group, tend to think that it is more meaningful to become successful in the field of art or popular culture and identify themselves as 'cool' people than to work as *sarariman* (company employees) or *OL* ('office ladies') only for the purpose of getting a stable income. If there are few opportunities for them to create such a fulfilling life in Tokyo, they often plan to migrate to New York City, which appears to provide them with more opportunities. This is why some of them emphasised that they do not long for 'America' but they long for '*living in* America'.

Furthermore, it is significant that many of these young Japanese can imagine their lives in New York City with remarkable concreteness:

> I imagine my life in New York City, by watching movies, which were shot in the city, or reading travel books. Like, I eat here, shop there, in such a place... But, to be honest, I'm not very sure about it. I'm anxious that reality might be different from what I am expecting. ...My ideal life is, I concentrate on classes during weekdays and I go to museums and galleries and have parties with friends on weekends. I want to lead a fulfilling life. (Fumiko, female office worker, age 26)

> I imagine my life in New York City very often. I'm going to do exercise and build up my muscles. I'll cook by myself. I think about where to buy a rice cooker. I'm going to save money. I have to take two lessons everyday. After that, I won't be able to move. I want to live near the dance studio, but it's expensive. So maybe I'll live in Brooklyn, as my friend said there are nice clubs there. But I've never been out there. (Nana, female salesperson, age 20)

> I imagine it often. It's so fun. Mostly, I get angry, I'm laughing with my boss in a gallery, with my roommate in my apartment. I talk a lot. There are some specific people in my imagination. I have some characters in my mind. Of course, it'll be different from reality [after migration]. (Toru, male salesperson, age 25)

It seems that the media enable them to portray where they will live, what kind of people they will meet, and how they will spend their everyday lives in their destination in detail. Perhaps, this is one of the main reasons why they feel 'familiar' with life in New York City, even though they have never lived there.

Thus, their meaning of migration to New York City lies in starting a 'normal' life afresh in a new place, which appears to be the most *similar* to Tokyo while also providing them with opportunities be successful, opportunities which are no longer available to them in their homeland. It is mainly the media, such as American television programmes and movies and Japanese television programmes, books, and websites, that have led them to hold the image of New York City where people will be able to have such opportunities and also participate in popular culture that seems 'stylish', 'beautiful', 'lively', and 'fun', and to speak 'cool' English.

4.3.3 The Image of London

The London group has different patterns of media exposure and attitudes towards their destination, compared to the New York group. In this group, some people have been interested in British popular culture, and have had access to images and information about London conveyed by British and Japanese media. However, other people have had little interest and access to these. As for travel experience, more than half of this group had visited the city beforehand. And many of them commonly have a mixture of positive, neutral, and negative images of their destination, such as 'cool', 'sophisticated', 'new', 'historical', 'dark', 'cold', 'lazy' and 'dangerous'. As those who have travelled to the city note:

> I had often read [a Japanese fashion magazine] *Street Fashion* and I had expected there should be many stylish people in London. But I didn't see many stylish people. It was the most surprising thing. London was smaller than I had expected. Buildings looked so old. As I had thought Europe was like that, it was not surprising. ...I had watched [a Japanese television programme] *Beat UK*. I think recently we are getting more information about Britain than before in Japan. But it might be because I'm more interested in Britain than before. I have watched Jamie Oliver's show on CATV. I've read many feature articles about London in [Japanese] magazines. (Kumiko, female layout designer, age 25)

> Actually, I began to pay attention to British things only after I decided to study in London. Before that, I had known little about Britain. ...My image of London is the Beatles, Oasis. Britain had a lot of colonies and America became superior in the twentieth century. It's rainy and dark in London. It's historical. ...When I travelled to London, I found the city was smaller than I had expected. It was not so cold. Hotel workers were so lazy. As I had not expected much, I was not disappointed. ...Recently I watched Japanese television programmes about Harry Potter and The Lord of the Rings. (Yayoi, female part-time worker, age 19)

> My image of London is that it's cool. When I travelled to London, I took pictures every night. Lighting in the city was very sophisticated. I felt everything was expensive there. As I had not had much information about London, I just felt London was like this. I had not had many impressions of London. I hadn't heard much about London before. I became interested in London after my parents encouraged me to study abroad. I have visited websites and read [Japanese] magazines to get some information. But I'm still not so eager to gather information about London. (Jun, male art college student, age 22)

Those who have never been to Britain also come to hold a particular image of London through the media. Ryo describes:

> [My image of London is] the Thames River. I like the Beatles, John Lennon. People are kind. Horses. Noble people. Well, country houses. Big Ben. I thought Tate Modern is cool. …I got to know these things through magazines, the Internet, travel books, [Japanese] television programmes on Peter Rabbit. I've watched British television programmes on satellite channels and NHK. (Ryo, male pat-time worker, age 25)

When asked, 'Do you think speaking English is cool?', all the young people said, 'No' or 'Not really', although some noted that they had considered speaking English to be cool before. According to them, speaking English is just a means of obtaining more opportunities in their careers. Some people are even critical about the fact that Japanese are eager to learn English:

> I don't think speaking English is cool. It's just a tool. It's not a special skill. It's the same as a skill in using PCs (Kumiko, female layout designer, age 25)

> I thought speaking English was cool before. But thinking 'English is cool' is not cool now. English is necessary to become international. It's just a tool. Ordinary people may think English is cool. But we shouldn't think that way. We have to respect our country, to survive worldwide competition. So it's meaningless to think whether or not English is cool or not (Mihoko, female receptionist, age 30)

Concerning differences in regional dialects of English, only Ryo said, 'I'm interested in British English more than American English.' However, most respondents could not distinguish British English from American English, although they knew there are regional differences in the English language. As Jun notes:

> I'm learning British English at the British Council just because I will study in Britain. But I don't know much about the differences [between British English and America English]. (Jun, male art college student, age 22)

In this way, while some have an interest in British popular culture and have access to information about London, others do not. In addition, no one regards speaking English as 'cool' and few recognise specificities of British English. If so, what has commonly led them to desire to migrate specifically to London for the purpose of cultural production and learning English? It turned out that most young people in this group expect to acquire 'cultural and social capital'[61] in Pierre Bourdieu's sense, such as English proficiency, an art degree or certificate, or personal networks with British artists, and thus 'distinguish'[62] themselves from other people in Tokyo's art worlds:[63]

> I want to acquire something distinguished [to work as a fashion stylist]. If someone asks me whether or not I have something special, I can't say I have. If I start my career in Japan, I will be an assistant to a professional stylist at first. But I won't be satisfied with learning from people in Japan. Fashion is not only in Japan. (Aiko, female fashion student, age 20)

> I will go to study performing arts. I want to be an actress. ...I have wanted to study abroad and have heard that Britain is famous for performing arts. When I was in high school, my friend went to study in France. At that time, I didn't like English. I liked only Japan. But as my friend studied abroad, I came to think now I should be international too. ...I didn't want to go America because it's too ordinary. Everyone goes to study in America. It doesn't make any difference. (Yayoi, female part-time worker, age 19)

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[61] According to Bourdieu, 'cultural capital' can exist in three forms: the *embodied* state is the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body (e.g., knowledge, skills, and tastes); the *objectified* state is the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.); and the *institutionalized* state is a form of academic qualifications which are acquired through educational institutions. And 'social capital' is 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition' (Bourdieu, 1986:243; 248).

[62] As Bourdieu notes in *Distinction*, 'social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make' (Bourdieu, 1984:6).

[63] According to Howard Becker, 'art worlds consist of all the people whose activities are necessary to the production of the characteristic worlds which that world, and perhaps others as well, define as art. Members of art worlds coordinate the activities by which work is produced by referring to a body of conventional understandings embodied in common practice and in frequently used artefacts. The same people often cooperate repeatedly, even routinely, in similar ways to produce similar worlds, so that we can think of an art world as an established network of cooperative links among participants' (Becker, 1982: 34-5).

> I want to have my own design office in the future, so I need to distinguish myself from others [in Japan]. Most people in the apparel industry are domestic and are making very similar products within Japan. I should have some strong points in order to start my own business. I want to find good manufacturers in Britain. 'Made-in-Britain' makes a difference. If I find some, I will place orders for my future business. (Nozomu, male fashion designer, age 25)

As already mentioned, these days, many people in Japan attach a great importance to their lifestyles and identities. Especially, the young people in the London group are from middle-class families whose householder's occupation is relatively culture-oriented, but many of them are likely to descend in the scale of social stratification. Because of their social backgrounds, they tend to attempt to acquire cultural capital as much as possible, in order to retain affinity with the class in which they were born.

Because American culture is part of everyday life and popular among the young people at large in Japan, respondents in the London group tend to consider that migrating to the United States is 'too ordinary'. Many of them say that they have learned or heard in school and/or through the media that European art and culture is the most eminent. Among European countries, they have chosen to go to Britain, because they can also learn the English language, which they regard as a means towards having more opportunities in their art careers. They consider that if they acquire such cultural capital in Europe, they can have an advantage over other Japanese who have obtained an art degree or work experience only in Japan.

Finally, some respondents, mostly those who have been interested in British popular culture and have travelled to the city, describe their possible lives at their destination to some extent, but others cannot imagine their everyday lives in London. In either case, their descriptions are relatively poor, compared to those in the New York group:

> I can't imagine it well. I will be looking around in London at first. But I will be walking on a street as if I were a Londoner, so I won't be looked down on. (Aiko, female fashion student, age 20)

> I can't imagine it. But I guess my life in London will be similar to my life in Tokyo. (Mihoko, female receptionist, age 30)

As explained earlier, almost all of the young Japanese said that they saw and heard about 'America' more frequently than any other foreign country. It seems that even those migrating to London have been exposed to far less mass-mediated images of Britain and London than those of the United States and New York City. This may explain why they tend to simultaneously have positive, neutral, and negative images of their destination. Most of the young Japanese migrating to New York City have been exposed to a considerable amount of American television programmes and movies, which are likely to influence their images positively. On the other hand, if those migrating to London have not been exposed to a large quantity of mediated images of the city, they are not likely to recall so many good images.

In short, the meaning of migration to London for these young people lies in achieving 'distinction' for their art careers in a place, which they believe is the most eminent in terms of art and culture. They have gained this idea not only through the media, such as Japanese television programmes, magazines, books, British television programmes and films, but also through education (but as they tend to assume that their everyday life in London will be almost the same as their everyday life in Japan, their evaluation seems to be limited to the field of art and culture).

4.3.4 The Lack of Images of 'Race' and Ethnic Relations

Overall, these young Japanese emphasised more positive images of New York City or London than negative ones. However, it is significant that some people note that they have heard about negative aspects of their destination by word of mouth:

> I was told I should go to Japanese estate agents. Non-Japanese agents swindle us out of our money. ... I've heard that Japanese girls are popular in New York City. But another friend said that's not true. They just want to take advantage of our loneliness as Japanese girls often feel homesick. They think we are easy. (Yoko, female part-time worker, age 27)

> Americans seem friendly and we have good impressions. But surprisingly, my dance teacher told me that they are very cold when you need help. (Rie, female office worker, age 27)

> My sister's friend stayed with a non-English speaking host family in London. They told her to get out, as she couldn't follow their way of life. (Natsuko, female office worker, age 23)

> I heard racial discrimination is severe. When my friend was walking on a street in London, a black man told him, 'You, stink, Chink!' (Ryo, male part-time worker, age 25)

Television programmes, films, magazines, and books as well as travel experience tend to lead them to have positive images of their destination, but interpersonal communication with their friends who have lived in their destination tends to let them know negative aspects of it. While their image of New York City or London is mostly centred on popular culture and tourist attractions, what they have heard by word of mouth is mostly problems in relationships between their peers and local people.

In fact, only a few people voluntarily referred to races and ethnicities in their destination. When asked, 'What kind of people are in the city?', most of the young

Japanese described misleading images. Those in the New York group mentioned 'white and black', to a lesser extent, 'Asian', but no Hispanics. No one pointed out white ethnics (Italians or Jewish) and black ethnics (African Americans or West Indians):

> I heard New York was like Tokyo, as many people in the country go up to the city. But I didn't know there are so many Chinese in the city. I thought only white and black people, I mean, real Americans lived there. There were swarms of people who I couldn't tell if they were Chinese or Koreans or Japanese. (Haruka, female dance student, age 23)

> I think whites and blacks live in New York City. Are there any other kinds of people? Gay people? I really don't know such things. (Atsushi, male hairdresser, age 25)

> Q. What kinds of people are in New York City?
> A. There should be all kinds of people... It's common knowledge, there are white people. There are a small number of Asian people too. (Toru, male, age 25)

More races and ethnicities, such as white, black, Asian, Irish, Latin American, Jewish, or Indian, were mentioned by those migrating to London.[64] However, 'white people' seem to be the centre of their image of people in London:

> Many white people live in London, right? I don't think there are many black people in the city. I suppose many rich Asian people go to English language schools. White people are either skinny or very fat. Irish people live there too. (Nozomu, male fashion designer, age 26)

> I was surprised to see there were many races in London. I had imagined British people were Monty Python people. (Kumiko, female layout designer, age 25)

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[64] I assume that these young people migrating to London could refer to more races and ethnicities because they have better educational backgrounds.

Whether they can recognise that there are some races and ethnicities or not, almost all of these young Japanese interviewed are not much aware of issues concerning race and ethnic relations in their destination city. Even the influx of foreign popular culture and foreign workers in the past decades has not changed their awareness. According to Marilyn Ivy (1995), in Japan, the foreign can only operate as a commodified sign of reassurance. That is, the foreign must be transformed into a manageable sign of order, a transformation indicated most clearly by what, in Japan, is perhaps the dominant political concept of the past decade or two: internationalisation (*kokusaika*). While internationalisation elsewhere implies a cosmopolitan expansiveness, the Japanese state-sponsored version tends towards the domestication of the foreign. Therefore, instead of opening up Japan to a conflict among different nationalities and ethnicities, the policy of internationalisation implies the opposites: the thorough domestication of the foreign and the dissemination of Japanese culture throughout the world (Ivy, 1995:2-3). Accordingly, the young Japanese tend to associate commodified signs, such as art, popular culture, landscapes of cities and tourist attractions, with the West, rather than people or race and ethnic relations, whether they go abroad to sightsee or they are exposed to the media in their homeland.

4.4 The Perception of Japaneseness

Before migration, these young people were also asked, 'Have you ever thought about the distinctiveness of Japanese people or culture?' Only Makoto answered that people were 'basically the same':

> Nothing special. I stayed at a youth hostel in New York City, and I made friends with Brazilians and Europeans. I felt we were basically the same. There is a slight difference, but basic things are the same. Perhaps the only difference

> is the custom of ladies first. (Makoto, male graphic designer migrating to New York City, age 29)

Other young people referred to ideas which are often seen in discourses of *nihonjinron*. Nevertheless, most of them noted that they had never heard of the word '*nihonjinron*' itself. Only three people said that they had read books or had watched television programmes on this topic. It seems that most of them have been exposed to the ideas of *nihonjinron* second hand through the media, education, or word of mouth, without being much aware of this fact.

The women talked more about the negative aspects of Japaneseness than the positive aspects. Particularly, those in the New York group tend to adopt a critical attitude towards Japanese people and culture:

> When I was working, I felt old things wouldn't change in Japan. I was working in an office of a foreign firm in Tokyo. So I thought such a workplace must be Americanised. But it wasn't true. As most employees were Japanese, *seniority* was very important for our relationships. (Fumiko, female office worker migrating to New York City, age 26, emphasis added by YF[65])

> I had been bullied when I was in high school. So I thought I hated Japanese people. ...Individually people are good. But when Japanese people get together, they become *exclusive*. There is a boss and that person decides to exclude some people. There were such people around me. It might be the same in any country, though. (Nana, female salesperson migrating to New York City, age 20)

Those in the London group also pointed out the negative aspects of Japaneseness, but they tended to attempt to redefine such aspects as 'neutral' characteristics:

> I heard Japanese people are *two-faced* people. My foreign friend said so. I think it is ok because it is a characteristic of Japanese culture. I've also heard about

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[65] All emphases in my respondents' narratives are added by the author.

> 'SSS' or *smile, silent, sleep*. Japanese people always sleep on trains and often evade a question with smile. In an English programme on NHK, a director who studied in Britain said this is a conventional expression about the Japanese. (Natsuko, female office worker migrating to London, age 23)

As for the positive aspects, these young women mentioned 'kindness', 'traditional clothes', or 'punctuality'. On the other hand, the young men tended to clearly, fully explain their idea that Japan is superior to other countries:

> Japanese people are good at *appropriation* and *absorb many cultures*... When I was watching television programmes, I sometimes saw people arguing that Japanese people are bad after all. I feel Japanese people don't have much patriotism. When I was watching such things, I felt I should support Japan. I have patriotism somehow. (Toru, male salesperson migrating to New York City, age 25)

> In the field of fashion, Japan is included in countries setting the trend, such as New York or Milan. Such a small island can follow other countries. Compared to other Asian countries, I think Japan has achieved significant development. Japan is excellent in fashion. Other countries regard the Japanese market as highly important. (Nozomu, male fashion designer migrating to London, age 25)

> I am proud of being Japanese... I learn *shakuhachi* [a Japanese music instrument], as I am proud of being Japanese. I like Asian tastes in the field of arts though I like American music a lot. Japanese can't speak English because many are afraid of talking with foreigners. Some Japanese admire foreigners and forget their Japanese mentality. (Shota, male college architecture student migrating to London, age 22)

As we see, when describing some ideas, men tend to refer to more positive aspects of Japaneseness and their patriotic sentiment, while women tend to refer to more negative and neutral aspects of Japaneseness, as pointed out in Chapter 2. Even so, on the whole, it seems that the young Japanese interviewed have had few occasions to consider their sense of Japaneseness in their everyday lives in Japan. This is a significant contrast to the case of Keiko, whose father is Japanese and mother is Korean (she dropped out from my study after her first interview, because she decided to go to China, instead of going to New York City). According to her, she often thinks about her identity:

> A: If I continue to stay in Japan, I can meet only Japanese people. I want to live in a different world.
>
> Q:… Do you speak Korean?
>
> A: Just a little bit. I didn't know how to say hello in Korean before. ...My mother often says, 'Japanese are like this and that'. So she may have had a great influence on me.
>
> Q: How do you think about yourself? Are you more Korean or more Japanese?
>
> A: Before my mother made me attend a language school in South Korea last summer, I had believed myself to be 100% Japanese. But after I saw their cultural practices in South Korea, I realised cultural practices in my home were indeed Korean, which I used to believe were the norm [as Japanese]. After that, I began to feel strange about everything. …I realised that my home was not Japanese. I talked with my older brother that we were Japanese, but we were Japanese who were raised by a Korean mother. (Keiko, female, age 22)

Unlike her, the twenty-two young Japanese rarely described their sense of Japaneseness, in relations to other ethnicities. Their lack of awareness of race and ethnic relations can be attributed to the fact that the state has succeeded in establishing a strong idea of 'homogenous' national identity. To the majority of Japanese people, only national, gender, and, to a lesser extent, class identities appear to be the common frames of reference. Therefore, it seems that while living in Japan, the young Japanese have had few occasions to compare themselves with other ethnicities in Japan, and thus cannot give many accounts of distinctiveness of Japanese people and culture.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the following factors – 'push' factors (dissatisfactions with youth unemployment and family relationships) and 'pull' factors (the popularity of art and culture in New York City and London and the attraction of opportunities for learning English there), the migration systems (commercial and governmental organisations), and cultural-ideological links (the construction of the images of 'the West', 'America'/Britain, and their destination cities) – have all contributed to young Japanese migratory projects to 'the West'.

Cultural-ideological links are particularly crucial in their migration process to the West. On the one hand, the link between 'America' and Japan has been constructed through the experience of the American military occupation and of American popular culture, since the U.S. Occupation. In the early postwar period, 'America' was an explicit object of admiration among young people. However, by the late 1970s, it had simply become part of the quotidian life of Japanese people, partly because the media had conveyed a large quantity of mediated images of 'America' to them, over a long period. Under these conditions, the respondents come to conceive of the popular, contemporary West, as being represented principally, by 'America'. For them, American popular culture and the English language are not an exotic but distant object of admiration, but rather, have become part of everyday life in Japan. So they come to believe that New York City is a very 'familiar' place, where they can continue to lead a 'normal' life but with better prospects.

On the other hand, the link between Britain and Japan was first constructed in the process of modernisation during the Meiji period. This tradition of going, for a period, to live in European cities, to acquire cultural capital seems to continue to this day. In the past, however, it was available only to elites, whereas now it extends to young people of the middle class. While 'America' becomes part of everyday life in Japan, foreign travel becomes popularised, information channels regarding foreign countries increase, and people's interests, needs, and tastes become diversified. To the extent that some young people conceive of the cultural, classical West, as connoting Europe (including Britain), they begin to hope to migrate to London, in order to achieve 'distinction'.

Thus, the media have contributed greatly to the establishment of the interconnections between these countries and to the construction of the respondents' image of 'the West'. Without these pre-existing cultural-ideological links, they would not conceive of migrating for the purpose of cultural production and learning English.

It should be noted that, before migration, the young Japanese were not particularly self-conscious of race and ethnic relations in New York City or London, nor their Japaneseness. This is partly because they have a strong belief in the 'natural' status of 'homogeneous' Japanese national identity; and partly because the media have provided them with visual images and information about the desirability of life in New York City or London, which failed to tell them much about social discrimination and racism. Their friends may have attempted to tell them more realistic information about life in the city, but the young Japanese were often too full of optimism about their prospects of creating a more fulfilling life abroad to take notice of these warnings.

Then, we might ask, 'How will the "reality" they experience in their destination be different from what they have believed beforehand?' From Chapter 5 to Chapter 8, I will explore the second question of this study: how do the young Japanese experience their sense of Japanese national identity in their destination city? In each chapter, the influences of 'race' and ethnic relations, gender, class and language, or media will be examined in turn.[66]

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[66] Religion has little influence on their identity experience, because the respondents (as well as the majority of Japanese) do not practise any specific religion.

Chapter 5 Encountering 'Race' and Ethnic Relations

> '...These days, spades all over the place, and every shipload is big news, and the English people don't like the boys coming to England to work and live'
> 'Why is that?'
> 'Well, as far as I could figure, they frighten that we get job in front of them, though that does never happen. The other thing is that they just don't like black people, and don't ask me why, because that is a question that bigger brains than mine trying to find out from way back'. (Selvon, in *Lonely Londoners,* 1956: 39)

5.1 Introduction

Sam Selvon's *the Lonely Londoner* (1954) vividly depicts the lives of West Indians who migrated to London in the 1950s. After their arrival in the city, contrary to their expectations, these migrants found that many English people were not welcoming to them. Half a century after the first publication of Selvon's novel, West Indians in New York City (Waters, 1999), Albanians in Italy (Mai, 2001), and Moroccans in London (Sabry, 2003) have also found that their prior positive images of their destinations were illusions, and that they were to be categorised and alienated as 'people of colour' or a 'coloured race'. Similarly, the twenty-two young Japanese have migrated to New York City or London, without knowing much about problems of social and racial discrimination that migrants may experience in their destination city. Will they go through the same experience as the previous migrants did? This chapter investigates how 'race' and ethnic relations affects the ways in which these young people experience their sense of Japanese 'national' identity.

The Influence of 'Race' and Ethnic Relations on National Identity

The word 'race' first appeared in the English language in the early seventeenth century. Subsequently, this term began to be used in European and North American scientific writing in the late eighteenth century, in order to name and explain certain physical differences between human beings (Miles, 1993:28). However, research over the twentieth century revealed that racial boundaries are so blurred that no meaningful taxonomy of races is possible (Yoshino, 1997:141),[67] and the biological concept of race has generally been refuted in scientific terms.

Nonetheless, people still use the concept of 'race' in everyday life. Particularly, in multi-racial societies such as New York City or London, 'race relations'[68] greatly affect personal interactions. Race relations tend to be constructed under the influence of the ideology of 'racialism'. According to Tzvetan Todorov, the word 'racism', in its usual sense, actually designates two very different things. On the one hand, it is a matter of *behaviour,* usually a manifestation of hatred or contempt for individuals who have well-defined physical characteristics different from our own. On the other hand, it is a matter of *ideology*, a doctrine concerning human races: the behaviour of the individual is understood to depend, to a large extent, on the racio-cultural (or ethnic) group to which he or she belongs; and the racialist also believes that some are superior to others, which implied that he or she posses a unitary hierarchy of values, an evaluative framework with respect to which he or she can make universal judgements. Todorov proposes to call the latter 'racialism' (Todorov, 1993:90-5).

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[67] For example, apart from the visible morphological characteristics of skin, hair, and bone, by which we are inclined to assign people to the broadest racial categories – black, white, yellow – there are few genetic characteristics to be found in the population of England that are not found in similar proportions in Zaire or China (Appiah, 1986:21).

[68] According to Robert E. Park, 'race relations' are 'the relations existing between peoples distinguished by marks of racial descent, particularly when these racial differences enter into the consciousness of the individuals and groups so distinguished, and by so doing determine in each case the individual's conception of himself as well as his status in the community' (Park, 1950).

In Western nation-states, the racial category 'white' is always constructed as the top of the racial hierarchy, and 'people of colour' are positioned as inferior in terms of appearances, abilities, or cultures. As Richard Dyer points out, being 'white' means being just human, and this confers the most powerful position on those categorised as white people. That is, the claim to power is the claim to speak for the commonality of humanity. 'Raced' people can't do that – they can only speak for their race. But non-raced people can, for they do not seem to represent the interests of a particular race, and these people are 'whites' (Dyer, 1997:2). In the case of the United States, the concept of 'American People' is constructed as 'white', within the process of nation-building. This has served to justify and perpetuate the subordination of the African American population, as well as to assimilate certain immigrant populations and exclude others (Basch et al., 1994:40).

As for the idea of 'ethnicity',[69] it appears to be a more neutral concept than 'race'. However, as Stuart Hall argues, the term 'ethnicity' acknowledges the place of history, language, and culture in the construction of subjectivity, and is often equivalent with nationalism, imperialism, racism, and the state. In the case of Britain, the hegemonic conception of 'Englishness' has been constructed as the core of national identity. Because it is hegemonic, Englishness does not represent itself as an ethnicity at all (Hall, 1996b: 446-7). In this way, the dominant ethnic group in a nation-state marginalises other ethnic groups, by constructing a national identity that is represented by their own culture and history.

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[69] In social sciences, this idea of 'ethnic group' generally falls into two broad categories. First, it corresponds to ethnic minorities and/or immigrant groups, such as Pakistanis in Britain or Japanese Americans in the United States. Second, it is extended to a historical prototype or substratum of national community, such as England in the Shakespearean era, or pre-colonial Vietnam (Yoshino, 1992:68; 1997:20).

Thus, within a particular context of a nation-state, race and ethnic relations develop, and these relations are hierarchical in nature. When people migrate from one nation-state to another, they are placed in a particular position of the racial and ethnic hierarchy of their host country, which is different from that of their homeland. This greatly affects new migrants' identity transformation. In many cases, new migrants find that they are labelled as 'ethnic', and that they are regarded as occupying a lower position in the racial and ethnic hierarchy than that to which they are accustomed.

5.2 Their Early Impressions

The young Japanese interviewed believe that Japan is a monoethnic nation, although it is indeed a multiethnic nation that includes Ainu, Burakumin, Chinese, Koreans, Nikkeijin, or Okinawans (Lie, 2001; Morris-Suzuki, 1998; Weiner, 1997). Before migration, I asked them about their experiences in personal interactions with 'non-Japanese' people. Many respondents said that they had only a few friends, colleagues, or relatives who were not Japanese. According to them, they talked with English-language teachers and international students from Asia, Europe, or America in high school, college, or language school, and chatted with Westerners in bars in fashionable areas of Tokyo, as well as communicated with local people when travelling in Asian, Caribbean, European or North American countries. However, these occasions were rare. As for interactions with ethnic 'minorities'[70] in Japan, few reported their personal experiences. This is probably because they were not aware of the existence of various ethnic groups in Japan and regarded such people as 'foreigners'. Some of them might have met people with ethnic backgrounds other than Japanese, but it is possible that these people attempted to pass as 'ordinary Japanese' and hid their ethnic backgrounds to avoid social discrimination.

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[70] As Avtar Brah points out, the usage of the word, 'minority' is problematic. This is partly because the numerical referent of the dichotomy (majority/minority) encourages a literal reading, reducing the problem of power relations to one of numbers, with the results that the repeated circulation of the discourse has the effect of naturalising rather than challenging the power differential (Brah, 1996:187).

After arriving in New York City or London, therefore, most of the young Japanese become consciously involved in race and ethnic relations for the first time. Some respondents who had not visited the city before find that their prior image of the city had been misleading:

> When I didn't know much about America before, my image of America was mostly of white people. But now I found that in America there are a large number of black people too. In Manhattan, I see many white people, but in Brooklyn or Jamaica [in Brooklyn], the majority is black people. My image of America has become that there are a large number of black people. (Atsushi, male, age 25, after 3 months in New York City)

> London is totally different from what I had thought. First of all, I was so surprised to see many Asians and Arabs here. I was surprised to find that the city is so dirty. Thailand was the only country I had visited before. My first impression of London is that this city is like Bangkok. For example, many people ignore traffic lights. People drive cars so roughly. Arabs manage convenience stores [as in Bangkok]. (Ryo, male, age 25, after 3 months in London)

Thus, some of them come to have a new idea that a nation can be 'multiethnic'. In addition, several respondents, especially females, commonly find it attractive that Westerners communicate in 'eloquent' and 'horizontal' styles, compared to the 'tacit' and 'vertical' styles of Japanese communication:

> I think everyone is kind in New York, like people on the street, students in my studio [in a dance school], or people on the train. I think people here are kinder than Japanese people. In Japan, people don't pay attention to strangers in stations. ... But here, people talk to others whenever something happens. It seems normal here. To have some conversations with others makes me feel

> good. (Nana, female, age 20, after 3 months in New York City)

> In London I always feel people are very friendly and kind in shops, buses. … It's very nice that people talk to strangers while waiting at bus stops. They say good morning when passing each other in the morning. (Emi, female, age 23, after 4 months in London)

Furthermore, all of the young Japanese confirm that their decision to migrate was the right decision. Many respondents in New York City said there are as many opportunities and is as much freedom in the city as they had expected. As Yoko notes, 'I feel I have opportunities for going forward. In New York, I found some fulfilment in my life' (Yoko, female, age 27, after 3 months). Several people in London stressed that the environment is excellent in terms of art. According to Sayaka, 'In London, I found that people are good at appreciating works of art. Maybe it's because art is part of everyday life here' (Sayaka, female, age 27, after 5 months).

However, at the same time, these young people often mention that some aspects of their destination are worse than their previous images. They point out that 'bad services' and 'uncaring assistants and clerks' are normal in banks, post offices, stores, and telephone companies and that the city is 'dirty' and 'littered', noting, by contrast, that in Japan they can enjoy 'good, kind services' and their Tokyo is more 'convenient' and 'clean'. What is more, some respondents described America or Britain as 'underdeveloped':

> Well, we tend to think that America is advanced, but it is indeed *underdeveloped.* Like, fridges, or things for daily use. This city is at the forefront in terms of fashion. But as for daily necessities, all things are behind Japan. (Nana, female, age 20, after 3 months)

> Britain is *underdeveloped,* isn't it? I feel so whenever I see electrical products or the transportation situations here. Underground, trains, buses… Many buses

> are running, but they are indeed random. I often get angry when seeing such things. They should work harder. (Nozomu, male, age 25, after 3 months)

It is discussed that 'the West' is a name always associating itself with those regions, communities, or peoples that appear politically or economically superior to other regions, communities, and peoples (Sakai, 1988:477). Contrary to this general association, before migration, none of the young Japanese specifically associated 'progress' or 'development' with the West. After migration, some people even came to consider the West to be 'underdeveloped'. Yayoi's comment makes it clear how their image of 'the West' constructed in Japan was gradually dissolved:

> If you ask me when I got to know this image [of London which she had had before migration], I can't answer. But I think there is the particular image that is generally believed in Japan. I didn't believe all parts of the image. I just thought this place might be similar to the image... When I was in Japan, I was feeling this place was a distant existence, as if it were in a dream. It seemed to exist in another space. Of course, in reality, it must have existed, but I had not experienced this place by myself. But now I feel that this place really exists, which was very vague before. I am here now, and many things are happening in front of me. When I was in Japan, I knew there were foreign countries, but in fact I couldn't really feel it. Even when I visited here for sightseeing, I couldn't really feel it. The experience was just the same as going to Disneyland. But now, I find that people make their livings, they are living. (Yayoi, female, age 19, after 3 months)

In the early period of their migration, these young Japanese tend to recognise that their previous image of New York City or London is not entirely the same as their actual experiences; but they also consider that their migratory project is successful in terms of their purpose in migration. However, as various obstacles become visible to them in their everyday lives, they begin to reconstruct the previous image to a great extent.

5.3 Race and Ethnic Relations in New York City

5.3.1 Becoming 'Racialised'

White, Black, and Hispanic Americans

As the young Japanese spend more time in New York City, they begin to describe differences among people by referring to physical differences; they also begin to attribute the behaviour of the individual to the racio-cultural group to which he or she belongs. In this sense, they become more 'racialised'.

At first, due to their positive images of 'America' and New York City, they tend to consider Americans friendly. Most of them approach 'white and black' Americans expecting a welcoming reception. However, they gradually find it difficult to form friendships with white Americans. In their English language schools or dance studios, the majority of students are international students; and only Japanese bars, restaurants, or hotels hire them because of their elementary English skills and the lack of a legal work permit. Accordingly, most of the young Japanese have few occasions to talk or interact with white Americans in their everyday lives. They sometimes chat with white American teachers in their schools or studios and have fleeting interactions with white Americans in subways, stores, or streets, or through their activities in cultural production. But such interactions do not often develop into long-term friendships.

Concerning their relationships with black Americans, most of the young Japanese held an image that black Americans are 'cool'. In the United States, black Americans are often regarded as a stigmatised race, but there is another side of black imagery: since its emergence in the mass media mainstream in the early 1990s, hip-hop culture has positively affected the arenas of film, fashion, television, art, literature, and journalism (Emerson, 2002:115). As these young Japanese have migrated for the purpose of cultural production, most of them are greatly affected by such positive images and some of them strongly hope to participate in black American culture.

Mayumi had a great interest in black American popular culture and was exposed to a considerable amount of images of black Americans portrayed in MTV and fashion magazines before migration (see p.120). But, after migration, she finds it difficult to enter the circle of black Americans, as they do not regard her as their peer:

> A: Among Americans, I don't like black people. There is a school near here, and black people are really noisy after school.
>
> Q: You said you liked black culture very much when you were in Japan, didn't you?
>
> A: They have bad personal attitudes. It is ok just to see them from outside. But, for example, women in Starbucks are noisy and impudent. ...They don't return small change, such as one cent or two. When I talk to them, because my English is poor, they often ask me, 'What?' with a frown. Black people seldom give way to me on the streets. ...Anyway I don't like them. They are twisted. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 3 months)

Before migration, no one described any particular image of Hispanics. After migration, Haruka, who has started attending a dance school in the East Village, comes to hold a negative impression of the whole ethnic group:

> I hate Hispanics. I don't have any good impressions of them. A while ago, when I got on a subway, there was a couple. The man suddenly said, 'there is a smell of sushi in this train'. Then, the girl burst into laugher and told the man to stop saying such a thing. I got angry and said, 'What?' They said, 'You smell like sushi!' But both of them looked strong, so we ignored them and they got off. My friend and I talked and laughed, saying that was so terrible. Then, they returned to us and said 'Don't laugh!' He said, 'My girlfriend wants to beat you'. We said, 'No, no, no'. Then, the door shut in front of them and we were relieved. It was so scary. We did nothing wrong. (Haruka, female, age 23, after 9 months)

According to John Ogbu's theory of 'oppositional identities', involuntary minorities, such as blacks and American Indians, perceive their social identity not merely as different from that of their white 'oppressors' but as opposed to the social identity of white Americans. This oppositional identity, combined with their oppositional or ambivalent cultural frames of reference, make the crossing of cultural boundaries very problematic. That is, behaving in a manner regarded as falling under the white American cultural frames of reference, or acting 'white', such as speaking 'standard' English or conforming to school requirements associated with whites, is threatening not only to their minority identity and security, but also to their solidarity. Individuals seeking to behave like whites are discouraged by peer group pressures (Ogbu, 1990:155-8). Particularly, black boys develop their own street fashion, such as a combination of hats, bandanas, baggy pants, and certain types of jewellery. All of this contributes to their 'cool pose' image, which in turn causes others to be afraid of them. In addition, voluntary migrants, such as Mexican or Puerto Rican Americans, especially those in the lower classes, are also considered to often adopt oppositional identities (Waters, 1999:198-9; 309).[71]

In New York City, nearly all respondents do not attend college nor work in American organisations. They therefore have few occasions to become acquainted with middle-class blacks and Hispanics, but sometimes experience fleeting interactions in stores, streets, or other public spaces with those who have adopted oppositional identities, mostly those of less privileged classes. Due to such interactions, some respondents come to believe blacks or Hispanics to be 'bad' or 'scary'. Thus, these young Japanese make negative judgements about a particular race or ethnic group as a whole, although they have interacted with a small number of people. Then they begin to evaluate people individually by the colour of their skin or culture.

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[71] It is argued that there is a class difference within oppressed ethnic minorities. For example, upwardly mobile Mexican American students are capable of maintaining some aspects of an oppositional identity, but succeed academically and value academic success in a way that working-class Mexican American youth values do not allow (Waters, 1999:198-9; 309).

Asian Americans and East Asians

According to previous research on race relations and youth friendships, particularly relevant concepts for understanding friendship in racially diverse schools are 'homophily' – the tendency to form friendships with racially similar others – and 'propinquity' – the tendency to form friendships with others who share the same social situation (Quillian and Campbell, 2003:544; 559). As these ideas suggest, when the young Japanese form friendships with Americans, their friends are mostly Asian Americans or any Americans who have interests in Japanese culture and people (e.g., a Japanese American, a Korean American, a white American student who majors in Japanese culture and language, or a mixed race American who has taught English in Japan).

Meanwhile, many respondents establish more friendly relationships with young people from South Korea and Taiwan than with any other 'non-Japanese' people:

> In school, it is easier for me to talk to Asian people. Maybe, I am afraid to talk to white people, because their skin colour or hair colour is different from ours. Now I strongly feel Japan is part of Asia (Yoko, female, age 27, after 3 months)

> A: I don't have any close friends who are black or white. For me, it is easy to make friends with Koreans. This may be because our faces are similar or our countries are close. I found that many Koreans are interested in Japan. They want to learn Japanese language. So I feel familiar with them. Because they are friendly to us and approach us, so we can talk.
>
> Q: Do you know why?
>
> A: Koreans told me that it's their culture. They like to make friends.
>
> Q: How about Taiwanese?
>
> A: They are friendly. I think that Taiwanese people's faces are the most similar to Japanese people's faces. They said that in Taiwan, there are *purikura* ['Print Club' or photo sticker machines that are popular among young people]. It is the same as Japan. I find that Taiwan is similar to Japan. (Nana, female, age 21, after 1 year)

The main reason for these relationships seems to be that young Koreans and Taiwanese are affected by their colonial past.[72] Today, young Koreans and Taiwanese are taught about their colonised history in their homeland and tend to be knowledgeable about Japan, whereas the young Japanese are less interested in such historical occurrences. Furthermore, in recent years, Japanese popular culture has been widely diffused and accepted in South Korea and Taiwan.[73]

Thus, the colonial past has fostered 'cultural proximity' between Japan and South Korea or Taiwan. This often induces the desire of the former-colonised, young Koreans and Taiwanese to imitate the former-coloniser, Japan. The young Japanese were often approach by young Koreans and Taiwanese displaying an interest in Japan. In response, the young Japanese develop a stronger affinity for Koreans and Taiwanese than for Hong Kong or mainland Chinese, although these East Asians are similarly 'racial insiders' to the young Japanese. They regard Koreans and Taiwanese as 'cultural insiders', and Hong Kong and mainland Chinese as 'cultural outsiders'.

In Japan, even Koreans or Taiwanese who were born and brought up in Japan tend to be seen as 'outsiders' or 'foreigners' (Lie, 2001), and the young Japanese were indifferent to the existence of Koreans and Taiwanese in Japan before migration. However, after finding themselves to be just one of the various ethnic groups in New York City, they come to see Koreans and Taiwanese as 'insiders'.

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[72] Japan had colonised Korea and Taiwan between 1895 and 1945 and the government had attempted to unify these peoples culturally, by diffusing the Japanese language and culture among them.

[73] In Taiwan, Japanese popular culture has spread widely since the 1990s and impacted the youth lifestyle (M. Lee, 2004:130). Japanese commodities such as cuisine, fashion products, magazines, literature, brand-name cartoon icons, and animation have been widely circulated and accepted in Taiwan today (Ko, 2004:110; 129-54). For South Korea, Japan has been regarded as a 'close but distant' oppressor. Deep-seated collective memories of the Korean people as victims of Japanese imperialism have been reflected in the Korean government's policy for cultural exchanges with Japan. However, although the influx of Japanese popular culture has been officially regulated until recently, Japanese animation has been diffused these thirty years and the transnational influence of Japanese television culture has rapidly grown during the 1990s (D. Lee, 2004:251).

5.3.2 The Racial and Ethnic Hierarchy

White Privileges

Another significant change in their perception is that the young Japanese themselves begin to refer to a hierarchy of race and ethnicity and judge some races as superior to others. First of all, they begin to become aware of the privilege of 'whiteness'. During the early period of her migration, Nana had few white American friends, but regarded white Americans as her positive role models:

> Q: What do you think about Japanese people here?
>
> A: Perhaps Japanese people here want to become like Americans. By watching other Japanese around me, I find they are trying to communicate in American styles.
>
> Q: How about you? What type of American do you want to be?
>
> A. Perhaps, I want to become like white people. They speak the clearest English. I feel they are the easiest to talk to. I feel it difficult to talk to black people or Hispanics. There are few Hispanics in my studios. There are some black dance teachers, but I can't understand what they are saying. I don't know their personalities, but if there are black people and white people in front of me I will talk to the white people. (Nana, female, 20, after 3 months)

Other respondents, however, develop more ambivalent feelings towards white privileges. Chihiro attends an English school in Midtown Manhattan and also engages in producing drawings in her room near Harlem. She lives with a white American student, Kate, who majors in Japanese culture and language in a university. Through interactions with Kate and her white American friends, Chihiro comes to think:

> [White] Americans like America very much. Of course, many Japanese find that they like Japan when they live abroad. But, Americans seem to like America very much even if they have never been abroad. I asked some Americans, 'Do you Americans think that America is the best?' They answered, 'Of course'. They said so without hesitation. I just thought, 'OK, if you want to

> believe so, just believe so'. Many Americans think in the same way, don't they? ...When I told Kate that Japan is good in some respects, she told me that China was superior to Japan in this point and that. Or, China is getting better than Japan these days. When someone talks about good points of one's own country, Americans often try to devalue the country. (Chihiro, female, age 23, after 6 months)

Fumiko is able to speak English fluently, because she spent more than half of her school years outside of Japan as *kikokushijo*[74] (children who have returned from abroad) due to her father's job. In New York City, she has daily interactions with white Americans in her art college. In her view:

> New Yorkers are very severe regarding the English language. When I lived in Australia, people always praised me as I could speak English more fluently than other non-natives. They were not so strict. But, here, I feel Americans always rank others according to how well they speak English. The rank is, first, native speakers, second, those whose pronunciation is as good as native speakers but whose grammar is not perfect [like myself], and then, those who came here as an adult and study English hard, but pronounce English like Japanese. Maybe I will continue to experience this even after I begin to work in this city. (Fumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year)

Fumiko considers that white Americans always rank others according to 'standard' or white American English, and this has affected the way in which she evaluates her Japanese peers.

Sensitivity to Racism

Although these young Japanese tend to criticise white privileges, when they were asked whether they had personally experienced racial discrimination in the city, most of them said, 'No'. Only Fumiko remarked:

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[74] According to Roger Goodman, *kikokushijo* are defined by the following features: (1) both parents are Japanese; (2) they went overseas before they reached the age of twenty; (3) they went abroad, generally, because their father was posted temporarily overseas; (4) they have been overseas for 3 months or more so that they are registered when abroad as children of *chuzaiin* (businessmen) or *chōki taizaisha* (Japanese who stay overseas for more than 3 months) rather than tourists; (5) on their return to Japan, they have entered schools that are part of the mainstream education system and not international schools (Goodman, 2003:178).

> Q: Have you ever experienced discrimination here?
>
> A: Yes. Only once. A middle-aged black man spat at me. Maybe, he thought that because a lot of people, like me, were coming to New York, it got more competitive to get a job. (Fumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year)

However, the other people said that they had never experienced racial discrimination, even after they reported negative race-related incidents, such as being neglected by clerks in shops or being abused in subways or the streets by by-passers:

> Q: Have you ever experienced discrimination?
>
> A: No. It's never happened to me. But, it seems like Europeans in my class have never approached Asians. They have never talked to me. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 7 months)

Having grown up as members of the dominant ethnic group, the young Japanese have seldom experienced such negative race-related incidents in Japan. Therefore, not until they repeatedly experience such incidents do they begin to 'sense' whether an incident is based on racism or not. In fact, in New York City, whites rarely showed blatant discriminatory acts towards my respondents but practised 'subtle racism',[75] in which the perpetrator can deny any racial animosity and claim their behaviour is due to other considerations. Most respondents regarded it as 'bad manners' or ascribed it to their own elementary English skills. When some blacks or Hispanics insulted them in the streets or other public spaces, they considered it to be negative characteristics of

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[75] Mary C. Waters considers that there are two types of racism. First, 'structural racism' exists where there is blocked mobility in a society and a hierarchy in which whites have political and economic power; Second, 'interpersonal racism' comes in two sub-forms – old-fashioned racism and subtle racism. Old-fashioned racism consists of blatant acts of discrimination and prejudice such as physical attacks or threats, insults on the street, refusals of housing or employment specifically for racial reasons, and hassles by the police. As for subtle racism, the perpetrator can deny any racial animosity and claim their behaviour is due to other considerations, as in the case of taxi drivers refusing to stop, or clerks showing very cold attitudes (Waters, 1999: 153-64).

'blacks' or 'Hispanics', rather than recognising it as prejudice against them. These young Japanese tended to believe that, while social and racial discrimination may occur to blacks or others, it would not occur to them.

Mainland Chinese as the Focus of Differentiation

In this group, Haruka and Mayumi heavily criticise mainland Chinese, making them their focus of differentiation. These young women want other people to know they are not the same:

> I don't want people confusing Japanese with Chinese. I think Japan is special in Asia. I don't like Koreans. I don't like Asia. After I came here, I often feel they are not cool. They are boring. Few Chinese and Koreans learn dancing. Mostly Japanese, Americans, and French are learning dance. (Haruka, female, age 22, after 5 months)

> In my [English language] class, there are six Chinese out of seventeen students. I hate Chinese. They were chewing gum and making noise during class. I think their customs are disgusting. I came in contact with Chinese for the first time here, and understood this. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 10 months)

Today some regions of China are still underdeveloped, and the number of immigrants in the less privileged class who are from China is larger than the number of those who are from other East Asian countries and regions.[76] Moreover, Haruka and Mayumi have been exposed to American television programmes since childhood, and expressed the strongest attachment to American popular culture among the respondents before migration (see their narratives on p.120). They seem to consider mainland Chinese as inconsistent with their 'cool' image of New York City, from their subjective viewpoints; therefore, they want black and white Americans to see themselves as different from and 'cooler' (or more Westernised) than mainland Chinese.

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[76] For example, in New York City, 31% of immigrants from China are college graduates, while 62% of immigrants from Taiwan are college graduates as of 1993 (Foner, 2001).

5.3.3 Renegotiating Their Sense of Japaneseness

Young Japanese Men in New York City: Atsushi, Toru, and Makoto

As their views become racialised, the young Japanese begin to reinterpret their sense of their Japaneseness. Significantly, the way in which they renegotiate their Japaneseness differs to a great extent according to their gender.

During the early period of their migration, Makoto and Toru complained that many people in New York City, such as clerks in shops or officers in public organisations, were unfriendly to them. They said that people in Japan had treated them more respectfully. As more time passes, more obstacles in their new lives become visible to them. Makoto attends an English language school in Long Island, and also makes his artworks in his room in Queens. As he notes:

> A: Recently I think it is more comfortable to live in Japan than in New York City. Perhaps, if I could speak English fluently, my life will get better.
>
> Q: Do you have Japanese friends who can speak English fluently?
>
> A: No. We always use Japanese when we get together. All of my Japanese friends can't speak English well. ...When I came here, at first I thought I would be able to speak English soon because I thought I would become friends with many *gaijin*[77] ['foreigners']. But, I found there are far more Japanese people than I had expected. There are many Japanese stores as well. I can live here with only Japanese language. Now I think I may not be able to improve my English. (Makoto, male, age 30, after 7 months)

Having recognised that it is difficult to become friends with Americans and to improve his English skills, Makoto begins to feel that he could live in Japan more comfortably without such difficulties.

Since these young Japanese men seriously hoped to become successful artists in New York City, they indeed made great efforts to do so – Atsushi visited a hair salon in

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[77] This Japanese word connotes whites and Westerners.

Midtown East in Manhattan in order to find a job; Makoto put together his portfolio and brought it to art galleries in Chelsea; Toru sold his paintings on sidewalks in Soho every weekend. While Atsushi returned to Japan after three months, Toru and Makoto have seen some results. Both of them have participated in exhibitions in small galleries. Toru also succeeded in selling a number of his paintings to American, British, and French passers-by in Soho and earned a couple of thousands of dollars. Even so, famous galleries seldom reply to their portfolios, and it is difficult for them to develop social networks in the established art worlds in New York City. As they cannot earn stable earnings by selling artworks, they begin to feel that it may be almost impossible to 'make it' as artists.

Voluntary migrants, as John Ogbu argues, generally regard themselves as 'foreigners' or 'strangers' who come to America with expectations of certain economic, political, and social benefits. While anticipating that such benefits might come at some cost – involving discrimination and other hardships – the migrants do not measure their success or failure primarily by the standards of white Americans, but by the standards of their homelands (Ogbu, 1990:150-2). In contrast to Ogbu's argument, these young Japanese men did not expect to face much discrimination and many other hardships. However, as Ogbu argues, they begin to measure their situation by the standard of their homeland, because they are not highly valued in New York City, where the culture of white Americans, particularly that of Anglo-Saxons, is established as the norm. In so doing, they attempt to revalue their sense of Japaneseness, which, in their minds, is the singular concept conflating their national, racial, and ethnic identities:

> Well, are Japanese people *hard-working*? A Turkish girl once told me that I was *punctual*. She is always late for class. So I told her, 'It's good for you to come on time sometimes'. She said, 'You come on time because you're Japanese, but I can't because I'm Turkish'. Maybe Americans are lazy, though I've never met Americans by appointment. (Makoto, male, age 31, after 1 year)

> I need to absorb cultures of other countries, such as America or Britain. One good point of Japanese people is that we *imitate* others' products and *remake* them, though we don't often create things. I'm also superior to others in this point. We *steal good points of others, and apply them to ours*. For example, I gained an idea from the design of Rubik Cube and applied it to my drawings (Toru, male, age 27, after 1 year)

What is more, these young men begin to express their nationalistic sentiments. As Toru claims:

> I think Americans are so simple. Japanese are delicate. Maybe, Americans are normal and Japanese are *special*. ...Now I think Americans are childish. Before, I expected too much from Americans. I thought they were much better, smarter people. But they are simple. They can *say only yes or no*. (Toru, male, age 27, after 1 year and 4 months)

Before migration, the majority of respondents referred unconsciously to discourses of *nihonjinron*, when they described their Japaneseness, although they tended to say that they never heard of the word itself, '*nihonjinron'*. It is significant that after one year in New York City, Makoto and Toru still borrow common expressions from discourses of *nihonjinron*, such as 'hard work', 'punctuality', or 'appropriation'. Furthermore, as seen in Makoto's narrative, non-Japanese people sometimes let them know about their perceived Japaneseness, which also seems to derive from discourses of *nihonjinron*, and reinforce these ideas. In this way, their identity negotiation is greatly conditioned by discourses of *nihonjinron*.

Young Japanese Women in New York City: Chihiro, Fumiko, Haruka, Mayumi, Nana, Rie, and Yoko

We can see rather different stories in the subjective experiences of the young Japanese women in New York City. During the early period of their migration, Haruka, Nana, and Yoko mentioned their wish for an escape from the category of 'Japaneseness'. Yoko explains:

> I don't want to be seen as Japanese. ...I want to be seen as Vietnamese rather than to be seen as Japanese. But I may look very Japanese recently. ...I had planned to stay here for one year. But now I think I don't want to go back only after one year. Now I find my life in Japan was too restricted. ...Somehow, I feel I am free now. (Yoko, female, age 27, after 3 months)

However, for most of them, it turns out to be difficult to make friends with Americans or to find opportunities for speaking English. Some have also encountered unpleasant interactions with people who adopted oppositional identities. Mayumi, for instance, spends her life studying in English courses in a community college and working part-time in a sushi restaurant in Greenwich Village. She expresses her disappointment:

> Before coming to New York, I imagined that I would hang out with *gaijin* [or foreigners or Westerners], speak a lot of English, and learn dancing. But I have achieved none of these. The only thing I could do is to study at community college. But I will drop out soon. I hoped to make it. But I can't. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 10 months)

Most of the young Japanese women in New York City live with Japanese roommates, illegally work part-time in businesses that cater to Japanese clients (typically, Japanese restaurants and hostess clubs), and hang out with Japanese peers, although they strongly hope to change this lifestyle. But they tend to ascribe their difficulties only to their lack of English proficiency and do not consider the possibility that their 'race' also prevents them from participating in American society, which Mary C. Waters calls 'a chronically racist society' (Waters, 1999:147). Even so, these young women feel that differences between 'Americans' and 'us' prevent them from being included in mainstream life in their host society:

> I have no American friends who I can talk to in my dance school. If I continue to live like this, I will end up with only this. There is an intangible wall between the world of Americans and our world. I have to break through. …When I was looking for a job here, I felt there was the wall. Even in dance school, it is easier to talk to Japanese people [than to Americans]. I feel this deeply all the time. (Yoko, female, age 29, after 1 year)

Haruka has a black American boyfriend, but cannot enter any circles of black American females. So she begins to attempt to differentiate herself from black women, identifying herself as 'Japanese-black':

> I dyed my hair blond because Cristina Milian [a young black female singer] dyed her hair blonde. Black girls who have black hair are cool, but Christina Milian, Beyoncé, and Eve [young black female artists] have blond hair. I don't want to imitate black girls in every point because I'm not black. I don't hope to have such dark skin. It would be impossible, of course. What I want to be is Japanese-black. [Her boyfriend] Jazzy looks so happy when my fashion is more of a black-style. Then, he calls me, 'Japanese-black!' (Haruka, female, age 23, after 9 months)

These young women come to realise that it is hard to exit the category of Japaneseness and that they often think and act according to 'Japanese' cultural norms, which they had previously criticised. Then they begin to re-articulate their sense of Japaneseness, comparing themselves with Americans. Nana was very critical about Japanese people before migration (see p.134), but reconsiders her previous ideas:

> A: Americans have their own opinions. Japanese are always concerned about other people's opinions. I might think so just because I only understand Japanese language…
>
> Q: What is a good point about Japan?
>
> A: Japanese people are thoughtful and kind. They are considerate of other

> people's feelings. Some are very *polite*. *Punctuality* is also important in Japanese culture. (Nana, female, age 21, after 1 year)

In Chihiro's case, through her experience in living with her American friend, she comes to discover Japaneseness, which she disliked before, as part of her own persona:

> In Japan, *correct manners* are so important. If a person doesn't *follow commonplace and widespread ideas*, the person tends to be seen as crazy or strange. But when I visited Europe, I found that they were not like that. After I returned to Japan from my trip, I began to think I should live abroad. So I came to New York. But, as I am living here, I've realised that I also tend to think in the same way other Japanese think. I've found such an element in me because I am Japanese. Recently, I think that I have to admit this fact and I should live being myself, Japanese. (Chihiro, female, age 23, after 6 months)

As we see, these young women often refer to common ideas and expressions in discourses of *nihonjinron,* such as 'politeness', or 'punctuality', in the same ways as the young men did.

Thus, both of the young Japanese men and women continue to represent their identities, by referring to discourses of *nihonjinron.* And their comments are often based not on their experiences but on their assumptions. For instance, Toru has few interactions with American artists in his everyday life, but he insists that he is good at 'imitating', while American artists are not, as if he had indeed observed or experienced this directly. Yoko has no American friends, but she insists that she knows that Americans are more concerned with their mentality or humanity, while the Japanese are concerned with keeping up their appearances. I consider that the elements of 'Japaneseness' pointed out by these young people are also, in fact, seen among Americans: many American artists are also inspired by other people's art and apply such models in their own artworks; not a few Americans try to keep up good appearances, by exchanging many formal greetings, exhibiting their successes, or being greatly concerned about their body images.

Because most of the young Japanese have few occasions to interact with Americans, they do not have enough personal experiences to differentiate themselves from Americans. Rather, when they want to describe their own cultural distinctiveness, they tend to focus on particular aspects of Japanese people and culture which are consistent with discourses of *nihonjinron.* In fact, they have also observed and experienced some incidents which are inconsistent with discourses of *nihonjinron.* According to Makoto, his Japanese friend working in a Japanese hair salon in the East Village told him that most American customers were very punctual for appointments. However, neither Makoto nor his friend described this as representing 'Americanness', because punctuality is generally considered as a legitimate element of Japaneseness. These young people rarely recognise what they have observed as 'Americanness' or 'Japaneseness' except by reference to a certain category that is defined, in advance.

As discussed earlier, Naoki Sakai (1988) argues that Japan's uniqueness and identity are provided insofar as Japan stands out as a particular object in the universal field of the West. But this is nothing but the positing of Japan's identity within Western terms, which in return, still establishes the centrality of the West, as the universal point of reference (cf. pp.57-8). As long as these young Japanese borrow expressions from discourses of *nihonjinron* when attempting to revalue their own identities, they will never succeed in overcoming their subordination to the West. Instead, an anticipated consequence is that they unwittingly corroborate in establishing the universality of the West.

5.4 Race and Ethnic Relation in London

5.4.1 Becoming 'Racialised'

British Whites

A culturally constructed sense of 'Englishness' is one of the core characteristics of race and ethnic relations in London. Here, the notion of ethnicity (the English) has connected to nation (the English) and race (Anglo-Saxon, whites)[78] (Hall, 1996b:446-7). After migration, a few respondents become more conscious of this centrality of 'Englishness', but most of the young Japanese still do not have a clear idea of the difference between 'the British' and 'the English'. This is because the word '*Igirisu-jin*'[79] corresponds both to 'the British' and to 'the English' in the Japanese language.

These young Japanese seriously attempt to become familiar with British whites, as their primary purpose for coming to London is to acquire 'cultural capital' for their art careers; for this purpose, they have to get closer to 'whiteness', which is placed as the norm in Western representations of art (Dyer, 1997:3). Many of them, however, find it harder to enter white social circles than they anticipated. Because Nozomu, Ryo, and Emi do not attend any college, they attempt to develop acquaintances with British whites by means of conscious strategies, such as attending churches, despite the fact they do not want to be Christian. In Nozomu's case, he spends his life in London going to an English language school in north London and visiting clothes/shoe manufactures in and around London for his future fashion business. As he notes:

> Q: Do you want to make friends with *Igirisu-jin*?
>
> A: Yes. Because I like to play billiards, I went to a pool bar to make friends

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[78] On the other hand, in New York City, it is considered that a variety of white ethnicities have been 'assimilated' into a category, 'white American', although white ethnicities have been used symbolically (Gans, 1979a:1-18). See the introduction of Chapter 7 for a detailed explanation.

[79] *Igirisu* is a loanword from a Portuguese word, 'Ingrez'. The Japanese word, *Jin* means people.

> with *Igirisu-jin*. …There are members-only billiard places in Angel and Kings Cross. Last week I went to one and expected to meet English gentlemen because *Igirisu* is the birthplace of billiards. The entrance was gorgeous, and I pressed a buzzer to get in. But it was totally different from what I expected! …I only saw many rich Chinese kids playing billiards and betting money. I just watched them for a couple of hours, drinking a beer, and then left. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 3 months)

> Four months later:
> Q: Have you made friends with *Igirisu-jin*?
> A: I haven't. Have you made friends with *Igirisu-jin*? I want to have some.
> Q: Didn't you plan to become friends with them by playing billiards?
> A: It doesn't help. They always just leave after games.

Nozomu expected it to be much easier to become friends with British whites, but he finds that their common interest in billiards rarely overcomes their difference in terms of race. Other respondents do have daily interactions with British whites in college, flats, clubs, parties, and cultural events. They tend to make friends with British whites, mostly those who have specific interests in Japanese animation, manga, or technologies. Female respondents tend to become friendly with British white men, by making use of their femininity as a resource (this will be discussed in Chapter 6).

Meanwhile, some of the young Japanese develop negative impressions of whites, because they have had encounters with what is commonly known as 'yob' or 'lager lout' culture (White, 2003), being physically attacked or threatened on the street by young white men:

> Q: What is your impressions of *igirisu-jin* ?
> A: I don't like them because I met many bad people. In everyday life, they are very irresponsible at the post office or police stations. …In early December, I was riding on my bicycle in town. It was around eleven or midnight. Then, a drunk bumped into me. It was around Chinatown or Soho. I was hurled away. I saw the man. When I stood up and looked back, I saw the man

> running away at a dash. It was just a drunken prank. It was really terrible. I had my wrist sprained, and went to hospital and had an X-ray examination. …Early this year, then, someone stole the bicycle. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 7 months)

> Q: Have you experienced racial discrimination?
>
> A: When I was walking on the street, someone yelled at me. It often happens, like once a week. My neighbourhood [in a southeast area of Greater London] is a horribly racist area. I had heard about it from a Japanese girl, and then I experienced it personally. A black girl, who is my flatmate, also told me the same thing… When my Japanese friend lived in Canterbury, she was walking after language school. Then, someone poured paint over her head. There was a paper on the can and it said, 'Go back, Jap!' (Yayoi, female, age 21, after 1 year and 3 months)

These unpleasant personal interactions bring about contradictory meanings in their idea of whites. That is, the young Japanese had regarded 'whiteness' as supreme in terms of art and culture, but now they see arrogance or rudeness in 'whiteness' as well.

Since they hope to get closer to 'whiteness' in terms of art and culture, most of them do not voluntarily approach 'blacks', e.g., Africans, Arabs, Indians, Pakistanis, or West Indians, who draw their attention through contrast to 'whites'. However, they often interact with young people from East Asia:

> I think I can get along better with people from Hong Kong than mainland Chinese. Compared with people from Hong Kong, I get along better with Koreans. But recently I feel the Taiwanese might be the closest to us. I think they are fond of the Japanese. They are interested in Japan. Koreans are relatively warm-hearted. Chinese always want to take the initiative. Koreans are more modest. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 3 months)

> Most students are Japanese and Koreans. There are some Taiwanese as well. …I feel a strong affinity for them as if we are the same race. We can't communicate well in English, but I think they are nice people. (Aiko, female,

age 20, after 3 months)

As with the New York group, these young Japanese come to consider Koreans and Taiwanese more similar to them in terms of race and culture than other ethnic groups. Clearly, their ways of thinking become more 'racialised' than they lived in Japan.

5.4.2 The Racial and Ethnic Hierarchy

White Privileges

The young Japanese in London also come to recognise the privilege of 'whiteness'. Aiko, for example, studies fashion media in a college near Bond Street and comes to feel that she is despised by a British classmate:

> A: British people are friendlier than I thought. But I sometimes feel I am looked down on. But there are good people too. They kindly show me their notebooks...
>
> Q: Who looks down on you?
>
> A: She is young, 22 or 23. Well, she is self-assertive, but she is often late for class. I thought she was typically British. I thought there were many girls like her but there were not so many... She never talks to me. She looks a little prim and cold. (Aiko, female, age 20, after 7 months)

The privileged position of British whites becomes clearer when these young Japanese interact with young people coming from other European countries. Yayoi, who studies performing arts in college, develops complex relationships with British, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese classmates:

> Q: Have you become friends with English [or British] girls?
>
> A: No. I have no close English [or British] girlfriends who I can hang out with.
>
> Q: Is it difficult to make friends with them?
>
> A: Why? Well, it might be because I can't speak English fluently... My

Spanish friend and Portuguese friend speak English slowly and I understand what they say. Even when we can't describe our feelings well, we can communicate well. But when I talk with *Igirisu-jin*, they have an advantage. They talk a lot faster and I can't say anything…

Q: Do you think they are mean to you?

A: I don't know why, but the meanest is a Dutch girl. We call her 'bitch Dutch'. She is an international student like us, but she speaks English very fluently. …She becomes friends with British girls quickly and she seems to want to become *Igirisu-jin*. Because she has the same appearance as *Igirisu-jin* and speaks English very fluently, it is difficult to tell that she is Dutch unless she says so. She is also an international student, but she looks down on me or my Spanish friend or other international students… While the Spanish friend, Portuguese friend, and I were chatting, we were complaining that *Igirisu-jin* are very childish and they often speak ill of others. …After all, we realised that we can get along well only with international students. We all were so depressed.

Q: …Had you heard about such relationships through the media while you were in Japan?

A: The status of the Japanese in Britain? Well, I hadn't heard much about it. I couldn't have imagined how I would get involved in such relationships and how I'd feel, how I'd think. (Yayoi, female, age 20, after 7 months)

Aiko also finds that some Europeans are not quite 'white':

> Most Italians are nice and kind. I feel more affinity for them than for *Igirisu-jin*. Italians speak English with a considerable accent. In my class, there is an Italian boy and his English is not so good. He rolls his tongue very much when he speaks English. One day he spoke English with his accent in class, and a British white boy laughed at him scornfully. After that, I don't like that British boy. I was angry because we were trying as hard as we could when speaking English. …*Igirisu-jin* often ask me, 'Pardon?', because of my pronunciation, even when my grammar was correct. I tend to become quiet in front of *Igirisu-jin*. But it is easy for me to talk with Italians, as they speak English with an accent as well, so I feel we are equal. (Aiko, female, age 20, after 7 months)

Aiko and Yayoi consider 'whites' coming from Italy, Spain, or Portugal to be closer to them than British whites. Such young Europeans are not regarded as 'white' as the English, because some whites are 'whiter'[80] than others. This fact connects those young Europeans with the young Japanese.

Sensitivity to Racism

Unlike the New York group, several people in the London group become conscious of racial discrimination, and report their experiences in terms of 'subtle racism'. Emi spends her life in London producing illustrations in her room near Brick Lane without attending any educational institution. She describes her impressions:

> A: I sometimes think I am discriminated against.
> Q: How?
> A: Sometimes I am treated with a very cold attitude by clerks. Then I observed them. If they had treated the next customer in the same way, I could have thought it was just their manners. But I suspected that this was because I was Asian. (Emi, female, age 23, after 11 months)

As noted earlier, some people reported their experience of more blatant acts of discrimination, such as physical attacks or threats on the street. Differences in the respondents' awareness of racial discrimination may be attributed to differences in race and ethnic relations between London and New York City. In London, some respondents encountered blatant discriminatory acts by whites, mostly by those in the working class. Since these young Japanese tended to regard whites as privileged, they often thought that such whites discriminated against them from a position of social privilege. On the other hand, in New York City, few respondents were physically attacked or threatened by whites. But some respondents were insulted on the streets by some blacks or Hispanics who internalised oppositional identities. These young people in New York City regarded blacks and Hispanics as the people in the lower classes who were discriminated against. Therefore, most of them did not regard such people as discriminating or having prejudice against them from a position of any power.

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[80] According to Dyer, 'whiteness as a coalition also incites the notion that some whites are whiter than others, with the Anglo-Saxons, Germans, and Scandinavians usually providing the apex of whiteness under British imperialism, US development, and Nazism' (Dyer, 1997:19).

As the young Japanese in London repeatedly experience negative race-related incidents, such practices have been 'normalised and slipped into the context of daily life' (Simmill-Binning et al., 2003:48). After living in the city for two years, Yumiko, who has begun to study in a postgraduate programme in Kensington, comes to think:

> Don't you experience discrimination very often? The other day, when I went to a pub near my college, I was about to sit next to my British classmate. But a middle aged man, who was also sitting next to him, looked at me and said, 'You should turn back and go away'. I already knew many middle-aged men don't want foreigners to come to pubs. I've experienced such things many times. But my classmate didn't know such things and got so angry. I told him that this kind of thing happens to me very often. There is no use getting angry. (Kumiko, female, age 28, after 2 years)

A Sense of Superiority to East Asia

Many of the young Japanese in London distance themselves from mainland Chinese, who are 'racial insiders' but 'cultural outsiders' to them, as with those in New York City. As Emi claims:

> I discriminate against others. I really don't like to be mistakenly called Chinese. Well, this may be a bad attitude, but I don't want to be seen as Chinese, because they are not cool. (Emi, female, age 23, after 9 months)

What is distinctive in the London group is that they develop a strong sense of superiority towards Koreans and Taiwanese. Aiko maintains:

> A: Taiwanese people like Japanese people, don't they? They have a strong

> affinity for Japan. Well, it's something like adoration. Many Taiwanese people seem to want to become familiar with me. They often talk to me. Someone told me that Taiwanese or Koreans wanted to be familiar with Japanese people, just because we were Japanese. It's a bit sad.
>
> Q: Do you know why?
>
> A: I wonder why. But, among these people, we are above them. As for clothes, ours is superior to theirs. Koreans are not so cool. Koreans just copy Tokyo fashion. (Aiko, female, after 7 moths)

Moreover, several people claim that the Japanese are 'the closest to the West'. They often use the West's gaze as the basis for their views of others and contend that the Japanese are seen as superior to other Asians by Westerners:

> Of course, Japan is not part of the West. But, after I came here, I began to think that Japan is the closest to the West among Asian countries. We have more daily contact with Western culture than Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, or Thai people. For instance, in my class [in English language school], they didn't understand some names of Western dishes. I was so surprised that they didn't know such common names. They didn't know many Hollywood stars or famous *Igirisu-jin* either. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 3 months)

> After I came here, I found that Japanese are accepted more than other Asians by foreigners. They said that they didn't like Chinese, or Koreans were bad. So I asked why. They told me that Japan was the closest to Europe. Italians, British, and Greeks said so. They thought in Japan there were many buildings like New York City, and also women wearing kimono. They said it was well-mixed. (Shota, male, age 22, after 6 months)

According to Koichi Iwabuchi, Japan's modern national identity has always been imagined in an asymmetrical totalising triad between 'Asia', 'the West', and 'Japan'. While 'the West' played the role of the modern Other to be emulated, 'Asia' was cast as the image of Japan's past, a negative portrait which illustrates the extent to which Japan has been successfully modernised. However, the Japanese discursive construction of 'Asia' is marked by the impossibility of a clear separation between Japan and Asia. In its history, the issue of 'commonality and difference' in Japan's relationship to other Asian nations was often understood in terms such as 'similar but superior' or 'in but above Asia' (Iwabuchi, 2002:6-16).

Probably, from the respondents' subjective viewpoints, the attitudes of some mainland Chinese who do not appear culturally sophisticated are inconsistent with their previous image of London that focuses on whites and high culture. The young Japanese feel the need to distance themselves from mainland Chinese and to identify themselves as more 'Westernised'. On the other hand, they can feel a sense of 'contemporaneity'[81] (Iwabuchi, 2002:156) to young people from Taiwan and South Korea, which have achieved a high degree of industrialisation and modernisation. Some young Japanese thus come to regard themselves as similar but *far* superior to, *far* above young Koreans and Taiwanese.

5.4.3 Renegotiating Their Sense of Japaneseness

Young Japanese Men in London: Jun, Nozomu, Ryo, and Shota

After migration, the young Japanese men in London find it difficult to make friends with British whites. They also begin to recognise that they will never be able to speak English as fluently as native speakers, and think that they only need to communicate with Westerners to some extent, for the purpose of cultural production. Some of them assume that British whites will value them for other abilities besides the English language, although, in fact, communicating in 'standard' English is very important for achieving upward social mobility in British society, whether socioeconomically or culturally. Ryo hopes to become a professional pianist and takes private piano lessons in north London. He wished to speak English fluently before, but now he thinks:

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[81] That is, their nations have gone though the urban consumerism of an expanding middle class, the changing role of women, the development of communication technologies and media industries, the reworking of local cultural values, and the re-territorialisation of images diffused by American popular culture (Iwabuchi, 2002:156).

> A: I'm beginning to hate the English language. I feel disgusted with the language. …
>
> Q: Can you be successful even if you can't speak as fluently as a native speaker?
>
> A: I think I can. Some people are working and living here with their English with strange accents. In particular, Indians have strange accents. I thought they couldn't speak English. But after observing them talking with British people, I realised that they just have strange pronunciation. I was concerned about this before, but now I think language isn't a serious obstacle. (Ryo, male, age 26, after 1 year and 2 months)

Through sporadic personal interactions with British whites, these young Japanese men begin to recognise white supremacy, so that they attempt to resist it and revalue their sense of Japaneseness. In the same way as the New York group, they use common ideas and expressions from discourses of *nihonjinron*, such as 'politeness', 'uniqueness', or 'vertical relationships':

> A: Do you like Japan?
>
> Q: I like it so much. Japanese people are generally sensitive and attentive. When I was travelling in many countries in Europe, I thought Japan was more developed than these countries. But I also thought Japan has a lot of problems perhaps because it is an island country; for example, *vertical relationships* among people in the workplace. But *horizontal relationships* are more important for people here. I deeply feel that vertical relationships are strong in Japan. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 11 months)

> Now I see Japan from a different viewpoint. I've always liked Japan since I was in Japan. But now I like it more deeply. I've found my position and Japan's position. It's not about high and low. I've confirmed that there is something only Japan has. It is often said that the Japanese highly think of *honne to*

> *tatemae,*[82] but as I am Japanese, I don't want to be totally Europeanised. (Shota, male, age 22, after 6 months)

Again, their comments are often based on their assumptions that derive from discourses of *nihonjinron* rather than on direct experiences. Nozomu, for instance, has never worked in London. But he explains that horizontal relationships are more important for people in London, and also that vertical relationships are strong in Japan, as if he actually observed it.

It is also significant that some of these young Japanese men start 'autoexoticizing' or 'self-Orientalizing' (Kondo, 1997:10), and reproduce the West's gaze and their Otherness, by highly evaluating authentic, exotic, and traditional Japaneseness. As Shota notes:

> I like Japan very much. After I return to Japan, I want to let other Japanese know the good points of Japan. As an architect, I want to build something in which we can see real Japaneseness. ...I hope there is a symbolic building in Tokyo, so we can say this is Tokyo or Japan, like Edo Castle. (Shota, male, age 22, after 6 months)

Occasionally, Westerners let them know that they appreciate some aspects of traditional Japanese culture, such as kimono or samurai. These young Japanese men also observe that Japanese traditional art and culture are being introduced by British media. Since they are interested in 'distinguishing' themselves in the field of art, they come to believe such Japaneseness to be their strongest asset.

Furthermore, some of them become more interested in Japanese history and begin to look at books or films about this subject. Nozomu remarks:

> A: Well, do you think you have a sense of nationalism?

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[82] To distinguish between situations in which a person might express her or his personal feelings and situations in which the person is impelled to repeat the accepted view.

> Q: Yes. Recently, I often see war films, like *The Tokyo Trials*. My friend and I were saying that we were lucky as we were born after the Wars. In the past, Japan was strong, wasn't it? Japan won over Russia. Then, America defeated Japan completely, though. But Japan was the strongest among Asia. That means that Japan worked hardest among Asia in those days. So I deeply feel that Japan is a great country. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 11 months)

Thus, these young Japanese men not only heighten their sense of Japanese national identity but also develop the strongest nationalistic sentiment among all respondents in this study. This is probably because they were more privileged in terms of ethnicity, gender, and other factors in their homeland (as they are 'Japanese' 'men' with a college degree or a better career) than the other respondents. For them, Japanese national identity appears to highly value them.

From their experience of cultural production in London, they may bring some cultural capital home, but they will also bring their heightened sense of nationalistic sentiment and rivalry to the West to their homeland. Before returning to Japan, Shota mentioned that he was planning to find a job as an architect in a governmental organisation, and Nozomu said that he was hoping to do international fashion business. Through their experiences in the West, they begin to hope to contribute to the prosperity of their nation. However, unknowingly, they reproduce discourses of *nihonjinron* and also internalise the West's gaze which 'Orientalises' Japan.

Young Japanese Women in London: Aiko, Emi, Kumiko, Mihoko, Sayaka, Wakana, and Yayoi

During the post-migration period, the young Japanese women in London have most frequent interactions with people of their host country (because of their femininity and attendance to college. This will be explained in Chapter 6), but it is still difficult for them to enter English social circles. Some are frustrated by the fact that they cannot develop social networks in art worlds in London, although it is much easier for them to do so in Tokyo. As it also turns out to be difficult to improve their English skills, like their male counterparts, some female respondents begin to convince themselves by thinking that British whites will value them for other abilities besides the English language:

> A: I may not be able to improve my English that much. Now I think I should compete with others by using abilities other than English.
>
> Q: You mean you will give up studying English hard?
>
> A: I won't make much effort anymore. ...there are many bilinguals, and many Japanese can speak English these days. At first, I wanted to be able to speak English. ... If people always label me as a foreigner, other abilities are more important. People will respect me if I show my ability to think. *Keeping up appearances* is a bad characteristic of the Japanese. Here, people don't listen to me unless I show what I have done and what I am able to do, rather than insisting I can do this, I can do that. ...I still hope to improve my English to some extent, but I wonder how they think about my improper pronunciation. Here people often tell me I have an American accent, but I don't care. I am Japanese, so that's fine. Whatever my accent is, I will say, 'Do you understand what I want to say?' If they say yes, I am fine. (Kumiko, female, age 25, after 7 months)

As a result of such experiences, these young women begin to experience their sense of Japaneseness in ways that they never did prior to migration. Sayaka comes to think that the Japanese may indeed have some negative characteristics:

> Maybe, Japanese people are *working too hard.* ...Here, seemingly, British people are good at managing their vertical and horizontal relationships. But as I've never worked here, I am not very sure. If I begin to work here, I may have different opinions. In Japan, we have *seniority*. I don't think it's good, but it will be hard to change it. (Sayaka, female, age 27, after 10 months)

On the other hand, some women attempt to revalue their sense of Japaneseness:

> Q: Do you think about Japan recently?
>
> A: Yes, I do. I think it is convenient to live in Japan. I think everyone should appreciate it more. When I was talking with my Japanese friend, we were saying that Japanese people often criticise our country and politics, but once we live abroad, we realise that Japan is a country that is so convenient, wealthy, and responsible. Trains always come on time. Some people say Japanese people are cold, but I think Japanese people are indeed kind. Because we have *only one race,* in a sense, we are protected. This is really good. People complain about Japan because they are not aware of these things yet. They don't know. Before I came to *Igirisu*, I didn't know this either. (Yayoi, female, age 20, after 7 months)

> Q: Will you stop thinking that you're Japanese, if you live here for ten years?
>
> A: Well, I don't think so. Since my childhood, I have been greatly affected by Japanese education. Here I deeply feel so on many occasions. When I participated in discussion in class, I always listened to them politely and hesitated to express my opinions. People here think that Japanese people are very *polite*. I think it's a very good thing. I think I am very *quiet* as well. (Kumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year and 2 months)

Whether they criticise or appreciate their sense of Japaneseness, they often borrow ideas and expressions from discourses of *nihonjinron*, as with the other respondent groups. Yayoi appreciates Japan's homogeneity, although Japan is a multiethnic nation. Kumiko regards the Japanese, including herself, as quiet, although she is in fact talkative when she speaks in Japanese (and also, she often describes her personality as self-assertive, when comparing herself with her Japanese friends).

Even so, as these young women observe, listen to, and exchange opinions with people in their host country in their everyday lives, they also begin to describe some aspects of Japaneseness with their own ideas and words. Yayoi held the idea that *all* Westerners are mature and individualistic but now she reconsiders:

> During recess, some [British] girls [in her college] quickly get out of our

> classroom, though they are lazy during class. They often stay in the cafeteria. If I don't join in with them, they usually say, 'Why not?' They always make a big circle there... I found that this country is not a country of individualism. It's not true. I don't want to criticise them, but when I was talking with my mother, she told me that Westerners are more mature than the Japanese. But after I came here, I find, at least, 18 year-old Japanese young people are often more mature than 18-year-old *Igirisu-jin*. (Yayoi, female, age 20, after 7 months)

Kumiko finds that British whites often have stereotypical images of the Japanese:

> The other day, in class [of her postgraduate course], we discussed regulations on the Internet for youths under 15. A [British] classmate suddenly said, 'But in Japan, there are *rabuhoteru* [or lover's-rendezvous hotels], aren't there? What are they like?' I was so surprised to hear that he knew such a strange thing. I couldn't say anything. It is a distorted view of Japan. British people focus on information about particular aspects of Japan, rather than the whole aspects of Japan. They condense such particular aspects in their images and say, 'This is Japan'. I've become very interested in how they interpret Japan, or how Japan is seen from outside. (Kumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year and 2 months)

Thus, when rearticulating their identities, these young Japanese women often refer to 'old' Japaneseness, which has been constructed within the play of specific modalities of power and which defines Japan's identity in terms of deviations from the West. But at the same time, they begin to recognise the constructed nature of such Japaneseness and attempt to create their 'new' Japaneseness.

5.5 Conclusion

The twenty-two young Japanese, who bring their assumptions about their 'homogenous' national identity with them to their host country, then get consciously involved with race and ethnic relations for the first time in their lives. As a result, both in New York City and in London, they come to find that their previous image of 'the West' was an 'illusion' or at least different from their experiences of the 'reality' of the city. Gradually, they become 'racialised' and begin to compare themselves with the whites who are the dominant racial group, as well as with East Asians who are 'racial insiders' to them. Having faced various obstacles, due to their 'marked race', almost all respondents come to renegotiate their sense of their Japaneseness.

Their identity negotiation indeed fits the model of identification that Hall described (see Chapter 1). In other words, their Japanese national identity is not intrinsic or essential but is constituted within representations and discourses. More specifically, while living in their homeland, many of them had unconsciously absorbed discourses of *nihonjinron* through the media and education. After migration, having found it difficult to become included in mainstream life in their host country, these young people begin to renegotiate their sense of Japaneseness. In so doing, many of them often imagine their Japaneseness in abstract terms, without much reference to their own experiences. They do not have many opportunities to talk or interact with Anglo-Saxons or the English, who represent the host country's national distinctiveness. So these young Japanese reproduce discourses of *nihonjinron* as if they were based on their 'lived experience', describing their sense of Japaneseness as 'unique' or 'particular'. Since such Japanese national identity has been constructed on a hierarchy between the two poles – Japan/the West, this attempt can never succeed. They are likely to collaborate, inadvertently, in establishing the universality of the West.

As the previous studies of Japanese migrants have suggested, the ways in which the young Japanese renegotiate their sense of national identity are highly gendered, in this case. Moreover, differences in their educational/occupational backgrounds affect the process of their identity experience. My results confirm the idea that race/ethnicity, gender, and class are all 'interlocked' (Glenn, 1985), thereby all influencing these young migrants' sense of national identity in very complex ways. The next chapter will focus on gender in the 'interlocking system'.

Chapter 6 Gendered Japaneseness: Negotiating Images of 'Submissive' and 'Exotic' Women

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how gender affects the ways in which female respondents renegotiate their sense of Japaneseness, as they both conform to and resist the stereotypical images of Japanese women. To begin with, two important theoretical pillars are examined. Firstly, current theorising has revealed that 'gender', as well as 'sex', is a social construct. In the field of sociology, Harold Garfinkel's ethnomethodological study of a transsexual male, Agnes, first pointed out that a person can 'pass' as a 'woman' by learning what it is to be a woman. Gender is therefore 'accomplished' through everyday interactions (Garfinkel, 1967:116-85). From a different perspective, Erving Goffman (1976) has conceptualised 'gender display'. In his view, people 'display' or 'present' their own gender to others. Such behaviour is based not on 'essential nature' but on 'conventionalised portrayals' of feminine and masculine characteristics.

In recent years, famously Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) has had a great impact on our understanding of gender and sex. She argues that if gender does not follow automatically from sex, there is no reason to believe that there are inevitably two genders. If we question this belief, we must also begin to ask whether sex itself is simply a fact of nature. Once the immutability of sex is contested, it becomes apparent that 'sex' itself is as culturally constructed as gender. Bodies become gendered through the continual performance of gender. Hence gender, rather than being part of an inner essence, is 'performative', and to be feminine is to 'perform' femininity (Jackson and Scott, 2002:19). Thus, we can say that gender is not a set of traits, but rather, femininity, as well as masculinity, is what people are 'doing' through everyday interactive processes and practices (West and Zimmerman, 1987:129).

Secondly, many scholars claim that ethnic 'minority' women are oppressed in the 'interlocking systems' of race, class, and gender. As is often discussed, since the 1980s, second-wave Western feminism has come under criticism for its universalistic, homogenised and 'white' 'middle-class' assumptions about women. It has ignored the multiplicity of women's experiences according to race, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, and other elements.[83] Much effort has been made to understand how white women are located in a more privileged position than 'non-white' women. As Nirmal Puwar explains, when a body is emptied of its gender or race, this is a mark of how its position is the privileged norm. Its power emanates from its ability to be seen as just normal, to be without corporeality. In other words, with 'whiteness' defined as 'an absence of colour', whiteness exists as an 'unmarked' normative position. 'Non-white' women, therefore, become highly visible as deviations from the norm and invisible as the norm. Taking gender and race together, we have a complicated and enmeshed layering of 'othering', whereby different bodies are 'othered' according to one criterion or another in relation to the centrifugal somatic norm (Puwar, 2004:57-9;143).

This 'othering' of ethnic 'minority' women is practised by various institutions, and the media is one of them. As Patricia Hill Collins notes, 'portraying African-American women as stereotypical mammies, matriarchs, welfare recipients, and hot mommas' has been essential to the ideological justifications for their subordination. Such stereotypical images, or 'controlling images' in her term, are designed to objectify black women and make racism, sexism, and poverty appear to be natural, normal, and an inevitable part of everyday life (Collins, 1991:67-8).

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[83] For example, Audre Lorde writes, 'as a forty-nine-year-old Black lesbian feminist socialist mother of two, including one boy, and a member of an inter-racial couple, I usually find myself a part of some group defined as other, deviant, inferior, or just plain wrong' (Lorde, 1984:114).

Considering the above two theoretical perspectives, we can say that when ethnic 'minority' women show particular characteristics or behaviours, these are not simply their displays of their 'nature' but rather their 'accomplishment', 'display' or 'performance'.[84]

Masculinised Japaneseness in Japan

In the case of Japan, Japanese women have always held a mode of femininity which is 'unmarked' in terms of 'race'. Rather, it is Ainu, Chinese, Korean or Okinawan women who are oppressed in the interlocking systems of race, gender, and class. Even so, Japanese women are still 'marked' in terms of gender, as Japanese men are regarded as the norm of the nation. That is, predominantly male political leaders, intellectuals, journalists, educators, or businessmen have constructed the essence of Japaneseness through discourses of *nihonjinron,* by imagining how Japanese 'men', such as samurais, monks, and businessmen, think, feel, and behave. In so doing, they masculinised Japaneseness and consequently have established another concept: 'women'.

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[84] Karen Pyke and Denise Johnson have investigated this point, by conducting a case study of Korean- and Vietnamese-American women. This case study revealed that respondents often changed their attitudes and behaviours between the different settings of mainstream society and ethnic society. These Asian women tended to act 'freer' and 'more self-expressive' in white-dominated settings, and tended to perform the role of the 'submissive', 'quiet' and 'controlled' woman in Asian-dominant settings. In addition, some respondents believed that white American femininity is normal and superior and that greater gender equality is always found in white-dominant settings. They therefore obscured gender inequality between white Americans and ignored recent feminist movements among Asian women. Overall, many respondents had internalised their 'controlling images', thereby reproducing their oppression. Pyke and Johnson argue that particular axes of domination, such as race, class, sexuality, and age, mould a 'hegemonic femininity' that is venerated and extolled in the dominant culture. This 'hegemonic femininity' emphasises the superiority of some women over others who are cast in the category of 'subordinated femininities', and privileges white upper- and middle-class women (Pyke and Johnson, 2003:35).

The modern concept of 'women' in Japan dates back to the Meiji period when the Education Ministry diffused the notion of 'good wives, wise mothers' as the role model for women (*ryōsai kenbo*). Women were to remain in their family (*ie*) and to faithfully execute their duties as household managers, especially as educators who instilled proper Japanese values in their children[85] (Kondo, 1990:266-9). Chizuko Ueno argues that within the nationalisation agenda of the modernisation project in Japan in the late nineteenth century, there was little awareness of the importance of the issue of the problem of women as 'targets' of nationalisation or modernisation. From the very beginning, the nation was defined, through the exclusion of women, in masculine terms[86] (Ueno, 2004:3-65).

During the U.S. Occupation, Japanese women were extended suffrage and the right to run for political office. Additionally, they were given equal rights in marriage and compulsory education (Kondo, 1990:273-4). Nevertheless, until the mid-1970s, the number of full-time housewives had grown in Japan, as more men began to work as company employees.[87] According to Emiko Ochiai, during the period of high economic growth (1955 to 1967), the two dominant images of women, that is, 'full-time housewives' and 'young *BG*' (business girls) were established and widely diffused through women magazines. While the popular image of housewives was 'mature and self-disciplined', the popular image of young *BG* was 'charming, putting on Western-style make-up, and attractive as potential housewives' (Ochiai, 1995:106-29).

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[85] This vision of the woman's place marked a dramatic change from the Tokugawa period, when child-rearing was regarded as the duty of responsible males in the family. In addition, the Meiji government's emphasis on female domesticity is especially ironic in light of the prominent role of women in the industrialisation of Japan (Kondo, 1990:267-72).

[86] According to Ueno, at a time of total war, with its unprecedented and inflated expectations of the public sphere, there were two options for the reorganisation of gender: one was to aim at the nationalisation of the private sphere while maintaining the existing gender role assignments (the segregation model); the other was to dismantle the gender role assignments themselves (the integration model). In the case of Japan, women were excluded from nationalisation, as the government opted for the gender segregation strategy. These two gender strategy options have long been debated in feminist discourses as a confrontation over the question of equality versus difference. If we go along with gender segregation we must adhere to norms of femininity. At first sight, equality appears to be achieved by the strategy of disregarding gender. However, for as long as the public sphere is defined in terms of masculinity, women who become producers or soldiers have to resign themselves to being second-class workers or soldiers. Whether in accordance with the segregation or the integration model, what the paradigm nationalisation of women, obtained by masculinising the nation made clear was the all too obvious fact that women were not citizens (Ueno, 2004:3-65).

Since the mid-1970s, the number of women employed has increased, and more than 10 % of the number has always been part-time workers (Seiyama, 2000:9) (also see Chapter 4). According to a 1983 Labour Ministry survey on women's attitudes towards home and work, 55.2% of all respondents said their ideal scenario was to find a job, stop working temporarily to marry and bear children, and then resume work a few years later (Kondo, 1990:276). At the time, the popular images of women became diversified, including 'sexy women' (1968-74), 'girlish women', and 'strong women' (1975-87), and these transformed according to social changes in Japan (Ochiai, 1995:106-29). Since the 1970s, feminist movements in the field of academics and politics have become more active in Japan (Inoue, 1995). Nowadays, the image of women has been more diversified, although the roles of women as 'wives' and 'mothers' are still considered very important.

In this way, Japaneseness has been constructed, by putting women into another category. Shunsuke Tsurumi notes that if we unveil Japanese women's culture, we may be able to display new kinds of Japanese national identity, which are different from the masculinised Japaneseness defined by the government ideology (Tsurumi, 1991:720).

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[87] As the majority of men began to work full-time as company employees, it became unnecessary for married women to help farming or self-employed businesses within their households (Keizaikikakucho, 1984).

Feminised Japaneseness in the West

Once Japanese women move to the West, however, they are identified as 'Asian women' or 'Japanese women' rather than simply as 'women'. They become 'marked' not only in terms of gender but also in terms of 'race'. Although many young women in contemporary Japan have been trying to become more independent and have more diverse identities than in the past, there is still a widely held belief in Western societies that all women from Japan monolithically are more passive and quiet than the average white woman.

One reason for such stereotyping is that an excess of 'controlling images' of 'Asian women' have been constructed and widely diffused in Western societies. According to Renee E. Tajima, in Western films, there are two basic types of the Asian woman: 'the Lotus Blossom Baby' (a.k.a. China Doll, Geisha Girl, shy Polynesian beauty), and 'the Dragon Lady' (prostitutes, devious madams) (Tajima, 1989:309). The Lotus Blossom Baby, a sexual-romantic object, has been the more prominent type, depicted as 'submissive', 'passive', 'quiet', and 'weak'. Picture brides, geisha girls, concubines, and hara-kiri are all mixed together and reintroduced into any number of settings (Tajima, 1989:309-10). By contrast, the Dragon Lady is a mirror image of the evil Oriental man, and seen as a 'deceitful', 'dangerous', and 'treacherous' creature who poisons men as easily as she seduces him (Espiritu, 1996:112). Thus, in Western popular images, Asian women are not portrayed as ordinary people. Rather, Asian women have been both hyperfeminised and masculinised. Such imaging has the function of defining, maintaining, and justifying white privileges (Espiritu, 1996:108; Tajima, 1989:314).

Moreover, while Japan has masculinised Japaneseness, the West has feminised Japan, as it attempts to erase the threatening Japanese other. According to Traise Yamamoto, one particular effect of this process of 'Japanisation' has been to 'reduce'

Japan to a country of childlike women. Because the threat of difference must be defused, but not eliminated, in order for exoticised difference to function, the Japanese male, the threatening other, is discursively erased. Japan becomes the site of accessibility and domination, a site personifying the Japanese feminine that affirms and reaffirms its opposite: white Western masculinity. As she notes:

> The feminization of Japan functions in relation to the masculinised West in the same way that the stereotype of the Japanese woman functions in relation to the white Western male. Both relations are inscribed by overdetermined patterns of submission and domination, in which race and gender difference mark the boundaries of the orientalised other, in a manner that both 'invites' access and allows erasure of the threatening Japanese other, gendered as male. Fetishised as a super-feminised exotic object in whom the soul of the geisha resides, the Japanese woman is configured as ontologically mysterious, sexually available and hungry for contact with the West – via the white western male. (Yamamoto, 1999:22)

Yamamoto goes on to argue that the figure of the Japanese woman has been variously deployed in the United States, over the past century. Between 1860 and 1990, American images of the Japanese woman have undergone four distinct phases: the sensual geisha girl and, simultaneously, the devoted woman (1860-1900); the heathen woman, oppressed by Japanese men and Japanese culture, who must be saved by enlightened Christianity (1910-45); the emancipated Japanese woman, freed by postwar Occupation-style democracy (1945-60); and the empowered Japanese woman, recuperated through a combination of new social history and cultural feminism (1970-90). However, in reality, all these incarnations of the Japanese women are more reflective of changes in American attitudes concerning gender in general, and attitudes to Japanese society, than they are of historical developments in Japan. Though a distinct image of Japanese womanhood was ascendant in each period, 'Japanese women' as an ideological construction of the West, in general, has consistently depended on variations, but not displacements, of the geisha stereotype (Yamamoto, 1999:21-4).

Therefore, once young Japanese women migrate from Tokyo to New York City or London, they are often regarded as racial and ethnic 'minority' women in Western societies where the standard of femininity is attached to Anglo-Saxon or English women. This difference between images of 'women' in Japan and images of 'Japanese women' in the West is likely to have some influence on their identity negotiation. Before migration, the young Japanese women interviewed expected to become successful as artists or have working opportunities in New York City or London. However, after migration, they are likely to find that people in their host country often expect them to 'display' more passive, quiet, and exotic characteristics than they were used to displaying in Japan. Based on these arguments, let us look at how these young Japanese women negotiate their sense of feminised Japaneseness.

6.2 Feminised Japaneseness in New York City

Before migration, most young women in the New York group graduated from high school or two-year colleges, and/or worked as part-time/contract employees. As they were not satisfied with their working conditions, they tended to criticise conventional values that encourage them to have a stable job, rather than to pursue individual dreams (see Chapter 4). So they have migrated to New York City, in order to seek opportunities for 'making it' as artists in the field of modern dance or contemporary arts.

Those who planned to engage in dancing are more interested in black Americans, because black popular culture has positively affected dance culture (Emerson, 2002:115). On the other hand, those who planned to engage in contemporary arts are more interested in white Americans, as whites are overwhelmingly predominant in art worlds (Dyer, 1997:3). Their interests in art and culture entail their interests in people with particular racial backgrounds. Furthermore, because of their femininity, these young Japanese women show specific patterns of interactions with people of a particular class, race, gender, and sexuality.

6.2.1 White American Femininity

One distinctive pattern in their identity negotiation is that most of the young Japanese women develop relatively negative attitudes towards American women, through direct interaction and observation. Among this group, only Yoko admires American women's strength and attaches a positive meaning to it. She actually spends most of her time working at a Japanese hotel in Midtown Manhattan or with her Japanese boyfriend, whom she met quite early in New York City and now lives with. She has no American friends, and her impressions are based on her observation of American students in her dance school in Soho:

> I think American girls are strong. In many respects they are strong. When it comes to dancing, they are good at expressing their feelings. They know how to do it. (Yoko, female, age 28, after 1 year)

On the other hand, some young women develop negative impressions of American women. Fumiko interacts with white female students and teachers in her art college and thinks that white American women are 'aggressive':

> A: American women often attack others. This one white female teacher is so aggressive and has spoken very harsh words to me.
> Q: Do you think you should behave like them?
> A: I don't think so. I want to always be as I am, so I don't have to feel so tense. I think there are many ways to defend myself even if I don't attack others. (Fumiko, female, age 26, after 6 months)

Fumiko has spent more than half of her school years in Western countries as well as in a Southeast Asian country. Even so, she has not internalised the idea that white femininity is the norm. She perceives white American women as 'aggressive', rather than seeing them as a role model.

In Chihiro's case, she lives with her white American friend, Kate, and comes to consider white American women's strength as a form of 'selfishness':

> Q: What do you think about American women?
>
> A: I think they are very strong. I don't want to be that strong, though I want to be strong in a different way. They are selfish rather than strong. If my roommate wants to do something and I don't follow her, her attitude becomes offensive. She cries or laughs according to her mood, so I don't want to be like her. (Chihiro, female, age 23, after 6 months)

Their critical views of white American women seem to arise because while living in Japan, these young women have learned a certain appraisal standard of femininity and have internalised it. After migrating to New York City, however, they recognise that there is a different appraisal standard of femininity, which is attached to the image of white American women. Instead of regarding Anglo-Saxon middle-class femininity as normal or superior, they attempt to redefine it as aberrant and 'aggressive' or 'selfish'.[88]

Their negative attitude is also seen in their relation with American women with other racial backgrounds. Haruka likes black popular culture and attends a downtown dance school. She has a young black American boyfriend, Jazzy, who often plays drums on the street near Times Square. As she remarks:

> Black girls and Hispanic girls have seldom talked to me. When Jazzy and I

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[88] This is a contrast to the case of young Asian American women (Pyke and Johnson, 2003), who have been brought up in the U.S. and have internalised the idea that white femininity is normal and superior.

> hang out and meet his friends, black girls and Hispanic girls talk only to him, so loudly, ignoring me. They just take a glance at me as if they think, 'Who is this girl?' (Haruka, female, age 23, after 9 months)

Mayumi often hangs out with a second-generation Japanese-American woman who is bilingual in English and Japanese, Tomoko. But Mayumi sometimes feels uncomfortable with her 'Americanised' attitude:

> I don't like girls who are Americanised. When I hang out with Tomoko, I couldn't do *burikko* [this Japanese word means that women consciously cultivate an image of sweetness]. But Tomoko changes her attitudes. She blames me for not doing *burikko*. She told me that if I wanted to attract men, I had to do *burikko* anyway. 'Bitch' is the word for her...When she found her favourite man coming, suddenly she started putting on her make-up. She told me that it is normal in America, and it's all a matter of how well you can lie to men. She told me that I am not wise. Women should lie to men. She told me that I have to tell men I can play the piano, even if I can't. I have to tell them I'm good at cooking, even if I can't'. ... But I can't become like them. In Japan, girls criticise a girl like Tomoko. Here, American girls respect each other for carrying out such a strategy. So I can't get along well with Americans. (Mayumi, female, age 28, after 1 year and 8 months)

As the very existence in the Japanese language of the colloquial expression *burikko* implies, some women in Japan do indeed behave in the same way as Tomoko does. However, probably because such a strategy is practised in a different cultural setting from one that Mayumi experienced in Japan, she attributes it to Tomoko's 'Americanness'.

Thus, the femininity that these young Japanese women bring with them from their homeland is no longer the 'standard' of femininity in New York City. Rather, their femininity becomes 'marked' in terms of race. This shift often prevents them from developing friendly relationships with women in their host country, who have different standards of femininity from their own.

6.2.2 Resisting 'Controlling Images'

Another pattern seen in their identity negotiation is that these young Japanese women recognise the 'controlling images' of 'submissive' or 'easy' women, mainly through their personal interactions with men in their host country. In the New York group, all women are heterosexual. While their femininity tends to become an obstacle for their friendships with American women, it often becomes a resource in relationships with some heterosexual American men.

Some of these Japanese women have a great interest in white or black American men. One reason seems to be that they hope to acquire English skills or a green card: Nana and Rie say, 'Getting an American boyfriend is the best way to improve my English' (Nana, female, age 20, after 3 months); and 'Some girls will try to marry any American man to get a green card' (Rie, female, age 27, after 6 months). In addition, traditional attitudes to gender, such as practices of 'ladies first', exercised by some American men, tend to impress these young Japanese women.

Concerning relationships with white American men, the idea that socially or economically powerful positions are held by white men contributes to some Japanese women's views. For example, Nana goes out with a black Jamaican male, but comes to consider the most desirable partner to be white or Japanese:

> I want to get acquainted with white Americans. I don't want to go out with blacks anymore. I don't like Hispanics either. Now I prefer white men who graduated from good universities. ...But I have no opportunities for getting to know such white men, and I almost give up. Recently, my friend, who is working as a nurse, got married. Her husband is a very cute white boy who is ten years younger than her. I asked her where they met, and she said that she met him in a match-making party for American men and Japanese women. My

> friend is 35 years old, and the husband is 25 years old. ... He will be a doctor in the future and is now studying in a graduate program in a famous university. I don't know what kind of personality he has, but I want to marry a man like him. (Nana, female, age 21, after 1 year)

As Tajima argues, popular media have a great influence on this hierarchical relationship, as Asian women are often assigned the role of expendability in situations of illicit Asian-white love (Tajima, 1989:311). Cast as sexually available, Asian women become another exotic possession of white men. In films and network television programmes, interracial sexuality, though rare, occurs principally between white men and Asian women. A combination of sexism and racism makes this form of miscegenation more desirable (Espiritu, 1996:95).

On the other hand, Haruka is interested especially in black American men, and notes:

> I like men with some muscles. I don't like white men. They are too pale, and many whites are bald. Puerto Ricans are better than whites, but I like black Americans best. I have always liked America since I was in elementary school. After I got involved with dancing, I've always had a great interest in black men. (Haruka, female, age23, after 5 months)

Like Haruka, some of the young Japanese women interviewed associate black men with stereotyped 'cool' images of hip-hop culture, exaggerated masculine bodies, and a general 'ladies' man' image.

Haruka and Nana claim that they do not want to have any dating relationship with Japanese men while living in the city. Moreover, both male and female respondents in the New York group often note that Japanese men are unpopular among American women. The main reason seems to be that, as Espiritu argues, race mixing between an Asian male and a white female would upset not only racial taboos but those that attend patriarchal authority as well. In films and television programmes, as on-screen sexual rivals of whites, Asian males are neutralised, unable to sexually engage Asian women and prohibited from sexually engaging white women. Otherwise, they are depicted as inhuman invaders or rapists (Espiritu, 1996:92; 95). Indeed, a male respondent, Toru complains that American women 'don't take notice of Japanese men', although Japanese males are interested in white American women.

Thus, Asian men are persistently desexualised in Western popular media, and this leads many Asian women living in Western society to perceive their ethnic counterparts as undesirable partners (Hamamoto, 1994:42). Some young Japanese women also unwittingly enforce the Eurocentric gender ideology that objectifies both sexes and racialises all Asians, thereby regarding Asian men as passive, weak, traditional, abusive, domineering, short, and so on (Espiritu, 1996:97).

According to the respondents, the Japanese women's love for American men is reciprocal. A common belief that 'Japanese girls are popular' is widely diffused among young Japanese in New York City. Chihiro has heard this from white Americans, but she also finds that there is an underlying meaning:

> Q: Have you heard that Japanese girls are popular here?
>
> A: Yes. But in fact, it is not true as far as I observe other people. Many *gaijin* [foreigners or Westerners] told me that all men liked Japanese girls very much. When one girl told me so, others agreed with her. But I've also heard that Japanese girls are *easy*! Do you think it is true? Some Japanese girls might easily follow men, as many Japanese girls coming to New York are open-minded… (Chihiro, female, age 23, after 6 months)

Chihiro infers that their 'popularity' implies their 'easiness' in relationships with white American men. Similarly, Mayumi criticises relationships between white American men and Japanese women, which she believes are sometimes founded on the fact that some white American men find that they are not attractive enough for white American women and therefore approach Japanese women instead:

> As far as I know, Americans who have Japanese girlfriends are mostly nerds, like those who like comics. 'Defective' Americans often like Japanese women. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 10 months)

As for their relationships with black American men, some female respondents think that Japanese women are often symbolised by Japan's economic power, or 'richness'. Before migration, most women in the New York group had only positive images of black Americans. After migration, however, they face unexpected problems in their relationships with black American men:

> Black men who can speak some Japanese words are untrustworthy. Such men usually have had some Japanese ex-girlfriends. I don't like men who approach me just because I am Japanese. ... Perhaps, they assume that Japanese girls are *rich* or seldom get angry. They may think Japanese girls are *submissive.* After all, they think it is *easy to control* Japanese girls. American women are..., for example, in a nightclub, I saw a black man approaching a Hispanic woman, but she pushed him away! Maybe Japanese girls don't do such things, can't reject men in that way. (Rie, female, age 27, after 6 months)

> Many black boys consider all Japanese girls to be the same. Such men ask ten Japanese girls out, thinking that if he can get at least one girl, it's all right. That's why many Japanese girls who have black boyfriends are working at *pianobā* ['piano bars' or hostess clubs]. After all, black boys don't have jobs, and Japanese girls earn money for them. Many couples live together, but the girls pay the rent for their boyfriends. My friend has lived together with a guy in this way for three years. It isn't really good. (Nana, female, age 20, after 1 year)

These young Japanese women have few occasions to meet middle-class black men as they do not attend American colleges or work in American organisations. But they sometimes experience personal interactions with lower-class black males, some of whom do not hold full-time jobs, through meetings at nightclubs, on streets, or in other public spaces. Then they begin to go out with lower-class black males without knowing much about their underprivileged social backgrounds. This class difference often brings economic factors into their relationships.

Thus, relationships between middle-class white men and young Japanese women are sometimes based on an exchange of cultural capital (whiteness and English language) and social status (as girlfriend/partner of a white man) for subservience; on the other hand, relationships between lower-class black men and young Japanese women are sometimes based on an exchange of a different brand of cultural capital ('cool' aspects of blackness and English language) for economic support and subservience, in addition to their physical attractions, congeniality, or other factors. In both cases, the 'controlling images' of being 'submissive' or 'easy' often become an important element in their relationships.

6.2.3 Making Use of Femininised Japaneseness

As we have seen, these young Japanese women find that white American femininity is the norm; and stereotypical images of Japanese women are diffused among American men. As a result of such discoveries, some of them begin to 'display' feminised Japaneseness. In most cases, they are affected by men's perceptions. As Haruka remarks:

> Everyone likes Japanese girls. All of Jazzy's friends asked me to introduce some Japanese girls to them. All of them have had Japanese girlfriends before, so they can speak in Japanese, like, '*Konnichiwa*'. When I asked them why they liked Japanese, they said that it's because Japanese girls liked blacks. So in turn blacks like Japanese girls too. ... Well, they also said Japanese girls were kind. American girls or Chinese girls were arrogant. Really, Japanese girls do a lot of things for their boyfriends, don't we? (Haruka, female, age 23, after 5 months)

In addition to the opinions of American men, these young women also refer to the opinions of Japanese men. Nana works part-time at a Japanese *pianobā* ('piano bars' or hostess clubs) for Japanese businessmen. One of her customers told her about the 'good points' of Japanese women:

> A: A middle-aged Japanese man told me that American men were looking for kind girls. In America, men and women are now equal, and women have an advantage over men. Japanese girls are still kind and gentle, and American men also look for such kind girls. So he told me I should not become like American women even if I go out with American men.
>
> Q: What do you think about his comments?
>
> A: I don't really know much about American girls. But I thought Japanese girls may treat men with respect. I think it is a good thing. I think it is good that people have an impression that Japanese girls are kind. (Nana, female, age 20, after 1 year)

Before migration, only Mayumi mentioned 'kindness' as their sense of Japaneseness. However, partly because these female respondents are told that Japanese women are 'kind', 'gentle', or 'devoted to men', some of them also come to believe these points to be their positive characteristics and emphasise them, in order to compete with other types of femininities held by American women. In fact, these are often different ways of expressing their 'submissiveness'. Nevertheless, they attempt to thus 'revalue' their mode of femininity, which is constructed as inferior to white American femininity in the country.

Originally, these young Japanese women migrated to the city with their hopes of becoming successful as artists, and tend to consider that having more career opportunities is preferable. Nonetheless, as they attempt to stress that their femininity is their virtue, they sometimes contradict themselves, saying that they can accept *in*equality between men and women:

A: America is trying harder to achieve equality between men and women than Japan, though I don't know if America is really achieving it. But indeed women who hold top positions seem to be increasing here. …I feel women are getting stronger in America. But in Japan, the majority of top position holders are men, though there are a small number of women. In Japan, differences between men and women are considerable. I think there are some merits and demerits. When I was working in Japan, I often used my femininity to do jobs. … In the advertising industry, women often use their charms when they ask men to do difficult jobs. …But if a woman wants to be promoted, it is difficult. She has to discard her femininity.

Q: Which do you prefer?

A: I don't really need equality between men and women. But, if I get married and have babies, I may like it as I can have benefits, like maternity leave. (Fumiko, female, age 26, after 1 year)

A: Don't you think men and women should be equal?

Q: Not really. Maybe girls tend to depend on men, so we don't have to make it more equal in Japan. I am fine with differences between men and women. But, in America, I see women doing any kind of job. I think it's cool. I really don't know if I don't see it in Japan just because people don't accept women. As far as I remember, for sure, there are few female train drivers, or few female bus drivers in Japan. Well, in Japan, if there are women who want to do these jobs but are denied just because they are women, I think we should change it, if it is true. (Nana, female, age 20, after 1 year)

As these young Japanese women find it difficult to 'make it' in the city, they come to believe that feminised Japaneseness, which is constructed in the West, is in fact, their most useful resource. Some of them say that if they do not become successful, the best thing to do is to marry a man with sufficient income, so that they can continue to lead an affluent lifestyle and also engage in cultural production:

Q: Can you stay here for five more years, until you get to the age of 28?

A: No. My father won't allow me to do so. My father told me that if I don't

> become successful by the age of 25 or 26, I should go back to Japan, have *miai* [a marriage meeting], and then, get married. I couldn't do that, but I understand his feelings. The age of 25 or 26 is the limit. My strength is youthfulness. As I've never attended college and I have no certificates, I won't be able to do things when I get old. This is the last chance for me. (Haruka, female, age 23, after 9 months)

> I don't want to get married now. But when I get to a certain age, I want to get married. When I become 26, 27, or 28 and I still can't make it, I will think about marriage (Nana, female, age 21, after 1 year)

> A: You know TV often airs [Japanese] celebrities spending the New Year holidays in Hawaii. I have always envied them since my childhood. I had hoped to lead a good life as a celebrity. If I [go back to Japan and] work as an *OL* ['office lady'] and am still single by the time I am 30 or 35, I would feel regret, like, 'I should have made more efforts in New York City at that time'. But I can't figure out how I can make more efforts now…
> Q: If girls like you want to get married and become housewives after all, why are you trying to make it as artists?
> A: It is because we need to come to a final decision and to settle down someday. So we want to try to make as many efforts as possible before the time. We don't really think we can live by dancing for life. We just want to see whether we have further potential or not. Or some girls just don't want to work, because some girls who learn dancing often make light of women who are working as *OL*. (Mayumi, female, age 27, after 10 months)

In this way, through their experiences in New York City, Haruka, Nana, Mayumi, and Yoko begin to consider that their feminised Japaneseness is the most useful resource for them. However, this is likely to lead them to once again conform to conventional values in male-dominant societies, although they had originally migrated to become successful artists. On the other hand, Chihiro, Fumiko, and Rie continue to attempt to find better prospects besides marriage, by trying to become successful in the field of art or by seeking an alternative way.

6.3 Feminised Japaneseness in London

Most of the young Japanese women in the London group graduated from college and/or worked as full-time/contract employees in various art fields in Japan. Instead of hoping to find new identities, they aim to acquire 'cultural capital' – e.g., English proficiency, an art degree or certificate, and work experience in the field of fashion styling, graphic art, performing art, and product design in London – and take it back to their homeland, right from the beginning of their migratory projects. Even so, since they also hope to gain 'social capital' or develop social networks with British and European young artists, they attempt to become friends with such people. In so doing, they also show specific patterns of interactions with people of a particular class, race, gender, or sexuality.

6.3.1 British White Femininity

Some of the young Japanese women in London develop a positive attitude towards British white women. Aiko observes British white female students in her class, and begins to think that they are good at expressing their opinions:

> British girls are less strong-minded than I thought. I don't think they are so different from Japanese girls. Maybe, British girls are very frank, and just express their feelings more often. Japanese girls are not so different from British girls, but we just express our feelings less often. I don't dislike British girls. (Aiko, female, age 20, after 7 months)

However, others develop negative impressions of British white women to some extent. Emi, who has few British female friends, comes to believe British white women to be 'strong' and 'less charming':

> Q: What do you think about British women?

> A: I don't know much about them. I'm not so familiar with them. I heard that they have a bad reputation. Someone told me that, like we see in movies, American girls are prettier than British girls. British girls are strong, less charming, and always smoke a lot of cigarettes. (Emi, female, age 23, after 9 months)

Kumiko has friendly relationships with her British male flatmates, whom she met through a bulletin board notice, and with British male classmates in her college. But she finds it difficult to make friends with British white women:

> Q: Have you become friends with British girls?
>
> A: I think it's difficult. In my [postgraduate] course, there is only one British woman. She has a child, and she is a nice person. But generally, I don't like British women much. They look unfriendly and prim. ...British boys are kinder. There are few British women around me, and there are few occasions to talk with them. If any British people talk to me by themselves, they are always men. (Kumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year and 2 months)

As with the New York group, the main reason for their critical attitude seems to be that before migration, these young Japanese women have adopted an idea that their own femininity is the norm. After migration, however, they recognise that the standard of femininity is attached to the image of British white women, thereby attempting to redefine it as 'strong', 'unfriendly', or 'prim'.

6.3.2 Resisting 'Controlling Images'

In London, the young Japanese women interviewed are often associated with 'eroticism' or 'martial arts', in addition to 'submissiveness' and 'easiness'. Primarily, through personal interactions with British and other European men, they begin to recognise these stereotypical images. In this group, all women are heterosexual, and some of them are interested in British and, to a lesser extent, other European white men. As with the New York group, one reason is that they hope to achieve English proficiency. As Aiko says, 'I want to get an English boyfriend to improve my English skills, although I am not so eager to do so' (Aiko, female, age 20, after 3 months). In addition, traditional British attitudes to gender, such as 'ladies first' practices as well as the powerful position of white males in the interlocking system of British society have affected their interest in white males. Especially Mihoko, who studies in a foundation course in art, believes that if she marries a white man, she can display her superiority to her female friends in Japan:

> A: I don't want to go back to Japan. I hesitate to say this, but I should have married earlier. I am too old to find a partner in Japan. I don't want to get married to an unattractive man as my friends will look down on me. ... I want to stay abroad. I want to hide. I want to escape. I must achieve a happier marriage here than my old friends in Japan.
>
> Q: Are you willing to marry just an office assistant if he is a Westerner?
>
> A: I'm fine with it. Maybe. If it's with a Japanese office assistant, I don't want to marry him. But if he is a *gaijin* ['Westerner' in her sense], it makes a difference. My family is old-fashioned, and my mother would consider a foreign husband to be great. She doesn't say so, but I can feel it. (Mihoko, female, age 30, after 7 months)

Some of the male and female respondents note that Japanese men are unpopular among British and other European women, as well as among Japanese women. A male respondent, Ryo claims:

> Some Japanese girls here have no interest in Japanese men. They are disgusting. They must have come to London to look for foreign men. They don't take notice of Japanese men at all, although most of them are not pretty. ...I've never met a Japanese man who has a foreign girlfriend here. The other day, in a pub, I was the only Asian. I was surrounded by my European friends.

> They said too much to me. When our topic veered around men's private parts, they said they believed Japanese men to have a yellow, small one. This is a common idea. They seriously believed it. There was a rumour about women too. Did you know? They said that Japanese women's private parts have horizontal lines. When one Portuguese girl was talking about this, an Irish guy was listening to her story. Then he told me he also knew this famous story. I've found that Western people look down on Japanese so much. (Ryo, male, age 26, after 1 year and 2 months)

Another male respondent, Jun has a British male friend who likes Japanese women. Through his friends' opinion, Jun develops a view concerning the reputation of Japanese men in Britain:

> I think Japanese men are not popular. I think Asian men are not popular here. My British friend let me know that British women have no interest in Asian men. I asked him to tell me honestly whether I can find a British girlfriend here. He said, 'British girls wouldn't have any interest in you'. (Jun, male, age 22, after 3 months)

As seen in these accounts, the desexualisation of Asian men is also persistent in London. Some white men do not hesitate to insult these male respondents or do not regard such words as insults, because Japanese men are regarded as objects to be desexualised and this practice is normalised. On the other hand, some British or other European men tend to treat female respondents in a friendlier manner, because they regard Japanese women as sexual objects whom they can court. In fact, no female respondents in this study had received insults in the way the male respondents had, such as those about Japanese women's vaginas being, like their eyes, horizontal slits, an idea which has been circulated and widely believed in Western societies since the Second World War (Yamamoto, 1999:58).

Evidently, a common belief that 'Japanese girls are popular' is also diffused among young Japanese in London. Like in New York City, this 'popularity' is often associated with their 'easiness':

> Q: Have you heard that Japanese girls are popular here?
>
> A: I've heard about it. But after I came here, I gradually got to know that men often talk to Japanese girls because they look down on us, they think it's *easy to sleep with* us. I really feel so. My [Japanese] friend's boyfriend is *gaijin* [or 'Westerner' in her sense], and he says Japanese girls are *easy.* Many Japanese girls come to London to find a boyfriend, it's true, so we may not be able to deny it if they say so. (Emi, female, age 23, after 11 months)

Some girls are concerned about whether British white males who are marginalised in mainstream society are more likely to become interested in Japanese women:

> People who like Japanese girls are mostly whites. There are so many. They come to parties for Japanese people, and most of them are men who like cartoon, manga, or Japanese products. Such men are not so young, over mid-20s or late-20s. Some have Japanese girlfriends. They are not ugly but most of them are not cool, not fashionable. (Aiko, female, age 20, after 7 months)

> When I went to a book shop in Piccadilly Circus with two friends of mine, an old man approached us. He was interested in one of my friends, and asked her to become his girlfriend. He looked about 60 or 70 years old, had a white head of hair, and was tottering. But he was seriously asking her to become his girlfriend. She said no. But he bought her an expensive coat on her birthday, and told her that she should like him because he was doing so much for her. So she hasn't met him after that. We can't be too careful of old men. (Emi, female, age 23, after 4 months)

However, at the same time, these young Japanese women tend to describe themselves as 'a status symbol' for British white males, in contradiction to the above concerns:

> Around Brick Lane, I see many couples with a British man and a Japanese woman. Most Japanese women hanging around Brick Lane are fashionable. I guess that having a Japanese girlfriend might be 'a status symbol' for British men. I've heard people call British men who especially like Japanese girls '*Japasen*' [an abbreviation of Japanese and *senmonka* or specialist. This is a slang term diffused among young Japanese in London]. (Kumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year 2 months)

> I've heard that it is easier to catch a Japanese girl than to catch a 'yellow cab'.[89] My Spanish friend told me that many British men go out with Japanese girls. I'm not very sure about this, but there seems to be the idea of a 'Japan brand', like, having a Japanese girlfriend is 'a status symbol'. When I was walking on the street, I saw a couple—an old British man and a young Japanese girl. I thought because he was not attractive enough for British women, he must have become interested in Japanese girls. Perhaps, he took advantage of his being white, and asked out Japanese girls who were interested in white men. Maybe I'm not totally right, but I guess there are such aspects in their relationship. (Yayoi, female, age 20, after 7 months)

Thus, discourses that Japanese women are 'a status symbol' for British white males are diffused among Japanese women in London. This is probably because they unconsciously try to deny their stereotypical image as 'easy' women. They attempt to recast their femininity more positively against its devalued image in Britain.

Furthermore, 'erotic' and 'exotic' images have influences over relationships between British white men and young Japanese women. Yayoi studies performing arts in college to become a theatre actress, and has a steady boyfriend, Josh, who is English. She is surprised to discover the stereotypical image of Japanese women held by him:

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[89] This derives from a Japanese book written by a Japanese female journalist for the general public. It maintains that it is easier to catch and 'ride' a Japanese girl than to catch and 'ride' a 'yellow cab' in New York City. The label was often considered to be fabricated by the journalist herself, but the story was widely diffused, discussed, and criticised by the media in Japan in the 1990s. The term later comes to be used to describe Japanese women who have relationships with foreigners.

> I think British people have some stereotypical images of Japanese girls. My boyfriend told me about [Japanese] movies, like *Battle Royal* and Takashi Miyake's *Audition*. Perhaps you don't know this [latter] movie, do you? I was so surprised to find that so many British people know such a movie. I've never seen it, but I've heard it is a strange movie about a woman in a black leather bodysuit, which is like S&M [or sadism and masochism]. He said it was the very image of Japan. (Yayoi, female, age 20, after 1 year)

Apart from dating relationships, these young Japanese women are often associated with martial arts or mocked in terms of their language, as they have more interactions with whites of the host country than the New York group, due to their enrolment in college. Kumiko resents the ways in which some students connect her with the Dragon Lady image:

> Because I'm Japanese, I am sometimes told, 'When enemies attack you, you are going to beat them up with kung fu, aren't you?' This was my classmate, who is British. He also says, 'Are you going to use a Japanese sword?' It's so annoying. Other people are not like him, though. Maybe, *Kill Bill* is a stereotypical image of Japan for British people. (Kumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year and 2 months)

Yayoi complains that some students in her college talk to her, speaking Japanese with strange voices and actions:

> I don't like people who always use Japanese words to me in strange ways. Some people come to me and say, '*Konnichiwa, konnichiwa*'. I really hate it. Such people are just making fun of me. A girl said, '*Chō kawai!*' [or very cute!], using a shrill voice. Then, she asked me, 'Am I good at speaking Japanese?' …It was so irritating and I ignored her. There is a boy who always greets me using some Japanese words. It is as if I understand only Japanese and I should feel so happy when he speaks to me in Japanese. But I am always speaking to them in English. I was so offended. (Yayoi, female, age 20, after 1 year)

The mimicking of Japanese expressions seems to be affected by images of Asian women in popular media. As Tajima explains, Asian women in American cinema are interchangeable in appearance and name, and are joined together by the common language of non-language – that is, 'uninterpretable chattering, pidgin English, giggling or silence'. They may be specifically identified by nationality — particularly in war films – but that's where screen accuracy ends. The dozens of populations of Asian and pacific Island groups are lumped into one homogeneous mass of Mama Sans (Tajima, 1989:309).

As with the New York group, relationships between middle-class white men and young Japanese women are sometimes based on an 'exchange' of cultural capital (whiteness and English language proficiency) and social status (as girlfriend/partner of a white man) for subservience, as well as their physical attractions, congeniality, or other factors. The 'controlling images' of being 'submissive', 'easy', or 'erotic' women often become important elements in their relationships. Moreover, female respondents are repeatedly associated with the stereotypical images of the aggressive Dragon Lady or the chattering Geisha Girl in their personal interactions with people of their host country. These young women always attempt to resist such images, but this stereotyping does not seem to cease in their everyday lives.

6.3.3 Constructing More Diverse Femininities

In this group, only Kumiko begins to value feminised Japaneseness. She comes to think that it is a good thing that British white male friends treat her as a lady:

> A: I like men to do things for me. I am very happy when men carry my luggage…I am good at doing household chores, so I love to do it. I would like to cook for men…
>
> Q: What do you think about working women?
>
> A: In my class, a British woman and an Australian woman are trying so hard.

> Especially, the Australian is like a feminist. She is trying to show that she can do as good a job as men can. I wonder if we have to show such an attitude here. I know nothing about the workplace in London, but I've never seen a woman like her in my old workplace in Japan. ... I've heard that Britain is a more patriarchal society than Japan. Maybe British men treat me in a gentle manner because they think, 'We are men, and you are women'. I'm fine even if they think I am in a lower position, so they treat me kindly. I just think it's lucky if men treat me nicely. Some women may not like it, though. (Kumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year 2 months)

However, other female respondents reject the idea of conforming to the dominant images of them, such as being 'submissive', 'easy', or 'erotic', even after finding their femininity to be sometimes useful in relations with British and other European white men. These young Japanese women tend to become quiet in front of Westerners, due to their elementary English skills and their lower position in the interlocking system of British society. However, during their interviews conducted in Japanese with me — a female Japanese postgraduate student[90]— they expressed their opinions clearly and stated their unwillingness to 'perform' such feminised Japaneseness, which is constructed by the West. Yayoi, for instance, attempts to correct the stereotypical images, denying her 'submissiveness':

> Q: Do you think that relationships between men and women are less equal in Japan than in Britain?
>
> A: No. I think it was equal when I was a high school student. Personally, I've seldom been discriminated against in Japan just because I am female. My [English] boyfriend told me that Japanese women often follow three steps

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[90] Some may claim that these respondents would develop a sense of affinity to my opinions, due to our similar backgrounds. However, I tried only to ask questions and nod in assent, without letting them know my views. They seemed to be able to express their own opinions without reserve, saying 'No' to my questions very often, as seen in these accounts. As I discussed in Chapter 3, I consider that my similar background enabled them to express what they really had in their minds. I also consider that this is an advantage in studying Asian women. Having reviewed previous studies, I come to think that Asian female interviewees often hid some of their opinions or indeed did 'perform' their expected roles, not to offend researchers, who were white and/or male and had power.

> behind men. I told him that it was just a metaphor and nobody did so these days. My mother is not such a type of woman either. Now I remember one point concerning discrimination against women. In the theatre, even if men begin their careers at an older age, they can be appreciated as long as they develop a subdued mature style. But, as for women, it is difficult to get jobs if they get old and have more wrinkles. This can be seen both in Japan and in Britain. This is seen everywhere. But perhaps Japan is worse in this point.
>
> Q: What do you think about customs of 'ladies first' among British people?
>
> A: You mean things like men opening the door first when I am about to do so? I think it's a good thing to hold the door until the next person comes. But I don't want men to open the door just because I am a woman. (Yayoi, female, age 20, after 1 year)

As Yayoi is sometimes associated with the stereotypical images of 'submissive' or 'easy' women by British and European young people, she becomes more aware of problems that women often face in Britain and Japan, thereby becoming able to compare the conditions of women in Britain and those in Japan.

When asked about their future plans, most of the young Japanese women emphasised their hopes for their careers. They similarly claimed that they had wanted to have opportunities in London, but it was hard for Japanese women to have long-term future prospects in the city, due to the lack of English skills, a legal work permit, and social networks in London's art worlds:

> Q: How long do you want to stay here from now?
>
> A: One year is enough, perhaps because I don't think I want to work here for a long time. I strongly feel that I want to establish my career in Japan.
>
> Q: Why?
>
> A: I don't think I can compete with British people on equal terms. Because of my English... Is this just because of language? It is also difficult to get a work permit. Whenever I try to do something here, I have a handicap. (Aiko, female, age 21, after 1 year and 4 months)

> Q: Do you think you can work in London?
>
> A: I think it's difficult because I'm Japanese. They welcome people from the EU, but are not willing to employ Japanese, as they have to pay a lot of money to the government. …I must have enough ability to make employers want to take me rather than British people, even if they pay much money on my behalf. (Yayoi, female, age 20, after 1 year)

Even so, as they have observed some British white women become very successful in London, they come to think that it is possible for women to have more opportunities in society. For example, Emi, who engages in illustration, finds both merits and demerits in the experience of living in London as a Japanese woman:

> A: I think foreign men have a pushy attitude. They sometimes do things for me, but I'm not really happy about it. They seem to have some other intentions…
>
> Q: What do you think about equality between men and women in London?
>
> A: These days Japanese women are getting stronger. But it seems that women in Britain are stronger than women in Japan in the workplace or whatever.
>
> Q: For example?
>
> A: I have a connection with a woman, whose name is Dina. She makes clothes independently. She is a bit old, and looks like a strong woman. She lives in a nice place. I've heard about many female entrepreneurs' successful stories, but I didn't personally know any successful woman like her in the field of art. In this point, Britain is better than Japan. (Emi, female, age 23, after 11 months)

Emi does not appreciate the ways in which British and other European men treat her as a person to be protected. Rather, she values the fact that some British white women make a great success in their careers in London. Like her, after finding it difficult to pursue their careers in the city, most of the young Japanese women come to recognise their privileged position in Japan, and to re-imagine their future prospects there.

6.4. Conclusion

After migrating to New York City or London, the young Japanese women studied become 'marked' not only in terms of gender, but also in terms of 'race'. They find that people of their host country often see them in the light of stereotypical images of Japanese femininity, such as being 'submissive', 'easy', 'rich', 'erotic', or 'exotic'. In response, these young women show two main patterns of identity negotiation in terms of gender.

Some begin to consider their femininity as their most useful resource and attempt to make use of it. They 'display' and 'perform' feminised Japaneseness, in order to take advantage of Western men's ideas that Japanese women are 'kind' and 'submissive', so that they can get by more easily in their everyday lives in Western society. They thus often pragmatically calculate advantages and disadvantages, to figure out how they can create a more fulfilling life mentally and materially, and come to consider that the best thing to do is to eventually marry a man with sufficient income.

Others think that while their femininity is sometimes a useful 'resource' to be deployed for advantage in relations with men, they do not like the idea of making use of such stereotypical images of 'she-who-must-be-saved' (Kelsky, 2001:174). They thus attempt to reconstruct their identity as 'Japanese women', by attaching more positive meanings to it. Nonetheless, on the whole, it gradually becomes clear to them that it is difficult for Japanese women to build long-time careers in New York City or London, although the main reason why this should be is not very clear to them. It is very often said that Britain and the United States are, in general, more egalitarian than Japan, in terms of gender relations. While this may be true for 'white' women, it does not seem true for these 'Japanese' women. In fact, these female respondents would have more opportunities in Tokyo than in New York City or in London, because at least, in this context, they have the advantage of being members of the dominant ethnic group. They have fewer opportunities in their host country, not only because of their lack of English proficiency and of a legal working permit, but also because of the way in which their gender identity is interlocked with their Japaneseness.

So, instead of getting opportunities for themselves, these Japanese women often observe white women enjoying many more opportunities than them. One result is that in response, they begin to appreciate their own privileged position in Japanese society, and to re-imagine their future prospects there. In the long run, on their return, they may perhaps contribute to further diversification of femininities of Japanese women in Japan. However, the irony is that they may do so without paying much attention to the fact that their own privileged position in Japan is often established by the structural marginalisation of Ainu, Chinese, Korean, Okinawan or other ethnic ‘minority’ women in that country.

Chapter 7 Local Japanese Communities

7.1 Introduction

Chapters 4 and 5 investigated how 'race' and ethnic relations, as well as gender, affect the ways in which the twenty-two young Japanese experience their sense of Japanese 'national' identity. It turned out that they renegotiate and heighten their sense of Japaneseness as they interact with people in their host country. This chapter, then, will examine how their sense of Japaneseness is influenced by language, cultural values, ethnic organisations and institutions which link them to their peers in the local 'ethnic' Japanese community.

Local Ethnic Community and Identification

In cultural pluralism, one of the most well-known concepts, regarding ethnic identification, is 'symbolic ethnicity'. According to Herbert J. Gans (1979a), the cohesion and organisation of white ethnic communities has been disrupted over time, and the importance of ethnicity is defined increasingly as a matter of individual self-definition. That is, third and later generations of European immigrants become less and less interested in their ethnic language, cultural practices, and organisations – whether sacred or secular. Thus, even if they maintain an identity in sustaining certain ethnic customs reflecting their original identity, such as Jewish, or Italian, or Polish, this is done at a rather superficial level[91] (Gans, 1979a:1-18).

Particularly, middle-class white ethnics have been able to identify selectively with their ethnic origins, picking and choosing which aspects of their backgrounds they will continue to practise and identify with. If they do identify, they do so with a group that maintains its positive characteristics (and loses its negative ones) as the group itself increasingly comes to be publicly known by its middle-class, successful members, rather than by its poor immigration members. However, children of non-white immigrants tend to show different patterns from children of European immigrants. The social and political consequences of being Asian or Hispanic or black are not merely symbolic for the most part, nor a matter of voluntary choice. The lives of these ethnic 'minorities' are strongly influenced by their race or national origin, regardless of how much they may choose not to identify themselves in ethnic or racial terms (Waters, 1990:156-7; 1999:342).

In contrast to this cultural pluralist approach, transnationalism tends to be more concerned with actual cultural practices and involvements in organisations, in its attempt to theorise identities of migrants. According to Basch et al., today many migrants become involved in networks, activities, patterns of living and ideologies that span their home and the host society. These 'transmigrants' develop and maintain multiple transnational relationships, including familial, economic, social, organisational, religious, and political ones (Basch et al., 1994:4-7).[92] Based on this idea, it is often argued that some migrants are now developing transnational identities, by incorporating cultural practices and ideologies from two or more societies, actively participating in organisations across national boundaries, and being involved in home-country politics.

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[91] He views this symbolic identification as more or less a leisure-time activity. For example, individuals identify as Irish on occasions such as Saint Patrick's Day. In this way, whites often use their ethnic symbols, such as holidays or consumer foods, for their identification. Ethnicity takes on expressive rather than instrumental function in people's lives.

[92] However, Basch et al. do not stress the explicit form of a transnational identity, as they think that 'living in a world in which discourses about identity continue to be framed in terms of loyalty to nations, most transmigrants have neither fully conceptualised nor articulated a form of transnational identity' (Basch et al., 1994:8).

In the case of Japanese migrants, as explained in Chapter 2, *Nisei* and *Sansei* (second- and third-generation Japanese Americans) on the West Coast retained a very high level of participation in ethnic voluntary associations and other forms of behavioural involvement in local ethnic community life. Furthermore, they developed a strong sense of ethnic identity as 'Japanese Americans' (Fugita and O'Brien, 1991:3-46; 76-94), as cultural pluralist theory suggests.

In my previous research, many elderly *Issei, Kibei Nisei*[93] and old-timer Japanese nationals were also actively involved in Japanese organisations in New York City. In so doing, the *Issei* and *Kibei Nisei* saw themselves as 'Japanese-American' in a similar way to *Nisei* and *Sansei* on the West Coast. However, Japanese nationals, who migrated to America between the 1960s and 1980s and later acquired permanent resident status, tended to continue to regard themselves as 'Japanese'. Moreover, many of them still hoped to return to Japan someday in the future, when they change jobs, retire from work, or get older. It follows that they did not become 'hyphenated Americans', even after they had lived in their host country for many years. They cannot be regarded as 'transmigrants' either, because their networks and activities did not cross national boundaries to any significant extent. Instead, they stayed put in New York City: they worked for Japanese companies and organisations, participated in events held by local Japanese organisations, and socialised with Japanese peers, within the local Japanese community (Fujita, 2002; 2004).

From these studies, it is inferred that Japanese migrating from Japan tend to participate in local ethnic community life to some extent, but they are likely to identify themselves more closely with being Japanese, rather than with the 'ethnic'

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[93] Second-generation Japanese Americans who were sent back to Japan to go to school for any substantial length of time and then returned to the United States.

Japaneseness in their host country. However, today migrants can utilise the advanced means of communication and transportation which were unavailable to the old-timer migrants who came between the 1960s and 1980s. So, depending on extraneous factors, newcomers may experience their sense of belonging in different ways from the old-timers. In the context of these considerations, the case of the young Japanese migrants will be looked at in the following sections.

7.2 New York's Japanese Community

7.2.1 Demographic Characteristics

According to the U.S. Census, about 73 % of the Japanese population in New York City were foreign-born in 2000 (Asian American Federation of New York, 2004). This implies that the majority of the Japanese population in the city are not American citizens but Japanese nationals. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan estimates that in 2004, there were 60,451 Japanese nationals (or *zairyū hōjin*) in the Greater New York area.[94] This number consists of 47,549 temporary residents (or *chōki taizaisha*) and 12,902 permanent residents (or *eijūsha,* or Japanese nationals who hold a green card) (MOFA, 2005).

There is no statistical data for the average period of their stay in New York City. But in my previous research, many editors and journalists of two major local Japanese newspapers in New York City (*OCS News* and *Yomiuri America*) similarly informed me that the majority of Japanese residents stay in the city for a short period, mostly 'for three to five years', and then leave for Japan or other destinations[95] (Fujita, 2002). Therefore, the Japanese population in the city is characterised by high mobility, and the majority are transient migrants.

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[94] This includes New York City and Westchester County of New York, Fairfield County of Connecticut, and Bergen County of New Jersey (MOFA, 2005).

[95] Similarly, a governmental report estimates that about 59 % of company transferees stay abroad (including all countries) between three and seven years (MEXT, 2004).

Concerning occupation, temporary residents (*chōki taizaisha*) in the Greater New York area and its environs[96] belong to one of two categories: in 2004, 62.2 % were working for private companies or belonged to the families of such workers; those who identify themselves as students,[97] researchers, and teachers contributed a further 23.0 % of the total[98] (MOFA, 2005).

The two majority groups are highly gendered. About 92 % of those working for private companies were males (and their spouses were housewives). And it is estimated that about 60 % of the young people who identified themselves as students were females in their 20s or 30s (MOFA, 2005; MOJ, 2001).

These two groups are residentially segregated. Most company transferees who have migrated with their families live in wealthy suburban areas, such as Westchester in New York, Fort Lee in New Jersey, and Greenwich in Connecticut. Many single company transferees live in Midtown Manhattan, as Japanese firms concentrate in this area. On the other hand, in the case of the young Japanese interviewed, they first lived in areas where they can rent cheap rooms, such as Astoria, Elmhurst, Prospect Park, Harlem, or Midtown East. Significantly, many of them later made use of their personal networks, as well as bulletin boards on Japanese websites and in Japanese grocery stores, and moved to particular areas in New York City where many young Japanese were also living – Astoria, the East Village, and Harlem (the latter two areas are well-known for activities in art and popular culture).

Thus, about 85% of the Japanese population in New York City belongs to the two dominant groups characterised by age, gender, occupation, and income. In fact, Japanese top-ranking elites, e.g., politicians, bureaucrats, and corporate executives, tend to stay in Japan and the poor cannot afford to migrate from the country. And those who live in New York City mostly come from the middle class in Japan, such as company employees and their families, professionals, and young people whose parents can afford to send their children abroad.

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[96] This includes New York, New Jersey, Fairfield County of Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, because these areas are under the jurisdiction of the Consulate General of Japan in New York (MOFA, 2005).

[97] This includes those who obtain a student visa to stay in the city but actually do not attend school.

[98] In addition to these two categories, there were a small number of self-employed professionals, (e.g., entrepreneurs, doctors, lawyers, accountants, architects and designers, chefs, and so on), government officers and clerks, journalists, and other occupational groups (MOFA, 2005).

The Borders of the Community

The Japanese population is spread throughout New York City, so that there is no geographically defined Japanese community in the city, comparable with Chinatown in Lower Manhattan or Flushing Koreatown in Queens. This may be attributed to the fact that since the 1970s, Japan has sent a relatively small number of migrants to this city. Unlike these Chinese and Korean communities, the Japanese community cannot exist unless it is 'imagined' by its members.

When asked to describe what type of Japanese people live in New York City, the respondents mentioned 'students', 'wannabe artists', 'company employees', 'housewives', and 'career-seeking women'. Some of them also regarded *kikokushijo* and Japanese Americans who are bilingual in English and Japanese as insiders in their peer groups.[99]

These things suggest that they tend to include people who not only look 'Japanese' but also speak Japanese fluently in their circles. Therefore, language is the key to their inclusion/exclusion. Since third- and fourth-generation Japanese Americans do not generally speak Japanese, this imagined community seems to be composed of the vast majority of Japanese nationals and a small number of *Issei* and *Nisei* Japanese Americans.

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[99] In my previous research, I asked the same question of about forty Japanese residents with various occupational backgrounds, including *Issei*, *Kibei Nisei*, male company transferees and their wives, students, and the journalists and editors. And their answers were similar to the answers of the young Japanese interviewed. These people tended to consider 'company transferees', 'students', and 'Japanese Americans' who speak Japanese fluently, such as *Issei* and *Nisei,* to be members of the Japanese community. But they regarded Japanese Americans who do not speak Japanese as outsiders (Fujita, 2002; 2004).

7.2.2 The Use of Language and Cultural Values in the Peer Group

In his *Urban Villagers*, Herbert J. Gans studies the Italian American community in Boston's West End and argues that the basis of adult West End life is peer group sociability, which means a routinised gathering of peer groups and friends that takes place several times a week (1982:74). This is true for the young Japanese in New York City, as they tend to live in peer group sociability without being deeply involved in any Japanese organisations. They often get to know other young Japanese in English language school, the workplace (e.g., Japanese restaurants or hostess clubs), and their hangouts and develop networks through these peers. Through these interactions, they come to share certain cultural values in terms of Americanised ways of speaking, manners, or appearances.

The Privileged: Japanese Americans and *Kikokushijo*

The young Japanese tend to regard Japanese Americans who speak Japanese as insiders and as privileged. Mayumi has become friendly with a second-generation Japanese-American woman, Tomoko. Through personal interactions with Tomoko and her Japanese-American friends, Mayumi comes to think that Japanese Americans are 'cool', because they are native speakers of English and lead an Americanised lifestyle:

> Tomoko told me Japanese-American organisations have strong ties. They look like Japanese, but speak English. They are so cool. I envy them... Yesterday, I went to Tomoko's friend's birthday party in a hotel because she asked me to go there with her. ...All the guests were real New Yorkers. It was like a scene from *Sex and the City*...Indeed, I didn't fit in the party. Everyone spoke English except me. All were Asian Americans, and these girls were so pretty. Tomoko introduced her friends to me. They looked like Japanese, but they were like, 'Hi,

> this is Yuki'. Their names were Japanese names, but they spoke in English. It was an amazing scene. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 10 months)

In a similar vein, due to their bilingualism, *kikokushijo* tend to be seen as privileged and as insiders. Among this group, Fumiko is *kikokushijo* and remarks:

> My [Japanese] friend told me, 'I envy you. You have no trouble speaking English and you can do your projects without difficulties [in class]'. My [Japanese] roommate sometimes tells me that she envies me, because I don't have to worry about my English. She is struggling with English grammar. I told her I sometimes made mistakes in English. She was so surprised and said, 'Even Fumiko worries about English!' (Fumiko, female, age 26, after 1 year)

In fact, *kikokushijo* tend to know how the power of the English language works, as they often feel a sense of inferiority in terms of the English language through their interactions with Americans whose first language is English. In turn, *kikokushijo* utilise their fluency in English, in order to display their superiority to other Japanese.

Competition among Young Japanese

Japanese Americans and *kikokushijo* are considered to be privileged, due to their bilingualism and display of some Americanness. However, if young Japanese migrants attempt to become Americanised, they often criticise each other. There are specific points of issue repeatedly mentioned by the respondents. First is the English language. They are sensitive about when and how their peers speak English. Generally, young Japanese do not speak English with their peers. But some newcomers are eager to improve their English skills and attempt to speak English to other young Japanese. These people are often labelled as 'strange':

> Recently I've become friends with a Japanese girl in my dance school. I've known her since I came to New York. I said to her, 'We've known each other for more than six months. But we didn't talk, did we?' Then, she let me know

> that it was because she avoided me. She thought I was a strange person. I asked why. She said because I was talking to other Japanese in English. (Nana, female, age 20, after 1 year)

In addition, these young Japanese often criticise their peers who speak English with heavy accents:

> Most Japanese here can't speak English. … In my workplace [a Japanese sushi restaurant], there's a 21 year-old girl who can speak English better than other girls, because her boyfriend is black. But I can't understand her English at all, because her pronunciation is so bad. Actually, she tries copying the way black people speak English, but indeed she can't. She is proud of her English, though. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 7 months)

Second is 'acting black'. That is, some young Japanese try to act black because of their great interest in black American culture, but they tend to be criticised by their peers. Haruka is very interested in black culture and calls herself 'Japanese-black'. Nonetheless, she has a low opinion of male counterparts who try to act black:

> Most Japanese boys like black culture, like songs or raps. Actually I was surprised to see many [Japanese] people smoking pot here… They believe it's cool. They try to write hip-hop lyrics too. Such people tend to believe stories from black songs or raps to be true and imitate them seriously, saying, 'This is my life' or something like that. (Haruka, female, age 23, after 9 months)

Similarly, Toru, who hopes to become a successful artist, often criticises other young Japanese who attempt to become Americanised:

> I call them '*nihonjin americajin*' [his own term which consists of 'Japanese' and 'American']. They can become none of the two. Eighty percent of Japanese students in language school are like that. When someone asked me, 'Who do you think is a real New Yorker?', I wanted to slap his face. He said, 'Japanese who do not use polite expressions are New Yorkers'. They think

> not using polite expressions is important for becoming real New Yorkers. I felt so disgusted when they said, 'Yo!', or they called me by my first name just from the first time we met. (Toru, male, age 25, after 3 months)

Thus, these young people show a negative attitude towards their peers who attempt to become Americanised. One reason seems to be that they compete with their peers for achieving black or white Americanness, which they think is necessary to become 'real New Yorkers'. They often develop a sense of rivalry towards their peers who act black or white, as they do not want their peers to be more successful in American society than themselves. Another reason is that, as discussed in Chapter 4, these young people gradually find it difficult to participate in mainstream life and heighten their sense of Japaneseness. Consequently, they develop an ambivalent feeling – on the one hand they continue to hope to speak English fluently and become friends with Americans; on the other hand they begin to develop a strong sense of Japaneseness, and become critical of their peers who appear to deviate from Japaneseness.

For the same reasons, these young Japanese tend to show negative attitudes towards their peers who have stayed in New York City for many years. They regard such old-timers not as privileged but as 'strange people' who have been losing Japaneseness but cannot achieve Americanness either:

> Q: Do you know some Japanese who have been here long?
>
> A: I haven't talked to them. But they are strange. Such people stay in New York for ten years. They seem to have gone crazy. These people are working here. I know a hairstylist. He won a Green Card two years ago. He opened his own salon, and bought a car recently. He is a kind of successful man. My friend is working for him. He always says that the man is crazy. I also know a sushi chef who looks crazy. If people come to New York when they are kids, they tend to be fine. But if people come here after the age of twenty or after they have established their personalities in Japan, they will go crazy as they stay here for many years. I came here when I was 29. If I continue to

> stay here for 10 years, I will go crazy too.
>
> Q: Do you want to go back to Japan before you've gone crazy?
>
> A: Yes, I do. (Makoto, male, age 30, after 7 months)

> I decided not to continue to stay in New York. I want to go back to Japan often. If I continue to stay in America, I will be like Americans. I still don't like America. But what I hate most is Japanese who want to be Americans....They are crazy, very strange people. Because they are Japanese, I tend to pay attention to them. Because Americans are foreigners to me, I don't care about them much. Such strange Japanese call my roommate at 1 or 2 am every day. They shouldn't call after 11pm. All Japanese who stay here more than two years are rude, like Americans. (Toru, male, age 25, after 6 months)

As these young Japanese become involved in peer group sociability in New York City, they tend to internalise both the idea that Japanese who have long lived in the two cultures and can speak English fluently are privileged and the idea that Japanese who did not acquire Americanness in their childhood are not qualified to acquire it but should remain 'Japanese'. They often put pressure on each other to frustrate others' attempts to become Americanised.

7.2.3 Institutions, Ethnic Media, and the Community

Institutional Completeness

Raymond Breton (1961) coined a term, 'institutional completeness' to indicate the degree to which networks of social organisations dominate an immigrant/ethnic community. He argues that 'the community with many formal organisations is said to be more institutionally complete than the one with only a few or none' (Min, 2001:174). According to this definition, New York's Japanese community can be considered institutionally complete. In the New York - New Jersey area, there are about 1000 branches of Japanese firms and financial corporations (JETRO, 2004).

Throughout the New York - New Jersey area, there are about 350 restaurants, 20 grocery stores, 10 bakeries and coffee shops, 60 travel agencies, 50 real estate agencies, 5 book stores, 10 video rental stores, 40 hair salons, 10 clinics, 5 hotels, 30 night clubs and bars, and so on (Yellow Page Japan, 2005). In Midtown Manhattan, there are about 20 Japanese governmental organisations and business associations, such as the Japanese Embassy, the Japan Foundation, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Nippon Club. In and around the East Village, Japanese supermarkets, restaurants, hair salons, boutiques, and bars do business for young customers. In the suburbs in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, full-time or part-time Japanese schools provide education for company transferee families. Additionally, there are dozens of social associations, such as *kenjinkai* (prefectural-based social associations), baseball or football teams, student and alumni organisations, and so on.

Due to this institutional completeness, most of the young Japanese in New York City become surrounded by Japanese language and other Japanese, just as they would in Japan. For instance, after finding it impossible to improve his English skills, Makoto comes to think:

> I'm not going to study English anymore… I can work at Japanese restaurants if I really want to earn money. In case of need, I can rely on Japanese doctors or lawyers, so I don't have to speak English. (Makoto, male, age 30, after 1 year)

Like him, most respondents live with Japanese roommates, cook Japanese dishes, watch Japanese television programmes and videos, hang out with Japanese friends, and go to Japanese restaurants. When necessary, they use Japanese travel agencies and see Japanese doctors. When they want to present their artworks or performances, they participate in art exhibitions or club events held by Japanese in the city.

The Workplace

Some of the young people interviewed are more involved in Japanese organisations than others, as they work part-time in a hotel, restaurant, or nightclub. Yoko works in a Japanese hotel and a wholesale office for Japanese restaurants, in order to earn part of her living expenses. As she observes:

> All *Japaresu* [an abbreviation of 'Japanese restaurants'] have strong ties in a small world. It was so surprising that all kinds of rumours were going around very fast. Everyone knows things like which restaurant is going broke or something. They're all connected… (Yoko, female, age 27, after 1 year)

Nana and Rie work part-time in *pianobā* ('piano bars' or hostess clubs) in Midtown Manhattan. In New York City, dozens of Japanese-style hostess clubs are clustered on the East Side between 45th and 53rd Street. The hostess club is indeed one of the most popular places for work among Japanese women in their 20s and early 30s in New York City, as they can illegally work there without a work permit and earn about 80 US dollars by the day. Their job as companions consists of sitting with, serving drinks for, and chatting or sometimes flirting with Japanese businessmen. Generally, almost all employees and clients in *pianobā* are Japanese. This creates a sphere full of cultural practices familiar in Japan, and customers can feel as if they were in their homeland. As Nana describes her job:

> Most customers are company transferees. They are older than their 30s…They often ask us to go to dinner after work. This week, I was asked for dinner twice. But I turned them down because when I am with them, I always have to behave as if I respect them, so I get tired. …Most customers are working for famous Japanese firms, like X electronic company, Y stock brokerage firm, or Z trading company… Some have lived here for many years. Some customers are perverts. Some are very rich and look down on women. Some always make many indecent jokes. Most girls have boyfriends and do this job only for money. It's

> ok to talk with them in the workplace, but it's a waste of time to meet them after opening hours. (Nana, female, age 20, after 1 year)

It is often said that New York's Japanese community is similar to a 'village'. This is because the members of this small community tend to know each other, and Japanese organisations tend to attach importance to traditions and customs and to be exclusive to newcomers (Fujita, 2002:202) As the young Japanese work in Japanese organisations, they are required to follow such organisational practices, or moreover, sometimes follow old values that had been diffused in the past in Japan and have been preserved in this small village.

Ethnic Media

Ethnic media is an important ethnic institution for the young Japanese. New York City has more than ten local Japanese dailies, weeklies, and free magazines but no local Japanese TV and radio programmes (however, there are some 'transnational' television programmes. This will be discussed in Chapter 8). Among these ethnic media, three free papers, *Japion, Nikkan Sun,* and *Front Line* are most often read by the respondents, and they use these papers for several purposes. The first is to get information about the social system and culture of their host country:

> I read *Japion* often. When I go to Jasmart [a popular Japanese convenience store], I pick up a copy. I often read advertisements. I also read columns about the life of American people. A while ago, I read an interesting article in *Front Line.* This is about when people feel they are discriminated against. It devotes one page each to Hispanics, blacks, and Japanese. It was very interesting since we usually don't recognise these things. (Fumiko, female, age 26, after 6 months)

They also use these papers to learn about immigration laws, the Green Card lottery, the usage of the English language, or American public organisations and local commercial establishments.

The second purpose is to read about local news. Certainly, all of the young Japanese interviewed have learned English in language schools in New York City or educational institutions in Japan. But they tend to depend on Japanese papers to learn about local news, because they cannot fully understand American television news and newspapers due to their elementary English skills:

> I watch NY1 and see a lot of news, thinking, 'Wow, there are such incidents!' But I can't understand all of them. After one week, the same news usually appears in *Japion*. Then, I learn what they were saying, or I realise I didn't interpret them properly. (Yoko, female, age 27, after 1 year)

The third purpose is to collect information about Japanese organisations in New York City. Many respondents utilise advertisements in these papers to find Japanese clinics, shops, restaurants, travel agencies, etc. As Makoto says, 'I get *Japion* when I go to shops. When my pc broke down, I looked in the paper and called a Japanese computer shop' (male, age 30, after 1 year). They also use help-wanted ads and apartment share ads to find part-time jobs and their residence.

The fourth purpose is to read news concerning their homeland. The young Japanese tend to have a great interest in news about Japan (e.g., gossip about celebrities, results of professional sports, and international affairs), which is the main contents of these free papers. Toru remarks:

> Jasmart is next to my language school. I get them [local Japanese dailies] there. I usually read through all articles. I like to read weather forecasts [in New York City]... I miss Japan so much. These days, I always think of Japan, as I've always liked Japan more than America. These days I'm concerned about juvenile delinquency in Japan. I saw it in *Nikkan Sun* or on TV. I thought Japanese were so clever. Here, murder cases are simple, like bang, bang! But in Japan there are many mysterious murder cases that we cannot understand. This

> point drew my attention. I think Japan is more amazing. Japan is more like NY. Japan is similar to the image of New York which people usually think of. (Toru, male, age 25, after 1 year)

These free papers usually carry old news about Japan, and some people pointed out that they could read the latest news through the Internet. Nonetheless, they still use these papers to repeatedly read similar accounts. According to Victor Sampedro, consumption of delayed news when one is in a foreign context is mainly a cultural practice in securing personal identity, familiar formulations of cultural spaces, and communities of origin. Although it does not cover informational needs in a proper way, through similar media accounts they can confirm that they have not missed anything major and that they had not been left out. This kind of media usage should be understood in terms of confirmation instead of information (Sampedro, 1998:133-4). As he suggests, the young Japanese seem to confirm their sense of belonging to their 'national' community, by reading old news about Japan reported in these free papers.

It is significant that none of the young Japanese said that they read New York's Japanese community news in these Japanese papers. By contrast, many *Issei, Kibei Nisei* and old-timer Japanese nationals in my previous research showed their great interest in New York's Japanese community news, such as information about events held by Japanese American Associations, profiles of community leaders, and award ceremonies for elderly Japanese (Fujita, 2004:129). This is consistent with previous studies which argue that ethnic media tend to have a 'cultural pluralism function' for members of ethnic groups and contribute to the establishment of ethnic communities in the host country (Cottle, 2000; Subervi-Velez, 1986; Viswanath and Arora, 2000). However, this is not true for the case of the young Japanese who show little interest in New York's Japanese community news, but display a great interest exclusively in old news about their homeland.

A Sense of Belonging to the Local Japanese Community

When these young Japanese were asked, 'Do you think there is a Japanese community in New York City?', some of them could not describe New York's Japanese community. Rather, they pay much attention to peer groups among young people:

> Q: Do you think there is a Japanese community in New York?
> A: People tend to develop personal networks. But I don't know much about communities. (Fumiko, female, age 26, after 6 months)

Others could picture New York's Japanese community in their minds. Through their experience in peer group sociability or part-time jobs in Japanese commercial establishments, or their use of local Japanese papers, they came to imagine New York's Japanese community which is 'small' and whose members are 'connected' with each other:

> I think the Japanese community is very small. Everyone is connected. There are both good and bad points. All are so close and help each other. I think it's good. But I didn't expect there to be so many Japanese living in New York City. (Nana, female, age 20, after 1 year in New York City)

> A girl, who's lived here for about ten years, told me that Japanese people were protected in New York, because there was a Japanese community. We can use Japanese networks, if we become ill or get involved in trouble. There are many Japanese doctors and lawyers. Our community is small and people tend to know each other. Maybe they will help me if I use some personal networks. (Makoto, male, age 30, after 1 year)

In either case, however, no one emphasised that they belong to New York's 'ethnic' Japanese community. Rather, these young people tended to show a strong sense of belonging to their 'national' community (or Japan). Again, this is a significant contrast to the case of *Issei, Kibei Nisei* and old-timer Japanese nationals. For example, an elderly female permanent resident said:

> *A: OCS News* and *Yomiuri America* informed me a lot about our community. Of course, I know what is happening to people around me. But without these newspapers, I can't know things happening out of eyeshot. American newspapers do not carry information about the Japanese community. I think Japanese newspapers are so important. These newspapers let me know about events for senior Japanese and social services.
>
> Q: … You said you came to New York City in the 1960s. So you have lived here over 40 years. Are you very proficient in English?
>
> A: Not at all. I have a lot of problems in English. So *OCS* and *Yomiuri America* are very useful for me. (A female permanent resident who holds Japanese nationality in her 70s) (Fujita, 2004:130-1)

As noted earlier, many *Issei, Kibei Nisei*, and old-timer Japanese nationals are deeply involved in Japanese organisations, and have the same idea of New York's Japanese community. As I found through my participant observation, this is precisely because particular organisations, such as the Japanese Embassy, the Nippon Club, and the Japanese American Association, very frequently sent information to the editors and journalists, as they wanted local Japanese newspapers to carry news and articles about their organisations: as a result, the journalist often wrote news and articles about those organisations, describing their officers and heads as 'community leaders' in their newspapers. In addition, the *Issei, Kibei Nisei*, and old-timers, as well as the journalists, often participated in events held by the above organisations, and also frequently read local Japanese newspapers. Consequently, these people often shared the same information through word of mouth and the ethnic media, and came to have the same image of New York's Japanese community (Fujita, 2002).

On the other hand, the young Japanese, who have spent only a few years in the city, have not become deeply involved in Japanese organisations (although they work part-time or shop at Japanese commercial establishments and are exposed to the ethnic media). In contrast to the old-timers, most of the young Japanese continue to be exposed to a large amount of information and images from Japan and regard themselves as belonging to their homeland, without developing any sense of belonging to New York's Japanese community.

7.3 London's Japanese Community

7.3.1 Demographic Characteristics

The Japanese population in London is characterised by high mobility, like that in New York City. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan estimates that in 2004, there were 23,402 Japanese residents (or *zairyū hōjin*) in London. This number consists of 19,122 temporary residents (or *chōki taizaisha*) and 4,280 permanent residents (or *eijūsha*) (MOFA, 2005). About 82 % of Japanese residents in London are transient migrants.

About 44.6 % of *chōki taizaisha* in Britain[100] are company transferee families. Students, researchers, and teachers contribute a further 41.7 % of the total. These two groups account for about 86 % of Japanese residents in the country. As with the New York City, most Japanese migrants in London are company transferee families or people affiliated to some kind of educational institutions (MOFA, 2005), and have middle-class backgrounds.

These two groups are also characterised by gender difference and residential segregation, as with those in New York City. 77.3 % of those working for private companies are males (and their spouses are housewives). Such company transferee families tend to settle down in Acton, Golders Green, or Finchley. On the other hand, about 66.3 % of young people who identify themselves as students are females, and most of them are in their 20s or 30s (MOFA, 2005). Their residences are scattered throughout the city. In the case of my respondents in London, they live in Brixton, North Finchley, Notting Hill Gate, South Kensington, Camden, Hoxton, Shoreditch, and Lewisham. Overall, Japanese populations in the two global cities are very similar in terms of their high mobility and socioeconomic characteristics.

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[100] The government statistics are based on the number of *chōki taizaisha* who registered at a Japanese embassy in London, and exclude those who reside in Scotland, Cumbria, and the Newcastle area.

The Borders of the Community

In London, Japanese company transferee families tend to live in the above areas, but they have not built a geographically defined Japanese community, to compare with Chinatown in Soho or the Bangladesh community of Brick Lane. In the two global cities, Japanese migrants have not formed a single physical enclave, like 'Little Tokyo' in Los Angeles. In the case of London, this is precisely because there was no large-scale Japanese in-migration to Britain in the past.

When asked to describe what type of Japanese people live in London, young people in this group referred to 'business people', 'company transferees and their wives', 'students', 'hair stylists', 'chefs', or 'tour guides'. In Mihoko's words:

> Q: Do you think there are certain differences in Japanese people in London, like rich or poor?
>
> A: Women who have married foreigners are just ordinary, not rich. They just wanted to marry foreigners. People who came here to work for Japanese companies are rich. They are in the higher class. People who work as office assistants or as tour guides are in the middle. ...These days, young people can come here even if they come from ordinary families. But some young people have little financial support from parents and move into cheaper flats. So I don't think that all of them have much money. (Mihoko, female, age 30, after 11 months)

Certainly, a number of *kikokushijo* and British-born Japanese reside in London, but only three respondents noted that they had met *kikokushijo* or 'British Japanese' in the city. This is probably because these people are small in number in the city; and the young Japanese migrants do not have many occasions to interact with them. This imagined community seems to consist of the vast majority of Japanese nationals coming from Japan.

7.3.2 The Use of Language and Cultural Values in the Peer Group

All respondents in London are involved in peer group sociability to some extent. Since London is a popular place among young Japanese who study art, some of them have social networks with alumni of their preparatory schools for studying art abroad, vocational schools, or art colleges in Japan:

> I often get acquainted with friends of friends. For example, when I first arrived in London, I already had some friends living here. I've known them since I was in Japan. I could develop networks through them. I graduated from Bunka [a famous fashion school in Japan], and many Bunka graduates come here. I am often introduced to other Bunka people. (Aiko, female, age 20, after 3 months)

For those involved in peer group sociability, Old Street, Liverpool Street, Spitalfields Market, and Brick Lane are the most popular places to visit and hang out. These young Japanese are informed about these areas by their peers after migration, and begin to gather there. As Nozomu notes:

> Do you ever go to Old Street? I heard it is like Azabu in Japan and many people gather in the area. I don't know much about it yet but I heard there are many shops. I also heard about Liverpool Street. My home is near there, so I sometimes go and look around there by bicycle. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 3 months)

Most of the young Japanese are attracted to this district because many young British artists hold exhibitions in galleries and gather in stylish bars and restaurants here.[101] However, it seems that most respondents are not interested in or not much aware of the fact that this district was (or has been) a historically poor and working-class district, and represents an exuberant independence from the elitism of grand private galleries in the West End (Bracewell, 2004:52-9). Rather, what attracts them is 'coolness' in this area. There are not many opportunities for them to mingle with young British artists, but they still want to identify themselves as the same kind of 'cool' people as young British artists. Like these respondents, there are many other young Japanese who hope to have some experiences in London's art worlds. One of their solutions is to hold events and create opportunities by themselves:

> I went to a club event. It's called '*Matsuri* [or festival in Japanese]'. The organisers and staffs were all Japanese. In the event, there were hair shows and fashion shows. DJs, VJs, or MCs were doing live performances. Well, it was last October and the event was a great success. Perhaps, about 300 people showed up, and 80 percent were Japanese. It was held at a bar called 'Juno'. The location was between Old Street and Liverpool Street. (Aiko, female, age 20, after 7 month in London)

If the young Japanese cannot gain access to London's art worlds which consist of mostly whites, they can take part in such events held by Japanese peers. Even though the majority of participants are Japanese, this enables them to have more to add to their curriculum vitae or portfolios, and on their return to Japan, to say that they have experience participating in exhibitions or art shows 'in London'.

The Privileged: Japanese Nationals

The young Japanese tend to regard British whites as privileged. Nevertheless, they tend to consider themselves more privileged than 'British Japanese' or *kikokushijo*. Nozomu has a British-Japanese friend but describes him as 'strange':

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[101] In this district, artists had been setting up studios and finding flats in the cheaper East End throughout the 1980s. Since then, Hoxton and Shoreditch have become the centre for making and consuming art in the context of a new contemporary culture (Bracewell, 2004:52-9). In 1992, it was estimated that 6,000 artists lived in east London (Guardian, June 5, 2004).

> Some time ago, a man talked to me and said he wanted to become my friend. We became friends. He was a bit of a strange guy. At first, I thought he was Japanese. But he said his mother was Japanese and his father was English. His face looked Japanese, though. He was the sort of guy we are likely to see in Akihabara [a shopping district in Tokyo well-known for electric products and *otaku* people]. I thought he must be Japanese. But he couldn't speak Japanese. He only spoke English. His mother had died when he was a little child and he has never been to Japan. He said he wanted to go to Japan. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 11 months)

In a similar vein, Kumiko, who has a Japanese friend who is *kikokushijo*, thinks that her friend has disadvantages rather than advantages:

> I think Japanese who came here in their early years of life do not belong to Japan. I graduated from a university in Japan so I could make close friends in Japan. But perhaps some people chose to go abroad in their early years of life because they didn't fit in Japan. These people are usually too aggressive and stand out among other Japanese. They tend wrongly to assume that that's because they have outstanding personalities, though. (Kumiko, female, age 26, after 1 year and 2 months)

In contrast to the New York group, the young Japanese in the London group tend to consider themselves to be more privileged than British Japanese or *kikokushijo*. One reason may be that as discussed in Chapter 5, both male and female respondents in London tend to have better educational backgrounds and develop stronger nationalistic sentiments than those in the New York group, thereby thinking more highly of themselves than people who appear to 'deviate' from Japaneseness.

In fact, none of the young Japanese in this group attempts to become 'Anglicised' in terms of appearances and behaviour, although they hope to identify themselves as the same kind of 'cool' people as young British artists. Rather, they tend to show a negative attitude towards such attempts. Mihoko, for instance, criticises Japanese who attempt to look like Westerners:

> Q: What do you think about Japanese young people who dye their hair blonde?
> A: If they want to follow Westerners and dye their hair blonde, they should stop doing so. (Mihoko, female, age 30, after 10 months)

This is a contrast to the New York group in which many respondents observed other young Japanese 'acting black' or 'acting American' and some respondents themselves attempted to do so. The young Japanese in the London group seem to consider that they can 'distinguish' themselves culturally, not by imitating whiteness in terms of behaviour or appearances but by acquiring art degrees from British educational institutions, speaking English fluently, and gaining work experience in London's art worlds. On the other hand, those in the New York group are interested in American popular culture. For them, it is important to get closer to particular 'cool' images of American pop stars and celebrities, which are widely diffused by the media (see Chapters 4 and 5. Haruka and Nana mentioned names of their American idols, such as Beyoncé or Missy Elliot).

As with the New York group, the young Japanese in London tend to criticise their peers who have stayed in the city for many years. They regard such old-timers as 'strange people', who are losing Japaneseness:

> A: They are organisers or DJs. They often hold club events in Old Street. Some of them are 29 or 30 years old, have student visas, and stay here for many years, mostly, for 3, 4, or 5 years. Their futures are uncertain. They are almost the same as *freeters* [a young person who chooses to live on a series of part-time jobs rather than find a permanent one]. Their cultural activities don't produce any profits. They always work part-time [in Japanese restaurants] to do such activities. I think they are immature or strange. Because I was

> working in Japan, I can't understand these people …
>
> Q: Do they like Britain?
>
> A: Yes. Many of them say they like Britain. They say they don't like Japan, or don't want to go back to Japan. But I think Japan is better. It is more progressed. Such people tend to criticise Japan. They say they can have more freedom in Britain. But I don't think so. I think Japan is very good.
>
> Q: Do such people have British friends?
>
> A: No. They are always with other Japanese… they seem to think they can carve out a future for themselves but indeed they are like 'walking on ice'. They are just *freeters*. They come to Britain and certainly have some things they want to do. But actually they are just like walking on a very thin, fragile surface. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 11 months)

These young Japanese hope to follow the 'cool' lifestyle of young British artists, but at the same time, they greatly value their Japaneseness. Overall, most respondents live with Japanese flatmates, cook Japanese dishes, hang out with Japanese friends, or participate in cultural events with their peers. These things contribute to the retention of their sense of Japaneseness.

7.3.3 Institutions, Ethnic Media, and the Community

Institutional Completeness

London's Japanese community resembles New York's Japanese community in terms of demographic characteristics and institutional structure. In London and its environs, there are about 600 branches of Japanese firms and financial corporations. This number includes branches of major Japanese manufactures in Berkshire and Surrey, e.g., Sony, Panasonic, and Canon. In Central London, we can find about 20 Japanese governmental organisations and business associations, such as the Japanese Embassy, the Japan Foundation, and Nippon Club. Moreover, a glance at one Japanese business directory (Redbooks, 2005), for example, reveals a great many commercial establishments, including about 50 restaurants, 20 grocery stores, 8 bakeries, 30 real estate agencies, 15 travel agencies, 3 hotels, 10 clinics, 30 hair salons, 4 book stores, 15 night clubs and bars. In particular, many Japanese gather in popular shopping spots in Piccadilly Circus, such as Japan Centre and Mitsukoshi. In Finchley and Acton, full-time or part-time Japanese schools as well as commercial establishments are open for company transferee families. Many people belong to informal social associations, e.g., *kenjinkai* (prefectural-based social associations), mothers' clubs, football or golf clubs, study groups for business people, and so on. As major Japanese companies and governmental organisations establish their branches in both of these two global cities, the institutional structure of the Japanese community in London becomes very similar to that in New York City.

The young Japanese interviewed buy food in Japanese grocery stores, use Japanese travel agencies, or see Japanese doctors when necessary. Yet, London has fewer Japanese-style commercial establishments for young customers (e.g., coffee shops, comic shops, video rental shops, and *izakaya*) than New York City. So young Japanese in London have fewer hangouts where they can gather and socialise with their peers than those in New York City.

Among this group, only Mihoko is involved in Japanese organisations to some extent, as she has worked part-time in a few Japanese restaurants. While working in a famous Japanese restaurant in Piccadilly Circus, she finds that employees have to follow organisational practices familiar in Japan:

> A: If you want to work in this restaurant, the first thing you need is knowledge about Japanese language. They think it's useless to hire foreigners. When they hire foreigners, they hire only Koreans or Nikkei Brazilians [who speak Japanese] as kitchen staff. The manager and chefs give instructions only in Japanese…
>
> Q: Are there any hierarchical relationships?

> A: There is a girl who throws her weight around. She has been working for one year and a half. She's worked there longer than any other part-time employee. She is 27 years old… We always have a staff meeting before we open our restaurant. The manager gives instructions to us. But the girl also gives us instructions and says, like, 'Please recommend today's special to customers'. She seldom goes to her language school recently. Perhaps, she wants to get a working visa from the restaurant. (Mihoko, female, age 30, after10 months)

On the whole, in London, the young Japanese show little commitment in Japanese 'organisations' in the city, whereas some of them are thoroughly involved in Japanese 'peer group sociability'.

Ethnic Media

London has five or more local Japanese dailies, weeklies, and magazines but no local TV and radio programmes. The respondents use two free papers, *Journey* and *News Digest* most often for several purposes. The first is to get information about the social system and culture of their host country. They say, 'I read feature articles about Brighton and Bristol. It was very useful' (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 11 months) or 'I like to read articles about important figures in Britain. In this issue, there is an interesting story about a butler to Queen Elizabeth' (Emi, female, age 23, after 9 months). The second purpose is to collect information about Japanese commercial establishments. Many respondents use advertisements in these free papers to find Japanese clinics, shops, restaurants, travel agencies, etc. The third purpose is to read news about their homeland, as these free papers carry a large amount of news about Japan:

> My friends brought a copy of *Journey* to me yesterday, so I read it. It reported who went out with who, or who got married. I thought they were rubbish, but we talked so much about these articles. (Aiko, female, age 20, after 3 months)

> When I read news in Journey, I felt that cruel crimes were increasing in Japan. Editors may select only shocking news stories among various news stories, though. For example, I read that many school teachers went out of their minds and committed crimes. (Emi, female, age 23, after 9 months)

The respondents in London also perform 'the ritual' (cf. p.225) to secure personal identity and communities of origin. That is, they read old news in these papers, although they can read the latest news through the Internet:

> Q: Don't you think news in *Journey* is a bit old?
> A: Not really. Recently, I read a piece of news that said an actress was getting married to a guy who was fifteen years younger than her. I read the news through the Internet first, and later read it again in *Journey*. It was rather timely. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 3 months)

However, since London's Japanese papers do not frequently carry local community news, the young Japanese in this city have few occasions to read about the profiles of community leaders or events held in the local Japanese community. It seems that because there are a relatively small number of Japanese migrants who plant their roots in London, Japanese residents in the city have less solidarity than those in New York City, which include a number of *Issei* and *Nisei* Japanese Americans. Therefore, Japanese papers in London do not devote much space to local Japanese community news, in contrast to those in New York City.

A Sense of Belonging to the Local Japanese Community

When these young Japanese were asked, 'Do you think there is a Japanese community in London?', Sayaka, who had spent most of her time in her art college in Lewisham, could not describe any particular community:

> Q: Do you think there is Japanese community in London?

> A: I don't mingle with many Japanese people. There may be some communities, but I don't know. (Sayaka, female, age 27, after 10 months)

Some people pictured peer groups or friendly 'communities' among young Japanese, which they could directly observe:

> Q: Do you think there is a Japanese community?
>
> A: Yes. There are groups like circles. For instance, there is a circle which asks us to play football together. I think there are many. When I visited my friend's place some time ago, I met a [Japanese] girl who was working in Old Street. Later, I became friends with an Italian man and we went to a Japanese club event in Old Street. Then, we met the girl. And the Italian and the girl knew each other. I was so surprised to know they were friends. We live in a very small world. (Nozomu, male, age 26, after 11 months)

Only Mihoko, who has worked part-time in a few Japanese restaurants, and Ryo, who has taught piano part-time in several Japanese families, could describe wider Japanese communities, including company transferee families and people with other occupational backgrounds. As Mihoko notes:

> Q: Do you think there is a Japanese community in London?
>
> A: I often see information about it in *Journey*. While I'm working in the restaurant, I also see *kenjinkai* [prefectural-based social associations] and Japanese association gatherings; or study groups will call us and reserve private rooms. People in the Japanese Embassy or major Japanese firms come and study political or economic issues about Japan. They also exchange information. … I think there are many communities.
>
> Q: What about young people?
>
> A: They hold [Japanese] college alumni associations. I often see ads which say, like, 'We are looking for more alumni. Please contact us'. I also see women, who have married foreigners, come to my restaurant and study how to make sugarcraft. They appear to be in their 30s. (Mihoko, female, age 30, after10 months)

Except for Mihoko and Ryo, the other people in the London group could not imagine any local Japanese community which consists not only of young people but also of people of different ages and occupations. The reason seems to be that since their purpose in migration is to improve their English skills or gain work experience in London's art worlds, they have little interest in participating in Japanese organisations; therefore, they have few occasions to hear about the image of London's Japanese community, which is supposed to be diffused mainly through organisational networks (as well as through local Japanese newspapers). Consequently, they seldom develop a sense of belonging to London's Japanese community, and continue to have a strong sense of belonging to Japan.

7.4 Conclusion

In both New York City and London, the vast majority of Japanese residents come from the middle class in Japan. The two dominant groups are company employees (the majority is male) and their families and young people (more than 60 % are female). As these Japanese residents have similar social backgrounds, most of the twenty-two young Japanese studied develop peer group sociability very easily.

In such relationships, the Japanese language plays an important role. When they develop friendship networks, they do so mostly with young people who not only appear Japanese but also speak Japanese; and they often depend on Japanese commercial establishments in the city for shopping, travel, or employment, because they can speak Japanese in such settings. In this way, language allows them to maintain their sense of being Japanese and also serves to connect them effectively with other Japanese in the city to which they have migrated.

Their cultural values are another important factor, although their effects vary in the different contexts of New York or London. On the one hand, the young Japanese in the New York group often try to achieve acceptance or inclusion in American society, by 'acting black' or 'acting American'. On the other hand, those in the London group do not attempt to become Anglicised, because they consider that it will ultimately profit them more if they can acquire specific forms of cultural capital, such as an art degree or certificate or work experience in London's art worlds. Despite this difference in attitude towards 'acculturation', respondents in both groups tend to criticise their peers who deviate from Japaneseness.

In both cities, these young Japanese often utilise local Japanese free papers, although they have little interest in news about the local Japanese community. Rather, they mainly read old news about Japan, thus confirming their sense of belonging to their national community.

Overall, the young Japanese in both groups do not internalise the cultural practices and values of their host country to any significant extent, and are not actively involved in either local Japanese organisations in their host country or transnational organisational networks that link together Japan and their host country. All the young people continue to regard themselves as belonging to Japan, without developing a sense of being Japanese Americans or becoming 'transmigrants'.

Chapter 8 Transnational Media, Mobility, and Imagining 'Home'

8.1 Introduction

> There is only one problem. *To return or not to return.*
>
> A long dream – I thought I had a long, long dream. (In this dream) when I woke up and realised that I had been dozing off in a *kotatsu*, Grandma was shaking me out of my sleep, saying, 'you should sleep in futon'. Then I rubbed my eyes sleepily and stretched my arms… Ah, but (in my reality) time passed by relentlessly, and I have actually spent a great amount of time on which I cannot turn back the clock. *And what have I learned from all these years I've spent living in my own shadow?* What I have learned, what I had to learn from all these years I can no longer turn back, is – that there is only a weak link, which is more fragile than a spider's thread and can be cut off anytime, between the fact that I have Japanese blood in me and the fact that I am Japanese.
>
> So, Grandma, the fact that I have Grandma's blood in me may not be the reason why I want to return to Japan, why I always hope to return there. But I have always hoped to return, and now I am actually trying to return. We came all the way to the Promised Land, but I am returning, leaving this Promised Land. (Minae Mizumura, in *Shishōsetsu: from Left to Right,* 1995:13, translated by YF)

Chapters 5 and 6 described how the twenty-two young Japanese renegotiate their sense of national identity, as they interact with people in their host country. Chapter 7 explained how these young Japanese continue to regard themselves as belonging to their homeland, without developing a sense of belonging in relation to the local Japanese community. Finally, this chapter closely examines the role of transnational media and mobility in their identity experience.

As discussed earlier, theories of transnationalism argue that one key aspect of globalisation is the rapid improvement in technologies of communication and transport, which have made it increasingly easy for migrants to maintain close links with their areas of origin. One result of this aspect of globalisation is that migrants begin to form transnational identities and communities. In their analyses of the role of media in this process, proponents of transnationalism often refer to Benedict Anderson's notion of the 'imagined community' (1983) as a theoretical basis. They maintain that media enable migrants to imagine transnational identities. Nonetheless, Anderson himself opposes the idea of transnationalism and instead, introduces the concept of the 'long-distance nationalist' (1992).

The Emergence of the Long-Distance Nationalist

According to Anderson, migrants today continue to hold a sense of belonging to their homeland. The scale and speed of modern market-driven migrations have made any traditional form of gradual assimilation to the new environments very difficult, because people can easily go home by the same ships, trains, buses, and airplanes that brought them from their homes in the first place. Moreover, the telephone, the Internet, and the post office encourage them to keep in touch in a way unimaginable in earlier centuries. Therefore many of them dream of 'circulatory migration', rather than of finding a new permanent home, even if that is what, finally, they find themselves stuck with. Anderson goes on to argue that it is not only local and familial memories that migrants bring with them, but that capitalism has its own way of helping them imagine 'a more mediated identity':

> We may recall the famous photograph of a Peloponnesian Gastarbeiter sitting mournfully in his tiny room in some anonymous German industrial town – Stuttgart perhaps? The pitiful little room is bare of any decoration except a travel poster of

> the Parthenon, produced en masse by Lufthansa, with a subscription, in German, encouraging the gazer to take a Holiday in Sunny Greece. This Lufthansa Parthenon is transparently not a real memory for the melancholy worker. He has put it on his wall because he can read it as sign for 'Greece', and – in his Stuttgart misery – for an 'ethnicity' that only Stuttgart has encouraged him to imagine. (Anderson, 1992:9)

Thus we are faced with a new type of nationalist: the long-distance nationalist. Though many migrants live in their host country for many years or even permanently, they feel little attachment to the country. Rather, they may find it tempting to play identity politics by participating (via propaganda, money, weapons – any way but voting) in conflicts of their 'imagined Heimat – only fax-time away' (Anderson, 1992:13). Even if migrants do not actually participate in home-country politics, they often continue to have 'a burning desire for return' (Naficy, 1990:16) to their imaginary homeland, as the quoted passage from *I-Novel* written by Minae Mizumura describes (Mizumura arrived in America at the age of twelve in the 1960s, lived there over two decades, and finally returned to Japan). We can find similar sentiments in the case studies of first-generation Turks (Robins and Aksoy, 2001:695-6), as well as of first-generation Hong Kong Chinese in Britain (Siew-Peng, 2001:143-55) (cf. p.45).

'Public Diasporic Spheres'

On the other hand, Appadurai argues that the combination of electronic media and mass migration is leading to a 'postnational' political order composed of 'diasporic public spheres'. Anderson (1983) has shown that print capitalism can be one important way in which groups who have never been in face-to-face contact can begin to think of themselves as a 'nation'. By contrast, Appadurai claims that electronic capitalism can have similar and even more powerful effects, for electronic media do not work only at the level of the nation-state. Electronic media increasingly link producers and audiences across national boundaries. As such audiences themselves start new 'conversations' between those who move and those who stay, we find a growing number of 'diasporic public spheres', which offer the means for forming a variety of transnational organisations, movements, ideologies, and networks (Appadurai, 1996:8-10).

These diasporic spheres are frequently tied up with long-distance nationalism. Yet Appadurai emphasises that transnational communities, (for example, the Islamic worlds, or black people's networks in South Africa, the United States and the Caribbean) often have little to do with national boundaries. Activist movements involved with the environment, women's issues, and human rights have created a sphere of transnational discourse. These examples suggest that the era in which we could assume that viable public spheres were necessarily national could be at an end. In the long run, we may find that the nation-state becomes obsolete and other formations for allegiance and identity take its place in the postnational political order. Accordingly, diasporic public spheres may also bring into being a new world system that is based on relations between heterogeneous units and is free of the constraints of the nation form (Appadurai, 1996:21-3). And indeed, Appadurai's ideas are demonstrated by the case study of second- and later-generation bilingual Turks (Aksoy and Robins, 2000:363-4; Robins and Aksoy, 2001: 700-3) (cf. p.45).

These theories and case studies make it clear that even in the same migrant group, under the influence of the media, some may become 'long-distance nationalists', while others may develop transnational identities. Particularly, it is suggested that 'first-generation' migrants are likely to hold onto their homeland-based national identities, as transnational media convey images of their homeland. This chapter will examine the case of the young Japanese, by exploring how transnational media and mobility affect the ways in which they reconstruct their perception of 'home' and renegotiate their sense of belonging.

8.2 Imagining 'Home' in New York City

8.2.1 Transnational Media

In New York City, there are two transnational television services for Japanese residents. One is a subscription television service, TV Japan, which began transnational broadcasting through DTH (Direct-to-Home) satellite and affiliate cable systems in the United States and Canada in 1991.[102] The other is Fuji Corporation International (FCI) Television, which started to provide its programmes in the United States in 1982. In the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut area, its programmes are broadcast for two hours per day on WMBC-TV (Ch. 63) via cable television and satellite systems.[103] Since TV Japan's subscription fee is about thirty US dollars per month, the young Japanese in New York City who have relatively low incomes, seldom subscribe to the service. Nearly all of them, however, watch FCI's programmes on WMBC-TV, which is included in most basic cable television packages in this area.

Some respondents contrast Japan with America when they see images of Japanese people and society on television in this new context, away from their homeland. Mayumi develops an impression that Japan is strange and inferior to America, where she currently lives:

> A: I watch Japanese news every morning. One day, when I saw the news, I felt it was the right decision for me to come here. I felt Japan was petty. Lots of people commit crimes, like making 'clone mobile phones', or making sneak hidden-camera videos. They are so petty.
>
> Q: Do you think New York is better?

---

[102] TV Japan's programming is mostly from Nihon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) in Japan, e.g., live news, documentaries, drama, sports, variety shows, children's programming, and other popular programmes. This programming is edited and arranged to 24-hours-a-day format to suit the needs for North American viewers in different time zones (http://www.tvjapan.net/eng/index_e.asp).

[103] FCI TV's programming is from Fuji Television in Japan. FCI TV is available over the air on UHF TV stations in five major markets and via cable and/or satellite elsewhere. FCI TV's daily news and entertainment shows are watched nationally by more than 70% of Japanese living in the U.S. (http://www.fujisankei.com/en/home.html).

> A: Maybe I think so because I don't often watch American news. Life here is more like virtual reality to me. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 3 months)

Even after spending three months in New York City, Mayumi's perception of everyday life is like 'virtual reality'. As in Jean Baudrillard's 'hyperreality' (1983), clear distinctions between the real and the imaginary do not exist yet in her life in the city. It seems that she had been greatly affected by images of New York City while living in Japan, and these images still shape her reality more than what she directly sees in the city.

Most of the young Japanese tried to watch American television programmes more frequently than Japanese ones, because they strongly hope to improve their English listening skills. However, they often find themselves more interested in Japanese programmes and continue to watch the Japanese news, dramas, and variety shows. Some of them even begin to watch videos, by utilising Japanese video rental shops or borrowing videos from their peers:

> My [Japanese] boyfriend and I opened Pandora's Box. We can walk from home to Family Market in a few minutes. We can rent videos in the Japanese convenience store. We usually go to rent videos every weekend. We watch variety shows. Japanese variety shows are very funny, very enjoyable. We laugh wholeheartedly. ... But I don't think this is good. I should watch videos in English. (Yoko, female, age 29, after 1 year)

> I want to watch Japanese programmes on Sunday night, drinking beer. Because I don't have many videos now, I've watched one video with *Mechaike* [a popular variety show] five or six times. ... I wouldn't watch American programmes, even if I became able to speak English. They are boring. American characteristics come out even in commercials. They are rough and have no taste. (Toru, male, age 26, after 1 year)

These young Japanese feel the need to see images of people and culture from their homeland, in order to secure their identity, as they cannot feel that they belong to America. Transnational television and video allow them to feel mentally included in their national community, whenever they virtually return there, by watching Japanese television. They also confirm that their 'home' still exists, far away from America, and think that they have an option to physically return to their 'home', if they face serious problems in their host country.

In addition, the Internet greatly contributes to their sense of belonging to their homeland. Most of the young Japanese use the Internet to read news headlines in Japanese language (mostly those on Yahoo Japan or Excite Japan) frequently and try to catch up with what is happening in Japan. Email and online chat also enable them to maintain strong ties with people in Japan:

> A: I talk with my father through online chats almost every day. I get along well with my family. Like, he said he paid my tuition or I told him I was doing this project in college. I sometimes take photos and send them to him. My mother doesn't use Messenger, so I send her emails from my pc to her mobile.
>
> Q: Did you talk about your [Hispanic] boyfriend?
>
> A: Yes. I told them about him some time ago. My mother was surprised and said, 'You have a boyfriend!' My father didn't say anything special. He was like, 'Hmm. Is that so?' When we talk about my future plans, my mother always says I should go back to Japan right after graduation. My father suggests that I should get some work experience to develop better career options. (Fumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year)

They do not make international calls frequently because of the high cost. Even so, Haruka often receives calls from her father in Japan:

> My father often calls me. He asks me what I am doing. He said, 'You should go to [dance] school, and stop hanging out. You had better not move house so often'. When I decided to live in Harlem, he was a bit angry and said, 'What

> are you doing?' I sometimes feel sorry for him because recently I've been hanging out with my boyfriend. (Haruka, female, age 23, after 6 months)

Through the Internet and international calls, parents can exercise some control over their daughters living away from them. Their parents also give considerable mental and financial support to their daughters living alone for the first time (while male respondents in New York City have no financial support from and few contacts with their parents during the post-migration period). In response, these young women become more considerate to their parents, and often take their opinions into account when making important decisions.

8.2.2 Transnational Mobility

Owing to low travel costs,[104] nearly all of the young Japanese in New York City go back to Japan once or twice every year (see Table 3.2 on p.81) just for casual reasons, such as attending a sibling's wedding, seeing their dentist, or just seeing families and friends. This back-and-forth movement leads them to rethink Japan. In this group, only Yoko criticises Japan after her sojourn, saying, 'When I was in Japan, I felt a sense of being oppressed and I couldn't do what I wanted. It was like I was being observed by someone [as she feels that individuality is not highly valued in Japan]' (Yoko, female, age 27, after 10 month).

Other people, however, came to think that Japan is 'a good place', whereas some of them had criticised the country heavily before migration:

> Q: How did you feel when you returned to Japan?
>
> A: I thought I might experience culture shock, but I didn't. ... I went to Shibuya [a busy area of Tokyo which is very popular among young people], and found that Japanese fashion was prettier than American fashion. My

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[104] Generally, during their post-migration period, a discount round-trip flight ticket between the two cities costs approximately 600 US dollars.

> parents told me to come back to Japan as soon as possible.... I felt Japan is a good place. People working in convenience stores were nicer than people here. (Mayumi, female, age 26, after 10 months)

> I found Japan is a good place. I can live there more easily. ...My aim is to go back to Japan once per three months. I want to go to Japan to sell my artworks and have fun in Japan. (Toru, male, age 25, after 6 months)

These young Japanese had taken their privileged position in terms of nationality and ethnicity in Japan for granted. After migration, however, they have encountered various obstacles as a foreigner and a member of an ethnic 'minority' group in their host country. Subsequently, by moving back and forth between two different societies, they experience their old and new social positions and compare these experiences. As a consequence, they come to feel that they can live in Japan more comfortably than in New York City, and develop a stronger attachment to their homeland than they had prior to migration.

To Return or Not To Return?

For all of the young Japanese in New York City, the question as to whether or not they should eventually return to Japan is always critical. Significantly, they often change their migratory plans according to how their lives at the time are going in their host country. Before migration, they all planned to stay in the city for a couple of years or had not decided when to return. In the early period of their migration, most of them began to hope to stay in the city as long as possible or even permanently (see 'estimated period of sojourn' in Table 3.2), being fascinated by their new life. Then, after finding their prospects in New York City not to be so rosy, they reconsider their plans as a result of certain factors.

Firstly, financial conditions and visa status have an influence on their length of stay.

Nearly all of the young Japanese obtain an F-1 or M-1 visa and an I-20[105] through language or vocational schools (regardless of their school attendance). If they want to stay longer, they need to figure out how to pay the following year's tuition. Some ask their parents to pay for extended years, while others begin to work part-time as waitresses, bar hostesses, kitchen staff, or receptionists in Japanese commercial establishments, several days per week.

Secondly, future prospects after returning to Japan are an important factor. In Nana's case, after living in New York City for six months, she decided to stay in the city longer than she first planned. Moreover, she began to hope to become American, as she found her new life to be more fun than her old life in Japan. She said, 'I have nothing to do in Japan if I return there. Perhaps, I don't want to go back to my old life. Maybe I want to escape. After all, I may not want to work' (Nana, female, age 20, after 6 months). After one year, she extended her stay again mainly for the same reason. Even so, having faced various obstacles in her everyday life, she came to think of Japan, which she used to dislike, as the best place for her. What she now hopes is to stay in New York City as a Japanese:

> Q: Do you want to become American?
>
> A: No.
>
> Q: How do you think about being Japanese?
>
> A: Japanese are responsible and thoughtful. I am very happy that I am Japanese. I don't know much about foreign countries, so I'm not very sure. But between Japanese, we can understand each other without explaining things in details.
>
> Q: If you continue to live abroad, do you think you will become less Japanese?
>
> A: No. I think I will be always Japanese. I was born Japanese. My parents and grandma are also Japanese. Maybe that's why I want to be Japanese. Japan

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[105] I-20 is a certificate of eligibility for F-1/M-1 student status, issued by college or language/vocational school. To obtain an initial I-20, the student must meet certain financial and academic requirements. If students can pay tuitions for college/school and renew their I-20 every year, they can legally stay in the United States, even after their visas expire.

> is safer than other countries. Before, I wanted to become American. But now I want to enjoy life in America as a Japanese. (Nana, female, age 21, after 1 year and 4 months)

Toru succeeded in selling a number of his paintings on the street in Soho and earned several thousands US dollars. But it is still difficult for him to have a stable income, so that he often feels like returning to Japan. He cannot return, however, as he believes that there are few opportunities for him in Tokyo. He says, 'if I go back to Japan, I have to give up becoming a professional artist. ...if I go back to Japan now, I have no future. Maybe all I can do is to work as a security guard or something like that' (Toru, male, age 26, after 1 year). He therefore continues to stay in New York City, without developing any attachment to America:

> Q: How long do you want to stay?
> A: I don't know. I have nothing special to do in Japan.
> Q: Why don't you produce artworks in Japan?
> A: Everyone is good at drawing in Japan. And there are established communities [in Tokyo's art worlds]. As I have been doing this by myself, I'm not interested in joining them after all this time...
> Q: Now you don't like Japan much, do you?
> A: I like Japan very much. I like Japan best. ... When I watch Japanese programmes here, I always think Japanese people are so talented, or delicate. Japanese animation and manga are marvellous...
> Q: But don't you want to stay here for five or ten years and be an American?
> A: No. I want to remain Japanese. I can't think of myself being American. I feel much cultural difference. For example, their nationalism. The other day, Tom [his American friend who is interested in Japan and speaks a little Japanese] was very angry when he got to know that we don't pay tax though we earn money here [by selling artworks or working part-time illegally]. He told us to pay tax if we live here. But I don't care. (Toru, male, age 26, after 1 year and 4 months)

In a similar way, Makoto, who has begun to attend art school in order to hold a valid I-20, intensifies his sense of belonging to Japan:

> Q: Are you interested in getting American citizenship?
>
> A: Not at all. I'm not interested in suffrage or social security. But if I have a green card, I don't have to go to school. So, I want to get a green card. I've never thought about becoming American. I prefer being Japanese. It is easier. I've been Japanese so I don't want to change my nationality. ... Indeed, I don't want to stay here until I die. I will return to Japan someday. (Makoto, male, age 31, after 1 year and 5 months)

In his studies of Iranian exiles in Los Angeles, Hamid Naficy notes that nostalgia has in recent years become a common currency as postmodernity, neo-colonialism, communism, totalitarianism, imperialism, and transnational capital have displaced peoples and cultures the world over. The nostalgia for one's homeland has a fundamentally interpsychic source, expressed in the trope of an eternal desire for 'return' – even if that is a return which is structurally unrealizable in practical terms. Although the 'lost mother' that is the goal of this desire for return is structurally irretrievable, the lost homeland is potentially recoverable, and it is this potentiality – however imaginary – which drives the exiles' multifaced desire to return, according to Naficy's psychoanalytic perspective (Naficy, 1991:147-8).

Unlike the Iranian exiles, the young Japanese in my study have not 'lost' their home, and there are few political and economic barriers to their return. Nevertheless, it is not easy for them to conceive of returning to their homeland. Since nearly all young people in the New York group had spent most of their lives in Japan, they already know that their future prospects are limited in Japan. This was the main 'push' factor for their migration (see Chapter 4). After facing various obstacles in their new lives in New York City, they have begun to sense that it is also difficult to 'make it' in New York City and they thus develop a stronger 'nostalgic' attachment to Japan. However, many of them attempt to stay longer in New York City. This is precisely because they have internalised the positive image of the city constructed by the media as a 'place of opportunity', and are afraid that they will lose their last chance of success, if they return to Japan without having made any significant achievements. Therefore, even if these young people cannot actually 'make it' in New York City, they are likely to try to stay in the city until their I-20s expire or until the idealised image of the city – their hopes and dreams of success there – finally wears off. Alternatively, perhaps, for some of them, this constructed image may prove immune to their actual experiences and might never fully disappear from their minds, even while their nostalgia for Japan grows stronger and stronger. In this sense, they may continue to live in an imaginary world, or a 'hyperreality', which is constructed by mediated images, more than by what they directly experience in New York City.

Meanwhile, Mayumi and Rie have begun to reconstruct their positive image of New York City and decided to return to Japan soon:

> I think I need to take courage to decide to return to Japan. If I return to Japan now, I will have a hard time there. I am a bit old, but have no special educational background or career. What if someone asks me what I have been doing in New York... It may be about time to face the reality. Now I don't think returning to Japan is an escape. I think staying in New York may be more like an escape... an escape from Japan. ...After I came here, I felt deeply that I wouldn't change wherever I go. Even though I've spent much time in New York, I haven't changed. Before, I expected that I could change. I always blamed Japan when I had some problems. But now I've realised that what should be blamed is not Japan but me. I found out that I am always the same, whether I live in Japan or here. (Mayumi, female, age 28, after 1 year and 8 months)

Mayumi believed that she could change herself if she migrated to New York City. She expected that she would naturally become able to speak English fluently and get acquainted with many Americans, and many doors would open for her, as she saw in magazines, television programmes, and films while living in Japan. However, these things do not happen to her in America as these did not happen to her in Japan. Then, she begins to think that her life in New York City may be 'an escape', which is unreal and allows her to forget her life in Japan. Through her experiences in New York City, she comes to realise that she is always the same person who cannot transcend her sense of Japaneseness.

Finally, in this group, only Fumiko has an ambiguous sense of belonging. As mentioned earlier, Fumiko is a *kikokushijo*, and had spent more than half of her school years in North America, Australia, and Asia, due to her father's job as a company transferee. Subsequently, she returned to Japan to attend college, worked in companies in Japan for several years, and then migrated to New York City. During the early period of her migration, she expressed clearly that America was 'a foreign country' to her. But she gradually came to feel that it is more comfortable to live in New York City than in Tokyo. In fact, in interviews, she does not heighten her sense of Japaneseness as much as other respondents, even after her recent re-migration:

> A: Where do you think the base and centre of your life is?
>
> Q: It is a difficult question. I haven't found one yet. After living in Japan for eight years, I was gradually able to fit in with life there. But most of my college friends were *kikokushijo*. I couldn't get along with Japanese who have lived only in Japan. I think they think too much of group harmony. I can't be self-assertive there. Of course, there are many good points of such a Japanese way…
>
> Q: …Which do you prefer Tokyo or New York?
>
> A: I have never stayed in one place for many years. So I'm not sure if New York will be the base and centre of my life, though I feel very comfortable here.
>
> Q: With which do you feel familiar, Japanese Americans or Japanese?
>
> A: That is hard to say. It is other *kikokushijo* who I feel the strongest affinities

> with, though. If I compare the two, I tend to feel more affinity with those who were born and grown up in Japan.
>
> A: Do you think you have a sense of nationalism?
>
> Q: I think Japan is my country, as I was born there. So I have some sense of nationalism, but I may have less than other people.

Partly because she is proficient in English and partly because her peers, who have stayed in the United States for many years, inform her about their experiences, she understands that her 'race' and her imperfect English skills will later block her opportunities to rise socioeconomically in American society. She is more careful about evaluating her current situation, and considers it necessary to work in American organisations to find out if she can fit in with life in New York City. Thus, because she has a diasporic background and has been negotiating her identities since childhood, moving to New York City once does not heighten her sense of belonging to Japan as strongly as with the other respondents. Even so, I would not consider her to have developed a transnational identity, because she tends to conceptualise her identity by using words such as 'foreign' and 'my country', and still identifies herself as *kikokushijo* – a constructed category for those moving in and out of a nation-state. Such identification does not transcend the very concept of 'the nation'.[106]

8.3 Imagining 'Home' in London

8.3.1 Transnational Media

In London, Japanese residents can watch Japanese Satellite Television (JSTV), which began transnational broadcasting in Europe and other neighbouring countries in

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[106] In her study of *kikokushijo*, C. L. Pang also concludes that 'I do not share the belief that returnees, while claiming their specific identity, are all cosmopolitans' (Pang, 2000:317).

1992.[107] Since it costs thirty pounds per month for JSTV subscription fees, no respondents use the service. And there are only a few Japanese video/DVD rental shops in London. Therefore, these young Japanese have very limited occasions to be exposed to images of their homeland on television and videos. Nevertheless, Nozomu and Ryo download Japanese television programmes from the Internet and watch them using file sharing software:

> Q: Do you watch Japanese television programmes?
>
> A: No. But I download them using Winny [a Japanese file sharing software for Windows users]. *Orengi deizu* [a popular Japanese television drama] is now being broadcast in Japan. I watched all the stories. … Japanese television programmes are very delicate. They grab customers' needs. There are many genres. I usually watch comedy shows, like *Haneru no tobira*, thinking Japanese comedy shows are so funny. This may be because I can understand Japanese language, though.
>
> Q: Do you miss Japan when watching Japanese programmes?
>
> A: Not really. But here, there are only soap operas, which have been running for many years. In Japan, it is so great that new dramas are coming in every season. (Nozomu, age 26, after 11 months)

These young Japanese men have a strong desire to see images of everyday life in Japan and to enjoy Japanese popular culture. Even though there are no free television services, they find an alternative way to watch Japanese programmes.

As with the New York group, the London group often reads Japanese language news on the Internet, and also use email and online chat to communicate with people in the homeland. Several respondents, who have work experience in Japan, consider their social networks in Tokyo to be important for their future careers, and continue to have frequent contact with their friends and ex-colleagues there. Also, several female and one male respondents contact their parents frequently:

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[107] JSTV broadcasts a variety of programmes for 24 hours per day which include NHK News, documentaries, drama, animation, variety show, sport (sumo, Japanese baseball, etc.). Anyone can watch NHK News and other NHK World TV programmes for free; however, for viewing other programmes, subscription is required (http://www.jstv.co.uk/english/index.html).

> A: When my parents visited me, they brought me a laptop. …Online chat is amazing. …They also gave me a headphone and a camera, so I can talk with them, seeing their faces. This TV phone is free. These days, I talk to my parents more often. Before, I didn't do the Internet. I didn't want to be bothered by such a thing…
>
> Q: So you can see their faces.
>
> A: Yeah, I can see their faces. I even saw my sister's newborn baby [in real time]! (Ryo, male, age 26, after 1 year and 2 months)

International calls are used to keep in touch with people close to the young Japanese, such as family members or a girlfriend. These young people also tend to recognise their parents greatly support their children living alone overseas. Emi considers her relationship with her parents has improved from the pre-migration period:

> Q: Do you keep in touch with your family?
>
> A: Yes. They call me every two weeks.
>
> A: …After you left Japan, has your impression of Japan changed?
>
> Q: Not really. Well, when I was in Japan, I couldn't get along well with my family. I thought if I left home, I could get along better with them. And it turned out to be true. When we lived together, we had many arguments. But after I left home, I became more thoughtful towards them. When we communicate by email or airmail, now I can honestly say, 'Thank you'. (Emi, female, age 23, after 9 months)

The young Japanese in London have little access to Japanese programmes through television and video rentals. Instead, the Internet and international call enable them to see images of everyday life in their homeland as well as to have strong ties with their families and friends there.

8.3.2 Transnational Mobility

Due to low travel costs,[108] some of the young Japanese, especially those who plan to attend college for two or more years, return to Japan once or twice per year during holidays (see Table 3.2 on p.81). Through this back-and-forth movement, as with the New York group, most respondents compare their positions in the two different societies and discover good points about their homeland:

> A: ...Because I went back to Japan twice this year, I could meet my friends then. I didn't feel there was a time gap. I met them after half a year but it was not so different from when I lived in Tokyo.
>
> Q: Did Japan look different?
>
> A: I thought Japan was so organised, like transportation. I thought it was so great that trains came on time and people in department stores, banks, and hospitals treated customers very nicely. ... It was also good that I could use the language of my country. When I speak English here, there is a language barrier. (Sayaka, female, age 27, after 10 months)

> A: I want to return to Japan at least once a year. I've established my own personal networks there. I don't want to lose them...
>
> Q: Do you prefer going back and forth?
>
> A: Indeed, I want to go back to Japan occasionally. I don't spend much time with my parents, but I meet friends very often. Now I have something I really want to study. Many people support me in Japan. I also have some close friends there. But it is difficult to make such close friends here.
>
> Q: As you go back and forth, does Japan look different?
>
> A: Japan looked like 'too much'. When I went back to Japan during the New Year holidays and saw a 'scramble' intersection [an intersection with diagonal crosswalks], I felt that people were walking too fast. I took it for granted before, though. ...I went shopping in Akihabara, and attended a conference. I enjoyed a productive time. But after I came back to Britain, I had few friends, had nothing to do, and idled my time away. Then I felt that

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[108] Generally, a discount return flight ticket between the two cities costs approximately 500 - 700 GBP as of 2006.

> I do belong to Tokyo. (Kumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year and 2 months)

Sayaka took the common language and practices in Japan for granted, but now she appreciates them. Kumiko discovers that she has a solid foundation for her life in Tokyo, while it has been difficult for her to develop social networks with local people in London. Transnational mobility thus leads these young people to confirm that they 'belong to' their nation of origin.

To Return or Not To Return?

From the beginning of her migration, Sayaka regards London just as a place to study art and the English language, and never changes her migratory plans – to return to Japan after finishing her study. Other people, however, grapple with the question of whether they should return to Japan or not to return. Most of them strongly hope to have some work experience in London, and financial conditions and visa status affect their length of stay. Because it is difficult for non-EU residents to obtain a legal work permit in Britain, these young people tend to consider obtaining a valid student visa to stay in the city, by enrolling in an English language school (even after graduating from college there). If their parents are not willing to financially support their children for more years, they tend to choose to return to Japan.

Their choice to return to Japan is also related to their prospects in Japan. When they can neither secure parental supports nor find a full-time job, they do not dare to work part-time as an unskilled labourer, just in order to stay in London. Rather, they return to Japan to find a better job:

> If I go back to Japan, I can build up a reputation. Some people have lived only in Japan and have never lived in a foreign country. If I say, 'I lived in London and attended college', such people will treat me better. Even if my abilities are this [with her gesture], they will think I have more abilities. This makes me do

> things more easily. (Aiko, female, age 21, after 1 year and 4 months)

> Q: …Do you think Japanese people who remain in Britain are successful?
>
> A: I don't think so. They stay here not because they found a good job. Rather, many people are looking for a job just because they want to stay here. …I know a person who got a job. But the company told her to enrol in an English language school, because it costs so much to give her a working visa. The company will pay for the tuition. Visa is a serious problem.
>
> Q: …Is there any possibility that you will go back to Japan after graduation? How many percent is it?
>
> A: 85 percent. The remaining 15 percent is just my dreamy wish. To be realistic, it is easier to work in Japan than in Britain. Now Japanese people treat me better than before, like 'Are you studying in RCA!' It is as if I got a reputation. This is a nasty part of the world, but I can make use of this. (Kumiko, female, age 27, after 1 year and 2 months)

As seen in these narratives, many of the young Japanese recognised that it is difficult to get a full-time job in London. Instead of trying to remain there, they tend to plan to take advantage of their experiences from London back in Japan. In particular, those who have received (or will receive) a degree or certificate from a famous art college, such as the Royal College of Art (RCA) or Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, or those who have acquired some experience (e.g., publishing artworks in an independent magazine or working part-time in a clothing shop) consider that, on their return, they will be able to 'distinguish' themselves from other people in Tokyo's art worlds.

Moreover, their image of London seems to be another important factor. As Emi says:

> Q: Don't you want to stay longer in London to become successful?
>
> A: A little bit. But I don't really want to stay any longer.
>
> Q: Why don't you want to stay longer?

> A: I don't like their customs much. I like buildings here, though. They look good only from the outside...
>
> Q: Have you become satisfied after living here for one year?
>
> A: Yes. Except regarding work experience, I have no regrets.
>
> Q: Has your impression of Britain changed after coming here?
>
> A: It's not the same as before. I often felt, 'Ah, reality is like this'. When I was in Japan, London looked nicer. Well, pictures in magazines were well done, so I thought London was a cool place. But after I came here, it was like, 'This is it?' Pictures are the most effective. When I arrived at shops or bars, looking at photos, I was disappointed so many times. ...But living abroad is what I wanted to do most. I lived with my family in Japan because I was preparing to live abroad. But, after I finish this, I will start living alone in Japan and make efforts there. (Emi, female, age 23, after 11 months just before returning to Japan)

In this way, respondents in London tend to be less influenced by their previous image of their destination city than those in New York City. This may be attributed to the nature of the image of their destination. That is, before migration, they tended to have a mixture of positive, neutral, and negative images of the city, and could not imagine and describe their lives in London in detail (see p.130). That is, these young people had a less positive and concrete image of their destination city than those in the New York group. Since they did not internalise a very positive image of their destination, after their expectations proved to be at odds with the reality they experienced, it is likely that any idealised images of London dissipated. Consequently, some of the young Japanese in the London group, who have better prospects in Japan, begin to consider returning to their 'home' with cultural capital they have acquired in London.

Even so, Ryo, Kumiko, and Yayoi hope to remain in London as long as possible. After two years of their stay, they still plan to establish their respective careers in London as a pianist, a graphic designer, or a theatre actress, as they are greatly fond of art in London and/or have got an English boyfriend. But at the same time they come to consider that they will be always Japanese:

> Q: Don't you want to go back to Japan?
>
> A: Well, I don't want to go… I don't know. My family… Well, I really want to live with my family [in Japan].
>
> Q: …Can you live here in the future even if you get old?
>
> A: This is a critical time for me to consider this. I have seen many such people here [as he teaches piano part-time in Japanese families]. I sometimes feel I will live here for a long time. But if I consider this carefully, this is a serious matter. I may continue to live here and get old, but Britain will be a foreign country after all.
>
> A: How about becoming British?
>
> Q: Even if I can get permanent resident status, after all, I will be always Japanese. Some people may be different from me, but I guess I won't be able to live outside the Japanese community. (Ryo, male, age 27, after 2 year and 1 months)

> Eventually, I want to return to Japan. I want to study Japanese history after retirement. I want to experience living in Kyoto. I still like Japanese history, or culture, even though I am living here. So I won't abandon Japan. I will never do so… I have never thought I wanted to be born British. Well, if I were born white, people may have treated me more nicely, though. Even so, I don't think I wanted to be born British. I'm very happy that I'm Japanese. I will never discard my nationality. I'm proud of our history. I don't mean Japan is superior to other countries. But I just like Japan, because Japan is the place where I was born and raised, where my family and friends have their roots. (Yayoi, female, age 21, after 1 year and 9 months)

These young people have recognised that they will never be able to live outside of the Japanese community or be treated on equal terms with white people. They imagine that Britain will be always a foreign country to them, even if they obtain citizenship or permanent resident status, and intensify their nostalgic desire, hoping to physically return to their 'home' someday.

8.4. Re-Imagining 'the West' in Tokyo

Among the twenty-two young Japanese studied, five returned to Japan and had started new lives there by the summer of 2005. Atsushi returned to Japan after only three months in New York City. At that time, he went back to Japan, because he wanted to persuade his girlfriend, who did not like the idea of going to a foreign country, to start a new life together in the city. However, his original plans were altered when his girlfriend got pregnant during his stay in Japan. So, he gave up the idea of migrating to New York City, got married instead, and started a new family in Japan. Since he stayed in New York City only for three months, his image of the city is still the same as one which other people held in the early period of their migration:

> Q: Do you want to go to New York City again?
>
> A: Yes. I still want to. My desire hasn't gone. If my wife feels like going… I only have good images of New York City. I don't have any bad images. People were kind there. They kindly told me how to get to the places I wanted to go. (Atsushi, male, age 27, one year and six months after his return from New York City to Japan)

The other returnees, who stayed in their destination city for more than several months or a year, have ambivalent views about their host country. Rie could not find a full-time job nor a work permit, and considered it pointless to live in New York City without a stable income. So she returned to Japan. Before her migration, she imagined that America was the closest country to Japan. After returning to Japan, however, she reflects that America is actually very different from Japan:

> Q: What is your image of New York now?
>
> A: Well, it is an energetic city. Everyone enjoys life there. But I just stayed there only for a year. If I had lived there longer, I would have thought differently.

> Q: Was New York the same as what you had imagined?
>
> A: I did not imagine much... [But indeed she described her images of New York City before migration. See p.120-1]. I just thought that New York was like this. But what surprised me most is the free way of life...
>
> Q: ...After you came back to Japan, does Japan look better or worse than before?
>
> A: When I lived in New York, Japan looked very good. I felt Japan was a very good place. After I came back here, well, I feel comfortable. But indeed my image of Japan improved from before I lived in New York. Why...? Perhaps, I had lived only in Japan, so I had taken Japanese people's sense of values or way of thinking as just normal. But these are normal only in Japan. Many things were different there. So I compared Japan and America, and confirmed it. I thought many things are better in Japan. Japanese people are kinder. Since childhood, Japanese people are taught not to do what others feel to be uncomfortable, aren't we? So Japanese are more considerate. ... It might be just differences, though. They might be also considerate, but they might be considerate in different ways. (Rie, female, age 29, seven months after her return from New York City to Japan)

Emi returned to Japan, as she ran out of funding and faced various problems in London, such as lack of housing, jobs, etc. Before migration, her image of London was relatively stereotypical – punk, tea, and antiques – but she has developed different images of the city, which is greatly shaped by her life near Brick Lane:

> Q: What is your image of London now?
>
> A: I think of fashion shows, curry, Middle-Eastern people, dirtiness, bad food, convenient night buses... Before I lived in London, I expected only good things. But after I lived there, I had some bad experiences. But now I feel more familiar with the city. I feel I can go there whenever I want.

Also, her image of *seiyō* (west-ocean or the West) has changed. Before migration, she regarded it as Britain and France, but now she considers:

> Q: If you hear the word *seiyō*, what do you think of?
>
> A: Stockholm… or Austria. Maybe because I lived in London, I don't see Britain as *seiyō*. The country is not so pompous.
>
> Q: What about *ōbei* (Europe-America or the West)?
>
> A: It is America. (Emi, female, age 25, ten months after her return from London to Japan)

Shota returned to Japan, because he considered it more important to finish his college education in Japan than to do small jobs only to remain in Britain. After returning to Tokyo, he also reconstructed his previous image of Britain, as well as his image of *seiyō*:

> A: What I saw there and what I hear and see through sounds and images on the screen are different. I see Britain on the box, but it is different from the Britain where I once lived. That Britain [on the box] is the same as the Britain I used to think of [before migrating to the country]. That Britain is unfamiliar to me. Its images are full of ideas that Britain is traditional, fashionable, etc. But once we directly interact with people there, our perspective changes so much. Perhaps, we can't get to know this if we just go on a short trip.
>
> Q: Are these images better or worse than reality?
>
> A: It's not a matter of good or bad. The images are just very different [from what he experienced]. It makes me feel Britain is very far. We see images of America many times everyday, but we don't see images of Britain so often. So it is as if Europe or London exists only in cinema…

Like Emi, his image of the West or *seiyō* (west-ocean) was associated with Britain and France before migration. But now he thinks:

> Q: If you hear the word *seiyō*, what do you think of?
>
> A: France, Italy, Western Europe, the EU. I don't feel Britain is *seiyō*. When it comes to *seiyō,* it is usually about art and cuisine. But Britain is not famous for cuisine. As for art, Britain became famous just after modern art.

> We tend to regard religious pictures or Impressionism as coming from France or Italy.
>
> Q: What about *ōbei*?
>
> A: Perhaps, America and the EU. Britain is also included in it, I guess. (Shota, male, age 24, one year and five months after his return from London to Japan)

These returnees stress that what they experienced in New York City or London is different from the image of the city diffused by the media in Japan, which is 'unfamiliar' or 'far' to them. In addition, Emi and Shota, who used to consider Britain to be *seiyō*, have now excluded Britain from their image of *seiyō*. It seems that their previous image of *seiyō* did not correspond to their experiences in London or in Britain. Although they had expected the West to be 'classical' and 'cultural' (e.g., 'antique', 'religious paintings'), they found London or Britain to have a variety of other aspects (e.g., 'dirtiness', 'convenient night buses'). Furthermore, although they had expected the West to be the place where white people live, they found not only whites but also multiethnic people living in Britain (as for *ōbei* or 'the contemporary West', they continue to regard it as 'America' and/or Europe).

Except for Atsushi, who stayed in the city for the shortest period, these returnees say that they do not want to live in their destination city without a stable income for a long period again. However, they still hope to visit in the city again, although they tended to criticise people and culture in the city, to some extent, during their migration. For those in the London group, this is partly because they consider that they have indeed achieved 'distinction' through their migration. Nozomu returned to Japan after one year, according to his original plan. Subsequently, he began to work in Tokyo for an apparel company, which is one of the most famous Japanese high fashion companies and has participated in the Paris Collection for more than two decades. According to him, he was selected out of hundreds of applicants to the position, partly because of his English conversation skills, such as answering phone calls in English, as well as for his experience in London. Another reason for their hope to revisit may be that as they spend more time in their homeland, bitter memories will fade and good ones remain:

> Perhaps, we tend to forget bad experiences. Perhaps, I can't be fully satisfied with my life wherever I live. Now I live in Japan, and I have some problems which are different from the problems I had in London. I complained much because it was hard for me to live in a foreign country with anxiety… (Emi, female, age 25, ten months after her return from London to Japan)

These returnees tend to remember their migration as a good experience and their destination city as familiar to them. Nonetheless, when they are asked whether or not Japan should accept more foreigners and immigrants like New York City or London does, they tend to express ambivalent or negative views:

> A: It is difficult to answer. But Japan has its own way. Because Japan is an island country, we have many good points. Maybe, I'd prefer if so many foreigners or immigrants were not coming to Japan.
>
> Q: Why?
>
> A: As for Japanese culture, people are very considerate even if we aren't told to be so. Japan is not the country of self-assertion. Perhaps America has various people so America becomes the country of self-assertion. But I think 'nothing' or silence is good, it is a good point of the Japanese. (Rie, female, age 29, after seven months since her return from New York City to Japan)

> I am happy that more good foreigners are coming to Japan, but I don't want people who will commit crimes to come to Japan. People who have decent jobs or international students are welcome… I think there are so many foreigners in Tokyo. I don't like Middle-Eastern people very much. (Emi, female, age 25, ten months after her return from London to Japan)

> It is difficult to say. Japan can open its doors to foreigners a little more. But

> there are safety problems. I wonder if it is good or not. (Shota, male, age 24, one year and five months after his return from London to Japan)

> A: I think we have enough foreigners already. They are that race in Britain who did terrorism. I feel a bit uneasy about people who have light-brown skin. I think crimes will increase if they come. In this sense, it is better that the majority is Japanese in Japan.
>
> Q: Did you make friends with them in London?
>
> A: Perhaps, one was Iraqi. He was kind. But rather, I think we can make friends with black people [originally coming from Africa]. People with light-brown skin [he means Middle-Eastern people] are problematic... (Nozomu, male, age 27, one year after his return from London to Japan)

In spite of their 'good' experience of living in a multiethnic society through their migration, their sense of 'homogenous' Japanese national identity is almost the same as it was before migration – or has even been heightened.

8.5. Conclusion

During the post-migration period, transnational media and mobility greatly affect the respondents' perceptions of their 'home'. Many of the young Japanese (especially those in New York City) watch Japanese programmes regularly, and most utilise email or online chat almost everyday. In so doing, they 'return' to Japan virtually, and their nostalgia for their 'home' grows stronger. Furthermore, they indeed go back and forth physically between their host country and homeland. This leads them to experience their new social position (as members of an ethnic 'minority' group) and their old social position (as members of the dominant ethnic group) comparatively. As a result of such experiences, many of the young people develop a more positive attachment to their nation of origin than prior to their migration.

Meanwhile, these young Japanese begin to consider whether they should eventually return to Japan or not. Most respondents in New York City have deeply internalised the idea that 'everyone can have a chance at success in New York', as articulated by the media consumed while living in Japan. They therefore believe that they will lose their last chance for success, if they return to Japan. By contrast, most respondents in London had an image of the city which was relatively multifarious (if not obscure), so that any idealised image of the city tends to be dissipated more easily. Consequently, they more readily begin to consider returning to Japan.

Returnees also show some significant transformations in their perceptions. Some recognise the constructed nature of the images of Britain diffused in Japan. Moreover, most of the returnees ultimately came to think that they prefer life in their 'homogenous' society in Japan. The main reason seems to be that as they were treated as members of a racial 'minority' group and experienced racial discrimination during their migratory experience, they come to feel that Japanese people such as them can live in the 'homogenous' society at home more comfortably than in a multiethnic society, because in their context they are once again treated as members of the dominant, privileged group.

Theories of transnationalism claim that electronic media increasingly link producers and audiences across national boundaries, and contribute to the formation of new transnational identities. In this case, the young Japanese studied also utilise transnational media and move back and forth between two countries. Nevertheless, I found no evidence that they were forming 'new identities' that transcended their Japaneseness. Rather, they reconstruct their perception of their 'home' through their experience of the migration process, and in so doing, confirm their own sense of 'belonging' to their homeland.

Conclusion

As stated in the Introduction, the objective of this study is to explore the central thesis: while young Japanese are led by ideas derived from the media to migrate to 'the West', once there they renegotiate their sense of Japanese national identity. For this purpose, I have addressed two research questions: (1) how do the twenty-two young Japanese conceive the idea of migration to New York City or London for the purpose of cultural production?; (2) how do they experience their sense of national identity in their destination city? In this concluding chapter, I review my answers to these questions.

The Category of 'Cultural Migrants'

In the Introduction, I discussed the concept of 'cultural migrants' as a new category of migrants today, because the conventional terms, such as 'economic migrants' and 'political refugees', cannot properly describe the case of young Japanese. Then, I showed that during the pre-migration period, the twenty-two young Japanese hoped to 'make it' in the field of art and popular culture, rather than stay put in Japan, work full-time to earn a stable income, and live an ordinary life. After migrating to New York City or London, many of them indeed tried to create a more fulfilling life and thus transcend their old identities, even if they had to live a less affluent lifestyle there than they had lived in Japan. In this sense, they can be said to have migrated purely for cultural or symbolic reasons. I therefore consider that in terms of the purpose in migration, the concept of 'cultural migrants' has been validated, in such cases.

In fact, this is not the only case in which people migrate for reasons other than economic or political ones. As noted earlier, J. Sakai (2000) and Sato (2001) describe Japanese women moving to England or Australia as 'spiritual migrants' or 'lifestyle migrants'. Mai (2001) and Sabry (2003) also delineate the symbolic dimension of young Albanian and Moroccan migration, and Sabry calls this 'mental emigration'. I suggest that in order to understand the complicated conditions of international migration today, it is necessary to adopt a cultural approach, in addition to the conventional approaches, and carefully examine the symbolic dimensions of migration.

The Meaning of Young Japanese Migration and the Role of the Media

How have young Japanese found migration to New York City or London for cultural purposes to be meaningful? As I have discussed in Chapter 2, Kelsky offers one explanation. She argues that a large number of Japanese women migrate to the West, which is most powerfully associated with America, with their sense of *akogare* (longing, desire, or idealisation), often displaying their 'desire for the white man as fetish object of modernity' (Kelsky, 2001:4; 26). If this is true, it follows that Japanese women's migration is similar to young Albanian and Moroccan migration, in that they all migrate with desire for Western modernity. On the other hand, C. Sakai (2003), J. Sakai (2000), and Sato (2001) take a different view, explaining that many Japanese women have migrated to Australia, England, or Hong Kong, because they hoped to have better working opportunities, create a more fulfilling life, or find new identities.

My case supports the latter view. Indeed, none of my respondents displayed a longing for Western modernity. The reason why they did not want to stay in Japan and did not try to become successful there is not that they believed Japan to be inferior to, or less modern than, the West. Rather, the young Japanese in the New York group tended to think that 'America', which is associated with *ōbei* or the contemporary West in their minds, is a very 'familiar' place where they can continue to lead a 'normal' life with better prospects. Those in the London group regarded *seiyō* or the classical, cultural West (which is rarely associated with 'America') as the most eminent, in terms of art, and the best place to acquire cultural and social capital to improve their art careers. But, at the same time, they believed that their everyday life in London would be 'similar' to their everyday life in Japan. Furthermore, after arriving in New York City or London, some young people came to consider Japan to be more advanced than American or Britain. My respondents tended to regard the West as 'familiar' or 'similar' to Japan, rather than as superior or more modern.

Therefore, it seems that when young people migrate to Western countries, they do not always do so as a result of being greatly fascinated by Western modernity. Instead, each migrant group has a particular idea of 'the West'. In other words, as Appadurai notes, 'imagined worlds' are 'the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe' (Appadurai, 1996:33). So there are various ideas of the West which, while not drastically different from one another, are not totally the same. In the case of Japan, during the period right after the Second World War, many ordinary people greatly admired the modern/Western lifestyle, and today those who have lived through the period may still have a strong sense of admiration, as well as an ambivalent feeling, for the West, especially 'America'. However, all of the young Japanese interviewed come from middle-class families and have grown up after the 1970s or 1980s, when Japan had become one of the world economic powers and people in Japan began to attach more importance to their identities and lifestyles. They are indeed greatly attracted by American popular culture, Western European art, as well as by 'cool' young artists in New York City and London and their lifestyles, but their feelings seem to be different from the longing for Western modernity which is seen in the cases of past Japanese migrants, as well as of young Albanians and Moroccans.

Contemporary media greatly shape young people's 'imagined West' and thus their migratory projects. In my case, many of the young Japanese had been exposed to a variety of American television programmes and films (e.g., *Beverly Hills 90210, Ally McBeal,* programmes on MTV, and *Basquiat*), British television programmes (e.g., Jamie Oliver's shows and Monty Python series), and Japanese television programmes, websites, magazines, and travel books (e.g., *Beat UK*, *Street Fashion*, *Smart,* and *Rurubu*), which portray everyday life and popular culture, tell stories of successful artists, and give information about art education or English language schools in New York City or London. These mass-mediated images are routinely, rapidly circulating and become resources used by young people for self-imagining in their everyday lives in Japan. As a consequence, they migrate there for actually becoming part of the images.

What Do the Uneven Flows of Young People Signify?

One might ask what these uneven flows of young people signify, if migrants do not always have a longing for Western modernity. As noted earlier, Appadurai is sceptical about simple centre/periphery models of global cultural flows, because he considers that the 'new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order' (Appadurai, 1996:32). However, the facts remains that a large number of young Japanese, as well as young Albanians and Moroccans, have been moving to America, England, or Italy, having been influenced by mass-mediated images flowing from these Western countries. On the other hand, a much smaller number of Western youths have been moving to live in Japan,[109] Albania, or Morocco;

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[109] For example, only 1,554 international students from North America enrolled in colleges and vocational schools in Japan in 2002 (MOFA, 2003). On the other hand, 40,835 Japanese students

and no cases of mass youth migration from Western countries to non-Western countries under the influence of the media have been reported.

Perhaps we can explain the current situation in the following way. Because of the new technology of electronic media, a large quantity of mass-mediated images from the United States and Western Europe have been diffused throughout the world during the past decade; and many people have been exposed to these images. However, as the relative economic, political, and cultural power of the United States and Western Europe continues to diminish, the idea of Western modernity no longer has the universal appeal. Therefore, while some audiences are greatly fascinated by the images of Western modernity portrayed by the media, others are not, depending on their historical, linguistic, political, and social situatedness. Even so, to the extent that the electronic media convey a large quantity of images from the United Sates and Western Europe, these images become resources for imagining possible lives in the West, and some of the audiences actually find motivations to migrate there. Thus, the flows of mass-mediated images have begun to contribute to mobilising the flow of young people from the 'peripheries' (Albania, Japan, or Morocco) to the 'centres' (the United States and Western Europe), although a longing for Western modernity does not necessarily explain their motivations. In this context, it can be said that the 'centre/periphery' relation exists.

Cultural Pluralism or Transnationalism?

The cultural pluralist school of migration theory claims that migrants gradually lose their homeland language and customs, but their ethnicity continues to be recreated as a new form of host-country based identity; thus migrants and children of migrants to the United States become 'hyphenated Americans', such as Japanese-Americans, eventually. In the case of the young Japanese in New York City, as with other migrants

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enrolled in undergraduate programmes in universities in the U.S. in 2003 (IIE, 2005).

coming to America, they hoped to become successful and live in the city as long as possible. Nevertheless, with the exception of Fumiko who is *kikokushijo*, they did not become fluent in English and did not internalise the cultural practices and values of the host society to a significant extent. Overall, I could find no evidence that they developed any sense of 'ethnic' Japaneseness in their host country, which might have led to their developing a 'Japanese-American' identity. Therefore their experiences cannot be explained by the cultural pluralist approach.

On the other hand, transnational migration theory claims that migrants are forming transnational identities and communities across national boundaries, by using the advanced means of communication and transportation. Kelsky (2001) also supports these ideas of transnationalism or cosmopolitanism, and contends that 'internationalist' Japanese women move easily across different identifications, and develop a 'diasporic' or 'cosmopolitan' identity.

From Chapter 5 to Chapter 8, I attempted to explore how the twenty-two young Japanese experience their sense of Japaneseness, by closely examining (1) race and ethnic relations (2) gender (3) language, cultural values, and ethnic media, and (4) transnational media and mobility. As we have seen, each of these factors affected the process of individual identity formation in different ways. However, overall, these factors led them to renegotiate or even heighten their sense of Japanese 'national' identity.

Evidently, theories of transnationalism emphasise the role of transnational media: Appadurai explains that electronic media connect producers and audiences across national boundaries and contribute to the formation of 'diasporic public spheres'. In my case, as he suggests, many respondents often watched transnational television programmes from Japan, and all respondents made frequent contacts with people in their homeland by utilising email, online chat, or international call. Nonetheless, I found that media and migration worked in the opposite way to that hypothesised in the general discussion of transnationalism – that is, media did not lead the young Japanese migrants to establish organisational or political relationships or to develop new identities across national boundaries. Instead, media led them to reconstruct their perception of 'home' and to confirm their sense of belonging to their nation of origin.

The 'Homogenous' Japanese National Identity and Race and Ethnic Relations

If this is true, the issue remains of how has their identity experience has become different from the general discussion of transnationalism. My answer is that mainly because of the 'homogenous' national identity which they brought with them, as well as of the difference in 'race' and ethnic relations between their homeland and host country, the media could not lead the young Japanese migrants to transcend their sense of Japaneseness.

Let me review this process. While living in Japan, the young Japanese studied were not much aware of 'race' and ethnic relations, because Japan appeared to be 'homogenous', from their subjective viewpoints. American and Western European media and popular culture, as well as Japanese media, also failed to tell them much about social and racial discrimination in New York City or London, and only provided them with visual images and information about the desirability of life there. However, after migrating to a city where Anglo-Saxons or the English are the ethnic dominant group, nearly all of the young Japanese encounter (consciously) race and ethnic relations for the first time in their lives and face various obstacles there, due to their 'marked' race. This is one of the main reasons why many respondents had to hang out mostly with Japanese peers, even though they had come all the way to New York City or London in the hope of participating in Western culture.

As a result, they began to attempt to revalue and redefine their Japaneseness which, in their minds, is the singular concept conflating their racial, ethnic, and national identities. In so doing, many people began to re-imagine their Japaneseness, referring unconsciously to discourses of *nihonjinron*. Their Japaneseness was often interlocked with their gender, and female respondents had to renegotiate their feminised Japaneseness as well. Meanwhile, they frequently 'return' to their 'home', virtually and physically, by media and by air. Through these experiences, returnees came to feel that they could live in the 'homogenous' society more comfortably. Their experience of exclusion from Western society in New York City or London may lead to their own exclusionary attitude towards 'non-Japanese' people in Japan.

In short, although theories of transnationalism claim that media enable migrants to develop transnational identities, in this case, 'the work of the imagination' functioned in an unexpected way. That is, media use led the young Japanese to hold a misleading image of the West due to their lack of understanding regarding race and ethnic relations. After migration, the gap between their image of the West as an egalitarian society and their actual experience was heightened, so that most respondents confirmed their strong attachment to a 'homogenous' Japanese national identity through the migration process.

One might think that if these young Japanese stay in their host country for longer, they would gradually get accustomed to the new life and begin to develop new identities. I consider that this is also possible, but that not many people will actually follow this path. One reason for this is that, as described earlier, many of the young Japanese began to hope to return to Japan, after facing various difficulties in their host country. They also came to think that if they returned to Japan, they would have an advantage of being members of a 'homogenous' nation. As a consequence, most of them are likely to return to Japan when their nonimmigrant visa (or I-20) expires. Compared to other migrants coming from economically unprivileged backgrounds, the young Japanese are less likely to be motivated to spend the time and money needed to obtain permanent resident status in their host country. Once they recognise that their prospects in their host country are not so rosy, most of them are likely to return to their privileged position in Japan.

Nevertheless, some young people may stay in their host countries for a long period, for various reasons, such as marrying a host-country citizen, or finding a job in a company or organisation that can help them get permanent resident status[110]. Even so, in previous studies, it is suggested that Japanese women in Australia and England, (as well as Japanese residents in New York City), who stayed in their host countries for decades, still tended to hold onto their sense of Japaneseness (see Chapter 2). Perhaps it may be difficult for 'first-generation' Japanese migrants to transcend their Japaneseness, even after living in their host countries, or going back and forth between two or more countries, for many years. But depending on extraneous factors, some of them may nonetheless be able to transcend their Japaneseness. In order to answer this question, a larger or longer-term research would be necessary.

Questions of National and Transnational Identities

In the general discussion of transnationalism, it is often said that as more and more people are developing transnational identities, the nation-state is going to be obsolete in the future. However, the idea of 'transnational identity'[111] has in fact been established based mainly on case studies of marginalised people who migrate in order to attempt to improve their economic and social conditions, even if this leads them to leave their homeland for good – e.g., diasporas, the former-colonised, or labourers from developing countries. Nonetheless, many researchers often optimistically presuppose that migrants will come to transcend their national identity if they routinely cross national boundaries, without closely examining the actual experiences of migrants. However, as Ulf Hannerz notes, not all expatriates are living models of cosmopolitanism (Hannerz, 1990:106).

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[110] Indeed, the number of *eijūsha* or Japanese permanent residents overseas has been increasing every year. For example, according to the government statistics, there were 98,777 Japanese permanent residents in the U.S. and 6,034 in Britain in 1996, but the number increased to 110,954 and 9,713 respectively in 2004 (MOFA, 1997; 2005).

[111] As I found no evidence that young Japanese develop transnational identities, I come to question how migrants can have a form of 'transnational identity'. In fact, Basch et al. note that discourses about identity still continue to be framed in terms of loyalty to nations (Basch et al., 1994:8). In a similar vein, Robins and Aksoy argue that the idea of identity is an invention of the national era and mentality (Robins and Aksoy, 2001:708). Therefore, it may be important to reconsider whether and how we can define the concept of 'transnational identity'.

As I have shown, it has been observed that many Japanese migrants physically or geographically move back and forth between their homeland and host country, as well as consume information and products which circulate transnationally. Nonetheless, they continue to live predominantly in Japanese peer group sociability or Japanese organisations in their host country, creating a cultural space which is not so different from that of their homeland. In the case of the young Japanese, I have called them 'cultural migrants' because their main purpose in migration is to participate in cultural production in New York City or London. But in the end, contrary to their hopes, they find that they could not cross national boundaries mentally or culturally. In this way, there are clearly limits to the process of cultural transnationalisation.

One might say that the cases of Japanese migrants, including my case, are exceptional, as Japan is a rare nation-state which has established a particularly strong, homogenous identity among its people; it might thus be that unlike them, the majority of migrants (non-Japanese) can develop transnational identities. However, I do not think this is necessarily so. To take another East Asian case, middle-class South Korean migrants are likely to show similar patterns to Japanese migrants. That is, both North and South Koreans believe that they are a 'homogenous' people; and many of them are likely to encounter negativity in race and ethnic relations, find themselves 'marked' in terms of race, and in response, hold onto their sense of Koreanness.

Theories of transnationalism, as well as of cultural pluralism, can account for only part of migrants' experiences. All migrants are heterogeneous in terms of their class, gender, sexuality, and race, as well as in the time and place of migration. It is very likely that specific factors will prevent some migrants from becoming politically and culturally transnationalised or assimilated into the host country. Race and ethnic relations may often work as the key factor which prevents migrants from transcending national identity, as racism is closely connected to nationalism, or is considered to be a supplement of nationalism[112] (Balibar, 1992:53).

Finally, I would like to suggest that we pay more attention to the process whereby the media lead a considerable number of migrants to become 'physically transnational' but 'mentally national', creating imagined national cultural spaces. Benedict Anderson has explained how the advanced means of communication contribute to the emergence of 'long-distance nationalists'. However, the migrants' mentality which I have observed is not exactly the same as that of 'long-distance nationalists' who play identity politics by participating in the conflicts of their imagined Heimat (Anderson, 1992:13). But rather, they are a large number of people living ordinary daily lives in geographically transnational settings, without having such a strong sense of nationalism or participating in home-country politics. Besides cultural pluralism, transnationalism, and long-distance nationalism, how can we conceptualise such identification? Which migrants show this pattern of identification? Will such migrants become an obstacle to an emerging post-national order? Or, in the long run, will the process of globalisation eventually lead even such migrants to become culturally transnationalised and be freed from the constraint of national identity?

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[112] As Etienne Balibar argues, racism tends to emerge out of nationalism. This arises towards people of the exterior (considered as an extreme form of xenophobia) as well as towards people of the interior (a population regarded as 'a minority' within the national space). At the same time, nationalism sometimes emerges out of racism, in the sense that it would not constitute itself as the ideology of a 'new' nation if the official nationalism against which it were reacting were not profoundly racist; thus Zionism comes out of anti-Semitism and third World nationalism develops out of colonial racism.

Appendix 1

Interview Guide in Tokyo

1. Personal Background
   (1) Age
   (2) Occupation before Departure
   (3) Education
   (4) Father/Mother's Occupation
   (5) Hometown

2. Migratory Plan, the Image of the West, and Japaneseness

Purpose, length, and means

(1) What is your purpose to go to London/NYC?
(2) How long will you stay in London/NYC?
(3) Why did you choose the city?
(4) Are there any other countries/cities you have considered going to?
(5) What type of visa will you get?
(6) How do you pay for living expenses/tuitions?
(7) How do your family members think about your going to London/NYC?
(8) Why don't you want to remain in Japan?

Images of the destination city and information sources

(9) Have you been to London/NYC? What do you know about the city?
(10) How have you heard/read/watched about it?
(11) Do you have family members, relatives, or friends who stay/stayed abroad?
(12) Can you imagine your life in the city?

Foreign countries and the Image of the West

(13) What do you associate with the word 'foreign countries'?
(14) Which countries have you ever been to?
(15) Do you have friends from foreign countries?
(16) About which countries do you hear most often in Japan?
(17) Where is the West?
(18) Is Japan part of the West? If not, part of Asia?
(19) How have you gotten to know what the West is?

English and other languages

(20) Do you think speaking English is cool? If so, is it different from speaking, say, French or Chinese?
(21) Have you studied English? How?

National and cultural identities

(22) Have you thought about being Japanese or Japanese culture?
(23) Have you read/heard about *nihonjinron*?

Appendix 2

Interview Guide in New York City and London

1. New Life and the Image of the West

Everyday life

(1) What have you been doing after coming to NYC/London?

(2) What type of visa did you get?

(3) Where and with whom do you live?

(4) How are you paying for living expenses/tuitions?

(5) What is your routine or normal weekly schedule? Please describe it.

(6) Have you made new friends? Are they American/British, Japanese or other?

(7) How often do you contact your family members or friends in Japan?

(8) What media do you use here?

The image of the destination city

(9) Is NYC/London the same as what you thought in Japan? Or different?

(10) Now, what do you associate with the word 'foreign countries'?

(11) Now, where is the West?

(12) Is Japan part of the West? If not, part of Asia?

(13) Now, how do you think about speaking English?

(14) Have you thought about being Japanese or Japanese culture after coming to the city?

(15) How do you think about British/American people?

Their migratory plans

(16) So far, do you think coming to the city is right for you?

(17) Now, how long will you stay here?

2. Identity Experience and Social Factors

Race and ethnic relations

The West

(18) What kind of people are Americans/ *Igirisu-jin*?

(19) Do you have American/British friends?

(20) Do you have any European friends?

(21) How do you think about Americans/*Igirisu-jin*?

(22) How are *Igirisu-jin* and Europeans different?

(23) How do you think about the English language?

(24) How do you think about regional differences of the English language?/ How different are the English from the British?

Asia and other ethnic groups

(25) How do you think about Arabs, Blacks, and Indians?

(26) How do you think about Koreans and Chinese?

(27) Have you ever experienced racial discrimination?

Japan

(28) How do you think about Japan?

(29) What are the good points of Japan? What are bad points?

(30) How do you think about making use of Japaneseness in art?

Gender

(31) How do you think about American/British men?

(32) Do you think Japanese girls are popular?

(33) How do you think about American/British women?

(34) How do you think about differences in femininity between NYC/London and Japan?

(35) How do you think about working opportunities for women in NYC/London and for women in Tokyo?

Japanese Communities

(36) Are there any Japanese communities in NYC/London?

(37) How do you think about Japanese people in NYC/London?

(38) What type of Japanese people are in NYC/London?

(39) Are they different from people in Japan?

(40) Where do Japanese people gather in NYC/London?

Media, Mobility, and Home

(41) What kind of media do you use? (Japanese TV, movies, magazines, or newspapers, *Japion* or *Sun/Journey* or *News Digest*, American/British media)

(42) How often?

(43) How are Japanese media from Japan useful?

(44) How are American/British media useful?

(45) How is *Japion* or *Sun/ Journey* or *News Digest* useful?

(46) How do you use the Internet?

(47) How and how often do you contact family/friends?

(48) Have family relationships changed after coming here?

(49) Do you think Japan is your home?

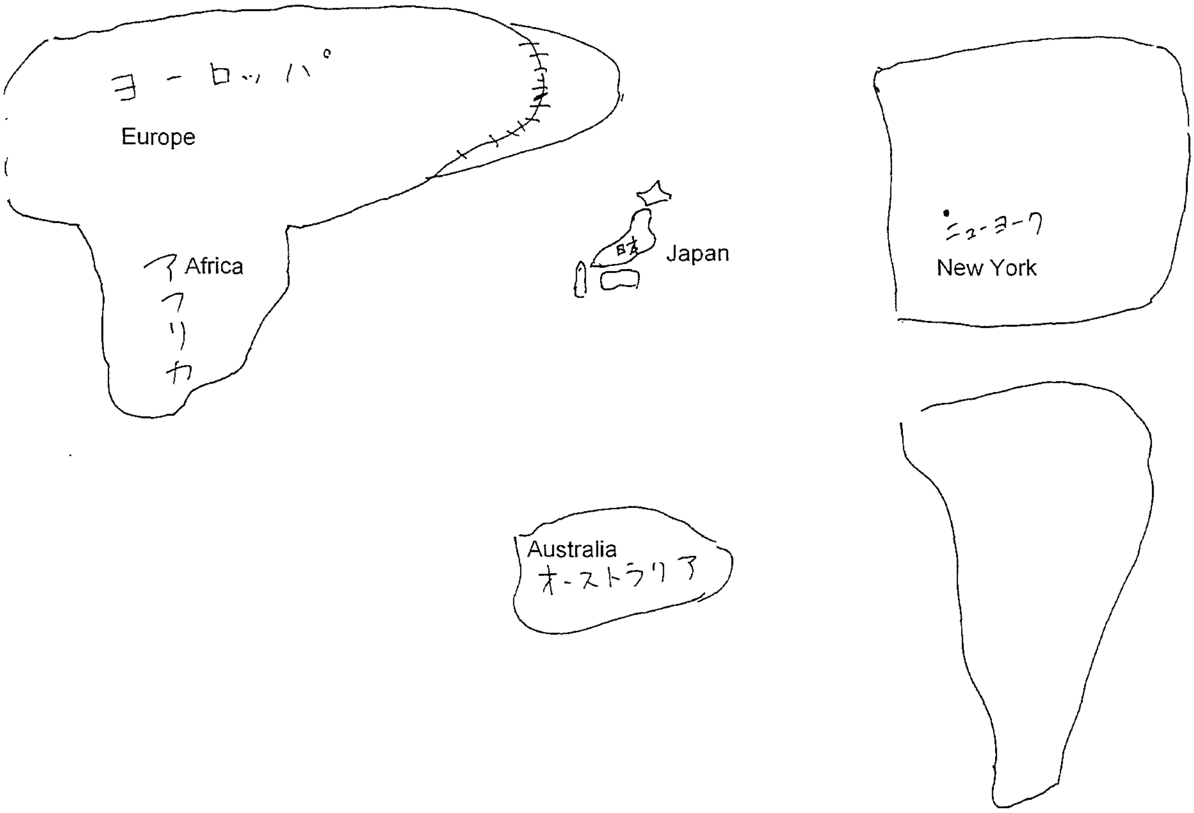
(50) Do you want to work and stay here for a long time?

Appendix 3

Mental Maps

The New York Group

Mental Map 1 Atsushi (Male, age 25)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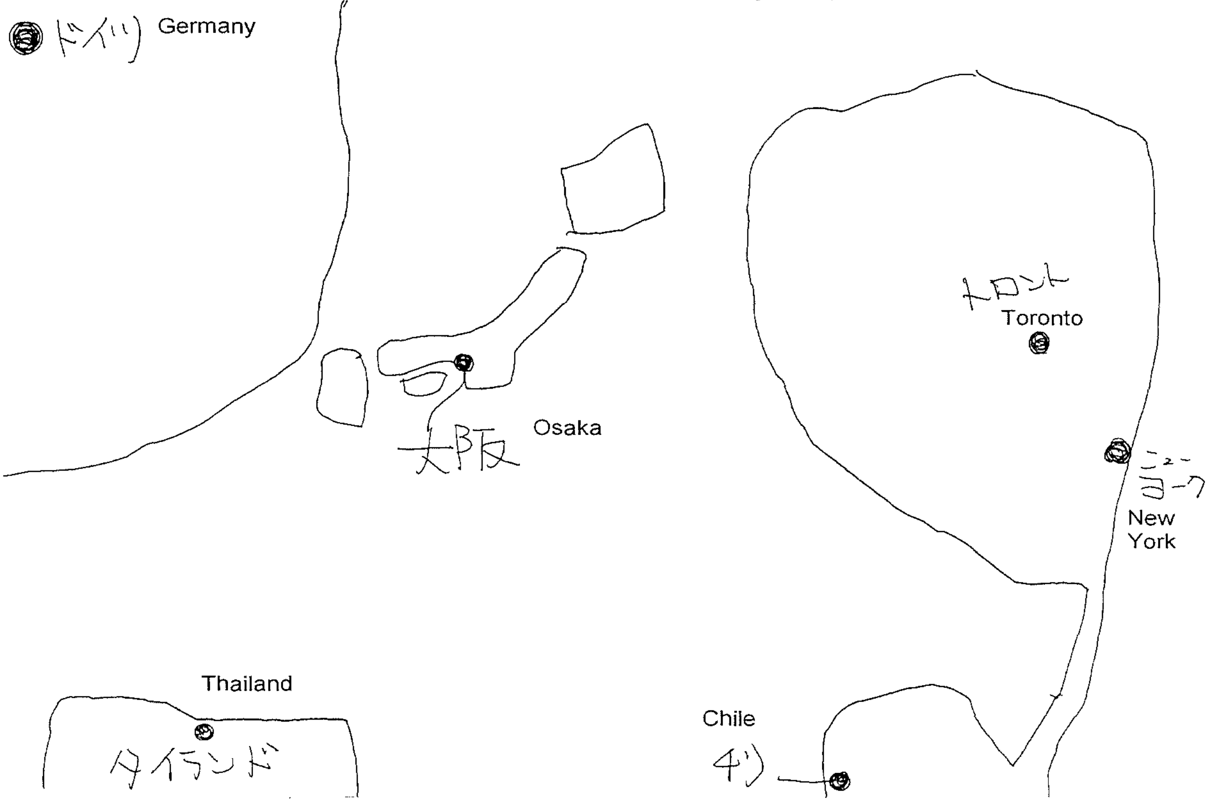
Africa
日本
Japan
ニューヨーク
New York
Australia
オーストラリア

Mental Map 2 Makoto (Male, age 29)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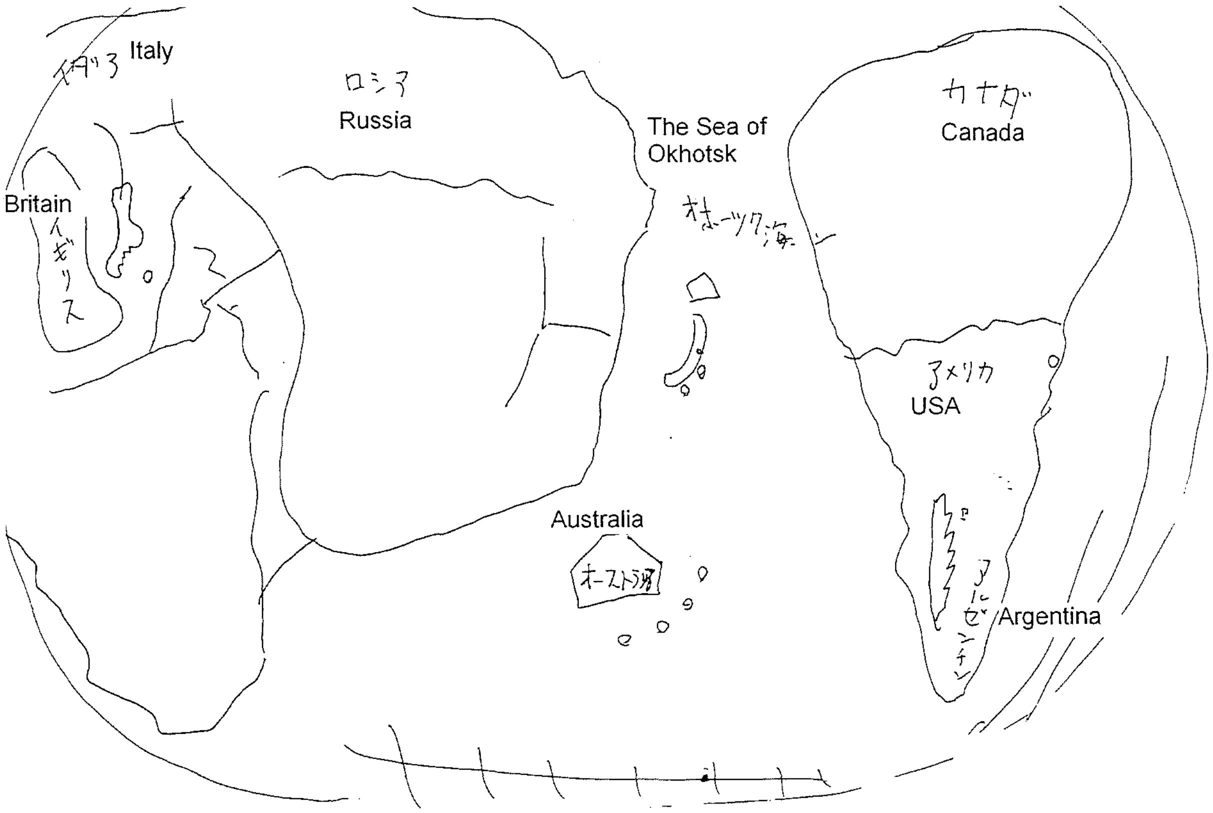
Germany
大阪
Osaka
トロント
Toronto
ニューヨーク
New York
Thailand
タイランド
Chile
チリ

Mental Map 3 Toru (Male, Age 25)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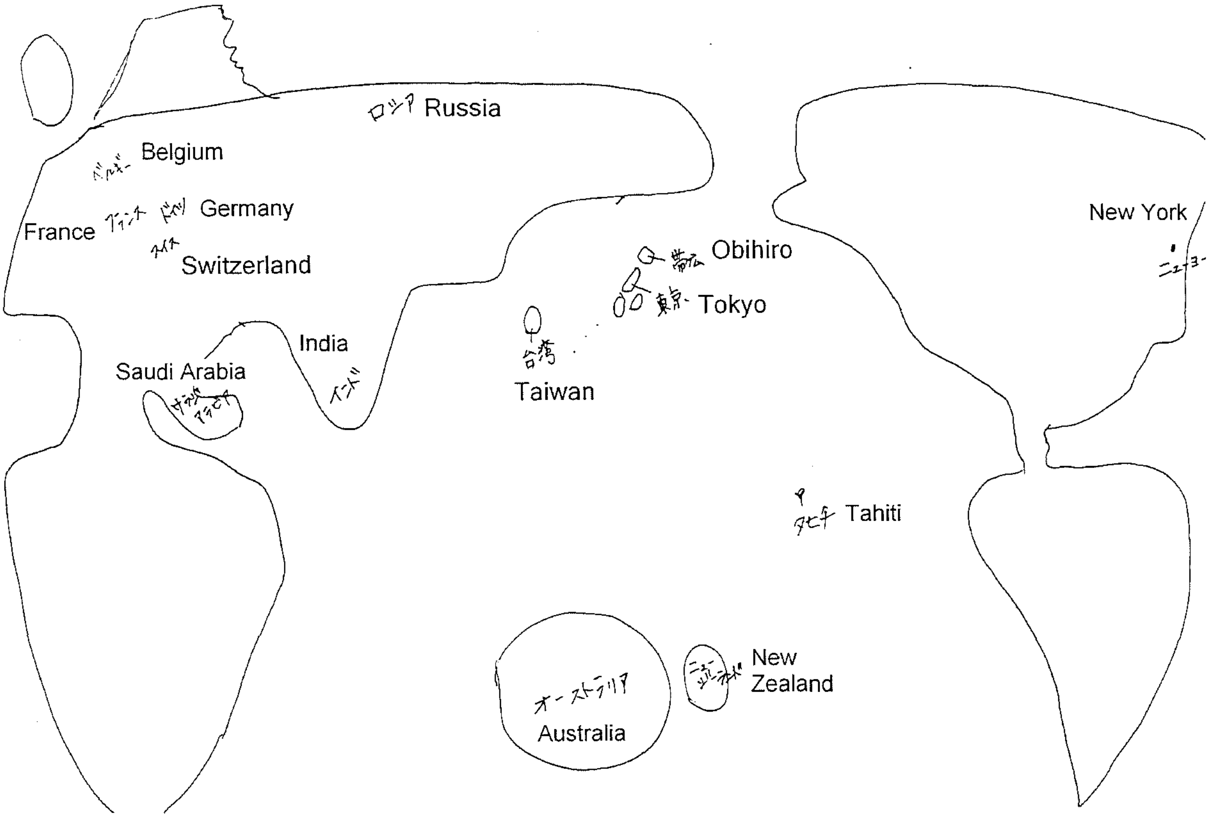
ロシア
Russia
The Sea of Okhotsk
オホーツク海
カナダ
Canada
Britain
イギリス
アメリカ
USA
Australia
オーストラリア
アルゼンチン
Argentina

Mental Map 4 Chihiro (Female, Age 23)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Belgium
France
フランス
ドイツ
Germany
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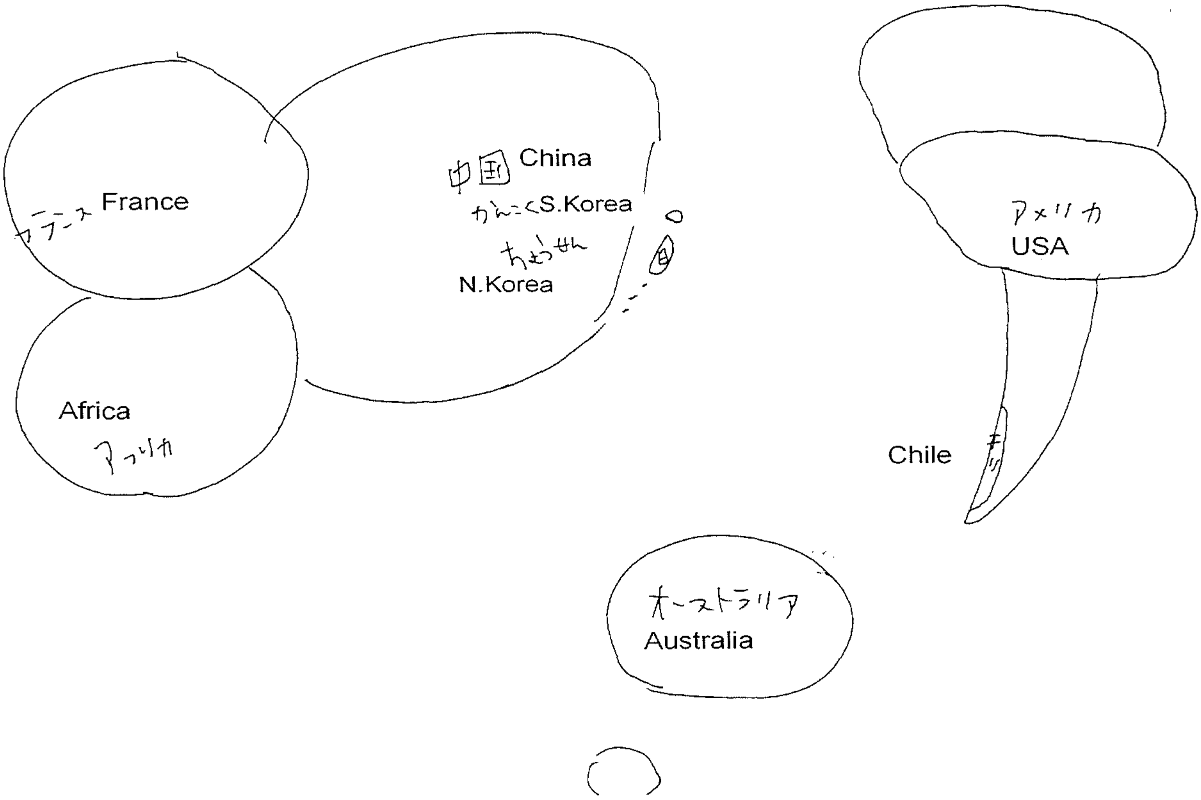
India
インド
帯広
Obihiro
東京
Tokyo
台湾
Taiwan
New York
ニューヨーク
タヒチ
Tahiti
オーストラリア
Australia
ニュージーランド
New Zealand

Mental Map 5 Haruka (Female, Age 22)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France
中国
China
かんこく
S.Korea
ちょうせん
N.Korea
日
Africa
アフリカ
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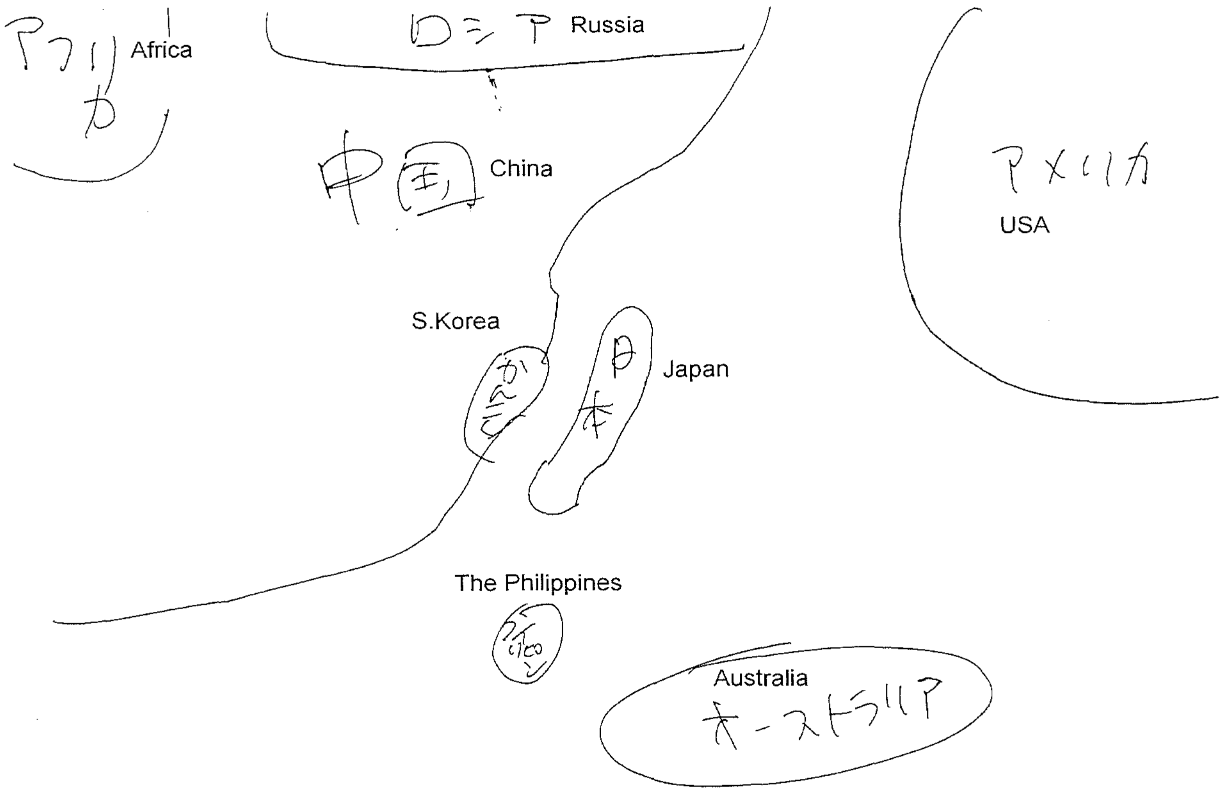
USA
Chile
チリ
オーストラリア
Australia

Mental Map 6 Mayumi (Female, Age 26)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Africa
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Russia
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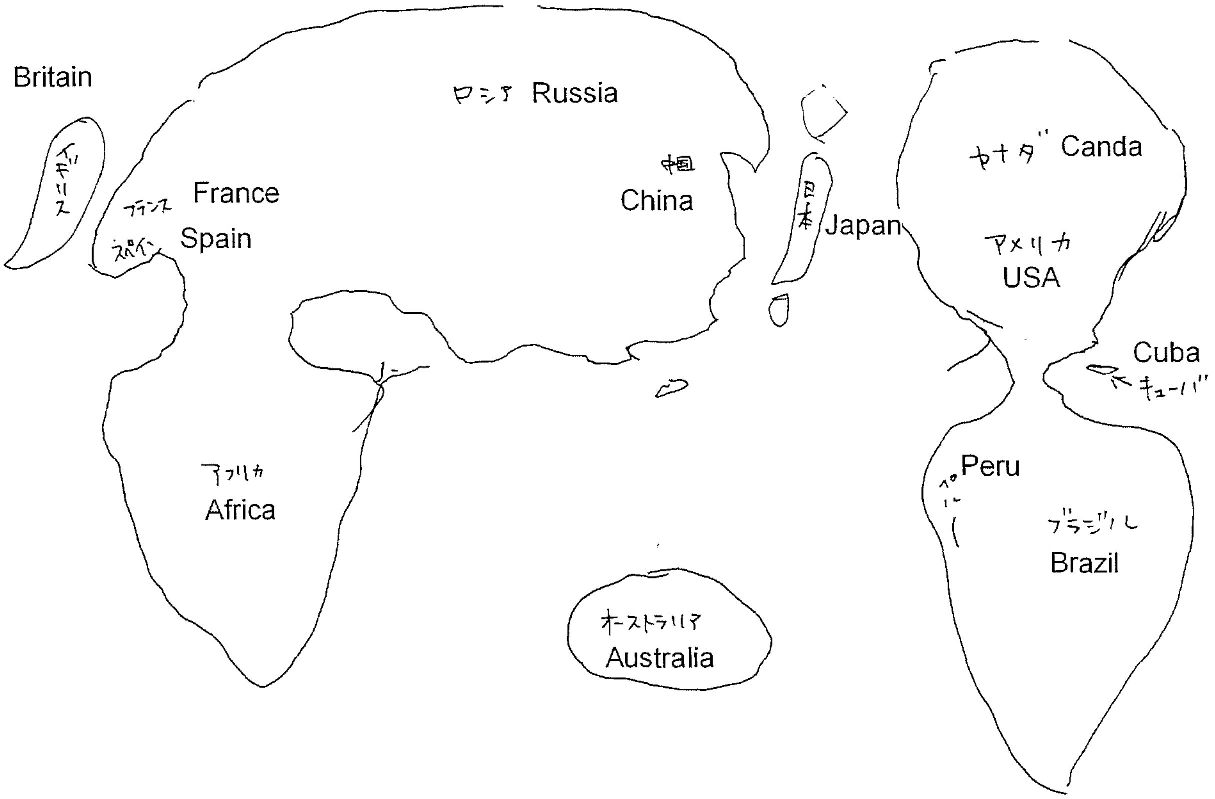
日本
Japan
The Philippines
Australia
オーストラリア

Mental Map 7 Rie (Female, Age 27)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スペイン Spain
ロシア Russia
中国
China
日本
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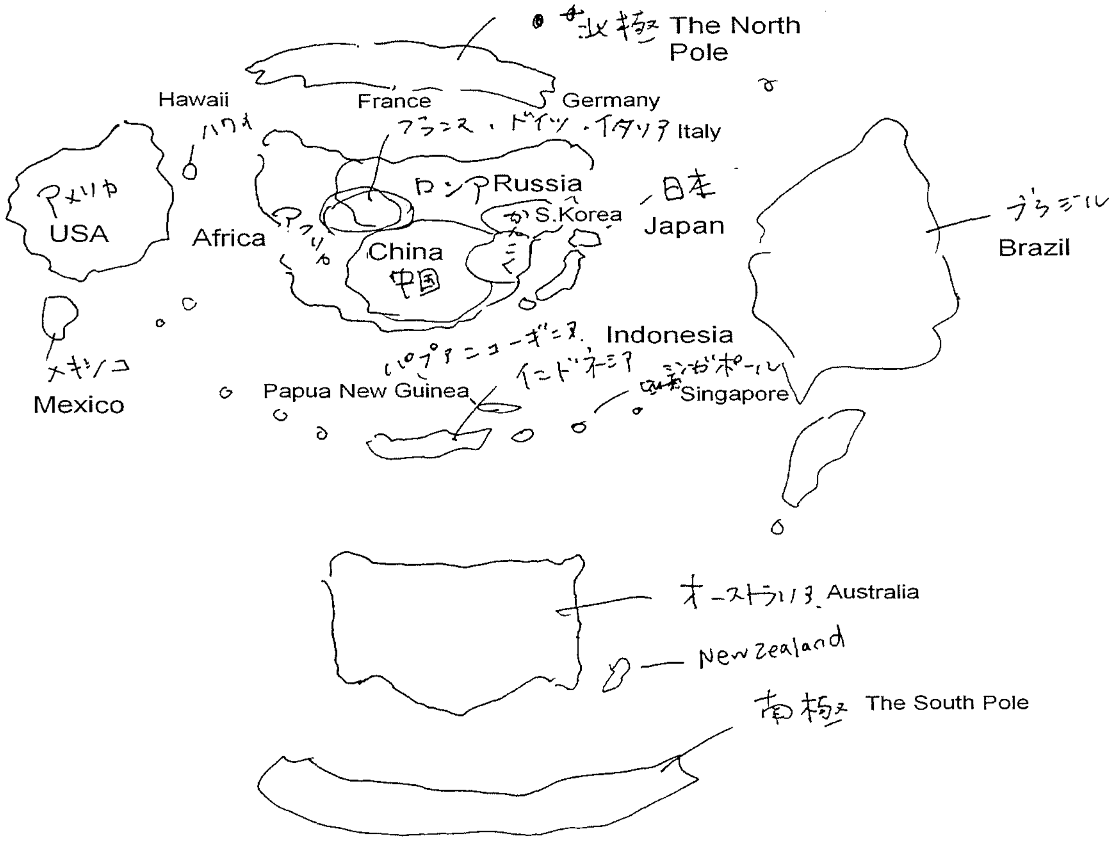
アメリカ
USA
Cuba
キューバ
ペルー
Peru
ブラジル
Brazil
アフリカ
Africa
オーストラリア
Australia

Mental Map 8 Fumiko (Female, Age 26)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Hawaii
ハワイ
France
Germany
フランス、ドイツ、イタリア Italy
ロシア Russia
S.Korea
かんこく
日本
Japan
アメリカ
USA
Africa
アフリカ
China
中国
Indonesia
パプアニューギニア
インドネシア
シンガポール
Singapore
Papua New Guinea
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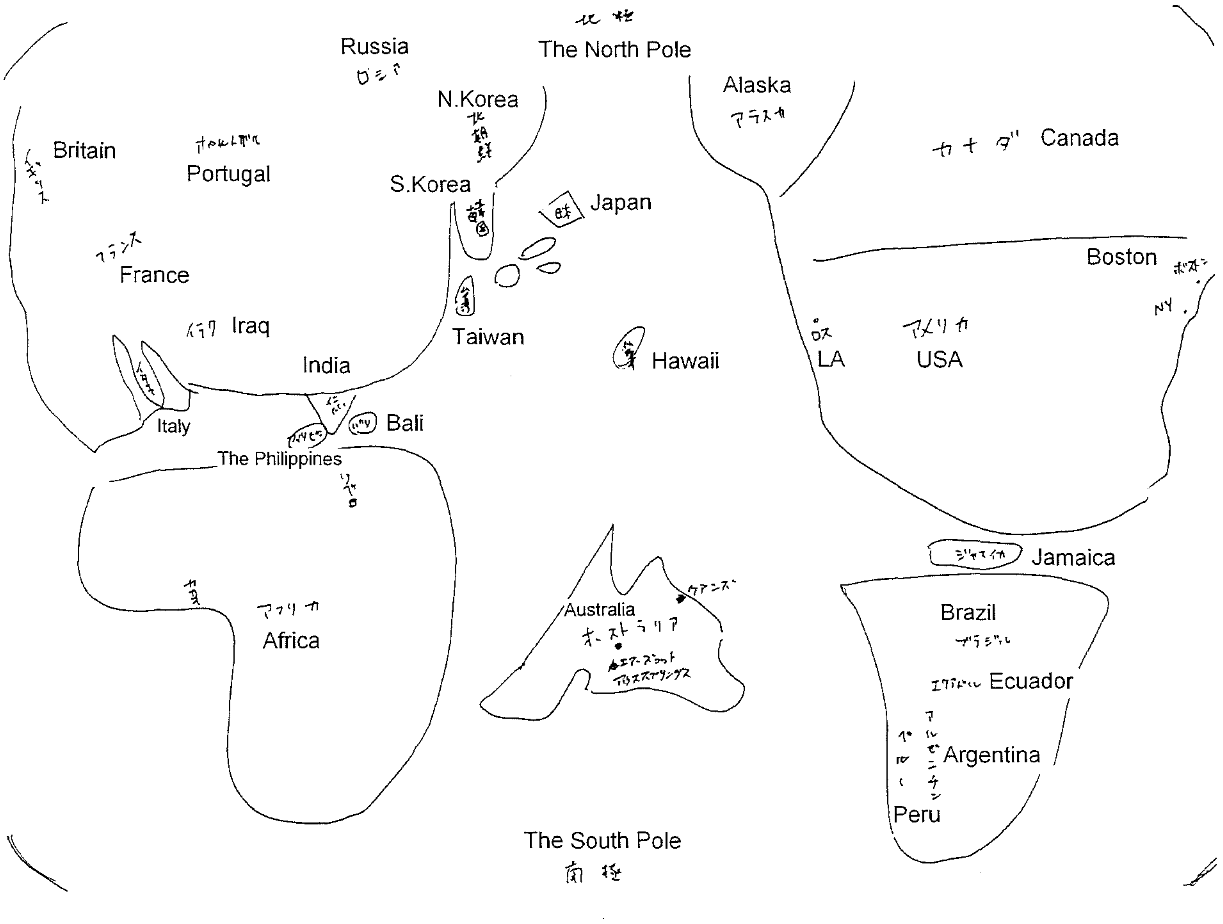
Mexico
ブラジル
Brazil
オーストラリア Australia
New zealand
南極 The South Pole

Map 9 Nana (Female, Age 20)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The North Pole
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N.Korea
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S.Korea
韓国
Japan
Taiwan
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Hawaii
ハワイ
Alaska
アラスカ
カナダ Canada
Boston
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NY
ロス
LA
アメリカ
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ポルトガル
Portugal
フランス
France
イラク Iraq
India
Italy
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Bali
バリ
The Philippines
フィリピン
南ア
アフリカ
Africa
Australia
オーストラリア
ケアンズ
エアーズロック
ジャマイカ
Jamaica
Brazil
ブラジル
エクアドル Ecuador
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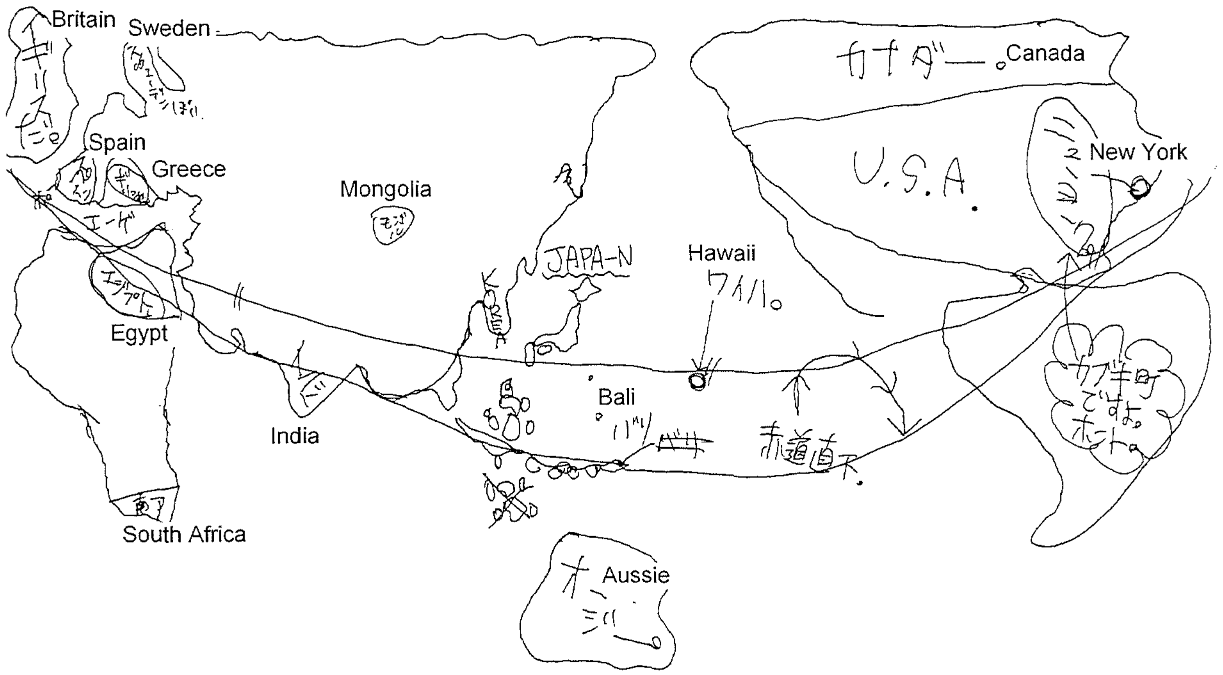
Argentina
ペルー
Peru
The South Pole
南極

Map 10 Yoko (Female, Age 27)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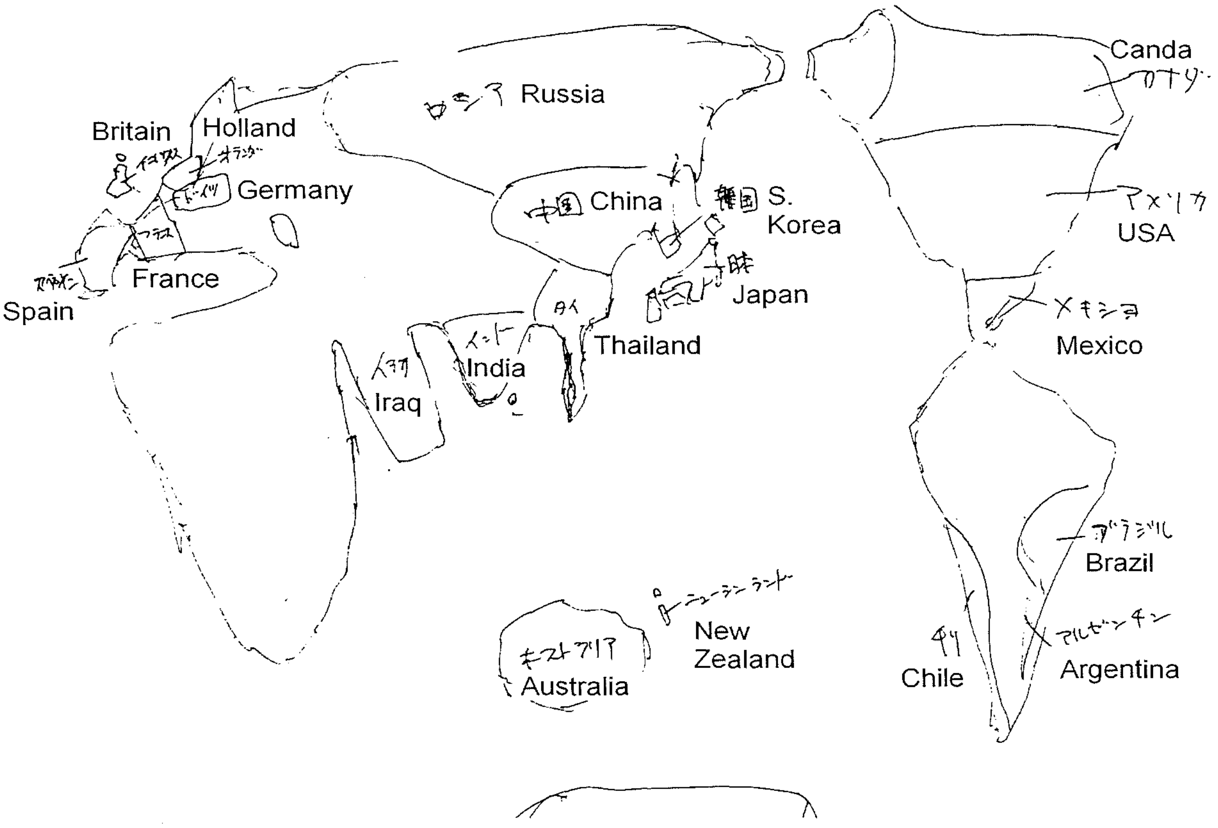
エーゲ
エジプト
Egypt
South Africa
南ア
Mongolia
モンゴル
India
インド
JAPA-N
Hawaii
ワイハ。
Bali
バリ
赤道直下
カナダ Canada
U.S.A.
New York
ニューヨーク
Aussie
オージー

The London Group

Mental Map 11 Jun (Male, Age 22)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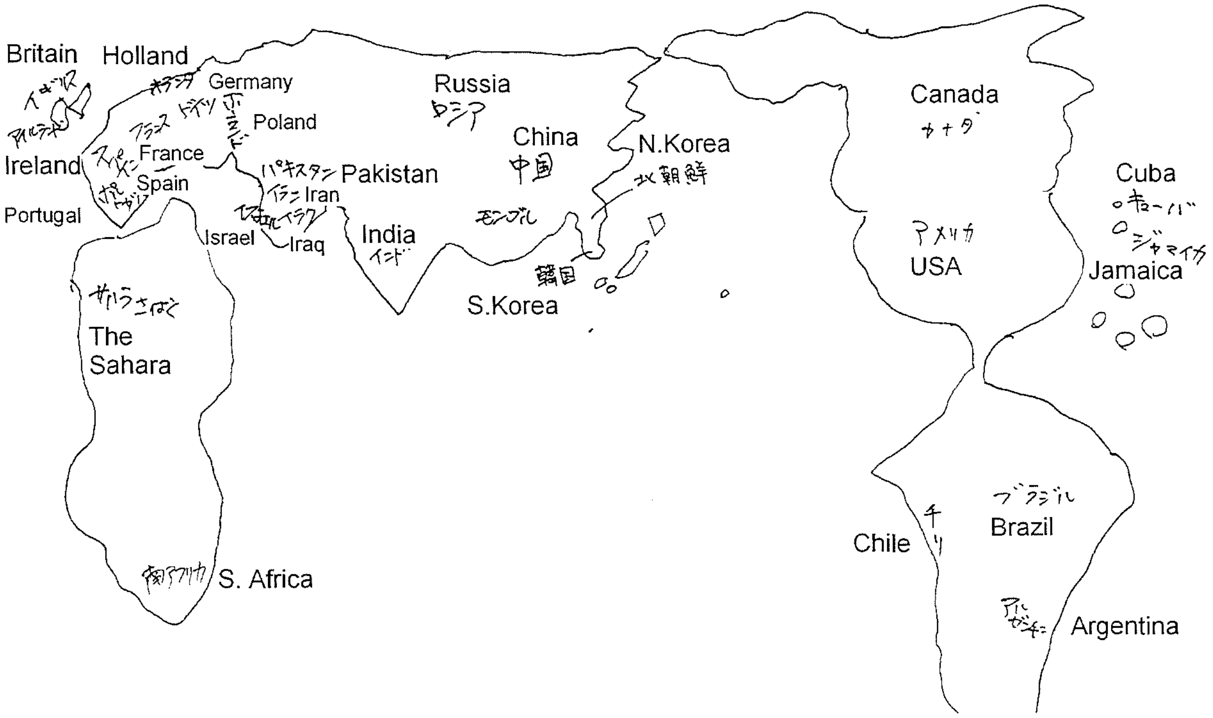
S. Korea
日本
Japan
タイ
Thailand
インド
India
イラク
Iraq
ニュージーランド
New Zealand
オーストラリア
Australia
Canda
カナダ
アメリカ
USA
メキシコ
Mexico
ブラジル
Brazil
アルゼンチン
Argentina
チリ
Chile

Mental Map 12 Ryo (Male, Age 25)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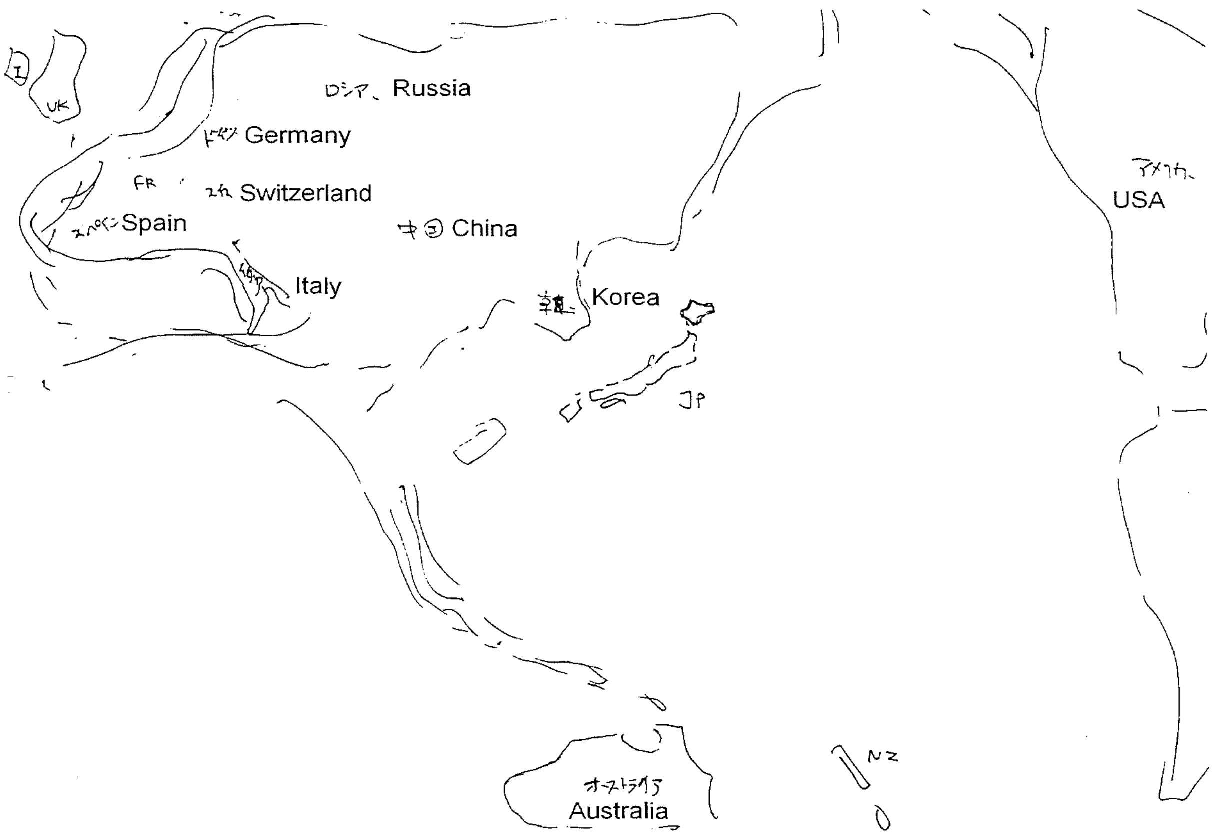
Russia
ロシア
China
中国
N.Korea
北朝鮮
パキスタン
Pakistan
イラン
Iran
イスラエル
イラク
Israel
Iraq
India
インド
モンゴル
韓国
S.Korea
サハラさばく
The Sahara
南アフリカ
S. Africa
Canada
カナダ
アメリカ
USA
Cuba
キューバ
ジャマイカ
Jamaica
ブラジル
Brazil
チリ
Chile
アルゼンチン
Argentina

Mental Map 13 Nozomu (Male, Age 26)


I
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ロシア、 Russia
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FR
スイス Switzerland
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韓国 Korea
JP
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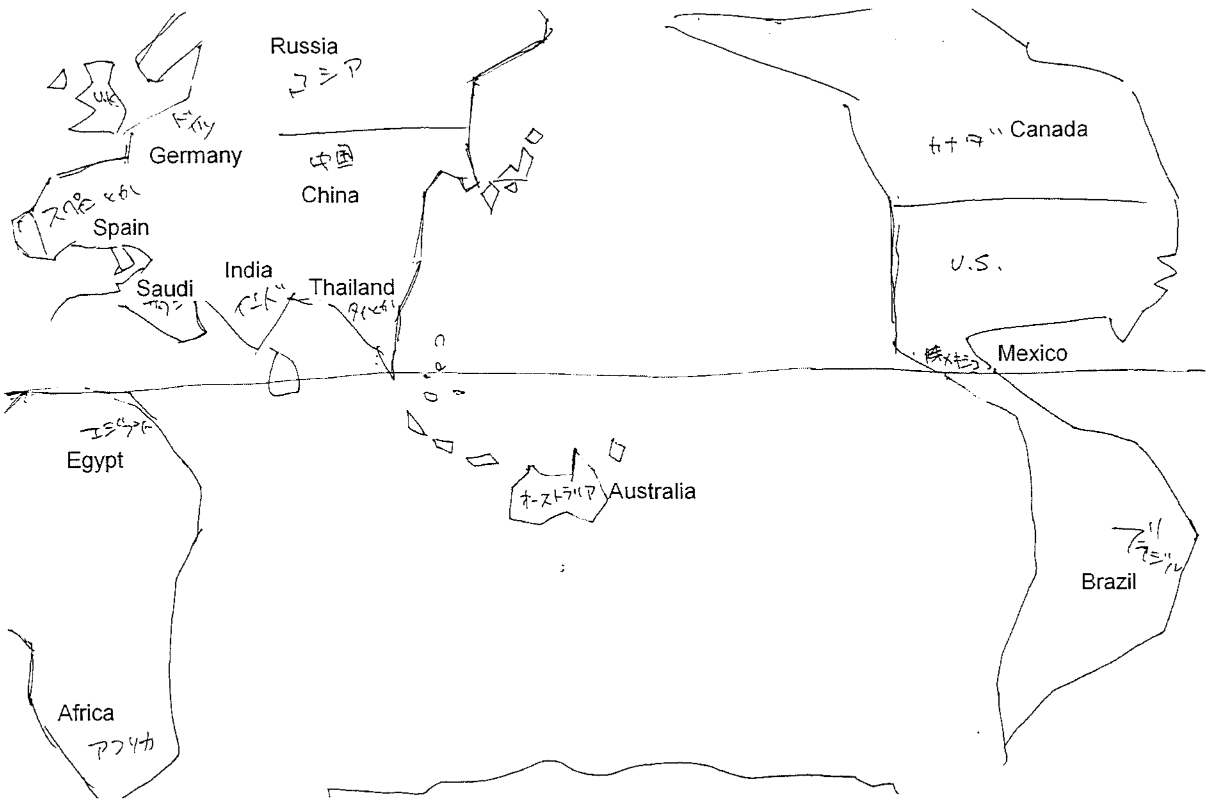
オーストラリア Australia
NZ

Mental Map 14 Shota (Male, Age 22)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カナダ Canada
U.S.
メキシコ
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Egypt
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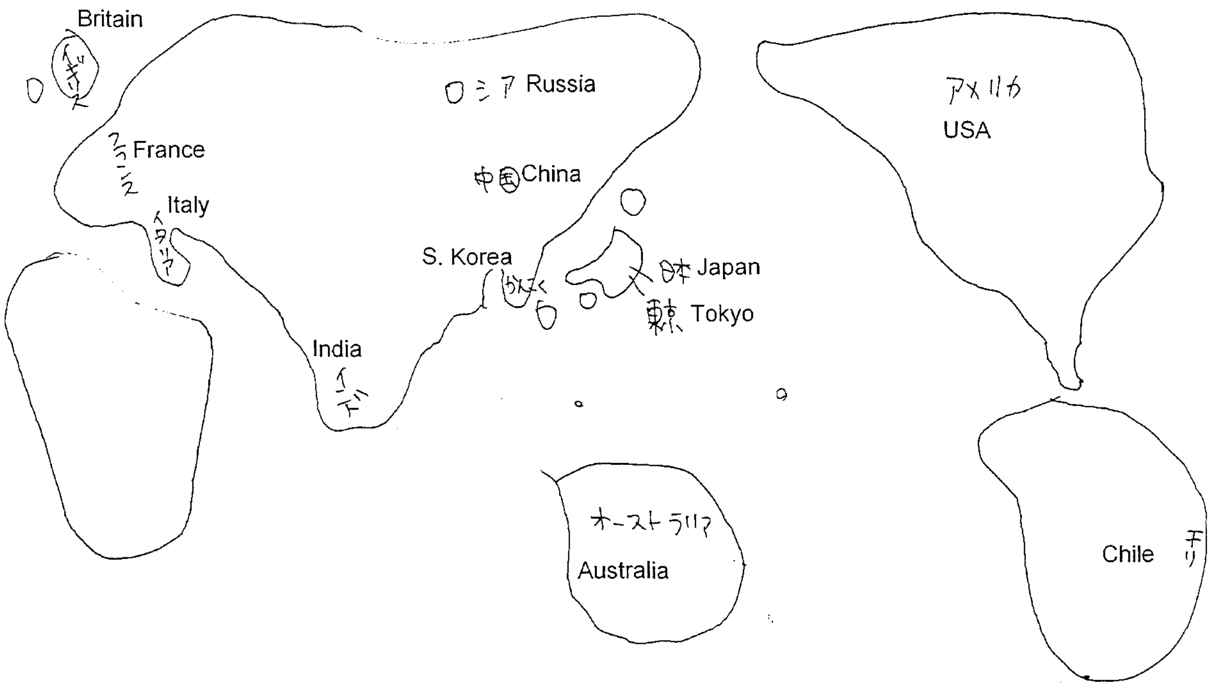
ブラジル
Brazil
Africa
アフリカ

Mental Map 15 Aiko (Female, Age 20)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中国 China
Italy
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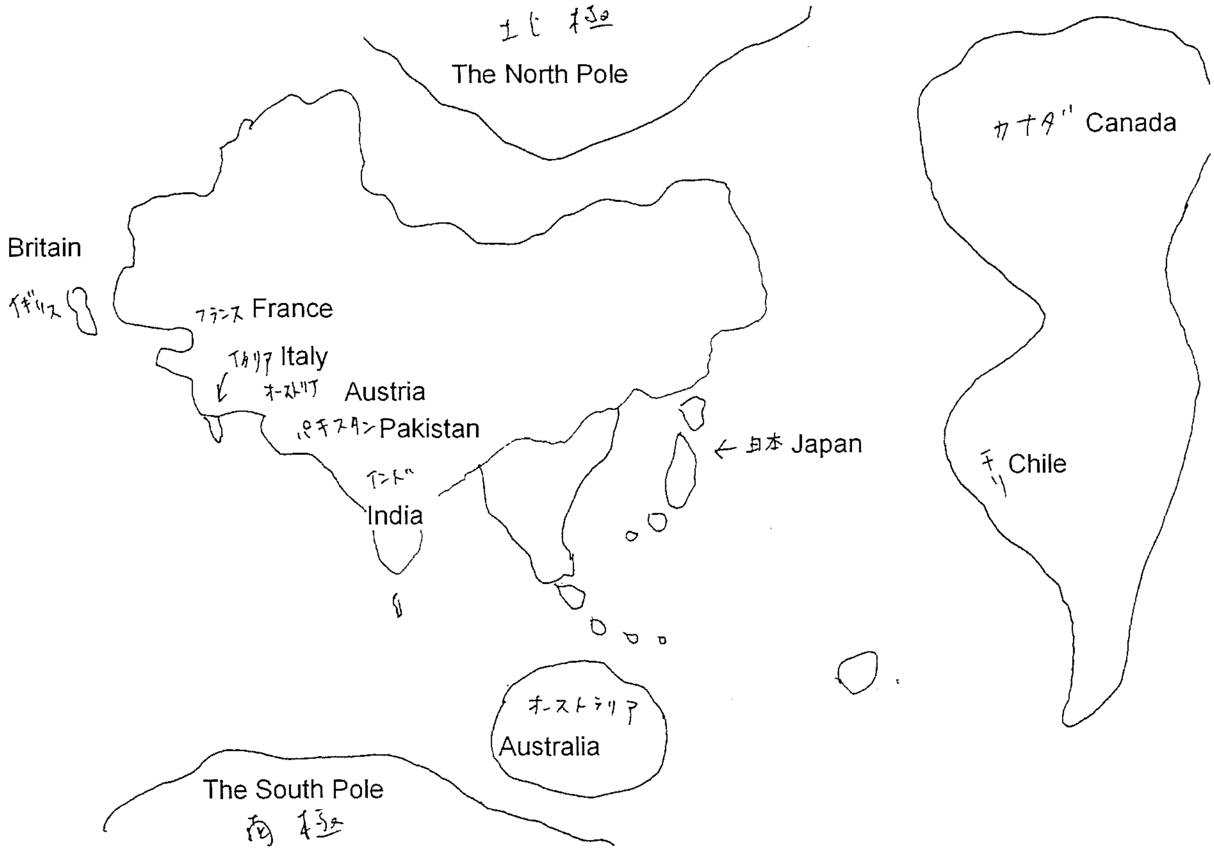
日本 Japan
東京 Tokyo
India
インド
オーストラリア
Australia
Chile
チリ

Mental Map 16 Emi (Female, Age 23)


北極
The North Pole
カナダ Canada
Britain
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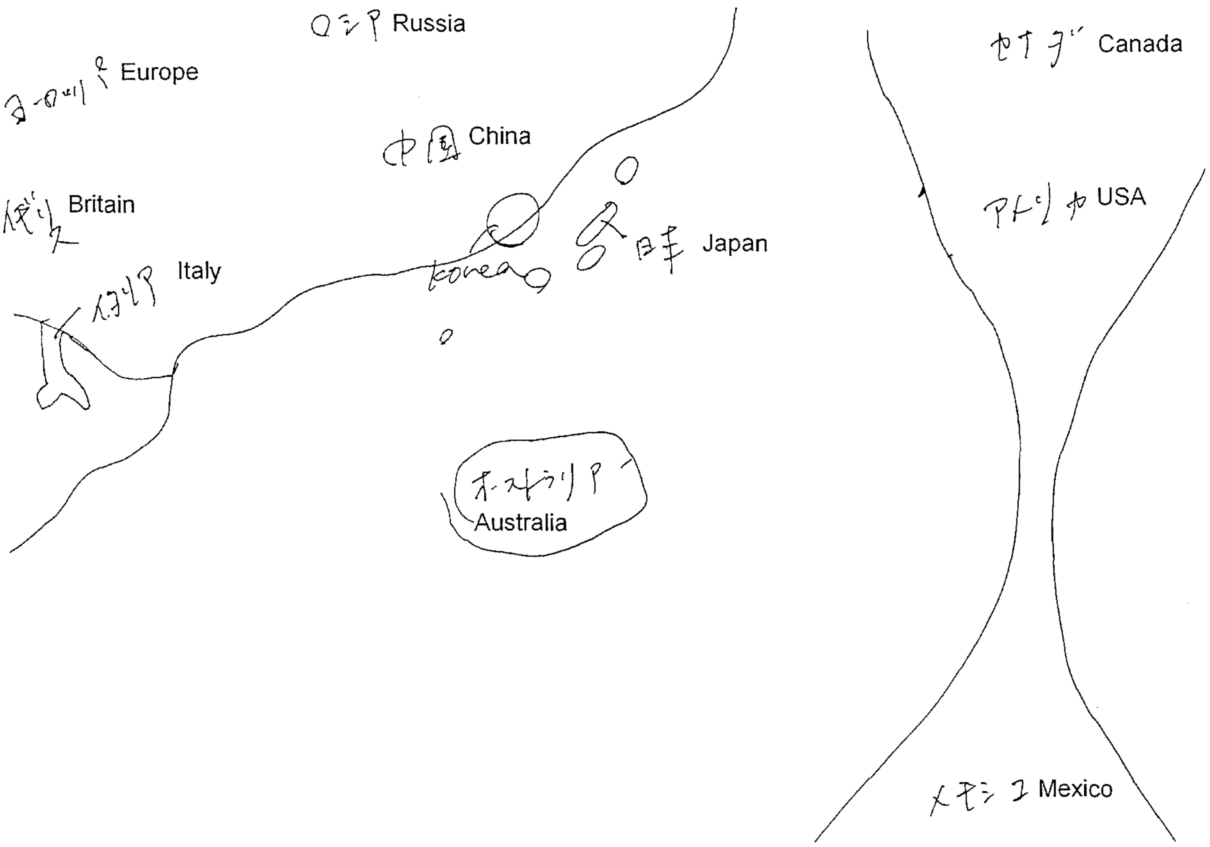
オーストリア Austria
パキスタン Pakistan
インド
India
日本 Japan
チリ Chile
オーストラリア
Australia
The South Pole
南極

Mental Map 17 Natsuko (Female, Age24)


ロシア Russia
ヨーロッパ Europe
中国 China
イギリス Britain
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日本 Japan
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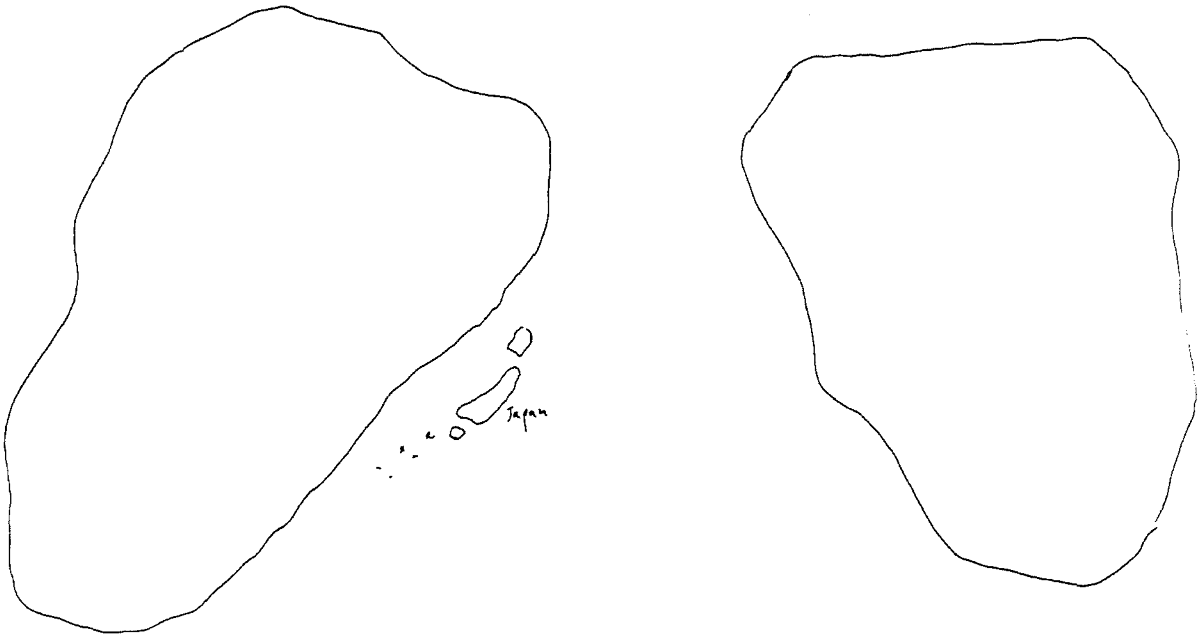
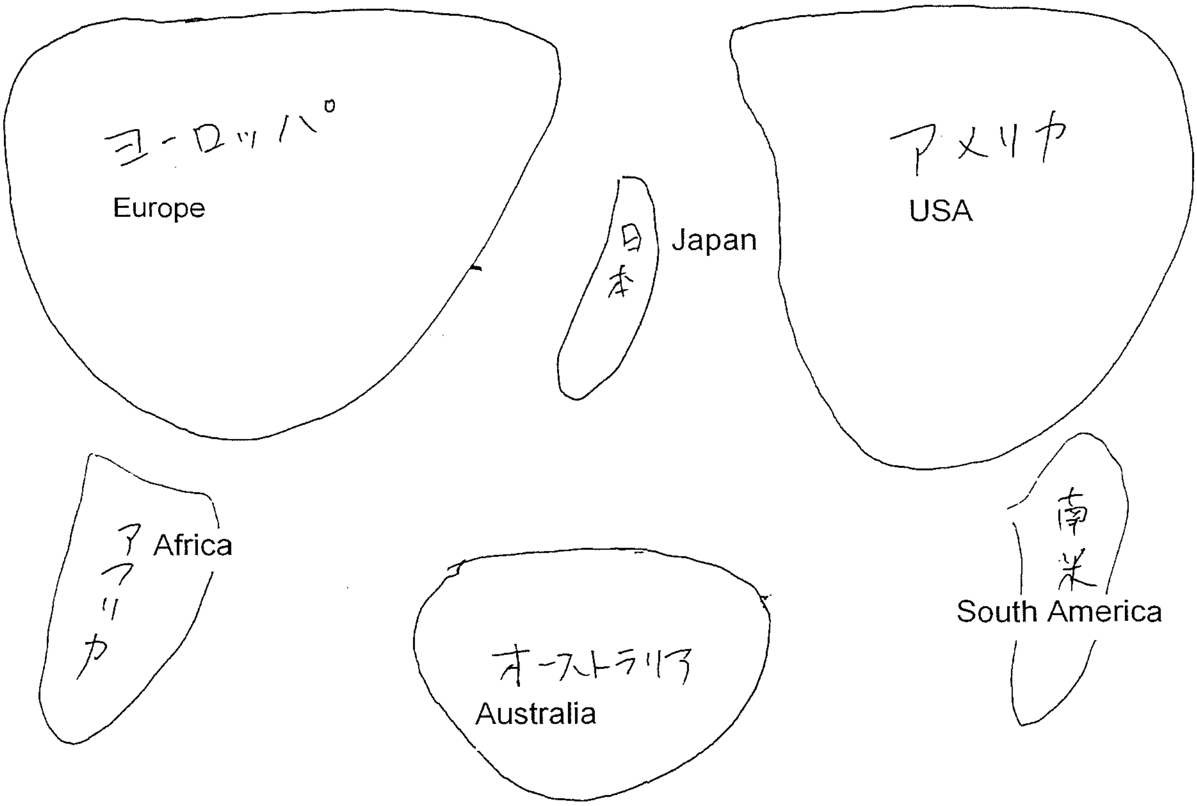
Australia
カナダ Canada
アメリカ USA
メキシコ Mexico

Mental Map 18 Sayaka (Female, Age 27)



Mental Map 19 Mihoko (Female, Age 30)


ヨーロッパ
Europe
日本
Japan
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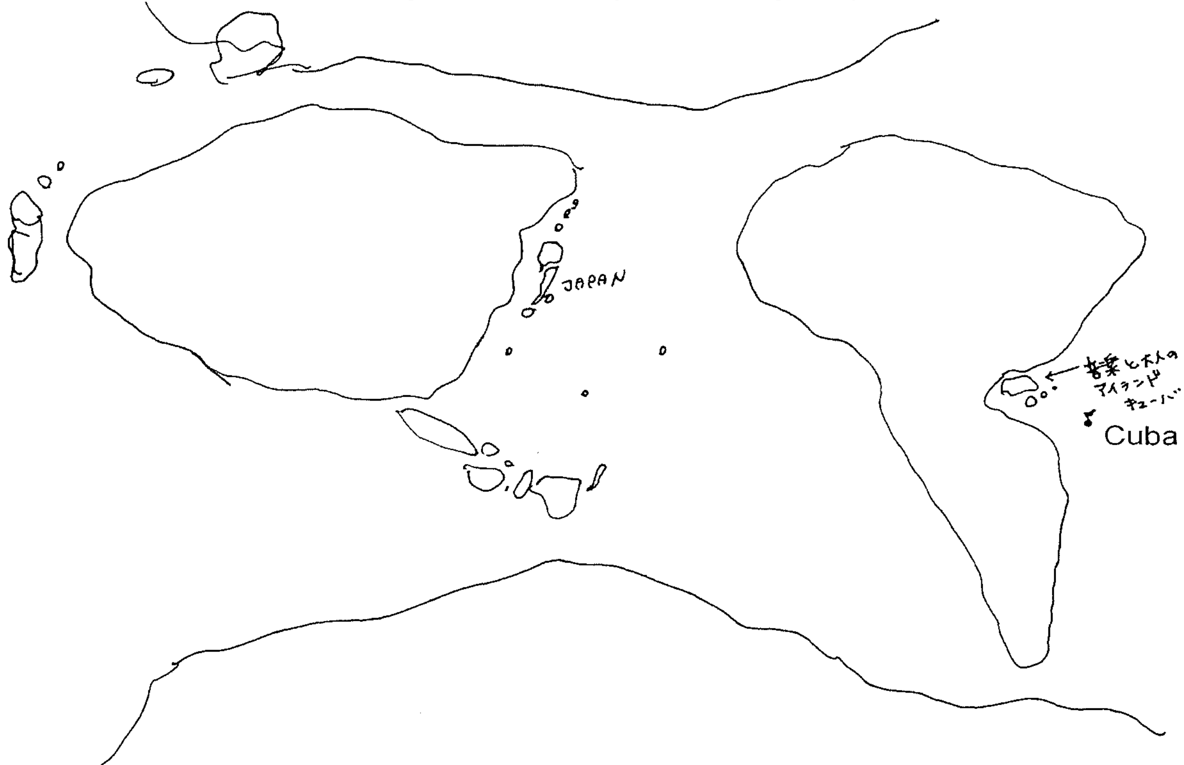
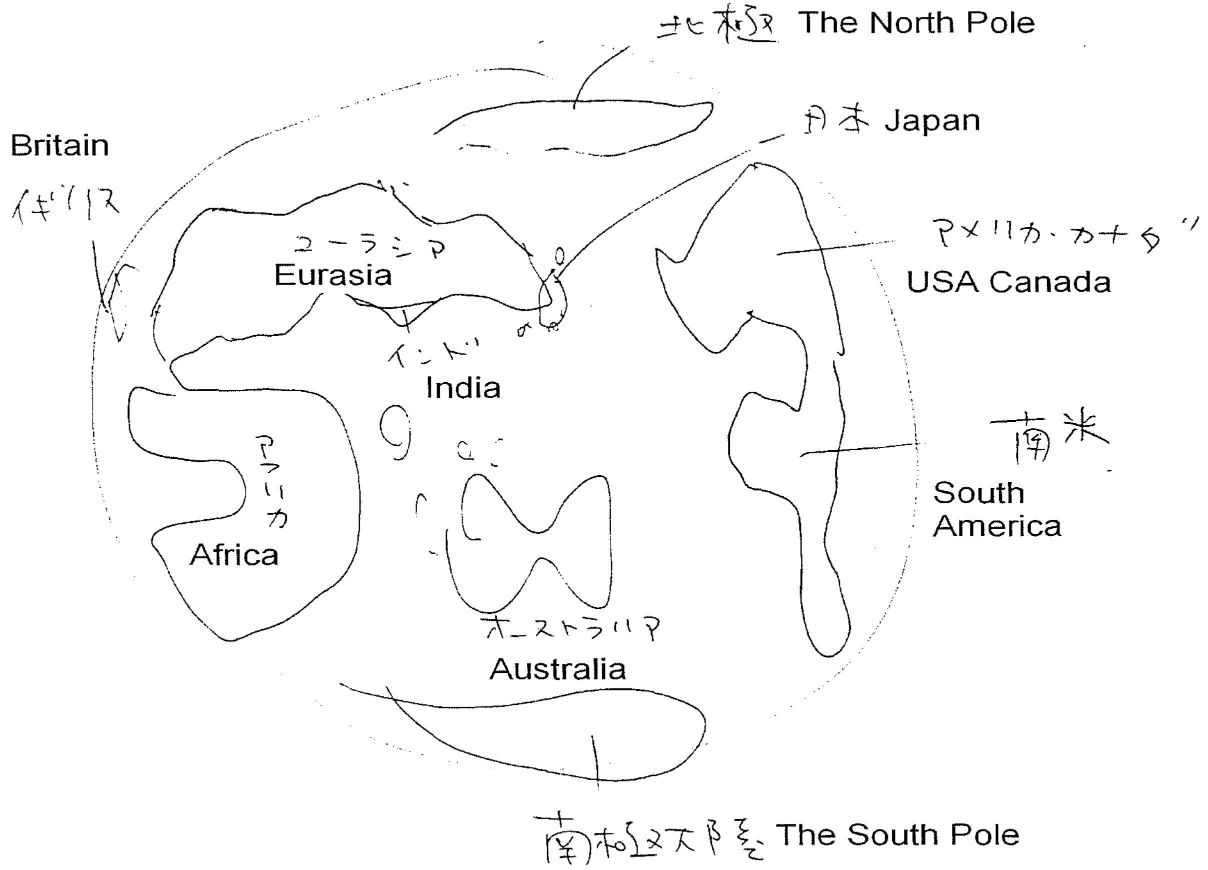
オーストラリア
Australia
南米
South America

Mental Map 20 Wakana (Female, Age 26)


JAPAN
音楽と大人のアイランド キューバ…
Cuba

Mental Map 21 Kumiko (Female, Age 25)


北極 The North Pole
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Eurasia
アメリカ・カナダ
USA Canada
インド
India
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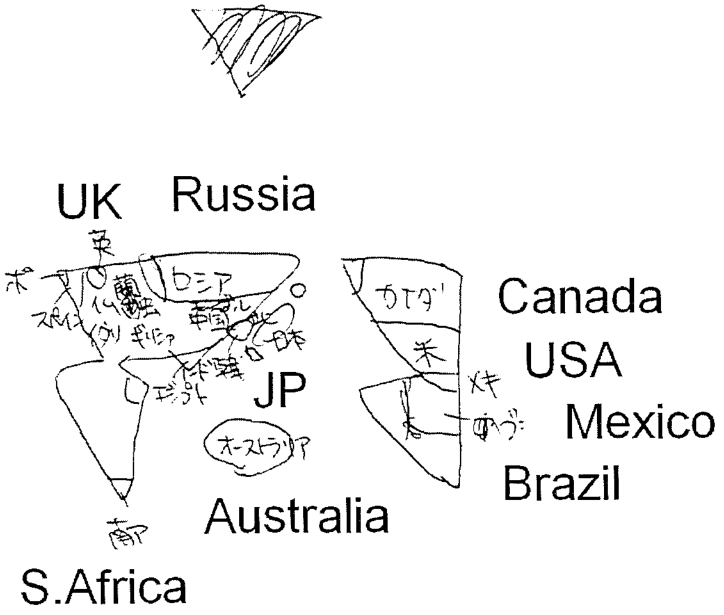
オーストラリア
Australia
南極大陸 The South Pole

Mental Map 22 Yayoi (Female, Age 19)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カナダ
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米
USA
メキシコ
Mexico
ブラジル
Brazil

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