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*Aspects Of Italian Buddhist Presence and Poetry*

Roberto Bertoni, Trinity College, Ireland

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0012



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## **1. Introduction**

The theoretical background of this paper, in addition to texts on the diffusion of Buddhism in the West (Batchelor, Baumann and Prebish, Harvey, MacMahan), confronts the Asian Conference on Cultural Studies's theme of sharing through the concepts of hybridization (Kraidy), neo-Orientalism (Said), and intertextuality (Bloom). The first section of the paper will briefly inform on how Buddhism was imported to Italy (Bertoni, Pasqualotto, Stortini) – the theme of becoming is implicit here in the practice of conversion. The second section will touch on belonging under the guise of the new spiritual and cultural identities that can be seen among contemporary poets inspired by Buddhism (Candiani, Carifi, Niccolai). In general, Buddhism in a Western country like Italy can be seen as a borderland, since it takes place against a cultural background that included this vision of the world only very marginally until recently, as it will be briefly hinted below. Let us start with some considerations on Buddhism in relation to hybridization and neo-Orientalism.

## **2. Buddhism as an Oriental import**

The presence of Buddhism in Italy dates back to Marco Polo's time, and onward to Matteo Ricci and other missionaries who commented upon Buddhism partly in favorable but mostly in unfavourable ways. Some more detailed and sympathetic commentaries were written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the first properly Orientalist studies were published in Italy (Pasqualotto). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a number of scholars wrote about Buddhism in informed ways and within the context of a scientific view on East Asia - namely Tucci who explored Tibetan culture in depth, and Maraini, originally his pupil, who lived for a time in Japan. The latest and most prolific import of Buddhism into Italy, however, has taken place in the last five decades. Buddhism in Italy presently appears to involve about 89,000 Asian migrants, and 100,000 Italian nationals (Stortini). Some comments follow below on this recent phenomenon.

An aspect of cultural borderland, and partly also hybridization, is that Italian Buddhism, like all Western Buddhism, implies adaptation to living abroad for Eastern Asian migrants; and conversion from Christianity, or at any rate to a new religious dimension, for Westerners.

There are actual differences in religious mentality and loyalty to traditions as expressed by practitioners from countries where Buddhism is an official religion, and by newly converted Italians who hybridize the Dharma teachings to a higher extent with Western philosophies.

On the one hand, to cite a statement by Weber (1918, p. 139), in modernity “the world is disenchanted. One needs no longer have recourse to magical means in order to master or implore the spirits”. By contrast to this well-established interpretation of modernity, Beck maintains that it has become apparent that the pairing of modernization and secularization is not as accurate as it seemed to be only a few years ago. This is due a process of “re-enchantment” that consists in the appearance in the West of new types of spirituality, i.e. of social and personal systems of feeling and thought other than Christianity. Such an interpretation is rather interesting in general, and perhaps newly converted Buddhists are indeed

motivated, in Italy like elsewhere in Europe, by a need for a re-enchantment of the world. Yet, one wonders to what extent this hypothesis is fully tenable, given the need for an uprooting of delusionary visions of reality and a confrontation with the sheer fact of suffering as a starting point in meditation on the Four Noble Truths.

On the other hand, with its insistence on impermanence, and because it is a non-theist religion, Buddhism appears to respond, once again in terms of borderland hybridization with Western theories, to the rather secular need to come to terms with modern temporariness and flexibility in liquid modernity (Bauman), and with a non-strictly religious need for spirituality. In the last thirty years, some of the interest in Buddhism has been caused by its capability of “communicating with a post-industrial modern society” (Obadia, p. 19). Buddhist persuasions would appear to coincide, at least in some respects, with anti-materialism and rejection of consumerism by social groups and individuals, while also responding to the need for happiness expressed by Western late-modern ideologies. In brief, Buddhism would seem to combine social “well-being” and “spirituality” (Obadia, p. 93).

Some scholars go as far as to doubt that Western Buddhism is motivated by typically religious needs, and they maintain that at its roots we find an undefined quest for spirituality:

“It might as well be that the attraction of Buddhism in the eyes of Westerners is rather a push towards spirituality than a way back to religiousness, and this Buddhist-like type of spirituality offers a credible response to the anxiety created by the modern world. This idealized and purely spiritual variety of Buddhism is what I call ‘neo-Buddhism’ as distinct from other types of Buddhism which have kept contact with tradition, in the bad and the good, in Asia” (Faure, p. 113).

This may be seen either as a fact, or merely an opinion, however what one can say is that Buddhism is a religion but in the West a number of sympathisers emphasize the moral rather than metaphysical teachings. Even the Dalai Lama does not seem to exclude this possibility when he explains that a life based on ethical principles is not necessarily founded on religious convictions: “I have come to the conclusion that whether or not a person is religious does not matter much. Far more important is that they be a good human being” (Gyatso 1999, p. 20).

One aspect of Buddhist moral behaviour that is compatible with Western mentality is a practical attitude, based on the persuasion of usefulness of certain acts. Goodness, in brief, is not only morally and psychologically rewarding, but also useful, and acting well is beneficial because it creates well-being by making one feel at harmony with the universe.

The ideological context, in particular for Italian converts, is connected to the reworking of identity in terms of neo-Orientalism. A revival of Eastern religions took place in Europe, the US and other Western countries in the 1960s and 1970s in connection with liberation ideologies, the hippy movement, and other anti-institutional philosophies. Hinduism, yoga, Buddhism, among other religions, were adopted by admirers of Asia who idealized *ahimsa* by presuming peacefulness existed in countries that in reality were not too rarely pervaded in those decades by

social conflict and violent political strife. Asia, in line with Said's concept of Orientalism, at times provided a supposedly exotic framework of reference to Italians. Marginal communities and individuals additionally adopted Asian religions as an attitude of protest, in opposition to a Christianity that seemed to have links to vested power and tradition.

Some Western interpretations see Buddhism as more tolerant than Christianity. Discussion has taken place, for example, on the Buddhist concept of error, or blindness, as different from the Christian concept of sin (Kornfield). This obviously applies to Italy, too, since the hegemonic religion there is Catholicism.

Beck has also identified the search for a "personal God" that for a number of Western people would seem to have replaced collective formal representations of Christianity. An embryo of rediscovery of Buddhism took shape and continued to develop in Italy in the 1980s and 1990s in connection with new types of spirituality such as the Aquarian Age and the New Age accompanied by imaginative and not explicitly political traits. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, though, Buddhism in Italy, as well as more in general in Europe, took distance from these practices and developed in independent and more conventional ways as it kept growing in numbers.

In short, in a number of cases, the West has developed modes of approaching and importing Buddhism that are not only suitable for religiously oriented people but for secular mentalities influenced by the Enlightenment.

Nonetheless, Buddhism and Catholicism in some measure share aspects on a borderland. For instance, there are similarities and common features between Buddhism and Catholic monasticism with regard to the configuration of communities of the practising religious and the need for meditation. The Dalai Lama (Gyatso 2012) states: "Christians are very close to the Buddhist spirituality. I am thinking, for instance, of Christian monastic life where attention and time are devoted to meditation". We can find further connections between the evangelical concepts of charity and altruism, and the Mahayana tradition of the Bodhisattva.

Concerning re-working of identity from a more politically oriented perspective, after the wavering of neo-Marxist utopias in the 1980s, Buddhism was one of the ways to provide some Italian radicals with a forward-looking vision of the world, based on a consideration of human beings as unhappy, and yet on an ability to progress towards a socially positive dimension.

In this respect, in the 1980s and 1990s, Buddhism configured itself in Italy as a predominantly socially aware approach, and Buddhist organizations have increasingly become involved with ecological issues, peace movements, protection of human rights at home and abroad, as well as with specific Asian issues such as the Tibetan diaspora.

Sharing, in the above context, is therefore shown by social participation, while a sense of community is also noticeable both in Buddhist *sanghas* and secular associations, with varying accentuations of theory and practice depending on the particular schools chosen – Tibetan and Zen schools, but also other Mahayana traditions and Theravada teachings. These were either imported from Asia, or they



were now and then introduced into Italy via European monasteries. A particular case is that of Soka Gakkai, originally from Japan, inspired by Nichiren Daishonin's teachings, but developed autonomously on the peninsula in Italy in the last decades.

Individual becoming is relevant, since a Buddhist spiritual itinerary is one of personal transformation of negativities into positive attitudes (selfishness into altruism, and so on). On this level, interconnections, mutual borrowings and shared views are visible between Buddhism and psychology. In Italy, like in other Western countries, a number of psychologists use the Buddhist meditational practice of mindfulness in depression therapy. Italian analytical psychologists inspired by Jung adopt symbols such as the mandala and other Buddhist notions within the therapeutic framework of the process of individuation, on the ground that both Jung and Buddhism aim at the transformation and rebirth of the individual (Moacanin, 1986). Bonecchi maintains that non-Buddhist therapy is probably preferable to meditation in order to deal with psychosis, but Buddhist awareness of suffering, due to disease, getting old and disappointments of all kinds, are useful in the treatment of neurosis.

### **3. Italian contemporary Buddhist poets**

The second section of this paper focuses on a particular case of borderland identity that can be seen among contemporary poets inspired by Buddhism.

One premise here is that, in relation to mentality studies (Sorokin), whereas in Asian countries Buddhism permeates the attitudes and reflections of people consciously and unconsciously since it has shaped those civilizations, in Italy it is a relatively recent acquisition and it influences writers in more oblique and perhaps superficial ways due to their more limited knowledge of this religion. The mentality of Italian poets, willingly or unwillingly, and by acceptance as well as rejection, is receptive of several nuances of Christian philosophy. Nevertheless, it is more of a *tabula rasa* (or colloquially a clean slate) towards Buddhism, the principles and ideas of which have penetrated literary culture gradually and often incompletely for reasons of non-traditional belonging of Italians in this vision of the world.

Yet, philosophical concerns are frequent among Italian Buddhist poets. A question is also posed on how a neophyte can propagate his new beliefs. On this plan, some neo-Buddhist writers exhibit the intellectual freshness of newly received ideas.

With reference to intertextuality, understood here as an aspect of cultural borderland sharing, some of the Italian Buddhist poets have acquired new Asian-influenced writing identities, and in this field the *haiku* is particularly conspicuous with cross-reference to classics such as Basho but also to more modern Japanese verse. Buddhist poetry from a number of other Asian traditions has been translated into Italian and has influenced local writers – just to mention two illustrious intellectuals, 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century Milarepa from Tibet and 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup>-century Ko Un from Korea.

Certain Italian poets leave Buddhist spirituality mostly in the background as an

additional aspect of their poetics, as is the case with Candiani. Intertexts have been built from Italian classics and Asian spiritual texts, as it occurs with Carifi who reads the Tibetan *Bardo Thodol* (*Liberation through Hearing during the Intermediate State*) through the linguistic mediation of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*. Others have moved from a previous variety of secular poetics to a different one based on spiritual themes, as Niccolai did. More details on some of the works of the three authors just mentioned will be given below, accompanied by the present writer's translations of the poets' statements and texts from Italian into English.

Chandra Livia Candiani (born in 1952) practices Theravada Buddhism, teaches Vipassana meditation, translates Buddhist texts, and writes poetry. Her identity as a resident in Italy with Russian ancestry, and a user of different languages, belongs in a borderland accentuated by her cross-reference to Western and Eastern intellectual persuasions.

She stopped writing for some periods when Vipassana meditation seemed in conflict with the act of producing literary scripts, and at those times it was "important to understand what counted most in my life" (Candiani 2014, 2), yet poetry always re-emerged, and in fact her process of growth in Buddhism helped to also renew her poetical language and ideas.

Even though she states that Buddhism does not explicitly pervade her poems, "or else my poetry would be strictly ideological", this religion is clearly her predominant view of the world even though what she seeks for is essentially "human qualities" (Candiani 2014, 2). With regard to solidarity, she expresses a concept of mutual charity that seems somehow shared with Christianity (Candiani 2014, 1, p. 11):

"The universe has no centre,  
But humans, in order to embrace, act as follows:  
They approach one another slowly  
And yet without any apparent reason,  
Afterwards they open arms,  
Show the disarmament of wings,  
They finally disappear  
Together  
In the space of charity  
Between one  
And the other".

Buddhism and poetry interact in her view of the latter as nothingness (Candiani, 2005, p. 81):

"In the light bones  
The vacuum is written,  
In the immature voice  
An unattained life is written,  
Due neither to premature death  
Nor to laziness or cowardice  
But to devotion to the nothingness

Of poetry”.

The most evident aspect of a direct influence of Buddhism on her poetry is probably impermanence, underlined by the alternation of life and death (Candiani, 2005, p. 17):

“Dust already chases  
The Lady who was born yesterday  
In order to return her to dust  
As though she is a cloud –  
This is an evening when the Lady is October  
That occurs to someone  
Because leaves fall”.

Another clear reference to Buddhist teachings is the diminishing of the ego through the principle of the non-self and a projection into the wholeness of nature (Candiani 2014, 1, p. 119):

“At times  
I am just not there  
I am the entirety of the air  
And specks of dust  
Vibrating under the impact of others,  
Under the impact of others’ gestures and breath  
[...]”.

Related to her Buddhist views are also, of course, some of her outlooks on life. She says that Buddhist “practice coincides with welcoming life as it is, and us as we are” (Candiani 2014, 2).

Her minimalist style touches upon deep existential areas in light language and imagery that are at times reminiscent of the haiku. One example (Candiani, 2005, p. 27):

“Black  
Birds  
Across the glass of the window  
It looks as though they are driven  
The Lady teaches them how to fly  
And then forsakes them –  
Let it snow  
On the Japanese magnolia  
On the gate  
On the shadows of the meadow”.

Summing up on Candiani, we notice several Asian/European interactions in her work, an exploration of the unconscious, and a sense of belonging in the meditative tradition of Buddhism but also a claim to freshness, simplicity and originality. In her view, poetry appear to discover and renew rather than express sheer theological truths.

A somehow different case can be made for Roberto Carifi (born in 1948), one of the members of a school of poetics called myth-modernism (Bertoni 2006). In the 1980s and 1990s he formulated his interest in spirituality discerned as myth and as an intertext including reference to European 19<sup>th</sup>-century Romanticism and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Western Modernism. In the last two decades, after conversion, he has often devoted his work to Buddhism.

His *Tibet* is a collection of poetry inspired by Tibetan philosophy and landscape, and in particular, as mentioned above, by the *Bardo Todol*, or the book exploring the borderland between the word of the dead and rebirth.

*Tibet* is a cohesively spiritual volume that avoids any trite approach to becoming, makes the transition to death/rebirth both personal, enigmatic, and somehow coherent with Buddhist teachings (Carifi, p. 9):

“Find out where nothingness is,  
Where your disguise and your snow are,  
Then start climbing  
Upper and upper, until you reach an open space  
Where you hear a weeping,  
A weeping howling -  
You feel transformed,  
The arms wide open”.

One culturally shared link between West and East is the term “souls”, depicted as a memory of Dante’s *Inferno* but also as Buddhist entities dispersed in plural Hells, and Jungian symbols situated in the depths of the unconscious (Carifi, p. 30):

I set camp by the stupa,  
There seemed to be live souls  
While they were transporting me towards the heights.  
From up there they showed me the Earth.  
Close to the stupa there is a gaze  
That teaches how to look from near  
Under Hells and swamps, under illnesses  
Under strokes that take root and skulls that break,  
But elsewhere souls pass  
Into the indiscriminate deep end of things”.

The Buddha comes as a borderland figure into the dreamy, mountainous landscape. Defined by being undetermined in terms of matter, the Buddha asserts his identity, and asks to be just one of us. By doing so, he provides a new identity: “[...] / He who comes is neither earth nor water / But says I am the Buddha, / Take me among yourselves”.

The route of this book includes the achievement of “Samadhi” (Carifi, p. 35), a disembodiment when “the body [...] became prayer” (Carifi, p. 38), the overcoming of suffering by “Embracing all wounds / Mine as well as the blood of other. / There will be no suffering in all of this. / There will only be endless conifer trees” (Carifi, p. 51).

Finally, peace takes over through rebirth of the narrative voice as a follower of Bodhisattvas:

“The country is full of deeds, yaks  
 Sheep and Kumbum smile, the one hundred thousand images of the Buddha,  
 I find myself there and listen to the silence  
 After having seen cliffs, followed the images of evil,  
 Eavesdropped at doors that open onto the dead.  
 Later on, snow falls slowly. The bodhisattvas,  
 Those enlightened beings, show the path to all,  
 Men and animals, and I follow them, too”.

In brief, becoming is a strong dimension of Carifi's *Tibet*, and it takes place through transmigration and rebirth as a spiritually oriented being after the Bardo. This is both a metaphysical persuasion that life continues after death, and a symbolic dimension that might be applied to metamorphosis of human beings into better persons during the course of their earthly lives.

Such an emphasis on becoming is also accentuated in Giulia Niccolai's work. Born in 1934, she belonged in the Italian neo-Avantgarde literary movements in the 1960s and 1970s when she wrote experimental poetry concerned with language innovation, anti-establishment satire, and expression of extraverted vitality. A major change took place in her life and texts in the 1980s. She converted to Buddhism, and she finally became a Buddhist monk from a Tibetan school in 1990.

Buddhist meditation acted on Niccolai's creativity initially as a block to writing in general and in a second phase to writing in her previous humorous and secular register. In the latter stage, she wrote prose work, for instance essays including texts on her motivations to become a Buddhist and on coincidence and sincronicity (Niccolai 2001), and some spiritual poems. One example of these is “Three meditations” (Niccolai 1999-2001), where we find lines such as the following:

“A mole in its den,  
 A seed in a pumpkin,  
 Isolate from any external stimuli,  
 Slowly calm down  
 The tyrant blazing  
 Of the five senses, and become acquainted  
 Sweetly with death  
 [...]”.

However, she has more recently returned to her original inspiration in a new light by expressing jovially ironic observations on daily life in old age, this time, rather than in polemical ways, in terms of acceptance of things as they are and of a joyful presence in a content existence (Niccolai 2012).

#### **4. Conclusion**

The present essay had the main purpose to show how Buddhism has become a relevant cultural reality in Italy. Within the framework of borderlands of becoming, belonging and sharing, Italian Buddhists, and the poets mentioned here, have added interesting cross-cultural and transnational dimensions to the Italian literary canon and to society at large.



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***Examining a Collaborative Conversational Feature between Australian Men and Women***

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**Abstract**

Many past studies of gender interaction discussed differences in masculine and feminine conversational styles. In particular, collaborative talk is regarded as a feminine conversational style. For example, Holmes (2006) makes a summary that most gender studies found that women tend to be collaborative while men tend to be challenging in everyday communication. However the author of this study believes that both men and women adopt collaborative features in their conversations. The purpose of this study is to find whether a collaborative feature in everyday conversation is confined to being only a women's conversational feature or if it is also apparent in men's conversation. In particular, this study focuses on looking at one of collaborative conversational features of one sentence expansion (OSE) which was defined by Lerner (1991).

The data of this study was collected in Australia. All participants of this study are Australians who are native speakers of English. This study adopts both quantitative and qualitative analysis. For the quantitative analysis, a total of 12 conversations were recorded with a voice recorder: men only, women only, and both mixed conversation. The quantitative results of this study show that while men showed 23 cases of OSE while women showed 12 cases of OSE. For the qualitative analysis, this study adopts Discourse Analysis (DA) to examine how cases of OSE in this study were delivered by participants of this study. The results show that both men and women similarly used cases of OSE in this study.

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## Literature review

### Men and Women's Talk

Holmes (2006) says that to some extent, people are always aware of whether they are talking to a woman or man, and they bring to every interaction their familiarity with gender stereotypes and the gender norms to which men and women are expected to conform. A number of sociolinguists have investigated gender stereotypes in talk. For example, men swear and use slang more than women do. Men tell jokes and women do not. Women can smooth over difficult social situations while men find this more difficult. Men tend to talk about competition, sports, and doing things. They also tease more and are more aggressive than women. Women tend to talk about themselves, feelings, affiliation with others, home and family (Lakoff, 1975, Poynton, 1989, Tannen, 1993, and Wardhaugh, 2002). Holmes (2000) summarised gender stereotypes which were commonly mentioned in the past studies of gender stereotypes below.

<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
direct	indirect
aggressive	conciliatory
competitive	facilitative
autonomous	collaborative
dominates talking time	talks less than men
interrupts aggressively	has difficulty getting a turn
task-oriented	person-oriented
referentially oriented	affectively oriented

(Holmes, 2000: 3)

As past studies of gender talk summarised that collaborativeness was one of the features of women's talk. Therefore this study focuses on looking at collaborativeness of not only women's conversations but also men's conversations. The author believes that collaborativeness is also seen in men's conversations

### One Sentence Expansion (OSE)

A OSE has been used as a collaborative feature in conversations. Coates (2007: 49) points out that co-producing an utterance helps to develop the speakers' idea or story by adding just a single word or entire clause to an utterance. Sacks also (1992, v1: 652) calls it '*co-producing an utterance*' in talk. '*Co-producing an utterance*' occurs when a party produces what could become a sentence and another speaks and produces a completion to that sentence.

A OSE occurs when the original speaker delivers a syntactically complete utterance which is often semantically complete as well. The next speaker then expands the original speaker's utterance. The next speaker is, however, the person who makes the original speaker's utterance an in-progress utterance although the original speaker's utterance is delivered by the speaker as a syntactically complete utterance. For example,

Louise: first of all they hit rain then they hit hail  
 Roger: n then they hit snow.  
 (Lerner, 1991: 448)

This example shows that the first speaker Louise provides a syntactically complete sentence which can stand alone and therefore does not require completion. However, the next speaker Roger, then expands the first speaker Louise's utterance.

In addition, when the original speaker's utterance is expanded, the next speaker often uses a device to expand the original speaker's utterance. It can be a preposition such as 'to', 'for' or 'with' and so forth. It also can be a conjunction such as 'and', 'but' or 'because' and so forth. Lerner (2004) refers to such a device as an *increment* initiator. The device encompasses a range of grammatical practices that can be used to explicitly connect a next turn constructional component a possibly completed turn constructional unit.

Thus, for this study, a case of OSE which is counted as a case should include the following features:

1. The original speaker delivers a syntactically complete utterance, in other words, it does not need to be developed but it can stand alone.
2. The next speaker develops the original speaker's syntactically complete utterance.

### **Methodology**

All participants were informed that their conversations would be recorded at the time they were recruited. In addition, in order to protect participants' privacy, they were informed that their personal information such as their actual names, their actual friends' names, and the names of their actual workplaces would be replaced by other names created by the researcher. All participants in this study were asked to record their own conversations and they were guided in how to use the audio recording device before they started recording their conversations. The author of this study was not present while the conversations were being recorded to avoid any authors' influence on participants' conversations (Cameron, 2001).

Participants were engaged in everyday situations during the recordings including the following:

- Participants having dinner, lunch, snacks with tea or coffee in participant's place.
- Participants having a break or having lunch (including dinner when they were working late) at work and talking.
- Participants having a party in participants' place.

The settings above do not constitute institutional settings in which there is some kind of control over participants (Drew and Heritage, 1992): in these settings, participants could be expected to provide the ordinary talk which is normally seen when participants talk with friends or family in casual settings (Cameron, 2001). Thus by recording conversations in these settings, the author of this study was able to collect data relating to ordinary conversations among participants.

Three groups of participants were used for recording their conversations for this study below.

1. Mixed-gender conversations
2. All women conversations
3. All men conversations

For this study, 12 conversations in total were collected which included five men-only conversations, three women-only conversations and four mixed gender conversations. The length of each conversation varied.

### The data analysis

This study adopts mainly qualitative analysis. Schegloff (1993) explains that quantitative analysis for conversation such as counting cases of particular conversational phenomena does not provide strong support for making generalisations about conversation. This is because each person is unique when they talk. Perakyla (2004) also points out that researchers often have limited time to transcribe their data and deal with a massive amount of conversation. However, in order to make qualitative analysis, quantitative observations are often combined. Heritage (2004), for instance, explains that a single case study can be applied to future studies. Perakyla (2004) also explains that in order to select samples for qualitative analysis, researchers need to access to a large collection of data. The aim of this study is not to generalise about the feature of OSE between men and women but rather to use a quantitative approach as a basis for qualitative observations.

Results

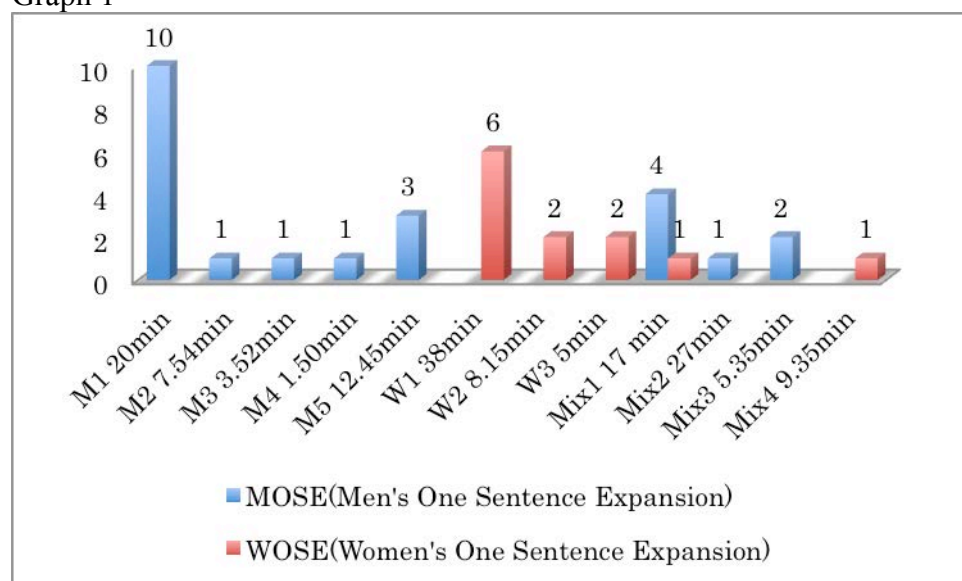
Table 1

Time	Male only	Female only	Mixed both	All male talk	All female talk
Minutes	2781	3075	3610	6391	6685
Hours	46.35	51.25	60.17	106.52	111.42

Table 2

Type of collaborative strategy	Male only	Female only	Mixed both genres	Mixed male initiated	Mixed female initiated	All male initiated	All female initiated
One sentence expansion	16	10	9	7	2	23	12
Total	52	35	26	16	10	68	45

Graph 1



The quantitative results show that both men and women showed cases of OSEs. Men used 23 cases and women used 12 cases in total. In this study, male participants used nearly twice as many cases of OSE as female participants used. However, it is important to note that the length of each conversation is different, which might affect the numbers of cases seen in each conversation. Also it is important to note Schegloff's claim (1993) mentioned earlier that coding numbers of cases of a conversational feature does not provide strong supporting evidence for generalisation on the use of the feature which is discussed. For instance, in men's conversation 1, ten cases were seen, while in men's conversations 2 to 4 each conversation shows only one case. Nevertheless the results support a possible trend for both men and women to use OSE as a collaborative feature (Perakyla, 2004)

### Qualitative analysis

For qualitative analysis, the total of four examples are examined in depth. Both Example 1 and 2 are taken from women's only conversations. Both Example 3 and 4 are taken from men's only conversations.

#### Example 1

- 585: A: Wll I just said t'the boss I said make sure we treat her well because y'know she's .hh  
 586: she knows pe::ople. hahahaha  
 587: K: hahahaha [ye::ah.]  
 588: A: [I don't ] wanna be getting on a thing and then someday they're asking her  
 589: about her experiences and she goes I worked for this café (in ) n'the people there  
 590: were horrible. [hahahahaha]  
 591: K: [hahahaha ]  
 592: → A: and never go eat the:re=they do disgusting things with their[fo::od.]  
 593: → K: [they] spit  
 594: in the fo::od.  
 595: A: yeah.  
 596: K: hahahahahaha

Both K and A are talking about a new staff member who has just started working at A's workplace as a waitress. A does not know who the new staff member is but she has found out that the new staff member was on TV and both K and A are very

surprised that she has come to work in A's work place. In line 585, A starts telling of her concerns about the new staff member including whether she might spread rumours about the café where A works.

A's utterance in lines 589 and 590 '*...I worked for this café (in) n'the people there were horrible. [hahahahaha]*' is expanded by the same speaker A in line 592 by adding '*and never go eat the:re=they do disgusting things with their[fo::od.]*'. A's utterance in 592 '*and never go eat the:re=they do disgusting things with their[fo::od.]*' was delivered with a delay, since laughter tokens by both A in line 590 and K in line 591 were inserted in A's self expansion of her original utterance in lines from 588 and 590. A's utterance in line 592 contains a conjunction term '*and*' at the beginning which syntactically combines her previous utterance '*...I worked for this café (in) n'the people there were horrible. [hahahahaha]*' in lines 589 and 590 with the rest of her utterance in line 592 '*and never go eat the:re=they do disgusting things with their[fo::od.]*'.

K's utterance in line 593, '*they spit in the fo::od*' expands A's self expanded long utterance to produce '*I worked for this café (in) n'the people there were horrible and never go eat the:re=they do disgusting things with their[fo::od.] they spit in the fo::od*'. Lerner (1991) explained that OSE is a collaborative feature in talk. In this instance, the original speaker's discourse unit is expanded by the next speaker K. It shows both A and K are collaboratively forming one discourse unit.

## Example 2

- 132: A: *yeah* so:: he is doing this and like this guy was like yeah it'll be just like the one you've  
 133: currently got and blah blah blah and you'll pay this much per month. (1.0) and he  
 134: said you know sort of like you beauty an- an- rick wasn't aware of what- ↑he doesn't  
 135: know anything about it like (0.7) I was talking to him he goes yeah NOW I  
 136: REALISE-  
 137: K: he was like sort of [suckered into a dodgy deal.]  
 138: A: [yeah well he's got two teena]gers,  
 139: A: and you know- I- I knew tht mike was always on his PS3 playing online games  
 140: [through the console,  
 141: K: [↓ah:::  
 142: → A: and I was li:ke [okay] he goes I got this bill for three thousand dollars.  
 143: K: [hhhh.]  
 144: K: =Aaargh:::  
 145: A: and I was like [OH:::M:::Y go:::d. ]  
 146: → K: [cause he was so far over] his download.  
 147: → A: yeah because he would have been downloading at least twenty gig, .hh you know  
 148: and it's like fifteen cents per every megabit (.) that you're over.  
 149: K: AH:::  
 150: A: and I was like oh my [god  
 151: K: [he should've rung them up and contested it n said look you  
 152: didn't explain this [properly.]

Both A and K are talking about a story of playing online games in this example. The current speaker A in line 142 delivers '*and I was li:ke [okay] he goes I got this bill for three thousand dollars.*' which is a syntactically independent discourse unit. It also ends with a falling intonation which suggests that A's utterance is complete (Fletcher and Loakes, 2006). A's utterance in line 145 begins with '*and*', showing that A is self expanding her previous utterance of line 142.

The next speaker K in line 146 delivers ‘*[cause he was so far over] his download.*’ which expands A’s ‘*and I was li:ke [okay] he goes I got this bill for three thousand dollars.*’. K’s expansion in line 146 of A’s utterance of line 142 makes A’s syntactically complete utterance an in-progress utterance (Lerner, 1991).

K’s ‘*[cause he was so far over] his download.*’ in line 146 is then expanded by the original speaker A in line 147 ‘*yeah because he would have been downloading at least twenty gig, .hh you know*’. K’s utterance in line 146 contains a falling intonation which suggests that she is signalling the end of her utterance (Fletcher and Loakes, 2006). A’s utterance in line 142 and K’s utterance in line 146 form one syntactically complete discourse unit. However, A’s utterance in line 147 makes K’s utterance in line 146 an in-progress utterance.

In the end, a whole discourse unit has become a very long discourse unit as below.

142: A: ‘...he goes I got this bill for three thousand dollars.’  
 ↓  
 146: K: ‘cause he was so far over his download.’  
 ↓  
 147: A: ‘yeah because he would have been downloading at least twenty gig, .hh you know’

In this case of OSE, there are two components of surprise: ‘*Aaargh:::*’ by the next speaker K and ‘*so I was like OH:::M:::Y go:::d*’ by the original speaker A. These two components are inserted before the next speaker K delivers her expansion. K in line 144 ‘*Aaargh:::*’ shows her surprise that A’s boss has received a bill for three thousands dollars. A’s ‘*so I was like OH:::M:::Y go:::d*’ in line 145 also describes her surprise when she heard the story from her boss. Because these two components of surprise by both K and A are inserted, K’s attempt to expand in line 146 is delayed.

K’s utterance in line 146 ‘*cause he was so far over*’ is overlapped with A’s surprise ‘*OH:::M:::Y go:::d*’ in line 145. Lerner (2004) explains that an overlap by the next speaker in one sentence construction can occur when the original speaker continues talking beyond the opportunity point space for the next speaker who tries to complete the original speaker’s utterance. Both speakers continue their utterances and therefore the next speaker’s affiliating utterance overlaps the previous speaker’s utterance which is still in progress. In this instance, the original speaker A continues her utterance while the next speaker K expands A’s previous utterance.

K’s expansion of A’s utterance in line 146 ‘*[cause he was so far over] his download.*’ begins with ‘*cause*’ which is used to explain a possible reason why A’s boss was asked to pay such a huge bill (Schiffrin, 1987). It is accepted by the original speaker A in line 147. A’s attempt to expand K’s utterance in line 146 contains a minimal response ‘*yeah*’ at the beginning. This A’s ‘*yeah*’ is used as an acknowledgement token (Gardner, 1998). In line 147, just after ‘*yeah*’ A gives builds on K’s utterance in line 146, which suggests that A is further acknowledging K’s utterance. A mentions ‘*twenty gigabits*’ which describes exactly how much A’s boss would have used, while K in line 146 says only that he was ‘*so far over his download*’.

### Example 3

- 239: L: [o of (.) ] no of songs that they wanna he:ar  
 240: and it's like normally (.) if (.) if I tell like a bride and groom or something to  
 241: bring along a CD. (0.7) you're worried? whether they'll actually bring it  
 242: along?=  
 243: J: =yeah.  
 244: L: and whether it'll actually work?  
 245: J: ye::ah.  
 246: → Al: and whether or not [it'll actually be just] stuff for you to find anyway.  
 247: L: [nono ]  
 248: L: yeah but if it's the marine guys it's just like o:[h]  
 249: K: [o:]h it's gonna [wo::rk.]  
 250: L: [>it's< ] it's gonna  
 251: work they'll have four copies of it (.) just in case >the first one<  
 252: doesn't [work (or not)]. It's all ↑good.  
 253: Al: [ye:ahhh ]  
 254: Al: every date stamp[ed. ]  
 255: L: [eve]ry date and time stamped  
 256: J: and it'll be like [it'll be like (.) ]  
 257: L: [how many tapes wrapped up]  
 258: J: you know (0.3) pro professionally printed,  
 259: L: yeah.

In this part of the conversation, L is talking about his work. L is in charge of DJing for a wedding, and participants are treating L's story ironically. This instance of OSE has several features discussed below. Firstly, Al's expansion of L's previous utterance in line 246 *and whether or not [it'll actually be just] stuff for you to find anyway.* contains an increment initiator 'and' (Lerner, 1991). L's utterance in line 244 *and whether it'll actually work?* which ends with a rising intonation, is followed in line 245 by J's delivery of a minimal response token 'yeah' which precedes Al's expansion component. Nevertheless, Al's utterance in line 246 is actually expanding L's utterance in line 244 since it includes an increment initiator 'and'.

Secondly, Al's attempt to expand L's utterance is partially accepted by L in line 248. Lerner (2004) explains that the original speaker often delivers either an acceptance or rejection for the next speaker when the next speaker delivers an affiliating utterance for one sentence construction. Lerner's claim can also apply to the speaker who delivers an expansion component in a case of OSE. In this instance, L in line 248 delivers a minimal response token 'yeah' which shows that L is partially agreeing with Al's utterance in line 246 *and whether or not [it'll actually be just] stuff for you to find anyway.* However, L delivers 'but' after 'yes' which is a contradiction marker (Schiffrin, 1987) and L continues his story. Thus L in line 248 is showing partial agreement with Al in line 246 but L does not show full agreement with Al's expansion.

Thirdly, this case of OSE follows a three part listing explained by Jefferson (1991) and Lerner (1991). Lerner (1991) explains that a sentence can be theoretically expanded with no limit with the use of conjunctions such as 'and' but in conversations, speakers might predict how many conjunctions will be used to expand a sentence. Jefferson (1991) finds that speakers in conversations often deliver the three part structure when they list things in their conversations. The recipient often monitors the third component as a sign of turn completion.

In this example, L's utterance lists two things he could be worried about when he tells a bride and groom to bring along a CD: *'whether they'll actually bring it along?'* in lines 241 and 242, and *'and whether it'll actually work?'* in line 244. Then in line 246 Al delivers *and whether or not [it'll actually be just] stuff for you to find*



*anyway.*' as the third component of L's list. Al's utterance in line 246 is presented as a completion of L's possible three-part list.

A OSE providing a third component of a three-part list was also seen in women's conversation in this study. The extract below is taken from Example 1 in the women's OSE earlier.

- 585: A: Will I just said t'the boss I said make sure we treat her well because y'know she's .hh  
 586: she knows pe::ople. hahahaha  
 587: K: hahahaha [ye::ah.  
 588: A: [I don't wanna be getting on a thing and then someday they're asking her  
 589: about her experiences and she goes I worked for this café (in ) n'the people there  
 590: were horrible. [hahahaha]  
 591: K: [hahahaha ]  
 592: → A: and never go eat the:re=they do disgusting things with their[fo::od.]  
 593: → K: [ they] spit  
 594: in the fo::od.  
 595: A: yeah.  
 596: K: hahahahaha

A's utterance in line 592 contains the first list component '*people there were horrible.*'. A in line 592 then delivers the second component part '*they do disgusting things with their[fo::od.]*'. The third component is then delivered by K in line 593 and 594 '*[they] spit in the fo::od*' and it both expands and completes A's utterance of line 592.

As explained above, this instance in men's conversation shares similar features, in that three list components are produced: '*whether they'll actually bring it along?*' and '*and whether it'll actually work?*' by L, and '*and whether or not [it'll actually be just] stuff for you to find anyway.*' by Al. This list is collaboratively developed by two male speakers L and Al.

#### Example 4

- 28: J: hehehe and he goes (0.5) ↑why the fuck's my door shut. =and we're like meh? anyway  
 29: cause he went to go an to go in there and he didn't came back around us, .hhh and he  
 30: walks in, and the heat wave that came through-  
 31: → L: cause he saw the heat wave coming out of his fucking room  
 32: → J: and it was ju- we're both like ↑ye::ah,  
 33: → L: because it was beautiful because he was all cold in ours, and then he walked into the  
 34: next room ws a sauna.  
 35: J: we also (hid)-  
 36: L: and he's like oh no fuck ↑hahahaha

Both L and J are talking about a story of their holiday in this example. The instance of OSE is seen in lines 31 to 34. J's utterance in line 30 '*walks in, and the heat wave that came through-*' is cut off by the next speaker L. L in line 32 then delivers '*cause he saw the heat wave coming out of his fucking room*'. J in line 30 talks about the 'heat wave'. The next speaker L expands L's talk to provide details of where the heat wave was coming from, and how it was seen by their friend. Therefore, J's utterance in line 30 '*walks in, and the heat wave that came through-*' is interrupted and, at the same time, expanded by the next speaker L in line 31. L's expansion component in line 31 '*cause he saw the heat wave was coming out of his fucking room*' contains '*cause*' as an increment initiator.

L's expansion in line 31 does not end J's story. It is further expanded by the original speaker J in line 32. J in line 32 delivers '*and it was ju- we're both like ↑ye:::ah,*' which contains an increment initiator '*and*'. J's utterance describes both J and L's reactions to their friend's having been a victim of their practical joke. Thus, so far, a discourse unit is collaboratively formed by both J and L: '*he walks in and the heat wave that came through cause he saw the heat wave was coming out of his fucking room and it was ju- we're both like ↑ye:::ah,*'.

J's expansion in line 32 '*and it was ju- we're both like ↑ye:::ah,*' is then expanded by L in lines 33 and 34 by delivering '*because it was beautiful because he was all cold in ours, and then he walked into the next room ws a sauna.*'. L's expansion contains two uses of the increment initiator '*because*'. The first '*because*' by L is used to expand the previous speaker, J's utterance in line 32 '*and it was ju- we're both like ↑ye:::ah,*'. The second '*because*' by L expands his first component '*because it was beautiful*'.

In the end, the original speaker J's utterance in line 30 '*...heat wave came through-*' is expanded by both the original speaker J and the next speaker L as a long discourse unit as described below.

Line 30: '*...heat wave came through-*' (by J)

↓

Line 31: '*cause he saw the heat wave coming out of his fucking room*' (by L)

↓

Line 32: '*and it was ju- we're both like ↑ye:::ah*' (by J)

↓

Line 33: '*because it was beautiful because he was all cold in ours and then he walked into the room*' (by L)

As the above shows, this instance is a highly collaborative OSE by male participants. Both speakers J and L are contributing to the expansion of their story using increment initiators '*cause*', '*and*' and '*because*'.

This multiple expansion model is also similarly seen in women's conversation, as shown below.

- 139: A: and you know- I- I knew tht mike was always on his PS3 playing online games  
 140: [through the console,  
 141: K: [↓ah:::  
 142: → A: and I was li:ke [okay] he goes I got this bill for three thousand dollars.  
 143: K: [hhh.]  
 144: K: =Aaargh:::  
 145: A: and I was like [OH:::M:::Y go:::d. ]  
 146: → K: [cause he was so far over] his download.  
 147: → A: yeah because he would have been downloading at least twenty gig, .hh you know  
 148: and it's like fifteen cents per every megabit (.) that you're over.  
 149: K: AH:::  
 150: A: and I was like oh my [god  
 151: K: [he should've rung them up and contested it n said look you  
 152: didn't explain this [properly.]

The extract above was taken from Example 2 in the women's OSE earlier. Both A and K are expanding the original speaker A's utterance. The next speaker K's expansion component does complete the original speaker A's utterance, but the original speaker A further expands K's expansion component. In the end, both men and women similiary showed the cases of the multiple expansion which were seen as collaborative feature of conversation.

## **Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to explore whether a collaborative feature in everyday conversation is confined to only women's conversational feature or if it is also apparent in men's conversation. In particular, this study focused on looking at one of collaborative conversational features of OSE. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis showed that both men and women in this study showed some cases of OSE which were collaboratively delivered. As for quantitative analysis, although coding numbers of cases of OSE does not provide strong supporting evidence for generalisation on the use of the feature (Schegloff, 1993), the quantitative results of this study support a possible trend for both men and women to use OSE as a collaborative feature (Perakyla, 2004). As for qualitative analysis, four examples (two women's only conversations and two men's conversations) were examined in depth. Example 1 (women's only conversation) showed the similar case of OSE with the case of OSE in Example 3 (men's only conversation). Example 2 (women's only conversation) also showed the similar case of OSE with the case of OSE in Example 4 (men's only conversation). All four examples collaboratively showed the cases of OSE. As a future study, this study focused on exploring conversations between Australian men and women. To explore cases of OSE between men and women in other countries might show the different features from the features which were seen in this study.

The logo for 'iafor' is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, faint circular graphic composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent arcs in shades of blue and red, creating a circular frame around the text.

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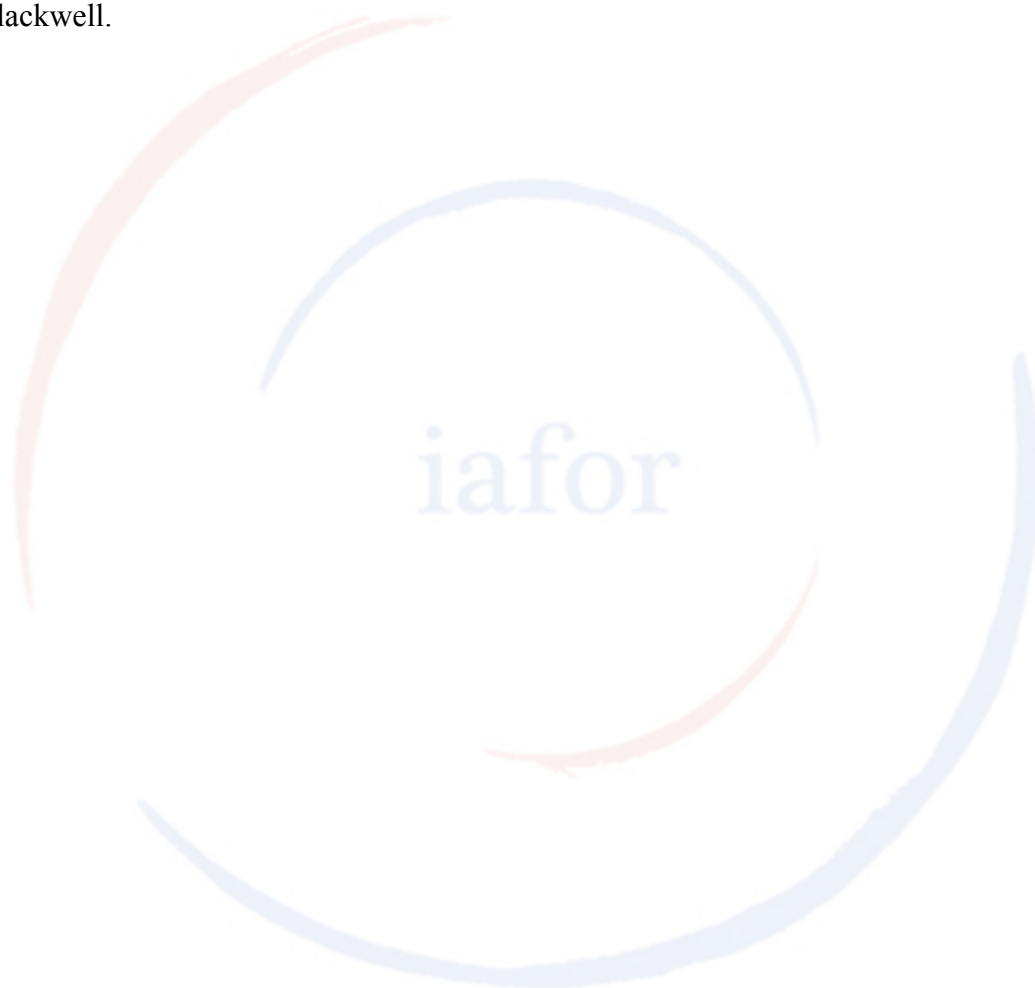
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*The Creation of Trans-Cultural Belonging  
Chinese Artists' Paintings from Tibet after 1982*

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**Abstract**

Since the 1960s, Tibetan self-government has been established in autonomous areas; there, Tibetans live in compact communities under the unified leadership of the Chinese central government. A number of Chinese artists and scholars have come to work and live in Tibetan cities, in Lhasa in particular.

Against this background, this paper is about contemporary paintings that engaged with the vestiges of Tibet's heritage and made by Chinese artists in Tibet. In this paper, I would take the initial experiment of reshaping the iconography of Tibetan Buddhism by Han Shuli in 1982 as its starting point. This paper examines what Chinese artists have done in the bilingual and bicultural environment of Tibet in the past three decades. It aims to explore the tension between Tibetan and non-Tibetan (mainly Chinese) artists in Lhasa, and the unsettling problem of their cultural identity in between Tibet, the globalised West and China. To its end I hope it also offers a new interpretation of contemporary Tibetan art that created by Tibetan and non-Tibetan artists, which is based on modes of art-making characterised as Tibetan style.

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Since the 1960s, Tibetan self-government has been established in autonomous areas; there, Tibetans live in compact communities under the unified leadership of the Chinese central government. As one of the results of the reform policies by the Chinese central government in 1978, a number of Han Chinese, including Chinese artists and scholars, have come to work and live in Tibetan cities, in Lhasa in particular. Generally speaking, these Chinese artists and scholars have appreciated the great value of Tibetan traditions and endeavored to promote them into a much wider dialogue with Mainland China and the rest of the world. This can be proved by the influential wave of art works produced about the Tibetan people and landscapes by Chinese artists during 1980s and 1990s, such as Chen Danqing's *A Series of Paintings for Tibetans* (1980, fig. 1); Ai Xuan's *Frozen Ground in the Zoige Plateau* (1985, fig. 2); Chen Yifei's *The Wind between the Mountain and the Land* (1994, fig. 3); and Yu Xiaodong's *Cheers, Tibet!* (1996-1997, fig. 4). Since the early 1980s, in their exploration of Tibetan culture, Chinese artists, such as Han Shuli, Ye Youxin and Ye Xingsheng, not only have been inspired by the surface of Tibetan culture, but also have contributed to creating new and diverse Tibetan cultural identities.

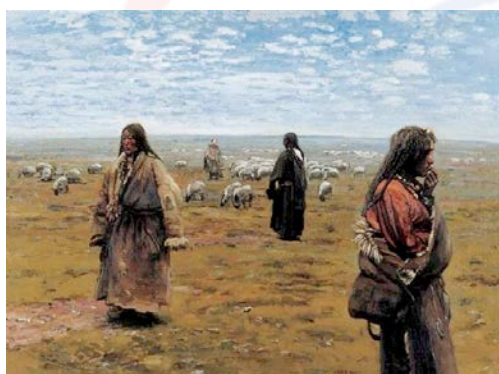


Fig. 1 *A series of paintings for Tibetans*, oil painting by Cheng Danqing, 1980.



Fig. 2 *Frozen Ground in the Zoige Plateau*, oil painting, by Ai Xuan, 1985.

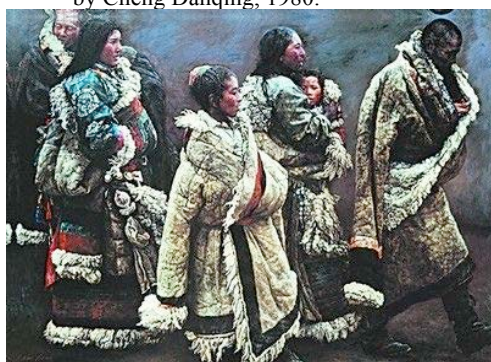


Fig. 3 *The Wind between the Mountain and the Land*, oil painting, by Chen Yifei, 1994.



Fig. 4 *Cheers, Tibet!* Oil painting, Yu Xiaodong, 160X190cm, 1996-1997

This paper is about contemporary paintings engaged with the vestiges of Tibet's heritage and made by Chinese artists in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China. Here, I would take the initial experiment of reshaping the iconography of Tibetan Buddhism by Han Shuli in 1982 as its starting point. In this paper, I mainly select the transnational experiences of some contemporary Chinese artists in seeking to explore the interaction between visual translations and cultures in globalisation. I try to explore the tension between Tibetan and Chinese artists in Lhasa, and the unsettling problem of the trans-cultural identity in between 'the two external forces that



dominate culture in the Tibet Autonomous Region: the globalised West and China' (Harris, 2012: 229). Several key questions inform the focus of this paper:

1. Which artworks by Chinese artists are proposed as exemplars of the use of Tibetan traditional cultures, particularly Tibetan Buddhist themes, in a contemporary framework?
2. What would be the value of the ancient Tibetan tradition for contemporary Chinese artists?
3. Is it possible for Tibetan culture, with its specific vocabulary and visual codes, to be understood by Chinese artists and audiences?
4. How can we appreciate ways in which Chinese artists working on Tibetan themes have influenced and inspired Tibetan contemporary art?

I first provide a brief introduction to the complex contemporary environment of Tibetan art development and the controversial issues on its ethnicity and authenticity at a cross-cultural level. I then analyse some typical examples of the contemporary development of the old Tibetan traditions that done by Chinese artists who have lived and worked in Tibet for decades. In so doing, it is my endeavour to create a broader understanding of one's ethnicity, cultural identity and an essence of Tibetan-ness in contemporary Tibetan art. In this respect, I argue that personal art practice as an experiment may offer an openness that can deal with the encounters between Tibetan art tradition and contemporary art from open, creative, and dynamic perspectives.

Contemporary Tibetan art is constituted by many loose ends and dangling strands that Tibetan artists and some Chinese artists try to tie together between the global players of China, Tibet and the West (Hofer, 2011:1). Influenced by Harris's work, my research on contemporary Tibetan art confronts controversial issues on a cross-cultural level and, in a broad context. Harris's research—being a pioneering study of Tibetan contemporary art since 1959—provides me with insights on the disparity between indigenous, Chinese, and Western assessments of the transformation of Tibetan art from traditional forms to innovative forms. Harris (2012: 208) examines post-1959 Tibetan artworks produced in two parallel but somehow connected worlds: the world of Tibetan painters who remain in a Tibetan autonomous region and the other Tibetan-speaking regions of China, and the world of Tibetan refugee artists living in exile. As Harris (*ibid.*) writes:

Significantly, although artists in each location were forced to reimagine what Tibetan art might be, and did so with very different results, their aim was to generate something that could still be seen as 'authentically' Tibetan.

Yet, from my perspective, the aim of being authentically Tibetan reveals 'utopian and archival representation of their homeland', which can be ambiguous and politicised as facets of cultural diplomacy:

[In the 1980s and 1990s] new paintings from Tibet were construed as ugly deviations from the earlier glories of Tibetan heritage and as evidence of the decline of Tibetan culture under Chinese rule. Art made in Tibet after 1950 was thought to be tainted by association with the People's Republic

(in terms of style, content, and mode of production), and to have lost the distinctive qualities that made it recognizably Tibetan (*ibid.*).

However, the modern and contemporary movement in Tibet during the 1980s was actually an underground activity, a radical protest against the Chinese central government in the political climate of the period. Anti-traditional activist<sup>1</sup> advocates were reforming the dominant (traditional Tibetan and Chinese) thinking in Tibetan society as a contemporary cultural ideology through a gradual de-structuring and restructuring of visual codes and forms within Tibetan art tradition. For example, the renowned Tibetan artist Gonkar Gyatso, who was educated in China (in both the linguistic and aesthetic sense), pioneered a radically modernist form of art to replace the traditional Tibetan art models during 1988 and 1989. He stated that Tibetan artists needed to produce a specifically contemporary Tibetan art, which would be explicitly different from the Chinese (and Western) contemporary art and, to some extent, also engaged actively in a dialogue with mainland China and the rest of the world.

While activism promotes new forms of art from Tibet as aesthetically appealing and exciting innovation, conservatism<sup>2</sup> claims that it has lost the distinctive qualities of Tibetan heritage under Chinese rule [after 1959] (Harris, 2012: 208-209). Some Tibetan artists and scholars not only insist on following the traditional forms of Tibetan culture, but also are opposed to translating and outputting their religious theories and aesthetic traditions to China and the outside world for political, economic or personal reasons.

From my perspective, I think they may overemphasize the so-called uniqueness or authenticity of ancient Tibetan tradition, using this as a strong excuse for rejecting the idea of integrating cultural studies with China and the rest of the world. Although it is understandable that some Tibetans take intense pride in their cultural identity, this may lead to cultural protectionism and a return back to the previous state of self-isolation, which will inevitably cause barriers towards other cultures in the present era of globalization.

Furthermore, the politics of representation and colonialist appropriations of Tibetan cultural artefacts<sup>3</sup> make these conflicts between Contemporary Tibetan people's activism and conservatism more complicated and challenging. Based on an over-romantic view of 'authentic nativeness', the western perspective has developed its own fascination of the myth of the 'Tibet', which makes modern and contemporary Tibetan art unimaginable in the eyes of some Western audiences (Hofer, 2011:1). As Kabir Mansingh Heimsath, a curator of contemporary Tibetan art, observes, there is a conservative stance about the Tibetan art that is 'Tibetan "tradition" has been lost within Tibet itself—so anything genuinely "Tibetan" must necessarily be old, and

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<sup>1</sup> Here, it refers to the action of advocating vigorous reform of Tibetan traditions.

<sup>2</sup> In contrast to activism, conservatism refers to the action of over-protecting Tibetan traditions and opposing any change in them.

<sup>3</sup> The perception of Tibetan culture (including Buddhism and its art) in the West was framed on the Orientalist mode of projecting it as the 'other', see Korom's *Constructing Tibetan Culture* (1997), Dodin and Rather's *Mythos Tibet* (1997) and *Imagining Tibet: Perceptions, Projections and Fantasies* (2001), and Brauen's *Dreamworld Tibet: Western Illusions* (2004), Lopez's *Prisoners of Shangri-la* (1998).

anything new that comes from Tibet itself is not “really” Tibetan’ (Heimsath, 2005: 1).

The greater the conflicts, the more it shows the confusion contemporary artists in Tibet have in their value-orientation. As Harris suggests:

[Activist] Tibetan artists sought to use the idea [of new form of art] ... That is, they sought to dislodge one colonially produced notion of Tibetan distinctiveness—particularly that created ... under the influence of the British—with another kind of uniqueness [now] derived from ... China (*ibid.*: 209).

In response, China has, since the early 2000s, endorsed the production of Tibetan contemporary art as a way of preserving and promoting Tibetan culture. With the financial support from the Chinese government, Han Shuli, who have lived in Tibet for over four decades and become the Chairman of the artists’ Association in Tibet, has organized many tour exhibitions of modern and contemporary paintings from Tibet in Europe since 2001.

Compared to more politically motivated Tibetan artists, these Chinese artists, such as Han Shuli and Ye Xingsheng, care about whether or not spiritual transformation from Tibetan belief and art tradition thousands of years ago are still true or relevant now, and they are asking, through their work, what the relationship between contemporary people (in Tibet) and the inspirations of Tibetan (art) tradition is now, and what it may contain. As Han says in an interview, ‘anybody involves in art cannot resist the mysterious strength and temptation of Tibet and its culture’<sup>4</sup> and he describes his own inner feelings as follows<sup>5</sup>:

[Once I] leave Tibet, I feel like a plant pulled out from its soil and that lives without water ... Let myself be immersed in the beauty hidden in my own culture [here, I refer to Tibetan culture because I regard Tibet as my art birthplace] where I find an appropriate way to express it out—that kind of pleasure and complex feelings of achievement is beyond words can express.



Fig. 5 *The Buddha*, cloth



Fig. 6 *A Buddha and Two Bodhisattvas*,

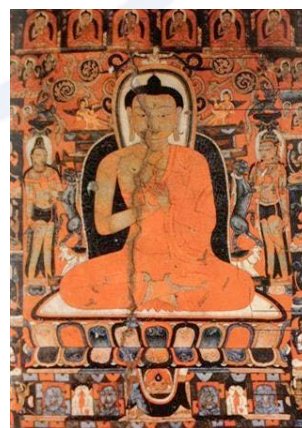


Fig.7 *Sakyamuni*, mural painting,

<sup>4</sup> [http://hanshuli.artron.net/main.php?pFlag=news\\_2&newid=279845&aid=A0001384&columnid=0](http://hanshuli.artron.net/main.php?pFlag=news_2&newid=279845&aid=A0001384&columnid=0) (accessed on 11 September 2012).

<sup>5</sup> <http://hanshuli.artron.net> (accessed on 11 September 2012).

painting, by Han Shuli.

Mural painting on the north wall of the Red Palace ruins in Zanda county, the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century.

A-ji Monastery, 12<sup>th</sup> century, Tibet.



Fig. 8 *The Emptiness No. 1*, cloth painting, 151X101cm, 2004, by Han Shuli.



Fig. 9 *The Emptiness No.2*, cloth painting, 151X101cm, 2004, by Han Shuli.

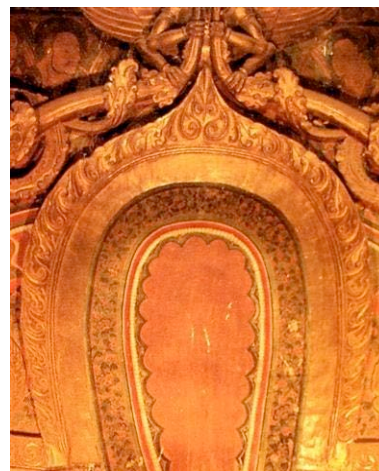


Fig. 10 The remains of the large back-light in the Buddha's Hall of the Zatang Monastery in Tibet.

In order to explore and express the hidden beauty in Tibetan culture, Han Shuli has found inspiration from the ancient Tibetan paintings and sculptures, particularly those of the desolate remains of Guge kingdom, such as Zatang Monastery in western Tibet. For instance, one can see clearly the influence in the composition of his cloth paintings entitled *The Buddha* (fig. 5) that was completed at the end of the 1990s, which is very similar in structure to the mural paintings of the Sakyamuni Buddha in the Red Palace ruins in Zanda County (fig. 6) and in A-ji Monastery of Western Tibet (fig. 7); and the reference of the large backlight of the clay-sculptured figure in the Buddha's Hall of the Zatang Monastery (fig. 8) from his series of cloth paintings entitled *The Emptiness* (*Kong Men* in Chinese, 2004, fig. 9 and 10). The common feature of these three of Han Shuli's paintings during the end of 1990s and 2000s is the encrypted visual vocabulary of the absent Buddha in a kind of style that combined 'dreamy semi-abstract forms' with ancient Tibetan religious images (Heimsath, 2005: 5). From my personal perspective, the fantastical palaces and monasteries that are full of sophisticated mural paintings in the Guge civilization were greatly damaged during the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the 15<sup>th</sup> century for reasons that are unknown and eventually were abandoned in the 17<sup>th</sup> century due to its neighbour the Ladakhi's military campaigns (Yu, 2006: 170-171). Until the archeological investigation in 1980s and 1990s, the precious and magnificent artworks in the remains of Guge Kingdom finally came back into the public gaze after centuries' of silence. The history of the Guge kingdom is somehow paralleled to the modern history of the Tibet from 1960s to 2000s—the Chinese Cultural Revolution during 1966 and 1976 endeavoured to demolish any religious beliefs and many of the objects and art in Tibet and the aesthetic tradition were destroyed and abandoned there until the start of the 1980s. It makes me suspect that it was not coincidental that the visual culture of the Guge in Western Tibet became the inspiration for Han Shuli's paintings in 1990s. In strong contrast to the socialist realist propaganda imagery that were once dominating both China and Tibet during the period between the 1950s and the early 1970s,<sup>6</sup> Han Shuli and his Tibetan

<sup>6</sup> During the 1950s and 1970s, there was the first wave of Tibetan themes in prints and paintings by Chinese artists. These representative works during this period are as follows: *When the Good New of*

and Chinese artist friends, felt at liberty to create images that re-engaged with Tibetan Buddhism and its art. For Han, the statement of the absent Buddha in his paintings may reflect some kind of fusion with Tibetan's cultural identity that was wiped out during the Cultural Revolution. In his artworks Han also reveals his inner personal longing to inherit the Tibetan traditional culture, as with other Tibetan artists. As Harris (2012: 217) states:

It should be acknowledged that this development [of a modernist sensibility among Tibetan artists in Lhasa] was initiated in part by Han Shuli ... he took the iconography of Tibetan Buddhism and reshaped it in ways previously unattempted by Tibetans...Han Shuli's mode of regarding the vestiges of Tibet's heritage proved to be hugely influential on other artists in Lhasa (Both Tibetan and Han). He had paved the way for the imagery of Tibetan Buddhism to be viewed from a secularist perspective, and for its objects to become props for making art.

I therefore suggest that the presence of Han and other Chinese artist in Lhasa positively contributed to reproducing and reviving Tibetan aesthetic traditions through innovation.



Fig. 11 *Red Buddha*, mixed media on cloth, 120X85cm, by Gonkar Gyatso. Photographed by Clare Harris.



Fig. 12 *The Emptiness No. 1*, cloth painting, 151X101cm, 2004, by Han Shuli.

Here, I found another painting entitled *Red Buddha* (1989, fig. 11) which was done by the famous Tibetan contemporary artist Gyatso in Lhasa, that also resonates with Han Shuli's cloth paintings. In this Gyatso's painting, that were influenced by Western modernist art such as cubist forms, he employs the techniques of Chinese traditional ink and water painting that he learned in the Minority Art School in Beijing during 1980's, that were done in order to express a pared down icon of the spiritual leader of the Buddhism, the Buddha, 'into an anonymous apparition'(Harris, 2006: 702). As Harris comments,

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*Liberating Tibet peacefully Arrived the Kangxi Plateau* by Liu Wen and Li Shaoyan (1952), *Outside the Ancient Great Wall* (1954) by Shi Nu, *The Spring Comes to Tibet* (1955) by Dong Xiwen, *In the Heavy Snow* (1955) by Huang Wei, *The First Time Stepped on the Golden Road* (1963) by Li Huanmin, *The Golden Season* by Zhu Naizheng (1963), *The Summer River* (1964) by Ye Qianshu, and *Serf's Daughter goes to University* (1973) by Pan Shixun. Artworks during this period usually adopted metaphorical titles to imply the Chinese socialist orientation in Tibet.

For Gyatso, the ‘Red Buddha’ painting he completed in the late 1980s was a statement about the absence of the Buddha in Tibet and a demonstration of the need to reactive his presence in that place (*ibid.*).

Admittedly, many ideas and models of Tibetan traditional (Buddhist) art seemed to be repressed, abandoned or overlooked as visual codes, which have both theoretical sophistication and critical aesthetic vocabulary in the Tibetan-themed artworks created from the 1950s to the start of the 1980s. It is no wonder that in Harris’s interpretation she regards the painting as a medium that deflects politicised reading in the historical context of Tibet in the 1980s. Nonetheless, I would add one point to supplement Harris’s analysis of Gyatso’s paintings: there is clear evidence of the influence of the Chinese aesthetic tradition, which epitomises Tibetan artists’ concerns about their cultural identity and their engagement in the trans-cultural translation of visual codes between Han Chinese and Tibetan art at that time. That is to say, there is the question of how to develop an aesthetic heritage in contemporary Tibetan art, where both Chinese artists, such as Han Shuli, and Tibetan artists, such as Gyatso, all end up in the same place even though they may take different routes getting there.

Take another outstanding Chinese artist Ye Xingsheng as an example, who was from Sichuan Province and is also the Chairman of the Tibetan Folk art association. In 2003, for his outstanding contribution to the conservation of the old Tibetan tradition and excellent art achievement, Ye was blessed by 480 Tibetan lamas (fig. 13) and conferred to the honorary title of ‘Sera Thekchen Monastery Chuntse’ tagmeme with a gold seal (fig. 14), which was the first time a Chinese artist received such a prestigious honour in Tibeta history.<sup>7</sup> ‘I cannot live without Tibet, and Tibet would remember me as well’, he says in an interview,

Thanks to the Tibetan people for their great creativity in developing such a broad and profound culture, which makes me being so intoxicated for over 40 years.<sup>8</sup>



Fig. 15 *Tashi Delek*, mural painting in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, 450X1800cm.

<sup>7</sup> <http://ent.cctv.com/interview/special/yexinsheng/>(accessed on 11 September 2012).

<sup>8</sup> <http://ent.cctv.com/interview/special/yexinsheng/>(accessed on 11 September 2012).



Fig. 16, 17 and 18 the figures in the centre of the painting are performing the *Guozhuang* dance.

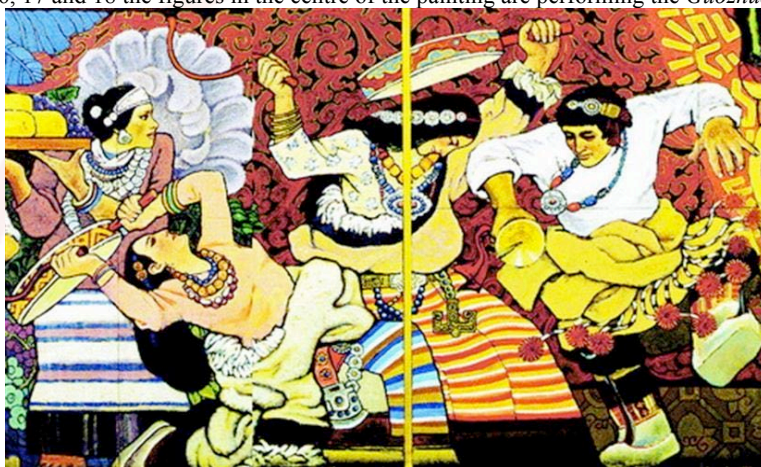


Fig. 19 the figures performing the *Reba* dance.



Fig. 20 the figures on the top of the right side of the mural painting are racing the horse.

Indeed, his love, passion and close relationships to the Tibetan culture is evident from his design of the masterpiece mural painting *Tashi Delek* (1980-1985, fig. 15) seen above and in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. The composition of this giant piece is based on the painter inheriting the traditional forms of the circle and the square used in the *mandala* of Tibetan art. Followed by the rules of the old traditional Tibetan painting, Ye Xingsheng maps out the main lines of orientation, the vertical and the horizontal axes and adopts the symmetric arrangements of 71 figures, 49 animals, and over 100 symbolic objects.<sup>9</sup> From my personal perspective, the artist delicately designed the circle as a variety of patterns of flaming fire and auspicious clouds so that they are intertwined in a round and a square naturally. The contrasts

<sup>9</sup> <http://ent.cctv.com/interview/special/yexinsheng/> (accessed on 11 September 2012).

between the circle and the square, between the curves and the straight lines, make the whole composition well-balanced and harmonious. Also, Ye adopts the methodology and artistry of the *mandala*—‘a sacred space created in the process of transforming the universe from a realm of suffering to a realm of happiness’ (Leidy and Thurman, 1997: 9). Thus, in my own viewpoint, the systematic figural and architectural creation of individuals and communities can be regarded as a new approach for developing the art of the *mandals*, which exalt spaces and reflects ‘a longstanding commitment in ... [Tibetan] Buddhism to world transformation as well as individual liberation’.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, Ye employs decorative techniques and styles to depict the magnificent scenes of the whole process of traditional Tibetan *Losar*.<sup>11</sup> In the centre of the gaint mural painting, many young Tibetan men and women are performing the Khampa Circle (or known as *Guozhuang*) dance (fig. 16-18), one of the three major Tibetan folk dances, which is based around auspicious symbols, such as the head of sheep, the green crops, and a pair of lucky buckets. On the left hand side of the painting, there is a Tibetan woman holding torches in pastoral areas to say farewell to the past year. Surrounding her are various scenes of Tibetan traditional activities that are depicted before the beginning of the new year, such as eating dough drops known as ‘Gutu’, having a bath, carrying water, throwing grains, playing a Tibetan fiddle made of six strings, performing *Reba* (‘the drum and the bell) dance (fig. 19). On the right side of the painting, there is an old Tibetan man is singing *zhega*, one of the oldest door-to-door folk performing arts in Tibet, in the centre and surrounding him, the people are giving each other *hada*, performing a traditional Tibetan opera, horse-racing (fig. 20), drinking the hullessbarley wine and singing songs, and preparing for ploughing in order to welcome the coming new year. The background of the whole piece is the splendid Potala Palace, the snowy mountain and the folating clouds. Confronting this magnificent mural painting, one can see a great number of figures from the children to the old that are portrayed vividly with different characters, gestures and Tibetan costumes in a wide range of traditional activities. Unless the painter was very familiar with customs and the general way of the Tibetan’s thinking and feelings, it would be impossible for him to accurately grasp and design the content of this mural painting. Also unless the artist understood Tibetan culture comprehensively and was able to master the technical aspects of Tibetan painting, it would be too difficult for him to find a way to inherit and develop the traditional form as Ye managed to do in his painting.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://ent.cctv.com/interview/special/yexinsheng/> (accessed on 11 September 2012).

<sup>11</sup> *Losar* means ‘New Year’ in Tibetan.





Fig. 21 *Auspicious Clouds around Potala Palace*, cloth painting by Ye Xingsheng, 1988.

After completing the monumental mural painting, Ye created another influential painting entitled *Auspicious Clouds around Potala Palace* in 1988 (fig. 21). The main body of this painting displays an accurate representation of Tibetan traditional architecture: the Potala Palace in the centre, the beautiful Norbulingka palace on the lower part on the left hand side, the famous Jokhang Monastery and the Alliance Tablet of Tang China and Tibet on the lower right hand side, and the Buddhist white stupas with a gold top in the middle of the bottom. Surrounding them are colourful auspicious clouds depicted in the decorative traditional patterns in Tibetan art. On the upper corners, there is the sun on the right hand side and the moon on the left hand side among the clouds. As it well-known in Tibet, the sun and the moon are usually depicted above the main deity on the upper part of traditional *thangka* or wall painting in Tibet, representing the wisdom of the female and compassion of the males respectively. Here, Ye inherits these traditional Tibetan symbols and their symbolic meanings in order to refer to the unity, harmony and balance of Tibetan society that he sees today. In the distant background of the painting, there is the Dragon King Lake, the grassland and the rivers, and the snowy mountains. The whole composition comprises three parts: the background area, the middle-body area, and the front area, which may sound similar to the linear perspective that was used by the Renaissance artists in the West. However, in fact Ye Xingsheng breaks out of the illusion of three-dimensional space and the rules of the linear perspective in this painting and layouts the content of various Tibetan architecture and landscape in accordance with the rules of traditional Tibetan paintings that arrange the content orderly and symmetrically together on a rather flat surface.

Before I move on, there are two notes that I notice in this painting. The first note is that Ye employs the traditional mineral pigments and dyes in Tibet, such as the azurite blue, lapis lazuli, minium, cinnabar, *ka rag* (earth white), and carbon black, that have better stability and more resistance to both the light and the damp. He also follows the common method and process of applying colours and outlines of traditional Tibetan painting. Another interesting note is that there is a flock of 21 black-neck white cranes with various gestures that forms incomplete round shapes in front of the Potala Palace. As far as I know, black-necked cranes are an endangered species as precious as pandas, usually found on the Tibetan Plateau and parts of India and Bhutan. Every year, thousands of cranes fly to the Yarlung valleys on the Tibetan

Plateau to spend the winter. Because of their incorruptible temperament, beautiful appearance, elegant movements and long life span, the Tibetans love black-necked cranes very much, deeming them as symbols of wisdom, auspiciousness, nobility and longevity.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, in Chinese legends and Chinese traditional art, the crane is also one of the most popular auspicious symbols and is often called the ‘blessed’ or ‘heavenly’ crane, which is probably because Taoists believed that their highly-ranked priests would ‘turn into a feathered crane’ or ‘fly on a crane and become immortal’ when they pass away in ancient China. With regards to their common adoration in the cranes, it is unclear whether there is any connection or influence in their symbolic manifestations between the Tibetan and Chinese culture. Yet, what one can see clearly is that both Tibetan and Chinese artists have introduced the cranes as an auspicious symbol into their traditional paintings since the ancient times. Ye is probably the first contemporary Chinese artist to paint the symbol of the cranes in his Tibetan-themed paintings at the end of 1970s, which in turn influenced some other Chinese painters in Tibet. For example, the symbol of the cranes also appears in Yu Youxin’s paintings entitled *The Floating Clouds and the Wild Cranes* (1980s, fig. 22) and *Flying over the Empty Valley* (1996, fig. 23), and Han’s Chinese painting *Longevity* (2003, fig. 24) and illustrations *Flowers of the Grassland* (1982, fig. 25 and 26). Also, in Ye’s recent artworks, he repeatedly paints the cranes as a symbol of Tibetan cultural identity, such as his cloth painting entitled *The Heaven* (2005, fig. 27) and mural painting known as *The Inventor of the Tibetan Script—Thonmi Sambhota* (2011, fig. 28) in the centre hall of the research centre of Tibetan studies.



Fig. 22 *The Floating Clouds and the Wild Cranes*, cloth painting by Yu Youxin, 1980s.



Fig. 23 *Flying over the Empty Valley*, cloth painting by Yu Youxin, 1996.



Fig. 24 *Longevity*, Chinese Painting by Han Shuli, 2003.



Fig. 25 and 26 *Flowers of the Grassland (BangJin Meiduo)*, illustrations, by Han Shuli, 1982



<sup>12</sup> <http://2007.tibetmagazine.net/en/cranep.htm> (accessed on 11 September 2012).



Fig. 27 *Tian Jie (The Heaven)*, cloth painting, by Ye, 2005.



Fig. 28 *The Inventor of the Tibetan Script—Thonmi Sambhota*, painting, by Ye Shengxing, 199X360cm, 2011.

In Ye's painting entitled *The Inventor of the Tibetan Script—Thonmi Sambhota*, Ye combines the old Tibetan aesthetic tradition and a more modern realistic method of painting, which integrates successfully the mysterious visual languages and forms from ancient times into the artistic tastes of our contemporary life. In the centre of the painting, there is *Thonmi Sambhota*, one of the seven great ministers at the King Songtsen Gampo's court during the first half of the seventh century, who also invented the writing system of the Tibetan language on the basis of the Indian alphabets and scripts (Schaik, 2011: 12). The figure wears a red top hat, a patterned red Tibetan robe with a white long vast, and holds Buddhist scriptures with two hands and walks forward from the rays of bright sunlight. When the artist depicts the parts of the figure's face and hands, he adopts realistic Western drawing techniques of highlighting the light and shade of the objects in order to create a three-dimensional and real effect of the flesh. The other arrangements of the painting are as follows: Karmapa palace, which is used for translating the Indian Buddhist texts into Tibetan, is drawn on the left part of the painting. Underneath it, there are thirty different Tibetan characters written on a colourful tablet that fill the middle on the left side, which makes the whole painting appear somehow post-modern in style. The Nyemo County in the west of Lhasa, the birthplace of *Thonmi Sambhota* is drawn at the bottom of the left hand side. Some stationery materials, such as the Tibetan writing tablet, ink stand, and brushes, that are depicted in the middle part of the right side; and Johang monastery and the alliance monument are located on the lower part of the right side.

In summary, my research is on the input that Chinese artists have given to contemporary Tibetan art and the sense of trans-cultural belongings that these Chinese artists have developed in their artworks and personal lives in the past decades. In a positive sense, it is no exaggeration to state that the ideas, models and visual codes coming from Tibetan culture influenced many Chinese artists, which were later assimilated into Chinese culture and contemporary art. During the period from the late 1980s to the 1990s, new and diverse Tibetan cultural identities were created with contributions made by Chinese artists, in their exploration of Tibetan culture. This was probably due to these works' presentation of various signature styles of contemporary Tibetan art that were in parallel to the scholastic need to correct the outdated over-romantic view of Tibet in the West. As a Western audience comments on Han's painting, he says:

From your artwork, I feel that the Tibetan aesthetic tradition and religious freedom are not to be stifled by the Chinese in Tibet as I often heard from the media. In fact, I see the progress of developing the Tibetan culture. I can see your fascination for Tibet and its culture not only is love in its general sense, but also the most profound sincerity, modesty, love and compassion in the bottom of your heart, which manifest in the figures and objects in your Tibetan-themed painting.<sup>13</sup>

In these outstanding Tibetan-themed artworks as I discussed above, Chinese artists put their affection and subjective understanding of Tibet and its culture into the visual landscape and the figures that they depicted, which not only display the spirit of the Tibetans, but also reveal their own aesthetic tastes and individual's deep inner longings. Here, I suggest that it is not one's ethnicity that confers an essence of Tibetan-ness or an intimate relationship with Tibetan art traditions.<sup>14</sup> In a complex contemporary environment, the emphasis on individualistic persona rather than one's ethnicity and nationality is a creative strategy: 'a tactic designed to deflate essentializing constructions of Tibetan-ness imposed on them from outside as well as a method for resisting politicized readings of their work' (Harris, 2012: 234). As postmodern theories of transnational translation go beyond issues of uniqueness and authenticity on a traditional cultural level,<sup>15</sup> my research focus in this paper shifts from studying Tibetan art as specifically Tibetan, to studying it as a set of potential strategies latent within personal journeys in creating the sense of trans-cultural belonging.

To its end I hope it will offer a new interpretation of contemporary Tibetan art based on modes of art-making characterised as Tibetan style, as opposed to a more readily suggestion by some politically motivated Tibetans that 'Tibetan contemporary art can only be created *by* Tibetans' (*ibid.*: 228). On the one hand, these artworks done by Chinese artists in Tibet display the spirit of the Tibetans; this is beyond the territorial boundaries of ethnicity. On the other hand, these artworks also reveal their aesthetic tastes and an individual's deep inner longings. can be regarded as a specific cultural product translating techniques and ideas and depicting images of Tibet in global communication.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://hanshuli.artron.net> (accessed on 11 September 2012).

<sup>14</sup> Some radical Tibetan artists (such as Gyatso) believe 'ethnicity fundamentally determined style' and therefore insist that Tibetan artist are the only ones can create an authentic Tibetan type of art (Harris, 2012: 227-228).

<sup>15</sup> Based on Wang Ning and Sun Yifeng's analyses of contemporary translators' approaches to 'cultural translation' that 'localized' western theories in the Chinese context in a post-colonial era or vice versa, they conclude that cross-cultural dialogue can be carried more pragmatically and ideologically, especially in the field of art through various individual artist's experimental exploration. (Wang and Sun, 2008: 26)

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***Intercultural Awareness and Competence: Cultural Differences and Challenges among International Students in a Private Malaysian University***

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**Abstract**

In the past, almost the whole university student population in Malaysia comprised three major ethnic groups, namely Malays, Chinese and Indians as well as other minorities. The make-up of the student population has evolved dramatically and it is common to see students of other cultures in private campuses throughout the country. Tolerance will be a major obstacle until not only each national but the greater student population become more accepting and accommodating. Western literature on intercultural competence abounds, however there are few studies in the local context done on this topic.

There is a need to explore and investigate the awareness of intercultural competence of these foreign students in a private Malaysian University in order to understand the pedagogic implications and the measures to be taken by the university. Therefore, the key questions for the study are: How do foreign students in this private university cope with the cultural differences and challenges? And what competences do they have and need, other than the English language as lingua franca? A large scale study was beyond the scope of this paper; therefore, an exploratory study was done with a small, convenient sample of international students in the university. It was the intent that through this study, issues related to awareness of cultural others and the students' own intercultural competence would surface for further direction and a large scale study. The implication of the findings for understanding the awareness of intercultural competence among students in this private university is discussed.

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## **Introduction**

In recent years, Malaysia has seen exponential growth in the number of international students. In the past, almost the whole university student population in Malaysia comprised three major ethnic groups, namely Malays, Indians and Chinese, as well as other minorities. From the 1990s, the make-up of the student population evolved dramatically and it is now common to see students of different cultures in campuses throughout the country. These students bring with them not only different ways of thinking and behaving but also diverse cultural idiosyncrasies.

It is increasingly common to find students from Oman, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Korea, China, and Mongolia in the Malaysian classrooms. There are 4,000 students from over 90 countries in Sunway University, Malaysia. Increasingly, students have significant contact with individuals coming from different backgrounds from their own. The encounters experienced by many of these students are witnessed in increasing frequency, so too the desire by these foreign students to hold on to their cultural identity. This is seen in the emergence of national clubs of every nations and events such as cultural nights to celebrate their unique differences. All parties must be prepared for any kinds of intercultural interactions they are bound to encounter in and out of campus, whether enriching experience or otherwise.

## **Purpose of Study**

There is a need to explore and examine the awareness of intercultural competence of these students in Sunway University in order to understand the pedagogic implications and the measures to be taken by the university. Much needed and increasingly important due to the recent development on the campus, a check reveals that Western literature on intercultural competence abounds, however, very few significant studies in the local context on this topic exist. A large-scale study is beyond the scope of this paper; therefore, an exploratory study was done with a small sample of international students. The aim of this study is to explore and examine intercultural competence in this context.

## **Research Questions**

Therefore, the key questions for this study are: How do foreign students cope with the cultural differences and challenges? Do they have the competence to do so? More importantly, are they aware of their own intercultural competence?

It is hoped that through this study, issues related to intercultural awareness and competence will surface for further direction and study. First, this paper examines the theoretical underpinnings that inform the study. Next, the methodology and the design of the study are presented and subsequently, the findings are discussed. Finally, a conclusion is drawn.

## **Literature review**

It is widely accepted that to be a leader, one needs to be not only charismatic but to have skills, especially people skills, or better defined as intercultural communication competence. How can young people — leaders of tomorrow — develop these skills? As noted by Deardorff (2009), to be able to think interculturally, to know the products of a culture such as music, history and language, or having an intercultural experience is not enough for a person to develop intercultural competence. Citing Savicki (2008),



she concurs that other than “building authentic relationship”, respect and trust and adequate preparation are needed for intercultural competence development prior to working or studying abroad.

From another perspective, Kim opines that preparation can be acquired through “acculturation” (Kim, 1988, 2001, 2005a), which is the acquisition of new cultural practices whereby one doesn’t have to leave home to experience the phenomenon. He suggests that a person can come into contact with foreigners in his country and through the Internet, he is exposed to other cultures. This is now made possible with globalisation. However, he argues that even with intercultural contacts and exposures, acculturative learning will not occur automatically or randomly. Previous internal conditions do not simply happen with the additions of new cultural elements but it is a process in which an individual has control. If, for example, a person wishes to engage in an intercultural dialogue, he needs to be in an intercultural society and have intercultural competence, an inevitably position most foreign students find themselves in.

Intercultural competence is in the attitude of the person interacting with people of another culture, with a willingness to suspend one’s own ethnocentrism, stereotyping and prejudice (Byram, Barrett, Ipgrave, Jackson and del Carmen Garcia, 2009; Deardorff, 2009). Further, the problem of ethnocentrism, stereotyping and prejudice is a worldwide problem. Overcoming ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, and racism requires a commitment both to learning about other cultures and to understanding one’s own. This is because they are so familiar and comfortable and overcoming them can be a serious challenge. A willingness not to prejudge is necessary in exploring various cultural experiences and an ability to behave appropriately and effectively with culturally different others, without invoking prejudiced and stereotyped assumptions are required (Hall, 2002).

To handle the pressing but potentially inflammatory issues of prejudice and discrimination in a manner that is both appropriate and effective is the challenge for interculturally competent communicators. Biases can impede the development of intercultural competence. No one can completely overcome the obstacles to intercultural competence that naturally exists but the requisite knowledge, motivation, and skill can help minimise the negative effects of prejudice and discrimination (Lustig and Koester, 2013).

As cited by Hall, according to William Sumner, ethnocentrism refers to the view that “one’s own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it”. Hall concluded that ethnocentrism is when we are intolerant of differences, indifferent to others’ concerns and when one avoids interacting with others. While this may be true, other studies argue on a totally different aspect of a person. They focus on the area of a person’s identity stating that identity plays an important role in successful intercultural engagement. The more secure one feels in his or her identity, the better the degree of adaptability, flexibility and cultural empathy (Kim, 2009). Many studies have shown that identity is often juxtaposed with the other cultural group. Identifying oneself through in-group/out-group, a natural human tendency is a great influence in intercultural conflicts and development (Ting-Toomey, 2009; Kim 2009).

### **Intercultural Competence defined**

While this may be so, Deardorff opines that to assess intercultural competence, we must first define the concept. She asserts that it is a complex construct that involves more than one component. Her study reveals that there are multiple definitions of the concept from the intercultural field as well as from the academic disciplines. Many scholars have made various attempts at defining the concept with varying degree of acceptance and success. Simply put, intercultural communication is the interaction between people who speak different languages and intercultural communication competence is how well they interact or communicate (Lustig and Koester, 2013). However, intercultural communication competences are expressed more comprehensively as the five *savoirs* by Byram (1997). This definition is deemed most appropriate and found to be the most suitable one for this study.

The competences are expressed as *savoir être* (attitudes – curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own); *savoirs* (knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction); *savoir comprendre* (skills of interpreting and relating: to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and to relate it to documents from one's own); *savoir apprendre/faire* (skills of discovery and interaction: ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction) and *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness/political education: to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries).

Byram further opines that intercultural is an activity which involves affective as well as cognitive and behavioural issues, as indicated in the extract above. In addition, Byram et al (2009) redefine intercultural competence as the ability to be aware and to recognise other people's identities, to accept and deal with ambiguity constructively, to empathise, to have communicative awareness in order to negotiate rules appropriate for intercultural communication, to have knowledge of social processes, to own skills of interpreting an event and relating it to events from one's own culture, skills of discovering new knowledge of cultural practices, to be able to evaluate critically one's own and other cultures perspectives and practices and lastly, to undertake willingly some activity alone or with others in order to make a contribution to the common good.

What about the field of education? Can education or the university help young people develop these competencies? According to Cushner and Mahon (2009), there is no blueprint for building intercultural competence. Although in education there have been attempts to address society's changing needs and even as international diversity has been increasingly embraced by higher education, concepts related to intercultural understanding and competence remain on the fringe of the institutional mission. Is this the case with Sunway University?

Turner (2007) concurs with Murphy & Ivinson that universities exist as both local and international entities as their participants move within social and educational contexts. And intercultural integration will not provide an educational solution for classroom

inequalities, let alone encourage the development of global perspectives among students unless it is purposively managed. It is the intent of the author that this small study will lead to it. Berg and Paige (2009), quoting Lou and Bosley, recognise that forced immersion in another culture is necessary, though not sufficient, condition for achieving “the transformative experiential learning potential”. Further they assert that “cultural mentoring” which facilitates the development of intercultural competence among students is the sufficient condition.

Local students in Sunway University find the international population very appealing as it helps prepare them for an overseas education in the future. Some foreign students appreciate that the college looks after the welfare of the international students. Upon arrival, they are picked up at the airport, provided with quality accommodation and given free counselling. The international student office organises trips, clubs, activities and helps the students in getting along with each other. It also helps in providing practical information such as banking and shopping for daily needs ([www.studymalaysia.com/where/profile.php?code=sunway](http://www.studymalaysia.com/where/profile.php?code=sunway)).

Granted there are some efforts made to help students adjust to the local environment culture mentoring; however, there is largely a lack of integrated holistic effort by the university to identify and develop students’ intercultural communication. For example, there are no studies done to measure the effectiveness of its larger strategies and efforts in this area. Therefore, this exploratory study, through a preliminary assessment of a small sample of its international student body, serves as a starting point to address the deficiencies.

### **Methodology**

Defining and measuring students’ intercultural competence enables a university to gauge its success in internationalisation strategies (Deardoff, 2009). There is no shortage of instruments or methodologies for assessing intercultural competence. These are discussed in some details by Fantini, A.E. & Smith, E. M. (1997), Deardorff (2006), Holmes & O’Neill (2010), and Van de Vijver, F.J.R. & Kwok, L. (2009) and as exemplified by Hammer, M. R. (2008); however, the instrument selected to assess the students’ awareness and competence is the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE) developed for the Council of Europe by Byram et al. (2009).

The Autobiography had been expressly designed to encourage and foster cognitive competences such as interpretation, explanation and relation of cultural information, and the critical evaluation of the perspectives, practices and products of different cultural groups. These cognitive competences are necessary to engage effectively with the cultural other and to appreciate the value and benefits of living within culturally diverse societies. The Autobiography not only offers a framework for an awareness of the individual’s intercultural competence, it also provides space and time for reflection as the subjects work on their journal.

I do not claim that it is the only or the best instrument available but under the circumstances, I feel that it is the most appropriate one for this study. The Autobiography’s comprehensive framework was found to be in line with the objective of my study and largely level appropriate for my participants. The questions are thought provoking but framed at a level in which the participants could understand and engage in.

At this point, we are only interested in the relationship and response of the participants to the study. The students were required to journal an encounter that has impacted and challenged their own understanding of intercultural competency. Since intercultural competence is reflected in the way we tell our stories, the Autobiography attempts to evaluate the student's position towards intercultural competence by exploring the way each tells the narrative of his or her encounter. Questions in the Autobiography are designed to create self-awareness of the participant and awareness of the cultural other; and explore the participants' experience with their cultural other in their encounters. In this study, we seek to evaluate not only the facts but the manner and style in which subjects tell their stories.

### **Sampling**

For this exploratory study, purposive sampling was chosen. The reason is that the sample would be representative of the student body in Sunway University and it was felt that this method of sampling was the best under the circumstance. Admittedly, there will be differences between the sample and the population however insignificant and incidental (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). Information on the demographics and other characteristics of the participants will be revealed as the study unfolds. Students of both genders from undergraduate and pre-university programmes were recruited for the study. These students were invited to participate if they meet the criteria, the first of which is that they come from a homogeneous background. The second criterion is that they must have a level of proficiency in the English language (at least an IELTS band 5) in order to communicate their encounter through journaling. Lastly, they must be students of Sunway University.

Two Indonesians, one Kazakh and one Iranian were recruited. Two Malaysians were included as it was felt that their encounter with an international other would enrich the study. However, the paper will focus on the international students due to space constraint. The students were each provided with a copy of the Autobiography and given a time frame of two weeks to complete the Autobiography. The journals were then collected for evaluation and analysis. A summary of the findings in the form of tabulation is included in Appendix 1. Some of the questions framed in the Autobiography are: How would you define yourself? When did you have this encounter? How has this encounter changed you? Will you decide to do something as a result of doing this Autobiography? These questions took the participants through self-awareness before and after an encounter and self-reflection of their intercultural engagement. The Autobiography also challenged them to do something positive in an intercultural encounter in the future. Some of the findings are discussed in the next section. In this early study, expecting more than the participants' self-awareness of their intercultural competence would be unrealistic. However, there are serendipitous moments, as evidenced in the encounters below.

### **Findings**

#### **Encounter 1 — Different yet similar**

It is generally agreed that the study of at least one other language is extraordinarily useful in understanding the role of differences in verbal codes in intercultural communication. It also teaches much about the culture of those who use it and the categories of experience the language can create (Lustig and Koester, 2013).

However, Deardorff asserts that language does not guarantee intercultural competence. It appears to resonate in this encounter.

Back home, Margaretha uses the Indonesian language even with her Indonesian friends who speak English. She realised her lack of proficiency in the English language when she first came to pursue her foundation studies in Malaysia. From her perspective, her Malaysian classmates appeared to be more proficient and comfortable with the language than her (*savoir apprendre*). “English is not my mother tongue, whereas for Malaysian English is just one of another daily language. This is the first time I realised that English is my primary language here after I touched down in Malaysia”[sic].

Her classmates treated her like a Malaysian and for them to accept her indicates their tolerance and respect as they engaged in intercultural dialogue (*savoir s’engager*). “I thought I still needed to learn a lot in communicating in English [sic] but they thought I was quite good enough.”

Stereotype inaccuracy can lead to errors in interpretations and expectations about the behaviours of others. In this case, interpretation errors occur because stereotypes are used by Margaretha not only to categorise specific individuals and events but also to judge them resulting in inaccurate labels for a group of people (Malaysians), which are then used to interpret subsequent ambiguous events and experiences involving members of those groups (Lustig and Koester, 2013 p 142).

Journaling her encounter made Margaretha more aware of her lack of social confidence, and more appreciative of the fact that her host culture was not too different from her own (*savoir s’engager*). She observes that “Bahasa Malaysia (BM) and Indonesian are very similar to each other so sometimes it helps if we couldn’t explain our mind in English”. Through the encounter, she is aware that she has grown and matured as a person as a result of being in a different environment. She also realises her need to improve her proficiency of the English language for better communication which in turn will help her to get out of her comfort zone. She had equated her lack of social confidence to her lack of English proficiency (*savoir comprendre*).

### **Encounter 2 — Ability to ‘decentre’**

This participant exhibits *savoir être* as he was open and curious about the cultural other in his encounter. Nico is an outgoing, friendly Indonesian male who has friends from every nation. He finds other cultures interesting and enjoys the friendship of people from different cultures. An individual who adopts a pluricultural orientation is better adapted, both psychologically and socioculturally (Byram et al., 2009). Although he appears to have a positive attitude and an appreciation of ‘the other’, which should have reduced the need for toleration, this encounter was an eye-opener for him.

In the course of a casual conversation, Nico and his friends discovered that their mutual friends, an African couple, had been keeping their relationship a secret. Nico discovered, to his amazement, that to keep a boy-girl relationship a secret from people close to them is accordance to African culture. This was baffling for him as it is completely different in the Indonesian culture (*savoirs*).

Nico grew up in a close-knit Indonesian family. In his culture, once you are in a relationship, you share your happiness with others. Through his reflection in his journal, he discovered awareness of self and knowledge of practices in his own country. He was also willing to suspend disbelief about another culture and belief in his decision to do something as a result of this experience: “I did ask them personally and no need to expose their relationship” [sic]; and he could recognise the difference between both cultures “It is quite interesting and funny about African culture, about boy-girl relationship” [sic] (*savoir s’engager*).

This encounter has taught him to respect another culture and it has inspired him to want to write about other cultural differences he faces in other encounters. His journal showed that he had the ability to ‘decentre’ and to acquire new knowledge of his cultural others leading to *savoir apprendre/faire*. In this respect, Nico has intercultural competence as he had the ability to be aware and to recognise other people’s identities, to accept and to deal with ambiguity constructively and to have communicative awareness in order to negotiate rules appropriate for intercultural communication (Byram et al., 2009),

### **Encounter 3 — Cultural ‘adept’ with a prejudice.**

*Savoir s’engager* is clearly seen in the subject in this next encounter. Bayan is a male student who comes from Kazakhstan. Bayan’s encounter took place during a travel to Tarsus with a friend. His friend suggested visiting an Arab acquaintance. Bayan was so impressed with this Syrian Arab who showed gentleness, generosity and hospitality to them although they were total strangers. The Arab expressed surprise at Bayan and his friend’s ability and proficiency of the Arabic language. “They probably hadn’t met anyone from Kazakhstan before me so it was an unusual experience for them to talk in their own language to a stranger, taking into account that Arabic is losing its popularity [sic],” observes Bayan.

He exhibits cultural and political awareness and knowledge or *savoir s’engager*. “They were surprised to meet two fluent Kazakhs and Arabic and to talk frankly about the political and economic situation which was a taboo in Syria” [sic]. He is able to evaluate his encounter and time with his cultural other critically (*savoir apprendre/faire*), “I was too frank in my communication with them, and I had to restrain myself in order not to get into trouble, they had to adjust to more literary language and speak more coherently” [sic] and “they must be taught to be respectful to strangers whatever their opinions/visions [sic] are”.

Bayan’s observation that this man was not a “typical ignorant Arab” reveals ethnocentrism, stereotype and prejudice about Arabs in general without him even realising it. Prejudiced attitudes include irrational feelings of dislike and even hatred for certain groups, biased perceptions and beliefs about the group members that are not based on direct experiences and first-hand knowledge, and a readiness to behave in negative and unjust ways toward member of the group (Lustig and Koester, 2013). Similarly, Allport (1954) argues that prejudiced people ignore evidence that is inconsistent with their biased viewpoint, or they distort the evidence to fit their prejudices. In his writing of the nature of prejudice, he explains that by virtue of kinship, an individual not only becomes the victim of whatever prejudice is directed

against his primary caregivers, the individual also takes on the prejudices of those primary caregivers. This might explain Bayam's prejudice.

On the other hand, he displays *savoir comprendre* in his observation that the culture of hospitality is common to both cultures — Kazakh and Syrian Arab. "For example, I wanted to know why they were so hospitable to us, strangers. I compared this aspect to our own, according to our customs, any guest is a sign of bliss and whenever a guest comes, a family can't reject and must always be hospitable" [sic].

The encounter has taught him to respect others and to treat strangers in a foreign country hospitably. From his journal, Bayan expressed confidence and an awareness of a high level of interculturality in "that he has matured and can be a respected guest of anyone in any country". Ironically, with all his prejudices and ethnocentrism, he considers himself highly competent interculturally.

#### **Encounter 4 — Cultural faux pas and confusion**

The last participant, Hamid, an Iranian appears to have a lack of *savoirs* and an identity crisis. He reported an encounter while working in Iran about three years ago. In the Iranian culture, men greet each other with a kiss to the cheeks the second time they meet as a mark of respect. Not knowing that it is not acceptable in the European context, Hamid greeted his German clients with a kiss. It was a shocking moment for everyone at the meeting, including four of his colleagues. In his confusion and to cover up his *faux pas*, he pretended nothing had happened. In his reflections, Hamid says that this was his first contact with foreigners. He confessed that at that time he didn't understand other cultures.

Clearly, although ethnocentrism had not resulted in any damaging conflict (Hall, 2002), it was used by Hamid as his reference in this context. He had honestly thought that greeting both genders with a kiss was socially acceptable even in the Western context. Although he was embarrassed by the encounter, he was able to self-reflect through journaling. This shows a certain *savoir s'engager* as he felt challenged and was encouraged to learn more about other cultures.

As Kim (2009) argues, the more secure one feels in his identity, the better the degree of adaptability and cultural empathy. Many studies have shown that identity is often juxtaposed with the other cultural group. Identifying oneself through in-group/out-group, a natural human tendency is a great influence in intercultural conflicts and development (Ting-Toomey 2009, Kim 2009). Clearly, it is lacking in this encounter.

#### **Discussion**

The discussion revolves around the objectives of the study: to explore and examine the awareness of intercultural competence of these students in Sunway University in order to understand the pedagogic implications and the measures to be taken by the university.

In light of this, three definable patterns have emerged from this study. This includes

- a need for students to discover and be aware of self first,
- the students' discovery of the cultural other and their idiosyncrasies, and
- the students' discovery of their own vulnerability and a new level of awareness of their own intercultural competence and development.

Some other important points that should be mentioned include:

- Self-perception of intercultural competence is different from the reality as captured in some of the encounters.
- Whether you come from a mono or pluricultural/multicultural background is no guarantee of immunity from prejudice, stereotyping or the challenges of an encounter.
- Surprisingly, the international students from homogenous background seemed to fare better than the Malaysian students in their encounters. This could be explained by the fact that international students have certain expectations, however limited before they go abroad. To some extent, this forced immersion has prepared them for new encounters, though it appears to be inadequate.
- The Autobiography has helped all participants to be more aware of themselves and their level of intercultural competencies. One of the key objectives of the study was to explore the cultural awareness of the students. This study has helped to achieve this goal. Although intercultural communication can be learned from lectures, textbooks and research articles, direct involvement in an encounter or experiential learning, is more impactful (Campbell & Li, 2008).
- The Autobiography has helped them to focus on their own ethnocentrism and brought self-awareness of their stereotyping and prejudices. In Encounter 3, although the participant believes himself to be open-minded and non-judgemental, ethnocentrism and his prejudice are obvious. His identity, as expressed in his race, faith, values and where he comes from is important to him (Kim, 2009; Deardorff, 2009) and so he gets upset about “the ignorance and stereotyping of other races”. Experiential learning requires self-reflection (Holmes & O’Neill, 2010; Kolb, 1984). Through reflection, students in the study achieved self-awareness and increased sensitivity to differences (Gu & Maley, 2008).
- Through it, their beliefs were challenges in one way or another if not turned on its head, and all walked away from the experience changed for the better. This study helped students to challenge their ethnocentrism and stereotypes, increase their cultural awareness and expand their worldviews. This led to a better understanding and appreciation of cultural differences. However, this is just the beginning.
- The interest in the study expressed by some of the students indicates there is a need for more study of this nature.

## Conclusions

The study reveals an interesting mix of response from the international students — each narrative as unique, diverse and complex as each character. Surprisingly, Malaysians, who come from a multi-cultural environment, faced struggles in their encounters, too. This indicates that challenges from intercultural encounters are to be expected regardless of one’s cultural background or heritage and whether one comes from monocultural or pluricultural/multicultural environment.

The study shows that whatever background a person comes from, in order to engage in intercultural dialogue effectively, he or she must have most, if not all, intercultural competencies. The framework in the Autobiography was helpful in directing the student’s focus to their own intercultural competence. Arguably, there is a clear need



for intercultural competence awareness and development among the students — and possibly the educators — in Sunway University. There is clear evidence these Sunway University students have intercultural competence but at different levels. There appears to be acculturation among some students, which is hardly surprising. Turner observes that although social benefits may arise from student integration, there is a need to explore and establish what is meant and what might be achieved from integrating learner.

### **Implications for teachers**

As educators, knowing that students learn intercultural competence through experiential understanding, using a constructivist approach to teaching will have a greater impact than a behaviourist style of teaching.

It is believed that this small study will benefit teachers with international students under them, and other who wish to engage with intercultural competence, whether personally, socially or academically for better management of intercultural encounters. A further study on a bigger scale may be explored such as a bigger sampling of international students from more diverse countries. It is also recommended that a face-to-face interview of individuals be done to clarify any incoherent or confusing issues in addition to a longitudinal ethnography study for a more comprehensive study.

### **Implications for Sunway University**

The university's internationalisation, through its vision of being the 'Harvard of the East', has resulted in the introduction of prestigious programmes such as Le Cordon Bleu and partnership with renowned schools such as the Manchester Business School. Other than providing programmes of international standard, there is a clear need for the university to actively address the intercultural competence of its student population. This could be done through a large-scale survey using the Autobiography framework or other similar surveys as a starting point to determine the level and needs of international students and using the study to incorporate purposeful programmes in the curriculum for international education. It is hoped that this study will be the starting point for many other studies.

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## APPENDIX 1

## SUMMARY OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

	<b>ENCOUNTER 1</b>	<b>ENCOUNTER 2</b>
Name	Margaretha	Nico Fernando
Age [gender]	19 years old [F]	19 years old [M]
Nationality	Indonesian [Chinese-Javanese]	Indonesian Chinese
Language spoken	Javanese, Bahasa Indonesia	B. Indonesia, English
Title of encounter	When English is my daily language	BGR-Intercultural Exchange
Where? Encounter	Sunway university	Christian Fellowship meeting
When?	Foundation year - July 2010	After dinner 29 Sept 2011
Who with?	Pre-University coursemates	2 Africans at Christians fellowship
Changes after Encounter	Learnt to get out from comfort zone/to be more open-minded to improve communication in English	Felt maybe he should have asked them personally instead of wrongly judging them
	<b>ENCOUNTER 3</b>	<b>ENCOUNTER 4</b>
Name	Bayan	Hamid
Age [gender]	18 years old [M]	29 years old [M]
Nationality	Kazakhstan	Iran
Language spoken	Kazakh, Arabic, English	Farsi, Arabic, Turkish, English
Title of encounter	Generous Arab	Men kissing
Where? Encounter	Tarsus on a holiday	Iran - office
When?	Summer 2009	2008
Who with?	Muslim Syrian Arab	2 German businessmen
Changes after Encounter	Will act differently towards strangers in a foreign country/ Sure that he can be a respected guest in any country	Tried to learn more about different cultures [business point of view] Will read about business etiquette in other cultures

***Frontiers in Google Maps:  
Commodification and territory in the borderlands***

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Official Conference Proceedings  
0055

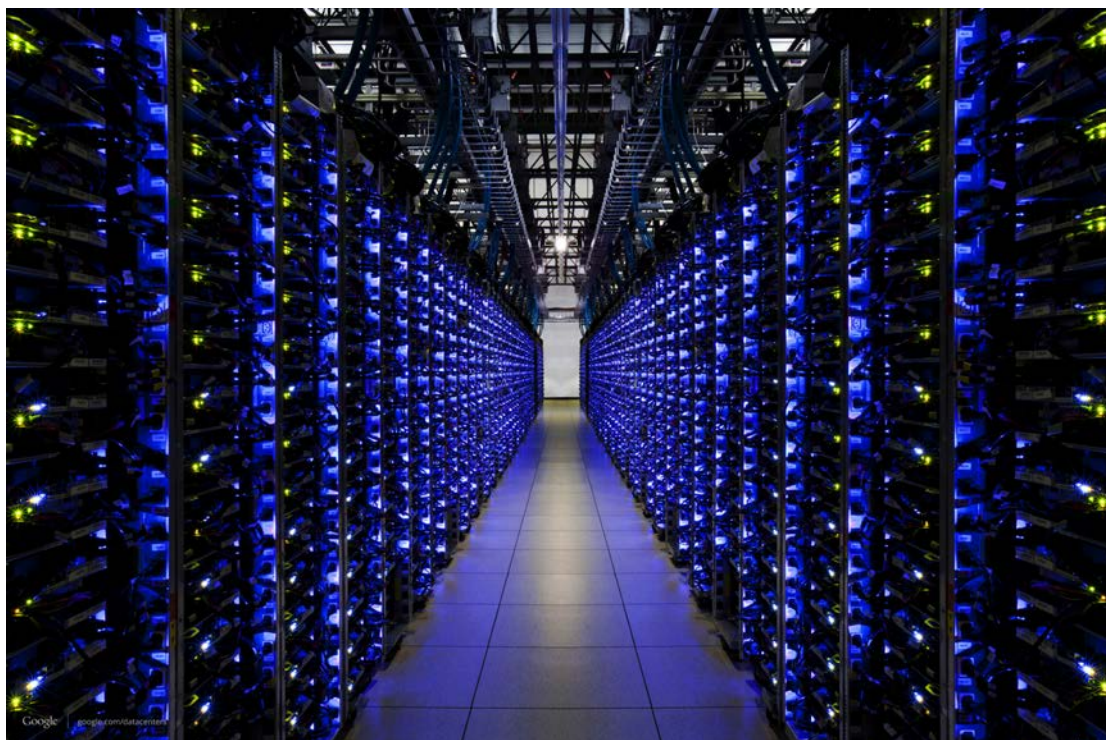
**Abstract:**

Google Inc. is a very powerful multinational corporation who generate the vast majority of their money from advertising. They have commodified language by creating a global linguistic market which provides the revenue for their expanding array of products. Google Maps is hugely influential, with apparently one billion unique users per month. This paper examines the ‘borderlands’ of Google Maps in two respects; firstly by examines how the company depicts disputed borders. By analysing their policy and using examples from Google Maps itself, this paper problematizes how Google presents different maps to different users. This paper argues that—despite the company’s claims—Google Maps are not ‘objective’ and ‘neutral’, but rather their map is fundamentally political. Then, this paper turns to consider the ‘borderlands’ in a more figurative sense. With Google Maps pushing the frontier of cyberspace further into embodied space, the corporation is leading the charge in reterritorialising both space and cyberspace, pulling them both into the circuits of capital accumulation.

**Key words:** Google, maps, borderlands, commodification, territory, globalization

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*Inside a Google Data Centre, Douglas County, Georgia, USA. (Google, 2014c).*

From carving up empires to enclosing the commons, the maps have long been caught up in creating, legitimising and representing borders and territories. There now exists a body of work critiquing maps as cultural artefacts, scrutinising the role that values, social structures and power relations play in their formation of meaning (Cosgrove, 1999; Harley, 2001). Drawing from these studies, in combination with other cultural, social and political theories, I shall turn to the hugely powerful and notably understudied cartographic representation: Google Maps.

This paper draws from research that I am currently conducting as part of a PhD at RMIT Melbourne, Australia, in the school of Global Studies. My thesis is centrally concerned with Google Maps at the intersection of technology and ideology in the context of globalization and capitalism. As this paper has been prepared for the Asian Conference on Cultural Studies, which in 2014 had the theme ‘borderlands’, it focuses on Google’s portrayal of borders on their massively influential world map. In doing so, this paper sketches a brief overview of some key themes of my research, assembled with the hope of rising discussion.

There are three components to this paper: firstly, I shall begin by contextualising Google and explaining how they make their money. Then, I will follow a traditional concern of map makers and consider how Google Maps depicts disputed borders between nation-states. By giving a string of examples, this section will dispute Google’s continual claims of political neutrality. Lastly, I move onto consider borders in a more figurative sense and discuss how the frontier of cyberspace has been pushed into the embodied world.

## Google

Formed in 1998 in Silicon Valley, Google Inc. became one of the world's fastest growing corporations. As of May 2014 Google's market capitalization was \$382.47 billion (US), approximately the same as the UN estimate for the GDP of Venezuela.<sup>1</sup> *Forbes Magazine* ranks Google as the world's fifth most valuable brand, placing it below IBM and above McDonalds; and it gives Google the world's third highest market value, sitting below Exxon Mobil and above Microsoft (2014). It is highly significant to note that at least 96% of Google's money comes from advertising (Kim, 2011). The vast majority of their money is made by launching an automated global auction every time someone enters a word into Google's search engine. Advertisers make bids on words that they want their brand to be associated with. Any word—'security', 'sex', 'salad' or 'Schumpeter'—entered into Google's search engine can lead to a bid in this global linguistic market (Levy, 2011, pp.83-99).

As Frédéric Kaplan has noted, Google have managed to extend the domain of capitalism into language itself, making words into a commodity (2011).<sup>2</sup> In doing so, they have found an incredibly profitable business model based on this linguistic speculation. In commodifying symbolic communication, Google have massively facilitated the global market's push deeper into people's everyday social relations and practices. This can be understood as part of the neoliberal project that, in David Harvey's words, means, 'in short, the financialization of everything' (2005, p.33). All of Google's projects—search, Gmail, YouTube, and Google Maps—can be analysed through this prism.

In 2012 Google Maps claimed to have one billion unique users per month (Google, 2012). The vastness of this number is worth reflecting on. To put it into some perspective, 200 years ago there was less than a billion people on Earth, and only a tiny proportion of them—princes, military elite, navigators and some capitalists—would have used maps. Given Google Maps unprecedented audience, I argue that how the multinational corporation represents the world is very significant, for it actively contributes to shaping the way an enormous number of people imagine the world and their place in it. Also, as a practical wayfinding device, Google Maps affects social practice with an enormous number of people regularly using the cyber-spatial representations to facilitate their physical movement through space.

## Depicting the Borderland

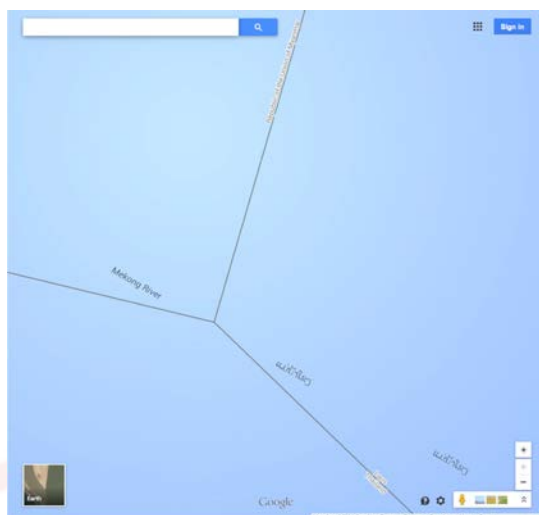
Like most contemporary world maps, political borders are a prominently featured on Google Maps. They are visible on the outmost level of zoom, where these frontiers between self-contained nation-states are depicted by solid black lines. This representation of global space is a rather conventional world map: a standard north-up, Mercator projection subdivided into a jigsaw of nation-states.<sup>3</sup> From this outmost level of zoom, national borders are visible all the way down to the innermost level of zoom. *Figure 1* depicts the apex of the 'Golden Triangle', the borders between Thailand, Laos and Myanmar at the maximum level of zoom.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> When I presented the paper, I used *Forbes* estimate from 2013: \$268.45 billion. I am shocked at how much higher it is just one year later.

<sup>2</sup> I must confess, this article was written in French and translated by, none-other-than, Google...

<sup>3</sup> I have discussed this global level elsewhere, see (Ström, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Without getting into the complexities of the research methodologies employed in my thesis, I should note that all images from Google Maps were captured using screenshots from my RMIT computer. It is



*Figure 1. The apex of the 'Golden Triangle'. Captured 20/5/2014.*

These straight lines meeting over the Mekong are a state imposition of order over the ever-changing flow of a river. This abstract geometry of power is reminiscent of Benedict Anderson's argument that maps function as a totalizing classificatory grid (2006, pp.170-8). While in some respects absurd, this example is again rather standard mapping discourse. Google Maps might pride itself on being 'innovative', digital and interactive but, as far as depicting the majority of national borders go, it is rather conventional.

Google Map's depiction of frontiers becomes interesting when it represents disputed borders. These borderlands not only raise the stakes politically, but they also reveal Google's ideological claims and offer an insight into how this map constructs subjectivity. The corporation claims they 'follow a hierarchy of values' which 'inform our depictions of geopolitically sensitive regions' (Boorstin, 2009). Using this hierarchy, Google claim to have reached the 'optimal combination of neutrality, objectivity, and legitimacy' (McLaughlin, 2008). This string of value laden words are key to understanding Google. The corporation consistently frames itself as being able to transcend culture and politics.

The most concise example of this was captured by Marissa Mayer, Google's former vice president of search products and user experience, and a key spokesperson for the corporation. She claimed to an audience at Stanford University: 'Data is apolitical'. Mayer went on to explain that Google are 'able to scientifically and mathematically prove' which course of action to take, and can therefore avoid politics (2006).<sup>5</sup> However—to rephrase George Orwell—the opinion that one's belief is apolitical is itself a political opinion (2004, pp.4-5). Rather than some form of cyber-positivism, Google's motives are inseparable from the dictates of profit maximization.

Google's director of public policy is Bob Boorstin, a man with noteworthy neoliberal credentials. He was formally President Clinton's national security speechwriter and

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a Mac which runs OS.X 10.8.5 and I use the web browser TOR 3.6.1 in an imperfect attempt to get at Google's default settings.

<sup>5</sup> NB. After 13 years with Google, Mayer left the company in 2012 to become the CEO of Yahoo.



the foreign policy adviser to Robert Rubin.<sup>6</sup> Regarding Google Maps, Boorstin announced the first tier of Google's hierarchy of values:

In all cases we work to represent the “ground truth” as accurately and neutrally as we can, in consistency with Google's mission to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful (Boorstin).

In the latter half of this statement, Boorstin quotes Google's official mission statement. In my thesis I unpack this mission statement in detail, for I see it as an ideological statement *par excellence*. Every word of this totalizing statement is swollen and dripping with value judgements, political implications, and cultural beliefs. While fully unpacking Google's mission is beyond the scope of this paper, I want to draw attention to the fact that this mission is bound up with the sci-fi sounding goal of creating artificial intelligence. Since the very beginning Google's founders ‘have been consistent in framing Google as an artificial intelligence company—one that gathers massive amounts of data and processes that information with learning algorithms to create a machinelike intelligence that augments the collective brain of humanity’ (Levy, 2011, p.385). Furthermore, then seek to incorporate this learning machine into the circuits of capital accumulation and the commodification of everything.

The second tier of Google's hierarchy of values is ‘authoritative references’, to which the company seems to have a somewhat ambiguous relation. In a policy post, Google claim: ‘While no single authority has all the answers, when deciding how to depict sensitive place names and borders we use guidance from data providers that most accurately describe borders in treaties and other authoritative standards bodies like the United Nations’ (Boorstin, 2009). In another post, Google dismissively dubs the as UN a ‘politicised organization’—as opposed to the corporations neutral, objective and legitimate pretensions—thus justifying their rejection of UN naming conventions or portrayal of national borders (McLaughlin, 2008).

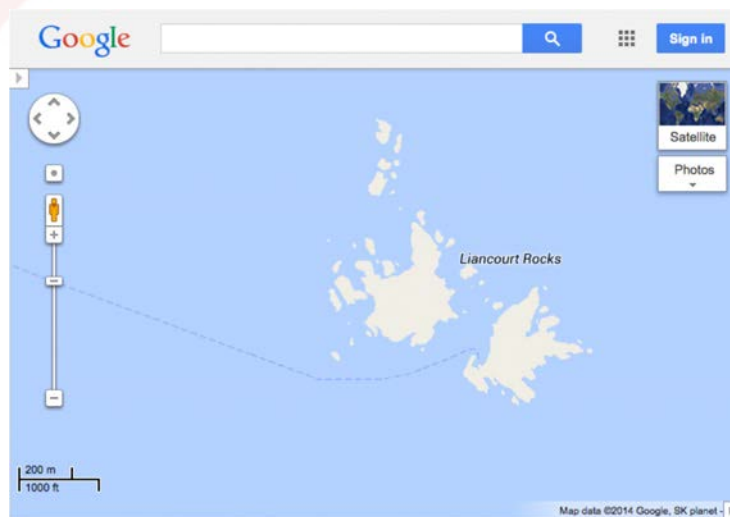
Neither do Google follow the naming conventions of any single respected geographical society because they note that ‘these organizations exist only in a handful of large, rich economies, and many believe they do not represent the views and values of other parts of the world’ (ibid ). In this strikingly unreflective statement Google conveniently ignores the fact that they are a stupendously rich and powerful advertising corporation based in Silicon Valley, USA. Essentially, this ‘authoritative references’ tier is a loose attempt to justify Google's picking and choosing from various sources as they see fit while simultaneously holding itself superior.

The third tier ‘local expectation’ is perhaps the most curious part of Google's approach to representing borders. The interactive and global nature of Google Maps enables the company to tailor their map to reflect the assumed opinion of the user in question. They literally change the map depending who is looking at it. Google Maps makes generalizations about the supposed opinions of an individual, language group or nation-state and can change their map reflect this.

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Rubin is a banker-economist and a classic example of the revolving door between the corporate and government spheres in the US. He worked for Goldman Sachs before becoming the US Secretary of the Treasury (1995-99), before working for Citibank and being a key player in the Global Financial Crisis.

Liancourt Rocks is an illustrative and locally relevant example. Named after a French whaling ship that almost ran aground there in 1849, this small rocky outcrop is about 432km north-west of Osaka.<sup>7</sup> These rocks, and the surrounding waters, are a disputed territory with both Japan and South Korea laying claim to the island. So the question is: on whose side of the border does it fall? Google Maps responses by saying, it depends who is asking... Using Google.com, the ‘global’—read American—version of Google, will deliver this result depicted in *Figure 2.1*. Using Google.co.kr, with the .kr being the country code for South Korea, a user will see the island labelled ‘Dokdo’ (*Figure 2.2*). Whereas using the Japanese Google.co.jp, a user will see the rocks labelled ‘Takeshima’ (*Figure 2.3*). What is more, the waters surrounding these islands are also contentious. Google Maps and Google Maps Japan agree that the body of water is called the ‘Sea of Japan’. Whereas the Korean Google Maps labels it the ‘East Sea’.



*Figure 2.1 Google.com, ‘Liancourt Rocks’, Image captured 14/1/2014.*



*Figure 2.2 Google.co.kr, ‘Dokdo’ ‘독도’ Captured 14/1/2014*

<sup>7</sup> This measurement was conducted in Google Earth...



Figure 2.3 Google.co.jp, ‘Takeshima’ 竹島, Captured 14/1/2014

Another example of the geopolitics of Google’s ‘local expectation’ can be seen in a territory fought over in the 1962 Sino-India border dispute. Google.com depicts this disputed territory with dotted lines, but labels it with the Indian name Arunachal Pradesh, as opposed to its Chinese name, South Tibet (Figure 3.1). Compare this with the Figures 3.2 and 3.3 to see how Google portrays the border on its Chinese and Indian versions of Google Maps.

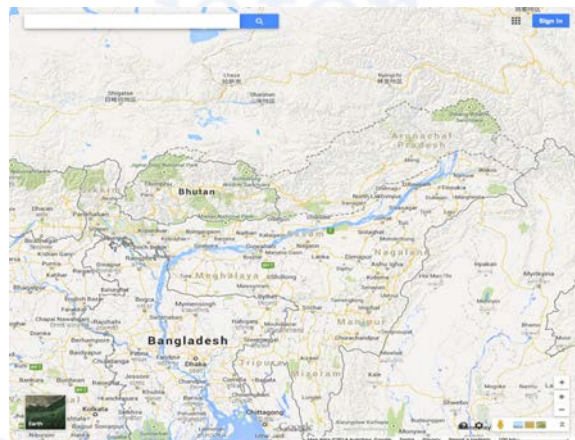


Figure 3.1 Google.com Sino Indian border, captured 15/5/2014

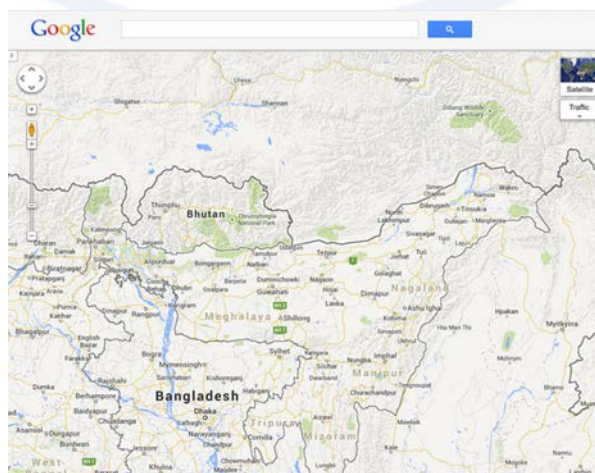


Figure 3.2 ditu.google.cn/ South Tibet, captured 15/5/2014

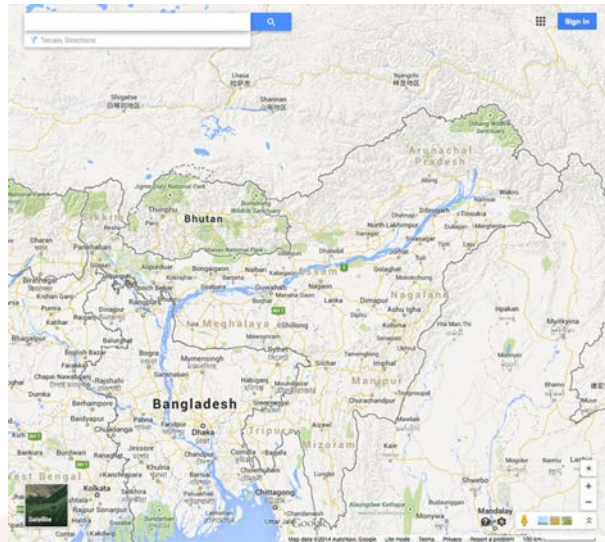


Figure 3.3  
 google.co.in/maps,  
 Arunachal  
 Pradesh, captured  
 15/5/2014

The recent situation on the Crimean Peninsular also features, with Google’s .com version representing the new border with a dotted line (Figure 4). The line on the Russian Google Map is notably not dotted, leaving no ambiguity as to who controls the peninsular. Unfortunately, for the sake of this argument, Google do not have a Ukrainian version of their maps to compare.

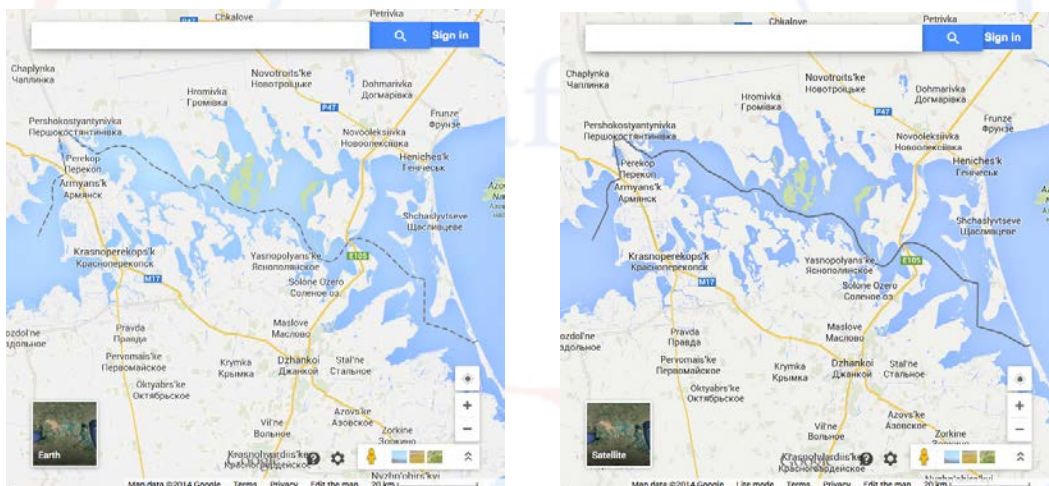


Figure 4: Google.com and Google.ru, the Crimean Peninsular, captured 21/5/2014

Another example can be found in the South China Sea. According to Google Map’s Chinese version, the contested sea is circled by line which appears to denote the Middle Kingdom’s unambiguous ownership of the sea.

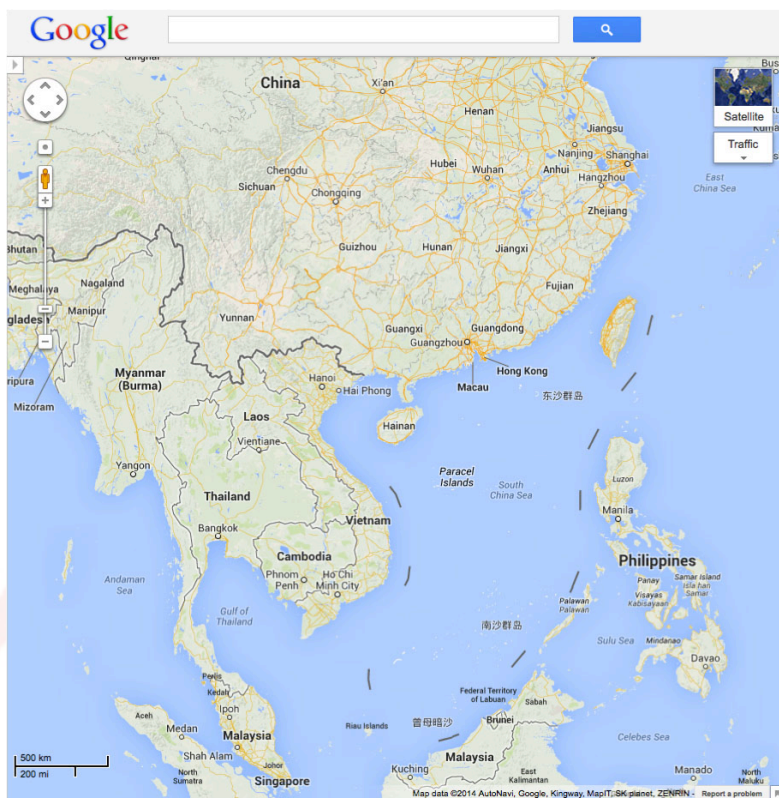


Figure 5: *ditu.google.cn/ South China Sea, captured 15/5/2014*

Moreover, this line also runs on the east of the Taiwan, which is notably not labelled as an independent country. In the case of Taiwan, Google Map’s Chinese version even goes so far as to remove the labels of major state institutions, such as the Presidential Office in Taipei. *Figure’s 6.1 and 6.2* show the difference between Google’s Taiwanese and Chinese services.<sup>8</sup>

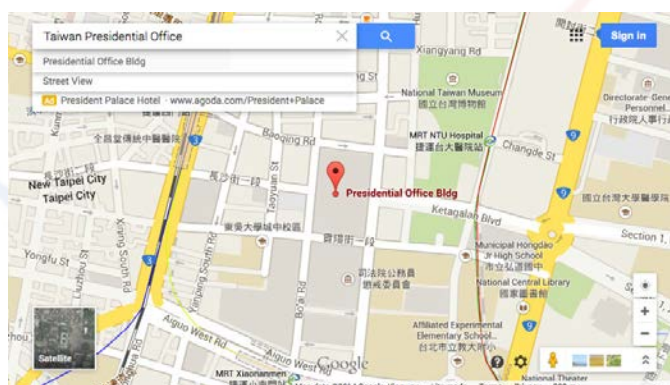


Figure 6.1: *Google.com.tw, Presidential Office Building, captured 21/5/2014*

<sup>8</sup> This is caught up with Google’s sometimes strained, sometimes dubious relation with the Chinese government. For a highly sympathetic account, see Levy (2011, p.267-314).

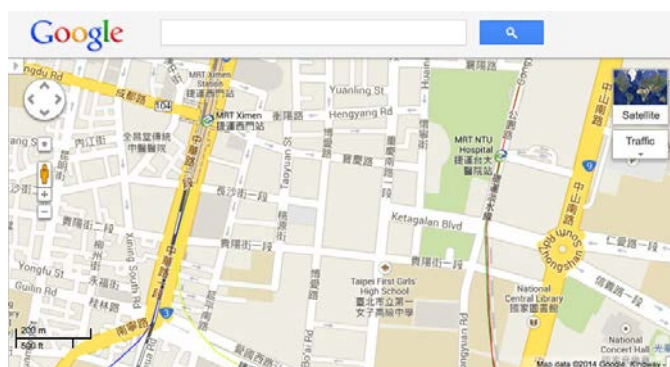


Figure 6.2: *ditu.google.cn, Unlabelled structure, captured 21/5/2014*

In 2012, the *New York Times* published an article with the provocative title: ‘The First Google Maps War’ (Jacobs, 2012). This article outlined a 2010 border dispute between Costa Rica and Nicaragua. This dispute began when Google depicted the Nicaraguan border a few square miles further south than the usually accepted international frontier. Explicitly citing Google, a Nicaragua official took the opportunity to cross the mouth of Rio San Juan and land in Isla Portillos. His expedition was soon followed by 50 soldiers. Costa Rica protested and responded by sending 70 police officers into the area.<sup>9</sup> These tensions were not just the result of Google, the roots of this dispute go back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Jacobs, 2012). While negotiations prevented a further escalation, this episode captures the tangled histories and power relations that can make demarking borders on a map murky territory.

Another problematic aspect of Google’s ‘local expectation’ approach is that it feeds into what Eli Pariser called the ‘filter bubble’. He is concerned that ‘personalization filters serve up a kind of invisible autopropaganda, indoctrinating us with our own ideas, amplifying our desire for things that are familiar and leaving us oblivious to the dangers lurking in the dark territory of the unknown’ (cited in Bauman & Lyon, 2013, p.123).

Google claim that they ‘work to provide as much discoverable information as possible so that users can make their own judgments about geopolitical disputes’ (Boorstin, 2009). Google Earth does include some little notes that can be opened with a click. For instance, a button on Liancourt Rocks states: ‘Administered by Korea as Dokdo, claimed by Japan as Takeshima’. Google Earth also depicts disputed borders in red, rather than yellow. However, the corporation’s apparently lofty principle of providing enough ‘neutral’ information so people can make up their own minds does not appear to translate to the far-more-popular Google Maps.

### **The Frontier of Cyberspace**

The implications of Google ‘local expectation’ leads me to turn away from the map’s representation of political borders and to consider the theme ‘borderlands’ in a somewhat more figurative manner. The later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the exponential rise of networked computers which qualitatively intensified the globalization process. By evoking the term ‘globalization’, I am not implying it in a simplistic, economic sense. Our world is neither ‘borderless’ or ‘flat’. Rather, I

<sup>9</sup> Costa Rica does not have an army to send. It was disbanded in 1949 as a way to prevent military coups. They rely on the police to enforce the law and patrol the borders.

understand globalization as referring ‘to the expansion and intensification of social relation and consciousness across world-time and world-space’ (Steger, 2013, p.15). In this sense, globalization is a material and symbolic process that is fundamentally multidimensional and multiscalar. The spread of the Net had a hugely deterritorializing effect on cultures and social practices around the world, with symbols and objects circulating the globe at unprecedented levels. I argue that corporations like Google have reterritorialized cyberspace, orienting as much of it as possible toward capital accumulation.

As Lev Manovich has noted, space is a key metaphor in new media and networked computers (2001, pp.272-3). The term ‘cyberspace’, first used by sci-fi writer William Gibson, is illustrative (1984). ‘Cyber’ is derived from the Greek term for ‘steersman’, implying someone who navigates through space. Indeed, the persistent spatial metaphors permeate much of the Web. Consider the names of some browsers—Netscape Navigator, Internet Explorer, and Safari—these examples are all framed in spatial terms, all conjure the image of an individual user navigating through an unknown territory.

In the same novel, Gibson also used the term ‘cyberspace cowboy’. Drawing on the American frontier myth, he used this to refer to elite high-tech hackers exploring the wilderness of the Web. To take this image further, as in the 19<sup>th</sup> century steam engines pushed the frontier of ‘civilization’ further into uncharted territory, so in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, search engines pushed into the uncharted cyberspace, reterritorializing it along commercial lines. Manifest destiny has been replaced by a utopian, neoliberal technological determinism. Ranges, re-appropriators and revolutionaries still move through this landscape, but much of the terrain has been reorganized, with the cowboy days being largely replaced by a sprawling ranch economy.

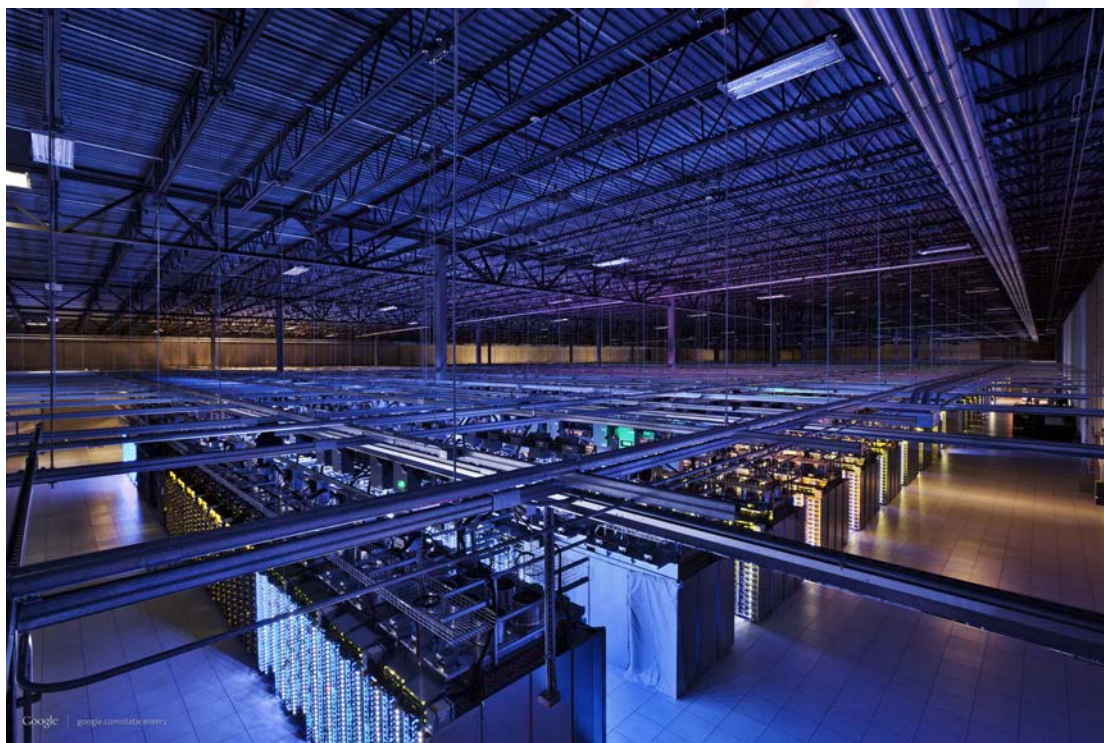
This is where Google began, as the most successful search engine to penetrate cyberspace. It functioned as a hugely profitable tool for assisting people to navigate their way through the imagined territory of the Web. Then, in the mid-2000s, Google began to spill out into the offline world. Initially, Google made their money from selling ads based on what one was searching for. Then with the advent of the mobile Web, *where* one searches from is almost as important as *what* one is searching for (Madrigal, 2012). At the end of 2012, at least 20% of Google’s queries are now ‘location specific’, a number that is certainly much higher for mobile users (Rushe, 2013).

And this is big business. The emergent ‘geo-services’ industry currently estimated at generating up to US\$270 billion of revenue per year, according to a Google commissioned report (Oxera, 2013). ‘Geo services’ include electronic maps, satellite imagery, location based searches, GPS navigation and satellite receivers. To put the staggeringly number into some perspective, geo-services are worth at least six times as much as the global video games industry (\$25 billion) or up to half of the world airline industry (\$594billion) (ibid, p.iv). As the most popular online map, Google Maps is at the forefront of this industry, leading the corporation’s interweaving of cyberspace and physical space. In so doing, it has created a sort of borderland between the two.

I will now offer a solid, if hypothetical, example of a local manifestation of this process in order to tease out the complex, problematic and contradictory nature of this borderland and its reterritorialization. Imagine a person walking through the streets of Osaka on their way to the 2014 Asian Conference on Cultural Studies. Rather than asking somebody for directions, the person runs Google Maps on their ‘smart phone’. They navigate the Web to navigate the city, they access commercial cyberspace in order to move through embodied space. The person taps ‘Rihga Royal Hotel’ (the conference venue) into Google Maps. What follows usually occurs within the pseudo-magical realm of the technological ‘black box’.

The phone’s hardware and operating system translates the person’s finger strokes into digital information, interfacing it with the browser, and then emitting it wirelessly. This information then jumps across the Pacific—via transoceanic fibre-optic cables—to the US where it fires up between 700 and 1,000 computers in several of Google’s massive data-farms (*Figure 7*). Hundreds of algorithms groom over the search request, indexing and ranking it (Google, 2014a).

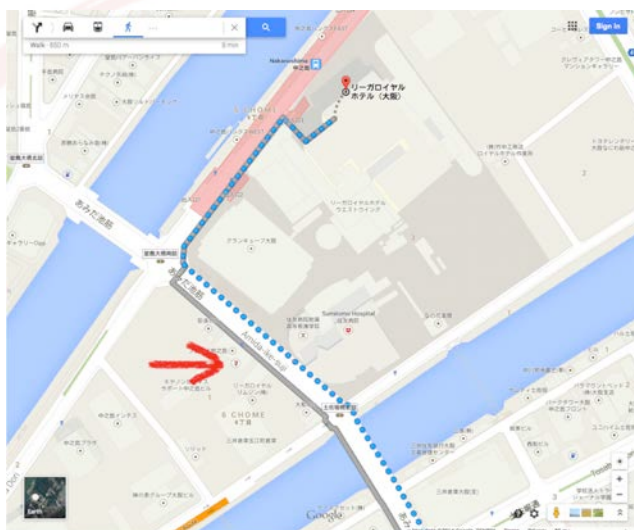
One crucial factor is *where* the person is searching from. Thanks to the Pentagon owned GPS system, Google locates them with great accuracy in Osaka. They thus decide that the person means *this* Rihga Royal Hotel, as opposed to the other five across Japan. It is their ‘local expectation’. The person’s search term and physical movements are recorded by Google and, in combination with their search history, they are profiled by the corporation’s pattern recognition algorithms and sold to Google’s advertisers in an attempt to manipulate the person’s consumer habits. This intricate surveillance mechanisms allows Google to efficiently launch contextual and targeted advertisements at their users. It also provides the data for Google’s machine learning algorithms to improve themselves as part of the company’s quest to create artificial intelligence.



*Figure 7: Inside a Google Data Centre, Council Bluff, Iowa, USA (Google, 2014c).*



Then, the results are blasted back halfway around the world where the person's mobile device translates the abstract code into a image that the person recognizes as a map (*Figure 8*). This whole process takes place at inhuman speeds and the results are delivered in less than a second. Google Maps directs the person to cross a bridge and then turn right. On route, they pass a 7-Eleven, which features as a corporate landmark. 7-Eleven is presumably a paid-up Google Maps advertiser with its logo featuring prominently on the map. I say 'presumably' as there is no way to tell which businesses that feature on Google Maps are paid advertisers and which are not. This violates part of point one of Google's self-proclaimed philosophy, which explicitly states that advertising must be clearly marketed (Google, 2014b). It seems this principle does not translate to Google Maps.



*Figure 8: Google Maps to this Rihga Royal Hotel, via 7-Eleven (arrow added)*

Wrapped up in this enterprise is a complex and cross-hatched tapestry of time and space which are woven together through the hypothetical person's use of Google Maps: social time and cyberspace; digital processing time and subjective sense of place; biological time and corporate 'geo-services'; global networks and local navigations. The everyday act of a person using Google Maps to navigate to this conference is a fascinating example of the multiscalar and multidimensional dynamics of globalization.

## **Conclusion**

While constantly claiming to have the 'optimal combination of neutrality, objectivity, and legitimacy', the issue of Google Map's depiction of disputed territories clearly demonstrates the farcical nature of Google claim for neutrality. Their map cannot exist beyond politics because the map itself is an incarnation of politics. It is a visualization of a perspective of a contested historical process, one fundamentally connected with subjectivity, power relations and social formations.

While making these bold claims, Google are expanding their commercial power and profit margins. The corporation's influence and ambitions have spilt out from the Web and begun to reterritorialize the embodied world. This has created a sort of borderland between the formal realm of cyberspace—with its algorithms and axioms,

conformity and code—and the place beyond software, our physical earth and social worlds; a place of infinite complexity and order that we inhabit and embody.

And it is this paradox, the ability to mix the formalised with the more messy—non-mathematical formalisms, linguistic, and visual objects and codes, events occurring at every scale from the ecological to the erotic and political—which gives computing its power effects, and which folds back into software in its existence as culture (Fuller, 2008, pp.5-6).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century coal was thrown into the boilers of steam engines, providing the power for expansion at the frontiers of ‘civilization’. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, language is thrown into the boilers of Google automated linguistic market. This provides the power for the search engine to reorganize the web and to reterritorialize the space beyond it, dragging as much of it as possible into the circuits of capital accumulation. In this way, Google Maps facilitates the global markets push deeper into the social fabric of the embodied world.

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, semi-transparent arcs: a larger, light blue arc and a smaller, light red arc that overlaps the blue one.

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***Future perspectives within Japanese and Chinese children:  
A comparative study about children's expectation and concerns for the future***

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**Abstract**

Adopting a comparative methodology, this study attempts to identify similarities and differences in children's expectations and concerns for the future between Japan and China. Fourth-grade elementary-school children were invited to describe three future events that they expected and three future events that they were concerned about. Qualitative analysis was conducted on the response contents. Comparison analysis revealed that, to some extent, responses related to both expectations and concerns about the future were very similar. For example, both them listed most events about the principal developmental task such as future occupation, education and family. Besides the topics about themselves, they both mentioned more concerns about societal or global affairs. For the difference, first Chinese children have more active and motivated attitudes towards their futures than Japanese children. Moreover, Chinese children also have much clearer images about what they want to be in the future than the Japanese children. The study argues that differences in the traditional cultures and the current social environments between two countries may contribute to these results.

Keywords: future perspective, expectation, concern

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## 1. Introduction

### **Time Consciousness and Human Development**

Lewin(1951) used 'time perspective' as a psychological conception, which is defined as 'the totality of individuals' view of his psychological future and psychological past existing at a given time' (p. 75), to represent how human's considerations about future or past influence our present behavior. In case of represent how people see their future in terms of goals, hopes, expectation, and concerns have been described in terms of future perspective.

Our consciousness of time, which seems originate from experiencing the discrepancy between desire and satisfaction soon after we were born to the world. Repeatedly experience of this discrepancy of time enable infant to construct gradually the consciousness of three time dimensions: past, present and future (Fraisie, 1957). Zazzo(1969) was interested in how children develop self-consciousness based on this three dimensions of time. He did questionnaire investigation and asked children "which period of your life would you prefer to live", had them select one from "the period in infancy" "present" "the period in adulthood", and lastly questioned the reason for the choice. The result indicated that, self-evaluation was developed through three stages. The first one is evaluate him/herself by comparing present him/herself to one lived in the past; then going through a comparison between present him/herself and possible one in future, lastly turn to the stage of self-evaluating by comparing present self with both one when in past and possible one in future. However, the same investigation was carried out later in Japan (Tsukano, 1994), but did not reproduce this conclusion.

### **Future Perspective Developed in a Societal Cultural Environment**

These previous researches indicate that, the consciousness of time is playing an important role in development of human beings. While considering about children, comparing to the past, the development of future time conscious is considerably more important for them. In particular for adolescence, when is conceived as a period of thinking about future in preparation for transition to adulthood, how children think about their future in adolescence has great influence in their later adult life (Nurmi, Poole, & Kalokoski, 1994).

However, it has been also pointed out that children's future orientation occurs within a social, cultural and historical context where it may influence conception of what is possible and desirable in the future (Nurmi, 1993). For instance, Nurmi (1991) indicated that normative social expectations play an important role in casting relevance upon one's particular interests or trajectories. Sundberg, Poole & Tyler (1983) focused on the impact of cultural or difference on the children's development of future perspective, and conducted the comparative study within India, United States, and Australia. The result showed that, they were found showing a shorter time perspective than boys due to a traditional culture where Indian girls have less freedom of choice. In addition, compared to other two countries, living in a society where significant life events like marriage are mostly arranged by others, Indian youngster are relatively more interested in the same events happening to others.

On the other hand, how children see their future or their expectation or concern about future can also indicate social problems which exist in certain social environment. For

instance, Solantaus (1987) conducted the comparative study of 11 to 15-year-olds' hopes and worries about the future within Austria, England and Finland, and found that children from England emphasis much more on work and employment compared to the other two countries, which reflects the higher unemployment rates in their country at that time. Besides, the result also found that children from Finland showed a high level worrying for the nuclear war in the future than the other countries since when Finnish mass media paid much more attention to the war and peace issues in the world.

### **Comparison of Children's future perspective between China and Japan**

In contemporary Japan, as the economic inequality is rapidly increasing, it has been reported that, people who feel hopeful or not about their future are more depending on their social status (Yamada, 2011). Yamada (2011) also contributed this as a reason to explain a growing number of social problems such as withdrawal and drop-out in Japan, since more and more people in a low social class can only feel their opportunities in the future have been blocked. Investigation conducted by Benesse (2009) revealed that, children in Japan were showing a low motivation not only about their future achievement, but also on making contributions to their country when they grow up. Besides, since the formal educational system has being lost its function neither on "rising One's social hierarchy" nor "guaranteeing an ideal job"(Yamada, 2011), some results indicated that children are gradually losing faith in formal education. For instance, an international comparative study investigating on children's awareness of learning showed that, Japanese elementary school students were less likely to endorse beliefs about everyday educational practice will be helpful in the future (Benesse, 2006).

Compared to Japan, China currently are achieving a rapidly development in economy. However, since a lot of bureaucratic corruption incidents are frequently reported recent years, the bustling societal atmosphere has been pointer out and being criticized. Some investigation even showed that, what children are dreaming about future mostly seemed utilitarian (Feng Jiang, 2012).

On this basis, the aim of this study was to investigate how the sociocultural difference influences children's future-oriented expectations and concerns about future between China and Japan.

## **2. Method**

### **Samples and Procedures**

The questionnaire investigation was first conducted in Japan in 2011, and then in China the following year, which was carried out among 4<sup>th</sup> grade students of elementary school in two countries. The Japanese sample comprised 445 students from Yamagata to Ibaraki, while the Chinese sample comprised 247 students from Beijing.

The questionnaire consisted of two questions: 1. What kind of things are you expecting for in your future? 2. What kind of things are you concerning about in your future? Students were asked to write down three events for each question.

After gathering all answering statements, three analysis procedures were carried out as follows. First, we adopted the KJ method, which is introduced by a Japanese

scholar named Jiro, Kawakita. It is mostly used to deal with a large amount of qualitative data through resorting statements into categories based on their natural relationships. We did this analysis with a group discussion, and finally 11 categories both for expectation and concern in china, and 12 categories for expectation, 11 categories for concerns of Japan were settled down. Each category was then given a name based on statements including in it. Through this procedure, we can get a rough outline of topics listed by children (Table 1).

Next, all the categories were then input as variables to use Hayashi's quantification method-III to continue the analysis. Hayashi's quantification method-III, which is introduced by Chikio Hayashi, is specifically designed to analyze qualitative (categorical) data by assigning numerical values to qualitative data. With the result, we can get a scatter spot, where all variables will be distributed on it and the association between these variables is expressed by the distance between them. Analyses were conducted for four times separately on expectation and concern in both countries. To make the association between these categories more clearly, the score each category in the row and column were used to input in a cluster analysis, which can partition categories into a superordinate cluster. We also assigned each superordinate cluster a name.

Table 1 category of expectation and concern about future

		Japan		China	
		classified categories	Frequency	classified categories	Frequency
e x p e c t a t i o n	1	physical chang in body	28	physical chang in body	23
	2	self-image in the future	34	self-image in the future	34
	3	job.proceeding to next stage of education, study	89	self-actualization	44
	4	residence.living life	43	employment	69
	5	the changing in relationship(meet new friends, get married, give birth)	64	study.proceeding to next stage of education,studying abroad	75
	6	becoming an adult,vague image of being an adult	60	possession,money	18
	7	feel free to do something	82	realization of goal	36
	8	realization of goal	98	leisure activity	23
	9	leisure activity	67	the changing in relationship(meet new friends, get married, give birth)	41
	10	the development in science and technology, the evolution of tool	84	the development in science and technology, the evolution of tool	53
	11	changing in living environment, Japan, the world and the earth	47	changing in living environment,the development of China, expect for a peacefull world	60
	12	some vague expectations ,looking forward to it since it's unknown	26		
c o n c e r n	1	illness, death	85	illness, death	27
	2	self-image in the future	44	self-image in the future	35
	3	employment, proceeding to the next stage of education,study	97	employment	100
	4	money,living life	57	study.proceeding to next stage of education	44
	5	the changing in relationship(death of parents, cound't make new firends)	66	money,economic condition of living life	21
	6	being a victim , injury	64	the changing in relationship(death of parents, cound't make new firends)	26
	7	can't realize the dream	38	being a victim	18
	8	natural environment,natural catastrophes	93	natural environment,natural catastrophes	76
	9	changing in living environment, science.politic and economy	37	vague concerns, the end of world	29
	10	war,incident,accident	43	workwide war	59
	11	some vague concerns,concerning about it since it's unknown	33	changing in living environment, the development of science	20



### 3. Result

#### 3-1. Content Analysis

Statements collected from two countries were first compared by the analyzing result in KJ method. In following, “ 「 」 ” is used to represent category we got in KJ method, “ 【 】 ” is used to represent superordinate category we got in cluster analysis and “[ ]” is used to represent collected statement.

##### 1) Similarity in content

Comparing these categories within two countries we found that, most topics mentioned by two countries were very similar. First, major topics about future in both countries were 「education」, 「employment」 and 「the changing in relationship」 (e.g., expectation of marrying someone, giving birth; or concerns about the death of parents, can't make new friends and so on). Actually these main topics about future have also been showed in some previous studies (Poole & Cooney, 1986), in which Poole & Cooney pointed out those main topics about future can be similarly across different countries or different year.

A lot of statements about 「realization of goals」 and 「self-actualization」 can also be observed in both countries. In terms of realization of goals, for example, in Japan we found statements like looking forward to be a soccer player or a baseball player, while in China, much more examples like looking forward to be a doctor can be found. Talking about the ideal self-image in the future, Japanese children would like to be a respectable person; while Chinese children are expecting to be one who can contribution to their society or country.

In addition to these topics about their personal future, a majority of topics about societal future can also be observed in both countries. Most children mentioned expectations about 「the development of science and technology, the evolution of tool」, which including statement like [car may can fly in the sky](from expectation in Japan), or [(looking forward to)new inventions in the future] (from expectation in China). Meanwhile, the similar concerns about 「natural environment, natural catastrophes」 can also be observed in both countries. This category comprised topics about pollution, earthquake and so on. On the other hand, some 「vague concerns」, which is consisted of statement such as [(concerning about)if the earth will be broken or not] (from concerns in Japan)or[(concerning about) if it is the end of world] (from concerns in China)existed for a certain amount. With this, the information from Mass media can be considered as the reason since existed statement like, [TV program said human beings will be extinct in the future] (from concerns in Japan).

##### 2) Difference in the content

Some differences can also be observed. First, as introduced, a certain amount of statements both from expectations and concerns about education are exist in two countries, however, in Japan, certain statement such as [which high school I will go (expectation)], focus more on how things will change; while in China, there are more statement like [my final academic background (expectation)] or [achieving 100 points in final examination (expectation)], which seems paying more attention to final achievement or outcome on education. Besides, in China, there are certain amounts of

expectations about studying abroad, which almost can seldom be found in Japan. Studying abroad has won much popularity in recent years in China. From these statements, we can find this is even having an impact on elementary school students.

Besides, ideal self-image can be found as another primary topic in expectation or concerns. Ideal self-image in China including, for example [conduct filial piety when grow up to an adult (expectation)] or [be an adult who be capable to contribute to the country (expectation)], which seems like children prefer to grow to be one who is capable to others.

Compared to China, the ideal self-image seems much vaguer in Japan. A certain amount of statements like [(looking forwarding to) how I am like as an adult (expectation)] or [(looking forwarding) to be an adult (expectation)] can be found. It is obvious that they are containing very few details about the ideal adult image.

### 3-2. the graphical display

Figure 1~4 represent the analysis result of Hayashi's quantification method type 3. As Figure 1 and Figure 2 show, in case of expectation in Japan, 5 clusters were decided and each of them were named as [vague adult image] [vague expectations] [self-image and living life in the future] [the realization of goals] [the outside world]. Whereas with terms of concern, we named 4 cluster as [vague concerns] [the realization of goals] [self-image and living life in the future] [the outside world].

With terms of expectation in China, 4 clusters were named as [self-actualization and possession] [self-image and living life in the future] [the realization of goals] [the outside world]; whereas with terms of concern, we named 4 cluster as [vague concerns] [self-image and economic capacity] [living life in the future] [the outside world].

#### 1) Dimension 1 and 2 –Japan

As figure 1 showed, the left hand pole of horizontal axis appears to contain expectations concerning more about personal world. For example, the cluster of [self-image and living life image] which located at most left-hand pole, refers to children's statement of expecting for physical body changing and education, job, relationship; whereas variables located at the right-hand of horizontal axis seem to be opposite in the character to these on the left. Compared with clusters located at left hand pole, the cluster of [outside world], that located at most right hand, contains expectations about science, society, living environment and earth. Thus, the left-hand pole of horizontal axis can be interpreted as a [personal-societal] dimension, with a continuum ranging from expectations focus on private world at left-hand pole to expectations focus on outside world at right-hand pole.

Turing to vertical axis, the top pole contains variables in which statements were not described in a specific way. For example, [vague adult image] located at most top of raw axis, contains statements such as [(looking forward to) be an adult], which seems providing a vague adult image; whereas at the lower pole of raw, contains statements such as [(looking forward to) the camp next week], which obviously is containing a specific image about expectation. Thus raw axis can be interpreted as [vague-

specific] dimension comprised of a continuum changing from some vague expectation at the top pole, to specific image of expectation at lower pole.

Meanwhile, as Figure 2 displayed, we can apply the same explanation of axis in expectation to concern. The horizontal axis appeared to make a continuum of concerns, ranging from [personal] dimension at left-hand pole, to [societal] dimension at right-hand; whereas the vertical axis appear to make a continuum of concerns, ranging from [vague image] at the upper pole, to [specific image] at lower pole.



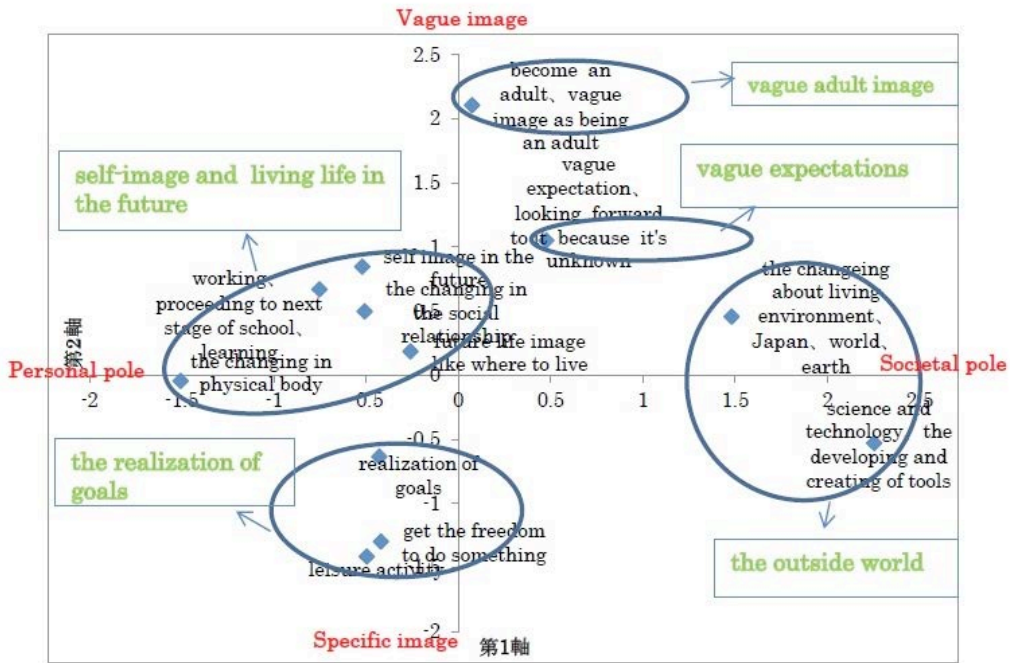


Figure 1 the graphical display of expectations in Japan

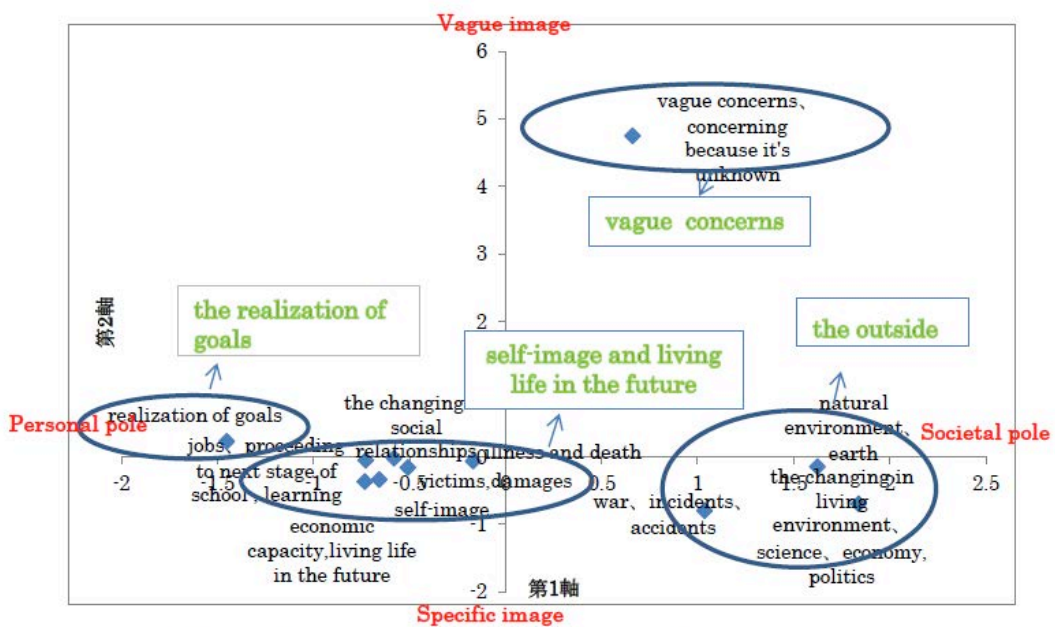


Figure 2 the graphical display of concerns in Japan

## 2) Dimension 1 and 2 –China

We now turn to a discussion about the result in China. Expectation is presented in Figure 3 and concern is presented in Figure 4.

With terms of expectation, the distribution of categories around horizontal axis appears to have same character with Japan, which means the left-hand pole of horizontal axis can be interpreted as a [personal-societal] dimension, with a continuum ranging from expectations focus on private world at left-hand pole to expectations focus on outside world at right-hand pole.

Turning to vertical axis, the cluster of [realization of goals] located at most upper pole, refers to expectations of realizing dreams, and also contains expectation for leisure activity such as [(looking forward to)go abroad for a tourism]; whereas variables located at most lower pole were about concerns of death, illness. As moving to upper pole, categories were about employment, for example concerning if he can get a job, then came to categories represent changing in relationship, such as death of parents or family, and then were categories about proceeding to next stage of education. If all these concerns can be understood as some changes may occur in the future, it is obvious that clusters located at upper pole contain some changes one have to actively pursue, while clusters located at lower pole contain much more changes will happen in a more naturally way with time. Contrasting with [active] pole, we considered lower pole as a dimension representing some naturally happening changes, which named [passive] changing. Thus, the vertical axis can be interpreted as a dimension of [active-passive] changing, with a continuum ranging from some changes can only happen if one actively pursue at upper pole, to some changes will occur in a natural, passive way at lower pole.

With terms of concern, it appears that explanation of axis in expectation can also be applicable to concern. The horizontal axis appears to be a continuum of concerns ranging from [private] dimension at right-hand pole, to [societal] dimension at left-hand; whereas the upper pole of the vertical axis contains changes one have to actively pursue, while at lower pole located changes will occur naturally with time. We chartered it as a [passive] changing dimension.

It is worth noting that, in graphic display of expectation in China(Figure 3), [self-actualization] and [possession], meanwhile in graphic display of concern, [self-image in the future] and [money, economic status] were partitioned as one cluster, which means one who mentioned self-actualization or self-image, mostly also mentioned money, possession or economic status in the future. Hence, we can see this may be a result indicating that Chinese children are evaluating what degree they actualize themselves based on a criterion of material possession.

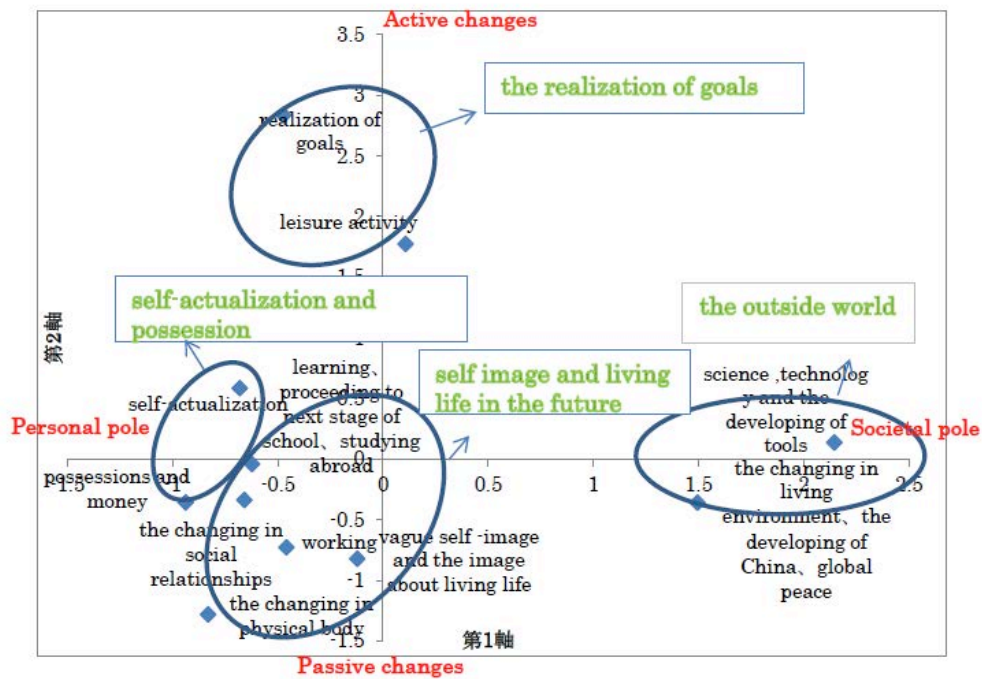


Figure 3 the graphical display of expectations in China

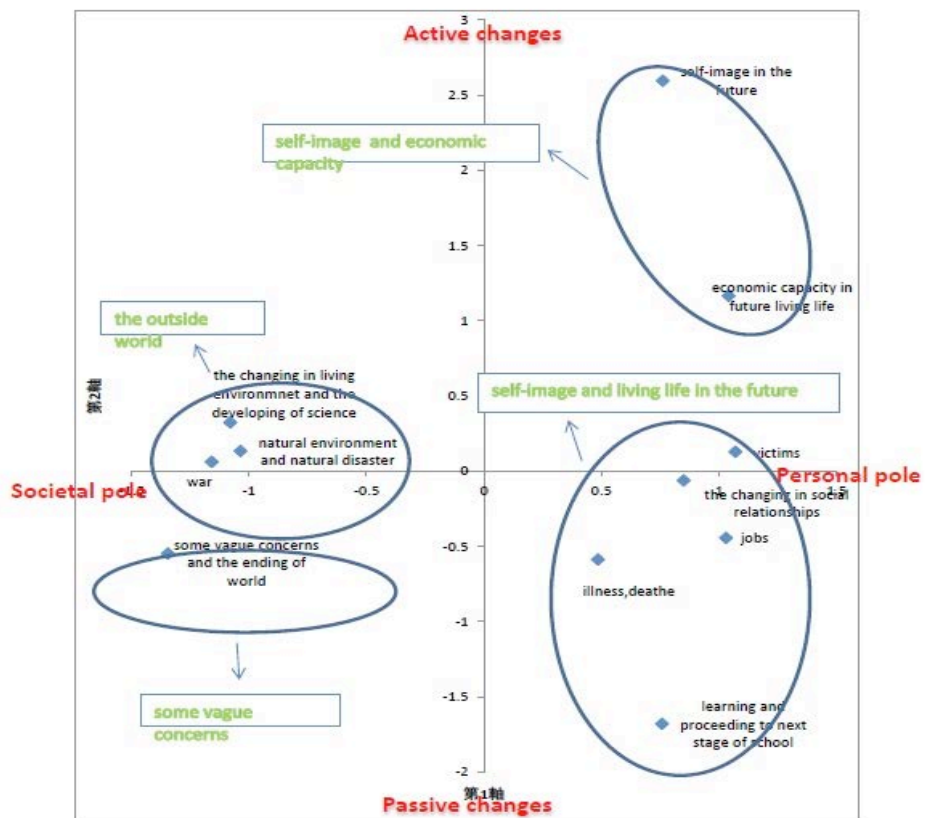


Figure 4 the graphical display of concerns in China

#### 4. Summary

This research focused on how social-cultural environment influences the development of children's future perspective through investigating and comparing the children's expectations and concerns within Japan and China.

Three analysis methods were carried out on data. With the first step, KJ method was adopted and all statements were classified into categories and each was named based on the content. Through this procedure, we got an outline of the topics about future and found that, most of topics in two countries were similar. For example, they both mentioned a lot about education, employment, marriage, and giving birth, which all these are mainly significant life events in a life trajectory.

In addition, the realization of goals or how they will be like as an adult were also a primary topic in both countries. Not only these topics of personal world, they also showed a strong interest in outside world, which means society, world, earth or the development in economy, technology. This "personal-societal" character of topics was also be confirmed by following analysis of Hayashi's quantification method-III, where both statement in Japan and China were constructed based on a personal-societal dimension.

In content analysis, we found Chinese children were caring more about the outcome or achievement when mentioning education, whereas Japanese children seemed just showing the expectation or concern for how it will change. In addition, Chinese children are more likely to be an adult, who is capable to help others; whereas Japanese children seemed vaguer about what kind of adult they would like to be.

This character that Japanese children's future image seems much vaguer is also showed in the following analysis. Through the explanation of axis, we found that both expectation and concern in China were constructed based on a dimension representing active-passive changing; whereas in Japan, the statement were constructed based on a dimension representing vague-specific image.

In general, the future perspective in Chinese children seems much clearer, more active and ambitious; whereas, Japanese children showed a vague image about their future, which may contribute a much more conservative culture in Japan as a reason to it. On the other hand, Chinese children who expect for self-actualization, at the same time have a desire for economic achievement in the future, which can be considered as a result that, the social environment in China which has been criticized for a bustle and dynamic atmosphere are giving a significant impact on children's moral value.

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### *Mapping the Concept(s) of Belonging*

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#### **Abstract**

Various epistemological changes – such as the linguistic, narrative, and cultural turns that have influenced humanistic and social scientific studies since the 1980s – have contributed to the increased academic interest in politics, discourses, processes, and practices of belonging. During the recent decades, the idea of belonging or not-belonging have been discussed and theorized in various fields with diverse parallel and/or overlapping conceptualizations. These include, for example, identity, place-making, displacement, and their representational, intersectional, and fluid nature. In recent years, several scholars have aimed to discuss the topics framed by the above mentioned concepts and points of view with a new conceptualization: ‘Belonging’ has been operationalized as a theoretical and analytical tool in the investigation of various contemporary forms of communal interaction. This paper explores ‘belonging’ as a scholarly concept with the method of concept analysis. By analysing a selection of recent academic publications in various fields we seek to answer the following questions: What does ‘belonging’ comprise? How is it used and defined in recent research? How does it relate to other similar concepts employed in the studies of belonging? What kind of added value does the concept bring to these studies? As a result, the paper presents tables and figures indicating the diversity in the notions of belonging and the links and relations between it and other related concepts. The paper concludes by discussing the problems and advantages of the concept of belonging in research.

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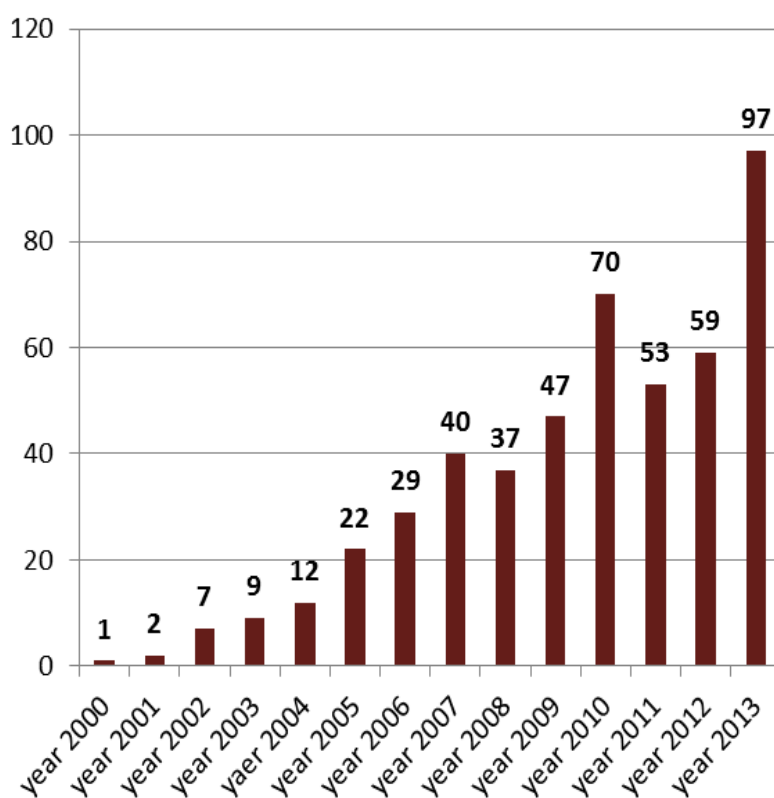
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## Introduction

Various epistemological changes – such as the linguistic, narrative, and cultural turns that have influenced humanistic and social studies since the 1980s – have contributed to the increased academic interest in politics, discourses, processes, and practices of belonging. During the recent decades, the ideas of belonging or not-belonging have been discussed and theorized in various fields with diverse parallel and/or overlapping conceptualizations such as identity, identification, place-making, exclusion, inclusion, displacement. Attention has been drawn to their affective, performative, narrative, representational, intersectional, multilayered, and fluid nature. In recent years, an increasing number of scholars have addressed the topics framed by the above-mentioned concepts and points of view with a new conceptualization: ‘belonging’ has been operationalized as a theoretical and analytical tool in the investigation of various contemporary forms of communal interaction.

Lately, the increased academic interest in the various aspects of belonging has led to a notable rise in the number of academic research articles touching the issue of belonging (see fig. 1). Although used extensively by scholars in various fields, the concept itself has often remained vague and ambiguous. The concept has been used to cover a wide variety of phenomena. For while there is an extensive and ever-growing body of literature related to ‘belonging’, the concept itself is in need of further clarification. Thus, also the studies that focus on the various aspects of belonging, would benefit from critical exploration and discussion of the idea of belonging as an experience, a process, and a concept.

Figure 1. The number of articles published between 2000 and 2013 with ‘belonging’ as an author-supplied keyword found by Academic Search Elite.



The aim of this paper is thus to deepen the understanding of the notion of ‘belonging’ and its uses in current discussions. The recent upsurge in the popularity of the concept of belonging is related to the parallel processes of transculturality, transnationality, interculturality, glocalization, mobility, connectivity, immigration, and multiculturalism that characterize the present cultural and social situation in many places. Yet, in the recent research the concept is discussed in conjunction with certain themes, topics and debates more frequently than others, and which also calls for a detailed examination of the concept itself and its various uses.

Thus, in the following, we explore ‘belonging’ as a scholarly concept with the method of concept analysis. By analysing a selection of the abstracts of recent academic publications in various fields of social sciences and humanities, we seek to answer the following questions: What does ‘belonging’ comprise? How is it used and defined in recent research? How does it relate to other similar concepts employed in the studies of politics, discourses, processes, and practices of belonging? Furthermore, based on our findings, we ask what kind of empirical and theoretical studies address the questions of belonging directly. What kind of added value does the concept bring to these studies?

The paper presents tables and figures indicating the diversity of the notions of belonging, and the links and relations between belonging and other related concepts. It concludes with a discussion of the problems and advantages of the concept of belonging in research, and addresses the question why issues related to ‘belonging’ are currently being debated so intensively.

### **Previous conceptualizations of ‘belonging’ and its relations to other concepts**

Belonging is, in Nira Yuval-Davis’ (2006, p. 197) words, “about emotional attachment, about feeling ‘at home’, and, about feeling ‘safe’”, and it is often “articulated and politicized only when it is threatened in some way”. According to this tentative definition, belonging relates to emotional or affective processes, material attachments, and social relations. Yuval-Davis emphasizes the need to see belonging as a dynamic process rather than a reified fixity, and the requirement to differentiate the three levels of the analysis of belonging, i.e. social locations; identifications and emotional attachments; and ethical and political values (ibid.).

The questions of belonging are often conceptualized in academic research as questions of identity, identification, or communality (Lähdesmäki, 2014). The concept of identity originates from the Latin word *idem*, meaning the same. Thus, the connotations of oneness and coherence are associated with the concept. In psychology, identity is commonly discussed in the context of individual personhood and growth. In social psychology and sociology, the concept has typically been regarded as relational (Rossi, 2008). The popularity of the concept has led to a severe critique of identity as sameness, and the establishment of the “anti-identity thinking” in, for example, the queer movement (Rossi, 2008, p. 34). As a response to this critique, identity has been conceptualized, for instance, in poststructuralist, feminist and queer theory as processual, inherently multiple, and changing (Butler, 1990; Scott, 1995). However, to Robert Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000), the concept of identity remains too ambiguous to be used as a tool for social analysis: it either

means too much in its essential form, too little when its fluidity and multiplicity are emphasized, or nothing at all.

In cultural studies, the concept of identity has been discussed in conjunction with race and ethnicity since the influential work of Stuart Hall (1990; 1992) which focuses on the concept of cultural identity, the politics of black diasporic identities, and the possibilities of hybrid identities. A number of scholars in this field have also engaged in the study of identity politics and the politicization of the questions of identity, such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and territoriality (see, for example, Rossi, 2008, p. 33; Lähdesmäki, 2014). Although identity politics often aims to empower certain groups of people and strengthen identification with them, it may also lead to the exclusion of other groups (Rajchman, 1995; Scott, 1995; West, 1995). This is why the concept of identity has been criticized for being essentialist, stable, and even violent in its implicit emphasis of coherence and sameness (Bell, 2007; Rossi, 2008). However, the need to belong and a sense of belonging are central to identity (*ibid.*).

Like identity, belonging has been one of the major themes of classical psychology and sociology (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 198). The concept of belonging emphasizes the social aspects of living in a world with others and relating to others in a certain historical and cultural context. This sense of belonging or not-belonging is, however, structured and directed by power and hegemonies, which can be analysed with the help of the concept intersectionality. Intersectionality originates from feminist theory (Crenshaw, 1991; McCall, 2005; Ferree, 2011). It refers to a critical understanding of the workings of power in positioning people hierarchically in certain social categories such as ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, social class, or bodily ability. Which ones of these categories are the most relevant, is, however, a question that has been heavily debated (Karkulehto et al., 2012; Mulinari & Neerdgard, 2012; Keskinen, 2013; Norocel, 2013; Lähdesmäki & Saresma, 2014).

Both belonging and intersectionality thus refer to the idea of identities as multilayered or hybrid (Staunæs, 2003, p. 101). In sociology and sociolinguistics, the complexity and interaction of social formations has also been addressed by the concept of superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007; Blommaert & Rampton 2011). This concept has been used in particular to explain the social and cultural processes of migration and globalization that are characterized by the dynamic interplay of diverse variables such as ethnicity, language, religion, cultural values, and the legal and societal position of migrants.

### **Data, methods and analysis**

Concepts are essential in producing scientific knowledge and conferring theoretical paradigms. In addition, concepts are produced in political debates and adopted from academic contexts to public and political discussions. The use of vague, complex, or fluid concepts in political discourse often includes a political intention: concepts are transformed into political tools. In research, vague and poorly understood concepts may lead to invalid and false results and conclusions. Belonging as a fluid academic and easily politicized concept thus requires a closer conceptual study.

The traditional methods of concept analysis have been criticized for the lack of extensive empirical investigations (e.g., Botes, 2002). In what follows, the concept of

belonging is explored with a concept analysis based on a broad empirical qualitative and quantitative research. As a theoretical point of departure for this investigation we adopt Mieke Bal's (2002) notion of the 'travelling' nature of concepts within and between distinct discourses and societal and scholarly domains. Our aim is to find out where (in which geographical locations, disciplinary fields and in relation to which other concepts) theories and studies of belonging have emerged, and how belonging is defined and operationalized.

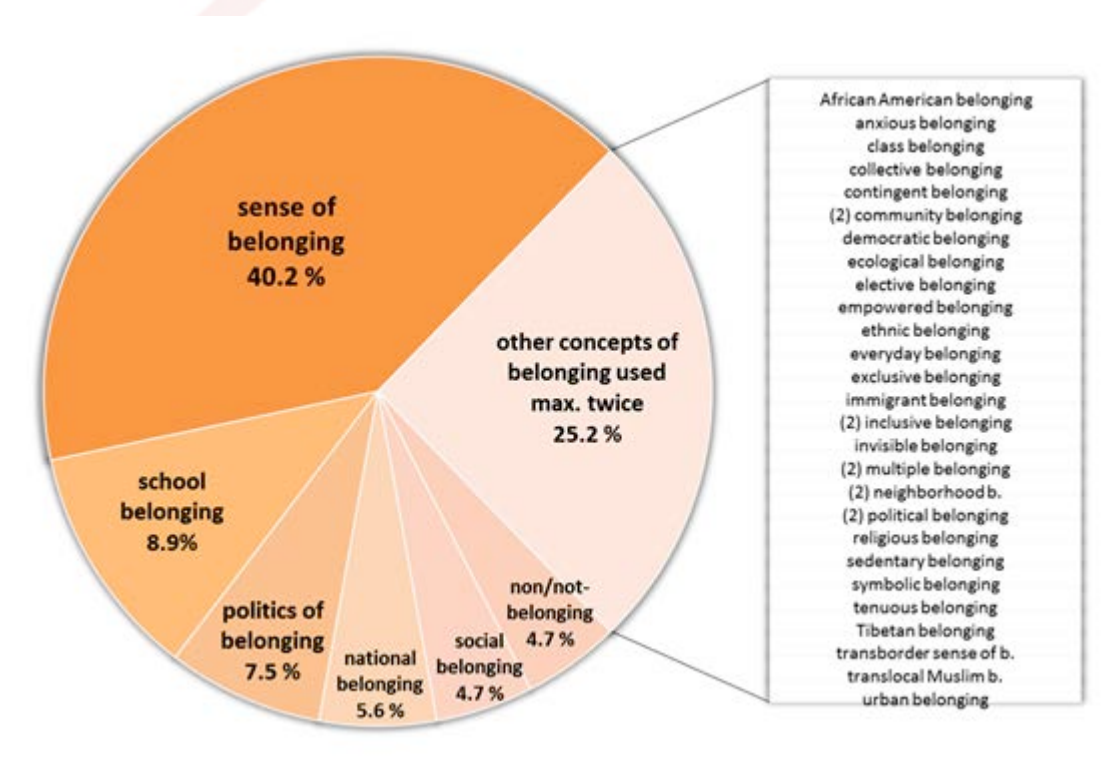
The research data consists of abstracts of scholarly peer-reviewed English language articles that were found in the Academic Search Elite (ASE) in April 2014. ASE was chosen as the database for gathering data due to its extensive content, interdisciplinary character, and emphasis on socio-cultural aspects. Disciplinary subject categories in ASE cover, for example, ethnology, history, pedagogy, sport, philosophy, religion, social work, sociology, information technology, music, political science, communication, languages, literature, arts, agriculture, biology, chemistry, engineering, environment and life sciences, applied science and technology, and multi- and interdisciplinary inquiries. In this study, the investigation falls on abstracts that were published in 2012 and 2013 with 'belonging' as an author-supplied keyword. With this framing (excluding nine abstracts in which the keyword was used in relation to molecular biology or chemistry), the data was composed of 147 abstracts of peer-reviewed articles, which were then chosen for a closer qualitative and quantitative analyses.

The 147 studies included in the data were published in 119 academic journals covering a wide range of publications in humanities, social sciences, and related fields of inquiry. Eleven (7.5 %) articles were published in the *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, six (4.1 %) in the journal *Identities*, four (2.7 %) in the *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, three (2.0 %) in *Social & Cultural Geography*, and three (2.0 %) the *Journal of Homosexuality*. Considering the scope of these journals, it thus seems that the notion of belonging invites authors to publish their articles in publications specializing in interculturality and identity-related issues. Alternatively, the journals specialized in the questions of interculturality and identity are the ones that – perhaps more readily than others – welcome articles dealing with belonging.

The majority of the articles, 85 (57.8 %), came from English-speaking countries, which, given the fact that the search was restricted to articles written in English, is understandable. Universities from the United States were involved in 33 articles, British universities in 27, Canadian universities in 12, Australian universities in 12, and a university from New Zealand in one article. 49 of the articles (33.3 %) came from European universities. There were seven articles from Asia (China, Japan, Malaysia), three from Middle-East (Lebanon, Israel, and Iran), and one from Central-America (Mexico). However, a great number of articles were co-written and in many cases the writers represented different universities, countries, and even continents. The university department (including "schools", "institutions", and "centers") was mentioned in 74 articles. The fields of academic study that appeared most often were: social sciences (in 26 articles, including philosophy), humanities (15 articles), environmental sciences (13 articles), educational sciences (11 articles), and health sciences (11 articles). It must be noted, however, that in many co-authored articles the writers came from different departments and disciplines.

In the abstracts, defining the concept of belonging was not stated as an aim of the studies. Only one study engaged in conceptual analysis of belonging: it focused on the use of the term in academic research in order to guide measurement approaches aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of community-based programs for people with disabilities. In one abstract, 'belonging' was defined in negative terms: the authors proposed to widen the commonplace understanding of the notion by introducing new dimensions to it, thereby defining the commonplace understanding of belonging. In another abstract, the authors sought to define the concept by providing other concepts to circumscribe the scope of the notion. In general, the approach in the studies in our data tended to be empirical rather than conceptual.

Figure 2. The word 'belonging' used as a combined concept (N = 107) in the abstracts of articles published in 2012 and 2013 with 'belonging' as an author-supplied keyword (found by Academic Search Elite).

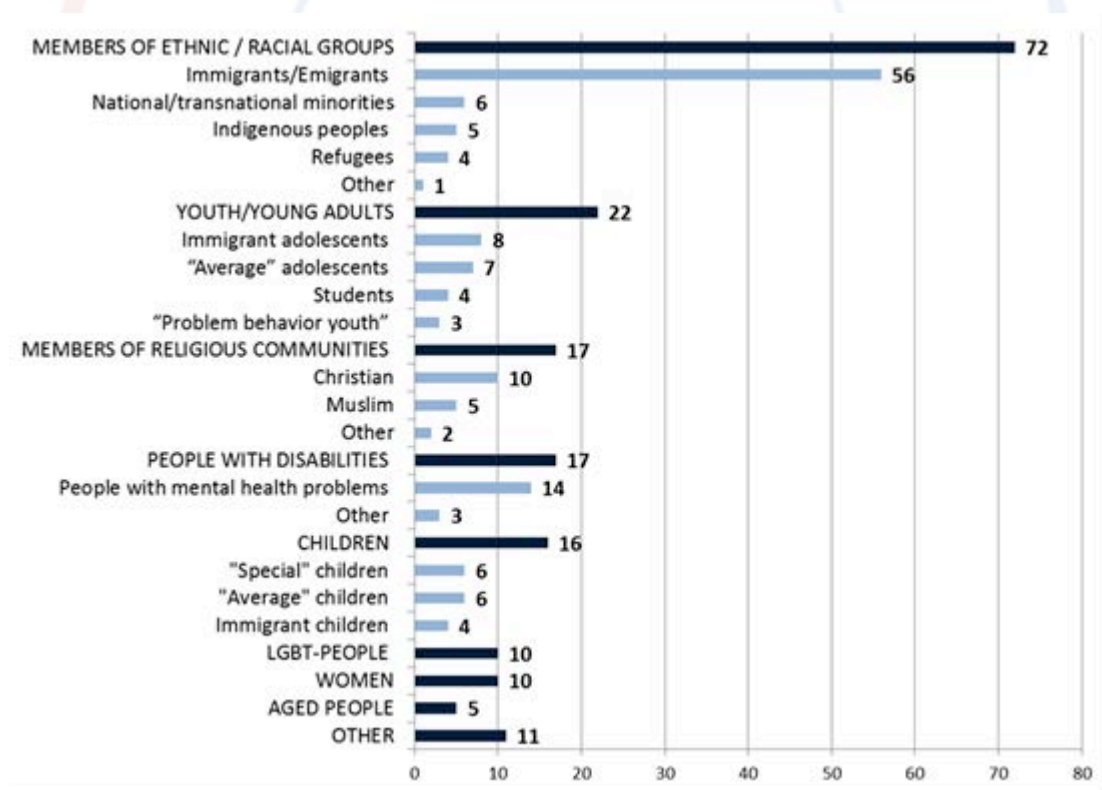


In order to better understand the conceptualization of the belonging, we also analysed the concepts that were combined with it. The abstracts included altogether 35 different co-concepts for belonging, which reveals that the concept of belonging often needs further definition. The marked variation of these co-concepts also indicates that the concept of belonging is highly flexible and that it can be applied to various approaches and types of empirical data. In some studies, belonging was used in combination with several different concepts. The co-concepts and further definitions of belonging can be divided into two categories: concepts, such as 'national belonging' that have a rather clear object, and more abstract and flexible combinations, such as 'questions of belonging'. In our analysis, we omitted the latter expressions apart from three recurrent combinations: 'sense of belonging' that occurs in 43 articles, 'politics of belonging' that was mentioned eight times, and 'not/non-belonging' that was used five times. These formulations are closely linked to certain academic approaches and traditions while expressions such as 'questions of

belonging’ or ‘relations of belonging’ are less so. In the data, however, these abstract combinations were used more frequently than the other, more strictly defined concept combinations. Of these, the most frequent ones were: ‘school belonging’ (12 times), ‘national belonging’ (6), and ‘social belonging’ (5). Altogether 27 concept combinations were used only once or twice (see fig. 2).

The analysis of whose belonging has been studied, our data shows that research on belonging tends to focus on groups that could be described as ‘vulnerable’ and in subordinate positions in society (fig. 3). The overwhelming majority of the studies concentrate on members of diverse ethnic or racial groups. The majority of these studies focus on immigrants and emigrants, but also on national minorities and indigenous peoples. Particularly, the research discusses immigrants in the USA and the EU. African Americans and Hispanic Americans were the most frequently studied groups in the USA, while European research concentrates on British society. In Australia, special attention is given to aboriginal people, while the studies on Asia and Africa tend to focus on national minorities or intra-continental migration.

Figure 3. The focus of the studies on belonging in the abstracts of articles (N = 147) published in 2012 and 2013 with ‘belonging’ as an author-supplied keyword (found by Academic Search Elite). Main categories in dark blue and their sub-categories in light blue.



The youth, children, and elderly people tend not to be similarly subordinated in their communities as many ethnic or racial minorities, but they are ‘vulnerable’ when the power relations in society are considered. Together these three age groups form a considerable proportion of the people whose belonging was investigated in the studies. Furthermore, within these groups, the focus is on the children, youth, and elderly with special needs, for example, adolescents with behaviour problems,

immigrant children, or depressed aged people. Other groups scrutinized in the studies are people with mental health problems, LGBT-people, and minority women. Often, for example, in the studies exploring same-gender loving black women or depressed gay men, the different categories of vulnerability overlap significantly.

The only group whose belonging was discussed in the studies that is not in any obviously vulnerable position in society were the religious communities. Most of the studies that scrutinize the belonging of religious people concentrate on Christian communities in Western societies, where Christianity is the religion of the majority. Some of the studies, however, also investigated the position of Muslims, often in connection to questions of ethnicity or race.

Mapping the keywords and subject terms that were used together with the concept of belonging highlights the centrality of race and ethnicity in the research on belonging. The keyword/subject term that is most frequently used together with it is '(im)migration'/'(im)migrants'. 'Multiculturalism' and 'diaspora' are also recurring concepts. The great number of other concepts connected to nation, race, and ethnicity (for example, 'citizenship', 'national characteristics', 'racialization', 'ethnic groups') also signals the emphasis on ethnic and/or racial relations and differences. The studies in our data thus foreground the often problematized simultaneous belonging to a minority and a nation.

Not surprisingly, then, on the basis of the data, the study of belonging is often connected to the study of identity. Identity was supplied as a keyword/subject term in almost one third of the abstracts. These studies generally focus on group identities – or more specifically on national, social, or racial identity. Along with identity, the centrality of social and communal relations was emphasized in the listings of keywords/subject terms. There were altogether eighteen different concepts with a definition 'social' in our data. These included, for example, 'social network', 'social integration', and 'social cohesion'. The majority of these concepts emphasize inclusion and participation, while exclusion and social 'abnormality' was brought up in only a few studies.

To summarize the above: belonging is often discussed in the context of migration. The concept of belonging is employed in the analysis of political and economic systems, consumption, legislation, and citizenship, as well as in the studies on religious belief of Christians and Muslims. Schooling and education are dealt with in studies focussing especially on learning disabilities, but also in relation to community belonging, including housing and architecture. Sameness and difference are discussed by taking into account ethnic diversity, gender, sexual orientation, social class, age, and disability.

In the data, there is a considerable variation in the types of material used to measure or explore belonging. The vast majority of the studies engage with contemporary issues through data collected specifically for the purpose of the study in question, or use data recently compiled in, for example, national surveys. Even those four studies that engaged only with historical data were motivated by a willingness to better understand contemporary culture. While articles acknowledged the role of historical construction of the phenomena they sought to tackle, the focus was on the contemporary cultural, political, social, and spatial arrangements. The need to study



these arrangements and their affect on people's sense and ways of belonging is often motivated by the mobilities of people, and also innovative methods, such as circulation of songs among diasporic communities (Impey, 2013), were employed. The majority of the studies, however, engaged with belonging through traditional methods.

Our data brings forth a wide range of methods that were employed to study belonging. Statistical analyses, surveys, and questionnaires were most often used to study old people and pupils' relation to their school or living environment. In order to grasp the multiplicity of practices through which people seek to belong, or experience, express, and produce belonging to groups and multiple localities, the scholars resorted to interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, personal reflection, observation, and analyses of cultural events and public debates. Furthermore, the studies that sought to explore the multiplicity of belonging engaged in discussions of previous scholarship, and employed discourse and concept analyses. Mixed methods were applied in several studies.

The recurrent notion of 'sense of belonging' in the data draws from social psychology and is particularly employed in quantitative studies that use scales, questionnaires, and different sorts of measurements in order to find correlations between, for example, sense of belonging and learning outcomes, motivation, and mental health issues. In contrast to these quantitative approaches, various practices of belonging are investigated with qualitative methods. Particularly the studies on the negotiation of belonging to multiple groups and localities, and discussing people whose belonging to a place was somehow 'precarious' or who seemed to be 'out of place' in their environments, resorted to ethnography, interviews, or personal reflection.

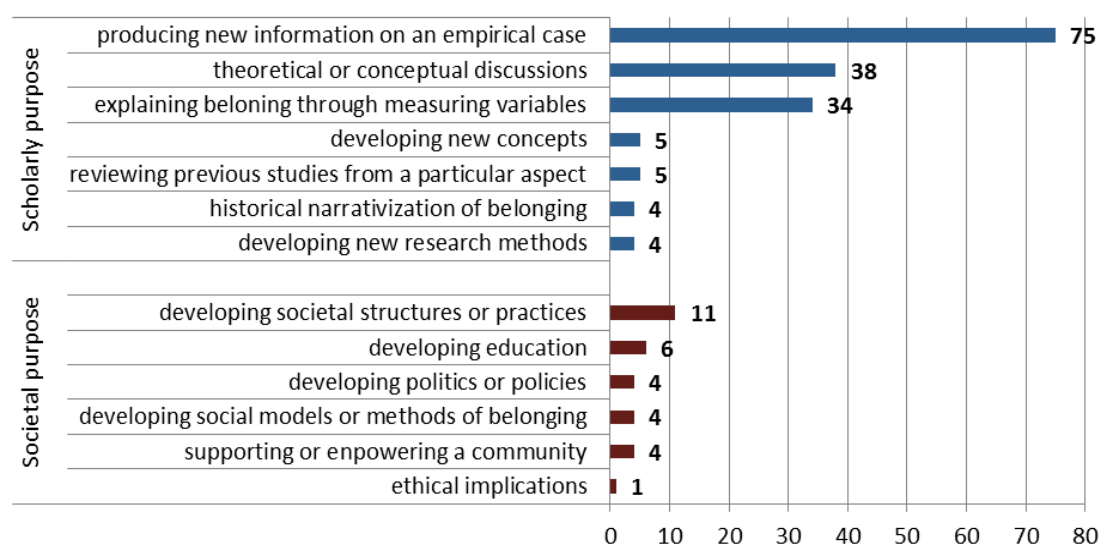
The studies in our data drew from various theoretical frameworks, such as childhood studies, child psychology, ecological framework of child development, postcolonial critique, population mobility studies, social and cultural geography, social network system theory, the investment model of decision strategies, theories of modernization, and market theory. The theoretical framework was explicated in only a few studies. It was stated, for example, that the approach is phenomenological and hermeneutic (Heggstad et al., 2013), that the study uses post-structural feminist framework (Meyer & Borrie, 2013), tourist research (Galliford, 2012), or the resource theory (Cheung et al., 2013), engages with sociological exploration of working-class place attachment (Paton, 2013), or that the study contributes to feminist, ethnic, and migration studies literature (Oliviero, 2013). Inter-disciplinary approach was mentioned recurrently, for example by stating "linking the social and the biological" (Wotton, 2013) as research aim. The strategy of reflexivity as well as the "interplay between historical research and personal experience" (Minkin, 2012) were also used as research methodologies, but the majority of the studies were based on data gathered by traditional methods, such as surveys and interviews.

In some studies of our data, belonging was discussed in a critical, postcolonial, or feminist paradigm; it was declared, for example, that the study had anti-racist or health educational aims or took an explicitly ethical or emancipatory position. Psychological framework was used to deal with individual affects, suicide, or learning disabilities, but the majority of the studies approached belonging as a social phenomenon and emphasized community identities and the relational character of

belonging. The data also includes market-oriented research and research that aims at policy making or clinical interventions. The studies also mentioned the biopolitical analysis inspired by Émile Durkheim, René Girard, Giorgio Agamben, and Roberto Esposito as well as Felix Ravaisson's philosophy, Pierre Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field, and Georg Simmel's theorization of the urban space. References to Nira Yuval-Davis's concept of 'politics of belonging' were made several times. Ash Amin's theory of multiculturalism and phenotypical racism and his notion of a politics of the commons were discussed in two studies.

As the analysis above shows, the studies in our data use the concept of belonging to discuss various social, societal, political, and cultural topics. Although a number of these studies highlight discriminative, oppressive, or unequal social practices and address various different concrete conflicts or barriers in social and cultural situations, in the abstracts, the scholars rarely explicitly aim to tackle these problems (see fig. 4). In the abstracts, the purpose of these studies is more commonly related to the academic context: in 94.6 per cent of them it is stated that the study has some kind of scholarly purpose, while 5.4 per cent of the abstracts describe the purpose of the study in practical terms. Both practical social or societal, and scholarly aims were brought to the fore in 13.6 per cent of the abstracts.

Figure 4. The purpose of the research stated in the abstracts of articles (N = 147) published in 2012 and 2013 with 'belonging' as an author-supplied keyword (found by Academic Search Elite).



This analysis indicates that scholars have relatively little interests in broadening the scope of their studies from academic contexts and scholarly discussions to solving concrete problems in society. The studies in our data concentrate mainly on producing new information and deepening the understanding of restricted cases. They provide theoretical formulations and conceptual discussions on belonging or not-belonging, and explain belonging by measuring diverse variables in particular contexts. Although the results of these studies offer various possibilities to participate in societal and political discussions and to influence social, societal, and political practices, relatively few scholars explicitly point to these possibilities in their abstracts. The results

suggest a modest interaction between the academia and social agents. For although a number of scholars use empirical data gathered from the 'field', they rarely explicitly aimed to 'return' their results back to this field in order to develop and improve the structures and practices that were found to be at fault.

### **Conclusions**

In recent academic studies, the concept of belonging is used to refer to multiple groups and feelings, and a wide range of methods and sets of data are employed in research that seeks to operationalize it. As a concept, belonging, however, remains open, ambivalent, ambiguous, and flexible. This becomes problematic when belonging is measured in quantitative research. For although the concept itself is defined in the quantitative studies, the results are categorized and provide models or patterns rather than refined understandings of how and through what kinds of means people seek to belong.

Our analysis shows that studies on belonging tend to focus on 'vulnerable' groups through empirical methods. Belonging is mostly understood as a positive. What is foregrounded is how people, sometimes against the odds, manage to integrate themselves into institutions, nations, etc. The failure to belong is not in focus. While the studies in our data often engage with people or groups who can be seen as multiply oppressed (depressed gay men, for example), intersectionality or superdiversity as theoretical frameworks do not surface in the abstracts. The scarcity of studies engaging with cultural products as means and manifestations of belonging is also remarkable. While the request by Nira Yuval-Davis (2006) to study belonging on the levels of social locations, identifications and emotional attachments, and ethical and political values has thus been responded to in the choice of empirical data in recent studies, a more rigorous theoretical engagement with socio-cultural frameworks is called for. We also suggest that cultural practices and phenomena should be taken far more seriously to the focus of research.

It seems that questions of belonging have emerged in recent research for at least two reasons. First, in connection to claims of identity and indigenusness, they are part of the "return of the local", as has been suggested by Peter Geschiere (2009). Second, questions of belonging entail practical and political implications, and in the contemporary world the acts of inclusion/exclusion, identification, and struggles over identity have become ever more topical.

As a concept, belonging is closely linked to identity. There seems to be, however, a movement in scholarship away from the notion of identity towards belonging, which indicates a movement away from the assumption of sameness embedded in the notion of identity towards belonging, which is understood as multiple, shifting, simultaneous, temporary (or even momentary), and located in – or oriented towards – multiple locations. But if identity is already understood as "something that all people have, seek, construct, and negotiate" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 2), as relational instead of a stable or coherent entity every individual 'has', do we need the concept of belonging?

It is possible that identity has become somewhat worn out in academic debates, and that scholars are simply in search of another concept. In our data, belonging seems to have surfaced alongside with the concept of identity: this emergence as well as the

upsurge of the notion of belonging in recent research can be interpreted as critique of the notion of identity. Belonging does emphasize the relationality of subjectivity more readily than identity. Furthermore, as the studies in social psychology manifest, belonging can be understood as scalar: one can (feel to) belong to certain groups to a certain degree, for a moment. Thus, while identity implies sameness and coherence within a group or an individual and assumes a shared basis, belonging can account for that which can change and shift in time and place.

In scholarly discussions, the concepts of identity and identification seem to refer to a state where subjects or groups recognize the existence of certain identities as a part of people's subjectivity – whether as a static, 'achieved' state, or a flexible on-going process of becoming. Human relations and attachments to other people and cultural phenomena are, however, profoundly nuanced, and the level of attachment varies and transforms. People may feel that they belong to something without necessarily describing the feeling as an identification or identity. The idea of belonging thus seems to form a conceptual sphere that is useful in theoretical investigations of subjectivity and group dynamics. It opens perspectives to discuss people's social relations, and social and cultural practices embrace, for example, feelings, emotions, and affects. In order to function as an academic concept and an instrument in scholarly investigations, however, belongingness – i.e. belonging as a particular relation to other people and as social and cultural practices – needs to be carefully defined.

The strength of the concept of belonging lies in the fact that it enables the inclusion of both social and societal dimensions. Belonging is not simply a private feeling as it comprises both emotions and external relations. It includes a political aspect and points to the norms, restrictions and regulations that enable or hinder belonging. The prevalence of studies and debates on migration in our data points to this aspect. Compared to identity belonging is also 'democratic'. While identities often draw on shared traditions, are politically charged, and centre on debates over inclusion and exclusions, belonging, by drawing attention to practices, enables more nuanced analyses and understanding of the multiplicity of attachments to a range of material and immaterial objects – groups, products, and spaces.

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The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, semi-transparent arcs: a light blue one in the foreground and a light red one behind it, creating a sense of depth and movement.





***Owning Multiple and Complex Belongings in the Borderlands:  
An Autoethnography***

Kathleen Fairbanks Rubin, Independent Researcher, USA

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2014  
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0071

**Abstract**

This autoethnography recounts the process of developing my own agency out of a borderland life-world formed in multiple geographic sites. I use self-reflection and research to make explicit a functional inbetween space where I belong. Through Gloria Anzaldúa's work, literature from border and cultural studies, identity formation and my own qualitative research, I analyze the complexities of this space. The narratives presented illustrate a spectrum of belonging and of alienation, unpredictable and frequent mobility, and unrecognized loss. I crossed the border from the U.S. to Mexico daily to attend first grade. I learned differing cultural rules and developed tolerance for ambiguity. In Mexico City at nine, I fluctuated between being Mexican and an expat. At thirteen, nearly a Mexican teen, I moved to the U.S. After two years, I added a rural, Midwestern, US identity before returning to my birthplace in urban California. As an adult, reflexive action resulted in a sudden awareness of an encompassing image: an internal convivial borderland ambiance around and between my distinct cultural identities. This holistic redefinition gave open access to my border person identity and mindset. It made available rich and ample resources for bridging political, social, organizational and individual boundaries in all aspects of my life. My story and its analysis offer an alternative to categorical identity norms with a single belonging place. Sharing these possibilities contributes to understanding the knowledge base, abilities and skills available to border people and those with multipart cultural identities whose numbers are increasing in a globalized world.

Keywords: border person, borderlands, belonging, Anzaldúa, autoethnography, communication, Coatlicue state, reflexive action, multi-sited belongings

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This autoethnographic journey recounts how discovering border personhood elucidates the satisfactions of owning multi-sited cultural belongings while learning to survive and thrive in borderlands. Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience (Ellis, C., Adams, T.E., & Bochner, P., 2011). “Reflective and engaging, focused on creation and making something happen, and providing means for movement and change, autoethnography is more than a method. [I]t is a way of living and of writing life honestly, complexly, and passionately” (Holman Jones, S., Adams, T.E., & Ellis, C., Eds., 2013).

Most people looking at me and listening to me talk English conclude I am a typical American. Light brown hair, now grey, blue eyes and the small freckles sprinkled over my easily sun-burned skin give no clues to what lies beneath. It has taken me years to unravel the depths of how I came to be different from most Americans. When I speak Spanish similar questions arise, however, there is a common word in Spanish, *fronteriza*, which communicates who I am. Naming myself a border person, in English, in 1988 and incorporating borderland living into life and work in organization development gives me words to describe my differences to people on the northern side of the US/Mexico border.

In early 1991 when I read Gloria Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987), I knew I’d found a kindred spirit. Her accounts helped me feel less alone and more grounded in what, to heartlanders, is an unfathomable identity. Exhortations of inclusivity, mediating divides (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 85); defining mental nepantlism and cultural collisions and the need to be “healed so that we are on both shores at once” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 78) supported my own feelings and ideas. In spite of our differences, her philosophy helped resolve confusion around my tolerance for ambiguity, identity and belonging.

Many of us have multipart cultural identifications, some call them identities. For us, just one identity doesn’t work and a two part hyphenated alternative may not describe us either. Narratives of living in three different cultures during childhood and multi-disciplinary analyses of the effects on belonging and identity provide clarity on behavioral responses. Next I describe how these experiences prepare me for adult reflexive action resulting in naming myself a border person, development of the concept of a border person mindset and borderland communication strategies. I show how this is analogous to the process Anzaldúa experienced as she moved toward a new mestiza consciousness and continued writing out paths for living life in the borderlands. Emphasis in her later work highlights the importance of transforming personal history into spiritual activism and is similar to an autoethnographic process. Anzaldúa’s work lays the foundation for recommending continued research on alternatives to coercive assimilation, a practice which deracinates and silences cultural origins not conforming to the majority.

To the phenomenologist Alfred Schutz *life-world* means the world into which we are born, the one from which we receive assumptions about everyday life (Wagner, 1970). I expand his definition to include parts of additional life-worlds I acquired as a child.

I was born into my first life-world, in Santa Barbara, California to middle-class white Anglo Saxon protestant parents. I have no siblings. By the time I was five we lived in three different houses, in two cities and travelled by car across the deserts of California, Arizona and Texas, to arrive in El Paso, where my father began work for the U.S. government. Multiple moves continued until I returned to California to attend university.

### **Narrative I: Immersion in the Borderlands of El Paso/Juarez**

Too young by state law to enter first grade in El Paso, my mother finds a school for me across the border in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. Every morning we board the street car that crosses the border into Juarez, get off, and walk several blocks to my school. My mother drops me off and doesn't return until five o'clock. I spend lunch and siesta time, from noon to three, with a classmate's family. I'm a five-year-old in a new culture, I don't know anyone. I don't speak Spanish. My mother and father are across the border. I spend much of the first three months crying. To comfort and quiet me, the principal sits me up on her desk in front of the sixth grade class she teaches. She looks into my blue eyes, smiles and pinches my cheek with thumb and forefinger and says "*¡ay, que chula!*" (Oh, how cute!) and I cry even harder. Yet by the end of the school year, I speak, read, write and do math in Spanish, but not in English. And, I've had an indelible Mexican "home-stay" experience with the Iglesias family that took me into their home and life.

### **Analysis: What a Five Year Old Can Learn in the Borderlands**

Events themselves have their impacts, but as they occur within space and time and culture, they also occur within a developmental matrix of experience and capacity within an individual. To better understand what happened to me and my sense of belonging, I contextualize my early childhood experience within developmental psychological theories of attachment.

At age five, I was frightened and abandoned by my mother when she left me in a situation where the fledging underpinnings of my first life-world suddenly didn't apply. I learned fragments of a new life-world and discovered alternate ways of eating, living, speaking, thinking, and of managing my feelings of fear and abandonment. Within a few months, I began to belong in a second life-world.

But my relationship with my mother changed. I lost trust in her and distanced myself from her, especially in Mexican settings where I felt she was the foreigner and I wasn't. Teachers and an unfamiliar family offered refuge. I developed my sense of attachment not only to them, but to the culture, language, and customs in which I experienced a supportive and safe "holding environment" (Winnicott, 1960), a space necessary for child soothing and internal emotional regulation and the eventual ability of "connecting well" as an adult (Kegan, 2001). At the same time, I managed the hurt and anger of separation from my mother by cutting myself off from her emotionally and substituting an air of independence (Karen, 1990).

My father, from then on, endearingly, referred to me as a half-breed or mongrel because of my facility to move between cultures. Speaking two languages and functioning in two cultures served to help me develop agency. I felt strong and capable because of my skills. Adults asked me to interpret for them. As I managed

novelty, fear and aloneness I formed an emotional defense template of appearing independent and self-sufficient.

### **Narrative II: Four Mex-Pat Years: Mexico City and Guadalajara**

Over the next three years I live in four new homes and go to four new schools as we move to Phoenix, Arizona, Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, Bakersfield and Redding, California.

When I am nine, we move to Mexico City. At first, being a Mex-Pat is like playing on a checkerboard with missing squares. Small town casual to cosmopolitan Mexico City, public transportation and taxis, new history to learn, excavations of the indigenous past to ponder, Catholic churches everywhere, a confluence of many cultures and an automatic change of social status.

As an employee of a joint Mexican-American government commission, my father is assigned a chauffeur-interpreter and a “red card,” a sort of get-out-of-jail-free card, to be shown in case of any difficulty with Mexican officials. Privileged white-skinned Americans in Mexico with government connections and economic capacity automatically moves us—me—into upper- middle-class society.

My formal education continues in three successive private schools, half day in English and at least a half day in Spanish, required by the government. My mother and I live in eight different rented houses and apartments in different sections of the city while my father works “out in the field” and comes to the city two days a month to report to headquarters. During school vacations, we travel by bus to spend time with him in outlying rural locations.

I have casual associations with expat children in Girl Scouts, YWCA and Episcopal Church activities. The one constant in this life of changing cultures, living spaces and schools is the Lopez family that we meet roller skating in Chapultepec Park. They and their two daughters my age are our connection to “normal” Mexican lower middle-class life, weekend excursions and holiday celebrations. When I leave the commercial street in an old part of the city and walk through huge wooden doors into their enclosed neighborhood I escape into welcome warmth, unconditional acceptance and lack of pretention, just like I did with the Iglesias family in Juarez. It’s a relief to leave the responsibilities of expat-ness for a while. Here I am just one of the kids playing tag on smooth stone slabs between rows of single story living units. We compete with radios playing popular tunes, women talking as they hang up laundry, dogs lazing in the sun and flowers blooming in pots outside doorways.

After three years, my father is transferred to the provincial city of Guadalajara. The three of us live in only two different houses. For the first time in Mexico I have a family home. The only Protestant American in a Catholic school, I continue the back and forth-ness, the fitting-in, between a new group of expats and Mexican classmates. Sara Chavez and her sisters, daughters of a Mexican army general, and I ride a city bus to school every morning. Before we leave, Mrs. Chavez makes the sign of the cross over us and says a prayer to the Virgin of Guadalupe to keep us safe.

### **Analysis: Re-Thinking Mex-Pat Life**

Educational psychologists and sociologists offer insight into events that occurred during those years. Crossing social and language boundaries felt seamless, natural and satisfying. I flowed from one circumstance to another, in what La Framboise, Coleman, & Gerton (1993, p. 399) called *alternation*, which assumes it is possible to know and understand two different cultures and to alter behavior to fit particular social contexts.

Expats were exclusive, cliquish, preferred speaking English and seemed jealous that I had no American accent in Spanish. Or did that fact imply a lower status in their eyes? Mexicans were surprised and pleased that an American could and would sound so Mexican. Or was it the power of my privilege?

Buckingham (2008, p. 1) points out tensions I noted between an expat identity over which I had no choice and desire to be closer to middle-class Mexicans whom I assumed were similar to me in important ways and were the majority culture. I practiced border crossing between social, religious and cultural groups, even ones that conflicted (Canclini, 1992, p. 214) as if, like Giddens wrote, they were fluid, not fixed (Buckingham, 2008, p. 9).

I used power manipulations inherent in both expat and Mexican societal constructs that were bolstered by the confidence and protection I assumed my father's position afforded me. Spanish language itself supported internalizing class distinctions by mandating to whom was owed the deference of formal forms of address. When I spoke to the maid, for example, I would tell her what to do or not do using grammatical forms for what Mexican society deemed to be lower classes. I sensed that if I acted in a more egalitarian way I could be ignored. If I acted "too Mexican" with expats, I'd lose connection with them. If I was perceived by Mexicans to be a usual expat I wouldn't fit in with them. Zigmunt Bauman (2008, p. 8) might suggest that I was practicing lessons in "rational conduct," keeping options open rather than risk gaining an identity that fit so tightly, options would be given up in advance.

During this comparatively settled last year of living as a Mex-Pat in Guadalajara, my mother decided I was becoming "too Mexican" and we returned to the States, to Michigan, where my father was born and raised. It is two years before he leaves Mexico, retires and joins us in Michigan.

### **Narrative III: Birthright? Northern Michigan**

I start high school the next year in a small city three hours south of the Canadian border. For the first time I meet my father's brother and a young second cousin who, along with me and my mother, carry the family name of Fairbanks ancestors who were early settlers to that area. Soon after we arrive I am walking down the main street and a lady stops me, looks me in the eye. "You're a Fairbanks," she says. "You have the same eyes as your grandfather." I am astounded. At a family reunion I meet relatives that grew up with my father. I'm beginning to think I belong here.

However, for the next two years, I am as miserable and out of place as I was in first grade in Juarez, feelings exacerbated by missing my father's presence and support. I know nothing about being an American teenager. No one wants to know anything about me or Mexico and I have no past with them. After two years of outsider pain, I

decide—against my mother’s wishes—to change schools. Since we now live in the tiny burg close to the cherry orchard where my father was born, I choose a nearby high school and don’t say a word about Mexico or my past life. I know the language now and how to dress. I am accepted by the smaller school’s insiders almost immediately. During the next two years, I am a very happy, successful rural northern Michigan teenager: I play in the marching band, I am voted a cheerleader, editor of the yearbook, have a football star boyfriend, a job as a ‘soda jerk’ in the local drugstore and I get good grades. I work in our cherry orchard in the summers, and without mentioning it to classmates, I’m an interpreter for Mexican migrant workers. As soon as I graduate, I leave for Southern California.

### **Analysis: Re-Visiting a Teenage Mind**

To make sense of these four years, in other than adolescent memories, I looked for explanations. The first high school community was a tightly supervised and policed traditional community with restrictions on movement and change. Members were masters at keeping insiders from deviating from their norms and at excluding outsiders (Bauman, 2008b, p. 21). Mex-Pat privileged status of race and class opened no doors here. During the first three years we lived in rented housing that was seen as less desirable than owning your own home; a Mexican, one of the Mexico City Lopez sisters, lived with us. The only Mexicans the locals knew were migrant laborers that came in the summer and left when the cherries were picked. And, we were associated with a farming community rather than an urbanized area. I was marginalized and relegated to lower status. Unlike my Mexico experience, there was no possibility of alternation or escape to a more comfortable space. The apparent independence of demanding a change seems like a repetition of the survival response I used in first grade to cover hurt. When a past identity didn’t work, I took charge and substituted an air of independence for the relationships from which I was alienated.

Michigan was a completely new experience: a native father, early settler great-grandparents, family resemblance, and blood relationship to a number of locals. I had legitimate claims to birthright here. Using these facts, expertise in fitting-in and determination, I soon became a full-fledged member of a second closed community. I was ecstatic—for a while. What I didn’t realize was that I had deceived myself. I was unaware then of what I had given up. To fit-in, to belong, to join, maybe even to win, I gave up some of my selves. At my fiftieth class reunion, I asked if any classmates knew I’d lived in Mexico. They didn’t. I so tightly closeted my prior identifications that no one there knew the Mex-Pat, the border person, the South Westerner, or the Californian. I followed the community rules to achieve what I thought I wanted. At the same time I gave up the freedom of choice to show all of myself. I fit-in to the point that others, and I, too, believed I belonged. I even felt a twinge of guilt when I left what everyone else called “home.”

Externally, I assimilated. Underneath, I longed for my Mexican self to be visible. I left for California, nearer Mexico, and friendlier to Spanish speakers. The choice I made at this crossroad, an Anzaldúan *encrucijada* (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 80), was a major step to owning and accepting “multiple belongings,” (Bauman, 2008b, p. 24) and a reflection of the effect on me of constant change and mobility.

### The First Time I Call Myself a Border Person

In California after graduate school and between careers, marriage into an orthodox Jewish family, children and traveling, questions of belonging continue. I notice the comfort of being in border areas on several continents and of living near and crossing the US/Mexico border often. In journal writing workshops, I continue efforts to make meaning out of my life experiences and examine feelings of belonging enough to imagine what real belonging might be like. I acknowledge the accumulated pain and disappointment of years of trying to fit in. I conclude that fitting in is not enough for me. Yet I'm still unwilling to pledge allegiance to any one group or culture.

I think about the cultures in which I was immersed as a child. I experience new cultures, notably African Americans, with whom I'm engaged at work and in our ethnically and racially mixed neighborhood. I consider my usual behaviors, both in business and socially. I picture how I keep expressions of each cultural identity separate from the others. I see myself vigilant, on guard, protecting each one from exposure to possible harm or rejection. Like in a video, I watch myself keep my Mexican life-world responses from appearing in the midst of discussions with rural Michigan friends. I make sure my involvement with the Jewish community does not break norms in Anglo groups and that my early white Anglo Saxon Protestant (WASP) learnings and Mexican identifications don't alienate my Jewish in-laws or African-American neighbors and friends. And, while doing organizational consulting I interact credibly with diverse staff groups in community agencies, schools, prisons and industry.

Reflections on these complications and complexities in my journaling, results in a sudden awareness of an alternate encompassing image: a convivial internal borderland ambiance around and between sometimes conflicting identities. I visualize an open mindscape where more than a categorical, solitary identity is accepted. I see me, as a border person, living my life among and between cultural identities. I breathe a sigh of relief and smile with pleasure and record this event. In naming this belonging space, I feel integrated. "*Completa.*" As Anzaldúa wrote after releasing *la Coatlicue* (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 51).

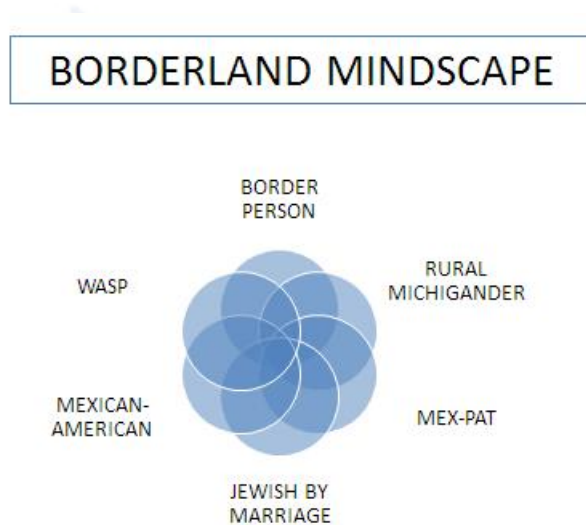


Fig. 1

For years prior to this epiphany, I suffered Coatlicue states (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 46-7). They were as wrenching as the images of Coatlicue herself. In place of her head, two rattlesnakes face each other, as if in combat. I'd argue with myself about who I really was because I was stuck in a categorical definition of identity that didn't hold all of my selves. Coatlicue wears a necklace of human hearts. My heart seemed to enclose hurts of so many people I had no power to help. I was sensitive to their pain and felt like I had no recourse to make a difference. Coatlicue's hands extend outward. I reached out my hands to the world around me, looking to connect, and found myself misunderstood. My fears of being alone and in the darkness of that fear felt like certain death, like the skulls Coatlicue bears. Evil wriggles in Coatlicue's skirt of snakes like evil in the world. These states were also brought on by others' reactions to my chameleon-like behavior that confused them when they were unsure of where I stood. My long standing addiction to fitting-in everywhere and anywhere contributed to intermittent bouts of identity crises. Not belonging anywhere dragged me down into depressions without the reward of "crossing" into "knowing" (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 48). On this occasion, out of the challenges I faced and what I learned from the process, I formed a new way of perceiving myself. I became what Anzaldúa would label a *nepantlera*, a person who, in spite of and because of the difficulties, learns to live inbetween to survive and then, thrive in the borderlands.

### **Acting on the Vision**

Becoming comfortable with this new self-concept, I continued to play openly with border ideas. Participating with the Association of Borderlands Studies and the Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, I found kinship with border person scholars. These *nepantleros*, from several continents, include Anthony I. Asiwaju (Nigeria/Benin), Francisco Oda Angel (Spain/Gibraltar), Oscar J. Martinez and Jose Manuel Valenzuela (US/Mexico). I identified a border person mindset and communication competencies and developed an experiential learning exercise to teach bridging skills between departments within organizations (Rubin, 1992). I drew upon personal interviews and my own professional experiences, as well as Brent Ruben's work on communication theory (Ruben, 1976) and Martinez's detailed analysis of people living in the US/Mexico borderlands (Martinez, 1994).

This borderlands model is what Giddens might call a consciously built self-reflexive identity project (Buckingham, 2008, p. 9). A border mindset includes comfort with ambiguity, acceptance of multiple world views and a desire for synthesis, a predisposition to accept mingling rather than rejection. To communicate with clarity in the borderlands both an intergroup and interpersonal focus is important. It is paramount to show respect and empathy for each individual as a member of the group (gender, sexual orientation, work group, race or mixed race, etc.) with which they identify as well as for them as an individual human being. Interpersonally it is critical to be aware of and minimize assumptions, to balance interaction time, to be non-judgmental and know how to manage cultural accidents when they occur.



### A BORDER MINDSET INCLUDES

- Comfort with ambiguity
- Acceptance of multiple world views
- Search for synthesis

### BORDERLAND COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES

#### INTERGROUP

#### INTERPERSONAL

Demonstrate intergroup RESPECT

Express intergroup EMPATHY

TIME

Build NETWORKS

non-judgmental

CHECK OUT meaning

Balance INTERACTION

ASCRIBING VALUE:

Plan for dealing with CULTURAL “ACCIDENTS”

Fig. 2

### Anzaldúa Process

In order to live life as a border person, I went through a process analogous to what Anzaldúa describes in her work (Anzaldúa, 1987). The following demonstrates how her border theories generalize to my race, gender, ethnicities, sexual orientation and age.

I was birthed, as a border person through an *arrebato*, a precipitous snatching away of one life-world for another; being inbetween without knowing what that constitutes; experiencing psychological blocks and addictions; experiencing depressing Coatlicue states, eventually arriving in *nepantla*, the borderlands, tolerating ambiguity in this inbetween place that will be home; negotiating, understanding and living inbetween cultures; and, finding ways to resist societal pressures to assimilate, or to align myself exclusively with one group or belief system (Anzaldúa, 2003).

But just surviving and living in the borderlands is not enough. Anzaldúa uses the story of Coyolxauqui's dismemberment as a metaphor for the importance of transforming the past by re-remembering. It is a process that requires courage to dust off memories, re-examine them, then reconstruct exiled emotions to reintegrate them. Excavating one's past prepares borderlanders to move into spiritual activism (Keating, 2006, p. 5-11).

Autoethnography promotes examination of fragmented life events and sequences them to create a coherent narrative. This gift of uncovering the raw materials from which we've made ourselves allows for the ultimate upgrade. It brings us into the present, ready for newly imagined and constructed futures.

### Conclusions

Issues common to border people, regardless of identifications or belongings, can only be addressed within a framework that legitimizes multi-part, concurrent identities and belonging.

Finding and promoting additional alternatives to assimilation and its disconfirming invisibility is crucial.

Further research using Anzaldúan theories can formulate more strategies for successfully navigating in-between spaces. An example of one such strategy is a science curriculum designed specifically for Chicano students (Aguilar-Valdez, LópezLeiva, Roberts-Harris, Torres-Velásquez, Lobo, & Westby, 2013).

Reconnecting life fragments through reflexive action to make meaning from life experience is essential to owning multi-sited cultural belongings. The use of autoethnography, metaphor, and the creation of a newly imagined personally coherent narrative promotes acceptance and facilitates learning how to be in the inbetween. These strategies are critical to becoming a person who reclaims and integrates an expansive capacity to experience a simultaneous sense of belonging to multiple cultural identities.

The logo for iafor (International Association for Cultural Studies) is centered on the page. It features the word "iafor" in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is surrounded by two large, overlapping, semi-transparent circular arcs. The outer arc is a light blue color, and the inner arc is a light red color. The arcs are positioned such that they appear to frame the text, with the red arc being slightly more prominent in the foreground.

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***Globally Not Yours ...The Master Discourse of Transcultural Mediation***

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**Abstract**

Intercultural encounters, particularly between civilizationally and power-unequally related cultures, demonstrate the complexity inherent in the process of interlingual communication across cultures. This complexity stems from the carrying-over of specific cultural products (as texts) to and recuperated by receivers that have at their disposal an established system of representation and mediation with its own norms for the production and consumption of meanings (texts). This system ultimately evolves into a *master discourse* through which identity, belonging, similarity and difference are negotiated (mediated). Drawing primarily on textual import (through translation as intercultural communication) from Arabic, the purpose here is to explore how a culturally defined *master discourse*, with its pressures affects the act of knowledge mediation: How do constraints and disciplinary demands of a socio-culturally defined *master discourse* animate mediation, leading along the way to the construction of certain systems of representation communicated to certain audiences? In a rapidly globalized world, a *master discourse* emerges as the all-powerful in its hegemonic discursive norms, resulting naturally in the emergence of desperate and often violent measures from 'other' equally self-perceived *master discourses*.

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## Introduction

ACCS 4, held in Osaka in May/June 2014, was an intellectually ravishing event that brought together researchers with common interests in Asian cultural affairs. Under the macro theme of borders and crossings, the various conference activities covered topics that addressed some of the most pressing cultural and intercultural issues facing Asian societies, such as literature, arts, music, minorities, imported wives, liberal arts, etc. The themes and associated problems can easily apply across global cultures. An interesting observation here is that the conference showed how most of us still zoom-in-on aspects of culture that are mostly material or invoke some old images of exoticism. For example, the beautifully designed covers of the conference program provide representations of the culture of Japan, but are what the covers show the Japan most people know today? It is not the Japan of electronic games for children (games and consoles, etc., that keep changing almost every few weeks and cost parents, like myself, small fortunes)? It is not the Japan where all the cars around the world originate from (we have had 3 Toyotas in 6 years). Isn't this Japan? This example is similar to what most TV channels show when addressing culture - CNN, for example, shows flamingo dancing when referring to culture in Spain. This is all fine, but is this culture that people are ready to fight and die for?

Within this context, it is a truism to say that different cultures have historically represented each other in ways that have reflected the type of existing power relationships between them. Over the past four decades or so, intercultural, post-colonial and translation studies, in particular, have contributed a great deal to the issues of the formation of cultural identities and/or representation of foreign cultures, what the late André Lefevere (1999: p. 75) named 'composing the other'.

The literature of mediation, (inter)cultural, (post)colonial, and translation studies is replete with calls for an ethical accommodation of cultural diversity and otherness. Still, practices within these disciplines and allied others indicate that *mono-isms* have reigned supreme over *multi-isms*.

Intercultural mediation breathes through communication and its many media. Likewise, globalization lives through communication. Axiomatically, globalization invokes the existence of something else —not so global, that is something local. Axiomatically still, globalization usually has local roots; one local that becomes global, and that both the global and the local produce discourses that compete for power and influence. Although, representations of weak cultures by powerful ones in negative terms have been part of the scheme of history, no culture has been misrepresented and deformed like the Arab/Islamic one, particularly by the West.

Taking translation as intercultural mediation *par excellence*, this article examines the constraints and pressures of the discourse through which translation is carried out, demonstrating the complexity inherent in the process of interlingual communication. This complexity stems from the carrying-over of specific cultural products (texts) to receivers who have at their disposal an established system of representation with its own norms for the production and consumption of texts, including translations. This system ultimately evolves into a *master discourse* (MD) through which similarity and difference are identified, negotiated, accepted and/or resisted.

Drawing primarily on textual import (through translation as intercultural mediation), the purpose here is to explore how a culturally defined MD with its pressures affects the act of knowledge mediation: How do constraints and disciplinary demands of a socio-culturally defined MD animate mediation, leading along the way to the construction of certain systems of representation communicated to certain audiences? In a rapidly globalized world, a MD emerges as the all-powerful in its hegemonic discursive norms, resulting naturally in the emergence of desperate and often violent measures from 'other' equally self-perceived MDs.

### **The Master Discourse of Intercultural Mediation**

Mediation (between two or more parties or across cultures) requires knowledge of the biases that predate the mediation process itself. In order for intercultural mediation to succeed, mediators need to be aware of issues that relate to identity ((self, us, we) and (other, them, they)), representation enterprise (patronage, agencies), and the cultural system of representation (master discourse). As a go-between process, mediation covers a number of media, including translation, and its two fundamental components are culture and language. Because it brings the two together, translation is by necessity a multi-faceted, multi-problematic process with different manifestations, realizations and ramifications. In general terms, culture can be defined as shared knowledge: what the members of a particular community ought to know to act and react in specific almost preformatted ways and interpret their experience, including contact with other cultures, but in distinctive ways.

Based on religion, social structures, beliefs, values, and history, culture involves the totality of attitudes towards the world, towards events, other cultures and peoples and the manner in which the attitudes are mediated (Fairclough, 1995). In other words, culture refers to a systems tacitly assumed to be collectively shared by a particular social group and to the positions taken by producers and receivers of texts, including translations, during the mediation process facilitated by language: the system that offers its users the tools to realize their culture. One may coin *culguage* out of culture and language to capture the intrinsic relationship between the two; two sides of the same coin whereby a coin is rejected as legal tender if one side comes with no inscriptions - blank.

The norms of producing, classifying, interpreting, and circulating texts within the contexts of one *culguage* tend to remain in force when approaching texts transplanted through translation from other *culguage* contexts. As with native texts, the reception process of translated texts is determined more by the shared knowledge of the translating community than by what the translated texts themselves contain, i.e., the MD.

While languages are generally prone to change over time (phonologically, morphologically, syntactically and semantically) cultures do not change fast. Overall, cultures remain by and large attached to and determined by a past or pasts. Edward Said (1993: p. 1) succinctly argues:

Appeals to the past are among the commonest of strategies in interpretations of the present. What animates such appeals is not only disagreement about what happened in the past and what the past was, but uncertainty about whether the past really is past, over and concluded, or whether it continues,

albeit in different forms, perhaps. This problem animates all sorts of discussions - about influence, about blame and judgement, about present actualities and future priorities.

When cultures cross and mingle, pasts clash and a struggle for power and influence becomes inevitable. Old formulations and modes of mediation appear on the surface and their realization is made possible by language: the data bank of discursive options. The use of language as discourse is invested with ideologies in the production, circulation and/or challenging of stereotypes and/or power relationships between translated and translating communities (different *culguages*).

In intercultural encounters, the issue of source and target ushers in fundamental theoretical and practical implications for translation whereby as Apter (2005: p. 160) aptly writes:

... the identity of what a translation *is* is tested; for if a translation is not a form of textual predicate, indexically pointing to a primary text, then what is it? Can a literary technology of reproduction that has sublated its origin still be considered a translation? Or should it be considered the premier illustration of translational ontology, insofar as it reveals the extent to which all translations are unreliable transmitters of the original, a regime, that is, of extreme untruth?

In this context, the status of the source text, its relation to its presumed translation (target text), the responsibilities of the translators and readers, and the ethics of translation, and patronage and publishers all throw translation studies into an epistemological no-man's-land for points of reference when dealing with the state and status of source texts and their respective targets (translations as mediations).

Through adherence to the requirements and constraints of a MD, self and other (source and target) become situated into ways of representation ingrained in the shared experience and institutional norms of the self (the translating *culguage*). Otherness is measured according to a scale of possibilities within the MD: when the other is feared, the discursive strategies (language choices) one expects are those that realize hierarchy, subordination and dominance. Otherness can and often does lead to the establishment of stereotypes, which usually come accompanied by existing representations that reinforce the ideas behind them.

The representation of others through translation is a powerful strategy of exclusion used by a self as normal and moral (Said, 1995). Not surprising, this exclusion is also accompanied by an inclusion process of some accepted members from the other as long as the *acceptees* adopt and adapt to the underlying MD and its associated representational system and ideology of the accepting self, *acceptors* (Faiq, 2006). Such a situation may lead the production of targets that do not relate to their presumed sources, but rather establish transcreated realities - almost virtual texts that serve particular purposes, inviting thus issues of appropriation, subversion, and manipulation.



## Globally Not Yours ... The Master Discourse of Intercultural Mediation

In his discussion of human interaction, Barber (1992: p. 53) posits two futures for the human race. One future is dictated by the forces of globalisation through

... the onrush of economic and ecological forces that demand integration and uniformity and that mesmerize the world with fast music, fast computers, and fast food – with MTV, Macintosh, and McDonald's, pressing nations into one commercially homogeneous global network: one McWorld tied together by technology, ecology, communications and commerce.

The other future is driven by what he calls 'tribalism' and is seen as the complete extreme opposite of the former. This future represents

... a retribalization of large swaths of humankind by war and bloodshed: a threatened Lebanonization of national states in which culture is pitted against culture, people against people, tribe against tribe – a Jihad in the name of a hundred narrowly conceived faiths against every kind of interdependence, every kind of artificial social cooperation and civic mutuality (p. 53)

Barber's choice of the words *Jihad* and *tribe* to describe the dangerous future for humanity immediately conjures up images of Arabs and Islam as the main causes of destructive nationalisms (tribalisms) that threaten the ways of life of the 'civilized' West.

Since translations are representations of cultures as understood and interpreted by translators, there is always an ideological dimension, albeit often camouflaged through source-attribution. So, source texts and their associated peoples are transformed from certain specific signs into signs that translators and others involved in the translation enterprise claim to know. As the antonym of the self (the translating *culguage*), the other (them, the translated *culguage*) is used to refer to all that the self perceives as mildly or radically different. The following are cases in point.

### UNESCO and Intercultural Understanding?

In our global context, translation, aided by the media and its technologies, yields "enormous power in constructing representations of foreign cultures" (Venuti, 1998: p. 97). An example of such practices is given by Mason (1994) and used by Venuti (1998) to represent the negative consequences of translation. Mason refers to the April 1990 monthly magazine, *Courier*, published by the UNESCO to promote intercultural understanding. In this issue, an article appeared in both the Spanish and English editions of the magazine. The article deals with the history of the Mexican peoples. For Mason and Venuti, the problem lies in the English translation, which represents pre-Columbus Mexicans as inferior, for example, 'antiguos mexicanos' (ancient Mexicans) became 'Indians' in English.

Accordingly, for both Mason and Venuti such a translation represents an 'ideological slanting' against a particular people. I would personally posit that the translator or translators may not have been that aware of any ideological slanting, but worked rather, perhaps unwittingly, within the demands of the MD they were brought up with and which formed their frame of reference when dealing with other cultures, in this case the ancient Mexicans. In other words, the constraints and norms of the MD

seemed to have guided the translation and the resulting representation of the source *culguage*.

### Translation from Arabic

Encounters between Arab culture and the West through translation have been characterized by strategies of manipulation, subversion and appropriation, leading to transcreated representations and images that fit the MD of the translating *culgugaes*. Such strategies have become nastier and dangerously *topoied* since the events of September 2001. The different media have played a major role in the rapid diffusion of subverted translations and coverage of this world – suffocating the diversity and heterogeneity of Arab culture, and portraying it instead as a monolith and a homogeneous entity. This situation not only distorts original texts but also leads to the influencing of target readers through transcreated realities that meet the expectations of the target audiences and their MDs. Carbonell (1996), for example, reports that in his comments on Burton's translation of the *Arabian Nights*, Byron Farwell (1963/1990: 366) wrote:

The great charm of Burton's translation, viewed as literature, lies in the veil of romance and exoticism he cast over the entire work. He tried hard to retain the flavour of oriental quaintness and naivete of the medieval Arab by writing as the Arab would have written in English. (cited in Carbonell, 1996: p. 80)

Such views of translation and by extension of readers, lead to translations that imply the production of subverted texts at all levels, “not only the source text, but also the target context experience the alteration infused by the translation process when their deeper implications are thus revealed” (ibid.: p. 93). This alteration ultimately leads to manipulations of the target text, thus, regulating and/or satisfying and agreeing with the expected response of and/or sought from the receivers of the translations within the pressures of the MD through which Arab culture is perceived prior to the translation activity itself.

Reporting on personal experience of translating contemporary Arabic literature into English, Peter Clark (1997: p. 109) writes:

I wanted ... to translate a volume of contemporary Syrian literature. I ... thought the work of 'Abd al-Salam al-'Ujaili was very good and well worth putting into English. 'Ujaili is a doctor in his seventies who has written poetry, criticism, novels and short stories. In particular his short stories are outstanding. Many are located in the Euphrates valley and depict the tensions of individuals coping with politicisation and the omnipotent state. .... I proposed to my British publisher a volume of 'Ujaili's short stories. The editor said, “There are three things wrong with the idea. He's male. He's old and he writes short stories. Can you find a young female novelist?” Well, I looked into women's literature and did translate a novel by a woman writer even though she was and is in her eighties.

This account shows how translation from Arabic into mainstream European *culguages* is essentially seen as an exotic voyage carried out through a weighty component of representation in the target culture, in which the objective knowledge of the source culture is substantially altered by a dialectic of attraction and repulsion. The *Arabian*

*Nights* (a title preferred for its exotic and salacious resonance to the original *A Thousand and One Nights*), for instance, is more famous in the West than in the Arab East. The focus on producing transcreated realities through exotic and distorted translations have resulted in very little knowledge about the Arab World getting through translation to Western readers. Despite interesting junctures and despite excellent literary works and a Nobel Prize in literature (awarded to the Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz in 1988), there seems to be what Edward Said calls an “embargo” (1995: p. 99). Said aptly remarks:

For all the major world literatures, Arabic remains relatively unknown and unread in the West, for reasons that are unique, even remarkable, at a time when tastes here for the non-European are more developed than ever before and, even more compelling, contemporary Arabic literature is at a particularly interesting juncture. (1995: p. 97)

This in turn ultimately leads to the conclusion that translation becomes the site of conflictual relationships of power and struggle between the cultures being translated and those doing the translating, with potentially dire consequences and accusations and counter accusations of misrepresentation and subversion. Events of the first fourteen years, so far, of this century, attest to this. These years have seen an unprecedented use and abuse of stereotypes of Arabs. The same old story has been repeated over and over again, often with damaging consequences, injecting the pressures of the existing MD with more potency, often deadly. But this has also led to the rise of counter (anti-) discourses in the translated culture and counter mediations of cultural realities in the Arab World about the West, in general.

A further examples relates to André Miquel’s translation of Naguib Mahfouz’s novel *Yawma qutila z-za’iim* (The Day the Leader was Killed/Assassinated) into French, where he explains in the foreword that he kept footnotes to the very minimum. Yet, Jacquemond (1992) counted 54 footnotes in a translation of 77 pages. What transpires is that the translator-cum-orientalist expert assumes total ignorance on the part of readers, and proceeds to guide them through assumed authoritative knowledge of an unfathomable world where backwardness and the assassination of peace-makers are the norms. But this would be acceptable compared with Edward Fitzgerald’s infamous comment on the liberties he had allowed himself to take with his version of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam*, “really need a little art to shape them” (Bassnett, 1998: p. 68

### **Media:**

A further example concerns representational norms of Arabs/Islam in the Western media, which remain major carriers of representations (as mediations and translations). Karim (1997), for example, provides striking examples of headlines in American magazines and newspapers across the political spectrum. The examples demonstrate adherence to a MD on Arabs and Islam that also animates translation. Only basic semantics is required to infer the ultimate aim of the headlines.

- an angry faith
- dark side of Islam
- the Vatican’s dark marriage to Islam
- The Crescent of Crisis

- Algerian Muslims Seek Power
- Islamic death threat
- Islamic suicide mission

These headlines provide representations of cultural realities as readily accepted transcultural images regulated as ‘fixed texts’ within the MD of cultural encounters between the two worlds. In this respect, translators, transcreators, editors, and patrons appear as authorities to familiar, but foreign realities: Arab culture - an exotic, yet violent and blood thirsty East (Faiq, 2001). In general terms, translation from Arabic into Western *culguages* has followed representational strategies within a system of intercultural mediation very much akin to Barber’s cultural dualism for the globe (see above). While seemingly both the West and the Arab/Islamic Worlds have decided to block themselves in their own towers, press and other media coverage has created more reasons of cultural misunderstandings. Representations –translations from- of Arabic and its associated cultures and Islam are carried out through lenses that fall within what Syyed (1997: p. 1) describes as,

Ghosts are the remains of the dead. They are echoes of former times and former lives: those who have died but still remain, hovering between erasure of the past and the indelibility of the present - creatures out of time. Muslims [including Arab societies] too, it seems, are often thought to be out of time: throwbacks to medieval civilizations who are caught in the grind and glow of ‘our’ modern culture. It is sometimes said that Muslims belong to cultures and societies that are moribund and have no vitality - no life of their own. Like ghosts they remain with us, haunting the present.

The caricatures depicting Prophet Mohammed in a Danish newspaper, George W. Bush’s use of ‘shit’ to describe the July 2007 war in the Middle East, the many mis-translations (misrepresentations) of concepts such as *jihad* and *fatwa* into fixed meanings and references that deform their native meanings and references, are examples of authoritarian relationships between a culture (Western) and how it represents —translates, communicates— the Arab/Islamic source culture (although not translations as such, transliterations represent powerful strategies of fixing and popularizing in the target *culguage* particular connotations that sustain cultural conflicts).

### **Conclusion**

Within the semiotics of communication, the status of something being a text is conditioned by the shared and/or assumed knowledge that the author(s) and the reader(s) each position(s) themselves through a process of projecting onto the text their absent counterpart(s). Both author and reader (producer and receiver) can only occupy one position vis-à-vis a particular text. For translation and mediation the same positions do not change dramatically.

Notwithstanding the complexities of intercultural communication, the ethics of translation, in theory, postulates that it should lead to a rapprochement between the *au-delà* (Bhabha, 1994: p. 1), the Arab World, for example, as this *au-delà*. But this is easy said than done. The cultural dimension of translation and the MD that underlies such intercultural encounters generally lead to the reconstruction of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs, and representations that pre-exist

translation in the target culture, whereby, as Venuti (1996: p. 196) writes, the purpose of translation “is to bring back a cultural other as the same, the recognizable, even the familiar.”

In this context and given the uniqueness of the current politics and effects of globalization and what it entails in terms of the state and status of the concepts of nation, language, and cultural identity, translation and mediation today play the crucial role in forming and/or deforming cultural identities. In terms of power relationships, translation as intercultural mediation has mostly done the latter, deforming minorities and cultures for their audiences. If not rectified for better intercultural encounters and a celebration of cultural differences, this global world, as Bermann (2005: p. 7) writes, will “be less hospitable; in fact, it could founder.” Perhaps, the answer lies in a reassessment of the MDs that govern the translation and mediation of cultures.

In our age and more urgently than ever before, the ethics of translation postulates that its aim should be intercultural communication between different *culguages* with a view to bringing both globalization (the *culguage* of the multinationals – often equated with the *culguage* of the United States of America and Western Europe) and localization (individual *culguages* – often equated with the rest of the World) together to celebrate differences. That is the aim should perhaps be *glocalization* (bringing the hegemonic global and the not-so-hegemonic local together in peaceful encounters)!

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*The New Style of Hybridity in Global Fluids –  
Two Cases of Studies of Both Techno Nezha and Old Master Q Puppet Theater*

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**Abstract**

The rapid flow of internet information has resulted to a McDonaldization phenomenon in the cultures of various countries. In our society today, people use various media tools to communicate with each other, and they tend to incorporate their culture in one way or another during their expressions. This has led to a superficial homogeneity in their cultures, but a new hybrid form of traditional culture is observed in the core. This research has employed two examples of traditional Taiwanese culture to elaborate on this phenomenon: 1. The new style of Traditional Taiwan puppet theater. Wang, Ying-Chun created Old Master Q Puppet. 2. The new style of marshal Nezha, the Taiwanese folklore God. The Nezha parade in combination with techno, and decorated with white gloves and sunglasses, even on motorcycles. Modern communication symbols are incorporated into these traditional cultures and the superficial global cultural homogeneity is worrisome as everyone is focused on the identical movie characters, cartoons, and even brands – this is becoming a new culture phenomenon.

Keywords: Hybridity, Techno Nezha, Old Master Q

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## Introduction

As global culture and values continue to flow relentlessly through the internet, in addition to the globalization of the cultural industries and marketing of IT products and food chain stores using a standard set of SOPs, the society today is receiving an identical set of media symbols on a frequent basis and traditional culture is now challenged by a cultural hybridity phenomenon.

In Taiwan, Marshal Nezha is highly respected by the people and puppetry is a traditional art that is very popular in the nation. What is the impact of globalization on these traditional cultures? How will the change in the traditional culture attract the public? And what is the inspiration derived from this form of cultural hybridity and the impacts on global homogeneity and cultural diversity?

## Marshal Nezha – an important God in Taiwanese folklore

Nezha(哪吒) is one of the most important Gods in Taiwanese folklore and he is known by many different names. Amongst all the names, Marshal Nezha is the most well known. According to the Chinese folklore “Investiture of the Gods”, Nezha is a reincarnation of a spiritual pearl and his birth was said to be in a form of a flesh ball after 3 years of pregnancy, carried by his mother. His father dissected the flesh ball upon its birth and Nezha popped out from the flesh ball with red lights glowing from his body and cheeks. Nezha was said to be wearing a golden bangle and a piece of scarlet silk around his belly during his birth and he also had golden rays that would shoot from his eyes.

One day when Nezha was seven, he was washing his magical scarlet silk in the Eastern Sea when his actions alarmed the army of the dragon palace. The dragon lord commanded Yaksha to confront Nezha together with his third prince but they were defeated by Nezha’s golden bangle in a blink of an eye. The death of the prince angered the dragon lord and news was delivered to the Jade emperor. The Jade emperor ordered the capture of Nezha’s family but rebellious Nezha refused to comply and he ended up committing suicide on the spot. Taiyi Zhenren later used a lotus flower to revive Nezha and Nezha was then appointed as a God ever since then.

The story of Nezha’s battle with the dragon lord of the Eastern Sea is very popular among the Chinese, and furthermore Nezha is also known as the marshal of the Taoism Gods due to his courage and unmatched skills. Nezha is therefore worshipped by the people as “Marshal Nezha” in order to commemorate his heroic acts. Marshal Nezha’s worshipers are mainly warriors but Nezha is regarded as the guardian of infants (Nezha’s child image) and worshiped by the logistics industry (the image of Nezha riding a hot wheel) for protection in modern Chinese culture. The transportation companies have currently enshrined Nezha for the office or at home in order to pray for a successful career and good fortune.



## The Nezha parade in combination with techno

When the people turned Nezha into the marshal of the Gods, his appearance in a form of a child was used during the different parade dances as the reconnoiter of the march.



Techno was introduced into the Yanshui fireworks parade in 2005 and has since then gained lots of popularity in the country and has been used at many large events in modern Taiwan. The “Din Tao” performance was made known to the world only in 2009 during the World Games organized in Kaohsiung. 40 different Nezha costumes appeared during the World Games in shades and white gloves and on motorcycles during the opening of the event, while the parade was accompanied by a Chinese pop song “You’re my flower” by Wubai – recomposed by Zhong-Yao, Kuang for a local orchestra. The audience welcomed the parade to the event using loud and stunning applause that has caught the attention of the whole world. (Jhong-Qing, Zhu; 2009)

Techno, which is a style of fast heavy electronic dance music, plays a dynamic performance and also incorporates music by Taiwan pop singers’ best-selling songs, such as ‘You are my flower’ of Wu Bai and ‘Bo Peep Bo Peep’ of Tsai-Hua Wang. That is also a reason why the Techno Nezha immediately received the peoples’ sympathy and recognition, because their performances ring true to the people’s living environment and conditions.

“We have to create a new way to promote Nezha.” said Wen-Zhen Zeng, the secretary of the Sinying Taizih Temple committee. Obviously, Techno music is a good way to attract and gather people again. How is techno and Marshal Nezha able to integrate as one with such perfection? Nezha is a God, but his appearance is marked by his child-like behaviors: dancing of the seven stars, stepping with his golden bangle. The seven stars step is light and quick, but it comes with a form of dignity as well. The beats and rhythm of techno in combination when the steps of Nezha is an innovative cultural product that is favored by the more modern public. In addition, this form of dance highlights the characteristics of Nezha, while making this cultural dance something to be able to be passed down from one generation to the next as it is used in various events and occasions as a form of celebration.

### **Puppet Theater – Taiwan Traditional Culture**

Taiwanese puppetry originated from the eastern and southern part of Quanzhou, China. The very original puppetry was classified as the Nanguan theatrical performance and its migration to Taiwan was concentrated to cultural districts such as: Monga, Lukang, and Tainan. Hokkiens gathered in these three places and the Nanguan puppetry was regarded as their “Hometown Show”. Puppetry in those days emphasized on the performance of classic literatures using scripts with elegant expressions and was therefore highly popular among scholars.

In order to accommodate to the likings of the public, Nanguan was replaced by Beiguan and the classic literatures were replaced by action plots as well. Temples also began to employ puppetry and opera performing groups to worship their gods and to attract believers. In order for the performing groups to ensure their future employment, they have improved their media entertainment effects in order to gain more popularity. According to the official report of the Taiwanese government in 1928, amongst the 111 performing groups, 28 belonged to the puppetry genre, which was more than the Luantan (Beiguan music) groups (26 in total) and opera groups (14 in total). Puppet shows during those days abstracted storylines from Chinese history, and they were then expressed into action performances.

During the Japanese occupation, the Japanese government banned the performing of puppet shows in order to promote the imperialisation policy. In the late 1950's, puppet shows were displayed using dazzling stage effects and have attracted many audience. This was a huge divergence from the traditional elegance of Nanguan puppetry and has brought forth a new appearance to puppet shows.

Puppet show “Yunzhou Swordsman – Shi Yan Wen” was broadcasted on TV during the 1970's and achieved an outstanding rating of 97%. The Taiwanese government later banned the program as it was deemed as a negative influence to the industrial and commercial market. The Pili(霹靂) puppet show was founded later in the 1980's and marked the rise of a new hero – Su Huan Zhen. The Pili group later established their own cable TV channel and even filmed movies using puppets. They brought forth a series of innovations to the traditional art and Pili puppetry is now a media brand of great renown.

### Old Master Q Puppet Theater

Puppetry master Hai-Tai Huang once said: “the classic cannot be excluded, but we must provide the audience with innovations as well. The best ratio is 30% classic and 70% modern” (Ji, 2007). It is therefore necessary for Taiwanese puppetry to retain the tradition and styles while accommodating to the needs of the modern society. Young puppetry Master Ying-Chun Wang mentioned: “my predecessor once told me that the show can be called a puppet show as long as it is acted by the hands and dubbed by our voice”. This concept has therefore provided traditional puppetry with limitless room for innovation.



Old Master Q is a puppetry product produced on the basis of such concept. The Taichung Sheng-Wu-Chou Puppet Troupe, led by Ying-Chun Wang, started performing Old Master Q using puppet after obtaining its franchise license. It is not uncommon to see Old Master Q and Marshal Nezha performing on the same stage in Wang's shows. I once asked Wang about the role of Old Master Q in his show, and he answered without hesitation: “God, of course, because my mentor told me that it is the easiest way to position your character if you have no definite role for him. And hence, Old Master Q is now helping Marshal Netzha as a God”

Ying-Chun Wang has also incorporated the concept of morality and environmental protection in modern puppetry for school performances in order to communicate with the younger generations. This has also brought forth a groundbreaking innovation for Taiwanese puppetry.

### Survival means of tradition culture – Hybridity

The migrating of mankind leads to the history of cultural exchange and acculturation is seen throughout the history of man. A hybridized culture is displayed by man externally in our daily lives and it is also a way for mankind to adapt to the ever-changing society. Two such examples are: language and food. In the past, the market and fair is a place of hybridization as exotic merchandizes from different places are gathered in one place. The supermarket and exhibitions today serve as the same

purpose today and the development of the internet has also facilitated the process of hybridization.

Techno Nezha and Old Master Q are both products of hybridization in the modern world. Fiske (1989:25) indicated that popular culture is made by the people at the interface between the products of the culture industries and everyday life. Popular culture is made by the people, not imposed upon them; it stems from within, from below, not from above.

The source of creativity of cultural hybridization lies readily in readily accessible resources such as: resources of modern capitalism and international communication. These resources are the symbols we use in daily communication such as: M for McDonald's, Hello Kitty, and abbreviations used on the internet and etc. Therefore, a hybridized culture is a form a public art, and it is also an art created by the use of daily resources.

The analysis in terms of hybrid cultures leads to a re-conceptualization of a number of established views. Rather than being eliminated by development, many "traditional cultures" survive through their transformative engagement with modernity. It becomes more appropriate to speak of popular culture as a present-oriented process of invention through complex hybridizations that cut across class, ethnic, and national boundaries. Moreover, popular sectors rarely attempt to reproduce a normalized tradition; on the contrary, they often exhibit openness toward modernity that is at times critical and at times transgressive and even humorous. (Escobar, 1995:219)

The modern presentation of techno Nezha and incorporation of Old Master Q into traditional puppetry has won the favor of the public and is now regarded as a new form of traditional culture. Schech & Haggis (2000:129) stated that these invented traditions, while usually drawing on the past, tend to be less specific and less binding than their "old" predecessors. They are important in public life, but occupy a much smaller place in the private lives of people than the old traditions did.

Traditions, whether "old" or "invented," must be understood as changing practices which can be imbued with different meanings and employed to serve a variety of purposes and interests. (Schech & Haggis, 2000:140)

Traditional culture of different eras will all be challenged by the ever-changing environment and they are forced to adapt in order to survive. Tradition is a relative term, and the key to its survival lies in the ability to retain the essential factors while adding new elements in order to attract major audiences. This form of hybridization is especially common on the tides of globalization and internet communication, but the hidden worrisome is also identical in this context.

### **The hidden worrisome of global acculturation**

Most people's cultural tastes and practices were shaped by commercial forms of culture and by public service broadcasting. (Hesmondhalgh, 2008:555). In addition to global brands and the promotion by 3C products, the acculturation caused by these factors is becoming a norm and shared across the internet. Geographical distance is non-existence in the virtual world and people are able to communicate instantly using email or mobile APPs. The global fluids have therefore facilitated globalization of the

society with rapid transmission of information, symbols, money, education, risk, and people.

Things are made close through these networked relations. Such a network of technologies, skills, texts and brands, a global hybrid, ensures that the same 'service' or 'product' is delivered in more or less the same way across the entire network. Such products are predictable, calculable, routinized and standardized. (Urry, 2003:57)

Globalized marketing is a process of deterritorialization. Countries with dominant culture also make use of global fluids to spread their value and ideas. All the nations will be identical eventually and this is an irreversible process. Some traditional cultures are incorporated into our lives, such as festival celebrations, social taboo and etc; while others are incorporated into our education, such as folklore, histories and etc. In comparison, globalization of brands, symbols and even food, can be found in each and every corner of our daily lives and our thoughts and behaviors are all affected by these globalized symbols.

Young people in every part of the world are affected by globalization; nearly all of them are aware, although to varying degrees, of a global culture that exists beyond their local culture. Those who are growing up in traditional cultures know that the future that awaits them is certain to be very different from the life their grandparents knew. (Arnett, 2002)

This is a challenge faced by traditional new culture. Marshal Nezha and puppetry may be different from a cultural aspect, but the expression means is nevertheless identical. This form of irreversible expression for the new culture is a consistent symbol used throughout the world and is manipulating the local very essence of local cultures. Hybridization is formed and cultural diversity now faces the risk of extinction.

Our concern may be pointless as the social trend may be beyond that of our imagination in the next few hundred years and what we regard as acculturation may be regarded as traditional in the future. Or perhaps, having an identical new form of traditional culture throughout the globe is part of the tradition of mankind in this era?

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***Tolerating Difference: Japanese experiences with difference and multiculturalism***

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0083**Abstract**

Post-Modernity, Globalization, Neo-Liberalism, many words come to mind to describe the contemporary world, but there is one type of discourse that seems to be gaining hegemonic position regardless of how we describe the present era: Multiculturalism. Particularly in Japan, a country that has since long constructed its identity under the idea of homogeneity, the adoption of the multiculturalist discourse by significant part of the academia, politicians, businessmen and the civil society become even more interesting. In the same context, as Japan's recent cultural export, the Visual Kei groups, gained notoriety in the international scene contesting many views on Japanese identity with their subversive aesthetics and performances, it bear the question: is Japan changing that much into a society of diversity? As this paper further investigates the question, it becomes clear that ideas of homogeneity and uniqueness, and the rigidity and essentialism of Japanese identity discourses remain unchanged or even worse. So the new question that appears is: How can a country in which multiculturalism discourse is on a rise and Visual Kei bands thrive be experiencing at the same time a rise on nationalism and have its rigid notions of Japaneseness remain unchallenged? This paper argues that what lies under the phenomena of multiculturalism and apparent subversive subcultures is the same ideology, the ideology of tolerance. Through such an ideology, difference is respected and tolerated, it is not made to be interacted with, rather, the concept of heterotopias works well to explicit how such ideology works towards difference in Japan.

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## Introduction

Many authors have defined our contemporary times by different terms. Giddens (1991a, 1991b) and Beck (1992) make use of terms such as *Late Modernity* and *Reflexive Modernity*, Lipovetsky (2004) prefers to use the term *Hyper-Modernity*, Bauman (2000) coined the term *Liquid Modernity*, and Lyotard (1984) popularized the term *Post-modernity*. One common characteristic from this era that these authors point out is the lack of credibility in modern institutions like the church, the nation, the state, the party, the science, and so on, which leaves societies victims to a kind of permanent *malaise*. Whereas Baudrillard (1998) points out the raise of *Consumer societies* and Lipovetsky (2004) and Bauman (2001) points to the *will to freedom* that leads to uncertainty as the consequences of such times, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 2009) saw this era as a *Schizophrenic* one, in which both the apparent freedom of the market and the rigidity of the State controlled the minds and bodies of societies, serving as major producers of subjectifications.

When the literature on post-fordist societies, such as Gorz (2010), Berardi (2009), Stiegler (2011, 2013), Marazzi (2008, 2011), Virno (2004), and Negri and Hardt (2001, 2011), is analyzed, it becomes clear how pervasive that logic of the market became, determining the way people make decisions, value things, and describe themselves. Thus, one cannot leave the influence of the market outside of any societal analysis done in contemporary times. It is in this new schizophrenic order that this article positions the subject of the Japanese youth, since work, argues Negri and Hardt, has become biopolitical, which means that “living beings as fixed capital are at the center of this transformation, and the production of forms of life is becoming the basis of added value” (p. 132, 2011).

Through this new logic, capital has not taken only control of the physical labor, but also of the affect labor and the cognitive labor. Through the process of this immaterial forms of production (Gorz 2010), knowledge and affect become valued by the market in as much as it produces commercial value. This not only alters the logic of production, but alters the very logic of knowledge and information. Knowledge now is no longer a matter of acquiring culture, nor is it aimed as means of understanding the societal and political relations that surrounds us, rather, knowledge now has become a matter of adding value to yourself as a workforce.

As capital becomes semiotic, immaterial, affective, it becomes a force of individuation, shaping people’s subjectivities and, consequently, their goals in life. When the shift from physical labor to knowledge labor happens, the working hours, although officially decreasing in most of the world, actually increases in the sense that it now takes place outside the work place as well. Through the idea of constant formation (Deleuze 1992), individuals are encouraged to be constantly adding value to themselves by training, courses, and the like, making learning experience something related to work. Also, friendship becomes network, and opportunities to make friends are now considered events for contact building (Bauman 2003). Besides, the introduction of the E-mail, and more particularly the *Smartphone* has produced an individual that is permanently connected to the workplace, one call or message away from his/her boss. The work invades the leisure and the resting time.

That is not to say, of course, that the State is no longer an actor of individuation, since it still produces narratives of national identity, especially through its social institutions,



namely the school system. In the case of Japan, the national identity narratives, that can be traced since the Meiji period (Kinmonth 1982), and perhaps peaked during the phase of *nihonjinron* (Befu 2001), are rigidly emphasized throughout the schooling experience, passing on an ideology of homogeneity that is perpetuated in the schools through various techniques (Okano 2009; Sugimoto 2010). As Hansen and Guarne (2012) and Yoshino (1998) demonstrated, the populist dissemination of selectively picked narratives from *Nihonjinron*, specially by the market through the means of *cross-cultural manuals*<sup>1</sup>, helped sediment the dominant and pervasive ideology of homogeneous Japan. It is this very illusion of homogeneity that we can find at the core of the narratives of *Japaneseness* collected and to be presented in this paper.

In parallel to that, also in recent years, the European and American continents have served as the stage for a growing appreciation for *Visual Kei* groups from Japan. A difficult genre to systematize with any simple description, *Visual Kei* appear as a nomadic assemblage of visual, musical, performative, and lyrical themes that goes beyond those of the rigid *Japaneseness* that has been produced to be what Befu (2001) called the *Hegemony of Homogeneity*. If the problem seems to be a semiotic impoverishment, a symbolic misery that in the case of Japan has been perpetrated both by the market as well as by the State (Munia 2014), *Visual Kei* seems to be the perfect antidote for such predicament, with its explosion of deterritorialized symbols that don't seem to obey any particular organization, but appear in constant change not only amongst the different bands in the genre, but within those bands themselves. In this sense, *Visual Kei*, with the popularity it has developed amongst the youth, could have served as a source of alternative *Japaneseness* that allows to break the symbolic misery of homogeneity and create a Temporary Autonomous Zone (Bey 2007) that, in turn, creates the semiotic apparatus for diversity and difference, empowering the youth to contest the official hegemonic project of homogeneity

It is in this background of a neo-liberal, globalized, post-modern age that the subject of this paper takes place. How has Japan engaged in a discourse of *multiculturalism* and *internationalization*, so frequently heard in the author's ethnography, while at the same time, reified and rigidified the idea of *Japaneseness* as something unique and homogeneous? How has Japan managed to reinforce nationalism, while the State engages in narratives of internationalization and multicultural society, and its market engages the narratives of global human resources and global talents? Why have the potential of *Visual Kei*, with many of its lyrics, videos, visuals, and body performances potentially understood as challenges of a status quo static identity of being-Japanese, dwelling into more flexible notions of gender, sexuality, self-perception, lifestyle, etc., failed to have produced a substantial counter-narrative to the rigid model of national-identity that would have made more flexible perceptions about *Japaneseness*, despite the national and international success of the genre?

### **Methodology**

To help answer this questions, the author collected some narratives through an ethnographical research that used his position as an university student to collect narratives during classes, presentations, and lectures, as well as one on one informal conversations that provided many relevant data of how the notions of homogeneity

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<sup>1</sup> Yoshino (1998) calls *cross cultural manuals* things like handbooks, English-learning

and *majority* discourses from Japan are incorporated and decoded by students and professors.

In addition to that, narratives from other studies were also collected, and then analyzed under the perspective of symbolic misery and neo-liberal subjectivities. Narratives found in the Japanese media, as well as in internet forums and social networks were also accessed in order to obtain perspectives from different forms of narrative production, since the things one will say to the media, won't be the same they would say to a colleague, a researcher, a Japanese, a foreigner, and so on.

Through these narratives the author found in which ways those students, professors, and even politicians and the media, accessed ideas national-identity and homogeneity, as well as of multiculturalism and internationalization, and how they used these ideas to justify actions and perceptions of self and Japanese society. Understanding the discourses of Japaneseness and multiculturalism as a *Machine* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 2009) that can be operate differently according to whose using it, one is able to understand better how such apparent paradoxical uses of an internationalization and a multiculturalism that are capable to produce nationalism and rigid *Japaneseness* could have been operated.

Some participatory observations were also done from the period of 2010 to 2014, in venues in which Visual Kei was performed. To further explore this analysis, lyrics, videos, and interviews from the performers were also analyzed, as well as informants and other researchers of Visual Kei performances were also consulted. Through this, it was possible to understand the political potentials and limitations of Visual Kei.

Thus, accessing the way the discourses on multiculturalism are being recuperated and operated through what this paper calls the *ideology of tolerance*, it was possible to come up with some hypothesis on how this ideology produced a view of difference as a matter of tolerance, and not as a productive category to be engaged with. The following argument is further presented in the next section.

### **Links Between Theoretical and Ethnographical Dimensions**

Arriving at a Japanese university for the second time in 2012 in order to conduct what at the time was a research about the dichotomy of Westernization and Tradition in the critique of *Japanese Culture*, the theme that rapidly got the attention of the author was how in a department supposedly aimed at the interaction between Japanese and International students for the creation of a multicultural environment, so few interactions occurred between both groups and how the narratives produced such rigid barriers between a Japanese Culture and another cultures, both from Japanese students as well as the international ones.

This soon become a bigger theme constantly present in the everyday life of the author as a foreign researcher in Japan. On one side, the contact with Japanese students produced rigid notions of *Japaneseness* and of other nationalities, even among the ones with international experiences. On the other, words like internationalization, multiculturalism, globalized era, all frequently appeared in any imaginable context. The two themes didn't seem to fit. What was, then, the reason behind such a failed attempt at internationalizing and multiculturalizing Japan, the author thought at the beginning, that resulted in the very opposite of what it aimed at, a reinforcement of

rigid identities, of Otherizations, of *heterotopias* (Foucault 1984), of national pride, etc. Yet, it didn't seem to be a feeling of failure, since the narratives did not usually presented a sense of contradiction between the nationalist observations being made, and the sense of internationalization being defended, in fact, it was the Japanese students who have had international experiences that were spear-heading the nationalist revival, albeit a new kind of nationalism, a nationalism that appeared as progressive and liberal, and that were not in the same box with the old conservative, militaristic nationalism of the anti-foreign movements in Japan.

The narrative from a graduated Japanese student, with international experience, that after graduation became an entrepreneur, can help illustrate the case:

I'm an entrepreneur and a brand manager. My mission is to carry on authentic Japanese culture both traditions and pop culture. I want to assist enterprises, which want to spread their values and passions all over the world, through branding, web-strategy, and management consulting. (Japanese Student A)

Proceeding with the same narrative, the student continues her self-description:

Traveling is another passionate thing for me. I've been to Seoul, Taipei, Beijing, Bangkok, Singapore, the south part of England including London, Germany, Paris, Switzerland, Austria, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc. The way I travel is to go to a local supermarket and observe people's action. And the most fun thing is to go to a local bar or restaurant and talk to many people there. To share beer or whiskey with strangers works for communicating with local people. (Japanese Student A)

What we see here is not the trope of the Japanese nationalist often shown on the media and in everyday discourse as a conservative anti-foreigner proud to have not left Japan. Instead, what we see is a student with international experience, proud to be in contact with the local people in different parts of the world and to have contact with strangers and their difference, the prototype of the globalized multicultural person. Yet, the self-described motivation of this same person is to “carry on **authentic Japanese culture**”, both traditional and popular.

Another narrative from a Japanese graduate with international experience that currently works in a NPO, constantly posting about Japanese culture in English, serves to give more colors to this new nationalism. While promoting a visit to two exhibitions (Kome and Sekai-ichi), the following narrative was produced:

In Kome you get to learn in depth about Japanese traditions and culture behind rice. Each description is beautifully written and the translation is impeccable. Sekai-Ichi takes you through all the great innovations made by Japan; you'll be surprised to see how many you use every day. Please go and have a look, they were both a lot of fun. (Japanese Student B)

In another narrative from the same student, an explanation in English for Iwate was given:

Back in the days, people in the Tohoku region were very poor. When their clothes became old, residents of southern Iwate

prefecture reused them by cutting apart the fabric and weaving them into new clothes or items. Though the fabric itself is old, the finished product gives off a comfortable, homelike, nostalgic feel. It can sometimes even remind us of where the fabric came from, whether it be your childhood clothes or your late mother's gown. This traditional textile weaving, "saki-ori", reminds us of the precious eco-friendly culture of Japan that cherishes the old and passes onto the new, telling the story of one's life to another. (Japanese Student B)

In these narratives, the international experience given by studying abroad and graduating from international universities, not only failed to prevent nationalism, but actually empowered nationalism, allowing the student to serve as a machine to produce cultural imperialism and fabricate a pride in Japanese culture. In fact, everything becomes Japanese culture, allowing the anti-nuke protests after the Fukushima nuclear disaster, the anti-whaling protests due to Japan's whaling practices, the protests against the movie *The Cove* who denounce the massacre of Dolphins in Japan, and all other issues to be ignored in the name of calling Japanese culture "eco-friendly". Again, what we see here is not the face of a nationalism that is anti-foreign, but a nationalism that talks about spreading the goodness of Japan to the world.

This new form of nationalism can be well understood when we take into the consideration the words of Abdallah-Pretceille (apud Campos and Lima 2011):

There is no evidence that the experience of contact is enough to erode prejudices. Instead, the experience also serves to reinforce ideas and false representations in the name of the 'lived' ('I saw', 'I was there'). It is not uncommon to come back from a trip with more xenophobic ideas than before. It has developed an utopia of exchange and encounter as a remedy for the deterioration of inter-individual or inter-group relationship.

As demonstrated, the contact with the international is not a guarantee of a nomadic assemblage, in which those students produce assemblages that are nomad, in constant seeking, rather than sedentary, of those who already "know". What can be seen both in the quote from Abdallah-Pretceille as well as in the narratives from the students, are precisely this sedentary assemblages, in which one is "known" to be Japanese, and therefore judges the encounters "as a Japanese" and interprets them "as a Japanese". This way, these international interactions are not a form of creating Body without Organs (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 2009) capable of nomadic assemblages, but rather, as citizens-organs, organized by the Japan-body in order to be machines producing cultural imperialism.

This new cultural imperialism is not produced in the same way as the Cool Japan project, however, but in a way that resembles a passage from societies of discipline to societies of control (Deleuze 1992). Here, an instruction is no longer needed in order for one to produce cultural imperialism, but rather, it is the very students that see the spread of Japanese culture to the world as a moral imperative of an international Japanese person.

On this, Yoshino (1998) argues that it was precisely when Japan began to increase its contact with the international that nationalism began to be revitalized as a form to speak of oneself to the Other. An interesting observation to be made in Yoshino's argument is that this *new nationalism* takes place with the addition of an interesting

new author: the market, which in the neo-liberal era is more preeminent than ever. In fact, a news report from Mie (2014) can further elucidate this argument.

Mie (2014) begins by framing Japanese current young generation as the *Generation Resignation*, a generation in which the hopes of the youth in Japan has been crushed due to the economic stagnation. The author goes ahead to say that Critics say youths in this generation are unambitious, averse to risk and reluctant to engage in romantic relationships, have little appetite for luxury goods and generally are not willing to go the extra mile to achieve goals. What can be noted in the way such critiques are posed is that what is going wrong with today's Japanese youth is their refusal to embrace the neo-liberal project, which while proceeding to read the news, gets even more explicit. She presents first the case of 16 year old Japanese Rika, whose big feat according to the news was to set up a company aiming to introduce female high school trends otherwise, adding to the description that since 12 she has dreamed of starting her own company. Another of her achievements included an app for smartphone aimed at female high school students, according to her, which allows them to register voices of handsome boys to work as alarm clock sounds. The segment on her ends quoting her phrase: "A sudden chill ran up my spine at the thought that I had not taken action and was just going to die without achieving anything. I wanted to leave a mark that I existed".

What Rika seems to be doing is not exactly subverting a generation of apathy, as the reporter suggests, rather what she is doing is, on one hand, replicating what Yoshino (1998) and Iwabuchi (2002) already discussed as a form of Cultural Nationalism present in Japan. Rika wants to use the ready-made subjectivity of the high school girl and make it global. On the other hand, Rika's phrase about her perceived lack of life unless she could have an achievement while still a teenager represents nothing but a representation of the Neo-Liberal self, the marketed subjectivities already well analyzed through the works of both Deleuze (1992) and Gorz (2010).

Also akin to this neo-liberalization of the self, discussed by the two authors as the invasion of the market into the production of subjectivities in the individuals, is the story of Yoichiro, also 16 years old, mentioned in the news (Mie 2014) as having a company that targets junior high and high school students with business ideas. The experience of Yoichiro is also far from revolutionizing Japan, rather, some of his narratives such as "many Japanese companies wouldn't give me enough hands-on job experience in a short time so that I could move to other companies, so I decided to hedge my risk by launching my own company so that I can at least control and take responsibility for my life" are symptomatic of a bigger trend going on in Japan, mainly in its youth: the Neo-Liberalization of Self.

Yuji (2007) in his explanation of the current mismatches between the reality of Japanese youth and the Japanese companies system has demonstrated the rigidity with which Japanese companies behave. Very resistant to change, those companies have failed to cope with the reality of contemporary times. Japanese companies operate according not to the logic of the neoliberal global companies, rather, it still constantly refuses to hire *global human resources* arguing that having to train international student would be troublesome, and it would be easier to rely on Japanese students who have already embodied *Japanese customs*, and therefore, know how to operate in a Japanese company. What we can see here is also a form of biopolitics; however, it is

one form of biopolitics that relies much more on the national identity discourse than on the discourse of the capital. The idea of a cultural capital (Bourdieu 1998, 2004) of *knowing how to act Japanese*, relies on a certain model of Japaneseness. A model shaped especially during the Meiji Era (Kinmonth 1982), and which model of essentialism and homogeneity was further shaped by theories known as *nihonjinron* (Befu 2001).

From these cases, we can see another characteristic brought about by neo-liberalism in Japan, the idea of the *escape*. The critique many students do to the Japanese companies are not intended as a way to change Japanese companies and engage themselves in this change, rather, it is a way to put Japanese companies in an oppositional category to the international companies, thus, making the latter their option to be engaged with. In this case, internationalization is not being used to internationalize Japan, but rather, as an alternative to Japan.

Ueno's (2013) analysis further contributes to see this neo-liberalization of the Japanese youth with her study of Japanese female graduates in elite universities. The female students interviewed showed a preference to work in international companies. When asked the reasons for such preference, the students seemed assured of their motivations. They associate International companies with freedom, Japanese companies with rigidity, International companies with equality, Japanese companies with sexism, International companies with mobility, Japanese companies with hierarchy, International companies with meritocracy, Japanese companies with seniority. The point here is not to attain to whether such descriptions of international companies and Japanese companies are accurate or not. Rather, it is to show the shaping of perception and affects of those female students towards what is presented to them as legitimate means to achieve success.

These students self-narratives seems to incorporate the tenements of neoliberalism quite well, the idea of knowledge and cultural capital as added value (Negri and Hardt 2011) to self in the pursuit of a place in the company, which itself adds value to the individual in society. To understand this, the description of Negri and Hardt (2011) of biopolitical capitalism as a shift for producing not only material products, but also life forms, is crucial. When capitalism begins to function as a life form, due to its new form of affect and knowledge labors, the process of individuation begin to be shaped by the logic of the market. People themselves become products that should be marketed, ironically, to the market. And if on one side companies advertise their products in order for individuals to buy it, individuals advertise themselves in order for companies to hire them. It is in this sense that some narrative patterns appear in the work of Ueno (2013).

But there is another aspect worth discussing in the narratives of Ueno's (2013) informants, which is the idea that Japanese companies are simply the way they are from being Japanese, and that their internationalized selves are not to be used in ways to internationalize Japanese companies, but to allow them the chance to work in already international companies. Once more, the international experience of these graduates does not act as a way to change their perception about Japan, on the contrary, their contact with the international only reinforced the borders between *what Japanese things are* and *what international things are*, as made explicit by the comparisons between Japanese and International companies they used to justify their

choices. What could be used to allow nomadic assemblages to take place, once again only produced a reification of Japaneseness as a homogeneous category impossible to be changed, allowed only to be adapted to or escaped from. Clavel's (2014) news report on the Japanese returnees is clear about this:

Upon their return to Japan, because they have typically picked up behavior, languages and even values that may be at odds with those traditionally practiced here, *kikokushijo* often face an intense re-acculturation period, during which they are expected to fall into line with Japanese societal norms.

Clavel (2014) goes on to report that despite the recent government push to develop *global human resources*, the existence of those returnees has been largely ignored by policy makers. Interestingly, in his report, a business consultant from Tokyo by the name of Noriko Suzuki comments on the returnees experience coming back to Japan:

The Japanese way of doing business is totally different from Western and global ways of business. [...] The American, Chinese, Korean and many European management styles are becoming more globalized now, so once you have the skills of doing business in, let's say, an American business environment, the skills are transferable. But the Japanese way of doing business is very particular.

Here it can be seen how the myth of Japanese particularity, proud of being *pure* in comparison with the *contaminated* globalized countries, lives on and is used as a legitimization of the countries rigidity and lack of opening towards returnees students. The author of the report also talks to Yoshi, who he presents to the readers as a returnee viewing Japan through the international lenses. Yoshi says:

If Japan stepped into the world more and interacted with other countries more, I think a lot more students would want to learn English because they would understand it's a necessary tool in order to expand Japan.

Here, once again, we see the international experience being used as a way to expand Japan through the acquirement of international skills. Internationalization being used as a way to empower the nation. Nationalism empowered with international skills. The conclusion of the news report shows all the pragmatism with which is viewed the returnee's situation:

Ultimately, for the *kikokushijo* to be a driving force in Japan's stuttering effort to globalize, society will have to meet multiculturalism halfway. This narrow mind-set is of particular concern considering the shrinking population at home, which will inevitably force Japanese firms to increasingly look overseas for opportunities to expand. This in turn strongly suggests that the proportion of *kikokushijo* in the Japanese school system will continue to increase even as the overall number of students declines. In a nutshell, the JFTC's Ichimura asks rhetorically, "Aren't those who actually experienced living overseas better candidates for globalization than those who have never left Japan?" Goodman concurs: "It's a missed opportunity. You have this particular group of people who could be taken advantage of and the state should be mobilizing them far more effectively."

Thus, so far, it can be seen how the rhetoric of internationalization have been used as a way to empower a new type of nationalism, a nationalism that has a different face than the anti-foreign nationalism of the Japanese who protested against Koreans in the Korean Town of Shin-Okubo, in Tokyo. Perhaps the event occurred in March of 2014 in Japan<sup>2</sup> is a good way to mark this change. In a protest made that month by the members of the ultra-right nationalist group *zaitokukai*, they got outnumbered in a three to one proportion by anti-racist protesters shouting them down as they marched. As Japan moves into efforts of internationalization and multiculturalism, nationalism does not die, but it merely changes its format.

Another point of contact that has been used to operate a process of Otherization that further rigidifies the frontiers between Japan and the International has been the ways the ideas of multiculturalism have been used in the Japanese context. In order to exemplify such usages, the same Shin-Okubo region can be used. In a visit guided by an official from Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza, a space created by the Shinjuku City office, the author and other international and Japanese students visited the Shin-Okubo region. The focus of such visit, said the guide, was to show how the region concentrated many different foreign citizens in Japan, mainly exemplified by restaurants and stores of *non-Japanese products*. Thus, Shin-Okubo region was deemed as the living proof of Shinjuku's (and by extent Tokyo and Japan) acceptance of foreign culture in its territory. Yet, the interpretation to be taken out of this should be precisely the opposite.

Shin-Okubo is a good example of what Foucault (1984) called *Heterotopia*, a space for difference that act in ways to make clear the distinction between the Other and the hegemonic (the latter allowed to have all the rest of the space). Isn't this how Shin-Okubo acts towards the foreign, as a living zoo for other cultures, all putted in one region of the city in order for the Japanese to appreciate difference from a safe distance? All along guaranteeing that such differences stay localized in one specific reason, so that the boundaries between what is Japanese and what is foreign are not blurred. No wonder Shin-Okubo is a favorite place for anti-foreign right wings to do their protests against the non-Japanese.

In another narrative collected by the author, a Japanese student presenting the intended research proposal, claimed to be wishing to study *multiculturalism in Yokohama*. When asked about what the multiculturalism observed was, it was explained that it was understood as the presence of many foreign restaurants in the area, in a similar multiculturalism as the Shin-Okubo area in Tokyo. Besides the usage of this spaces as *heterotopias*, the multiculturalism going on in these places are merely cosmetic, being nothing more than a consumer act of consuming the different, the *ethnic*, the *exotic*. In fact, the same student confess that most of this restaurants have to adapt their food to the Japanese taste, which means that rather than the Japanese experimenting with the new, what happens is an adaptation of a foreign cultural trait to appeal to Japanese palate, deterritorializing a cultural good from one country, and reterritorializing it in another. So in the end, what we have is not exactly

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<sup>2</sup> For more about the protest, access: <<http://tokyodesu.com/2014/03/17/pictures-ultra-nationalist-demonstrators-overwhelmed-by-anti-racist-counter-protest/>>



a multi-cultural experience, but rather, a *recuperation*, in Debord's (in Knabb 2006) sense of the term, in which the difference is defused, neutralized, and commodified within the mainstream culture, robbing it of any element that can produce change and disrupt the hierarchical balance between the *majority* culture and the *minority* ones.

Japan also have its version of a multicultural society in the way that was criticized before by Campos and Lima (2011), to whom multiculturalism is a discourse used to mask the estrangement that the presence of the foreigner causes in us, preferring safe encounters, with no surprises. As Campos (2009) himself points out, the politics of multiculturalism is constructed through the idea of *tolerance*, which is only possible through the assumption of a privileged position of that *majority* culture that can **tolerate** the *minority* ones, thus enabling the Other to be exoticized and commercialized. In this sense, Japan can already be seen as a multicultural society, given that Japan *tolerates* immigrants and minorities in their own spaces, proliferating Korean Towns, China Towns, Brazilian Towns, Gay Neighborhoods, Punk Neighborhoods, Otaku neighborhoods, etc. All minorities carefully maintained in its own space of Otherness, in order to be consumed as difference, tolerated and recuperated devoid of its challenging aspects to the rigid ideology of *Japaneseness*.

It is in this sense that Campos and Lima (2011) argues for replacing the idea of *multiculturalism* to that of *Interculturalism*. To them, while multiculturalism suggests the idea of a society constructed as a mosaic, formed by distinct static cultures; Interculturalism, on the other hand, suggests the existence of dynamic interrelations between cultures. They claim that while multiculturalism presupposes a dominant culture that accepts, tolerate, or recognize others in the cultural space that it dominates; Interculturalism presupposes the reciprocal recognition and the availability to mutual enrichment between various diverse cultures that occupy the same cultural space.

However, through the usage of multiculturalism in the very way criticized by Campos (2009) and in his further work together with Lima (2011), Japan managed to reify its position of privilege as that which tolerates the other and allows them to leave *in its land*, as long as the structures of power and domination, nor the clear frontiers of distinctions created between *Japaneseness* and the *International Other* are challenged. One of the narratives collected can help to exemplify the consequences of such reification of *Japaneseness* as the only game in town.

It comes from Japanese Student C, also with international experience, that has been through *Relaxed Education* program during public elementary and junior high school. Although describing her experience with such pedagogical style as being free and with no constraints to what she wished doing, she does mentioned that during that time she felt troubled by her relationship with the children around her, not being able to made many friendships because of her *stubbornness* and *assertive personality*. The justification for such outcome, she says, is that, after all, Japanese are a race in which you cannot go on without *reading between the lines*.

Here what first draws the attention is how this difficulty to get along with the Japanese around is not being considered a problem regarding the school, but rather, just the way Japanese are. This normalization of Japanese traits as natural goes on when she says that Japanese culture is the culture of finding virtue in the beauty of

harmony and co-operation rather than individuality, in a way to explain why, according to her, pedagogical programs that take into account the introduction of diversity would have little to none effect in the domestic reality. Many aspects in such narrative are worth discussing. First, how the interviewee considers Japan and the Japanese so *naturally* prone to reject diversity and individuality, even though she herself, Japanese, have embraced it.

The rigidity of Japanese discourses of national identity and what it means to be Japanese has resisted the changes in the society itself, ignoring the minorities, the globalizing effects of interconnectivity and mobility and the development of *liquid identities* (Bauman, 2000, 2001, 2011). Given that, the youth individual is quite aware of the discourse on Japanese identity, and sees how surrounded one is by such norms; however, the individual does not necessarily share such characteristics. Since the idea of Japaneseness in Japan suffers from what Stiegler (2011, 2013) called *Symbolic Misery*, it can be argued that alternative modes of Japaneseness are difficult to be imagined, so that the inability to cope with such model does not necessarily reflect a consciousness of difference, but rather, it can reflect an inability of *being Japanese*.

When one does not feel one share the characteristics of what is framed as *Japanese*, but at the same time is not able to imagine oneself as being part of *alternative modes of Japaneseness*, what is left is to imagine oneself as not being able to be *Japanese*. Thus, the rigid notion of *Japaneseness*, rather than comforting, actually produces uncertainty as well.

Similar conclusions can be drawn for the narratives present in Mie's (2014) report. As she herself comments, "the young people interviewed for this story said they still face unique challenges. With the rise of social networking tools, they feel pressured to keep presenting their everyday life on those platforms", and that "when they post comments on their political and business activities, they are sometimes perceived as "itai," or not cool — as many of their peers do not favor competing with others and sticking out in showy ways." "When the proactive types stick out too much, they run the risk of being ostracized by others both online and in the real world". In addition to this, Ayaka, 18 years old, tells the reporter that "One of her male teachers said she was "arrogant" to even consider running for the post [of president of a student council in high school]". As it can be observed, no matter how far into neo-liberal subjectivities these young Japanese goes, they are never able to escape the traditional institutions and their rigid notions of what it means to be Japanese.

In one case, the fact that the student could not thrive in school and work was related to a perceived lack of *Japaneseness*. The perception that the source for not being able to succeed in the study and work life is a lack of a certain cultural capital of knowing how to behave as Japanese leads to self-blaming. It reflects the same logic of some of Ueno's (2013) interviewees: if the other Japanese friends can do it, why can't she? She must not be Japanese enough. The fact, of course, is not a *lack of Japaneseness*, but a more than natural presence of a different form of Japaneseness that is not recognized in its difference. Another narrative of a student with international schooling background, complained about friends who, during a reunion of past school colleagues, had commented on some of her behaviors as not proper *for a Japanese*. Another interviewee frequently mentioned how her family usually told her "but you are Japanese" as a response to some of her behavior.

The fact that many Japanese, even when in contact with different forms of Japaneseness, still rely on the argument of it *not being Japanese* can be better understood by the concept of *heteronomous societies* from Castoriadis (1997). According to him, heteronomous societies attribute their imaginaries, and national-identity is an imaginary as Anderson (2006) shows us, to an extra-social authority. Not only Befu's (2001) work show us how the narrative of national identity often relies more on essentialist views rather than on socially constructed ones, the narratives presented also show such ideas. It also shows how some Japanese detach themselves from their access on Japaneseness. The narrative is not constructed within the argument of how they represent a form of Japaneseness and I represent another, something that the work of Lourenção (2010) also shows, but rather that such characteristics are the characteristics of Japan, and I am simply exposing them. In Lourenção's study of the *machines of Japaneseness*, he argues that the construction of Japaneseness requires machines that can activate something he calls *becoming-Japanese*. Since such becoming could be activated by different machines, each machine can, thus, produce different forms of Japaneseness. However, even throughout his argumentation, Lourenção is aware that this is not how the idea of Japaneseness is often seen by both the "Japanese" as well as by the "non-Japanese".

As Hansen and Guarne (2012, p. iii) points out:

Although recent years have registered a significant shift away from such essentialist depictions [of *Japaneseness*] in the academia, there remains a persistent social agreement that sustains as irrefutable "common sense" in regard to reified ideas of Japaneseness and Japan itself. This ubiquitous and resilient characterization is a means by which being Japanese, both personal and national, is informed, or indeed for some formed, via macro pressures encountered in one's daily social life.

The continuation of the narrative from Japanese Student C takes a turn after the interviewee refers to her experience in high school. Now, she says that, when facing high school, she noticed what the author has framed to her as *Education aimed at building the 'ideal Japanese'*. At this moment she says that the education has shifted towards a single objective, to get the students inside famous universities, usually Tokyo University. She proceeds to explain that this happens because Japan *is still* a society that relies on educational background in which more than the grades obtained or the content learned, what matters is which university you attended. Here she gives her version of what is the Japanese model of success: you go to a good university, you get in a good company; this is the way. Her experience with such ideology is explained next, when after an open campus visit she felt inclined to join another university, an international oriented university, after being confronted by some questions after such visit. However, the new decision to take such university as her goal did not please her teacher who obliged her to take the National universities and the famous private universities as priority, since, according to her, the university she intended to take was not famous enough. At this moment she described her feelings as taking a test not for herself, but for the sake of the school's reputation.

Again, some conclusions can be taken from this. First, the conceptualization of Japan as *still* a society that relies on education background as the most important form of cultural capital can be argued to show a certain feeling of anachronism in such a characteristic. To say it is *still* something means it *still* hasn't changed, and it can be

argued that it also demonstrates a desire for such a change to happen, or an expectation that it already should have. The other conclusion that can be taken comes from the final part of such narrative, when the conclusion reached is that the test was taken for the school, and not for the student. Here it becomes explicit the idea of how the individual refuses to take it as its goal, framing it instead as the institution's goal, thus, differentiating the two categories and already pointing out to some of the limitations felt. Here again, as in the case of the narratives collected by Ueno (2013), the rigid Japanese institution acts producing the limitation, and the more international university, as the international company, acts as an escape opportunity from Japan. The same student talked to the author in a later period after the first interview, and when confronted by the topic of internationalization in Japan, replied:

I feel ashamed this is partly true in Japan. [...] Japanese people are abusing vague words such as "global" or "*kokusai ka*", but I'm always wondering how many people in this country truly absorbed the meaning. [...] We're still in a chaotic state in terms of *global-ka shakai*. (Japanese Student C)

In all these cases, another point to be made is that of *difference* and the *international* as escape. *Difference* and *internationalization* are either to be tolerated, or to be utilized as cultural capital to escape Japan. Japan itself is immutable, and looking at how students narrate their views on it makes it very clear the *symbolic misery* in place that does not allow imagining "*an other Japan*".

If this is the case of how the ideology of tolerance operates in regards to the *difference* as a category of multiculturalism, then it can be argued that this is the same ideology working to neutralize the potential subversion of Visual Kei in Japan. By making it being seem as a *difference* to be *tolerated*. Yet, it is important to say that, in the case of Visual Kei too, the performances of subversion are subject to the creation of *heterotopias*. Since the purpose of creating heterotopic spaces is to make difference visible and localized as a delimited action, through this apparent tolerant environment towards difference, in which no one is banned of having their space, the control apparatus is actually more efficient, since now all the difference is located in particular places, easier to control, and with the semiotic effect of showcasing difference as a wild animal in a zoo's cage: It is ok for it to be in a cage, but if released and allowed amongst us, it would only wrack havoc and produce danger and instability. Here, too, the ideology of tolerance does its work to neutralize the presence of difference as a possible subversive element to the rigidity of *national identity discourses*.

### **Final Considerations**

It can be argued, after the theoretical consideration and the analyses of the narratives presented, that the escape strategy used by the Japanese youth to cope with the uncertainties presented to them have political consequences. The *symbolic misery* (Stiegler 2011, 2013) produced by Japanese schools regarding the models of Japaneseness, that fails to see the *becoming* aspect of Japaneseness (Lourenção 2010) and its multitude of modes of individuation, ends up transforming the Japanese society in a *heteronomous society* (Castoriadis 1997) that sees its characteristics not as being socially constructed, but rather, as being natural and immutable. If such

categories are considered to be immutable, the consciousness and desire to change them are unlikely to be produced. On the other hand, the new forms of labor that demands affects and knowledge to be at the service of the market (Berardi 2009; Marazzi 2008, 2011; Virno 2004) produces a biopolitical capitalism that produces life forms (Negri and Hardt 2001 2011), and that makes individuals and their knowledge to be valued according to the values that are given to them by the market (Gorz 2010). Internationalization is, as well, only valued to the extent that it can produce either cultural capital to become a *global talent*, or in as much as it can help Japan expand its culture and power towards others. When it does not promote any, international students are framed as social pariahs, rejected by Japanese companies that prefer already domesticated Japanese students, ignored by policy makers as returnees struggling to conform in schools, or too different people forced to take the path of international schools, international universities, and international companies. With multiculturalism the same happens, difference is only promoted to the extent that it allows Japan to pose as a liberal country, capable of the grandeur of *tolerating* different people in its territory, as long as they remain in the spaces allocated for them. If it is neutralized, exoticized, and commodified for consumptions by the Japanese, multiculturalism is welcomed; but if it becomes a source of challenge to the rigid model of Japaneseness and its ideology of homogeneity, then the theories of Japanese uniqueness is reinforced and rigidified.

When we look to the migrant *minorities* in Japan, we can see the same tolerance strategies, and the consequences of the politics of escape. The fact that one can make a trip to the small neighborhood of Shin-Okubo to see the *ethnic diversity* within Tokyo is not a point towards multiculturalism, is a point against it, since ethnic diversity is localized, separated, easily identifiable and dislocated from the mainstream. *We let you be yourself, as long as you keep it to yourself. We encourage your ethnic schools, the more you get all Brazilians to be with Brazilians instead of showing their difference in Japanese school, the best for us.* Again, the apparent tolerance makes it a more effective form of control: since ethnic communities can be formed and be dependable on their own institutions, the demand for changes in the mainstream Japanese institutions to deal with diversity are lesser and lesser, thus, Japanese institutions no longer have any barriers to further the project of a single homogeneous *Japaneseness*.

With Visual Kei, similar things happen. What makes it (and sub-cultures in general) so localized, both on space and time, is precisely what makes it available in a country with so much restraint to diversity without jeopardizing any identity construct enforced in Japan. Everyone gets their time off on Sunday to dress as different as they like, but on Monday, is back to black suits and school uniforms again. Here lays, perhaps, the biggest limitation of multiculturalism and the ideology of tolerance towards diversity and difference: A subversion that is 'allowed' cannot subvert.

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*Asian American Mother-Daughter Literature and Representations of Families of the Japanese Diaspora in Canada*

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**Abstract**

This paper details representations of Canadian Nikkei families by Canadian Nikkei authors in the periods just before and after Redress (1988) and The Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988). It examines relationships amongst matrilineal generations in novels within the critical context of the mother-daughter dyad in Asian American literature. People of Japanese descent in Canada have complex cultural identities relating to their sense of belonging (or not) in Canada, their imaginings of Japan as homeland, and the growth of Nikkei identifying themselves transnationally.

The paper considers Joy Kogawa's novel *Obasan* in which the protagonist Naomi's relationships with her (absent) mother and her two aunts frame her understanding of her own cultural identity. It also uses Hiromi Goto's novel *Chorus of Mushrooms* which has a family that problematises Canadian identity and asks questions of Canada's multicultural mosaic (and the place of minorities such as Canadian Nikkei within it). Canadian Nikkei—who were called 'the yellow peril' when they first arrived in Canada but are now seen as a 'model minority'—offer a window for exploring many of the most important issues around identity in Canada today.

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This paper details representations of the matrilineal Canadian Nikkei family in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* (Kogawa, 1994b), first published in 1981, and Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms* (Goto, 1997), first published in 1994. It shows within the critical context of Asian American mother-daughter literature ambiguities in how Canadian Nikkei may both belong (or not) to the nation-state Canada, as well as the possibilities this then leads to in terms of transnational Nikkei cultural identities.

Canadian Nikkei novels sometimes follow the mother-daughter dyad prevalent in Asian American literature, although they can also appropriate it to better represent how they see the cultural identity of Canadian Nikkei. The novels I analyse here are not always strictly matrilineal in the sense of proceeding through the generations from grandmother through to granddaughter. *Obasan* has as its protagonist the young child Naomi (interspersed with her adult self) whose mother and grandmothers are all missing from her life. In their place are Naomi's two very different aunts—the eponymous obasan, and Aunt Emily. By negotiating her relationships with these maternal proxies, Naomi comes to understand her place of belonging (or otherwise) in Canada and the possibilities for a cultural identity extending beyond nation-states. *Chorus of Mushrooms* at first glance follows a more traditional matrilineal model with grandmother Naoe, her daughter Keiko, and Keiko's daughter Murasaki. It also at first glance appears to fit into the Asian American mother-daughter dyad with both sets of mother-daughter at odds with each other due to cultural differences. However, these differences are not resolved in a predictable fashion according to the Asian American mother-daughter dyad since Goto shows that cultural identity is more complicated than simply moving from point A to point B.

Both novels at their start appear to stereotype their old women Canadian immigrants as racialised and underpowered. Yet, alternative readings of these novels particularly as their narratives develop suggest that assumptions about these women and their memories need to be questioned. Their storytelling brings to the fore the issue of difference in Canada, showing how power and politics work around cultural identity.

A general theme in Asian American literature stretching back to the post-war period is mother-daughter novels. Such novels place the relationship of the mother and the daughter as a central tenet of the novel. They place emphasis on conflict between mother and daughter which may or may not be resolved by the novel's end. Critical literature on such novels has grown in the last two decades with attention paid not only to gender but also to race, ethnicity, and social class (see Chodorow, 1999; Grice, 2002; Ho, 1999; Simpson, 2001). Novels by Canadian Nikkei writers both fit into this general field of Asian American literature and its more specific sub-field of mother-daughter literature, as well do not fit (sometimes by consciously attempting not to). Matrilineage, whilst important to bring out the key aforementioned issues such as gender and ethnicity, has a tendency to overshadow historically and culturally specific Canadian Nikkei issues by bringing them instead under this broader rubric of Asian American.

There are several novels that appear time and again in literary analysis pertaining to mother-daughter relationships and immigrant generations to North America. *Fifth Chinese Daughter* (Wong, 1950) is a coming of age story of a young Chinese American girl's attempts to balance adapting to America with the expectations of her family. *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2006), first published in 1989 and later made into a

film (Wang, 1993), tells the story of four Chinese immigrant mothers in San Francisco and each mother's relationship with their own daughter. *Eating Chinese Food Naked* (Ng, 1998) shows heroine Ruby Lee's complicated relationship with her mother and the rest of her family, as well as her struggle to understand her identity. *The Woman Warrior* (Kingston, 1989), first published in 1975, blends autobiography with Chinese folktales to portray Chinese-American life in the United States. Unlike many mother-daughter novels which tend to take the perspective of either the mother or the daughter (more usually the latter), *The Woman Warrior* offers the points of view of both mother and daughter. *The Woman Warrior*, like *Obasan*, is widely taught throughout North American universities. It "serves as a mother-text that paved the way for later depictions of an transnational matrilineage between mothers and daughters" (Schultermandl, 2009: 29). Kingston's novel acted almost as a blueprint for many subsequent novels on mother-daughter conflict and the difficulties of reconciling place in society and place in family.

Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms* also has mother-daughter conflict at its heart. There is conflict between Naoe and her daughter Keiko, as well as Keiko and her daughter Murasaki. Since grandmother Naoe and granddaughter Murasaki get on very well it would be simple to surmise that the central problem (quite literally) is Keiko. Goto appears aware of the Asian American mother-daughter literary context when she writes: "parent/child conflict. Add a layer of cultural displacement and the tragedy is complete." (Goto, 1997: 98). *Chorus of Mushrooms* appears to introduce stereotypes of Asian American women to later deconstruct them. Goto does this to avoid generalisations of what it means to be, variously, a woman, an Asian American woman, and a Canadian Nikkei woman. Mother-daughter writing affords her the ideal avenue to do this, as Wendy Ho explains:

*Many women writers of color sought ways to articulate their specific concerns and contradictions in the telling of their mother-daughter experiences in ways that did not replicate or depend upon white mainstream feminist models and narratives. As much as there were intense conflicts with mothers, they emphasized the mothers' powerful social and emotional presence in nurturing their creativity and in establishing the homeplace as a political space for their subordinated racial-ethnic families.*

(Ho, 1999: 37)

The tension in the relationship between mother and daughter in *Chorus of Mushrooms* is based upon their different needs. The mother (Naoe) has been uprooted from her homeland, a place she was familiar with and knew. She finds herself in a new place where her past experience counts for little and may even be seen negatively. Her offspring (particularly her daughter, Keiko), whom she would previously had expected to follow her ways and customs have ideas of their own. These daughters have their own issues of trying to fit into a society where individuality is valued whilst still somehow meeting the expectations of their mothers. Although many Asian American mother-daughter novels fit the *bildungsroman* model, some are left more open-ended since there is no easy narrative for successful resolution of these issues. Exploration of selfhood and cultural identity seems to necessitate the need for storytelling:

*While some of the works portray in equal measures the mother's quest for identity, such as through narratives of the mother's lives in Asia or their experiences of immigration and diaspora, what foregrounds the daughter's perspective is the explicitly transnational negotiation of matrilineage they perform through the daughter's appropriation of her matrilineage. In reflecting on and reassessing their own childhoods, the daughters in the texts by these Asian American women writers recreate memories and thus attempt self-creation via the narrative process of storytelling.*

(Schultermandl, 2009: 25)

The term 'Asian American' is problematic in terms of its application to the Canadian Nikkei writers such as Goto and Kogawa for two main reasons. First, it is difficult to define. Second, it appears to make the term 'Asian Canadian' a subset of 'Asian American' rather than a term with meaning in its own right. The meaning of the term Asian American is reflected in changes in (Asian American) literature over time. Asian American has moved away from being based on a vague notion of Asia (or specific nation-states within Asia) and an essentialised notion of Canada and the United States (combined into a monolithic 'American'). Appadurai shows the inadequacy of the term to cope with the huge variation it contains:

*The formula of hyphenation (as in Italian-Americans, Asian-Americans, and African-Americans) is reaching the point of saturation, and the right side of the hyphen can barely contain the unruliness of the left side... The politics of ethnic identity in the United States is inseparably linked to the global spread of originally local national identities. For every nation-state that has exported significant numbers of its population to the United States as refugees, tourists, or students, there is now a decolonized transnation, which retains a special ideological link to a putative place or origin but is otherwise a thoroughly diasporic collectivity. No existing conception of Americanness can contain this large variety of transnations.*

(Appadurai, 1996: 172)

Notwithstanding the problems of defining 'Asian' and 'American' separately, the term also places apparent equal emphasis on both. However, the reality is that writers are often located in these cultures unequally. By writing of Japan as belonging to their past heritage and Canada as their present reality, there is a danger of Orientalising Japan and not representing its transcultural influences appropriately. The transnational, translingual, and transcultural nature of the term Asian American has come to be increasingly appreciated in more recent times after Appadurai. Literary novels are often of help in this understanding. Yet, this appreciation of new meanings for Asian American is not universal. In other words, the term Asian American may mean different things to different people.

This leads to ask what is the precise purpose of the term Asian American? On one level, it can be seen as ideological, something that can be used by different bodies for different purposes. For example, minorities such as Canadian Nikkei can use the term as a preferable alternative to Japanese-Canadian since it avoids the problems of essentialising cultural identity based on nation-states. It also brings together different

cultural groups not only within nation-states such as Canada but also transnationally across North America. The term Asian American also serves a political purpose for Canadian Nikkei cultural producers. For example, since people of Japanese descent are one of the smallest visible minorities in Canada, labelling oneself as Asian Canadian allows a degree of leverage. This can be useful in applying for funding, grants, or even for advertising and promoting their works.

Kogawa's *Obasan* moves from the specificity of Canada to the more general realm of the Asian American. Like *Chorus of Mushrooms*, *Obasan* is characterised by an absence of male characters particularly positively influential father-figures. Emphasis is almost entirely transferred to the female characters and it is the two aunts who have the greatest influence on the subjectivity and construction of Naomi's cultural identity. From *obasan* she learns how to speak with silence, how to endure, how to cope with the everyday racism directed at Canadian Nikkei even after the war and to young children such as her brother Stephen and herself. From her Aunt Emily—and this is developed much more in the sequel to *Obasan* titled *Itsuka* (Kogawa, 1994a) then later rewritten as *Emily Kato* (Kogawa, 2005)—she learns how to argue, how to speak, how to fight against the racism directed against Canadian Nikkei even at the highest levels of government and media.

As a result of her interactions with these two very different aunts, one ostensibly representing Japan and the other the West, Naomi finds herself with a hybridised cultural identity. The hybridised cultural identity is not a simple Japanese-Canadian one, but one which mixes elements of the already hybridised identities of her aunts along with all the other influences Naomi has as a young child growing up in Canada. Yet, this hybridised identity is not something that Naomi feels completes her. Her missing mother is the key to understanding Naomi's need to keep searching and asking questions related to who she is and where she (and Canadian Nikkei) come from. It leads her in *Emily Kato* to research on Nikkei in the United States and whilst doing this and beginning to see the parallels with Canadian Nikkei in their historical treatment during the Second World War she begins to conceptualise a transnational cultural identity which can move beyond the nation-states of Canada and Japan.

The terms 'Asian American' and 'Asian Canadian' are sometimes used as an alternative to Canadian Nikkei but I would argue that they are more effective as political terms rather than for using to help understand cultural identities. Yet both terms raise some important questions relevant to discussions of cultural identity. For the term Asian American, I wonder why a canon of so-called 'Asian American literature' has developed. This seems incongruous in the current age of postnationalism, postethnicity, and, to a lesser extent, transnationalism. Chin argues that the category of Asian American literature is dominated by the ventriloquist autobiography which solidifies racial ideologies:

*We began another year angry! Another decade, another Chinese American ventriloquizing the same old white Christian fantasy of little Chinese victims of 'the original sin of being born to a brutish, sadomasochistic culture of cruelty and victimization' fleeing to America in search of freedom from everything Chinese and seeking white acceptance, and of being victimized by stupid white racists and then being reborn in acculturation and honorary whiteness. Every Chinese American book*

*ever published in the United States of America by a major publisher has been a Christian autobiography or autobiographical novel.*

(Chin et al., 1991: xi–xii)

Chin's critique is exaggerated and overly laden with notions of conspiracy, but there is an element of truth to it. Perhaps the case is different between Asian American literature from the United States and that from Canada, but in the case of the latter there is plenty of what Lisa Lowe terms 'heterogeneity' in the cultural identity of Asian Americans. In Lowe's highly influential *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Lowe, 1996) she argues that even the most prescribed novels "reveal heterogeneity rather than reproducing regulating ideas of cultural identity or integration" (Lowe, 1996: 43). A problem with Lowe's position in the context of my research is that even if we are to accept that Canadian Nikkei authors are able to create a particular notion of (Canadian Nikkei) cultural identity how is it that they still seem to fit within the category of the Asian-American literary canon? The answer to this might be that—even if they have no intention of doing so—Canadian Nikkei authors are automatically drawn into the Asian-American literary canon by default. The authors are perhaps more affected by discourse around this canon and its ideological influences than they realise. In this sense, Chin is right since there is more to compare than there is to contrast between Asian American writers such as Kogawa, Kingston, Tan, Jen, Mukherjee, Lai, and so on.

The Asian American literary canon hints at transnationalism and globalism yet one that stops at the Americas. The literary canon—as with Canadian Nikkei cultural identity—of course, does not do this. It exists both within and outside these borderlands. Cultural production and the creative industries is also not just something originating in the Americas but increasingly influenced by and a collaboration between Japan and colonised Nikkei. When seen in these terms cultural identity and issues of representation move away from Canadian Nikkei, Japanese Canadian, and Asian American, towards Nikkei and its worldwide diaspora. Hence, terms such as Asian American might be more useful for bringing together different groups of people of Asian origin in the United States and Canada, as for example is the case with some of the taiko groups in Canada.

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*The Exhaustion of the Multicultural Australian Philosophy and the Rise  
of a New Visual Regime of Signification: Melbourne  
between Multiculturalism and Globalization*

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**Abstract**

The Second World War caused unprecedented hardship, but it also accelerated change. Masses of European immigrants reached Australia's shores, giving rise to a sort of ideal multi-ethnic society. Between history and myth, diverse ethnic groups interacted without coalescing and by maintaining distinctive, national or group cultural identities. Indeed Melbourne rose as one of the world's most multicultural cities, with the largest transnational immigrant populations in Australia. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the 'global' pervades the multicultural social fabric of the city through the relentless spread of 'hybrid cultural objects' and it has the symbolic power to transform urban spaces by creating the 'global imaginary' in a single place. This paper aims to grasp how the shift from the 'multicultural' to the 'global' is increasingly generating a new visual global regime of representation and signification in Melbourne. Exemplified by a body of still images – one of which is analyzed and interpreted through the lens of social and political theory – this paper investigates how symbols found in the urban space of Melbourne construct a new social imaginary that is simultaneously local, national and global. In visualizing and interpreting global change in Melbourne, this paper observes that, while Australia's multicultural philosophy seems to be an exhausted discourse, exceeded by the 'global', Asia appears as a primary cultural globalizing force reshaping one of the most multicultural cities in the world.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Globalization, Global change, Social imaginary, New visual regime of signification, Representation, Hybrid cultural objects

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## Introduction

This paper provides some information about multiculturalism and globalization in Australia by focusing on the capital city of the state of Victoria, Melbourne. In particular, by understanding multiculturalism as a process of globalization, this investigation looks at the rise of the ‘global imaginary’ as a new visual regime of representation and signification. In doing so, the paper observes that — due to the ongoing process of cultural hybridization and globalization — the multicultural framework fails to capture change at the level of representation. Change is increasingly affected by the ‘global’, where Asia seems to act as the main globalizing and reshaping force at local-national level in Melbourne. This paper will also analyze and interpret one visual evidence to better understand how the shift from the multicultural to the global is symbolically and socially produced.

## Australia: Immigration and Multiculturalism

With a resident population of about 22 million people, almost half of which were born in a foreign country (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011, p. 9), Australia is a typical example, along with the United States of America and Canada, of the major immigrant countries in the world. Melbourne, the capital city of Victoria, is Australia’s most multicultural city (Australian Bureau of Statistic, 2011).

The arrival of the first European settlers in 1788, mostly transported convicts, was the beginning of more than a hundred years during which the separate colonies of the British Empire, New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia, had their own immigration policies (Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* Melbourne’s horse-drawn carriage with Imperial Crown and Australian Flag. Copyright [2010] by Tommaso Durante. Retrieved April 28, 2014 from <http://www.the-visual-archive-project-of-the-global-imaginary.com> by T. Durante.

Over the period leading to the federation of Australia in 1901 there was a steady growth in immigration mostly associated with gold rushes and the development of the agricultural frontier in Terra Australis. The flow of people mainly came from Britain,

although there was also a major stream of Chinese immigrants associated with the mining boom in the 1870s and 1880s, particularly in Victoria, and significant waves of migrants from Germany in the 1840s and 1850s, as well as of Italians and Greeks, especially in the early twentieth century. As measure of control and reaction, one of the first acts of the Commonwealth Federation of Australia was to declare the White Australia Policy inscribed in the Immigration Restriction Act in 1901, which limited immigration to Europeans, especially those from the British Islands. The White Australia Policy was eventually dismantled in 1972 (Australian Government, 2014).

The first wave of immigrants arrived in Australia in the 1830s and it was represented by a European settlement of mostly Anglo-Celtic people who displaced the area's original inhabitants, the people of the Kulin nation. In examining Australian immigration, the Second World War is a period of history that marked a turning point in the making of the modern Australia's nation-state. In that period immigration to Australia reached a new high level, which has been maintained over most of the subsequent six decades, with rises and falls associated with regional economic crises, wars and conflict zones, combined with shifts in the national immigration policy. However, the significant shift in the scale of immigration is only one element in the transformation of immigration to Australia in the post-war period and in particular in Melbourne, the city under investigation.

As previously acknowledged, Melbourne's population is made up of people from all over the world. Around 140 cultures are represented there: from Victoria's original Indigenous inhabitants to more recent migrants from Asia and Africa. The city's multicultural community includes people from the United Kingdom, China, Italy, India, Greece, Somalia, South Korea, New Zealand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan and so forth. Although some of these communities have arrived only recently, others, such as Chinese, Italian and Greek, came early in Melbourne's history and contributed significantly to shape the city's modern identity (City of Melbourne, 2014).

From the early seventies, multiculturalism has been a sort of bipartisan Australian policy and part of the Australian national philosophy, beyond the different approaches and social justice agenda of the various governments. Multiculturalism remains today's Australia's official policy, although in the last decade it has been significantly discussed and contested at academic level as well as in media and popular discourses (Baber, 2008; Hirst, 2005; Hodge & O'Carroll, 2006; Soutphommasane, 2013). At federal government level we are currently observing a shift in the approach to this theme, with a renewed focus on the border control and military defence (Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2014). This trend is also based on the assumption that ethnic integration requires the assimilation of Australian values, with a significant recurrence in the political speeches of the last decade of concepts like 'social cohesion'. Nevertheless, multiculturalism still represents a successful story in the social imaginary of the nation, something to be celebrated, as it happens on Australia Day.

### **A brief analysis of the concept of multiculturalism**

Multicultural societies have a long history; from the Ottoman Empire at the height of its power in the sixteenth century, to the United States of America from the early

nineteenth century onwards. However the term 'multiculturalism' is of relatively recent origin and it was formally adopted in 1965 in Canada to describe a distinctive approach to cultural diversity (Heywood, 2007, p. 310). The online Oxford English Dictionary defines the term 'multicultural' as 'relating to or containing several cultural or ethnic groups within a society' (2014). Therefore the term is bound to an idea of ethnicity that is both attached and immutable. Concurring with Jan Nederveen Pieterse, it is necessary to problematize the notion of ethnicity itself (2007, p. 112). The social theorist states that '[e]thnicity fades into race, nationalism, multiculturalism, identity politics, and community. Its significance and dynamics are conjunctural, contingent.' (2007, p. 112) This supports the idea that when we talk about 'multiculturalism' the term can be approached by different perspectives with different meanings.

Multiculturalism finds its origin in the eighteenth century and it is grounded in the emancipation from tradition and authority and, in the anti-imperialist anthropology, it was based on the equal dignity of cultures (Baber, 2008, p. 55). However, the most evident paradox of multiculturalism is that it grants the same treatment to all communities, but not to the people who form them (Bruckner, 2007). More clearly: in denying people from a specific ethnic cultural identity the freedom to liberate themselves from their own traditions, paradoxically multiculturalism forces people into cultural ghettos of their own systems of beliefs, traditions and ideologies. In other words, under the philosophical umbrella of respecting specificity, individuals are forced into an ethnic or racial definition, which plunges them into a ghetto-condition, chaining them to their roots, from which they were supposedly being freed (Bruckner, 2007). The images accompanying this paper attempt to visualize this point.

Thus, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, multiculturalism is one of the most controversial ideological topics in contemporary politics. Multiculturalism lays the foundation of Australia as a modern nation-state. While this social organization and national philosophy has had some positive impacts on Australian society – and thus the term can have very positive connotations for many Australians –, it also suggests ideological fragmentation and cultural ethnic divide. Indeed it represents a very sophisticated imagined form of society. This reminds me of the Roman ruler Caesar's maxim, *divide et impera* [divide and conquer], in its use of social and political power to exert control over society.

Following Pieterse's argumentation on the distinction between static and closed and fluid and open views of culture that produce contrasting perspectives on multiculturalism (2007, p. 135), this study understands multiculturalism as a mutual cultural toleration in a defined socio-historical context accommodating multiple cultures in a state of continuous contamination. I refer to globalization as an ongoing set of interrelated processes rather than something already concluded and defined. Thus, by taking into due account globalization and its cultural contaminations, this paper looks at cultural identity as something in a continuous state of change and transformation. In this respect, I argue that cultural hybridization is the product of globalization processes which in turn contributes to an exhaustion of the multicultural regime of signification in Melbourne. Indeed, it represents the human condition at the dawn of this new century. In other words, the intimate articulation between multiculturalism and globalization (Pieterse, 2007, 2009; Tomlinson, 1999) is the

presupposition of the production of a global culture, and this has socio-political and cultural implications.

Thus, far away from an Australia's past ideal of accommodating multiple cultures in a single place, I argue that – despite the rhetoric of celebrating difference – multiculturalism as Australian 'national policy' does little more than facilitating assimilation within the dominant neoliberal global ideology (Galligan & Roberts, 2004, p. 94). As a consequence, due to the effect of the intensification of the global processes, multiculturalism in Melbourne appears to be an empty, a coercive ritual confined to the symbolic domain of folkloristic and commercial representations—like the yearly Australia Day celebrations (Figure 2 and 3).



*Figure 2.* Iranian Society of Victoria, Australia Day Parade, Melbourne, Australia. Copyright [2014] by Tommaso Durante. Retrieved April 28, 2014 from <http://www.the-visual-archive-project-of-the-global-imaginary.com> by T. Durante.



*Figure 3.* Kleenex paper towels, The Kimberly-Clark Corporation USA, Coles Supermarket, Melbourne. Copyright [2013] by Tommaso Durante. Retrieved May 2, 2014 from <http://www.the-visual-archive-project-of-the-global-imaginary.com> by T. Durante.

Deeply aware that no discourses operate in isolation but, on the contrary, they are very much intimately intertwined, a significant outcome of global processes is the 'ethnic economy' (Sassen, 2000). Thus, it can be observed that in the socio-historical context of the global age, the philosophic ideal of a multicultural society serves to manage the complexity of the labour market and to avoid consequences related to cultural diversity. Eventually, the complimentary discourse of multiculturalism and globalization emerges as a form of society in which the different ethnic interfaces represent and work as a major form of socio-political control.

In 2007 Australia removed the word 'multiculturalism' from the name of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, calling it Department of Immigration and Citizenship, yet most of the policies related to multiculturalism are still in charge with alternate fortune and decline, depending on the type of government ruling the country. Thus, I argue that in the age of neoliberal globalization – the new economic and political world order –, multiculturalism embodies a fragmented and highly hybridized ideological landscape, rather than a social national imaginary or a national philosophy. Multiculturalism, as a symbolic system of values, seems exhausted at the level of representation and superseded by the symbolic power of the war-machine that is the new visual regime of signification: the 'global'. The new visual regime lies on the increasing production, circulation and consumption of hybrid cultural assemblages that 'condense' spatial-symbolic scales of the local, national and the global (Figure 4).



*Figure 4.* Swanston Street, Melbourne, Australia, Royal fans wait in Federation Square. Copyright [2014] by Tommaso Durante. Retrieved May 2, 2014 from <http://www.the-visual-archive-project-of-the-global-imaginary.com> by T. Durante.

Critically approaching multiculturalism and globalization as material and ideational processes, this study examines the symbolic and social construction of multiculturalism and globalization as interconnected discourses. Discourses that

engage with each other by frequently overlapping and, eventually, by contributing to the shift from the 'national' to the 'global' with the rise of a new public consciousness—the 'global imaginary' (Steger, 2008).

### **The global imaginary and the rise of a new visual regime of signification in Melbourne**

In the last two decades an epochal change has occurred in the way in which human beings imagine, communicate and fit together. Swift changes in the production, circulation and consumption of images, signs and symbols led the visual to eclipse the textual and dominate the world. As a consequence, the symbolic domain of the visual has been recognized as being as important as that one of language and theory since, as WJT Mitchell argues, '[i]mages are active players in the game of establishing and changing values. They are capable of introducing new values into the world and thus of threatening old ones' (2005, p. 105). Furthermore, the increasing production, circulation and consumption of a particular type of image, which I identified as 'hybrid cultural assemblage' of globality, have the symbolic power to transform urban spaces by creating the global imaginary in a single place (Figure 5). Informed by these theories, I am approaching globalization as a material and ideational process by expanding Steger's notion of global imaginary (2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c) to its 'visual-ideological dimension' (Durante, 2013). In doing so, I also follow Pieterse's view of globalization as a process of cultural hybridization which gives rise to a global *mélange* (1994, 2009).



*Figure 5.* Falun Dafa members, 7 Eleven and Vodafone logo brands, Bourke Street, Melbourne. Copyright [2012] by Tommaso Durante. Retrieved May 2, 2014 from <http://www.the-visual-archive-project-of-the-global-imaginary.com> by T. Durante.

Whilst globalization is often discussed in academic and public discourses as a phenomenon in itself, by critically approaching the multidimensional process of changes and transformations this paper regards it as a symbolic and social construct. In doing so, this study attempts to unfold the means and purposes of its symbolic and social production in Melbourne, Australia, to better understand the rise of a new visual regime of signification that is replacing the exhausted multicultural national

philosophy and its regime of representation and signification. By 'walking in the city' (de Certeau, 1998), it can be appreciated how the production, circulation and consumption of visual formations condensing the different spatial-symbolic scales of the 'global' are increasingly affecting Melbourne's multicultural identity by destabilizing the modern Australian self-contained nation-state.

### **Globalization as cultural hybridization**

This study began with the consideration that multiculturalism and globalization are mutually related. After having previously clarified the two concepts, I add that in this context I refer to globalization as related to the compression of world-time and world-space, and to the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole (Robertson, 2000). This means acknowledging the acceleration of the global interdependencies of people, structures and discourses and the shift from the national to the global represented by the rise of the global imaginary. This mindset represents a new public consciousness, that of being-in-a-global-interconnected-world, which in our everyday life is broadly understood as the common sense of the global. That is the standpoint from which I approached and attempted to grasp and explain how the global imaginary is overwhelming multiculturalism in Melbourne.

Concurring with John Tomlinson, 'globalization lies at the heart of modern culture; cultural practices lie at the heart of globalization' (2011, p. 1). Thus, there is a reciprocal relationship. However, this is not to say that globalization is the single determinant of contemporary cultural experience, or that the visual-ideological aspect that this study attempts to unfold is the key to access globalization's inner dynamics. Instead, I point out that the transformative processes affecting all the domains of societies cannot be better understood until they are grasped through their visual-ideological dimension. Likewise these changes indeed affect our sense of what multiculturalism and globalization actually are at the dawn of this new century. Deeply aware that the meaning of globalization and multiculturalism are notoriously contested concepts, this paper certainly does not aim at a complete analysis of the exhaustion of multiculturalism and the rise of the global imaginary. Rather, this paper tries to grasp the main elements of globalization and multiculturalism by a visual methodological approach to better understand how the exhaustion of Melbourne's multicultural philosophy is manifested.

Furthermore, the debate on the economic and cultural forces that shape globalization helps to explain the exhaustion of the multicultural philosophy in Australia and especially in Melbourne. Globalization, by its very nature, is grounded into the local-national. This also means that the phenomenon produces constant tension between sameness and differences, between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization. (Appadurai, 1990; Bhabha, 1994) Before going to analyze and interpret one image through case study method and through the lenses of social and political theory, I deem it necessary to provide a brief socio-historical sketch of what is defined as Australia's most multicultural city, Melbourne.

### **Global processes, local knowledges: Melbourne**

In 2011 Melbourne was ranked in the Global Innovation Cities Index as the 20th largest city economy in the world (Innovation Cities Program, 2011). In modern times



with the historical implications of the shift made by global media, communication and marketing, it is no longer possible to consider the city of Melbourne as being far away from the rest of the world. Indeed, due to the new geopolitical configuration of the global capitalistic economy, Melbourne appears strategically located in the Asia Pacific-Rim. Furthermore, Melbourne's main airport is, after Sydney, the busiest in Australia and its seaport is Australia's busiest for containerized and general cargo. (Dowling, 2011) These elements indicate the growing globalization process occurring in Melbourne, with no other city in Australia having ever recorded growth of this size (Colebatch, 2011).

If identity is a crucial aspect for people, products and places, then Melbourne offers all types of products and many places – like Piazza Italia in Carlton, the Chinese Museum and the recently built Vietnamese gate in Victoria Street – that help people to symbolically identify themselves with their cultural roots. However, the multicultural Australia of few decades ago has changed again and the government's multicultural philosophy seems to strategically control the whole Australian society through its ethnic cultural and political interfaces on top of which the Anglo-Celtic outnumbers all others (Hage & Johnson, 1993, pp. 113-134; O'Donnell & Johnstone 1997, p. 11).

At the same time Australia's international outlook has been reshaped in the past decade and the focus is increasingly on Asia. This change has been gradual and to different extents for the various sectors of Australian society (Australian Bureau of Statistic, 2009). The countries leading the global economy are mainly based in Asia, with unprecedented and strong implications for Australia; implications that are not only economic, but also have a socio-political and cultural nature; and they are profoundly affecting cultural identities.

I selected Melbourne because it is Australia's fastest growing and globalizing city and therefore a 'representational space' of ideological intensity (Lefebvre, 2008; Soja, 1996, 2003), due to the huge circulation and consumption of hybrid cultural assemblages that 'condense' spatial-symbolic scales of the local-national and the global. Thus, before continuing, I find useful to provide a brief outline of how the global imaginary can be traced.

### **How can the global imaginary be traced?**

As previously acknowledged, this study aims to investigate the new visual regime of representation and signification generated in Melbourne by the shift from the 'multicultural' to the 'global'. The samples were collected in fieldwork conducted twice a year, for a period of four years during, the months of January-February and July-August from July 2010 to February 2014.

In establishing the selection criteria for the choice of the visual material used in this study, I considered that images were eligible to be classified as 'hybrid cultural assemblages' of globality when they showed the condensation of spatial-symbolic scales of the 'local-national' and the 'global' in one single event, in one visual formation. I adopted the following interpretative strategies: 1) identifying key themes in my sources; 2) examining their effect of persuasion; and 3) making visible links and pathways.

In particular, during the stage of analysis and interpretation I considered the way in which the 'global' is symbolically injected into the 'local-national'. The following are the key visual constructs I am looking for:

- 1) A single event in which the presence of images, symbols and signs represents the spatial-symbolic scales or stands for the local, national and the global;
- 2) The visual formations that represent the mediation or the collapse of the different spatial-symbolic scales of the 'global';
- 3) All the less obvious signs and symbols that evoke or suggest the destabilization of local-national meaning through hybrid cultural assemblages of textual and visual metaphors.

By visual metaphors I refer to a representation through images that evokes a particular association of visually conveyed meanings.

### **New approach to the aesthetics of globalization**

I wish to point out that in this study the media representations are analysed and interpreted in relation to their actual forms. In other words, I take into consideration the actual symbols: signs, figures, images, narratives and words - the material forms in which meaning is circulated - and the context in which they are produced and interpreted. I am going to provide an example of interpretation by using one visual evidence (Figure 6) drawn, like the others accompanying this paper, from The Visual Archive Project of the Global Imaginary' (Durante, 2009-ongoing).



*Figure 8.* China Bar Signature advertisement, Melbourne. Copyright [2011] by Tommaso Durante. Retrieved May 8, 2014 from <http://www.the-visual-archive-project-of-the-global-imaginary.com> by T. Durante.

### **Analysis and interpretation of China Bar Signature advertisement in Melbourne**

Although it seems an apparently obvious photo depicting the opening of a new gathering place in Melbourne, the China Bar Signature advertisement is a very interesting example of cultural hybridization. The place in the picture was developed to operate on multiple levels in the core of the city CBD, on the corner of Little Bourke Street and Russell Street. Located in the Chinese cultural precinct, at first glance the restaurant seems just part of the city landscape and therefore looks quite

‘natural’. However, this ‘Asian buffet’, as the new bar is advertised, is part of the consolidation of the phenomenon of the Asian-Chinese retail business in Melbourne, which in the last decade is increasingly reshaping the urban fabric and affecting the multicultural character of the city.

A close-up of this photograph shows a large-size poster covering the new bar’s entrance. The poster portrays a seductive, submissive young woman whose only connection with the concept of food is in her hairstyle, which consists of a pair of chopsticks and a sushi roll. This macro-detail makes the difference by catching the viewer/consumer attention. In this context the ideological gendered male gaze suggests a visual pleasure that links food and female allure. The young woman displays a mix of Western beauty and Chinese fashion and the media representation, on the whole, approaches the viewer/consumer through a hybrid combination of English and Chinese language.

China Bar Signature advertisement is not focused on the quality of the consumer goods: the ‘Asian buffet’ experience is strongly related to an emotionally charged lifestyle that articulates local-national meanings around the ‘global’. In doing so, the China Bar Signature media representation affects cultural identity at local-national scale. In other words, this image clearly shows us how the global imaginary captures, adapts and alters local-national meanings by transforming local places into a global microplace.

When critically approached, this picture makes visible links and pathways, and the discursive ‘regime of truth’ that it produces, by also disclosing the macro-power channelled through this particular type of visual image. More precisely, in this selected image as well as in the other ones accompanying this paper, the condensation of spatial-symbolic scales of local-national and the ‘global’ transcends the geopolitical borders of Australia. In doing so, they contribute to changing, reorienting and altering local-national meanings by giving more symbolic power to the global.

To make it clearer, it can be observed that the Euro-Asian woman (Figure 8) would have never been on a billboard two or three decades ago in Melbourne, even though Chinese restaurants have been operating in Melbourne since 1863 (Nichol, 2012). Figure 8 depicts a visual formation that relies on the glamour of a reimagined China, and Asian food more broadly, through which we detect the fragmentation and re-composition of a hybrid assemblage of cultural identities at local-global scale. Furthermore, the image of the Euro-Asian woman is of indeterminate ethnic origin. Analysis of similar advertisements in the past 30 years would have shown mainly surfer guys and blondes.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has argued that in Melbourne, in the last decade, multiculturalism has evolved into an exhausted ideological system of values, overwhelmed by the symbolic power of the global. As a consequence multiculturalism in Australia appears to be a redundant parade of cultural and social divide, as displayed by the selection of images accompanying this paper. Indeed, it seems to me that, due to the spread of the processes of globalization, multiculturalism is turned into a tool of social and political control. This happens through the implicit expectation that groups of people fit into

what appears to be today a superimposed cultural frame in a context of intense contamination, ideological fragmentation and, eventually, of hybridization.

Living in Melbourne, I chose my city for this study on the basis of my everyday observation of its urban social fabric, and also by considering the existing literature on the subject. In the stage of collection, selection, analysis and interpretation of the visual evidence, I observed and explained how the production, circulation and consumption of hybrid cultural assemblages are part of the neoliberal economic globalization and of its new global order. The new global order sees Asia, and China in particular, as leading the global economy. This is clearly evidenced by the images accompanying this paper that depict how urban spaces in Melbourne are increasingly mediated by the global in the general fabric of its symbolic environment.

In order to adequately consider the ways people are experiencing the symbolic and social construction of the global imaginary—globalization in Melbourne, it may be necessary to move beyond the social cohesion agenda that relies upon the ideal of a lost harmonious multicultural community in this city and also to look at contestations. In doing so, it is also needed to take into due consideration the different materiality of the web as well as social media and networking practices. Interestingly, the collected visual evidence made of the images accompanying this paper seems to suggest that now Asia, rather than North America or Europe, appears to be the primary globalizing force in Melbourne at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

The multi-ethnic composition of contemporary Australian society is undoubtedly an overcoming of this past policy, but I cannot avoid commenting that the plurality of cultural identities also tends to undermine social solidarity. Beyond the political good will to accommodate different ethnic cultures in a defined socio-historical context, this study looks at multiculturalism as a perspective that actively encourages the promotion of separate cultural practices. As a relatively recent immigrant, I perceive multiculturalism as a strategic political device that not only acknowledges cultural diversity but also harbours the potential to segregate and discourage immigrant members of ethnic minorities from integrating into mainstream Australian culture. I also observe that today the exhaustion of multiculturalism is strongly suggested, supported and sustained by the shifting mindset of the global imaginary, the new common sense of the global.

The body of images that are part of this paper and the case study previously considered help to grasp the new shifting mindset—the global imaginary that is replacing the exhausted Australian multicultural national philosophy at level of social practices, imaginaries and ideologies. Although these images are highly subjective, selective and represent a limited account of the topic under investigation, still they are crucial keys to access the global imaginary to understand how it is symbolically and socially produced. Nevertheless, the possibility of conducting fieldwork in more Australian cities would undoubtedly contribute to a better understanding of the exhaustion of the multicultural philosophy and the rise of a new visual global regime of representation and signification.

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***The Borderlands of Motherhood: Representation of Spatial Belonging of Mothers and Families in Government Posters***

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Japan, like many developed countries, has recently seen its population decrease so that in 2012 it reached the lowest-low fertility rate of 1.41 (TFR). Since the 1970s, the main identified cause is the postponement of marriage, and therefore childbirth, by women. This is primarily interpreted as the consequence of a conflict between personal choice and the country's good, and one further affected by an ageing society. Since the 1990s, the Japanese government has intervened with various campaigns aimed to reduce this conflict. This paper focuses on one of those campaigns. More subtle and less authoritarian than the eugenic campaigns of the prewar and wartime governments, they nonetheless aimed at 'molding the mind' (Garon 1997). The posters depict ideals of family, parenthood, childhood, as well as society as a whole. This paper focuses on two main visual aspects of the posters: the spatial representation, and the social relationships. The posters show an attempt to redefine the geographical space of motherhood, shifting from an indoor, private space to an outdoor public space. The ads depict ideals of family, motherhood, childhood, as well as a harmonious cohabitation of all families, to form a unified and peaceful community.

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Japan has seen its population decrease to reach the lowest-low fertility rate of 1.41 in 2012. This tendency is predominantly interpreted as a consequence of the conflict between women's personal choices and the country's good, a situation that is exacerbated by an increasingly ageing society. Since the 1990s, the Japanese government has made several interventions to mitigate this situation: including changes to financial help and campaigns around work/life balance and gender stereotypes. Each of these laws and campaigns aimed to reduce the struggle between the individual's and society's ideals. This paper focuses on one campaign advertisements launched by different government organizations to raise the fertility rate since the 1990s. More subtle and less authoritarian than the eugenics campaigns of the prewar and wartime governments, they nonetheless aimed at 'molding the mind' (Garon 1997). The posters depict ideals of family, parenthood, childhood, as well as society as a whole. This paper attempts to identify the arguments put forward in the campaign advertisements as a solution to the issue of low birth rate.

I will first, retrace the changing construction of the family, especially through motherhood. I then consider the specific context of production of the posters and lately proceed to identify the main ideas used to present an image of the Japanese family.

For copyright reasons, the posters have not been reproduced here. The online reproductions of the posters considered in this paper are available from the National Diet Online Library, WARP.

### **Modern Motherhood and the Privatization of the Family**

The term *shufu*, usually translated as housewife, originally referred to upper class women who acted as head and manager of their household. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the Japanese modern society defined the *shufu* as the dominant model of womanhood. This role implies a separation of productive and reproductive labour. The private space of the household is identified with womanhood, and more particularly motherhood, whereas public space is claimed by men as productive agents. This gender role distinction is also a spatial separation of public and private spheres.

Kathleen Uno further develops the idea that there was an evolution in the caring role of mothers throughout the modern period. She identifies the persistence of pre-modern forms of the family during the Taishō period (1912-1926), especially in rural and lower classes households in which the woman's income was necessary for the family's survival (132). As with the immediate postwar period, the Taishō years brought along a set of different expectations, in which motherhood was not exclusively associated with child-care. However this image of womanhood as productive, rather than reproductive labour, was denigrated by the emerging ideology of *ryōsai kenbo*, the 'good wife, wise mother'. In order to fulfill economic and political national goals, women's role was redefined as primarily within the family. Women were held responsible for bearing children to accommodate the state's needs for soldiers until the mid-twentieth century and later for workers. Motherhood is then constructed throughout the modern period as a reproductive asset for the nation, not just the family.

More recently the strict separation of the private and public spheres, and its conflation with the feminine and the masculine, has become increasingly blurred. In response to the low birth rate and feminist women's demands for social changes, the Japanese government broadened responsibility for children to other members of society: professionals (with the Angel Plan), as well as fathers (as developed by the *Ikumen* project).

Not until the 1990s did official discourses offer an alternative view on gender roles as a response to the 'family crisis'. Previously the government promoted the idea of the male breadwinner and female housewife/child-carer.

A 2003 NHK survey on the issue of birthrates concluded that 'if a policy of reversing declining birth rate (*shōshika taisaku*) is to be pursued in earnest it must begin by reconsidering male dominance in this society' (quoted in Coulmas, 2007, 6). The Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society (1999) in its preamble offers the framework within which such changes could occur: 'to respond to the rapid changes occurring in Japan's socio-economic situation, such as the trend toward fewer children, the aging of the population, and the maturation of domestic economic activities, it has become a matter of urgent importance to realize a gender-equal society in which men and women respect the other's human rights and share their responsibilities, and every citizen is able to fully exercise their individuality and abilities regardless of gender.' Several other actions were taken up following this initiative. In 2000 the Plan for Gender Equality established eleven priority areas under four basic directions: building social systems that promote gender equality; achieving gender equality in the workplace, family and community; creating a society where human rights of women are promoted and defended; contributing to the equality, development and peace of the global community. Based on the provisions of the Basic Law, the Japanese government submits to the Diet each year the Annual Report on the State of the Formation of a Gender-Equal Society, which is the so called White Paper on Gender Equality. The White Paper describes the situation and progress made in each of these eleven priority areas for the current year, and reveals the measures that would be taken by the government in the following year.

It corresponds to the discourse reported also by the media. In 2005 the *Asahi Shimbun* stated: 'we should build a society where young people find it easier to want to have children' (quoted in Coulmas, 2007, 6). This better and easier society wanted by women goes through a redefinition of gender roles and an acceptance of a less tight model of family.

### **Family Day: Family as the Basis of Society**

In 2007, the executive body of the Japanese government, the Cabinet Office, presided by the Prime Minister, instituted a national 'Family Week' (which actually lasts for two weeks) built around a 'Family Day' to be celebrated on the third Sunday of November. This day follows a series of other days dedicated to specific members of the community and highlighting their role within society: Coming of Age Day (*seijin no hi*) for those turning 20 in January; Girls' Day (*hina matsuri*) in March; Boys' Festival (*tango no sekku*) in May; Respect for the Aged Day (*keirō no hi*) in September; *Shichigosan* (a festival for children aged 3, 5 and 7) in November. All except the Respect for the Aged Day, are festivals dating back to pre-modern forms of religious ceremonies. Both, this event and the Family Day, were created in the

contemporary period to respond to social concerns and attempt to influence citizens' behaviour. The government website even explicitly links the emergence of the Family Day to the 'fertility crisis'. As such, it addresses some of the issues identified by the state as causes of the decrease in fertility such as differentiated gender roles and women's isolation in childrearing, thus responding to feminist critiques of nuclear family models. Conservative critics have argued that the Western ideology of 'individualism' and women's 'selfish' pursue of higher education and careers are responsible for the low Japanese fertility rate thus causing the contemporary 'crisis' (Coulmas, 54). The online article encourages fathers to balance work and childrearing, as well as asks 'local people' to help parenting couples.

Unlike the aforementioned festivals which addresses a specific sectional cohort, the Family Day addresses all Japanese citizens, who all form part of a 'family' unit, as registered on the *koseki*. As the posters analysed below demonstrate, the government actively reproduces an ideal image of the family: composed of a couple and child(ren), sometimes with grand-parents. It also favours the representation of young couples in their late twenties or early thirties with young children who are neither demanding babies nor independent teenagers. The posters then represent the ideologically preferred family model.

This festival can be read in opposition also to the previously established Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day which individually celebrate members of the family. Mothers' Day was introduced in the 1930s, as part of the emulation of the model of the good wife-wise mother. It was initially celebrated on the day of the Empress's birthday, the 6th of March and thus reinforces the family-state (*kokusai*) system, by designating the Empress as the nation's mother. This date was later modified in the post-war period and a random day was chosen.

Since 2007 and until 2011, a poster was published annually advertising the 'Family Week' and the events taking place during this period. Other posters have been published by different prefectural governments to advertise local events.

### **The Natural Space and the 'Natural Family'**

Japan is a highly urbanised country, nonetheless the 'Family Day' posters emphasise a countryside-style landscape where the natural space seems to dominate. All the families are standing among green grass and under a blue sky. The only elements of urbanism are the houses. There is at least one house visible in each poster, a symbol of the refuge of the family. In Japanese, the family and the house are even further than that assimilated, as the term *ie*, often translated as family, also refers to the 'home'.

Thus, the home and the family members living in it are one single entity. The posters follow a recurrent pattern found in children's drawings of their families: the family members in front of the house, with trees and grass. The anthropomorphisation of several elements (sun, house) encourages such comparison. So not only is the child essential, even sometimes central (as in the 2010 poster), but it is also the maker and carrier of such an image of the family.

In the 2011 poster the home at the top of the hill is anthropomorphised and the chimney throws out hearts instead of smoke. It become then a loving member of the family. In the 2009 poster, the houses are far in the background and the tree is the

most visible component. The houses are rarely a major element of landscape and are surrounded by natural elements, like trees or bushes. The space of the family is thus not the home but the natural landscape of Japan, in which the 'natural' model of the family can develop and form a healthy and happy society. If marriage remains central to birth and raise children, more couples do not see children as a necessity for married life. The NHK survey carried out in 2003 highlights the debate about the desirability of having children. In comparison with a decade before, a higher percentage of women consider that having children after marriage is not a 'matter of course' (mentioned in Coulmas, 2007, 6). They outnumber women who consider it as 'in the nature of things' (*tōzen*) as well as the number of men who think similarly. Several causes lie behind this change of mind. Women's higher participation in the labour force transformed the modern traditional role of the Japanese wife as a fulltime housewife. Moreover, the economical cost of raising children according to the dominant middle-class dream and the housing crisis push towards a nuclear family with one or two children, thus allowing women to delay childbirth. It is then essential in order to encourage couples to marry and have children to make it seem 'natural' and unquestionable. Moreover, the 'Family Day' posters do not depict families as isolated nucleus within society but as the basic unit of it. Within the families portraits, all ages and genders are represented in different configurations throughout the posters.

In this nature the family is happy together. Naturalness is associated with leisure: outside space, balloons, air balloon ride, pic-nic.. The image of the 'happy' family is thus based on week-ends and leisure time shared between all generations. This representation makes abstraction of two issues. First, the housing crisis, with the high prices and the lack of space in Japanese urban accommodations, is not mentioned. Second, the difficulties of everyday life, the reliance of the 'good wife, wise mother' to care for the children are swept away by the presence of both parents or even the grand-parents around the child. The use of a 'natural world' avoids reference to the housing crisis and high urbanisation of Japan, as well as might encourage people to move back to the deserted Japanese countryside.

There is a clear horizon line dividing the green grass from the blue sky. The natural space is separated into two: the earth and the sky. This separation is smoothed by the representation of a round, softened world. This protective shape is built either through the representation of the earth itself (2011 poster) or through the different elements of the landscape: the tree, the sun, the clouds. The natural space is thus protective, as is symbolised by the sun embracing the family in the 2008 poster. It presents an ideal family radiant under the embracing sun. The different elements symbolizing nature (the sun, the bird, flowers, and rainbow) points both at the blooming and happiness of the members and at the naturalness of the family system. Besides a symbol of nature, it is difficult not to see in the sun a reference to the Japanese navy flag *Kyokujitsuki*, often associated with imperialism and pre-war nationalism. It is then the state, symbolized by the sun, who embraces and protects the happy family.

By extension, the family is defined as 'natural', i.e. it is the natural way to be in the community, thus inducing that being single is an unnatural and unwanted state or at least temporary until achievement of the ideal family model. 'Growing' a family is also symbolised in the posters. In the 2007 poster the grand-mother and the daughter are both watering the large tree under which the family is resting. On the foliage of

that same tree are representing different families, thus showing how each family contributes to the growth of the Japanese society. The next year poster, also shows a young girl watering flowers. It is quite meaningful that the caring (through the action of watering) is done by female members of the community, on which the Japanese government relies mainly to provide child and elderly care.

It is also an image of nature both reassuring and familiar, even domesticated. The trees are cut into round shapes or into a metaphorical heart in the oldest poster. The control of the natural elements to become a protection is seen through the presence of pets, domesticated animals: dogs and cats in all five posters. This protective nature is thus not only surrounding the house and the family but is also within it and a part of it.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has focused on five consecutive posters of the Family Day campaign. I have focused on the concept of nature and ideas of naturalness within their visual content. The representation of nature in the 'Family Day' posters implies naturalness at three different levels. It is first, the 'natural' structure of the family; society's organisation to reach happiness. The family is then the 'paradise' to be reached by the individuals, thus making the single state unnatural and unwanted. Second, women's symbiotic relationship with nature is enhanced through actions like watering that affirm women's reproductive and caring roles as 'natural'. Lastly, the child-drawing style of the posters stresses as natural the child's desire for this ideal family. By extension, then, the childish aspect of the drawings, reminding a child's drawing of his/her family, implies that this ideal happiness is reached with and through children. Thus the natural space is part of a discourse to legitimise the family lifestyle promoted by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare in the late 2000s

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## **Liminality and Belonging in Refugee Resettlement: An Ethnographic Case Study of Bhutanese Refugees in the UK**

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### **Abstract**

The paper is based on qualitative, ethnographic research with Bhutanese refugees who resettled to the UK via the Gateway Protection Programme. In this context, borderland is not a physical space, but a state of mind, in which stateless refugees attempt to negotiate between different identities: whilst seeking to 'integrate' in the British host society, they identify through their Nepali ethnicity, and seek to maintain their cultural heritage through establishing community organisations and retaining strong ties with relatives and friends in other resettlement nations. In addition, they suffer from the emotional impact of being exiled from Bhutan, their home country, without the possibility to be repatriated. The refugees' everyday life is characterised by a perpetual struggle to negotiate their multiple belongings in a multi-cultural setting such as the UK, in which co-presence and co-existence are ever-present. The paper examines the Bhutanese refugees' state of liminality, in which they may feel a sense of belonging to three nations (Bhutan, Nepal and the UK), cultures and values, whilst being citizen of none. Ethnographic research has the advantage to provide in-depth knowledge of the experiences of one particular community of refugees, and this research serves as a useful, comprehensive case study to illustrate the impact of involuntary migration and migration policy on individuals' sense of belonging.

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The paper is based on qualitative, ethnographic research with Bhutanese refugees who resettled in the UK via the Gateway Protection Programme. In this context, borderland is not a physical space, but a state of mind, in which stateless refugees attempt to negotiate between different identities in order to overcome their state of liminality. The paper examines the Bhutanese refugees' state 'in between', in which they may feel a sense of belonging to three different cultures and nations. By examining refugee resettlement as a rite of passage, we are able to position resettle refugees, and attempt to understand their current state of transition, in which new structural and cultural hierarchies emerge. This allows researchers to assess the needs and immediate problems refugees are facing in organised resettlement. Ethnographic research has the advantage to provide in-depth knowledge of the experiences of one particular community of refugees, and this research serves as a comprehensive case study to illustrate the impact of involuntary migration and migration policy on individuals' sense of belonging

### **Methodology**

My PhD research was conducted in Greater Manchester (UK), as well as Leeds, Sheffield and Bradford over a period of 14 months. Anthropological research is based on participant observation – the long-term immersion into the field - living with informants, participate in their day-to-day lives, and observe their behaviour and experiences. Anthropologists aim to collect in-depth qualitative data, in order to gain a detailed, thorough understanding of the lives and experiences of our informants.

During my fieldwork I worked with 30 key informants on an almost daily basis. However, I collected data about 300 Bhutanese refugees, which I met on several occasions, normally on a weekly basis. The very tight focus on a particular refugee group – in this case, Bhutanese refugees – allowed me to gain a deep insight and understanding of their lives and experiences with refugee resettlement.

Moreover, in course of the Bhutanese Refugee UK Film Project (BRFP), which was initiated by one of the Bhutanese refugee organisations and me, I conducted 23 semi-structured interviews in Nepali, the refugees' native language. I also attended several events throughout Greater Manchester, aimed at refugees and asylum seekers resident in Greater Manchester, such as the Refugee Football World Cup in June 2013, several diversity events in Salford, and cultural programmes hosted by Bhutanese refugees in Manchester, Sheffield and Bradford. Furthermore, I talked with service providers, such as Refugee Action UK (which organises refugee resettlement in Manchester) and community centres, which provides English language and IT classes to refugees and immigrants, as well as interviewing Nepali translators and case workers working with Bhutanese refugees since their arrival.

Last, but not least, I am part of a global group of researchers working with and on Bhutanese refugees in resettlement, currently headed by Dr. Michael Hutt at SOAS, London. The aim of this global project is to gain a deep understanding of refugee resettlement for one particular group, in order to record their experiences, and in the future advice policy makers on refugee resettlement.

### **The Making of Bhutanese Refugees**

In order to understand the experiences of refugee resettlement for Bhutanese refugees, I have to provide a brief outline of the 'making of Bhutanese refugees' – that is, how they became refugees in the first place. However, this element of the refugees' experience has been analysed and written about by several researchers, and thus is

merely referenced in my own work (see Evans, 2010; Hutt, 1996; Hutt, 2007 [2003] and Joseph, 1999, as well as several referenced from service providers such as the UNHCR and the IOM). Due to financial constraints and very strict visa regulations, I have not been able to visit Bhutan or the remaining refugee camps in Nepal, but I hope to do so in the future, perhaps during a post-doc. Nevertheless, here I provide a brief historical outline of the circumstances leading to the resettlement of Bhutanese refugees.

Bhutan – a small, landlocked country between India and China, only slightly larger than Denmark, with a population of only about 750,000 – gained recent fame with its unique development strategy Gross National Happiness, which emphasises human wellbeing over economic development. However, what is less known and rarely talked about in the media and international politics, is the fact that in the late 1980s and early 1990s, more than 100,000 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese have been forcibly removed from the country, their citizenship revoked and their properties impounded by the Royal Government.

Bhutan has always been a diverse country, having a steady influx of settlers from Tibet, Mongolia, India, China and Nepal. Joseph (1999) notes: "*Like other countries in South Asia, Bhutan is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious country*"(ibid: 23). Nepalese settlers arrived in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and settled predominantly in the South of the country.

Until the 1980s, the Bhutanese government treated all citizens equally: for example, Nepali was taught in schools in the South, people were allowed to worship their respective religions, regardless if Buddhist, Christian or Hindu, and there were no restrictions of cultural expression. For various internal and external political reasons (refer to Hutt, 2007 [2003]; Joseph, 1999; and Aris, 2005 [1994]), the Bhutanese government adopted a more nationalist stance in the 1980s, under the heading 'One Nation, One People'. Nepali and any other language besides Dzongkha (the language of the aristocracy) and English were taken out of the school curriculum, non-Buddhist were not allowed to congregate and worship in public, and it was made compulsory for all citizens to wear the aristocracy's traditional dress – the gho and kira. Government officials, with the help of the army, moved into South Bhutan, and forced Nepali-speaking Bhutanese to 'prove' their citizenship – for a country which was largely illiterate until the 1970s, this often proved impossible.

Under the threat of murder and rape, most Nepali-speaking Bhutanese were forced to leave the country and leave behind their property. As land-owning, agricultural-based communities, many people left with nothing but their clothes on their back. The Indian army – which is a close ally of Bhutan – quickly ushered the displaced people on across the Nepali border, where most of them settled along rivers in East Nepal. After disease and famine killed thousands of these refugees, the Nepali government requested the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (henceforth UNHCR) to step in and establish refugee camps. Since the early 1990s, more than 100,000 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese arrived in Nepal, and where settled in 7 refugee camps in East Nepal.

One of my informants, an elderly gentleman in his mid 70s, who was a large-scale landowner in Bhutan, summarised the events leading up to his exile in Nepal:

*“My great great grand father was born in Bhutan. We lived in Bhutan for five generations. In 1992, the government of Bhutan told us that we will not be allowed to live in Bhutan any more, and that we are not the people of Bhutan. The government deployed the army to evict us. Some people were paid compensation of land. They [Bhutanese government officials] brought video cameras and forced us to smile and took photos”* (translation from Nepali, BRFP, August 2013).

The following 15 years were marked by political unrest and protest by Bhutanese refugees, and several attempts to return to Bhutan. Moreover, the UN hosted bilateral talks between Nepal and Bhutan, in order to resolve the refugee issue. The UN attempted to find a so-called 'durable solution' for Bhutanese refugees. The first option was repatriation to Bhutan – something the Bhutanese government did not accept. The second option – settlement in the country of first asylum (which would be Nepal) – was not welcomed by the Nepalese government .

In 2007, the UNHCR together with the International Organisation for Migration (henceforth IOM) suggested the third durable solution: third-country resettlement. The US offered 60,000 places for Bhutanese refugees, and other countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, as well as Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands were quick to respond by offering more places for resettlement.

In the beginning, resettlement was not popular amongst Bhutanese refugees: it has been regarded as resignation, and in turn, the final abandonment of the possibility to return to Bhutan. However, once resettlement was agreed and started, many families – especially with small children – were quick to sign up. For example, a Christian refugee in her mid-30s outlined the different views on resettlement whilst in the camp:

*“Before we processed and came here, some people used to say that it is not good in foreign countries, people will scold and beat us. [...] People in Nepal used to say that our women are discriminated against in foreign countries, which isn't true. But women are discriminated against in Nepal. People here are respected regardless of age. Old-aged people and children are respected and well-looked after [...] All people are treated equally here: even the highly educated people treat the illiterate people equally”* (translation from Nepali, BRFP, August 2013).

The quote also exemplifies the refugees' view of England, or in general of what they regard as 'the West' – which in this case means Euro-America. This view or perhaps even real experience of what it is like to live in the UK (or any Western country) demonstrates the refugees' positive attitude towards resettlement. Another refugee who arrived in Manchester with his family only in early 2013, explained why most refugees decided to be resettled:

*“[M]any people took it negatively in the beginning. But I took it positively. It would be fine if we were in Bhutan, but we had to leave Bhutan. If there had been programmes for repatriation to Bhutan from the refugee camp, then we would be happy to accept it as our first priority”* (translation from Nepali, BRFP, August 2013).

Third-country resettlement began in 2007, and to date, almost 90% of Bhutanese refugees have been resettled to Western countries.

The UK entered the field fairly late: only in 2010 did the British government offer about 500 places (in total) for Bhutanese refugees. According to my informants, most aimed to resettle in the US, where to date about 70,000 refugees resettled in. However, the process and documentation to come to the UK was popular, because it was reasonably fast: within three months from the application date, my informants found themselves in a plane from Kathmandu (Nepal's capital) to Manchester. The process is ongoing, and more refugees arrive in three to six months intervals.

According to data published by the Himalayan Times in April 2013<sup>1</sup>, more than 80,000 refugees have been resettled to the eight resettlement countries<sup>2</sup>. The latest numbers available for Bhutanese refugee resettlement are from 2013. Because the resettlement is ongoing, these numbers have most certainly increased, and here I provide an estimate:

Resettlement Country	2013 <sup>3</sup>	2014
USA	66,134	~ 70,000
Canada	5,376	almost 6,000
Australia	4,190	~ 4,500
New Zealand	747	~ 750
Denmark	746	~800
Norway	326	~ 350
The Netherlands	326	~ 380
<b>UK</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>400 - 450</b>

The first Bhutanese refugees arrived in the UK in August 2010, and to date, about 450 Bhutanese refugees arrived in the UK. Note that the number of refugees is debatable, because children born in the UK are still categorised as Bhutanese refugees. Therefore this number may not be accurate. All refugees were resettled to Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield and Bradford, due to availability of services and accommodation.

### **The Gateway Protection Programme – Refugee Resettlement in a Nutshell**

Refugee resettlement entails the organised migration of (UNHCR) recognised refugees “*from their country of first asylum*” (in this case, Nepal) to “*a third country for permanent settlement*” (Wright et al, 2004: 6). This means, refugees are not asylum seekers or regular migrants, or are categorised as such. The distinction is relevant insofar as it entails vastly different rights and duties<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>From: <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=+100%E2%80%9A000+milestone+for+Bhutanese+refugee+resettlement&NewsID=374165&a=3> [Accessed: June 2013].

<sup>2</sup> The numbers mostly serve to exemplify the numbers of refugees in different countries.

<sup>3</sup> As mentioned above, the 2013 numbers were obtained from the Himalayan Times (see above for reference).

<sup>4</sup> Refugees have many rights, whilst asylum seekers do not: in fact, the latter are classified as ‘illegal’ immigrants, until they are able to prove their refugee status. For example, recognized refugees have (such in my informants’

In 2004, the UK initiated the Gateway Protection Programme (GPP), which facilitates refugee resettlement to Great Britain. The GPP is funded by the British Home Office, and operated by the UK Border Agency in cooperation with various organisations, such as the UNHCR, IOM, Refugee Action (RAUK), and other governmental and voluntary organisations. Each financial year, British Ministers set a quota, depending on international resettlement needs and available national resources. Initially, the UK limited resettlement places to 500 people, but has since increased the number to 750 per year (RC, 2004; Platts-Fowler et al, 2011: 4; Wright, 2004: 13-4; UNHCR, 2011: 2-3). Similar to other resettlement nations, the UK conducts interviews, as well as security and health screenings prior to offering individual places to refugees<sup>5</sup>.

On arrival, resettled refugees receive the Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR), which allows them to stay in the UK indefinitely. The ILR status means that resettled refugees enjoy the same rights to live, work and study in the UK as any other resident (except the right to vote), as well as claim benefits and welfare payments<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, the ILR allows individuals to apply for citizenship after five years of permanent residence in the UK (UNHCR, 2011: 8-9; Wright et al, 2004: 15). In 2015, the first set of refugees who arrived in 2010 are eligible to apply for British citizenship. Until then, they are 'stateless', and as such, only possess restricted travel documents, which allows them to travel to a few EU countries.

The UK adopts a Front-End (or Front) Loading (FEL) approach, which aims to provide support and resources only during the first stages of resettlement, “*in the expectation that less support [...] would be needed in later stages as (economic) self-sufficiency is attained*” (Duke et al, 1999: 166). After approximately six months after arrival, organisations implement an exit strategy, in which support is gradually withdrawn and support is outsourced to mainstream (public) services, voluntary organisations and local communities. However, since 2008, many of these NGOs and community centres suffered from severe budget cuts and lack of funding, which lead to a reduced provision of services for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, impacting on their daily lives and ability to gain self-sufficiency.

### **In between borders – Bhutanese refugees & the state of liminality**

Gloria Anzaldúa (1999), a well known mestiza writer, noted in her famous work 'Borderland – La Frontera', that “*borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy*” (ibid: 19). She argues that living on borders entails shifting identities, multiple belongings – what she calls a 'process of

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case) the right to be unified with their family (in their country of refuge), a right to housing and a right to receive an Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK. In the UK, asylum seekers are normally arrested on arrival, are housed in detention centres, and have no right to live and work in the UK until their status is approved or they are sent back to their country of residence (UNHCR; UNHCR, 2013; Mitchell, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> In addition to being a 'recognized refugee' according to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol, the individual may not (a) be in a polygamous marriage (relevant for examples below); (b) committed political or non-political crimes, and (c) have a dangerous medical condition, although the latter has been relaxed in previous years (UNHCR, 2011: 8; Wright, 2004: 14-5).

<sup>6</sup> Most Bhutanese refugees in the UK are entitled to claim Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), which is a state-benefit for people who are out of work (but able to work), and meet several conditions, such as demonstrating an active interest in looking for employment.

synchresis', through which people learn to cope “*by developing a tolerance for contradictions [...], ambiguity [...], learn[ing] to juggle cultures [...]* [adopt] *plural personalit[ies], [...], operat[ing] in pluralistic mode[s]*” (cited in Bromley, 2000: 4-5).

I argue that borderland is not necessarily a physical space, but may be a 'state of mind', in which voluntary and involuntary migrants find themselves, and in which they have to negotiate their sense of identity and belonging. In such a state, my informants have to undergo aforementioned 'process of synchresis' through which they learn new ways to accommodate conflicts, contradictions and uncertainties; and adopt multiple personalities or labels, which they readily apply depending on specific situations and environments, in order to gain an advantage. Moreover, rather than 'victimising' refugees, I follow the anthropologists Liisa Malkki (1996) and Dawn Chatty (2010), who argue against treating refugees as victims, “*persons knowable only through their needs*” (Malkki, 1997: 224), but rather regards them as “*active agents whose strategies produced distinct patterns of migration*” (Chatty, 2010; cited in Marfleet, 2013: 305).

These ideas fit neatly with my anthropological explorations of notions of liminality. Here I follow well-known anthropologist Victor Turner's (1967 and 2002 [1969]) discussion of liminality in rites of passage. Turner uses Van Gennep's (1960) tripartite model of rites of passage as any process which requires a “*change of place, state, social position and age*” (2002: 359). Refugee displacement and resettlement can be understood as phase of transition, and thus go through the same stages.

### **Separation**

Firstly, in rites of passage individuals undergo a phase of separation – the “*detachment of the individual or group [...] from an earlier fixed point in the social structure and set of cultural conditions*” (ibid). Bhutanese refugees underwent this phase twice: firstly when they had to flee Bhutan, and leave behind their belongings and social hierarchies. Secondly, refugees experienced a phase of separation when leaving refugee camps in Nepal. Once more, they had to leave behind their bamboo huts, relatives and friends, and move to a new country. According to my informants, they were only allowed to bring one piece of luggage (approximately 23kg) each. Deciding what to bring, and what to leave behind was a difficult decision, as many of my respondents recalled. Other literature concerning migrants and refugees highlight that this phase is often accompanied by emotional separation and trauma, sometimes with far-reaching consequences.

### **Liminality**

The phase of separation is followed by a 'liminal' period – a phase in-between, in which systems and hierarchies become ambiguous, and in which an individual “*passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or future state*” (ibid). In the liminal phase, persons are 'neither here nor there', and their social and cultural environment is questioned and significantly restructured. Again, Bhutanese refugees underwent this phase twice. Research conducted in refugee camps often regard them as a state of 'limbo', and is mirrored in the accounts of my informants. Resettlement itself is a state of liminality.

As mentioned above, my informants are currently in a state of liminality – somewhere in between borders and citizenship, located somewhere between Bhutani-ness,

Nepali-ness and British-ness<sup>7</sup>. During the liminal phase, the status quo and traditional hierarchies are being questioned, and new affiliations come forth. By being classified as Bhutanese refugees, a sense of egalitarianism and solidarity emerged. For example, even if some refugees were high status, land-owning individuals in Bhutan, they could not be distinguished from poorer, lower status individuals once in the camp. As one of my informant's put it: "*We were all the same in the camp, whatever we were before*" (fieldnotes, October 2012). During the time in the camp, their common aim to be repatriated to Bhutan led to the creation of what Turner called 'communitas', in which old political, legal and economic differentiations disappeared in favour of creating one unstructured community with equal individuals, "*submitting themselves to the general authority*" (ibid: 360) of service providers, such as the UNHCR and later the IOM. Again, after resettlement, this communitas continued to be relevant and hierarchies are severely restructured in resettlement.

From a practical perspective, this phase of liminality and emergence of communitas is played out in several ways. Most Bhutanese refugees are Hindus. As such, they would normally follow the strict rules attached to caste ranking – this was something I expected to find before entering the field. However, due to the unifying experience of exile and resettlement, most of these hierarchies are hardly visible. Rules such as higher casts not being allowed to share food with lower casts, or prohibitions to participate in rituals and events with other casts, lost importance, and are barely upheld in the UK. Many Hindus converted to Christianity in Nepal and in the UK, and the general notion that Hindus should never mingle with these converts and not welcome them to their homes is not followed in resettlement. Caste as a determining factor for marriage also lost relevance, although acceptable marriage-partners are still exclusively sought within the refugee community. That is, although there are cross-caste and a few cross-religious marriages, Bhutanese refugees do not seek partners outside of the Bhutanese refugee community. However, marrying a Nepali (i.e. ordinary citizen of Nepal or descendent) would still be acceptable, and is often highly encouraged.

Moreover, the process of questioning the status quo during liminal phases is also emphasised. Through the availability of Western education both in the camps and in the UK, about two thirds of my informants under the age of twenty-five, question their religious affiliation and social hierarchies. Except for the Christian community – about 30% of Bhutanese refugees in the UK – religion or Hindu rituals are often mere Kodak-moments, with emphasis on the sharing of food and the coming together of the community. Although children are shown how to, for example, apply *tikka* (mark on the forehead) and how to sing a few ritual songs, they are not initiated in religious scholarship. Most young informants emphasised their desire to become what they call 'civilised', which they assume to mean being 'atheist' and anti-caste. In comparison, the Christian community places significant emphasis on religious worship and scholarship. Particularly young members, who embrace religion in everyday life, follow an evangelical mission, which may lead to some issues with the Hindu community. Nevertheless, I observed several Christian teenagers drifting away from

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<sup>7</sup>Or English-ness – it is relevant to note that although there is a difference between Great Britain and England (the latter only being a part of Britain, which also includes Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), my informants did not make a distinction between England or Britain in their everyday conversations, and used England and Britain interchangeably.



their religious community as they accessed British education.

Furthermore, most of my young informants feel somewhere in between three different cultures and senses of belonging. They simultaneously attempt to describe themselves as distinctly Bhutanese – something they only know through stories and recollections of the older community members, as they were either too little to remember Bhutan, or were born in the refugee camps – whilst proudly arguing that they are Nepali, which they identify with through the language (which they only speak but cannot write) and what they term 'culture', such as fashion, tastes in music and films, as well as certain rituals and religious affiliations. However, they are quick to argue that ultimately, they are “*British*” or “*English*” now, and thus are 'civilised' and 'educated', especially in comparison to people in Bhutan or even Nepal.

The state of liminality is ongoing and persistent, and some informants argue that they will only 'become British' in the next generation, or maybe only thereafter. Yet, liminality does not pose a significant issue for Bhutanese refugees in the UK. They consciously adopt different identities – in this case, Bhutanese, Nepalese and English/British – depending on the situation and environment, in order to gain an advantage for themselves.

Moreover, aforementioned *communitas* plays an important part in the restructuring of hierarchies within the Bhutanese refugee community. Status is no longer dependent on caste or property, but on social capital in form of language ability, skills in dealing with official bodies and the government, employment and, in the future, citizenship. In turn, the idea of *communitas* is vanishing in favour of a newly structured community, in which pragmatic knowledge is valued above more traditional forms of status. Although I lack the space to discuss this in further detail, this newly acquired form of power over the community can create or exasperate conflicts amongst Bhutanese refugees, as the division between three distinct community organisations of Bhutanese refugees in Manchester demonstrates.

### **(Re-) Integration, (Re-) Assimilation**

The phase of liminality is followed by re-integration, in which the passage is completed. In the case of Bhutanese refugees, this phase could be termed 'integration' or 'assimilation' into the British host society and mainstream<sup>8</sup>. Some of my informants argued that this phase will only be complete for the second or even third generation of Bhutanese refugees in the UK, although all my informants expressed their aim to be 'integrated' in the UK.

It is the later point which makes my fieldwork and research unique. Migrant communities – especially involuntary migrants – are often said to over-emphasize their traditions and culture, and create so-called 'subcultures' in host countries. My informants do not seem to comply to this 'need' to 'reinvent' their culture, but rather

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<sup>8</sup>The UK Home Office defines integration as (a) individuals obtaining employment, housing, education and health services similar to the host population; (b) individuals being “*socially connected with members*” of their own and other communities, services and the state; and (c) individuals having satisfactory competence in the local language and culture, a sense of security, and “*confidently engage in that society in a manner consistent with shares notions of nationhood and citizenship*” (Ager et al, 2004). The concept and definition of ‘integration’ is widely debated in Social Sciences, and is referred to as ‘integration’ (with inverted commas) in this paper, in order to highlight the problematic nature of the term and related notions.

assimilate and replicate what could be termed 'Western lifestyles'. Rather than separating themselves from the British host society and seek connections only with South Asian migrants, they aim to be what they call 'integrated'. For them, being British means to be educated, articulated, fashionable, IT-literate and informed about current affairs. Most young refugees seeks white collar employment, and enter higher education, in order to enter the competitive labour market. On many occasions they emphasised their desire to 'give back' to Britain, to do the very best to “*support the British government and people*”, to pay taxes (and thus repay their benefits) and to what they call 'integrate'. This is fairly distinct from other research findings with migrants communities in the UK. However, whether their aims will be fulfilled and how these goals change once they can apply for citizenship, will only be revealed through further research in the future.

### **Multiple & Hybrid Identities: a necessity during liminality?**

Bhutanese refugees adopt multiple identities, which they readily apply depending on the situation they are in. For example, when talking about their shared history, they emphasise that they are Bhutanese, and thus legitimate their refugee status. They make use of the 'refugee' label in order to gain favours and attract funding or other advantages by the British bureaucracy and official bodies. At the same time as they highlight their distinctive character from the broader Nepali population both here in the UK and in Nepal, they make good use of their vast network with Nepalese migrants and Nepalese British whenever the need arises, proudly proclaiming that they are Nepalese themselves. When discussing their religion or upbringing, they often talk about themselves as Nepali, and thus emphasise their socio-cultural and linguistic background. However, when they talk about their lives in the UK and their 'right' to be in the UK, their access to facilities, education and sponsorship, as well as their eagerness to obtain citizenship, they always consider themselves 'British'/'English'. As one of my informants in his mid-20s explained: “*I'm really proud to be English. I finally feel like I've found my own identity*” (fieldnotes, May 2013). Here, they distinguish themselves from refugees who resettled in other Western nations such as the US. Britain, in their view, is a forward-thinking, technologically advanced and free country, in which they have the chance to “*realise their potential*”. They emphasise their gratitude to the British state and adapt their lifestyles and attitudes. It is in these regards that my informants are a unique and interesting community of migrants in the UK.

Even further, the correlation with being English and identity is an important one, and demonstrates how refugees – and perhaps migrants in general – adopt multiple and hybrid identities, in order to overcome their state of liminality, and generate a sense of belonging. Considering Stuart Hall's notion of 'othering', Bhutanese refugees make use of above mentioned three classifications depending on the situation and environment they find themselves in. Because support by services is stopped or outsourced to underfunded charities, Bhutanese refugees rely heavily on the established network both within and outside of their community. One must consider the external situations that have a vast impact on my informants' daily lives. For example, I identified a generational gap amongst Bhutanese refugees, that is of great importance to the restructuring of hierarchies within the community and families. Most refugees over the age of fifty, who did not enjoy formal education in either Nepal or Bhutan, are illiterate – both in English and in Nepali. For them, adjusting to live in Manchester is a challenge, which put enormous pressure on families. This

pressure is further accentuated if we consider that almost all Bhutanese refugees who are not in formal or higher education or training, were unemployed<sup>9</sup>. This created an economic dependency on the British welfare and benefit system. However, several young refugees made use of their vast network of connections with British Asians, and work for Asian businesses<sup>10</sup>, such as restaurants, take-aways, warehouses, construction and beauty salons. Those with such a job would happily refer other community members to their employers. Financially independent, and with the social capital of having a reliable network of external relationships, Bhutanese refugees with this form of social and economic capital gain important influence within the refugee community. Similarly, community members with high levels of English and who are in higher education also have increased power within the community, regardless of their (former) caste, religion, gender and wealth before exile and resettlement. The process of establishing new hierarchies within the Bhutanese refugee community is ongoing and will continue to change as more refugees arrive from Nepal.

### Conclusion

As it is my aim to continue research with Bhutanese refugees in the UK for a possible post-doc, I aim to further analyse their notion of identity, belonging and borderland. As mentioned before, the first refugees are able to apply for citizenship in 2015. Only future research will tell how their relationship with the British state and the host society will progress. In this paper, I aimed to show that my informants are a small, but fairly unique group of migrants in the UK. They are not passive recipients of services and passive clients of resettlement. They very consciously adopt strategies and identities depending on their situation. In comparison to other migrant groups, Bhutanese refugees do not create a subculture, but aim to fully assimilate what they term 'British/English culture'. Although still in a state of liminality, they actively work on overcoming this phase, and be fully (re-) integrated into the host society. Their status may suggest that they are stateless people, in between borders and citizenship, but their aspirations, articulations and everyday actions demonstrate that the crossing of borders does not necessarily have to be a traumatic experience, in which traditions and culture are reinvented and overemphasised. On the contrary: most of my informants emphasised that refugee resettlement opened up many doors, and enabled them to access facilities, education, health services and employment unimaginable in both Nepal and Bhutan. Although separated from their homeland Bhutan, and their ancestral home Nepal, they attempt to make the best out of a situation they have no control over. Their lives are changing with every day in resettlement, but after all, refugee resettlement is perceived as their chance to overcome the 'limbo' of being a refugee.

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<sup>9</sup>The reason for high unemployment within Bhutanese refugee communities in the UK are manifold, but cannot be discussed in scope of this paper. In summary, the reasons include a lack of English language skills even amongst the younger generation, lack of accreditation of qualifications acquired abroad and lack of access to training. Most relevant however, is the fact that the UK was (and to an extent still is at the time of writing) in an economic recession, and lack of employment affected all communities in the UK. Perhaps the UK itself was undergoing a 'phase of liminality' during the time of my fieldwork. In the UK unemployment increased from 5.5. to 8.5. percent within a couple of years, and halfway through my fieldwork, in April 2013, the unemployment rate was still as high as 7.9. per cent, with a total of 2.56 million people out of work. The rate is even higher for 16 to 24 year-olds: more than 21 per cent of young people (more than 1 million) were out of work in mid 2013 (ONS, 2013a & ONS, 2013b).

<sup>10</sup>It is important to mention that the UK has a vast community of British Asians and Asian migrants, mostly living in enclaves in urban areas. It is obvious that the labelling as 'Nepali' or 'South Asian' is beneficial when seeking employment in South Asian businesses.

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<sup>12</sup>Also available at: [http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0002/5053/Gateway\\_good\\_practice\\_guide\\_sept\\_2008.pdf](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0002/5053/Gateway_good_practice_guide_sept_2008.pdf) [Accessed: 21 April 2013].



***Other Shores: Challenges of Multicultural Belonging***

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*Chanoyu*, commonly known as the Japanese tea ceremony, is an interdisciplinary complex which is a synthesis of arts, crafts and multiple cultural elements brought together in a creative ritual of preparing, making and sharing a bowl of tea. It is a contemplative practice, which nurtures unified awareness through the refinement of all six senses in harmony and tranquility. It can be called “meditation in motion” but unlike many other meditative practices Tea happens without detachment from but in the real world with its colours, tastes, sounds, fragrances and textures.

*Chanoyu* combines calligraphy, architecture, garden design, flowers, incense and fine cuisine with ceramic, wood, lacquer, paper, metal and fabric design and craft and provides a framework for all of these different arts and crafts to coexist in a complete self-enclosed system. It epitomizes the Japanese penchant to elevate ordinary activities and objects to the level of art. While tea procedures are highly efficient and systematized, once mastered, their efficiency is fully re-applicable to daily life. Interestingly, following the rigid form actually results in the development of one's creativity and freedom.

The essential requirement of any tea gathering is presence of both host and guest. Their relationship is of supreme importance, which epitomizes Tea as a practice. *Chanoyu* provides the setting, environment and narrative for a shared experience, where distrust of the “Other” is dissolved as interaction takes place. Seemingly centered on preparing, making and sharing a bowl of tea, *Chanoyu* is an interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary complex. It is a contemplative practice, which nurtures panoramic awareness through the refinement of all six senses in harmony and tranquility. By de-centering the subject it offers a new and viable alternative to binary representation and overcomes the traditional dichotomy between self and others while re-thinking the whole idea of difference. Tea allows us to fully develop our “human-beingness” which is the development of mind, body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic appreciation and spirituality. These are the essential qualities nurtured through years of practice. *Chanoyu* can be considered a form of art but unlike any other, it doesn't exist without a combination of two seemingly opposite but in fact interchangeable and mutually necessary sides represented by the host and the guest (the other in us).

A teahouse is traditionally built in the quietest corner of one's property, far away from the realities of the busy world. Guests enter the gate and follow a stone pathway, leading to the waiting room. Stepping-stones are carefully selected and placed so one has to pay attention to each step. The tea garden, *roji*, “dewy path” is not really a typical garden but consists of multiple layers of various greens - moss, shrubs, evergreens with not a single flower in sight. The garden is cleaned, the moss is swept and the rocks are washed before the whole garden is lightly sprinkled with fresh water creating the feeling of purity, safety and anticipation. With each step guests remove themselves from the world of “ten thousand things”. They arrive at a waiting room where a scroll is hung in the alcove, usually a simple seasonal painting – a waterfall in summer, a pine under the snow in winter, buds of a plum tree in spring or red maple leaves in the fall. Here the guests have their first taste of water. It is heated and served in previously warmed cups so when the guest picks it up, it is pleasant to the touch and the water is just the right temperature. This water is truly delicious and one rediscovers its pure taste. Then guests proceed to the arbor bench in the garden where a tray holding a warmed ceramic container and carefully arranged ash around a small



lit bright red charcoal inside and a green bamboo tube with a few drops of water are placed along with woven seat cushions. Still enveloped in the green of trees and shrubs the guests hear birds and smell the breeze and these details become more important than conversation among themselves. The host purifies the stone washing basin. After hearing the sound of water pouring into the basin, the guests stand and when the host opens the low inner gate, all bow in silence. Now the guests enter the inner garden, purify their hands and mouth and enter the tearoom. The door has been left open just a little so they can insert a hand to slide it open. The entrance is often low, about half a meter high, so one has to sit down and lower one's head to get in and "dive" into the vastness of a practically empty room about ten feet square.

In older days, the samurai had to leave their swords outside on a sword rack. These days our symbolic swords are supposed to be left outside. Everyone in the tearoom is equal in his or her human nature. The first guest opens the door and finds a calligraphic scroll lit with natural light, catches a vague smell of incense, walks to the alcove and facing the wall by oneself contemplates calligraphy that sets the mood for the gathering and is in fact the most important presence in the room. Being ideographic, the characters have both visual and verbal components. Always hand written, they retain both the energy and wisdom of the calligrapher that lie far and beyond the meaning of actual words. In less than twenty minutes a transition from the cacophony of the outer world to a few minutes in front of celestial wisdom takes place. Entering the room is like entering one's inner world. The guests face the scroll one by one but they are also facing their inner selves.

The last guest locks the door from the inside, committing to voluntary confinement. For several hours the room will become a stage for the shapes, colours, textures, smells, sounds and tastes thoughtfully and gently orchestrated by the host and accompanied by the everlasting "wind in the pines" – the sound of water in the kettle, blanketed by the swirling steam.

After a greeting, the host offers a simple but complex kaiseki meal just enough to "satisfy hunger", gracefully arranged on mostly black lacquered dishes with some ceramic and porcelain pieces, accompanied by a few sips of sake. This is when the guest realizes that there is nothing more delicious and the host realizes that there is nothing more complex than an elongated shape of perfectly cooked white rice steaming in a warmed up black lacquer lidded bowl, with just a sprinkle of "dew" on top, served just in time along with miso soup in a similar bowl and the freshest possible raw fish on a porcelain plate. A number of courses are served, all seasonal, simple and regional.

Next carefully cut to size and previously washed charcoal is brought into the room in a basket and laid in the brazier to heat the water to the perfect temperature. Then sweets, freshly made by the host, are served and the guests return to the arbor in the garden for a break until they hear a gong, inviting them back in the room. They half-kneel while listening, then again purify their hands and mouth and enter the room once again. This time right in the centre of the alcove wall there are flowers placed in a vase. They are simple, unpretentious and pure. A bowl of thick tea is prepared by the host and shared by all the guests. Usually, a black raku teabowl, hand built, individually fired and named, is considered to be the most suitable. Though utterly delicious, a bowl of fresh tea, which has been hand picked, steamed, dried and

ground, is not only appreciated for its taste. It is tasted with the eyes seeing a gleaming green kneaded glaze against the sculptural black shores of the bowl, with hands feeling perfectly warm against the hand-pinned sides of the bowl, practically “holding” the potter’s hands. One’s senses diffuse and join in one continuum of experience.

A bowl of tea is appreciated on a number of different levels. The first taste of tea is for the eyes. Second taste is for the tongue. It is sharp, bitter, full-bodied. The third taste is the climax of the meeting of host and guest, who taste with the spirit and heart. Objects are not just used but also viewed closely so more is noticed about them. Light in the room changes as the reed blinds are rolled up to allow more light in the room. The fire is replenished and more sweets are offered before a bowl of thin tea is whisked individually for each guest. Greetings are exchanged once again and the guests ask the host not to see them off. Nevertheless the host opens the door of the guest entrance from inside and everyone bows in silence. The guests turn and leave as the host watches them until they disappear.

Interaction between host and guest is an essential element of *Chanoyu*. Their relationship is of supreme importance and is a quintessence of tea as a practice. Nothing represents this relationship better than Zen expression *muhinshu*. Mu refers to nothingness, *Hin* to the guest and *Shu* to the host. “No Host No Guest”, of course cannot be taken literally as it refers to non-differentiation between them, the experience that in its harmony erases the borders between self and other and creates an inclusive paradigm. Guest and host merge into a single entity that transcends their respective roles.

After bringing a bowl of tea to one’s place guest places the bowl between him and the previous guest and says: “*Oshoban itashimasu*” or “I will join you”. By doing so he acknowledges the presence of someone before him/her, someone else, the “other” who has been there before and who is an integral part of the present. Then guest places the bowl of tea between him and the guest who will have it next and says: “*Osakini*”, which is an acknowledgement of the person who is to come later, yet another “other” who is integral part of present and guest’s “self”.

The phrase is lacking the verb and leaves it open to the interpretation, such as whether it is a mere acknowledgement of someone who comes later or is it an offer to this person to actually partake first. Whichever interpretation we take, these motions are to remind and clearly place one in the context of communal existence. Not solitary but communal existence. These motions are followed by placing the bowl of tea in front but within the realms of one’s space defined by the edging of the tatami mat. The following greeting is directed to the host: “*Otemae chodaiitashimasu*” “I will partake of your *temae*”, often simplified in English to “Thank you for the tea”. However, *Temae* refers to not only the set of procedures and motions actually leading up to whisking this particular bowl of tea but also to the whole four hour-long effort and the whole preparation that the host endured to welcome the guests. Moreover, I would argue that it is an acknowledgement of the whole path of practice, which the host followed to be where he/she is at that point. Then a bowl of tea is being placed on one’s palm and a gesture of gratitude takes place. The bowl of tea on guest’s palm is elevated as guest’s head is lowered – an ultimate gesture of humility and acknowledgement of all that this bowl of tea represents – from nature that nurtured

the tea plant to people who harvested and processed it and then to those who offered it to me. All of these motions clearly de-centre the subject, acknowledge ever extending realm of existence of self as just a small part of the world of others and places self in a context of co-existence with others and in so many ways because of others, thanks to the other. By doing so they all stop being the other and become an irreplaceable part of self.

Environment, procedure and experience – all contribute to the creation of “place of no other”. Through disappearing of “I” in *temae*, synthesis (very much echoing Hegel’s) in *kagetsu* group exercise (a practice performed by five people taking turns making and drinking tea, where roles are decided by drawing lots from a folder and five people ideally move as one), or the creation of a “pure space” and placing value on the Other in *chaji*, formal tea gathering, all reiterate shared rather than individual experience. In *Chanoyu* people are moved and not just intellectually engaged.

In Japanese context internal relations tend to dominate over external ones. This helps to understand how the Buddhist concept of *muga* “no self”, *anatman* is maintained within a social context where introspection so often dominates. Self is internally rather than externally connected, related to others – to one’s immediate community, to the nature, to other people both past, present and future (including ancestors, teachers, friends). When looking inward into oneself one finds also part of others with which self is in internal relations.

It is not exactly that others define self but rather part of their self-definition is part of my self-definition. I define others to the same extent they define me. This is the idea of *kokoro*. *Kokoro* can be translated as mind, heart, spirituality.

Let’s have a look at the characters used in Japanese language to make up a word for “human being”, *ningen*. First character, *nin*, is for a person and the second one, *gen*, is for space or interval between. This combination suggests that one becomes truly human through the interaction with the other. *Chanoyu* offers this very opportunity of a delicate communication.

By gaining insight into the other we simultaneously learn about ourselves. Cultures are internally related and connected. To see the other is to see the part of ourselves.

I suggest that *Chanoyu*, the Way of Tea offers a new model for diversity, plurality and “all-belonging”, a space where just like Yin and Yang the “One” always also contains the “Other” (and vice-versa). In a way it creates a space extending beyond “Self” and “Other”, a place where there are no “Others”.

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The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the word "iafor" in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, semi-transparent arcs. The upper arc is a light red color, and the lower arc is a light blue color, creating a stylized, circular frame around the text.

*Unconsidered Ancient Treasure, Struggling the Relevance of Fundamental Indonesia Nation Philosophie “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” in Forming Harmony of Multicultural Society*

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**Abstract**

Indonesia is a multicultural country consists of hundreds of distinct native ethnic, racist, and religion. Historically, the Nation was built because of the unitary spirit of its components, which was firmly united and integrated to make up the victory of the Nation. The plurality become advantageous when it reach harmony as reflected in the National motto “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika”. However, plurality also issues social conflict easily.

Ever since its independence, the scent of disintegration has already occurred. However, in the last decade, social conflicts with a variety of backgrounds are intensely happened, especially which is based on religious tensions. The conflict arises from differences in the interests of various actors both individuals and groups. It is emerged as a fractional between the groups in the society or a single group who wants to have a radically changes based on their own spiritual perspective. Pluralism is not a cause of conflict, but the orientation which is owned by each of the components that determine how they're viewing themselves psychologically in front of others.

“Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” is an Old Javanese phrase of the book “Sutasoma” written by Mpu Tantular during the reign of the Majapahit sometime in the 14th century, which literally means “Diverse, yet united” or perhaps more poetically in English: Unity in Diversity. The book describes how the Nation in the past, spawned a great civilization with the diversity as one of its characteristics.

This historical philosophy is a valuable treasure to establish the ideal life of the Nation. However, as time goes by, it is barely abandon and lost its meaning. Throughout Indonesian history, nationalism dialogue and religious pluralism became the important things that protect the diversity of the Nation. With its' fluctuative relations, it is not an easy process to have the harmonious in diversity, but it has to be done, to evoke ancient glory of harmonious diversity in the global era.

Keywords: Multicultural, Social Conflict, Religion, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika.

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## **Introduction**

Indonesia is a multicultural country consists of hundreds of distinct native ethnic, racist, and religion. Historically, the Nation was built because of the unitary spirit of its components, which was firmly united and integrated to make up the victory of the Nation. For centuries Indonesia had lived with different societies, cultures, ethnics and various religions (Braddell, 1936). Being a nation of multicultural society, Indonesia has learned to live in differences hence harmony in diversity. The plurality become advantageous when it reach harmony as reflected in the National motto “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika”.

Plurality is a potential treasure for Indonesia. It presents the images of Indonesia’s rich and diverse cultural heritage. Its various perspectives, historical experiences, and local wisdoms are the aspects that can strengthen the nation unity. However, plurality also issues social conflict easily when mistrust, prejudice, and jealousy arise in the society.

Multicultural society shaped from distinguishes social identity such as different religions, ethnics, professions, and social backgrounds which is unique and different from others. Indonesia keeps on processing to weave the character and identity of its culture. However, the most important thing is the awareness of the consequences of social problems such as stability and social harmony and identity competition in a social background.

Ever since its independence, the scent of disintegration has already occurred. However, in the last decade, social conflicts with a variety of backgrounds are intensely happened, especially which is based on religious tensions (Ali, 2003). The conflict arises from differences in the interests of various actors both individuals and groups. It is emerged as a fractional between the groups in the society or a single group who wants to have a radically changes based on their own spiritual perspective. Pluralism is not a cause of conflict, but the orientation which is owned by each of the components that determine how they’re viewing themselves psychologically in front of others. Conflicts that happen in Indonesia are based on various backgrounds or themes, some of them are based on religions (Bertrand, 2004).

In the last couple years, several riots and conflicts has happened in various regions in Indonesia. Some of them happened in a big scale and occur in a long time, such as riots in Ambon (1998), Poso (1998), Maluku Utara (2000), and several riots in a small scale such as a conflict between local villagers with Ahmadiyah(Cikeusik, 2011), Church construction (Bogor, 2011), and conflict between Sunni and Syiah (Sampang, 2012). The conflicts happened not only among different religions but also between the members of the same religion who have different theology and practices. Regardless ofwhethersocialconflictdrive by political interest or economical aspect from a particular group; faith differences derived from a different interpretation and analysis on the religion sources. Often, religion used as a reason for one’s particular group to discredit another group(Wahid, 1998).

## **History and Primordial Wisdom**

Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has interesting geographical position. The archipelago's location has played a profound role in economic, political, cultural, and religious developments. For More than a thousand years ago the archipelago had

served trading network and destined to play an important role as a transition area and a meeting ground for people around the world (Cribb, 2000). Historical records that the geographical position of Indonesia took an important route connecting Asia with the Mediterranean world, including North Africa and Europe. D.H. Burger says (1960:15) that the traffic starts from the Northern coast of Sumatra along the East coast, continues to the South sea of Java. The voyages to West head to Benggala and North toward China. This chain of route is part of the famous series of trade known as the Silk Road. This trading routes leads to the entrance of various cultures and credence's to the Indonesian society. These wide ranges of cultures and beliefs are easily blended and adapted with the local culture. Furthermore, the original indigenous cultures have been enriched by the complex cultural mixture from different countries. The easily process of adaptation and syncretism of the new influences are the proof of the Indonesian's liveliness and openness. The original indigenous cultures of Indonesia is very adaptable, as Soekmono (1961:10) says that the origin of Indonesian culture give a space for every new influences and values that comes long as it is not contradict the original culture. This connection shaped Indonesia into the multi-ethnic and religiously diverse nation that we see today.

The geographical position of Indonesia not only gives a huge impact of the bridges of cultural and commercial exchanges but also brings a significant factor to the development of the greatest empires in Indonesia. Two biggest kingdoms that hold hegemony in south Asia are Srivijaya and Majapahit Empires. In the 7th century, the powerful Buddhist kingdom of Srivijaya arose on Sumatra. It controlled much of Indonesia until 1290, when it was finally conquered by the Hindu Majapahit Empire from Java (Groneveldt, 1960). Majapahit influence is considered to be one of the greatest and the most powerful in the history of Indonesia and Southeast Asia. This empire reached the height of its power and influence under the guiding hand of the Prime Minister Gajah Mada which also served as one of the most influential empires in the Indonesian history. Both Srivijaya and Majapahit kingdoms are the center of civilization of that time which served as bridges for cultural and religious diversity (Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam). (Collins, 2005; Fatimi, 1963; Ricklefs, 2005).

The plurality of religious traditions and cultures is the characteristic of Srivijaya and Majapahit kingdoms. The spirit of tolerance and acceptance is an essential element in the foundation of the two kingdoms. The cultural narration "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" written by Mpu Tantular in the Majapahit reign shows the plurality in unity. The word means "We are of many kinds, but we are one" or as literally translated "Unity in Diversity". It expresses the profound reality of a pluralistic society in which a strong desire to achieve unity among heterogenous religions, ethnic groups, and cultures is prominent. Rahmat Subagya (2002: 15) maintains that the symbol "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" contains a philosophy based on a synthesis of two reciprocal poles namely plurality and unity. This cultural narration describes not only how the nation lays the great civilizations in the past, but also portraits how the nation had lived in a pluralism and multicultural society, where different religions and cultures live in harmony; where diversity is celebrated in everyday life. This evidence shows that the values of tolerance and acceptance are highly respected and become the archetype of the Indonesian since ancient time.

The native of Indonesian believe in the powerful but unseen spiritual entity that can be both benevolent and malevolent. They believe that inanimate objects had spirits

which could affect the well-being of those around them. There were also considered to be spirits in trees, rocks, mountains as well as people. Before various religions came to the archipelago, the ancestors adhere animism and dynamism (Alisyahbana, 1988). These beliefs have persisted since ancient times and have become part of the syncretism system of Indonesian cultures and religious today. Animism and dynamism have existed since Indonesia's earliest history. Furthermore, the indigenous original culture of Indonesian was built from traditional culture that has made a strong spiritual behavior that is animism and dynamism activity. When Hinduism, Buddhism Islam, Christianity came several years later, animism and dynamism still exist and confluence with the new beliefs. The social and religious beliefs of the spirit and mysticism closely influence with the way of thinking, the customs, and the cultural of Indonesian people. Animism and Dynamism teach to respect the nature, water, forest, sky and the other things who have give the power and enjoyable life for people. The beliefs tied Indonesian people to the biggest power in the universe which make them hold rituals, offerings, and ceremonies to respect the spirits and supernatural power. The faith to the greatest power and the perception to the harmony of human being and universe is the core principal why ancient beliefs can easily adapt the new values and religions. Genuinely speaking, animism and dynamism have congruency with today's religion, the power of spirituality and mysticism also appeared in the modern religions. Buddhism and Hinduism both have ritual and ceremony to the gods, or devata. Islam and Christian also believe in the spiritual power and metaphysical. Therefore, every religions and cultures in Indonesia are tightly connected with the ancient beliefs. The new cultures and beliefs are suited with the original culture and ancient beliefs. Often the old rituals are adopted in the new religions to make it more acceptable (Taufik, 2013). Religion often considered as guidance; which contains the message of peace related with one's inner peace or social situation. It occurs in the form of revelation (from God) and philosophical (derived from human's wisdom). Then why religion becomes the background of violence and conflict? In a modern era where multiculturalism and freedom become the characteristics of the society, religion can neither serve as pillars of harmony nor justification of violence.

### **Conflict and the Nature of Religions**

To understand religion reality dualism – peace medium and justification of violence-it should be understood first the nature of religion dan how religious precept shape the followers attitude and behavior.

Religion related conflict (differentiated with religion based conflict), as any other social conflicts, is a horizontal group clash that developed formatively (affiliated to certain society or community) otherwise definitely (possessed certain characteristic). As a relatively religious society, Indonesian people are rally sensitive with creed issues (Hosen, 2005). Comprehension of religion related conflict dynamic require understanment of the nature of religion itself.

A religion compiled by many aspects. For the believers, religion understood as doctrine, feeling, organization, life style or pattern, and set of ritual (Titus, et al., 1994). As a doctrine, religion precept considered sacred dan undisputable. Distinguished from science wich obtained by exact testable research, religious guideline believed as fundamental and absolute truth. Even though, some religious traditions provide space (even encourage) for people to critically empowering their rational thought, so that the believe achieved would not be just naive obidience.



Interpretation of religious textual precepts still over important place for human logic and common sense.

Religious appreciation also tend to involve profound feeling of attachment to God. Veneration to the God raising a strong happiness affection in the believers. Even though, some people consider that merely affection is insufficient. It can easily lead as tray if it's not accompanied side by side with rational common sense.

As a society, followers of a religion habitually compose their belief as institutional foundation to express their fate. The Presence of leader and followers make social relationship clearly acknowledged. Religious formal organization also formed to achieve ideal goals, and strengthen social attachment among the followers. Nonetheless, some people understood that they don't need any structure nor organization for worshipping God and accomplish good deeds.

When religion reflected deep dedication, it can't separated from daily life. It would be frame of reference for someone to think and act. Further, it would also shapes life style and pattern. Spiritual obidience in formal religion performed in form of rituals simbolized certain meaning. Although, in the implementation of those rituals, one might not truly comprehend the core meaning, and merely facused on rutinity.

Religions oftenly not just considered as a guidlene to achieve genuine happpiness, yet also regard as perspective frame adopted by believers to percieve the world and how the life should lived. Religion offer explanations about human existence in the mysteriously indefinite universe, and those explanations provide assurance and safety feeling.

It is not enough to understand religion simply as worshipping relationship and set of rules humanity base on sacred manuscripts. Yet, the difference of belief and religious attributes could emerge segementation social groups. Religion, at the side of modium of social cohesivity and solidarity, could also precipitator of social disintegration. Fanatic followers could easily consider those who have difference of belief as infidel and lose dheep. Religious differenciation could emerge in form of sectarianism segmentation that possess range of disparity from superficial to the essential of religious construct.

Religious community could easier accept reality that another religion followers have different ideas in interpretating life and universe, yet the difference among the same religion frequently harder. Believers of a religion tend to expect the same religion followers have the same way of view.

Some believers are more tolerable in accepting difference, and understand that mistake in interpretation could be forgiven as long as it done carefully, by competence persons, with high responsibility, and possess together goodness orientation. In other dichotomy, some believers tend to easily claim that those who doesn't has same interpretation are infidel and unforgiven. They consider that wrong interpretation, however, could impair the purity of the religion cunstruct.

Religious diversity turns out has it's own dilemma. In one side, it gives positif contribution to the nation development. But in other side, the diversity could also

become condition where conflict seed could bloom easily. In certain cases in Indonesia, conflict emerge from house of worship building (which considered by community as violation of regulation or local norms), economical discrepancy, religious precept deviation, and political issues. Those issues then occasionally draw on by some people, triggered to areligious conflict. In some research held by Indonesian Government, religious related conflict rooted from those issues mentioned, then expanded to a religious based conflict for certain agendas (Ali, 2003).

Religious nuanced conflicts in Indonesia are not purely base on belief diversity. This condition related with daily cultural characteristic of Indonesian people, who realize their identity as a diverse nation, and formally (through educational system in school) they are taught to live peaceful in diversity. Generally, it is consentable for them, as long as among follower of religios or among sect in one religion can appreciate and respect each other. Even though, discrepancy (social, economic, or politic) as well as stigmatic stereotype among group can cause discomfort and jealousy. Violence is never be intrinsic aspect of religion, yet by those discrepancy it simply can be utilized and justificate offensive act be done.

Conflict causality can be sometimes base on claim of truth. But dominantly it triggered initially by elements that remotely related with religion itself. Religious identity oftenly used as an effectife tool to get social endorsement, legitimation dan empowering the position of each group that has certain agendas. Meanwhile, the main cause considered came from external aspect of religion. This conditions are compounded by inadequate law enforcement, complicated by globalization and reformation impact, which goes out control (Ali, 2003).

Conflicts held by religion followers can be rooted by religious and non religious factors (Wahid, 1984). Regardless of its cause, the presence of religion in society can have two possibilities, namely as a factor of integration or vice versa, disintegration (Wach, 1971). Religion can serve as a unifying medium - especially in conditions of a fragmented society in high tribal sentiments - by raising awareness of shared spiritual and implement its teachings for the good of the whole universe. Religions teach brotherhood on the basis of faith, nationality and humanity. Religion teaches peace and harmony between humans and fellow creatures. Religion taught noble character, orderly life and adherence to the rules of society.

However, religion may be a factor underlying the disintegration when out in the field in the form of exclusivity, understood narrowly and rigidly. Religion comes with a set of rituals and belief systems to which gradually gave birth to a separate community distinct from the community of other faiths. The sense of difference was intensified when the adherents of a religion have come to the attitude and the belief that the only true religion is the religion that they embraced, while others wrong. Exclusivity that grow more severe can lead to negative prejudice or attitude despise to other religion followers. Internally, religious texts in the religion are also open to various interpretations that can cause diversive sects and religious groups, even conflicting with each other, triggering a conflict (Wahid, 1984).

In addition to the factors associated with the doctrine as noted above, there are other religious factors that may indirectly condition the vulnerability of conflict among religious communities. Among the factors: religious broadcasting without maturity

and tolerance, marriage or adoption between adherents of different religions, religious festivities without considering the condition of other religious communities, the interpretation of religious texts and rituals that are different from the mainstream group, perceived blasphemy, establishment house of worship which is considered disturbing the surrounding community (Wahid, 1985).

As for the non-religious factors were identified as the cause religious disharmony include several things, among others: economic inequality, political interests, differences in socio-cultural values, advances in information technology and transportation (Hasan and Ahmad, 1986).

### **Ancient Treasure Dan Beyond**

Indonesia basically is a country of pluralism and diversity. The existence of pluralism and attitudes toward respect for diversity in Indonesian archipelago has long been in a place. Pluralism is neither foreign nor unknown to this nation's past. Since ancient times, the ancestors had lived in a multicultural society. Animism and dynamism enable the new influences to come and adapt with the origin (Koentjaraningrat, 1958). The primordial values to live in harmony both with nature and human being have shaped the perception of Indonesian that differences are not harmful.

Nowadays, the unity in diversity still becomes the founding principle of the modern Indonesian nation. The concept of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* that philosophically contains the essential unity of various differences and multiculturalism in Indonesia is not a unifying system which can instantly applied for the nation. However, the idea of unity in diversity implies that despite enormous ethnic, linguistic, cultural, geographic and religious differences, the people of Indonesia are all citizens of a single, unified nation. The nation declares the essential unity of its members despite ethnic, regional, social or religious differences. Indonesia values unity and cooperation above all else and yet it is a country of more diversity than perhaps any other. Furthermore, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* is the symbol and projection of the Indonesian archetype that has been deeply rooted since ancient times. It is an ancient treasure of Nusantara that portrait how the ancestors keep the harmony and unity in multiculturalism condition. Unity in diversity expressed the collective wisdom of Nusantara, which had developed over the centuries and was already deeply rooted within the culture of a wide geographic region that lay at the crossroads of many ancient civilizations. However, the atmosphere of pluralism has not always been breezy but on the contrary is often under attack. The values of unity in diversity are weakened from time to time. Egoism and exclusivity from particular groups that want homogeneous can really harm the Nation. Therefore, the unity of this nation depends on the willing to keep primordial values and continuously voice local wisdom in order to remind everyone about the identity of the nation.

Religion conflicts in Indonesia is a multidimensional problem. As a main aspect of the Indonesian society, religion must be regarded and practiced as a whole. Every religion has two dimensions: the ascetics and the social, and every adherent should perform those two dimensions in balance (Mibtadin, 2010). Besides intrinsic aspects in religion, conflict reconciliation need to be focused on the extrinsic aspects. Different from the past, the harmony in nowadays situation can only be achieved by several conditions; there is equality and social justice in the society, real action of government

roles to overcome the problems, and appropriate law to strengthen and secure the humanity and diversity in Indonesia.

Bhinneka Tunggal Ika is the local wisdom which remind the nation that nearly two thousand years ago, Nusantara 's civilization has constituted a unique experiment, and direct experience of, human being s' ability to live peacefully amid diversity. Of prioritizing harmony with others, above one's own self-interest. Of spiritual self-confidence, this allows one to experience and embrace new ideas and teachings. Of knowing that differences of opinion (and religion) are not harmful. By holding the principles and philosophy of life based on Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, diversity is in fact like colors emerging from a prism, derived from a single source of Light. The emergence of cultural and religion diversity in Indonesia which is derived from primordial philosophy of the ancient archipelago is the values that still relevant today and need to be preserved as the greatest local wisdom of the Nation.

As a multiculturalism society, Indonesia needs well-planned system to reduce the conflicts. The education system can positioned as a mediator factor of the process of reducing conflict. This consideration are particularly focused on formal education, due to the massive scope and standardized. Nevertheless, informal education can also be a means of support in micro coverage. The education system is not only instill pedagogic instruction, but also the attitudes, values and behavior (Eide, 1999). In a cultural paradigm, education should include aspects of multiculturalism.

Multicultural education in Indonesia must be accompanied by efforts to promote local wisdom. The themes can be implemented in it could be: (a) identification, the recognition of the differences that exist, (b) tolerance, respect the interests of other groups, (c) assimilation, for example, by the majority of minority acceptance into a new identity which unites, or (d) social integration, which means melting where there are equal rights with respect for differences in language, customs, and religion or belief.

### **Conclusion**

The ancestors of Indonesia has experienced repeated changes and diversity with the interpretation and understanding of the diverse local communities, indigenous and migrants. There is legacy that is the core of epistemological knowledge about the perspective of the world, which is passed down from generation to generation. Local wisdom of Indonesian nation were formed from a value system that emphasizes harmoni, diversity, humanism and morality can guide the ancestors live peacefully side by side. Local wisdom can be extracted through a careful study over cultural symbols, for example; rituals, literacy, local myths and legends, rituals, architecture (Meliono, 2011).

The multicultural education system especially focused on formal education can positioned as a mediator factor of the process of reducing conflict. Multiculturalism education can be given starting from the early childhood to the higher education. By teaching the differences and diversities, learners will conceive that understanding and tolerance are needed to appreciate the differences. Individual who comprehends the diversities could encourage the healthy competence in the way of thinking, expressing ideas and socializing with others. Understanding the differences also prevent the domination of one over the other (Ujan, 2009).

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***Colonialism, Migrations And Ethnic Integration In Asia:  
The Case of Modern Sri Lanka.***

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**Abstract**

Colonialism fundamentally changed the traditional pattern of Asian migration and opened new avenues for trade and investment for migrant merchant communities and occupational opportunities as indentured labor for agrarian classes. The Indian communities who migrated to Sri Lanka during British rule played vital and diverse roles in the colony's economic transformation.

When Sri Lanka transformed from a colony to nation with independence in 1948 citizenship emerged as controversial and crucial issue. With transfer of power to Sri Lankan leaders their economic agendas and the requirements of citizenship of the new nation these migrant communities were confronted with critical problem of either expulsion or integration. The principle problem addressed in this research will be the impact of citizenship issue on the Indian communities and their responses. The proposed study will examine the complex dynamism with which these communities deployed their respective economic bargaining power and the potential political strength to overcome these problems and successfully integrate into the new nation while safeguarding their economic and occupational interests.

The research for this study will use primary archival sources and data from ethnological and biographical studies of different Indian communities, personal interviews and field research.

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Migration of people from one area to another is an innate phenomenon in the history of Asia. In the diverse Asian migration patterns from pre-colonial times, movements of trading communities provide a fascinating aspect to the history of the region. They not only exerted a crucial impact on the economic life by creating markets for many surplus products of host societies but also by providing channels for capital circulation in the region. Besides, they functioned as agents of cultural diffusion and interaction within the region, eventually contributing to the ethnic diversity of new nations.

This paper focuses on the period of European imperialist expansion from the sixteenth century that created new conditions changing the pattern and degree of migrations in Asia. The Europeans opened many economies for colonial exploitation and created new avenues and opportunities for migrant communities, particularly to those of Indian and Chinese origin. Various Indian business communities in large numbers were attracted by favorable environment created by colonial expansion and expanded their economic operations and their trading networks. Deviating from their pre-colonial role these communities assumed essential intermediary functions in various economies created by the European capital networks in Asia. At the same time colonial economic ventures created an increasing demand for labour resulting in Indian indentured labour migration in different parts of Asia. The emigration of indentured labor started during the mid eighteenth century and continued up to the mid twentieth century with direct involvement of colonial governments. Both these streams of migration played a critical role in the transformation of economies in Asia and in different ways became essential elements of each colonial economy. At the time these colonies gained independence and in the context of creating their nation-states these migrant populations became politically and economically vulnerable.

In multi-ethnic colonial societies decolonization and state building processes were often accompanied by intensifying ethnic conflict where the dominant majority elites tend to use political power to promote their interests. In their perception of the new nation those not permanently domiciled were not only considered outsiders but their roles in the economy were seen as harmful to the progress of the nation. The most convenient strategy of removing these outsiders from their former positions was to deny them citizenship in the new state.<sup>i</sup> Many Asian colonial societies like Burma and Sri Lanka were faced with this problem articulating their post-independence nation-state formation.

With its ethnic diversity the Sri Lankan Political leaders were confronted with the problem of ethnic integration and citizenship at the time of independence in 1948. Under colonial domination specially in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a rapid strengthening of ethnic consciousness and identity. In the 1920s, Sinhalese identified themselves as the major historical majority and the Ceylon Tamils and Muslims as minorities. Apart from this, number of immigrant ethnic groups of both European and Asian origin were alien communities in the society. Indians formed the vast majority of these immigrants both in number and diversity.<sup>ii</sup> The notion of differentiation between the indigenous and the immigrant aliens assumed a new importance in the context of competition for political power in confronting colonial dominance.



At the end of the colonial period as it was in many other Asian colonies political power was progressively transferred to indigenous classes that emerged in association with colonialism. In the 1930s Sri Lankan leaders were given semi-autonomous powers under the Donoughmore Constitution and in 1948 Sri Lanka became a fully independent state. As the British gradually transferred power to the leaders of the dominant majority group they utilized their political strength and existing democratic institutions in order to control the immigrant communities which were already under threat from indigenous economic competition. As far as the Indian merchant communities were concerned their stranglehold over a large part of the economy was sufficiently stable so as to withstand indigenous competition. Therefore, the Sri Lankan political leaders had to resort to the use of institutions of power to control the operations of these merchant communities.<sup>iii</sup>

The economic thinking in their agenda for an independent nation was clearly autarchic which invariably involved removal of migrant communities, both labour and commercial. Therefore, in the national economic ideologies of these leaders the main objective was to control Indians influence in the economy as an urgent need in transforming the Sri Lankan colonial economy to a national economy. At the same time they considered the virtual monopolies held by Indians in many trading areas as an obstacle to the development of agriculture and industries in the country. In every possible way they tried to undermine Indian businesses in order to reduce their influence in the economy.<sup>iv</sup>

The influence of the Indian immigrant communities both in the sphere of labour and commerce in the Sri Lankan economy was wide and deep. Specially the function of trading communities had a long history of centuries in the pre-colonial economy in Sri Lanka. Immigrant indentured labour and various business communities of Indian origin played a leading role in making the colonial economy of Sri Lanka practicable. These groups played economic roles that the indigenous people were either reluctant or incapable of playing. Their functions were essential for the developments and survival of the colonial economy. Therefore, they were able to gain favoured treatment from the colonial state and strengthen their relative positions in the host society.<sup>v</sup>

Pre-colonial economy of Sri Lanka gradually transformed into a plantation economy with the introduction of commercial agriculture with coffee, tea and rubber by the British since the 1830s. With this transformation the economy started to depend heavily on import and export trade and the world market. Colonial state directly involved itself in facilitating the plantation sector by creating the foundation for foreign capital investment. At the same time the pre-colonial and mercantilist restrictions were gradually removed. The administrative and institutional apparatus of the colonial state intervened by creating a land market procuring immigrant labour and by providing roads and railways.<sup>vi</sup>

Since indigenous peasantry refused to provide the essential services and resident labour force as these offered no economic incentives, immigrant Indians became the main source of labour for the plantations from the mid of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus indentured Indian labour became the essential element in the Sri Lankan plantation economy.<sup>vii</sup>

In the late 1880s tea industry replaced coffee and became the major commercial crop. In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the war time demands rubber plantations increased rapidly absorbing a considerable number of immigrant labour. Then the numbers of Indian immigrations swelled annually with the rapidly increasing demands in the plantation sector. Out of 2,289,006 total immigrants in Sri Lanka 1,063, 258 were Indian estate workers for the ten years period of 1921-1930. The total resident estate population of Indian labourers was estimated to be about 740,000 at the end of the 1929.<sup>viii</sup>

Later these migrant labourers were attracted to various low-wage job opportunities of urban centres like Colombo and other developing towns which were the main supply and service centres of plantations. They were also gradually absorbed in large numbers to Government departments such as Public works, Railways, Harbour Works etc. and others, to local bodies and various private commercial firms for essential services. Apart of these there were a large number of immigrant Indian labourers employed as domestic servants.<sup>ix</sup>

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century European planters became a strong pressure group on the colonial state. They influenced the policies of colonial states to ensure an uninterrupted supply of cheap indentured labour.<sup>x</sup> While positively involved in maintaining continuous supply of labour the colonial state was committed to their welfare through various regulations.<sup>xi</sup> Under Ordinance No.11 of 1865 and Ordinance No. 9 and 10 of 1912 the state provided for free medical facilities at the government hospitals and dispensaries and under Ordinance No. 34 of 1935 it offered a free supply of rice for plantation labourers.<sup>xii</sup>

The second important component of Indian migrants in the colonial era was the various business communities who were already very active in their trading networks all over the Asia. Since some of these communities had a long term connection with the Sri Lankan economy from the pre-colonial era number of new opportunities for trade and investment attracted them in large numbers. The greater involvement of the Indians in the new economic ventures was evident in their vigorous participation in different aspects of the economy as well as in their greater numerical presence. However, this plantation economy developed alongside with the pre-colonial agrarian economy of Sri Lanka where Indian business activities continued to be dominant. These Indian communities integrated the Sri Lankan economy into the circuits of colonial European capital. At the same time, they successfully adjusted to the emerging colonial economy, transforming themselves from their pre-British economic roles. In this process they came to play dynamic roles, both collaborative as well as competitive between colonial investors and indigenous entrepreneurs. In fact they came to perform essential intermediary roles in the colonial economy.<sup>xiii</sup>

In this process specially Chettiars and Muslims of Indian origin came to play diverse roles. They supplied capital requirements of the rural economy stimulated and aggravated by new economic developments and opened the rural areas to the expanding market through their small shops and boutiques and at the same time carried back village produce to the outside market.<sup>xiv</sup>

The expansion of the plantation economy created new opportunities for capital investment for these Indian communities and their role acquired a new significance.

They came to engage extensively in the export-import trading activities and in small scale industrial ventures exploiting each and every profitable avenue. They became main suppliers particularly of rice, cloth and other food items which were basic consumer needs of the expanding Indian labour population in the plantations. They were able to maintain a virtual monopoly in these areas using their vast trading networks all over the Asia and to marginalize European competitors.<sup>xv</sup>

Money lending became a significant aspect of the role of Indian merchant communities, particularly Chettians and Muslims. As the European merchant banks refused to lend capital directly to indigenous entrepreneurs Chettians readily stepped in as the principal money lenders to this class and also played an intermediary role between the merchant banks and the Sri Lankan borrowers. Besides, the Chettians along with the Muslims became the principal moneylenders to both the rural peasantry and the urban and plantation workers. As moneylenders they invariably get involved in mortgages and foreclosures of all types of property of the indigenous population.<sup>xvi</sup>

Two related developments in the Sri Lankan society at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century made these Indian merchant communities vulnerable groups. On the one hand emergence of an indigenous merchant class created intense rivalry between the two groups. On the other increasing economic difficulties of both the peasantry and working classes, particularly in view of tax burdens and rising prices of essential items of food and the increasing need for credit made these Indian communities extremely unpopular. In this background the popular nationalist ideology portrayed these Indian communities as exploiters and the source of all evil of the indigenous Sri Lankan society.<sup>xvii</sup>

Simultaneously there was an increasing opposition to the Indian labourers both plantation and urban. Peasantry of the central highlands largely exposed to plantation agriculture was confronted with serious economic distress. Villages in these areas surrounded by plantations were suffering from scarcity of land necessary for natural expansion in keeping with population increase. With the money economy penetrating in to these villages and the strict implementation of the grain tax by the colonial state peasants were forced in to indebtedness and eviction from their lands. All this aggravated the exploitative role of Indian moneylenders, particularly Chettians and Muslims. Villagers' predicament was made worse since they were prevented from entering the plantations as workers due to the presence of Indian labourers.<sup>xviii</sup> Even in urban areas specially in Colombo increasing job opportunities were filled by the continuous inflow of cheaper Indian labour.

In this situation the Sinhalese press constantly highlighted a hostile image of both the Indian merchants and immigrant labour.<sup>xix</sup> The indigenous capitalists utilized every possible channel to raise their voice against the Indians. Issues relating to the economic role of Indians were also raised by indigenous political leaders in the Legislative Council and in their various political bodies. One of their major arguments was the 'harmful' impact of Indians on economy and society.

They raised two issues for the consideration of the colonial state in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; that the Indian exercised a monopoly control over the rice market and that the Indian labour migration continued uninterruptedly, both harmful

to the welfare of the indigenous population. They argued that the Indian control of the rice trade was particularly harmful as they had direct connections with producing areas and were able to manipulate prices as it was adequately illustrated during the First World War. The shortage of transportation from the rice growing areas of South East Asia and India was exploited by the Indians to make large profit creating artificial scarcity and hoarding stocks with the object of raising prices. This situation severely affected the Sri Lankan society largely dependent on imported rice.

Sri Lankan members of the Legislative Council urged the colonial state to intervene to prevent this situation but it had no such intention of interfering with the Indian businesses. When the local entrepreneurs attempted with the support of the colonial state to take the Indian rice trade in to their hands the Indian merchants were able to frustrate it.<sup>xx</sup>

At the same time the agitation against the Indian labour employment was strengthening. The indigenous representatives of the Legislative Council raised the problem of Indian migrant labour from the 1920s and the potential political and economic dangers if these workers were enfranchised. Fears that they would swamp the Sinhalese vote in the hill country districts were openly expressed. They criticized the policy of the colonial state on the heavy expenditure on Indian labour recruitment and expressed their fear of large scale inflow of Indian labourers would amount to deprivation of opportunities for the indigenous workers. They urged the need for immediate control Indian immigration.<sup>xxi</sup>

The second point they raised was that these immigrants did not have a permanent or an 'abiding' interest in the country. Indians were considered as a floating population and described as mere "*birds of passage*". The argument was that these labourers did not come to Sri Lanka to settle down permanently but only to earn a living. In that sense they were transient aliens and an economic 'drain' and transfer whatever savings to their relatives in India.<sup>xxii</sup>

This issue burst out in to prominence with the Economic Depression of 1929. The Depression badly affected the Sri Lankan economy with crop failures and decline of commercial activities causing widespread unemployment between 1929 to 1934. In this period strong agitation was directed against Indian labourers both in the plantations and urban sectors.<sup>xxiii</sup> They were accused as plunderers of opportunities of the indigenous labourers, a threat to local labour supply.

Several issues emerged in association with this agitation; firstly, the control of Indian immigration and the restriction of their franchise rights and, secondly, the denial citizenship rights of immigrant Indians. These became crucial political issues affecting Indians until the time of independence in 1948.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Sri Lankans were granted universal franchise under the recommendations of Donoughmore Commission in 1931. Besides, the Donoughmore Commission recommended adult franchise to immigrant Indians under a different set of conditions to adults who had been resident in Sri Lanka for five years; subject to a temporary absence not exceeding eight months in all during the five year period. The purpose of this condition was to confine the voting right to Indians "who have an abiding interest in the country or who may be regarded as permanently settled in the Island."<sup>xxv</sup> A

strong agitation arose among the Sinhalese politicians against this recommendation of the Donoughmore Commission. The extension of the franchise to include plantation workers was bitterly opposed by the Ceylon National Congress. In order to prevent transitory Indians being enfranchised they altered the Donoughmore Commission recommendation on Indian franchise by adopting certain limitations. Under their new proposals persons who were not domiciled in Sri Lanka had either to satisfy a literacy and property qualification or obtain a 'certificate of permanent settlement'. Under these proposals domicile was made the standard test for franchise. Non domiciles could enjoy franchise right under two conditions; either by satisfying literacy or property qualifications or by submitting a certificate of permanent settlement.<sup>xxvi</sup>

These conditions affected mostly the illiterate Indian labour population. The inevitable effect of this was that a bulk of the Indian immigrant population was left disqualified from exercising the franchises, and was thereby excluded from the permanent population of the Island. Only the estate Kanganies and Indian traders were able to meet the prescribed property qualifications to be eligible for the vote. Therefore, these conditions did not severely affect the Indian business communities since they were able to satisfy both conditions. But specially nominated Indian representatives in the State Council recognized the disadvantage of reducing the numerical strength of Indian votes. Members who represented Indian interests in the Legislative Council strongly opposed these resolutions presented by the Sinhalese members. Since their numerical power in the legislature was not strong enough they were unable to make an impact on the final outcome.<sup>xxvii</sup>

The Sri Lankan politicians used several other policy measures for the purpose of controlling Indians. One was to control banking activities of Indian moneylenders by establishing a government bank to provide capital to indigenous entrepreneurs. The high demand for a national bank which could meet the credit needs of the Sri Lankans led to the appointment of the Ceylon Banking Commission in 1934.<sup>xxviii</sup> In the Depression period the existing European banks refused to accommodate Chettiar loans and they soon lost their credibility as credit agencies. Filling this gap the Bank of Ceylon which was established in 1939 on the recommendation of the Ceylon Banking Commission came to replace Chettiar credit agencies in the financial market.<sup>xxix</sup>

The other measure was to introduce an income tax bill aimed at stopping the capital expatriation of Indians as profit from the Sri Lankan economy. The colonial state introduced income tax to the Sri Lankan society in 1931 for the purpose of raising money to balance the 1931-1932 budget. In the period of the Depression, the expenditure had surpassed the estimated revenue. Sri Lankan members supported the introduction of income tax as it would prevent the drain of money out of the country by foreign investors specially Indians. This bill severely affected Indians businesses.<sup>xxx</sup>

At the time Sri Lanka was transformed from a colony to a nation with independence in 1948 the citizenship of the new state emerged as a crucial and controversial issue. In 1948, the indigenous political leaders of the new government brought two legislative enactments,<sup>xxxi</sup> to redefine the citizenship rights of a large population that entered to Sri Lanka during colonial rule. Under these enactments the Indian communities were faced with citizenship requirements that defined those with dual

domicile in Sri Lanka and India as aliens. They were pressurized to choose one country as their homeland and be bound by economic restrictions of the new state.

Out of 825,000 people of Indian origin who applied, 134, 000 were registered as citizens of Sri Lanka, under the Indian and Pakistani Residents (Citizenship) Act of 1949. This number was assimilated and given equal rights with the rest of the population.<sup>xxxii</sup>

The two groups of Indian communities were dealt with the citizenship problem in two different ways. The business communities had more economic power and political influence and were in a more advantageous position compared to Indian plantation labourers. But the latter were not entirely helpless as their role was crucial for the sustenance of the plantations, the mainstay of the economy, apart from their numerical strength in a democratic political system. Over and above these factors Indo-Sri Lanka relations played a vital role in determining the outcome of the citizenship issue.

After Sri Lanka's independence many attempts were made by the two countries to find a solution to the controversy over the citizenship of Indians domiciled in Sri Lanka who could not qualify for Sri Lankan citizenship. The problem of 'stateless Indians' in Sri Lanka remained for decades a major issue between India and Sri Lanka.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

This problem of integrating ethnic groups with an Indian origin into the new nation had ramifications in Sri Lankan domestic politics with had even greater implications. The Sri Lankan Tamil population in particular viewed the above legislation of the new Sri Lankan state with alarm. The issues of citizenship of those of Indian origin aggravated the relations between the majority Sinhalese and the Ceylon Tamil population. The latter viewed these developments as a warning it them and their demand for special safeguards for the minorities in the constitution became stronger. The demand for a federal constitution came to the forefront of Sri Lankan politics with this development. The failure to accommodate this demand for a federal arrangement eventually precipitated Tamil separatist politics.

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<sup>i</sup> M.S. Gunarathne, *Role of Indian Business Communities in the Sri Lankan Economy, 1833-1949*, Ph.D. thesis, Jawaharlal University, New Delhi, 2011, pp.194-195.

<sup>ii</sup> Among the immigrants who were living in the Colombo Municipality in 1931, 74.91% were Indians. L.J.B. Turner, *Report on the Census of Ceylon, 1931*, Vol.I, The Ceylon Government Press, Colombo, 1931, p.138.

<sup>iii</sup> Gunarathne, p.195.

<sup>iv</sup> Gunarathne, p.169.

<sup>v</sup> For more details see Gunarathne, chap.4.

<sup>vi</sup> P.V.J. Jayasekera, 'Plantations and underdevelopment of indigenous agriculture: The impact of the policies of the colonial state in Sri Lanka', *Paper presented to the 34<sup>th</sup> International Congress Asian and North African Studies*, 22-28 August 1993, pp.17,20-21; Gunarathne, pp.49-50.

<sup>vii</sup> Indian labour immigration to plantations in large numbers began at the end of the 1830s. About 3,000 immigrations arrived in 1839. About 50,000 annual arrivals were recorded in the period of 1840-1860. In the 1870s the peak years of coffee exports, it rose to about 100,000. By the 1880s permanently settled immigrant workers in Sri Lanka amounted to about 200,000. Donald R. Snodgrass, *Ceylon: An Export Economy in Transition*, Richard & Irwin, Illinois, 1966, pp.25,26; Satchi Ponnambalam, *Dependent Capitalism in Crisis: The Sri Lankan Economy 1948-1980*, Lake House Investments Ltd., 1980, p.7.

- <sup>viii</sup> Turner, *Report on the Census of Ceylon, 1931*, Vol.I, p.5; Ceylon Blue Book, 1929, p.S1.
- <sup>ix</sup> Ceylon Blue Book, 1929, p.S2.
- <sup>x</sup> Jayasekera, 'Plantations and underdevelopment of indigenous agriculture', pp.15-16; Gunarathne, p.49.
- <sup>xi</sup> See Michael Roberts, 'The Master-servant Laws of 1841 and the 1860's and immigrant labour in Ceylon', *The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, 8.1,2, Jan.-Decem. 1965, pp.24-37.
- <sup>xii</sup> Ceylon Blue Book, 1929, p.S1; 1938, p.S1.
- <sup>xiii</sup> See Gunarathne, p.39, chap.4.
- <sup>xiv</sup> S.E.N. Nicholas, *Commercial Ceylon*, Times of Ceylon, Colombo, 1933, p.137; H.A. de S. Gunasekera, *From Dependent Currency to Central Banking in Ceylon, an Analysis of Monetary Experience 1825-1957*, University of London, London, 1962, p.205; A.C.L. Ameer Ali, 'Changing conditions and persisting problems in the peasant sector under British rule in the period 1833-1893', *Ceylon Studies Seminar Paper*, Series 1970/72, No.3a, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, [ ], pp.26-27; Gunarathne, pp.43,53,90.
- <sup>xv</sup> Gunarathne, p.108.
- <sup>xvi</sup> For more details see Gunarathne, chap.4.1.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Nira Wickramasinghe, *Ethnic Politics in Colonial Sri Lanka 1927-1947*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1995, p.34; P.V.J. Jayasekera, *Social and Political Change in Ceylon, 1900-1919, with Special Reference to the Disturbances of 1915*, Ph.D. thesis, University of London, London, 1970, pp.320-321,337,340.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Ameer Ali, pp.1,12-17,21-22,26,27; Asoka Bandarage, *Colonialism in Sri Lanka; The Political Economy of the Kandyan Highlands, 1833-1886*, A Stamford Lake Publications, Pannipitiya, 2005, pp.135,137,138,143; Gunarathne, pp.50-54.
- <sup>xix</sup> Jayasekera, *Social and Political Change in Ceylon*, pp.226-245,319-349.
- <sup>xx</sup> *Hansard*, Debates in the Legislative Council of Ceylon, 4 December 1918, pp.330-338; Gunarathne, pp.60-64.
- <sup>xxi</sup> *Ceylon Sessional Paper*, 12, 1926, Immigration of Indian Labour, pp.8-11.
- <sup>xxii</sup> *ibid.*; Gunarathne, pp.196-195.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> By 1931 there were nearly 700,000 Indian workers and their dependents in Sri Lanka. In Colombo there were 33,000 Indian workers in the Municipality, the harbour, railways, public works and factories doing unskilled work at lower rates of pay than indigenous workers. Kumari Jayawardena, *The Rise of the Labor Movement in Ceylon*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1972, p.318.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Gunarathne, p.166.
- <sup>xxv</sup> *Report of the Special Commission on the Ceylon Constitution*, His Majesty's Stationary Office, London, 1928, p.87.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Haraprasad Chattopadhyaya, *Indians in Sri Lanka*, O.P.S. Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta,1979, pp.207-209; Nanda Jayasinghe, 'Indo-Sri Lanka relations and the problem of Indian plantation labour, 1910-1931', *Kalyani*, 5,6, 1986-1987, pp.298-300.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> *Hansard*, Debate in the Legislative Council of Ceylon, 26 Oct. 1928, pp.1626-1628; 1 Novem. 1928, pp.1675-1681,1685-1690,1696-1704.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Gunasekera, p.200.
- <sup>xxix</sup> Gunarathne, p.107.
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- <sup>xxxii</sup> S.U. Kodikara, 'Indians in Ceylon: problems and prospects', *Indians Abroad; Asia and Africa*, Anirudha Gupta (ed.), Drient Longman Ltd., New Delhi, 1971, p.61.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Gunarathne, p.203.





***Place, Memory, Identity – Oral History in the Borderlands***

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## **1. Introduction**

Today, there exist many ways to explore political borders, including using such disciplines as geographical, economic and historical studies. But what is absent from many of these discourse, are the localised voices of those directly affected by these borders on a daily basis – the border dwellers. The oral or grassroots history movement, which had started in the 1960s and 70s in the US, tried to address this shortcoming and began, aided by cheap audio recording devices, to conduct interviews and assemble data libraries. Nowadays, one can observe an unprecedented intensification of media devices used to transmit one's own thoughts to the multimedia world. And the digital revolution has also had an important impact on oral history. Were previous recordings limited to aural archives, now additions to these archives were mostly in a visual format, thereby adding an extra layer of data to be explored.

The projects presented here make use of video interviews in order to gather data. The regions explored were chosen according to their easy comparability. Both Cyprus and Borneo are divided islands, their borders were decreed by colonial powers long gone and their present populations struggle with restless borders. And while the islands are geographically and also culturally worlds apart, the projects evidence that people's daily lives do have much in common and are in many ways controlled by their respective borders. Examples to prove this point are presented below.

## **2. Cyprus**

The Cyprus project used data from an Oral History (henceforth OH) Project conducted from 2009 to 2012 in Cyprus and partly funded by the European Union. The so-called SHARP project (1) aimed at adding its voice(s) to the cultural conversations taking place across the island by making them public. Over 100 interviews were conducted on both sides of the Green Line which since 1974 separates the northern Turkish Cypriot part from the southern Greek Cypriot one. Trouble between the two communities had been brewing even before Cyprus had gained its independence from Britain in 1960 and would still worsen afterwards.

Issues of identity, problematic relationships and differing historical accounts would continue to divide the two communities even today. And while not explicitly discussed here due to space restraints, the overall SHARP project relates to such issues of memory, memorialisation and the search for identity by specifically analysing production settings, processes, the training of interviewers, the interviews themselves and the collective interpretation of this data via new media means and debriefing events.

Interviewees would typically be older members of both communities: the Turkish Cypriots in the north and the Greek Cypriots in the south. Additionally, a member of the Armenian minority living in Cyprus was also interviewed. Of particular interest in the interviews were questions about how individuals from the two Cypriot communities interacted with each other in the events leading up to the 1974 intervention/invasion of the island by Turkish troops and how these events shaped people's lives and attitudes afterwards.

### **2.1. Cyprus and the OH Project**

The two interviews selected and discussed below were conducted in the autumn of 2011 by one interviewer (the author) and a cameraman as pilots to be shared with the other interviewers. Interviewed were George, a middle-aged Greek Cypriot media worker and Ali, a retired Turkish Cypriot contractor and now a second-hand bookshop owner. The interviewer and the cameraman were both non-Cypriots; the interviewer was of German origin and the cameraman had a Serbian background. As discussed in many ethnographic texts, the relationship between 'foreign' interviewers and local respondents is always fraught with difficulty. (3) At the same time, the foreignness of the researcher might also allow for answers not readily provided to locals. Other project interviews were conducted by Greek and Turkish Cypriots, sometimes in English, sometimes in Greek, sometimes in Turkish. Most of the interviews with Greek Cypriots were, in fact, conducted in English, as were the interviews discussed below. Interestingly enough, English was none of the participants' native language. Also, these were the first or pilot interviews conducted for the OH project, and this explains why there were still sometimes awkward moments when the interviewers did not exactly know how to respond to a given interview situation.

## ***2.2 The first interview: George***

George is a seasoned Cypriot media worker in his early 50s. He grew up in Cyprus and then moved to the UK and the USA for study and work. He returned to Cyprus, working in the media industry and has numerous film production and director credits to his name. Among the films he has directed is one which deals with the Cyprus crisis and the events of 1974. Right from the beginning of the interview, it becomes clear that he has an easy rapport with the camera, having worked in front of and behind the camera for many years. Judging by his gestures and occasional frowns, he seemed a bit tired, if not wary at first, but this turned into concentrated and willing collaboration with the interviewer. Indeed, one has the impression that he is relieved to tell his story (once again).

He begins his story with life in the early 1970s but then very quickly moves onto the traumatic events of 1974. He recounts his childhood memories of the war and of hearing enemy airplanes passing above. After the end of the war, the airport in Nicosia was closed for civil aviation and nowadays it is very rare to hear an airplane crossing the sky over Nicosia. George states that he had forgotten this episode until he went to London, and for the first time in a long while he was confronted by airplane noise.

His statement is an ample reminder that specific memories (autobiographical/traumatic) consist of both psychical and social elements, which are oftentimes combined, as in this case. In his answers, George dispels the myth that all the people were mostly afraid of the 'Turks'. For him the fear of EOKA B, a Greek Cypriot paramilitary shaped after EOKA A, which had fought the British in the Cypriot anti-colonial struggle, and which now exacted strikes against Turkish Cypriots, was the scarier enemy. But he also acknowledged that the belligerent events of 1974 had changed his life. However, he also stated that many use these tragic events to their own devices, oftentimes creating (ideological) barriers to innovation and social progress in society. He exemplifies this attitude when he tells the story of his return to Cyprus in the 1980s working for CNN World Report. At one point, he wanted to cover another item, the breaking AIDS crisis. However, he was asked,

‘Why do you want to cover this? We have the Cyprus problem which needs solving first!’

When responding to the last interview question about changes taking place in Cyprus for some kind of re-unification of the two halves, George can be seen and heard letting out a long and deep sigh, which might be interpreted in two ways: a) as a sign of resignation, or b), a sign that not everything is lost, but that in Cyprus, things take longer than in other parts of the world.

### **2.3. *The Second Interview: Ali***

Ali, an amicable Turkish Cypriot in his early 70s, is a shop owner in the beautifully restored Büyük Han Market in the Turkish northern part of Nicosia. He has had many professions in his life – he worked as a carpenter and in construction, is a collector of books and stamps and he is a sportsman. After his retirement, he opened a second-hand book and curiosity store in the aforementioned Büyük Han. He is active in the community and whenever one walks by his shop, one can see many people inside it enjoying his hospitality.

It is clear from the start that, just like George, Ali is also comfortable in front of the camera. He jokes and laughs a lot and is clearly enjoying himself. He proudly mentions that he has been interviewed by foreigners many times over and relishes the memories and this present interview.

Very early on in the interview, Ali comments on the fact that he is fluent in English, Turkish and Greek and thus speaks all three of the island’s languages. This allows him to position himself as an expert not just on his own Turkish Cypriot ethnic background, but also as an interlocutor for the two other official languages of the island. He grew up in Limassol but moved to Istanbul when he was 19 and then to Kyrenia (Greek: Κερύνεια, Turkish: Girne) and Nicosia after his retirement. His father and mother had remained in Limassol and then ‘moved’ to Kyrenia. This was directly after the 1974 war and their move was an enforced patriation (from what had become Greek-Cypriot ‘territory’ to Turkish-Cypriot ‘territory’). It is not surprising Ali uses the hyperbolic and safe word ‘moved’, rather than ‘flee’ or something similar, as this is one of his ways of coping with the difficult political situation in Cyprus, then and now. He is also keen to stress that he had good relations with the Greek community. ‘If I want to buy something [at a house/shop], I was invited to the house.’ This in his eyes was a sign of inclusion in the Greek community.

Apart from being a gifted narrator and performer, Ali is also a master of evasion. Asked whether he sees the ‘old days’ of both communities living together peacefully returning again, he replies: ‘This is a political question. I keep away from that. ... I am a very good mathematician and am also good at hunting.’ A while later he comes back to the subject, though: ‘We pay politicians to do things for us. That’s it. We do not need to be involved. A normal life is better.’ This statement speaks very clearly to his politics, at least when talking to us. He stays away from them, even implying that politics are ‘un-normal.’ He also stresses the use of the word ‘happy’ when referring to himself, which appears time and again. And, lastly, he stresses that ‘if you have so many problems in the past, you work on your body.’ Besides that, according to his statements, you also withdraw further into your private matters. He is proud of his body and mentions that he has been a runner and still goes walking in Troodos, the

highest mountain range and spanning both parts of Cyprus. This last element is again a hint that he does not see Cyprus as a divided entity.

#### **2.4. Analysis of the interviews**

When analysing the interviews, it becomes clear that all three individuals interviewed seemed to enjoy the telling of their stories. They are experienced narrators and have many elements of their stories readily available. They view their speaking as empowerment and also as a bridge between their professional and private selves.

Significantly, both stress that the old days were better, a sentiment shared by the majority of the people interviewed. This age group still remembers the 'old days' and they are aware of the fact that a common, shared life had been possible for both communities before, whereas this is not the case for the younger generation.

Retelling traumatic events has different implications for different informers: some individuals might go quiet, whereas others use the interview to cathartic effect in that pain is extra-territorialised (Dawson, 1999). In our sample the respondents acted in very different ways: George told a story about his fear of hearing airplanes which is due to his experiences in the 1974 war, whereas Ali refused to recall any traumatic experiences. In George's case, this retelling might have a cathartic effect to help overcome any trauma by cladding the experience into a stock narrative and thus making it a manageable part of oneself's history. In Ali's case, any trauma associated with the events was downplayed and evaded, which is another, but perhaps not the healthiest, way of managing it.

For both interviewees, one might apply the theory of compartmentalisation of events into different modes. Portelli (1997: 24-27) stipulates that oral history narratives generally adopt three different modes: the institutional, the communal and the personal. In oral history narratives, each one of these is characterised by the usage of a different personal pronoun: the third person singular for the institutional, the first person plural 'we' for the communal and the first person singular 'I' for the personal. In our sample, all three modes appear, although the personal memory dominates in two accounts, suggesting that agency is at a prime for both these interviewees, but an agency which is mostly reduced to personal and less to institutionalised interactions.

Both respondents were content with being interviewed at their respective places of work, George in his office, Ali in his shop and George in his office. George was able to tell a story right away, perhaps also because the airplane story was one he had recounted numerous times. Ali had so many stories that it was hard for him to concentrate on any one in particular. It is remarkable that all three of them were not keen to speak directly about politics, with George being more open than Ali. George stressed the fact that he did not leave Cyprus permanently, because for him it was worth fighting for a solution on the island itself and thus stay true to his roots. Ali did not explain why he moved back to Cyprus following his retirement, but his life on the island is ample proof that he considers it his home. However, Ali refrains from speaking about politics and sees his own body rather than the country of his residence as a construction site. In all three cases, the interviews revealed how much the Cyprus problem has intervened in their lives and altered their life choices and attitudes. All three of them made their choices accordingly: George came back to Cyprus and entered the media field to perhaps affect some changes in the thinking of the

population in the south; Ali came back restricting himself to his own body and the book and tourism trade.

It is fair to say that without the events of 1974, their lives would have moved on different tracks but they have found coping mechanisms and coherence systems to deal with the ensuing changes: George in a more professional capacity, Ali in a more private one. In all three, composure appears to have been achieved through the retelling of their stories, be it politically, apolitically or artistically.

#### **2.4. Conclusions from the Cyprus study**

The series of interviews undertaken aimed at providing an up-to-date snapshot of Cypriots and the interviewees' views on the past and its relevance for the present. From the two interviews discussed above, it became clear that all three individuals were and still are affected by the events of the 1960s and 1970s and that while individual composure has been achieved, closure on the other hand, individually, communally or bi-communally, has not. The remaining interviews speak to the same fact: all respondents agree that the status quo is untenable (unless one, like Ali, uses most of one's intellectual defences to expunge politics) and in need of change. The interviewees became better able to appreciate the fraught process of reconciliation when they were introduced to individualised life stories (Linde 1983; Frank 1995), not only from their own community but from the 'others' as well, thus creating a different perspective from the official records on both sides.

The interviews conducted during this project made it clear that much of the Cypriot memory and identity research work is still going on. All respondents were trying to make sense of their own identity vis-a-vis the general political situation in returning to individualised events in their pasts. As there are other ongoing projects scattered across the island, OH has of recent times, become an important tool in working through memories and collecting them. The next task will be to provide a more centralised way of accessing all these diverse interviews and thus making it easier for future researchers to access this much needed material. It is important to involve the next generations, as they will become the guardians of this knowledge and should be given as many narrations as possible to evaluate. Due to the technology available today, especially video equipment and easy storage facilities, this job is becoming easier as time goes by. Yet, more training, motivational discourse and institutional support are all still required in order to get projects such as the current ones off the ground, a task the EU, UN and national governmental and non-governmental institutions all need to work on together in order to provide the grounds for success.

### **3. Malaysia - Indonesia**

Disclaimer: What follows are first heuristic steps into this project, which is still ongoing at the point of this writing.

The border between Malaysia and Indonesia in Borneo dates back to the time of the colonial conquests. It was here where Britain and Holland demarked their areas of influence. Borneo, together with Malaysia and Indonesia gained its independence from the colonial powers in the early second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the border remains to this day and the voices of the border dwellers are routinely drowned out by political wrangling over the border. While Cyprus and Borneo might be described as

‘cold borders’, as there rarely are any incidents, they still inform people’s life on a daily basis. The project set out to pave the way for collecting interviews from border dwellers.

In order to facilitate the project, in January and February 2014, workshops on oral history were conducted in Pontianak, West Kalimantan and in Kuching, Sarawak. In these workshops, participants were trained in questionnaire design, interviewee selection, interviewing techniques, camera work and post- production skills. A refresher will be held in January 2015 with the actual project undertaken in February 2015.

In order to validate the preliminary questionnaires, 4 sample interviews were conducted and which are transcribed in the Appendix. From the interviews, it became that, just as in Cyprus, people do not officially reflect on the border much, but that it rather insinuates itself into their daily lives in a creeping way (‘Seeing logo of Republic of Indonesia’). People display little concern for the political issues of the border and focus on practicalities (‘I bought Baju Kebaya and hat and others buy imitated bags, clothes etc.’; ‘More advanced, cleaner, more organised’). And just like in Cyprus, people longed for a normalisation of border issues in order to facilitate their lives and for less political interference. It is expect that the full set of interviews will provide a more differentiated picture, but the overall tendencies, easier dealings with th other side and less politicising of the issues – would remain similar for both projects.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The results from the two projects are giving a diversified picture of border life, in Cyprus as well as in Borneo. People are intently aware of border issues, but their idea of resolution is clearly settled in the practicalities of the here and now. Perhaps a little less so in Cyprus, where the memories of both sides living together in mostly peaceful ways are still fresh, and an overall solution, either as a federation or as two separate states, is still sought after. In Borneo, views are somewhat less politicised and focus more on practical matters of daily life.

The projects also express the hope that these interviews will contribute to individuals’ empowerment and their better understanding of the historic processes which shaped and are continuing to shape their lives and their ethics in sharing an island. But both projects agree on two things: 1. the border poses a problem and a challenge that require a continuous struggle in order to minimise its impact; and 2. Politics are unhelpful in achieving a solution to 1.

#### **Notes**

1. More information on the project and a sample of the interviews can be accessed at [www.sharpnetwork.eu](http://www.sharpnetwork.eu).
2. Alev Adil, performing on 5 March 2012 at ARTos Foundation, Nicosia.
3. As an example, consider Landolf Scherzer’s 2005 *Der Grenzgänger* (The Border Rambler). In hisreportage, the author wanders the length of the stretch of land that until 1989 used to be the German-German border. Through his low-key and conversational narrative, he is able to understand and portray people living along this once impenetrable border. And re readily acknowledges that the willingness of his respondents was mostly due to the fact that they felt he was one of them.

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**APPENDIX I**

## Borderlands Project

Sample questions (generated by the Workshop Group, Kuching, Feb. 2014)

Written responses 1-3

Questions	Answers
What are your earliest memories of the border?	Seeing logo of Republic of Indonesia, Garuda Immigration building during my trip to Pontianak by bus via Tebedu Not much: I never feel Serikin as the border
What did your parents/older people tell you about the border?	Small stalls and cheaper price sold by Indonesian people Hygiene Warned me to beware of strangers, take care of won belonging and not to bring along many valuable things.
Have you ever crossed the border and if yes, for what purpose? Where and how do you usually cross the border?	Yes, to buy things, e.g. cloth/clothes at Tebedu by car. Yes, by bus on vacation Yes, to Pontianak by bus for a visit
Does the border have an impact on your life? If yes, how?	No Yes, new experience and eye opening No
Do you have relatives across the border? Do any of your friends/neighbours have?	Yes. Friends. No No. However, my friend have some relatives
How do you get your information about what is going on on the other side of the border?	From village people nearby Just following a tour guide organized by my in-law From the newspaper
How do you feel when you are on the other side? Have you had problems on the other side? Do you know of people who have had problems?	The language is different a little bit and also money exchange Yes, my wife: Hygiene (WC) language, living standards Normal except for the language difference
If people cross the border, what are they likely to purchase? How safe is cross-border trade?	To buy clothes, household. Safe enough Cheaper local products; imitated products; pretty safe I bought Baju Kebaya and hat and others buy imitated bags, clothes etc.: safe
Do you own property across the border?	No No No
Can you imagine a relationship with somebody across the border?	No Yes, not going to be easy and successful No
The idea of a borderless world vs. - nationalism - can they coexist peacefully?	No idea Cannot cannot
How do you hope the border will look like in 20-year time?	No idea; More controlled; More advanced, cleaner, more organised

**APPENIDX II****Borderlands Project PONTIANAK - INDONESIA****Sample questions****Written interview 1****What are your earliest memories of the border?**

I am not sure if I have earliest memories of the border. As my life is mostly far away from the border, I also did not have too much interest in it before. I only got close to the border when I and some friends conducted the border blogger movement program in the middle of 2011. That program was established to empower the border people to sharpen their awareness about their life by sharing their life story through web blogs.

**What did your parents/older people tell you about the border?**

From my source of information, there were no borders between Indonesia-Kalimantan and Sarawak-Malaysia a long time ago. There was only one people, a sub-ethnicity of the Dayak, living in both in Kalimantan and Sarawak. But after that, the line across the country made them separate.

**Have you ever crossed the border and if yes, for what purpose? Where and how do you usually cross the border?**

Yes. Some friends and I crossed the border to meet our Malaysian friend and we spent our relaxed time in a small restaurant in the Sarawak area, near the border. We crossed the border in Entikong in the Sanggau district, one of the formal borders between Kalimantan and Sarawak Malaysia.

**Does the border have an impact on your life? Which?**

Yes. I recently became more interested in borderland life. It's so unique, challenging, and beautiful. Many different ways of life can be find on the border. Also, we hear from its people about how they understand the "nation" concept. People who live on the border are more reachable by the Malaysian services instead of their own country's. For examples: Indonesians who life across the border have it easier to consume many Malaysian products, such as foods, but also services such as hospitals, education, radio and television. It is caused by the long distance of their village from the capital city of their district, province, even country.

**Do you have relatives across the border? Do any of your friends/neighbours have?**

Yes, I have some friends who live on the border.

**How do you get your information about what is going on on the other side of the border?**

I get the information from many media: internet, mobile phone connection, and sometimes I get it directly from person-to-person talks.

**How do you feel when you are on the other side? Have you had problems on the other side? Do you know of people who have had problems?**

If I were living on the border, that would be so challenging! Maybe I will see a new life that I never imagined before! Many people I asked always told me about their problems. Especially difficult to access government services such as health, educational, infrastructures, etc. services.

**If people cross the border, what are they likely to purchase? How safe is cross-border trade?**

Which border that you mean? There are formal and informal borders between Kalimantan-Indonesia and Sarawak-Malaysia. People become easier to establish the trade in the formal border, but they have to be more careful if trading via the non-formal border, that is illegal but they are looking for a better life!

**Do you own property across the border?**

No, I don't.

**Can you imagine a relationship with somebody across the border?**

Yes. I have some friends on the border. No problems with the relation, we can build our communication via the cellular phone and internet.

**The idea of a borderless world vs. - nationalism - can they coexist peacefully?**

Yes, if the government always tries to empower the people there. But if the government never gives it attention, nationalism is only a joke!

**How do you hope the border will look like in 20 years time?**

Become a modern border!

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*Practicing Peace: The International Okinawan Martial Arts Community as a  
Community of Practice*

Samantha May, University of the Ryukyus, Japan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2014  
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0152

**Abstract**

Economists to academics have noted the simultaneous tendency towards globalization and localization in recent decades. At times, the increasingly globalized economy and advances in communications technology seem to bring us together only closely enough to recognize our fundamental differences. Internal divides along cultural, linguistic, political and economic lines become as sharp and clear as geographic boundaries used to be. In such circumstances, “peace” is often thought of as merely the absence of conflict between divergent groups. At the same time, the emergence of worldwide media has fuelled a new ability to form globally connected communities of practice based on activities with local cultural roots. Using Wenger's (2000) community of practice theory, an examination of the domain, community, practice and lexicon of the international Okinawan martial arts community through participant observation, interview and survey data reveals the potential role of communities of practice in facilitating transnational cooperative structures. In this way, peace may be visualized not as a passive state of non-conflict achieved through compromise, but as an active and creative practice based on voluntary membership in a worldwide community.

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**Introduction: Cleaving Together and Cleaving Apart**

Those from the diverse fields of language maintenance to business have noted simultaneous tendencies towards both globalization and localization. Our use of computers and the internet has resulted in an extremely powerful mass communications ability, unprecedented in all of human history. However, this ability to connect to anyone, anywhere, often seems to bring us only close enough together to like each other less; geographical barriers have been supplanted by often deeper cultural, linguistic, economic and political divides. The expansion in the membership and influence of multinational political and apolitical bodies such as the European Union and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has also come with the recognition of such meaningful differences. The United Nations took the occasion of its' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary to “[c]ontinue to reaffirm the right of self-determination of all peoples” (1995), which has led to subsequent political changes. The former Yugoslavia, for example, is now six separate countries, but it is uncertain whether we should say it has “expanded” or “split” along pre-existing self-determined divides.

This begs the question of where constructive divides begin and end. Culturally and linguistically, Okinawa is certainly different from Japan, but Miyako Island is different from the rest of Okinawa. However, even within Miyako, there is no guarantee that two people from opposite sides of the island will share a common culture or mutually intelligible language besides that of Japanese. Sharing a distinct culture, language, and ancestry may foster group identity, but also has the potential to strengthen already existing boundaries between Self and Other. The word “cleave”, meaning both “to cleave together” and “to cleave apart”, may best describe these current trends.

**Self-Determination and the Definition of Peace**

With regards to self-determination, minority language rights are a particularly sensitive issue. Rita Izsák, an independent expert for the UN on minority issues, argues that “[l]anguage is a central element and expression of identity and of key importance in the preservation of group identity” and that “[l]anguage is particularly important to linguistic minority communities seeking to maintain their distinct group and cultural identity, sometimes under conditions of marginalization, exclusion and discrimination” (United Nations, 2013). While she acknowledged that language rights are often construed as part of secessionist movements that threaten governmental authority and national unity, states have often in turn “aggressively promoted a single national language as a means of reinforcing sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity” (United Nations, 2013) Most critically, “Ms. Izsák...noted that protection of linguistic minority rights is a human rights obligation and an essential component of good governance, efforts to prevent tensions and conflict, and the construction of equal and politically and socially stable societies.” This leads to another important question: If the promotion of minority languages as an aspect of self-determination is essential to conflict prevention and the promotion of peace between groups, what is the definition of peace?

Although peace may be defined as the absence of war, most current peace scholars and activists argue that this definition is inadequate. Höglund & Söderberg (2010) assert “merely looking at the frequency of peace agreements that lead to the ending of large-scale violence does not tell us much about the reality of peace beyond the



absence of war...[P]eace is a term that encompasses a whole range of meanings and has highly subjective connotations” (p. 367-368, 370). In a post on Share the World's Resources' website Shirin Ibadi (2007) of Open Democracy cites the number of deaths that occur in developing countries, particularly among children, due to malnutrition, inadequate health care, and poor sanitation. He writes “[p]eace means serenity. One can only feel serene if one's human rights are not violated and one's integrity is protected” (Share the World's Resources website). Goetze & Bliesemann de Guevara (2014) observe that “[c]osmopolitanism has been frequently put forward as the political ideology that should underpin peacebuilding missions... [because of] the connection that is made between the tolerance and universalism of cosmopolitanism on the one hand, and the idea of peace as reconciliation and justice in war-torn societies on the other” (p. 1-2). Given UNESCO's support of linguistic and cultural rights and freedoms, peace could be defined as the freedom of individuals and groups to have and maintain their own self-determined practices without threat of personal harm. Thus, instead of being a passive state describing the absence of negative conflict, we can arrive at a definition of peace as an active and dynamic practice.

### **Peace as a Practice**

What does the practice of peace look like? The answer came to my attention before the question, and from an unlikely source. While searching for terrible music on youtube.com, I saw what looked to be a very promising video of a girl singing Ozzy Osbourne's “Crazy Train.” However, watching the video made plain that not only was the girl extremely talented, but the equally talented musicians who accompanied her were each from a different country, collectively representing USA, Japan, Mexico and Spain (Sabrina Carpenter, 6:24-6:40). We can imagine how these people overcame vast geographic, cultural, and linguistic distances in the production of this music video. Certainly, this accomplishment would not have been possible, or at least would have been much more difficult, without peace between these countries. Watching the music video produced by people working together across numerous distances, I had a sudden realization: this was what peace looked like. My question became: If many areas and peoples around the world have achieved relative peace, what can we now do together?

### **Communities of Practice**

Of course, we may hope for Big Answers, such as ending poverty, disease and war (and we are working on them), but before we can get to those, let's first look at the smaller answers. In other words, what kinds of transnational, transcultural and translinguistic cooperative activities are already happening, and how do they function?

Working with others at a company, going to school, making a youtube video, or pursuing a favourite pass time are all activities where people engage with one another for a specific purpose in their daily lives. In his article “Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems” (2000), Etienne Wenger outlines a “social definition of learning” in which “[l]earning...is an interplay between social competence and personal experience. It is a dynamic, two-way relationship between people and the social learning systems in which they participate. It combines personal relationships with the evolution of social structures”(p. 227). Wenger focuses on “communities of practice” as “the basic building blocks of a social learning system because they are the social 'containers' of the competences that make up that system. By participating in

these communities, we define with each other what constitutes competence in a given context: being a reliable doctor, a gifted photographer, a popular student, or an astute poker player”(p. 229).

Communities of practice are composed of three elements: 1) mutuality or a community that encompasses the various interactions between community members, 2) a joint enterprise or practice that represents how a community strives to achieve its' goals, and 3) a shared repertoire or domain that defines the community's area of expertise, including “language, routines, sensibilities, artifacts, tools, stories, styles etc.” (p. 229) as well as access to these resources, and the ability to use them appropriately. “Communities of practice grow out of a convergent interplay of competence and experience that involves mutual engagement. They offer an opportunity to negotiate competence *through an experience of direct participation*. As a consequence, they remain important social units of learning even in the context of much larger systems” (p. 229, emphasis added).

Because communities of practice are social learning systems structured around social competence and personal experience resulting from direct participation, they do not define belonging according to geopolitical boundaries, but in terms of three modes of belonging to a community. “Engagement” is the ability to engage or accomplish things with others in the community. “Imagination” is the ability to abstractly envision the placement of oneself and others in the community as well as future possibilities. “Alignment” refers to bringing local or individual practice in line with those of the larger community to assist in the achievement of mutual aims. Thus, using these modes of belonging, people voluntarily form peaceful communities across geographical, social, cultural and linguistic boundaries in order to successfully improve joint practices. It is the potential of communities of practice to draw people together that has great relevance for peacemaking, and it is this which is the focus of this paper.

## **The Okinawan Martial Arts Community as a Community of Practice**

### **a. Community: Structure and Identity**

The international Okinawan martial arts community is a fascinating community of practice made up of karate and kobudo practitioners. This group shares a community, domain, and practice. The Okinawan martial arts community includes approximately 50 million members in over 150 countries worldwide (Okinawa Prefecture, 2014). The Okinawan martial arts community can be said to be a “trans” community in that it is transcultural, transnational, and translinguistic, uniting its' members across many often problematic barriers. However, unlike other communities of practice, because Okinawan martial arts are deeply connected to Okinawan culture and the majority of the martial arts community is not Okinawan, frequent “border crossings” are necessary to the practice of the Okinawan martial arts community. This largely entails the alignment of non-Okinawan students with their Okinawan instructors and their Okinawan students. The Okinawan martial arts community is heavily dependent on positive interpersonal relations. Because it is a knowledge-based community, it relies on face-to-face communication for improvements in practice. Therefore, knowing and maintaining good relations, particularly with high-level instructors in the community, is essential, and this cannot be done if cultural, national, or linguistic barriers are allowed to stand in the way.

Marking the martial arts community as a quintessential community of practice (Wenger, 2000), the emphasis in martial arts practice is on learning, rather than achievement. Although there is an extremely strong hierarchy within the martial arts community, it is based on individual skill and length of membership in the community; it is inclusive rather than competitive. For example, the rank of nanadan, or seventh degree black belt, is very difficult to achieve, but there are no limits on the number of nanadans in the world and the rank is open to anyone who meets the criteria. Thus, traditional hierarchies are broken apart as martial arts membership supersedes the importance of sex, race, class, and general social standing outside the dojo. Although the highest status Okinawan karate and kobudo practitioners tend to be elder Okinawan males, it would be expected, for example, that a young African woman would give commands to an older Japanese male in the dojo if she were his senior student. It is furthermore significant that, unlike membership in a sex or race-based group, membership in the Okinawan martial arts community is voluntary. Therefore, if a martial artist does not like his or her position in the hierarchy, he or she may simply change schools or opt out of the community entirely, which is seldom an option for race, sex, or class-based discrimination.

#### **b. Domain, Lexicon, and Symbols**

The domain of Okinawan martial arts includes knowledge of Okinawan culture, language, and symbols in addition to knowledge of martial arts techniques. Because it is the birthplace of karate and kobudo, information about Okinawa is not only explicitly taught, but implicitly learned through the practice of Okinawan martial arts and highly valued. Movement forms do not spontaneously occur, but are culturally embedded. For example, many martial arts techniques bear a great physical resemblance to movements of Okinawan dance (Juster, 2011). However, the similarities between martial arts and other Okinawan art forms only become apparent after familiarity with both arts. The understanding of Okinawan martial arts, including forms of address, etiquette and so on in addition to the interpretation of movements, is therefore incomplete outside of an Okinawan cultural context. Thus, martial arts tourism to and from Okinawa is highly desirable by members of the community because it helps facilitate a more complete understanding of the cultural context in which karate and kobudo occur (May, 2012).

Like the members of other communities of practice, the martial arts community also has a shared lexicon comprised of Japanese terms for counting, techniques, and dojo etiquette, mixed with the local language of the practitioners, and often some Uchinaaguchi, or Okinawan language, terms. It is frequently the case that all the members of a multinational karate group have only martial arts-related Japanese or Uchinaaguchi words as their sole common language, but as this lexicon also includes some basic vocabulary such as “sensei”, “sumimasen”, “arigatougozaimasu” and the numbers one to ten, as well as some kanji, there is certainly enough language in common to conduct a class together. However, in order to further improve their technique, many foreign martial arts students wish to learn Japanese, and occasionally Uchinaaguchi, so they can receive detailed instruction directly from their Okinawan instructors.

In addition to verbal and written language, the Okinawan martial arts community has a shared set of symbols related to their practice. For example, there are several karate

and kobudo styles, and within each style there are several schools, which are each represented by a crest that is usually sewn or embroidered onto the karate uniform, over the heart. Dojo in different countries might be affiliated with a particular dojo or organization in Okinawa, with some Okinawan dojo having over 200 branch dojo abroad (International Okinawa Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Federation, 2014). In this case, there are often similarities between the crests, where the same image or kanji is used with different text representing a particular location. In this way, members affiliated with the same honbu, or main, dojo in Okinawa can instantly recognize one another, which is particularly useful for organizational or social purposes at large international events.

### **c. Practice**

The practice of the martial arts community has physical, mental, spiritual, and cultural components. Most martial arts practice takes place within a private group class, but may also occur in public for a demonstration, seminar, or tournament. The physical practice of Okinawan karate and kobudo, which differ from dojo to dojo, may include kata, or forms, basic blocking and striking techniques, the use of weapons, kumite, or sparring, wrestling techniques, joint locks and so on, performed singularly or with one or more partners. Though the physical component may form the bulk of the class, it is usually framed within formal meditation practice at the beginning and end of each class, and is structured with the regular usage of Japanese terms that mark the different techniques practised in each phase of the class, such as “kon tiki tai”, “renzokumite” and so on. The use of formal Japanese, such as “arigatou gozaimashita” and “onegaishimasu”, as well as frequent bowing and standing at attention facilitate a sense of discipline and mental focus. Often cultural information about Okinawa or explanations of the meaning of particular techniques or dojo symbols is introduced throughout the class, or before the final formal “bow out” at class end. Because karate and kobudo techniques include meditation and learning about martial arts as well as the physical practice of techniques, martial arts may be practised individually at home as well as in a dojo.

Still, if martial arts techniques are designed to kill or disable an opponent, even if this is being done in a structured environment within the context of an international community of practice, one might wonder how the practice of martial arts can lead to peace. To answer this question, it is necessary to understand the intended goals of martial arts practice. Mastery of the physical techniques might first appear to be the most difficult goal to accomplish, but in order for this to happen, instructors from many different countries must first train together in Okinawa, and this is not always easy. In the words of one Okinawan instructor “[s]ometimes foreign instructors don't get along” (A. Yagi, personal communication, January 26, 2014), which leads to frequent situations where people with deadly combat skills, who may dislike each other intensely and cannot speak the same language, must physically interact with one another. Fortunately, the various karate and kobudo practitioners in the martial arts community ultimately *must* find a way to cooperate because it is the only way to improve their technique. Thus, the most important goal of martial arts practice, as stated by both Okinawan and overseas instructors, is not in fact mastery of the techniques, but self control. In other words, members of the martial arts community are not practising violence, but rather how to be peaceful in potentially volatile situations; this is the essence of serenity found in Ibadi's (2007) definition of peace.

### **How Do Martial Arts Promote Peace?**

In addition to the international friendships that are formed through regular interactions between members of the martial arts community, several studies demonstrate that martial arts encourage peaceful behaviour. For example, Troyer (2011) correlated martial arts practice with the concept of mindfulness. Mindfulness is “positively related to an individual’s ability to sustain attention, focus, and regulate negative emotions...[and] is necessary for higher or more effective LOC [Level of Consciousness] or the degree of responsiveness to the stimuli in the environment” (p. 291). Troyer further notes that training in self-awareness and LOC would encourage students to “better solve difficult problems by revealing to them the part they play in the problem solving process” allowing them to “potentially catch mistakes quicker, change strategies for quicker and more accurate analysis, avoid using up valuable working memory space with unnecessary stress or worry, and overall process information more efficiently and accurately” (p. 293). The benefits of mindfulness and enhanced LOC would be extremely useful in the peace-building process.

Trulson (1986) and Twemlow and Sacco (1998) observed that martial arts practice was connected with a decrease in bullying and delinquent behaviour among adolescents with a history of violence. In “The application of traditional martial arts practice and theory to the treatment of violent adolescents”, Twemlow and Sacco illustrated how violent adolescents, often with a history of criminal activity and gang involvement, greatly benefited from a therapeutic martial arts program, writing that “[t]he training strongly supports synthetic ego functions, particularly control of aggressive impulses. It may be especially helpful in assisting verbally limited students in mastering leadership skills” (Conclusion section, para. 1), which may assist with non-violent problem solving. They concluded that “martial arts taught in a traditional way also offer an organizing framework for understanding the world and a sense of historical connectedness, helping violent adolescents overcome their dysfunctional circumstances” (Conclusion section, para. 2). Lakes and Hoyt (2004) also demonstrated a connection between martial arts participation and increased self-regulation, and Nosanchuk’s (1981) study on traditional martial arts practice and aggressiveness showed an overall decrease in aggression among long-term martial arts practitioners.

Supporting the idea of social acceptance being broadly found within the martial arts community, Rao (2008) conducted a study of a karate dojo that included children with physical and mental disabilities in regular classes. He writes, “[w]hile the literature on inclusive strategies has continued to burgeon and inform our focused efforts in creating inclusive schools and communities, we are also learning more about how some communities as well as settings come to so naturally ‘accept’ or ‘include’ people who are different” (p. 294). Ultimately, Rao attributes the inclusiveness of the students in the dojo to the main instructor, who questioned “the existence of the dual categories of ability and disability [and saw] his students as more complex human beings. The ways, in which such a perspective shapes his pedagogy, his interaction with students as well as the community that he creates within his school is profound” (p. 295). Though it was not the focus of his study, Rao acknowledged the possibility that the instructor's practices “may have also been fostered by his interpretation of the martial arts tradition of karate” (p. 296).

The literature shows a correlation between martial arts practice and increases in mindfulness and self-regulation, with decreases in aggression and violent behaviour, as well as the ability to foster inclusive communities. It is likely that these benefits result from the current practices of the international Okinawan martial arts community as well, and certainly they contribute to the practice of peace.

### **Boundaries and Borderlands in Okinawan Martial Arts**

The Okinawan martial arts community is a large international group practising control of violence. As karate and kobudo are designated as intangible cultural properties of Okinawa and Japan, this community is Okinawa-centred even though the majority of its members are not Okinawan themselves. Therefore, not only must practitioners of Okinawan martial arts frequently cooperate across cultural, linguistic, and personal borders, but also they must accept and respect the Okinawan Other as the pre-eminent authority within their community. However, rather than viewing the Other's culture from an abstract distance, members of this community are, albeit to a limited extent, involved in the Other's cultural practices.

Wenger (2000) wrote that a social learning situation “combines personal relationships with the evolution of social structures” (p. 227). The Okinawan martial arts community is a prime example of a social structure that evolved out of personal relationships, but it is the ongoing process of cross-cultural alignment, whereby martial artists around the world strive to make their practice as close as possible to that of their Okinawan counterparts, that makes this community particularly worthy of study as a model of peaceful international relations. As a small kingdom which relied on international trade for hundreds of years, Okinawa itself has a long history as a peaceful “bankoku no kuni” or “bridge to all nations”, and several scholars have agreed that this peaceful image reaches beyond the realm of myth to shape a possible future for Japanese international relations. Hein (2001) writes that Okinawans may “spearhead a national policy that translates the strong pacifist sentiments of the Japanese population into an active principle for international engagement” (p. 35, as quoted in Govreen, 2014). Whether or not the Okinawan martial arts community derives its' capacity for peace from its' Okinawan cultural roots, the same desire for non-violence and peaceful engagement with the international community underpins the martial arts community, blurring the boundaries between Okinawan and Other within community practice.

### **Problems in the Martial Arts Community**

Despite its' potential to greatly contribute to peace, the Okinawan martial arts community is not without problems. Firstly, it is a very diverse community, incorporating many different styles of karate and kobudo. Consequently, participants' different nationalities are often less of an issue than the lack of cooperation and disunity between styles, or even within the same style. Though part of martial arts practice is self-improvement, martial arts skill may not always be equated with personal merit. Thus, the interpersonal politics between teachers, even those within the same school who operate different individual dojo, can be extremely complicated and problematic. Furthermore, although some individual karate or kobudo classes may have 50% or more female participants, the very few female Okinawan instructors who exist are rarely publicly recognized. This may contribute to sexism within the community. Some foreign female practitioners have reported foreign male students'

refusal to interact with them; interestingly, Okinawan male instructors were not reported to be sexist.

The martial arts community abroad is largely a young community that grew significantly during the 1980s. It may not sustain itself forever, especially given the fact that there are a limited number of Okinawan teachers to go around for a very large community of 50,000,000 students. It is possible that the Okinawan instructors will not be able to keep up with their worldwide following, and all the personal travel this necessitates. Furthermore, although Okinawan martial arts are one of many cultural arts in Okinawa that all have connections to Okinawan history, language, and lifeways, the overseas martial arts community may hyperfocus on their practice. Without a complete picture of the Okinawan cultural context of the martial arts, foreign martial arts practitioners may be prone to misinterpretation of cultural cues, leading to over-politeness and miscommunication.

Finally, in some cases martial arts participation may arise out not out of genuine interest and a desire for self-improvement, but from the fetishization of Japanese and Okinawan culture (Said, 1978). This has led to the commodification of Okinawan martial arts as some instructors seek to take advantage of students' desires to "buy in" to their image of this community (Brown & Leledaki, 2010).

### **Applications of the Martial Arts Community as a Community of Practice**

Peace is often associated with cosmopolitanism, including the preservation of local cultural diversity. The hierarchical structure of the Okinawan martial arts community, and its' alignment with Okinawan culture make it an ideal community in which to promote Okinawan cultural interests. Since Uchinaaguchi, an indigenous Okinawan language, is endangered within Okinawa and many karate and kobudo instructors wish to revive it, the Okinawan martial arts community may be highly receptive to using it in their practice. As predicted by Wenger's concept of alignment within communities of practice, interviews with both overseas and Okinawan members of the Okinawan martial arts community revealed strikingly similar attitudes towards Okinawan language preservation:

"I really want to keep the Okinawan connection alive and...as the art of Okinawa is Goju Ryu, then the language goes with that..[It] brings us a little closer to keeping this art alive and helping to promote the Okinawan culture as well, [to] promote this language." (L. Marchant, personal communication, October 16, 2013 )

"If Uchinaguchi is lost, Okinawan culture will also be lost...So let's use Okinawan dialect...let's start teaching Okinawan dialect to children...'If you don't understand your country's language, you will forget your country.'"  
(Okinawan martial artist, personal communication, February 20, 2013)

Preliminary results from a survey of the international martial arts community triangulate these findings. The average ratings on a ten-point Lichert scale for "learning about Okinawan culture is beneficial for martial arts practice" were 9.48, and for "learning about Okinawan language is beneficial for martial arts practice", the average was 7.48. Thus, it appears that the martial arts community as a whole has a stake in the promotion and maintenance of Okinawan culture and language, especially as it is connected to their practice.

## Conclusion

Paralleling the trends among international political and non-governmental agencies, the tendency in communities of practice is also towards greater transnational cooperation, as already exists within the international Okinawan martial arts community. That a transnational community so skilled in inflicting damage on others can so successfully cooperate and mobilize on such a massive scale should give hope for other activity-based collaborations.

The conception of peace as a practice in which something is produced or learned may directly assist the international peace building process using indirect or oblique methods. Much like an immersion approach to second language acquisition, the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology (Dalton-Puffer, Nikula & Smit, 2010) involves using the target language to learn another subject, rather than studying the language directly. If this idea is applied to peace building through communities of practice, peaceful relations are not the stated goal, but a by-product of other forms of border-crossing, co-constructive learning practices. Thus, peace is not the absence of war, but the learned successful negotiation of interpersonal conflict in potentially volatile circumstances. As in the Okinawan martial arts community, peace may be found in the palpable presence of joint creative activities that enrich human existence and our shared environment.

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***Successful aging among immigrants after midlife: Comparison of six ethnic groups***

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**Abstract**

Relocation by crossing borders can be a risky endeavor, regardless of the amount of resources and support one receives. While many immigrants experience stress by functioning in a foreign language and culture, aging in a foreign environment can lead to an additional burden among older people. The U.S. Census Bureau estimated that the number of immigrants age 65 years or older reached an unprecedented high of 5 million in 2010, representing approximately 12% of the total foreign-born population. The growing number of older immigrants, coupled with the diversity of various ethnic groups, highlights the critical need to promote the well-being for these older immigrants. This study explored the current status of physical and psychological well-being of immigrants from six different ethnic groups (Bosnian, Chinese, Indian, Korean, Latino, and Vietnamese). Data were collected through interview surveys with immigrants who were 40 years old and older (n=330). These six groups present distinctive differences in the entry to the U.S., racial backgrounds, educational levels, and cultural and linguistic proximity to mainstream Americans. Quantitative results indicated that connection with others and integration to the community and mainstream Americans were important factors of life satisfaction in general. However, analyses of comments to open-ended questions found that meanings of 'successful aging' vary among different ethnic groups and that generational arrangements were also different among them.

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## **Introduction**

Relocation by crossing borders can be a risky endeavor, regardless of the amount of resources and support one receives. While many immigrants experience stress by functioning in a foreign language and culture, aging in a foreign environment can lead to an additional burden among older people. The U.S. Census Bureau estimated that the number of immigrants age 65 years or older reached an unprecedented high of 5 million in 2010, representing approximately 12% of the total foreign-born population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The growing number of older immigrants coupled with the limited availability of resources highlights the critical need to promote health-related quality of life and well-being among these immigrants. Although the well-being of older adults is a key area of study in gerontological research and life-course studies, the inclusion of immigrants, particularly those who are of limited English proficiency, remains a major missing component, thus the needs of older immigrants is not well known. While there are many definitions of 'successful aging' according to different cultural contexts, psychological well-being is one of the important components in aging well. Component of subjective well-being involves evaluating one's life in positive terms (Diener et al., 1985), thus studying life satisfaction and relevant factors in general and within different cultural contexts offer some implications to gerontological researchers as well as policy makers. This study has two objectives: 1) To explore factors which predict life satisfaction among immigrants, and 2) To compare and contrast six ethnic immigrant groups.

This study was conducted in St. Louis, Missouri, in the United States of America. While the numbers of immigrants may be much higher in larger metropolitan areas, such as New York, Los Angeles, or Chicago, St. Louis has been one of the gateways for immigrants in the past few decades. Further, the number of refugee populations has also been increasing since St. Louis was designated as one of the preferred communities for refugee resettlement. Recent estimates suggest that there may be as many as 150,000 immigrants in the St. Louis area (Focus St. Louis, 2003; Strauss, 2012). Some aspects of the needs of older immigrants in the U.S. may be gleaned from the sparse research literature, but many of these studies do not distinguish between different cultural or ethnic groups. Considering the fact that these immigrant populations continue to age, it is imperative to explore needs of older immigrants, by identifying specific areas that may prove fruitful in improving health-related quality of life and well-being.

## **Methods**

### *Data Collection*

Interview survey was used to collect data from six ethnic groups (Bosnian, Chinese, Indian, Korean, Latino, and Vietnamese). These six ethnic groups represent different backgrounds in terms of race, entry to the US, religion, length of stay, and ethnic community size. Criteria for recruitment were a) 40 years old or older, b) came to the U.S. at age 18 years old or older, and c) legally reside in the U.S. We included immigrants younger than 65 because this age cohort will reach their retirement age within the next two decades, thus they will provide valuable information in terms of policy recommendations. Data collection was conducted by a total of 16 students and service providers who were able to speak one of the six languages. We were able to conduct interview survey in English with an Indian group. The final sample size was 330 (80 Bosnians, 80 Chinese, 80 Latinos, 30 Indian, 30 Korean, and 30 Vietnamese).

The survey consisted of both closed- and open-ended questions and explored several dimensions associated with successful aging.

### *Variables*

In this paper, we focused on several constructs, including Life Satisfaction, Social Involvement, English Competency, Perceived Discrimination, Social Support, Connection with Others, and Self Esteem. Many constructs were measured by existing scales which had been validated by many published studies. For the purpose of data analyses, composite scales were created after reliability tests. We were able to achieve good reliability for all the constructs, ranging 0.61 and 0.92. Control variables were Age, Years in the US, Sex, Education, and Household Income.

## **Results**

### *Demographic Characteristics*

Table 1 below shows general information on demographic characteristics of the sample.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics

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Sex (Males 43%, Females 57%)
Age (Mean=57.28, SD=12.45)
Years in the U.S. (Mean=18.98, SD=11.25)
Immigration status (Naturalized US citizens 53%)
Education (High School or less 50%, Some college 10%, College 18%, Graduate degree 22%)
Household Income (<\$50,000 51%, >\$100,000 10%)
Marital Status (Married 78%)

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In general, the sample is slightly more educated than general U.S. population of people with 40 years old and older (High School or less 63%, Some college 7%, College 18%, Graduate degree 12%) (Data analysis based on General Social Survey, 2012). Noticeable difference among six ethnic groups were: Indian group resided in the U.S. the longest (Mean=27.54 years, SD=10.44), had the highest level of education (College education 20%, Graduate degree 65%), and reported the highest house hold income (>\$100,000 71%) than the rest of five ethnic groups; Bosnian group resided in the U.S. the shortest (Mean=13.92 years, SD=3.54), had the lowest level of education (High school or less 88%), and reported the lowest household income (<\$50,000 55%, >\$100,000 5%); and Bosnian, Indian, Korean, and Vietnamese reported that they practiced religion several times a week and that religion was very meaningful to their lives (>80%).

### *Factors Predicting Life Satisfaction*

Life Satisfaction was the focus of interest of this study. The composite scale of this construct ranged between 5 and 25. While Indian group reported the highest score on Life satisfaction (Mean 20.29, SD=2.68), Bosnian group reported the lowest (Mean=16.23, SD=3.65) and tied with Latinos (Mean=17.37, SD=3.49). Table 2 shows the results of regression analyses for the entire sample and by ethnic groups.

Table 2 Factors Predicting Life Satisfaction (Standardized Coefficients are reported.)

Variables	All	Bosnian	Chinese	Indian	Korean	Latino	Vietnamese
Age	.048	-.023	-.455***	.354	.254	.202	-.339
Years in the US	.033	.079	.022	.124	-.189	-.038	.255
Sex (1=M, 2=F)	.015	.112	-.085	-.096	.275	.030	-.024
Education	-.063	-.155	-.115	-.192	.374	-.365*	-.953***
Household Income	.113 <sup>+</sup>	.339*	-.015	.231	.247 <sup>+</sup>	.202	-.181
Socialization	.197***	.256*	.111	-.222	-.029	.123	.155
English competency	.120	.097	-.175	.025	.313	.336 <sup>+</sup>	.391
Discrimination	.024	-.003	-.039	-.408	-.283	.104	.002
Social support	.051	.155	.154	-.019	-.058	.026	.411*
Connection	.279***	.313*	.216*	.375 <sup>+</sup>	.040	.218 <sup>+</sup>	.634***
Self Esteem	.193***	.021	.338***	.279	.429 <sup>+</sup>	.150	-.180
F-statistics	15.195***	3.553***	7.711***	2.046	4.840***	3.464***	6.456***
R <sup>2</sup>	.345	.365	0.55	0.542	0.758	0.359	0.798
N	330	80	80	31	29	80	30

+<0.05 (one-tailed), \*<0.05, \*\*<0.01, \*\*\*<0.001

Household income, socializing with people (from one's ethnic group and mainstream Americans), connection with others, and self-esteem positively affected one's life satisfaction in general. Older Chinese were less likely to be satisfied with life than younger Chinese. Among Latinos and Vietnamese, the more educated they were, the less satisfied. In spite of high SES, none of the variables predicted life satisfaction among Indians except for connection with others.

#### *Analyses of Written Comments*

In this paper, we analyzed the answers to two open-ended questions; 1) What does aging well mean to you, 2) What arrangement do you have with your children and/or parents in the U.S. or abroad? Physical and mental health, and financial independence were top three important items for all six ethnic groups to age well. Indian and Korean groups mentioned that spiritual issues were important to age well, and Latino and Korean group mentioned that community participation would contribute to aging well. In terms of arrangement with their children and/or their parents, Indian, Chinese, Latino, and Korean groups mentioned that financial arrangements had been already made with their children, and Bosnian and Vietnamese groups provided limited response or mentioned that there was no arrangement.

#### **Conclusion and Implications**

The results of quantitative data analyses show that connection with others rather than social support predicts one's life satisfaction across six ethnic groups, controlling for demographic as well as other variables. The results of analyses of written comments, however, show that meaning of successful aging is slightly different among ethnic groups in terms of material and nonmaterial aspects. Indian group, which has been in the U.S. the longest and does not have problems in communicating in English, seems to show good psychological well-being. Bosnian group, which is a refugee group and has resided in the U.S. the shortest, does not have arrangements with their children.

The results imply that older people's active involvement (teaching ethnic cultures to younger children, volunteer work, etc.) is important and that there is a need for policy recommendations for ethnic groups which do not have materials resources.

### **Acknowledgement**

We are thankful to the participants for giving us their time. We are also thankful to Diana Carlin, Ph.D. Associate Vice President of Graduate Education, who has funded the postdoctoral fellowship position. Last but not least, we appreciate the hard work of the project team: Safija Advic, Won Choi, Hieu Do, Eileen Franco, Adnan Gabeljic, Felix Galvez, Andreas Gambardello, Hanna Hoang, Yash Mehta, Sara Paracha, Shahed Shams, Jesus Quinones, Alexandra Vazquez, Aida Vajzovic, Reema Verma, Echo Zhang, Lucas (Yu) Zhang, Lu Zhou; Toni Moraldo and Eva Wang.

The logo for iafor (International Association for Cultural Studies) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters "iafor" in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, semi-transparent arcs. The upper arc is a light red color, and the lower arc is a light blue color, matching the text color. The arcs are thick and have a soft, painterly edge.

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***Representation of Indonesian Beauty in Cosmetic Advertisements***

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## **Background**

Indonesia is a multicultural country, where there are dozens of tribes who lives in different parts of region. Different climate and lifestyle generates different natural looks. According to its history, the busiest ports are in Java. Central of trade and politic, this has been happening since colonial era. Therefore most of economic and political decision were and still highly influenced by Javanese heritage. According to Burke & Stets (2009), an identity is the set of meanings that define who one is when one is an occupant of a particular role in society, a member of a particular group, or claims particular characteristics that identify him and her as a unique person. Indonesian women share the same nationality, community thus bear the same identity as 'Indonesian woman'. However, as a multicultural society, their physical appearances are varying. The exact definition of Indonesian beauty has not been coined yet. This study is trying to find the visual markings of Indonesian beauty through analyzing cosmetic advertisements by SARIAYU.

SARIAYU (or loosely translated means 'essence of beauty') as cosmetic company was built in 1970, the owner and founder is DR. Martha Tilaar. The promotional campaign using local beauty was started with her concern about Indonesian trend, which always based on western trend. Since 1987 this company started its own color trend, which always based on certain or several Indonesian cultural heritage. Its missions are beauty culture, beauty education, beauty green and empowering women. Use Indonesian beauty as part of its branding strategy.

Apart from imported cosmetic brands, there are several local brands, which made their own product and targeting Indonesian women as their main market. SARIAYU is the only Indonesian cosmetic brand, which features, specific Indonesian region every year as its promotional theme.

This study concentrate on printed cosmetic advertisement because its familiarity and regularity. "Adverts persuade people to consume some commodity or other. They also have a social and cultural function: creating and reproducing social and cultural identities" (Barnard, 2005). According to Reventós (1998), understanding the advertisements as cultural text will reveal the crucial role of advertising in perpetuating the traditional notion of femininity. While as stated by Adorno, the cosmetic industry has a significant contribution to beauty fetish, therefore the cosmetic advertisements gives the visual example to society on beauty benchmarks.

SARIAYU has been placing their ads in Indonesian women's magazine with wide circulation and targeted Indonesian women with high socio-economic status (such as Femina, Female, DEWI and BAZAAR Indonesia). Since 1987 they have been continuously placing their print-ad in leading Indonesian women magazines. Women magazines are still highly popular as entertainment and reference for beauty and fashion trends. While not entirely agree with all information in women's magazine, the readers are taking cues from them (Gauntlett, 2008). SARIAYU has been gradually building the image of Indonesian beauty with these printed images of beauty in Indonesian women magazines. Representational strategy has been used in cosmetic advertisement according to Reventós (1998), it is constructed around the 'ideology of modernity'. In this case the 'beautiful Indonesian women'.

**Method**

This study will use content analysis to decipher SARIAYU Advertisement and afterwards, story grammar will be used. Content analysis is an empirical (observational) and objective procedure for quantifying recorded audio-visual (including verbal) representation using reliable, explicitly defined categories (‘values’ on independent variables) (Bell, 2001). While a story grammar is a rule-based system that specifies canonical sequences of story elements. As a theoretical account, a story grammar is envisioned as a key determinant of the manner and ease with which people interpret the stories (Mick; 1987).

SARIAYU has been creating Indonesian women’s story in its advertisements. Stories have the function: they preserve the culture by educating others, especially the next generation, social and moral codes reorganize and interpret personal experiences by framing memory in an intricate but cohesive structure that incorporates shared knowledge (Mick; 1987). In ad, the audience is learning the frames within SARIAYU ad. The boundaries are visible in cultural markings in the ads. Therefore the audience could feel familiar with the cultural markings. The consumer narrative has been built.

**Analysis of SARIAYU Advertisement**

The content analysis will be divided into four design elements: lay out (page structure), typography, color scheme (or fundamentals), and image. The main design elements in graphic design are form and space, color, typography and lay out (Samara, 2007) This visual analysis will be divided into four main parts. The first one is the overall lay out which build the form and space. The second is text (which consist of headline, sub-headline and body text). The third is the images used within the advertisement (which consist of main model, supplementary/ additional model and pack shoot/product detail in photo). Last element is the color scheme used in the SARIAYU advertisements. Those visual parts are building the cultural identity elements.

**Overall lay out**

The main structures of SARIAYU Advertisement are mostly in this order:

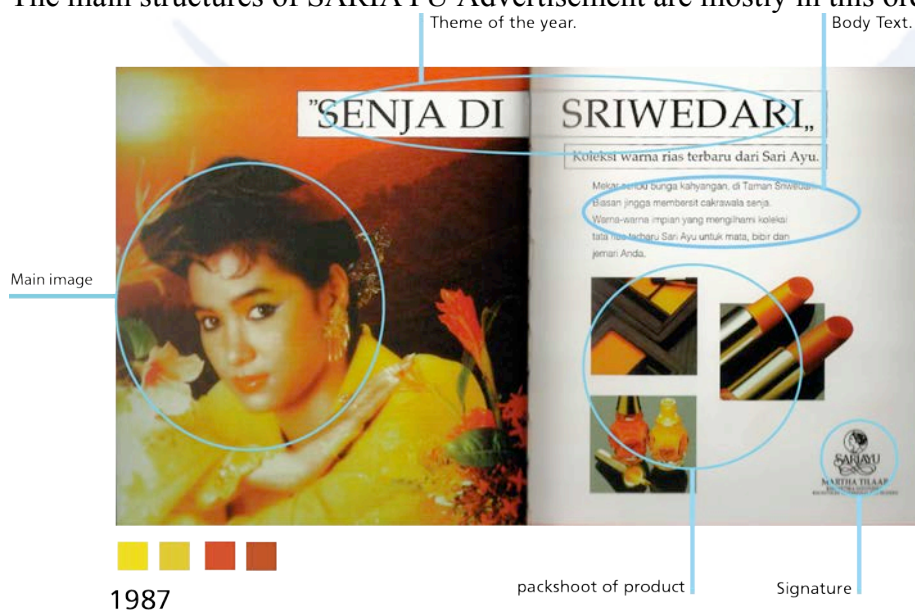


Image 1. Advertisement structure.

Female models are always on recto (left side from the audience) page, while the product photos, body text and signature are always on verso (right side from the audience) page. Reader will see the product first, then the yearly theme, afterwards will be reading the body text. The main image is located on recto page and takes most of the space, therefore the reader could thoroughly examines the usage of make up color. Exceptions are on the year 1997, 2001, 2006, 2007, 2010 and 2013, which put the main image on verso part.



Image 2. Variation in advertisement structure in SARIAYU ad in 1997.

On year 2000 and 2011 SARIAYU was featuring 4 women as the main image. Therefore the main image is spread across recto to verso page. As an example here is the printed ad from year 2000.



Image 3. SARIAYU Ad in 2000 featuring 4 models.

**Typography**

The specialized typography for theme of the year is always stylized with elements from the featured culture. For instance the Mount Bromo theme in 1990 has replace the letter ‘o’ with representation of the sun, because Mount Bromo is popular with its magnificent sunrise. While in 1997, traditional Dayak motif were used to enhance the word ‘dayak’. In 2005, SARIAYU used traditional Balinese flag to replace the letter ‘I (image 4.) This tendency is practiced since the 1990’s.



Figure 4. Stylized headlines examples.

The headline is always put at the top of the ad, and used in balance with the main image. If the main image is in the recto page, the theme or headline is in the verso page, which in all but in year 1987 and 1990. In those two years, the headlines are spread on recto and verso pages. The body texts are always set just below the headline on all advertisements.



Figure 5. The typical typography structure in SARIAYU advertisement.

### Color Scheme

In effort to maintain true to its yearly theme, SARIAYU always features specific colors taken from each culture/theme. Thus every year there are different color scheme for the advertisement. In the first two years (1987-1988) only 4 colors were featured. Then the collection escalated and the SARIAYU usually features 8 colors, which happened in 8 years (1991, 1993, 2003-2005, 2010-2013). In 2014, the advertisement highlights 16 colors because on that year the brand drew inspiration from 4 cultures. The Theme was ‘Millenium Nusantara’, which features East Indonesian cultures (*Jayamanise*), Java cultures (*Jawadwipa*), Bali and Nusa Tenggara islands (*Nusabali*) and Kalimantan cultures (*Kalimamiri*). SARIAYU also always includes neutral colors, which considered will be important for customer. This study took colors from the products featured yearly and bear significant colors for the theme, such as eye shadows and lipstick.

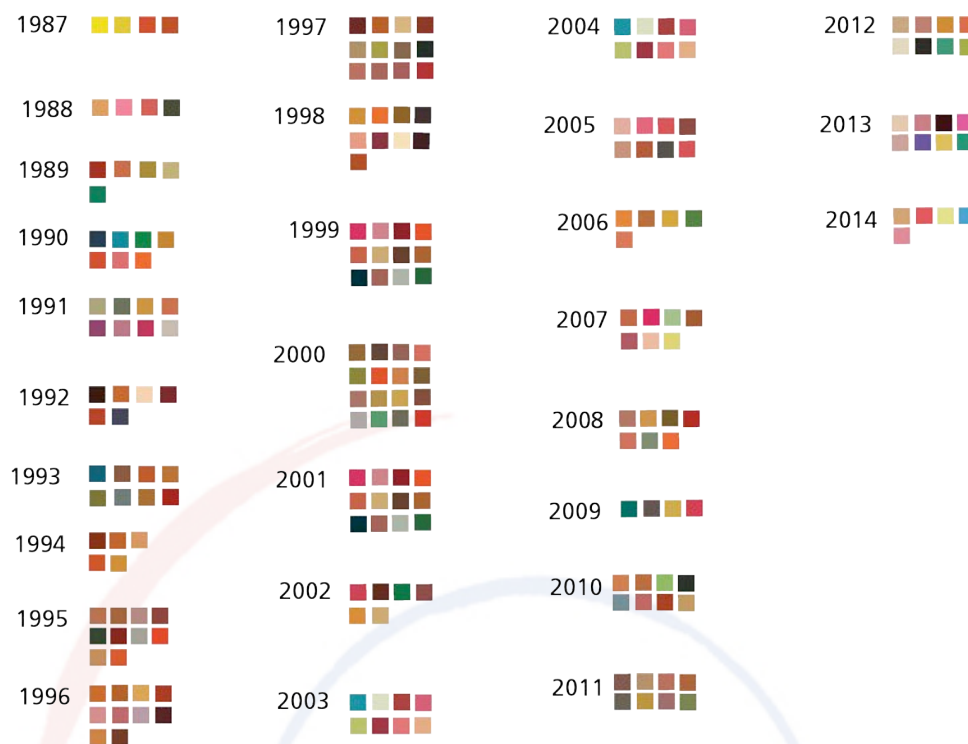


Figure 6. Colors used in SARIAYU advertisements 1987 - 2014

Colors most frequently used are in shades of red and brown and neutral color such as beige. Although the neutral colors were not inspired by Indonesian culture, SARIAYU always includes them due to consumers’ needs. In next figure there are Pantone color swatches for similar reference.

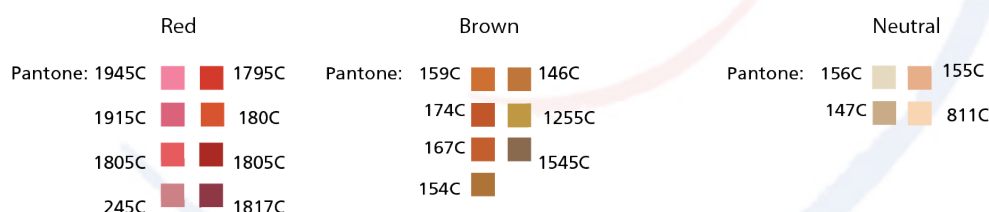


Figure 7. Frequently used colors.

**Image**

Since 1987, SARIAYU always use female model as the main image. They use the model as exemplar for make up application. In most ads, there is only 1 model in recto page (this tendency happened from 1987 to 1998 used a famous Indonesian model Larasati Gading). She bears the Indo-european look, with Caucasian face feature. In 1999 SARIAYU used a model with Javanese facial features. Afterwards SARIAYU preferred model with Indo-european facial features again, with exceptions in 2000 and 2011. In those two years, SARIAYU used 4 models with distinctive Indonesian look.



Figure 8. Models as main images in SARIAYU advertisements.

### Story Grammar

SARIAYU has succeeded to maintain similar lay out to support continuous narrative since 1987 to 2014. Therefore the audience could identify the advertisement as part of this cosmetic brand. SARIAYU most frequently features cultural traits or site from Java. This tendency happened 9 times, on year 1987, 1990, 1995, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2007, 2009 and 2013. There are influences from other Indonesian culture from Sumatra Island (1996, 1998, 1999, 1006 and 2010) and Kalimantan/ Borneo in 1997, 2008 and 2014. Inspiration from Sulawesi/ Celebes in 1993 and 2001 and other Islands in 1992, 1994, 2005 and 2012. SARIAYU celebrated milestones in 2000 (millennium) and 2011 30 years of SARIAYU. Time and trend set the tone for the advertisements as well, thus the colours from Indonesian heritage were combined with the specific year's color trend.

### Conclusion

SARIAYU has been giving visual examples of Indonesian beauty through its advertisements. According to content analysis, there are: consistency in lay out, color and typography. Main images are using models with Indo-european facial features. Thus, giving the perception about modernity as Westernized idea.

While according to story grammar, there were keeping continuity in using Javanese cultures and natural heritage, and other Indonesian cultures in between.



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*Self-identity in Love: The Problem of Self in Zweig's Letter from an Unknown Woman*

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The interests of writing this paper stemmed from the reflection on the romantic love. The context of this reflection is not to describe the romantic love in the western world, when it appearing and how it developing, but to demonstrate the idea of love in modern world. In other word, Love seems to be a title, under which, the almost vital ideas, such as the conception of self, in the modern society, links each other closely, and forms to be a picture. In this picture, Love is our starting-point but not our end. I hope that, by analyzing the title love, we could get more sense of these code conceptions which influencing upon our daily life and everyday understanding profoundly. Indeed, the paper here is the tiny fraction of this work, or the first step of this program.

Before making an outline of the paper, it needs to underline that, as the first step, this paper is not a literature critique, though a famous text playing a main role here. By analyzing Zweig's novel, *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, it is to describe how the problem of Self interweaving with the conception of Love. It is the story conceiving a particular situation that preserves the experience in Love without too much abstract analysis. Admittedly, in the sense of analysis, it always leads to a kind of abstraction, if here, we mean not to handle with the priority of subject but to deal with the experience, which means that the rethink to the conception of Love or Self is not to make the ideas to be the moderate-sized specimens of dry goods or the thin concepts, but to be the thick ones.

In this novel, Zweig described a woman who loved the novelist R. and never told him who she is. To R, she is a stranger, an unknown one. And this strangeness is guaranteed on three aspects:

1. This woman always hope R to notice and recognize that she is the girl of thirteen.
2. The novelist R did not do so from the first to last.
3. When R received the letter, the woman had died.

To the aspect 1, the question is why the woman always hope R to recognize her as the girl in thirteen years old? Zweig wrote, "it was then the world began for me"---what does the world here mean? In my opinion, Zweig here took over the tradition of initiation themes from the romantic literature. But the peculiarity of Zweig is that the program of the growth is not from the imperfect personality to the perfect one, but the process from the separation to collision until the conciliation between children's world and the adults' world. The symbol of separation between the two worlds is Love, the secret of the adults, and it was strange to the children. This is also see in the other novels, *Burning Secret*(1913), *Spring in the Prater*(1900), and so on, even in his autobiography, *the world of yesterday*(1942). In case that Zweig presented the growth as a child asking the strange world to recognize the existence of herself, the story of Love were not just an event but an incident that occur with self and others. In one word, under the context of the sentence "I Love you", recognition of the self in thirteen is reasonable, the reason is that it is the requirement for the certainty of my existence.

This requirement started from the grasp of Zweig to Europe before the First World War, converting optimism to the suspicion that human could establish everything without any others but himself. And this novel, *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, is the representative work for this period. In this work, Zweig rethinks to the subjectivity of Self, the romanticism holding in esteem, and to the possibility of the spirit completing within itself. The classic comparison is the philosophy of Fichte. He has claimed that the foundation for Knowledge is the certainty of Self. And the other one could go back to Spinoza, he has asserted that the self should be the one that could not depend on any others but itself, because the word “self” signifies self-content, in other word, if the Existenz wanted to have his absolute certainty for his being, it would be the one that identical for itself. This view has developing by Goethe to the slogan of Romantic Love—If I love you, what business is that of yours? However, here, Zweig disagrees with this idea. With the story of this unknown woman, he claims that if I love you, it will be some business with you. This is the reason why the woman eager the novelist R. to recognize her and give her the certainty of her existence. Only within the articulation between the love and her beloved, the Identity of herself would be assured.

But as the aspect 2, why the novelist R does not recognize her? This strangeness is not only for R. but also for the unknown woman herself, since she has lived in the suspension of the meaning to the existence of herself from first to last. even though she has participated in the community, the persons else could not be the other who could be the meaning-giver, only the beloved could be her someone while she could be his someone. The relationship with you and me, due to “I love you”, is reasonable. But R does not recognize her, so, which means the relationship is suspicious and they are strange—she is the unknown one to R—and which might cause that the more her requirement for his recognition, the more her anxiety to the indentity of herself. Now we could ask, why she would not to tell him who she is? Zweig gives the reason, the youthful pride, which implies the dilemma that,

- A. The strange world, the adult’s world, has opened to the girl when she fell in love with R and she has found she is living in the community and she is not alone, so she wants to the meaning of her existence though the other’s recognition.
- B. Her self demands a kind of sufficiency, in sense, which means a kind of privacy.

In this point, not only the woman faces with this dilemma of self-Identity, but the novelist R also does. It is why the woman says they are the same, having “the secret of your existence, this profound cleavage of your two lives.” The double character of R represent that in one hand, he is light-hearted and in the other hand, he has a keen sense of responsibility. it is from the characteristic of R that the girl of thirteen identified herself and fell in love with him.

Then, what does the double mean? This is the way that the novelist R might deal with the dilemma of Self. In this way, he divides himself into two parts: a spirit one and a

physical one. The spirit one keeps the self-sufficiency while the physical one holds the relationship of the other persons, especially with other women. So, he never reflected the past and always lives in the moment, and sometimes he says he feels strange to himself. So, how could this man recognize the other one, the girl of thirteen? He keeps his self-independence by estrange everyone, even himself. By comparison, the tragicness of the woman is that, in fact, she has approached to isolating the self with two parts, as what R has done, selling herself to be others' inamorata while remaining free as the girl of thirteen, but she does not satisfied with this. Her constant requirement for R's recognition reveals her real intention that she would fall over herself to the integration.

Therefore, the third aspect originated from the problem that if the woman told R who she was, she would not remain her pride, but if she did not, they were forever strange. The temporary solution is the child—"our boy"—"...by the birth of this other you, who was truly my own." The woman seems to be healed. The boy, the other you as the other me, brings off the natural relationship with the two strangers, in other word, they have got the self-evident certainty and the solution to the dilemma of self that maintains both integration and dependence. But the boy is dead. With his gone, the dilemma comes back, after all, the existence of "our boy" is given the solution on surface, not intrinsic.

What is the ultimate solution to the dilemma of self? The unknown woman chooses the death. On death, the self-sufficient and living-with-others is satisfied simultaneously with the abolishing the significance of self. That is to say, death gives the ultimate heal while bring the eventual failure. So, Zweig just show the dilemma and never give any effective solution. This is the attitude of Zweig to Romantic Love, not positive but critical. He is not like Goethe, the death of Young Werther is the success of self-will. So, the view of Zweig implies that once we using the idea of romantic love and the romantic conception of self, we might never resolve this problem. In Plato's *Symposium*, Aristophanes describes a picture of Man and woman that is one of two sides of a filleted fish, one half of an original whole, all continually searching for other half. And the desire and pursuit of the whole is called love. But in the same book, Socrates tells a story of the birth of Love, the son not only of Poros(Resource) but also of Penia (Poverty), so the nature of love is between mortal and immortal. He is always in dilemma. In the end of the story, Zweig wrote, "An intimation of death came to him, and an intimation of deathless love". It is not so much to say that the love is deathless as to say that the problem of self-Identity arouse in the situation of love is immortal.

***Reception and Consumption of Korean TV drama by Asian audiences:  
The Fansubbing Phenomenon***

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**Abstract**

Changes in the new media environment are radically shifting the ways audiences consume media products like foreign language TV dramas. The rapid expansion of broadband internet and the development of mobile technology in Asia are changing how Asian fans of these media products interact with each other. The purpose of this study is to examine the reception and distribution process of Korean TV dramas to Asian audiences. For instance, fans of the "Korean Wave" in Asia interact with other fans by participating in discussions about TV drama plots and characters on online communities, exchange amateur-translated subtitles and also comment on the translations. This study will particularly focus on the practice of exchanging fansubs (amateur translations by fans) on fan-based internet forums centered on TV dramas with the purpose of examining the translation process of fansubbers and the operating procedure of fansubbing.

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The cultural productions of South Korea, once peripheral, has emerged and increased its exports and market share in the international audiovisual market in recent years (Cunningham and Jacka, 1996; Keane, 2006). "Hallyu," which literally means "Korean Wave," represents the growing popularity of Korean cultural products all over the world. The popularity of Korean media culture, including TV dramas, has now fully blossomed in China and many other Asian countries (Jin, 2007; Mee, 2005).

Since the late 1990's, high speed broadband Internet access has made it easy for internet users around the world to quickly download and share large audiovisual files. These changes in the communications environment is giving rise to radical shifts in the ways audiences consume media products. Korea is also one of the highly wired countries in the world, where more than 90 percent of urban households are connected to high-speed broadband services. In this kind of environment, it is inevitable that viewership trends would be affected. With the advent of Internet technology that breaks down physical geographical barriers, people with shared interests gather in cyberspace and form communities. Logan (2010) refers to the term New Media as "those digital media that are interactive, incorporate two-way communication, and involve some form of computing as opposed to "old media" such as the telephone, radio, and TV" (p.4). In this new media environment, the viewers are able to engage in active participation and share critical observations about these media products which ultimately make them less susceptible to cultural domination and be more critically aware.

As mentioned above, the rapid distribution of high-speed Internet contributed to the research paradigm of the fan culture phenomena, shifting from 'passive audience' to 'active audience'. Jenkins (1992) classified the members of online fan communities as a special category of media audiences that are more active than other common media audiences. He stated that fans are like consumers who also produce readers who also write, spectators who also participate. It is widely accepted that without the limitation of time and space, Internet enhances the fandom.

An increasing trend among TV viewership among the youth all around the world is the engaging in social media while viewing and need to discuss the dramas with other people. A growing number of people are watching television programs on computers and mobile devices. Since the late 1990's, high speed broadband Internet access has made it easy for Internet users to quickly download and share large audiovisual files. These changes in the communications environment is giving rise to radical shifts in the ways audiences consume media products. This provides viewers with multiple opportunities to engage with a particular piece of content and it also makes it possible for content to be shared in a diverse manner. Hundreds of Internet fan-sites have sprung up on-line which allows fans to participate in on-line discussions about plotlines and favorite characters. Korean TV dramas are fast becoming one of the most popular and shared contents on these Internet boards. Accordingly, there has been a big demand for subtitles for these programs and amateur translators on these discussion boards are the ones who provide the content for these viewers. The viewers exchange fansubs in order to understand the contents and have interactions about the contents of the subtitles.



With the development of high-speed broadband technology and the increasing popularity of the fansubbing practice, online forums based on sharing subtitles are gaining popularity. And with the viewing practices of the young generation are rapidly shifting, moving away from their TV screens or movie theaters and consuming audiovisual cultural products on their computers and smart phones.

Although these amateur subtitlers are happy to distribute their work freely, they have to remain low-profile about their practice, unwilling to reveal too much about their identity to the general public. The online sites and communities are important platforms for ordinary fans to interact with fansubbers. These fansubbers announce the completion of their subtitle works and post the download links. And the viewers, who eagerly wait for the latest installment of their favorite American drama or sitcom, download the release of newly subbed work.

With the popularization of high-speed broadband Internet, the sharing of the latest media products have been made easy with uploading and downloading services that are prevalent on the Internet. Despite some shady legal implications, numerous video sharing websites have become as easily accessible by just the click of the mouse. And with the demand for high-quality American popular media products have increased the demand for subtitles foreign films, especially American TV shows.

### **Literature Review on Audiovisual Translation and Fansubbing**

Fansubbing is a very distinct art of translation both with the limitations of audiovisual translation, but at the same time somewhat free of the restrictions of the practice. It is not an overstatement to say that, fansubbers have employed some translation skills that are distinctive from traditional subtitling practices. This study will describe some of the practices shown in the fan-made subtitles of an American sitcom program by comparing it with a more traditional set of subtitle broadcast of the same program on a cable channel. I will attempt to show that there is much more diversity and individualism in fansubs and there may be implications on these practices encouraging more innovative practices in audiovisual translation in the future.

In audiovisual translation, the translated text is produced in a specific context with specific recipients, communicative functions, and so on. Translators are always faced with the problem of how to treat the cultural aspects implicit in the source text and of finding the most appropriate technique of successfully conveying these aspects in the target language. Culture is a multifaceted concept that encompasses a wide range of explicit and implicit factors and characteristics. The translator must be equipped with the competence to analyze the specific context of the source text and be aware of the cultural and linguistic constraints that are involved in producing a specific type of target text. We will examine how the amateur subs that are uploaded on this site compare with the standards set by professional translators in the field.

Translators in the audiovisual field have to engage with elaborate multisemiotic texts. We have to keep in mind that language and culture interrelate and take on a special significance. Audiences of foreign films encounter sociocultural systems which might be similar in some cases, but differ substantially from their own experience in others. audiovisual translators must decipher and filter meaning on different levels (aural, visual, verbal, nonverbal) before deciding on an appropriate rendering that will

hopefully make sense to their target audience. TV and film are comprehensive texts containing not only verbal information, but also image, sound, music and signs. Gottlieb (2005) states that there are four channels that to be considered during subbing foreign television programs or films. They are:

- The verbal auditory channel, including dialogue, background voices, and sometimes lyrics.
- The non-verbal auditory channel, including music, natural sound and sound effects.
- The verbal visual channel, including superimposed titles and written signs on the screen.
- The non-verbal visual channel: picture composition and flow.

It goes without saying that these channels should be considered when translating audiovisual texts. Pak (2012) has noted that as “paralinguistic features including intonation and stress patterns, gestures and facial expressions affect meaning, both verbal and nonverbal utterances are supposed to be conveyed into subtitles” (p.19).

O’Hagan (2007) focuses on the creativity shown by amateur translators and comments that the trend of fan-based subtitles and translation had developed with success of the Harry Potter series of books where underground translations were made available by fans that provided amateur translations before the official versions were published. In a study that focuses on academic acknowledgement of fansubbing, Diaz-Cintas (2004) comments on the development on the latest technologies such as DVD and the Internet and outline the fansubbing phenomenon. Diaz-Cintaz (2005) also stresses that fan-created subtitles shared among internet forum users are much less dogmatic and more creative than institutional subtitles on regular TV programs. In a study on the fansubbing process of Japanese animation, Diaz-Cintas and Sanchez (2006) examines the unique features of fansubs and also ponders on the legality and ethics involved in the phenomenon.

In another study on Japanese anime, Ortabasi (2006) focuses on fansubbed translators notes and points out that some fansubbers employ the technique of ‘thick translation’ and explains that the distinct features of digital technology will enable the fansubber to add on supplementary textual material which will provide the viewer with further information. As Pérez-González (2006) has predicted, scholarly interest in fansubbing has expanded exponentially. These researchers have focused on the emerging trend of fansubbing and have offered their valuable insights and the process of fansubbing will continue to challenge will challenge basic western assumptions about the nature of translation.

### **Unique Features of Fansubbing**

For the purpose of this study, an online site called Gita Migug Drama Gallery (Other American Drama Gallery, [http://gall.dcinside.com/list.php?id=f\\_drama](http://gall.dcinside.com/list.php?id=f_drama)) was examined to find out how viewers congregate and discuss their viewership. The viewers on this online site gather not only to talk about the programs but share in the distribution of subtitles of American programs translated by non-professionals who upload their work without any expectations of monetary rewards. Fansubs are posted on the online discussion sites and users can download freely and easily. The

translators comment about the difficulty of translating certain cultural terms, and explain the meanings behind them. Discussions on translation errors are posted by other users. It is a truly interactive process.

The study will also compare and analyze examples from both institutionalized subtitles (authorized translations on cable TV stations by professional translators) and fansubbed versions (fan-produced amateur translations). Upon examination, we can see that this new form of Internet subtitling by amateur translators employs more creative and individualistic strategies of translation than conventional translations done by professionals. The following are some of the idiosyncratic features of fansubs that were found on the above online site.

### **Annotations**

American TV programs, especially sitcom genre which is the focus of this study, contain numerous allusions, puns and cultural references, which are very difficult to translate. A popular strategy, widely adopted in fansubbing practice, is annotations. Annotations, which are essentially the amateur fansubber's explanations, are usually not allowed in conventional subtitling for movies or broadcast TV programs.

The fansubbers provide annotations on cultural references, allusions, background information on proper nouns that appear on screen and particularly explanations of jokes or puns that may go over the head of the foreign viewers who are viewing the program.

The annotations are placed in parenthesis or appear on the top of the screen. Diaz-Cintas (2005) has analyzed this feature in fansubbed Japanese animes, and this is also a prominent feature in the examples of the fansubs I present in this study. It is a logical strategy on the part of the translator to communicate with the viewers, eliminate cultural barriers and enhance comprehension of the contents of the text.

### **Direct Comments**

The fansubbers occasionally interact directly with the viewers by adding comments in the subtitles, expressing their opinions, feelings, and judgments on what is happening on screen. Comparing to annotations, comments are much less formal and more idiosyncratic.

### **Interaction**

The fansubbers often email addresses or post translation reviews on the forums citing the cultural references that appear in the particular program and the users offer feedback or point out the mistranslation in the subtitles.

As outlined in the above, a significant reason people join online communities is the desire to receive and share information. The sharing of the knowledge on cultural references and background information through annotations, comments and interaction fulfill members' need for knowledge and information about American culture. Meanwhile, passing on the knowledge to members in the community reassures fansubbers' identity as culture disseminators, which brings them the

psychological payoff for being higher in the hierarchy of knowledge and the actual respect from other members.

The study confirms that another primary reason for foreign TV drama fans to become members of fansubbing community is to express their interest in the shows and to share the fascination with others who also have the same interest. Fansubbers' adding comments, prefaces and postscripts increases the interactivity of the fansubtitles and creates a sense communication with the audiences in front of the screens, which satisfies fans' desire to discuss their interest with others. Seo (2010) has outlined how foreign feature films can also enhance people's intercultural awareness. The intercultural contents contained in the subtitles produce a special kind of humor that can be appreciated by people with both bilingual cultural competence. These insider jokes also serve as a power to bind members together, generating a sense of sharing understanding. Sometimes this information takes a guidance role in creating a sense of shared views, opinions and historical loyalty to the show that in some level consolidates the whole community.

The Fansubbers' self-empowered and self-commissioned practice and their diverse translation skills prove that translation is a process in which established standards and conventions can be challenged. Individualism and intervention is crucial; and the role of the translator is very visible indeed. Efforts should also be made to approach fansubbing from cultural and political perspectives. The practices of fansubbing within the academic field of Audiovisual Translation Studies should be further explored and discussed in the future.

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***Consuming and Interpreting Japanese Television Dramas: Attitudes among University Students in Malaysia***

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**Abstract**

Japanese media cultures have become diversified in Malaysia, providing opportunities for local audiences to gain access to media products from varied sources and participate in its consumption. This triggers an increase in recognition for audiences as producers of rich cultural readings resulting from cross-border media consumption. This study examines the interpretations of Japanese television dramas as media text among Malaysian university students, who actively produce meanings out of their consumption. The 'foreign' aspects of Japanese dramas attract the students to perform negotiated readings and contested meanings in reflecting similarities and differences between Japanese and Malaysian society. Malaysian university students as audiences are capable of employing the creative process of identification with the knowledge of Japan that they already hold by sharing self-reflexive thoughts generated from the stories of their viewing experiences. I argue that cultivating discussions using Japanese television dramas serves as a platform for exploring the changing attitudes in audiences who constantly acquires cultural knowledge, values, and ideas through their consumption experiences. It is imperative to discuss the dynamics of audience narratives by considering the local socio-cultural influences towards the meanings produced. This helps to facilitate the idea of using media to enhance cultural connections that acknowledges multiple interpretations of transnational media consumption.

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## Introduction

Young people in Malaysia grew up exposed to various Japanese cultural products. Yamato, Krauss, Tamam, Hassan, and Osman (2011) analyze the engagements of ordinary Malaysians with Japanese popular cultures such as *anime* (Japanese animation), *manga* (Japanese comic books), and television dramas. Their study highlights that consuming Japanese cultural products has not only become a part of everyday life among young Malaysians, but also a source to seek gratification. Young Malaysians appear to expand their continuous consumption of Japanese media products through the use of Internet in order to access media files without much restriction.

This research analyzes the active engagement of Malaysian students who consume Japanese television dramas under the context of audience reception analysis. Additionally, this study assumes that every audience produces diverse meanings out of media images and texts. The meanings in the viewing narratives generated by audiences will be examined to investigate the audiences' attitudes towards Japan.

### Active audience consuming Japanese television dramas

Previous studies in relation to television reception recognize audience as being 'active' in producing textual interpretations and open discussion about their consumption experiences (Ang, 1985; Roscoe, Marshall, & Gleeson, 1995; Livingstone, 1998). Efforts to explain the diverse readings of television programs acknowledge the ability of audience to 'actively' interpret media text elements, suggesting that audiences are capable of forming some kind of relationship with different elements in the program's narrative. Additionally, audiences are able to selectively translate elements in the media text for daily use. According to Kim (2008), people depend on their engagements with the social and cultural environment to make sense and produce their own views of the world. This contributes to the idea that audiences make sense out of all that is happening in the media narrative based on knowledge and awareness about everyday life. In the context of this study, viewing an episode of the drama requires the audience to read embedded messages that relies on the audiences' experience and knowledge of the world to produce meanings and describe them.

Japanese television dramas gained its popularity with Asian audiences towards the end of 1990s. Studies that attempt to explain the popularity of Japanese television dramas suggest the idea that Asian audiences sense 'cultural proximity' with elements represented on screen (Iwabuchi, 2002; Leung, 2004). Additionally, audiences who actively rework with familiar and different cultural elements in the media text enhance their interpretive activity, providing greater believability and identification. Other studies on audiences consuming Japanese television dramas also explore the ways in which they actively identify with the storyline, themes, visuals, and characters in the text (Iwabuchi, 2001; Hu, 2008). According to Ko (2004), Japanese television dramas find success outside Japan due to the way narratives have been presented. Also known as "trendy" dramas, many stories reflect individual pursuit of success in modern urban settings, depicting their endurance with struggles and hardships encountered in life. Audiences are attracted to such elements because they suggest a way of life that corresponds to their own stories in actual reality (Iwabuchi, 2001). This also has implications towards attitudes among audiences.



In this study, focus group discussion was used to explore the reception of Japanese television dramas among university students under the assumption that every respondents produce different readings out of the media text. Five focus group discussions were conducted in 2011, with a total of 36 university students who participated in this research. The respondents composed of students between the ages of 18 to 24 years old. All respondents have experience watching Japanese dramas and are willing to share their interpretations, through recollections of their viewing experience. The respondents also have a vested interest in learning about Japan, as twenty one participants are Japanese language major students and fifteen students are members of the university's Japanese cultural society. This study acknowledges that each respondent holds their own knowledge about Japan, and such diversity brings out greater reflexivity and contested meanings in producing rich cultural readings.

### **Identifying with the appeals of Japanese dramas**

When the respondents were asked to explain why they enjoy watching Japanese dramas, many of them attributed their viewing experiences to visual and emotional pleasures, citing elements such as 'good looking actors and actresses', beautiful locations', 'stylish fashion', 'inspirational themes', and 'humorous storyline' that appear in Japanese dramas. This points to the functional relationship between television program and audience. Sherry (2009) states that the audiences engage with media programs to experience enjoyment and relaxation, temporarily diverting from the issues one need to deal with in reality. Audiences have been found to derive pleasures from watching television dramas, as they identify with the storylines, characters, plots, emotions, and filming locations. While the respondents take pleasure from the visual qualities that appear on screen, they are nonetheless attracted to other aspects of Japanese dramas. For example, several respondents also regarded their consumption of dramas a learning experience in which they can translate elements such as language for practical use in everyday life. This can be exemplified by the following statements by two respondents:

At first, it [watching Japanese drama] was just a pastime because my brother watches it. I relied on subtitles back then and did not even know it was a Japanese drama. After I learn Japanese language, it became a learning method for me. (Ying Ting, 22 years old)

Sometimes I watch drama without subtitles to test my level. I found out that yes, I can understand. (Voon Hui, 21 years old)

According to Chua (2008), while audiences take pleasure in identifying with familiar elements in the drama, they are also attracted at the foreign aspects by "looking at a different world" (p. 197). Here, the attractiveness of Japanese drama is based on the lives of Japanese people interacting with others, and making connections with their social environment. In attempting to understand why the respondents favor watching Japanese dramas, many claim that they are able to view the lives of the Japanese people and witness how the society portrays social themes. For instance, the respondents shared Japanese drama titles that include stories about protagonist that becomes a victim of school bullying, domestic violence, and life threatening illness, such as *LIFE*, *Last Friends*, and *One Litre of Tears* respectively. The statements

below point out how respondents express admiration towards Japanese drama titled *LIFE* for the realistic depiction of issues related to bullying:

*LIFE* really gives an impact. I think I used a lot of curse words watching that. It's about bullying. It plays with your emotion a lot. I also liked the theme songs, the narratives. It's perfect. It taught me about true friendship and how to stand on your own when you are bullied. (Zakri, 24 years old)

I believe that after you watch *LIFE*, you will change somewhere in between your life. It's mostly about bullying in high school. I have yet to watch the last episode, but I really recommend it because probably in the future, you'll be a parent or teacher and this drama is about understanding the students or your own children. You might think you know your son or daughter well but it may not be the case. (Kristin, 19 years old)

The statements above demonstrated that respondents critically engage with the social themes presented in the drama storyline through empathy and emotion. Respondents who engage consciously with such dramas tend to position themselves as the fictional main character and evaluate the behaviors and decisions that the character made as the storyline progress. Furthermore, the respondents would describe the appropriateness of those decisions, by corresponding to the actual decisions they would have made, when given the same situation in reality.

In relation to the discussion about Japan's attractive cultural aspects that are considered different, words that were frequently cited by the respondents are 'discipline', 'moral values', 'cleanliness and hygiene', and 'efficiency'. For instance, in terms of discipline, the respondents expressed that they are impressed by portrayal of Japanese individuals and groups who are constantly working hard in daily routines such as work, studies, and attending to family obligations. The respondents noted differences between the idea of work ethics in Japan and Malaysia. For instance, working overtime is a common characteristic in Japanese work culture, but not obligatory in Malaysia.

Audiences who identify with elements in television dramas are also known to be capable of rejecting elements on screen. According to Chua (2012), the alternative to identification is known as 'distancing', and is used to explain how audience can detach themselves from accepting unfamiliar elements. The respondents do not necessarily accept the images in Japanese dramas directly without thinking of the implications for local practices. In terms of culture, there are certain elements in Japanese cultural characteristics that are considered complex and disagreeable. For instance, Siu Jen (22 years old) remarked that Japanese women enjoy putting on heavy makeup and wear loud fashionable clothes, suggesting that it is difficult for Malaysian women to identify with such portrayal of fashion because they tended to be more conservative. Here, she distanced herself from accepting Japanese fashion viewed in Japanese dramas.

Watching Japanese drama characters can remind the respondents several distinctive characteristics and cultural practices that are different than what is practiced locally. The respondents reflect about their own society while making sense of another. They are capable of accepting several elements, and rejecting those that are deemed

undesirable or difficult to identify with. Audiences negotiate with readings derived from understanding messages obtained from their viewing experiences, and that the negotiated readings can have “hybrid meaning” (Ott & Mac, 2010, p.226). For instance, respondents enjoy watching *One Litre of Tears* because they can relate with familial endurance and human perseverance, but those who disliked gloomy narratives may refuse the distressing emotions that overwhelm the storyline.

### Acquisition of knowledge and values

This research discovers that the students are also paying attention to mundane everyday routines in Japanese dramas such as the way characters are eating, interacting, and using public transportations. For example, several respondents stated admiration for the public transportations that were shown in Japanese dramas. As a result of such admiration, the respondents then downplay the local public transportation, as exemplified in the observation below:

- Azlina: They use public transport a lot. They don't really drive cars. They walk everywhere too, or use trains. I wish there was a bullet train here.
- Kristin: And they come on time. They enjoy taking busses as well. For us, it's like waiting for half an hour or more and still not coming. So we ended up comparing the countries.

Several respondents express similar interest towards the organized lifestyle of the Japanese people that involves the use of public transports such as busses, trains, and bicycles. This points out to cultural presence that is different than Malaysia, allowing the respondents to attach little importance to local public transportation when actual comparisons were made. Here, cultural differences have been reworked to enhance the attractiveness of Japanese drama as a media text.

Some of the students find it easy to associate with the attractiveness of human values in Japanese dramas, given that it is very much in line with the effort of the government to promote ideal Asian values into the roles and identities of Malaysian society. The Look East Policy that was initiated in 1982 by Mahathir<sup>1</sup>, former Prime Minister of Malaysia, aims to promote learning from Japan's experiences on national developments. As a result of this policy, many young Malaysians were sent to various Japanese educational institutions to promote learning from Japan, particularly in the areas of management skills, work ethics, technological know-hows, moral values, and discipline. At the same time, other efforts made in response to this policy were an increase in dialogue opportunities and cultural exchanges. While the policy had no impact on people's consumption of Japanese media and cultural products, it certainly promotes a favorable cultural climate for such consumption.

The relations between Malaysia and Japan is describe by Furuoka (2007) as ‘friendly and close’, making it possible for Japanese cultural products to be favorably

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<sup>1</sup> A speech on the Look East Policy is available online at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan website, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/malaysia/pmv0212/speech.html>

circulated and consumed in Malaysia. In their attempt to explain the popularity of the Japanese drama *Oshin*<sup>2</sup> in South East Asia, Mahathir and Ishihara (1995) indicate that Asian audiences can feel empathy with other Asians, “Our pop culture strikes a sympathetic chord across Asia. No hard sell is necessary; the audience is receptive” (p. 88). They believe that Asians can identify with the hardships and determination of other Asians, adding that one can succeed as well with effort put forth. *Oshin* became immensely popular in 1984. It was aired across countries in Asia including China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. *Oshin*’s popularity was attributed to the hopeful messages on human values related to endurance and perseverance that appeared in the drama narrative (Takahashi, 1998).

Another significant feature in Japanese dramas that attracted the respondents was the portrayal of cultural behaviors in Japanese lifestyle that seems to be different from the actual practice in Malaysia. The respondents stated that observing the way Japanese drama characters on screen behave in public setting, at home, and in workplace help them to pick up the good values and apply in actual reality. The respondents place significance on values that influence personalities. These values emphasize desirable ethical traits that one should embrace in order to project good impressions towards others. Respondents are attracted to intangible values that can be extracted from the attitudes of characters in the dramas, as exemplified in the following statements:

After I watch a drama and I discover a moral value I don’t have, then I would think whether I should do it or not. How shall I change? Can I be like that? Even if I have adapted it into my own personality, I would feel like it’s myself unconsciously. Watching *One Litre of Tears*, the value that I have learned the most is the way she (the protagonist) tried to be courageous, despite her close encounter to death. She still tries her best and motivating the rest, saying that it’s not so scary and it’s not the end. I’m the type who likes to laugh and be happy so I discovered the motto ‘don’t worry, be happy’ from this drama and it becomes my personality. (Yi Ting, 20 years old)

In *GTO (Great Teacher Onizuka)*, the character is really strong and is trying to change things. He can do things he wants and is determined. It shows that we need to be strong. (Min Lim, 21 years old)

It was found that respondents who consume Japanese dramas seek learning materials associated with human values, packaged with hints that can be employed as resource to cope with real life challenges. Additionally, all respondents are in agreement that Japanese dramas exhibit public responsibilities in the form of moral values that can be extracted as a source of advice, an observation that Hu (2008) refers to as the power of “implicit therapy” (p.116). Viewing how Japanese drama characters persevere in times of adversity helps the audience to reflect their own lives and provide encouragement to cope with their own reality as well. Similarly, Leung’s (2004) study shows that Hong Kong audiences are receptive of ‘ganbaru’<sup>3</sup> messages in Japanese

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<sup>2</sup> The drama follows the struggles and hardships of a Japanese woman named Oshin throughout her life during the Meiji period.

<sup>3</sup> Ganbaru refers to a Japanese motto that is commonly used to project motivation, encouraging individuals or groups to do their best, without giving up.

dramas. Additionally, they demonstrate the ability to apply the ideal nature of *ganbaru* in everyday life. Leung adds that Hong Kong viewers favor *ganbaru* messages in Japanese dramas because it helps them to cope with challenges in life. Audiences can alternate between reality and fictional narrative by seeking solutions from dramas and applying them in the local everyday.

However, the tendency to identify with attractive Japanese drama elements can become problematic when students carry positive attitudes towards Japan, but project negative feelings toward local aspects in Malaysian culture that has become ordinary. The attractiveness of local reality has been significantly reduced as the respondents represent Japanese drama elements as an actual reality in Japan, a reality in which Malaysia ought to achieve. The students associate Japan with advanced technologies, well structured urban life, discipline, trendy youth cultures, hardworking individuals, and punctuality. This may have been the result of the dominant messages that Malaysians use to describe their knowledge and understanding about Japan. This is in line with the tendencies among Hong Kong audiences to select elements in Japanese dramas that suit with their “longstanding stereotypes” (p.98) of Japan (Leung, 2004). In response to this, I argue that the respondents display the tendency to rely on limited knowledge and actual experiences of Japan to make sense of cultural readings obtained from watching Japanese dramas, blurring the perceived and actual reality of their own society. Other than media programs, many students claimed that they gathered knowledge about Japan from the stories they’ve heard another person, reading about Japan in publications, and attending locally held Japanese events. Some respondents also indicated that watching Japanese dramas helps them to clarify the knowledge that they collected about Japan, while others claimed that the accumulated interest may ‘bring’ them to Japan in future.

Towards the end of the discussion, the respondents were asked to explain their tendency to make comparison between what is viewed on screen and their local experiences. To some of the respondents, making such comparisons helps them to assert personal understanding and awareness about another society to counteract against the conditions in which they live in. Images in Japanese dramas can be translated into essence to be used for achieving self-realization about personal growth, a means for narrowing the disparity of social adequateness.

## **Conclusion**

This paper examined how Malaysian students as active audiences of Japanese television dramas negotiate the similarities and differences in visual and cultural elements viewed on screen. They relied on their existing perceptions about the everyday and understanding of Japan. Japanese dramas serve as a platform for the students to explore their own attitudes while ‘looking’ at another society. It is clear that watching Japanese dramas is more than just visual enjoyment. The ability of the students in consuming transnational media product and make creative use out of their interpretations from watching Japanese dramas demonstrates diverse readings that encourage learning from observing another culture on screen. Watching Japanese dramas becomes part of their personal story that enriches their everyday lives. However, it remains to be seen whether the ongoing consumption of Japanese dramas produces meanings that can potentially challenge representations of Japan in Malaysia. Even though the screen projects a world of fictionalized characters and produces a

fantasized imagination of a society across border, watching Japanese dramas provided the respondents a platform to discover greater appreciation to simple things in life.

Exposure to Japanese cultures via drama consumption allows respondents to generate critical understanding about their attitudes towards Japan in terms of tolerating with cultural similarities and differences. This study shows that the respondents were not passively accepting all aspects of Japanese dramas, but to observe “sophisticated content that depicts universal aspects of human beings” (p.206) (Yamato, 2012). Consuming Japanese dramas allow the respondents to selectively engage with human values and acquire cultural knowledge that resonate with their current lives. It is not surprising that the respondents maintained optimistic attitudes towards learning from the content of Japanese dramas, given that they believe in the necessary accumulation of cultural values for self development and growth to cope with everyday reality.

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*The Hostess at the Border: An Emergent Anachronism*

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In 2003 the Actroid range of robotic androids was launched in Japan. Its creators and vendors imagine that the 'bots will integrate into society, taking on companionship, entertainment and hostessing duties. To date, Actroids are modelled after young females, with the exception of (near) exact copies of two male Professors from Japan and Denmark, and a 'brother' released in 2011. Despite the theory of the so-called uncanny valley (Mori 1970), Actroids are designed to appear and behave as humanlike as possible so as to render them as familiar as possible, presaging a future of belonging, of ethically viable sociocultural identity (Ishiguro 2007).

Actroids' familiarity is achieved via re-inscription of stereotypically gendered cultural narratives and attributes, as the machinic 'women' enact media campaigns and advocacies that are reactionary and ideologically superseded (Robertson 2010; Suchman 2007). The routinely gendered hostess figure, capable only of a chronic and controlled performance and embodiment, is anachronistically emerging at the vanguard of futuristic design. She is being embedded in a new episteme, as our most advanced humanoid machines are shaped in her familiar image.

As a distilled marker of institutional hospitality, 'hostesses' are also gatekeepers at borders with respect to the locally and globally marginalized (Rosello 2001). Derrida (2000) argues that hospitality is the basis of all culture but cannot exist. Actroids embody this political impasse in their robotic gesturing of hospitableness; the trope's endurance is symptomatic of a world in which empathic sensibilities shift slowly—and sometimes regressively—while technologies evolve quickly. In this sense, paradoxically, they are 'human'.

Conventional hospitality, defined in a Kantian sense, adheres to strict boundaries and relies on national structures for its propositions and protocols. In 'Pera Peras Poros: Longing for Spaces of Hospitality', Dikeç details the inclusive mode of hospitality sought by sociologists Beck (1998) and Barber (1998) but speaks of "an oppressive aspect beneath its welcoming surface" (2002: 228). Derrida (2000: 5) warns of the intrinsic conceptual impossibility of hospitality, of the impassive experiential simultaneity of knowing and not-knowing the Other. This conceptualization is advanced despite him having stated elsewhere that "hospitality is culture itself" (2001: 16). Though Derrida and other poststructuralists problematize conventional hospitality, in indeterminately arguing for its effective impossibility the status quo of existing normative and oppressive power structures is preserved.

An inherent entitlement or 'appropriation' is at the basis of the conceptualization.

To dare say welcome is perhaps to insinuate that one is at home here, that one knows what it means to be at home, ...appropriating a space for oneself, a space to *welcome* [*accueillir*] the other... (Derrida 1999: 15; emphasis in original)

Appropriation without violence is typically only possible within a defined band of socially sanctioned privilege, and statements such as Derrida's elide and exclude the Other(s) of and for whom they speak, assuring that the status of the Other remains stable. This allows construction of Other, not as un-known or strange-er, as Derrida seems to be saying, but as already constructed, known-about and known-for. 'Daring'

to welcome is framed as a masochistic, risky or altruistic and commendable act whereas the prior and/or concurrent act of appropriation is naturalized.

According to Rosello (2001: 17), a postcolonial politics of hospitality that revises these conventions *in practice* “might seek to limit the arrogance of the postcolonial host”. In the context of this paper and its focus on the hostess, the colonial system has legitimized and canonized

a redistribution of roles in which Monsieur can afford to disappear (symbolically and physically) while Madame, who must pick up the task of domestic care in his absence (including the reception of guests), [ensures that] the servile aspects of hospitality can be delegated. (Rosello 2001: 133)

A self-declared host (Derrida’s “oneself”), in performing but simultaneously outsourcing the welcoming gesture, rises above the polysemous dilemma of being at once master and slave in his own domain, responsible for and assessable on providing the conditions of well-being of another. In relying upon the extant politics of power within the established domain, the host delegates aspects of the servile, deferential task as necessary and

the work has to be done by a subaltern, who finds herself transformed into an excluded third by the hospitable pact. It thus happens that when the host welcomes you ... he has arranged for a system of hierarchical redoubling: the host remains in charge of the welcoming gesture, but he is no longer responsible for the work... (Rosello 2001: 123)

Embedded within colonial and also postcolonial discourse and praxis as ciphers of hospitality, ‘hostesses’ to whom the work of the hospitable gesture is delegated thus become representatively complicit in politics of inclusion/exclusion that infuse both the domestic and cosmopolitan spheres. The persistence of this outmoded version of ‘welcome’ in the public sphere is less related to welcoming than it is to cheerleading and team building, and therefore more aggressive in its ideology than might be assumed. The hostess performing ‘welcome’, a signified hospitality, a closed openness, is symptomatic of a lack of shift in the cosmopolitan sphere in terms of the ethical responsibility for and provision of hospitality.

The persistent embodiment of a limited repertoire of gestures, aesthetics and modes-of-being by certain women performing welcome in media, arts and futuristic design could be argued to derive at least in part from the persistence of an anachronistic division of labour in relation to the host/guest. This repertoire is passed on to android hostesses without rupture of the established performative tropes, and thus the restrictive formal aestheticization of this mode of labour is uncritically endorsed. Robertson, in ‘Gendering Humanoid Robots: Robo-Sexism in Japan’, maintains that

most roboticists reinforce in and through their humanoids, by default arising from indifference, quite unprogressive notions of gender dynamics and the sexual division of labour... (2010: 28)

Robertson (2010: 29) raises the interesting metaphor of ‘degrees of freedom’ in robot-building as a way of illustrating the division. Degrees of freedom are corporeal capabilities of motion along particular independent planes. According to Robertson’s research the design of the female model of the Actroid (or geminoid) allowed for 42 degrees of freedom and the male model (an aesthetically-accurate copy-version of its lead creator) for 50 degrees of freedom. However, according to the Hiroshi Ishiguro Laboratories (Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute International) website, the current iteration of the female Japanese geminoid, Geminoid-F (2011), whom Ishiguro hopes will become “common communication media for everyday life” (Burrows 2011; Ishiguro 2014), has 16 degrees of freedom in order that it be cheaper, more lightweight, and more easily applied to social environments and installations. Its possibilities of movement are thus delimited and likely to become as iconographically familiar as the airline hostess’, the magician’s assistant’s, or the game show hostess’, for example. Robertson describes this approach as characteristic of ‘retro-tech’: advanced technology in the service of traditionalism.

The focus here on Japan is not arbitrary in that the setting is well known as the “high temple of robot technology” (Ambo 2007), and global uptake of its innovations in the robo-tech arena is well documented. As outlined by Robertson (2010) and others, the Japanese central government’s 2007 blueprint for revitalizing and repopulating Japanese society includes the official prime ministerial document *Innovation 25: Creating the Future*, which states that by 2025, as a core element of a robot-dependent society, every household should include a humanoid domestic robot<sup>1</sup>. The document’s online précis illustrates the five key points of this decree with friendly-looking cartoons: one is a *Stepford Wives*-esque picture of a pink humanoid robot with a dress-shaped body, cooking, cleaning and caring for children. Ostensibly relieving the housewife/domestic subaltern from some of her ‘duties’ in the home, the government’s professed ideal is that married women will benefit from their new degrees of freedom to regain an interest, flagging overall in Japanese society, in monogamous procreation. Another of these cartoons is of a large man being served by a slim, smiling airline hostess and communicating his wishes to her via prosthetic earpiece: this subsection of the decree promotes the use of robotic translators and the development of technological systems of virtuality whereby citizens will “realize the world without leaving home” (see Government of Japan 2007). There is ambivalence in the document toward globalization that attests to Japan’s history with regard to nationalism and immigration; domestically, humanoid robots are

regarded by the public as preferable to foreign laborers, ostensibly for the reason that, unlike migrant and minority workers, robots have neither cultural differences nor, in the case of (especially) East Asians, unresolved historical (or wartime) memories to contend with. ...They carry no inconvenient historical baggage. (Robertson 2010: 9)

A focus on convenient, rather than inconvenient, historical baggage is perhaps typically and efficiently Japanese, though obviously not limited to this locale or set of histories. Unfortunately, though, current iterations of humanoid robots *do* carry inconvenient historical baggage for those who find themselves on the less privileged side of inscrutably integrated cultural borders (and ceilings). ‘Conveniently’ for suppressing discourse about these topics, some of these very citizens are ‘lending’ their image or persona to the perpetuation of the hostess trope. The gatekeeping of

conventional wisdoms by proxies/surrogates, specifically conventionally attractive, young, female proxies and/or robots, is rife in Japan and despite ‘cultural differences’ can be seen to correspond to common images of hospitality all over the globe.

An android hostess obviously has a desirable capacity for almost continuous menial work. In the advertisement for Actroids that are ostensibly available for hire in a human-resources sense through animatronics company Kokoro (2014), there has been no promotion of male-gendered robots doing these same types of continuous welcoming, caring and menial roles.

[Machine] capacities for action are created out of sociomaterial arrangements that instantiate histories of labor and more and less reliable, always contingent, future re-enactments. (Suchman 2006: 653)

The fabricators and distributors of this commercial arm of the Actroid venture, which is otherwise framed as academic-scientific research into human presence and human-robot interaction (see Ishiguro 2007; 2014), is Kokoro, a branch of Sanrio— brand giant famous for the Hello Kitty franchise. Kokoro’s other significant line of robotics production is in animatronic dinosaurs for theme parks and exhibition displays. What company, then, better placed to corporealize an emergent anachronism such as the Actroid? ‘Female’ worker Actroids are *kawaii* (cute), novel, and antediluvian in the gendered labour codes they restate and reclaim. Publicized in their specific cultural context as “society heading in a natural direction” (Hasegawa and Collins 2010), they are presented in official discourse as an innovative, twenty-first century approach to fulfilment of a social utopian dream of a privileged class. But by aestheticizing and deploying Actroids uncritically and unprogressively in the hostess’ familiar role and image, one does not necessarily guarantee ethical treatment for the robots, their ‘gender’, or the workers they displace.

Public discussion of the societal assimilation of humanoid robots rarely occurs without reference to Masahiro Mori’s theory of the uncanny valley (1970). A literal translation of the German *das Unheimliche* being ‘unhomely’, uncanniness might also be directly linked to being ‘not like/at home’ and therefore to the experience of *inhospitality*. In English we have referred to a homely woman as one who is aesthetically inappropriate for society outside the home. To be *unhomely*, then, out of or inappropriate for the home, is also to be out of place, unwelcome or conditionally tolerated, and non-agentic in the public sphere. It is a liminal state that is becoming populated by a host(ess) of female Actroids.

The fourteenth Dalai Lama is said to have stated that compassion is the radicalism of our times. In ‘Toward a Theory of Feminist Hospitality’, Hamington (2010: 21) offers a vision of hospitality “that reflects a performative extension of care ethics by pursuing stronger social bonds, as well as fostering inclusive and non-hierarchical host/guest relations”. I suggest that this picture, which yet exists within a cosmopolitical system of laws, limits and defining signs, requires in addition to its dismantling of certain hierarchies an investigation of the complex and relatively disguised social bonds in which the fetishized female is substituted for the male ‘welcome’ and permission to participate in culture. If the hostess figure is a distilled marker of domestic hospitality in cultures both East and West, she can also be seen as a symptom of wider, persistent and treacherously transmissible disorder, for instance

as a gatekeeper for constitutional reluctance to behave in an unconditionally hospitable way to refugees and the poor. The insidiousness of the persona, unhelpful to gender equality and unable to speak for herself, and her concurrent generic attractiveness, celebratory 'aura' and surface compassion, render her chronic and controlled performance of hospitality profoundly questionable as she is further developed at the very vanguard of humanoid simulation.

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<sup>1</sup> See also Robertson (2010: 11): "No other country (as yet) attributes to robots and robotics such powerful agency and efficacy as does Japan. The five-year Humanoid Robotics Project, launched in 1998 by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), gave a consortium of 12 corporations and 10 universities a mandate to develop first-generation intelligent humanoid robots, able to use hand tools and work in human environments, including hospitals, offices and households. This project laid the groundwork for Innovation 25."

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***Manhattan Salvation Addict***

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**Abstract**

Kusama Yayoi is a world famous Japanese artist who has worked in a wide variety of media. Since the 90's we can observe growing fascination with Kusama's works, as well as its recognition and rediscovering. The phenomenon is better known as "The Kusama Renaissance".

As a still living and creating artist, she constantly tries to advance forward, despite living in isolated world of mental institution. Nowadays, "The Kusama Renaissance" transcends borders of Japan and USA, where the artist was mainly working.

This article explains the circumstances in which Kusama in 60's and 70's years in USA stir up cultural revolution. Her actions became a mirror reflecting social anxieties and opposition to the war in Vietnam and the government. She found her mission in proclaiming free love, peace and tolerance to the society. In attempt of finding out the relationship between those subversive activities and her literature I will examine her literary activity after she came back to Japan in the mid 70's and try to describe the world in which – like Jean Genet – "she makes the filth shine." I will also show, how she saves her characters – social outcasts, underdogs – from the hardships of existence and the entire universe by the concept of *self-obliteration*.

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Kusama Yayoi (b. 1929) is a Japanese artist and writer who, on the one hand, lets the references to the traditions of Japanese art seep into her work subtly – and at times almost imperceptibly - while on the other hand, she still subscribes to the mainstream of the western transavantgarde of the 1960s and 1970s.

Kusama distinguishes herself among other artists with her particular approach to the act of creation: her concentration often verges on a meditative state, during which the immediate temporal presence is abolished or dispersed; one may be tempted to claim that the artist herself might have wished for such a result. Consequently, she created a vast majority of her work in this spirit and in this vein, which is why, in turn, her pieces are characterized by a simplicity of the means employed and a semblant schematic structure; according to a master of the traditional school of Japanese *tosa*<sup>1</sup> painting, this last trait is a singular advantage, as it has the power to reach and touch the depths of the human heart. In an eclectic communion, Kusama combines this approach to work with the condition expressed “in the metaphor of the labyrinth, in the dispersion of entity, or in nomadism”<sup>2</sup> – basically, in a great confusion of the transavantgarde. In the experience of which, art manifests itself with a holistic completeness that is difficult to maintain and which occurs most often in a fragmentarized and acentric form. At the same time, this art possesses a certain capacity to simultaneously depict the many paths of entry and exit, while "enabling one to live a life in the world" devoid of great stories and history that would solder the infinite number of narratives into one solid wholeness. Nomadism - as understood by Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and Felix Guattari (1930-1992), and as described by Achillo Bonito Oliva (born 1939) - serves to perfectly depict the nature of the artist's work: “In nomadic works, the art of the 1970s comes across its own excellent movement coupled with the ability to traverse all territories freely without any hindrance, while following the guidelines which keep opening them up in all directions.”<sup>3</sup>

It is also worth mentioning that for years the works of Yayoi Kusama - fell into a virtual oblivion outside of Japan; however, 1990s marked the beginning of a continual process of rediscovering her as an artiste, as an icon of social and cultural transformations, as the "Queen of the hippies" and even as the progenitor of such schools of art as pop art and minimalism. This process, referred to as the "Renaissance of Kusama's art", further contributes to a "redefinition of the significance of the work of the author of *Infinity Nets*, as viewed in the context of art history”.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, this process brings about an increasing number of retrospective exhibitions of her work, as well as shows of her latest productions which are held in major galleries and museums around the world.

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<sup>1</sup> *Tosa* - actually Tosaha (The Tosa School); this term refers to a traditional school of Japanese painting. Its origins date back to the Muromachi period (1337-1573). One of the main objectives of the school was the eradication of Chinese influences and a renewal of Japanese painting, as well as engendering a move towards its ancient heritage of the Heian period (794-1185).

<sup>2</sup> K. Wilkoszewska, *Wariacje na postmodernizm*, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 194.

<sup>4</sup> A statement made by the President of the Japan Foundation, Asaho Shinichirō, during the preparations for a retrospective exhibition of Yayoi Kusama's works held at London's Tate Modern in 2012.

It is my wish to dedicate this article to the pursuit of the following three objectives: firstly, to present the circumstances in which Kusama unceasingly tried to kindle the flame of revolution in the minds and hearts of the Americans all throughout the 1960s and 1970s; secondly – to elucidate how she turned the concept of self-obliteration into her main tool of creation; and thirdly – to expound on how these activities affected her literary works, for which she was, first and foremost, highly appraised in Japan, following her many years of residence in the United States. It is Kusama's literary work - almost completely "unchartered" outside her home country, which serves to show us a whole new aspect of the universe in which the "I" of each and every one of us can become subject to dispersion.

The year 1957 saw Kusama arrive in the United States, where she settled for almost twenty years. In 1958, she moved permanently to New York. The first years were for her a mere struggle for survival, as she would spend all her financial resources on painting materials, thus living on the brink of poverty; this was also a period, in which her mental health deteriorated. However, it was during those tough days that she created one of her most famous series, entitled *Infinity Nets*. This painting cycle soon brought her recognition and appreciation among the New York art enthusiasts and critics.

Within ten years of coming to the U.S.A., Kusama strengthened her position in the art milieu primarily as a painter. In the late 1960's, the artist began to venture beyond the narrow field of classically defined arts and she chose to express herself in a wider range of activities, such as live art happenings. Although she was, already experimenting with performance art as early as in 1965 when she presented the *Narcissus Garden* environment during the Venice Biennale, it was only in 1967 that the fascination with this field of artistic activity urged her to organise one event after another. This coincided in time with the happenings parallel to the development of the hippie movement in Greenwich Village which began to increasingly affect many young Americans.

When, during the second half of the 60's of the past century, Kusama goes out into a public space with her happening actions and presents them on the streets of New York, it is the very dots which become her main weapon in a battle with a widely understood systematism and are to carry with them a power able to make revolutionary social changes at their basis, which included message of love, peace and tolerance.

Kusama is holding a series of "naked happenings", during the event, different color dot designs were painted on the bodies of the present participants. This act according to the artist's intentions then becomes a symbolic road towards experiencing the quality of the infinite universe. By painting dots on our bodies, we are able to experience – return to – being one with the universe, vanish from the multitude and become a potential force in subsequent transformations.

Polka dots can't stay alone, like communicative life of people, two and three and more polka dots become movement. Our earth is only one polka dot among a million stars in the cosmos. Polka dots are a way to infinity. When we obliterate nature and

our bodies with polka dots, we become part of the unity of our environment. I become part of the eternal, and we obliterate ourselves in Love.<sup>5</sup>

The term inseparably tied with the dot, for Kusama is a process of *self-obliteration*. It is a type of a spiritual enlightenment leading towards a renewed connection with infinity. This process is to make it possible for us to achieve salvation by freeing ourselves from shackles tying us with humanity. Shackles such as history, our ego or imposed on us social roles. In *self-obliteration*, we will find a reflection of the most significant slogans propagated by the American counter-culture at the turn of the 60's and 70's of the past century. Arising free love, anti-military social movements, newly created sects and religions as well as the drawn from the eastern philosophical and religious thought may be related to the ideas of *self-obliteration*. As noted by Midori Yoshimoto Associate Professor of Art History z New Jersey City University:

In essence, Kusama's Self-Obliteration is a creative hybrid of Buddhist thought inflected with New Age spiritualism, the rhetoric of sexual liberation, and her semi-autobiographical narrative.<sup>6</sup>

### Literature

The mid 1970s witnessed a drastic deterioration of Kusama's health. Consequently, in February 1975, the artist returned temporarily to Japan in order to undergo a surgery at a hospital in Tokyo. Making the best of her stay in the fatherland, she decided to go to her hometown of Matsumoto to find some tranquility and "peace of mind". She was planning to return to New York immediately upon recovery. However, she began to experience ever intensifying hallucinations. The doctors were unable to help her, as they could not conclude a definite diagnosis. Thus, due to the need to conduct detailed examinations and in fear of a further aggravation of her mental condition, she resolved to stay in Japan.

Kusama found it impossible to get readjusted to the Japanese way of life. She wrote about the great gulf that divides the United States and her country. Japanese conformism disillusioned her greatly:

"Everyone would act and look exactly the same way. They had the same expressionless faces. When someone would stand out from the crowd, it's only because they imitated something they had seen in a magazine on the American or French fashion. Upon exiting the station, they would all head off through the crowded streets to their small residential buildings. Sitting in their tiny rooms, they would watch the same old commercials on TV. The Japanese lifestyle and mentality became uniform. I couldn't stop thinking that unlike the times I remembered so well, everybody around was characterized by a lack of individualization."<sup>7</sup>

"What is this country?"<sup>8</sup> - Kusama asked herself. It seems that the progressive modernization and economic success of Japan is perceived by the artist as a source of

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<sup>5</sup> Kusama Y., quoted from Jud Yalkut, "Polka Dot Way of Life (Conversations with Yayoi Kusama)," *New York Free Press* 1, no. 8 (1968), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Yoshimoto M., *Kusama Saves the World through Self-Obliteration*, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Kusama Y., *Infinity Net*, p. 194.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*.

the destructive forces that transformed the country of a rich and varied tradition into a country "without character" or identity - a country whose citizens engage in mindless consumption while and reproducing foreign unfamiliar values. Having lived over seventeen years in the United States, once on the Japanese ground, Kusama is relegated to marginal sphere "that-which-is-left-unpondered". In other words, Kusama's activities failed to induce active aggression, nor do they provoke any controversy; instead, they cause her to be ignored as an artist and an intellectual. Japanese marginalize the importance of her thought and maintain it firmly beyond the framework of what is considered to represent the official, acceptable standards of social philosophy. According to Kusama's own admission, the Japanese society was not prepared to engage in an unbridled unfettered discussion on matters of the body, sexuality, gender and civil liberties - issues of the greatest important to the artist, ones that would determine the life of being human. Describing the then Japan, Kusama writes as follows:

„I was in my motherland for a little over two months, but all my stay did was confirm for me what a corrupt and bogus, fourth-rate country it was. In the end, the concept of free sex was something the Japanese simply could not grasp. [...] But when all was said and done, my pro-sex and anti-war ideas, and the Happenings that expressed them, went down like lead balloons in Japan. The mass media, the journalists, and the intellectuals all exhibited absolutely no comprehension of what I was about.”<sup>9</sup>

However, Kusama could not suffer the world to throw her into oblivion, and so soon after she revealed to it her previously unrecognized literary talent.

“I was able to shed light onto a different sphere of my own existence – one that I would not be able to fathom with the visual arts alone.”<sup>10</sup>

Upon her return to Japan, Kusama could no longer count on the tremendous popularity she once enjoyed during her years spent in New York. Although her first two retrospective exhibitions organized at that time in Tokyo helped attract new enthusiasts of her work, they become ventures of low media appeal, which failed to affect either the new currents in art or the wider Japanese audience. The summer of 1977 introduced a possibility to change this state of affairs and remind the world of one of the most important stages of the artist's life. Art critic by the name of Kazue Kobata (b. 1946) - then a young editor - asked Kusama for a brief write-down of her memories of Yoko Ono.

„She okayed my request by saying: „Well I can talk about her (instead of writing).”<sup>11</sup> So I went to see her for the first time, where she talked about Yoko Ono and also her days in New York, by mixing in some English words in the conversation, which I found so fascinating. I also liked the way she interpreted contemporary art, so I encouraged her to write a book about her own story.”<sup>12</sup>

After just three weeks, Kusama submitted a text of over 200 pages, which also constituted her first novel. The book was published the following year. Setting her

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<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 153.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted from Shinakawa T., “Bungaku ni mo Hana Hiraku, Hirui Naki Sōzō no Chikara”, [in:] Pen Henshūbu (ed.), *Yappari Suki Da! Kusama Yayoi*, p. 108.

<sup>11</sup> Sonoda S., *Locus of the Avant-garde*, p. 48.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

works in New York, Kusama scrutinizes the phenomena occurring in the changing cultural image of the city panorama, subjecting them to a detailed clinical analysis. Owing to this approach, the background of her novel, which is formed by meticulous descriptions of the world depicted, of nature or social phenomena, gains an equal importance as the main layer of the narrative, with which they are intertwined as its integral elements. According to Kobata:

She writes in a striking way, expressing her emotions freely with straightforward words, that you could feel how seriously she was living her life. I'm not quite sure if it's correct to state this as an objective fact, but considering that it is a memoir of what she had gone through, you could definitely call it a documentary of those days."<sup>13</sup>

*Manhattan Suicide Addict* is sometimes classified as an autobiographical novel; however, it differs from a typical documentalist narrative, which is characterized, for instance, by a fixed chronological framework of the events described and an inflexible formal structure – so much so, in fact, that it would not be completely unjustified to classify it as a work of fiction. Realistic events are interspersed here with phantasmagoric visions of a dark world imbued with secret forces, the true picture of which escapes one's grasp.

Determining the boundaries between its real and the fantastic realm seems unfeasible, because it becomes completely inseparable from the surrealist sphere, in which an attempt at separation or detachment of even one constituent fragment could result in the complete destruction of its intricate design. This structure is primarily a record of magical realism being simultaneously the result of Kusama's real-life experience and her artistic construct. In adopting such a perspective for the specification of the literary form - as long as we assume that this fantastical world, in which Kusama lives and acts, is not only a created vision, but also a part of her reality which she is in fact experiencing - we can state that we are indeed dealing here with a form of an autobiographical novel. When writing the afterword for this book, Poet Shūzō Takiguchi (1903-1979), compares Kusama to a fairy – a creature out of this world, suspended or trapped somewhere between the realm of objectivity and subjectivity. The uncertain and vague existence of the fairy also engenders a metaphor of art that escapes any concepts and definitions<sup>14</sup>.

"The squirrel began to gradually transform into one of the leaves. From all that staring at it, my eyes started to turn green. The squirrel's eyes met my gaze. It is summoning my spirit. I'm afraid. Leave me alone! Oh, actually wait, my body is turning into a green tree. Help! The tree is bursting into an unknown area of gender. How is that even possible? The trunk, thick as a penis pierced the gray soil. Dignity, which breathes heavily in the midst of cruel summer, is now trying to stand on an unfamiliar terrain of a grassy field. I have been crushed. I want to become a young man ... in secret."<sup>15</sup>

In addition to the dichotomous image of a dual reality that supports the entire narrative structure of the song, we can also differentiate other elements of the work

<sup>13</sup> Quoted from Sonoda S., *Locus of the Avant-garde*, p. 48.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted from Kusama Y., *Mugen no Ami*, p. 220.

<sup>15</sup> Kusama Y., *Manhattan jisatsu misui jōshūhan*, p. 18.

which serve to show that it is based on the category of difference as well as the category of repetition, alike Kusama's entire artistic output. Next to the dichotomy of the world depicted, which constitutes the narrative of the novel, Kusama's writings are also embedded on the aspects of divergence. On the one hand, we are confronted with descriptions of ruthless violence and brutality, while on the other hand, we are presented with sublime contrasting scenes depicting the richness and beauty of nature, which are often imbued with lyricism. The dramatic story of a romantic love is complemented by a description of a sexual act performed by animals and the recurrent castration theme with the penis marinated in a jar represents sexual slavery and the dominance of heteronormativity, while on the one hand, referring to a *sui generis* archeology of the sources of pleasure and satisfaction. It seems that the grotesque form employed by Kusama makes for great means to portray the wildly changing socio-cultural situation of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. The introduction of stylistic diversity enables the pronunciation of the inherent differences separating the citizens of the USA. Consistent juxtaposition allows Kusama to reveal the common mental platitudes, such as those pertaining to the issues of fundamental human rights, the citizens' attitude towards military actions (war waging), views on racial diversity and gender or sexual orientation. The slogans which accompanied her subversive activities of the New York era keep on living through her literary works and can provide proof of her unwavering determination to instigate a revolution in the world designed to rearrange the world according to the principle of universal understanding based on tolerance and respect and non-exclusion from society. Her commitment to the issues of morality is evident in the many descriptions of homosexual community which emerge "here and there" throughout her work; as Kusama herself recalls, some of the most faithful supporters of her avant-garde activities would recruit themselves this specific social group – ones on whom she could always rely. An example thereto might be the following excerpt:

**"I who have become myself**

Once, the old fag Jerome,  
when walking down the street, saw a white kitten  
who was busking in the sun.  
He was terribly dirty.  
So he took it home with him to give it a good scrub.

If you aren't able to clean yourself up,  
Then you'll never become a proper tomcat.  
I, who can never sit still,  
Am only looking at Bob licking a corn cob.

One day, I became a real tomcat.  
There's a lot of stuff to wash, leave it all for now.  
From dusk till dawn I'm humping Bob's butt.  
Even burnt bread or spilled milk won't phase me.  
I'm happy – I who dream the dream of a painter's brush." <sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, p. 14-15

The publicity Kusama gained owing to *Manhattan Suicide Addict*, meant that for a time in Japan she would be seen mostly as a writer. Shūzō Takiguchi notes the irony of the fact that only her first literary success and international recognition urged the Japanese to appreciate the value of their compatriot's work.

Kusama's second novel, published directly after the *Manhattan Suicide Addict*, which is entitled *The Hustlers Grotto of Christopher Street* proved to be an equally involved piece of writing. Also set in New York, this book became the most important among all her literary works, for which she received the prize of the "Yasei Jidai" literary magazine in the category of the best literary debut. The jury awarding the prize comprised, *inter alios*, of Ryū Murakami (b. 1952), Teru Miyamoto (b. 1947) and Kenji Nakgami (1946-1992), writers younger by almost two generations than the Japanese post-war school. In their rejection of Abe Kobo's existentialism, Yukio Mishima's romanticism and Kenzaburo Oe's political ideology, these writers and thinkers set a new direction for the modern Japanese writing, which shows a real fascination in supernatural forces, fantastical tales, occult ceremonies and dark sides of human nature. To a large extent, they were drawn in this direction by the works of Izumi Kyōka (1873-1939), a writer excluded from the mainstream of modern Japanese literature, which was back then dominated by naturalism. His surreal works imbued with magical elements, dark gothic aesthetics and a ubiquitous mystery affected the young intellectuals and avant-garde artists in the 1970s and 1980s in Japan, so much more strongly than they did the author's contemporaries. Kyōka is also one of the writers most respected by Kusama, and his "The Saint of Mt. Koya" is her favorite novel. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise to anyone that the publication of *The Hustlers Grotto* – a book permeated with camp aesthetics, depicting a narcotic vision of a sexually awakened New York, including elements of a bloody macabre - that coincided with the period of "Kyōka Boom" in Japan, was so positively received by other writers and literary critics. Nakagami admires the work of Kusama, in particular for her involvement to fathom such areas of social taboo as "violence, discrimination, incest and bisexuality"<sup>17</sup>. This exposing of the world became her principal method to fight human prejudices, bigotry and signallments of false morality. Seeking answers to the most basic ontological questions, Kusama tirelessly strives to unravel all the mysteries.

“What does living a life mean?  
Holding my hands firmly, and smashing the emptiness of my heart,  
though I want to climb up to the summit of life,  
how mysterious everything is.  
I know I should simply run and run through its course.  
I will discard every mystery!  
Good-bye, my mysteries.”<sup>18</sup>

Ryū Murakami, in speaking about the literary talent of the artist compared them to the talent of Jean Genet saying, “...both make filth shine.”<sup>19</sup> And so the main character in

<sup>17</sup> Quoted from Munroe A “Afterword” [in:] Kusama Y. *Hustlers grotto: three novellas*, p. 162.

<sup>18</sup> Kusama Y., *I Like Myself*, p. 44.

<sup>19</sup> Munroe A., “Between Heaven and Earth: The Literary Art of Yayoi Kusama,” in *Love Forever*, Munroe. Interview with Ryū Murakami, Tōkyō, May 21, 1996.



„Hustlers Grotto” – Henry, is a downright caricatural character, an African American, drug addicted male prostitute.

„Henry was, yes, an insatiable soul, a vagabond of the night who roamed the pleasure quarters seeking dissipation and oblivion. He used money to ransom food and drugs, and in order to obtain that money he begrudgingly sold his flash and his anus. The fact that business on the corners was so affected by the weather put him in the same level as a street artist.”<sup>20</sup>

Henry, just as a typical character from Kusama’s literary world, is a reject of the society, not accepting the surrounding him reality, for whom the only way out – salvation can be the very physical *self-obliteration* ending with the main character’s transmutation into a new being. In the final scene of this book, Henry suddenly vanishes:

But the black figure of Henry is no longer there where it’s supposed to be, in the corner of the void... His body has vanished from the space... In the milk-colored, mist a black spot. Falling. The spot grows smaller and smaller, until it’s just a dark speck dissolving into the mist.<sup>21</sup>

The characters appearing in Kusama’s writings are most often faced with dramatic events and thus forced to make decisions of absolute nature – they are confronted with the most basic questions about the quintessence of life and death. The collection of short stories entitled *Nyūyōku monogatari* shows the pain and suffering of people with AIDS and their determination to fight this incurable disease. In contrast, the novel entitled *Sento marukusu kyōkai enjō*, which has been defined as a mixture of "sex, death and hallucinations"<sup>22</sup>, the protagonists are struggling with recurrent hallucinations, uncontrollable obsessive behaviors and an unceasing feeling of a continuous disintegration and depersonalization.

Yet another example of the writer's characteristic literary figure is a women scorned and despised by men who is trying to find her own place in the brutal and unjust "phallic" world that surrounds her – for which appurtenance she is prepared to fight. The main character of *Sumire Kyōhaku* is a young girl who is afraid of her hysterical mother who can talk with flowers and communicate with the universe. This state of specific perception of the world is best captured in the following excerpt from this book:

Youth is hard to hold on to  
O violets, little flowers – don’t talk to me  
Give me back the voice that became a violet’s voice  
I don’t want to be an adult – not yet  
All I ask is one more year  
Please let me be till then<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Kusama Y., *Hustlers Grotto: Three Novellas*, p. 31.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 64-65.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted from Shinakawa T., “Bungaku ni mo Hana Hiraku, Hirui Naki Sōzō no Chikara”, [in:] Pen Henshūbu (ed.), *Yappari Suki Da! Kusama Yayoi*, p. 111.

<sup>23</sup> Kusama Y., Kusama Yayoi, *Violet Obsession: Poems*, p. 40.

The unwavering and unfalteringly keen interest in Kusama's writing has undoubtedly been fueled by the author's literary aspirations, which she herself notes shortly after being awarded the "Yasei Jidai" prize:

„My fever for writing only increased, and I wrote and published novels and poems in rapid succession”.<sup>24</sup>

In the period from 1985 to 2002 Kusama created twelve novels, a collection of poetry and an autobiography.

Many autobiographical references allow themselves to be traced in Kusama's works, which turns this literature into something of a personal confession. However, the author herself evades any clear indications as to which fragments were intended as literary fiction. One would assume that it is directly linked to the visions she is experiencing, for is it not true that the fact of their very experience corroborates their transition from the realm of imagination to the real world, at least in the eyes of the author herself? Transgressing this thin threshold of illusion thus leads to classifying the fictional events in the precinct of the artist's own truths. At this point it should also be noted that the nascent temptation to treat representational layer depicted as a classic *milieu* Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893), ie. as a meaningful and real environment in which Kusama lived her life – such an understanding ought to be supplemented by a post-structuralist reading of this category effectuated by Michel Serres (b. 1930). This will, therefore, present a perspective in which these places also contain many transcendences devoid of hierarchy, which possess the ability to unleash magic and create art, while depicting a life story of a single man.

Kusama's fictional output is completed by a considerable body of *feuilleton* work. It often happened that she drafted the descriptions of her own exhibitions and published press articles relating to both her own work and art in general. She frequently entered into polemics with other artists and critics. By far, what can be considered as the most interesting area of this activity are the different forms of her literary manifestos.

One example of her literary manifesto is the spontaneously arranged public reading of a letter addressed to Richard Nixon – which took place in November 1968, in front of the New York headquarters of the election committee. It was only a week after the end of the tumultuous USA presidential elections conducted in the shadow of the war that Kusama arranged this public reading of a letter addressed to the winning candidate of the Republican Party. In her famous piece of correspondence entitled *An Open Letter to My Hero, Richard M. Nixon*, the artist moves for an immediate end to the war in Vietnam, where the act of self-obliteration is to be the best way for the President to tame his "male, fighting spirit" and understand the often repeated "naked truth": „You can't eradicate violence by using more violence”.<sup>25</sup>

“Our earth is like one little polka-dot, among millions of other celestial bodies, one orb gull of hatred and strife amid the peaceful, silent spheres. Let's you and I change all of that and make this world a new Garden of Eden.

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<sup>24</sup> Kusama Y. *Infinity Net*, p. 209.

<sup>25</sup> Kusama Y., *Open Letter to My Hero, Richard M. Nixon*, 11 November 1968.

Let's forget ourselves, dearest Richard, and become one with the Absolute, all together in the altogether. As we soar through the heavens, we'll paint each other with polka dots, lose our egos in timeless eternity, and finally discover the naked truth: You can't eradicate violence by using more violence."<sup>26</sup>

The above description of the variety of activities in which Kusama would engage paints a picture of a socially involved artist, who turns her art into a weapon to fight against all forms of social inequality and for whom establishing universal understanding and peace in the world is the most important message to convey. You can also see that, although she often employs various means of expression, they still serve the same mission, which is to include in the sphere of her actions all people and to release them from the worldly hardships of existence by way of self-obliteration and to lead them directly to the ultimate salvation.

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is surrounded by two large, overlapping circular arcs. The upper arc is a light red color, and the lower arc is a light blue color, matching the text. The arcs are thick and have a slightly irregular, hand-drawn appearance.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibidem.

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***Impact of Cultural Differences on Business Projects between Germans and Swiss Germans: Unravelling Sub-Proximity HR Challenges of Cross-Cultural Projects***

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Based on Hofstede's 5 cultural dimension we explored in a study of a business project among Germans and Swiss Germans that cross-cultural diversity and distance on a level of geographical proximity is more significant than literature has predicted. Its recognition, human resource management (HRM) and assignment level holds the promise to leverage benefits of bicultural teams.

This paper deals with the research question what are the cultural differences between Swiss Germans and Germans and to what extent do they have an effect within an international project. To verify the result, we conduct the business case on both, international and intracultural basis, which leads us to the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1: Cultural differences exist between Germans and Swiss Germans, and are perceived by the stakeholders in cross-border, cross-cultural projects in this region.*

*Hypothesis 2: The cultural differences between Germans and Swiss Germans have a negative impact on a common cross-cultural project in businesses.*

*Hypothesis 3: There are cultural differences between Germans and Swiss Germans within the same cultural background (Alemannic culture)*

*Hypothesis 4: The cultural between Germans and Swiss Germans within the same cultural background have a negative impact on a common cross-cultural project*

In a first step the paper deals with the theoretical underlying of culture as well as background information on the two national cultures. Based on that, the case study was conducted. Finally, this leads to the result that there are cultural differences and that there is no significant distinction if Swiss German work with Germans from the Alemannic culture or not – the national border equals the border of culture.

## **Theoretical background**

### Definition of Culture

*"Culture... is ... the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs."*

UNESCO, World Conference on Cultural Policies,  
Mexico City, 06 August 1982

The UNESCO description is a useful starting point for a definition of culture because it outlines the basic elements of the complex topic. First the description is limited to a society or social group. Second it mentions and points out the aspect that a culture is embedded into an environment that either accepts or does not accept the cornerstones or layers of this culture.

### Layers of culture

Cultural differences exists on different levels which are visible (artefacts like language, food, clothes etc.), partially visible (norms and values like policies and regula-



tions etc.) or completely invisible (basic assumption like sense of humor, national feelings etc.).

Members of the culture interact within the level constantly but a foreigner of the culture mainly receives the visible part of artefacts. Hofstede defines four layers of cultures: symbols, heroes, rituals and values (Hofstede, 1991:7). A visual symbol for a national culture is its national flag. Heroes are person or characters the culture can identify with. For Germany this could be Hans-Dietrich Genscher (Secretary of State during Reunification) or for Switzerland Wilhelm Tell, a mythological figure for freedom fighting.

Rituals are collective activities with symbolic content which follow certain controlled steps until they reach the desired end. Within the culture, rituals are of social essence. Forecasting the weather is one ritual. People in Zurich celebrate "Sechseläuten" to predict the duration of the coming summer. A papier-mâché snowman filled with firecrackers is burned at the stake. The interval from sparking off the stake until the head of the Böögg burst will forecast the summer weather. Another example for Germany are the German Christmas markets.

Symbols, heroes and rituals are subsumed by Hofstede under the term practices. They are visible to foreigners but the meaning still remains within the members of the culture only.

The core of culture consists of its values which are attributes of individuals as well as of communities. Culture presupposes a collectivity. The individual combination is transferred by cultural patterns surrounding the receiver's mind at the time when it is still relatively empty and programs can be most easily registered. Although the learning transferring collective mental programs goes on during our entire lives, the basic programming is entrenched within our cultural behavior and changes only slightly, although the content is non-rational.

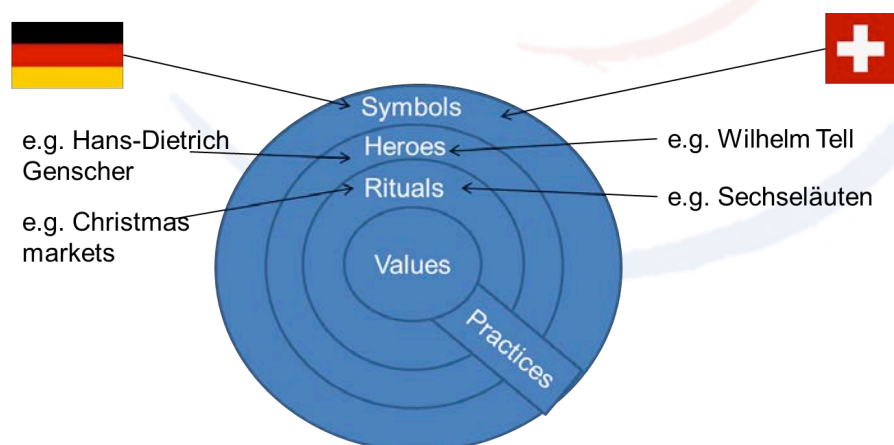


Figure: The onion diagram, Hofstede, 1991:9

### Figure 1: based on The Onion diagram (Hofstede, 1991:9)

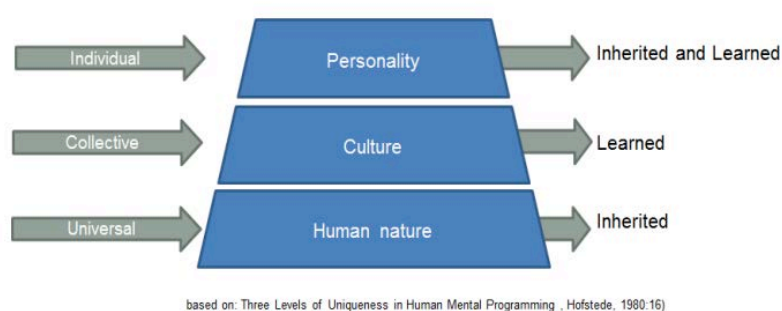
For the cross-cultural assessment between German and Swiss Germans not only the national level is of importance but also on linguistic affiliation level which contains linguistic determinant.

### Entities of Culture

Beside the layers of culture, entities of culture are another fundamental concept in cross-cultural research. Typical examples of cultural entities are individuals, organizational and societal levels.

This paper assumes that these three cultural entities exist and human interacting between all of them: The individual, collective and universal level. *“Metal programming can be inherited – transferred in our genes – or they can be learned after birth.”* (Hofstede, 1984:16). Hofstede noticed that it is difficult to draw lines between the single levels and therefore this is still discussed among anthropologists.

Culture includes: Different entities



**Figure 2: based on Three Levels of Uniqueness in Human Mental Programming (Hofstede, 1984:16)**

The universal and individual level are preprogrammed before birth while the content of the collective level is mainly learned *“which is shown by the fact that we share it with people who went through the same learning process but who do not have the same genes”* (Hofstede, 1984:16). This transfer is a social phenomenon. *“Societies, organizations, and groups have ways of conserving and passing on mental programs from generation to generation with an obstinacy which many people underestimate”* (Hofstede, 1984:16f.).

### Cultural Framework Theories

Scientists used different frameworks to find out the main cultural dimensions. Five cultural frameworks will be reviewed in chronological order, because each framework is based on former ones.

## Cultural Framework Theories

- Hall’s framework (3 dimensions)
- Hofstede framework (5 dimensions)
- Trompenaars framework (7 dimensions)
- GLOBE framework (9 dimensions)
- Ralston framework (8 dimensions)
- Thomas’s approach of cultural differences

**Figure 3: Most important cultural framework theories (by author)**

The framework of Ralston (1993) is of high relevance to this study, although it has been taken beyond the socio-cultural area which will be analyzed. Therefore the concept of Alexander Thomas (1992) about cultural standards and its interpretation of Frank Brück (2003) have been taken into concern. Brück analyzed the cultural standards of Austrians by comparing critical situations of Germans or Swiss Germans who have been confronted with in the working field of the Austrians.

Ralston and his team went stronger than Trompenaars into the interrelation between socio-cultural and business-ideological influenced values. Their research is based on the cultural dimensions of Hofstede and the GLOBE study. Ralston’s framework is an important source for creating the cultural dimensions in data mining of socio-cultural and business ideological influenced values for this business case.

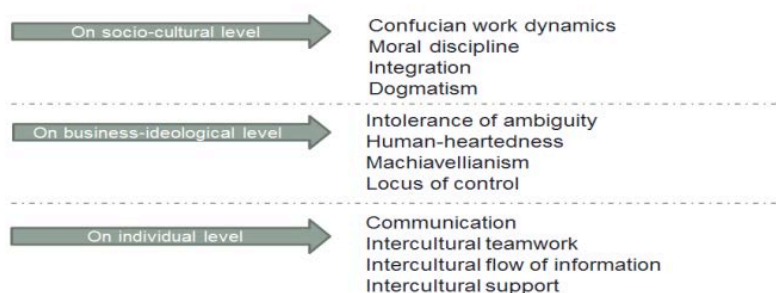
Based upon existing literature, they “developed a values system that consists of eight specific values.” On socio cultural level, “theses value dimensions incorporate the importance of trust in relationships (Confucian work dynamics), the emphasis on one’s self-interest versus the good of others (moral discipline), the managers’ views and valuation of the superior subordinate relationship (integration) and his acceptance of new ideas and changes (dogmatism.” (Ralston, et al., 2006:72).

On business ideological level, they defined the values of “one’s orientation towards wanting security and avoiding risks (intolerance of ambiguity), managers’ orientation towards employee welfare versus task accomplishment (human-heartedness), managers’ approach to influencing others at work (Machiavellianism), and managers’ feelings of control over their work environment (locus of control)” (Ralston, et al., 2006:72).

There are four more cultural dimensions on individual level added in this study, based on observations and interviews made in Germany and Switzerland: Communication, Intercultural teamwork, Intercultural flow of information and Intercultural support.

## Business Case Methodology

Ralston’s framework and four further dimensions on the individual level used for this research study



**Figure 4: Framework for Business case (by author)**

### Critical approach

The cultural dimensions of Ralston are characterized by Western and Eastern culture which – in times of globalization- make the framework as one of worthwhile frameworks in intercultural research study. The participating researchers in this study come

from different cultural backgrounds of the Eastern and Western world. This boots the advantage that the cultural dimensions are taken from different cultural point of views. Unfortunately there are no data given for Germany and Switzerland. But with mainland China and Hong Kong, Ralston and his colleagues have at least similarity in relation to comparing country size, common language and close business relationship within the comparing countries.

### **Background information**

#### Germany and Switzerland

Compared to Germany (357'000 km<sup>2</sup>; 80.5 billion inhabitants), Switzerland is very small in terms of both, surface area (41'000 km<sup>2</sup>) and population; of its 8.1 billion inhabitants, around 20 % of them are foreign citizens. In 2013 around 298'000 Germans lived within the borders of Switzerland (For Germany: 80'700 Swiss) (Sources: de.statista.com and bfs.admin.ch, requested 2014-05-21).

Switzerland shows an ethnic makeup of 65 % Swiss Germans, 18% French and 10% Italian (Szabo et al. 2002:55). With nearly 64% of the total population, German is the largest language area in Switzerland. Although High-German is an official language it is mainly a written language. According to the results of the census in 2000, 80.5% of the requested Swiss Germans replied to speak regional dialect (which belongs into the dialect family of Swiss German) while 90.8% of them replied to speak only regional dialect and no High-German (Lüdi, Werlen, 2005:36).

#### Historical development

In the Middle Ages, main parts of Germany and Switzerland belonged to the Holy Roman Empire. The Habsburger, a Swiss dynasty, came into power in the 13th century. By that time, in 1291, the "Forest Cantons" united in a confederation against the Habsburg monarchy. The Federal Letter or League of the Three Forest Cantons was signed on 1st August, today's National Swiss Holiday.

At the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, Switzerland attained legal independency. It was lost within the time frame of French revolution and the Napoleonic wars. Switzerland became more and more dependent on France. At the Congress of Vienna (1815), the European powers restored Switzerland within its borders of 1789 but also obliged the confederation to be perpetually neutral. After 33 years of discord and civil war, Switzerland became a neutral nation encompassing 24 cantons with four language regions. Since 1979, 26 cantons exist within the border of Switzerland.

Germany, as we know it today, is a very young country of 24 years. After World War II, it was separated in Eastern and Western Germany. In 1955 Western Germany joined the NATO. Eastern Germany (GDR) was founded by the Soviets in May 1955 and became part of the Communist Economic System and the Warsaw Pact. People within Eastern Germany were not allowed to criticize the system nor to travel to Western Germany. Within the early nineties the economic system in UDSSR and its satellite states collapsed. The knock-on effect reached Eastern Germany and on 9th November 1989, the Berlin Wall came unexpectedly down. On 3rd October 1990 the reunification was made officially. Based on this event, the idea for a common currency within the European Union was born and fixed in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Switzerland never entered the EU but maintains bilateral treaties with members of EU

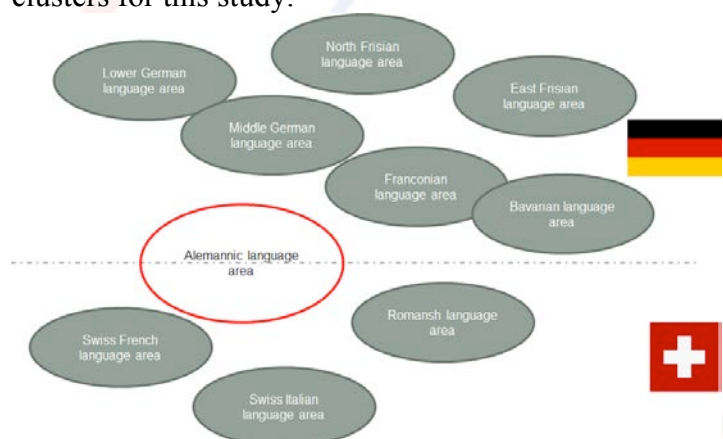
and operates as member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) since 1995. In 2002, after several referenda, the Swiss people decided to become member of UNO. In 2004, Switzerland ratified the Schengen-Dublin agreement, which grants the free movement of persons from EU to Switzerland and vice versa. It was supported by referendum on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2005 by the electorate and became operative in 2008 (europa.admin.ch; requested 14-05-21).

### Religion

Germany and Switzerland are strongly characterized by its Christian heritage. In 2013, around 31% of the German population has been Roman Catholics and around 30 % Protestants (Fowida, requested 14-05-21). In Switzerland, 38% of its populations are Roman Catholics and 28% Swiss Reformed (Der Bund kurz erklärt 2014:8). In both countries the numbers of members of churches decline steadily.

### Linguistic

Within the borders of the nations Switzerland and Germany are lots of heterogeneous cultures. There is neither typical German nor Swiss. In parts, the culture differs from village to village. A deep analysis of each culture would break the mold of this paper. Therefore the language areas in Germany and Switzerland are categorized into several clusters for this study.



**Figure 5: Cluster of language areas in Germany and Switzerland (by author)**

For the analysis of hypothesis 1 and 2 the cluster in dialect language area is not been taken in consideration. For hypothesis 3 and 4 the study is based on the same linguistic cultural area, the Alemannic language area. Historic-cultural, the Alemannic dialect was already mentioned in the Early Middle Age. This idiom is spoken in variation in six countries; in Germany (parts of Baden-Wurttemberg, Allgau), France (Alsace), Austria (Vorarlberg), Liechtenstein and well as in the German speaking parts of Switzerland and selectively in parts of Northern Italy.

### Daimler AG and Mercedes Benz Switzerland

Daimler AG, situated in Stuttgart, is one of the best known car manufacturers. Mercedes-Benz Schweiz AG is a subsidiary of Daimler AG. It is situated in the accommodation of Zurich and consists of two independent units.

From 2007, Daimler AG developed for its division Mercedes-Benz Car group a web based tool for its retailers to sell Mercedes-Benz and smart only by entering and using one single lead management system called MBC POS (Mercedes Benz Car group Point of Sales).

## Business Case

### Design and Selection

The Business case is based on the pilot rollout of MBC POS from Daimler AG to Switzerland from Sept. 2010 to June 2011. The rollout team of Daimler AG consists of twelve internal and several external employees. Furthermore, the executive managers from MBC POS, the CEO of Mercedes Benz Switzerland as well as executive managers from marketing & sales at Mercedes Benz Switzerland have been participated at the interviews.

I have chosen the single embedded case study because the German Daimler AG on the one side and its Swiss subsidiary provide the necessary conditions to assess culture, to test my hypotheses and access to the phenomena under investigation. This case study is viewed as critical and revelatory. Critical, because of the fact that the selected case – the MBC POS project – is present in two cultures where the phenomena under analysis can be observed and a sufficient sample size of respondents is given on both sides.

It is also revelatory, because such a phenomenon is not being previously investigated, from an insider's perspective, in a bilateral business project between a Swiss German and a German company. The phenomenon of culture in both companies is investigated at three different levels: socio-cultural, business-ideological and individual cultural level. The time frame for the investigation was kept as short as possible due to the ongoing project steps.

Another case study design alternative is the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches - a multi method design - which I selected for this thesis.

Thus, the employment of the qualitative methods (here observation and interview) has to be carefully weighted against the employment of the quantitative methods (here survey) because survey methods are more focused and efficient than observations or interviews.

The survey uses the 12 statements requested on cultural dimensions mentioned above. It is split in four sections. Section A samples personal data. Section B – D deal with statements of cultural dimensions on socio-cultural, business and individual level. The cultural dimensions in section B and C are in accordance to Ralston's Framework while those in section D come from conducted interviews and observations. Each section includes four statements which reflect each the perception of the current status (IS) and four statements which reflect each the desired status (SHOULD) in adaptation with the GLOBE study. Also the ordinal scale is adapted from the GLOBE scales but in reverse order. The order within the survey is depicted in the table below:

### **Survey response scales**

- 1 I totally agree with this statement
- 2 I mostly agree with this statement
- 3 I somewhat agree with this statement
- 4 I neither agree nor disagree
- 5 I somewhat disagree with this statement
- 6 I mostly disagree with this statement
- 7 I totally disagree with this statement

In the first stage I've used observations and interviews to limit the determinants of cultural dimensions. In a second step, I analyzed and evaluated the results of the qualitative approach to build up a framework for my survey. In total, I weighted the results from qualitative methods against quantitative methods I used by 1:2.

Limitations of this study are not only related to language or dialect area but also to the methodology used, available resources and the influence of researcher's subjective point of view.

### Findings

I acquired the findings on the visible outer layer (artefacts and products) from casual and formal observations of participants and myself. The findings regarding to the middle layer (behavior and values) come from the conducted survey while those from the inner layer (assumptions) result from observations and interviews I conducted.

On sociocultural level I primarily noticed different narration between Swiss Germans and Germans. Independent of the canton they come from, the majority of Swiss are proud of being Swiss. Swiss claim to purchase at Swiss Supermarkets like MIGROS and Coop (although in cantons near the German border many Swiss purchase in Germany because goods are on lower price there). Many Swiss Germans are proud of speaking dialect.

One referendum, the Zurich electors have been faced in May 2011 was about if - instead of Higher German - dialect should be single language of education in public kindergarten. The initiative was accepted by 53.9% (<http://www.nzz.ch>, requested 11-07-01). Swiss are more involved into political decision findings than Germans (except fiscal policy). One of the Swiss principles is that each person is responsible for himself (individual initiative) and only in case he is not able to do so, the canton supports him. This fact and the myth of being one single nation of brothers, makes many Swiss Germans seen themselves as equal ranked with equal rights and equal duties. I made the experience that Swiss Germans frequently lay things on the line and – in general - adhere to it.

This directness may be strange to many Germans. Germans are familiar with social state although this concept is shifting towards self-reliance. Demonstrations like Stuttgart21 (against the low-level main station in Stuttgart) show that also Germans are willing to accept responsibility. Still, I noticed that Germans are more into hierarchical thinking than Swiss Germans which might be an historical remnant. Furthermore, I made the observation that fewer Germans that are proud of being German than Swiss of being Swiss. At the same time Swabians are proud of being Swabian. The slogan "Wir können alles ausser Hochdeutsch" launched by the federal state Baden-Württemberg in 1999 demonstrates this self-esteem.

I determined that Swiss Germans sometimes have a fairly gritty idea about their Northern neighbor: Germans push themselves to the fore, speak rapidly and do not care about consensus, which is highly valued by many Swiss.

I also noticed that Germans' main mean of transport are cars, while Swiss Germans' main means of transport is "Velo" (bike) or tram (in cities) and for medium distance railway. Both societies claim to be world champions in recycling. I also made the ex-

perience that both countries are very rule based, but in contrast to Germany, the fines in Switzerland are more expensive. In terms of gender equality, I made contrary observations for Switzerland. On the one side, the majority of Federal Council is female. On the other side female employee draw lower wage than male (in 2010:27%). In contrast to Germany, family policy is mainly not paid by social state but private for reasons mentioned above.

In interviews with Swiss Germans about their perception of Germany and Germans I got contrary impressions. On the one side many Swiss Germans term Germany a "Grosser Kanton im Norden" but on the other side there is a kind of xenophobia against Germans in Swiss politics and media noticeable.

In interviews with Germans about their perception of Switzerland and Swiss Germans I got the impression that it varies much from the facts. Some told me, Switzerland is seen as postcard idyll never the mind it is expensive others that Switzerland is an island for tax fraud. These are stereotypes which do not align with my observations.

The participation rate towards my survey was pleasantly high; for Switzerland 81% and for Germany 59% of the participants replied.

On the socio-cultural level I made the following findings for Germans and Swiss Germans:

Confucian work dynamics: The German respondent discern this value as partly given while the Swiss respondents distinguish it as mainly given. Both groups say that participants of the societies should mainly give attention on trust-based relationships given.

Moral discipline: The German and the Swiss German respondents perceive this value as partly not given. Both groups say that participants of the societies should mainly possess higher degree of moral courage.

Integration: While the German respondents do partly not agree that mistakes are tolerated by the society, the Swiss German respondents neither agree nor disagree with this statement. Both groups could neither agree nor disagree if their society should be more tolerant or not against mistakes made by a person living within the society.

Dogmatism: While the German respondents neither agree nor disagree that different opinions are usually accepted by the society, the Swiss German respondents partly agree with this statement. Both groups mainly agree that their own society should be more open for new ideas and changes.

On the business-ideological level I made the following findings for Germans and Swiss Germans:

Intolerance of ambiguity: The German respondent perceive this value as partly given while the Swiss respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement. Both groups mainly agree that employees should be more involved in the decision making procedure.



Human-heartedness: The German participants partly agree with the statement, while the Swiss German participants neither agree nor disagree with the statement. Both groups expect that conflicts should be mainly resolved by negotiation and finding a solution together with the employee.

Machiavellianism: While the German respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement that superiors and managers put self-interests beyond the interest of the work group, the Swiss German respondents partly disagree with this statement. The group of German respondents expects that Machiavellianism should mainly not be given in the company while the Swiss German group neither agrees nor disagrees with this statement.

Locus of control: While the German respondents mainly agree that superiors can rely on the participation of his team members, the Swiss German respondents partly agree with this statement. Both groups mainly agree that superiors should rely on the participation of their team members.

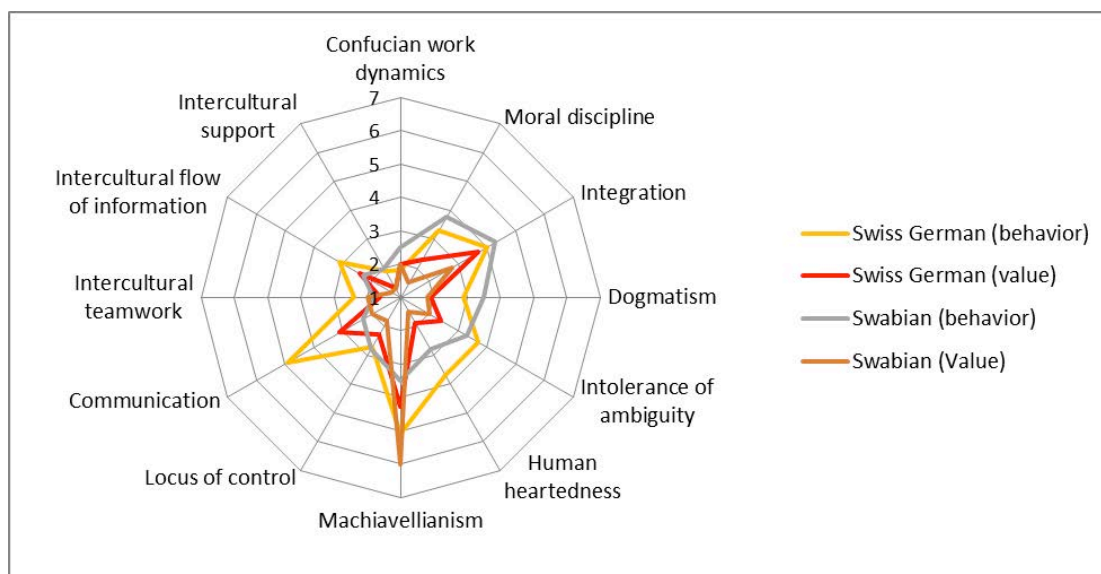
On the individual level I made the following findings for Germans and Swiss Germans:

Communication: The German respondents perceive this value as partly given while the Swiss respondents partly disagree with the statement. Both groups mainly expect that cultural differences due to communication should become smaller.

Intercultural teamwork: The German and Swiss German participants mainly agree that they feel very well integrated upon their own culture. Both groups expect that they mainly should be very well integrated with members of other cultures.

Intercultural flow of information: Both, German and Swiss German respondents partly agree that they got the same necessary information as their colleagues from other cultures. The group of German and the group of Swiss German respondents mainly expect that they should get the same necessary information as their colleagues from other cultures.

Intercultural support: Both groups mainly agree that they get the same support from each team member, regardless to cultural differences. While Germans mainly agree that they should get the same support from each team member, regardless to cultural differences, Swiss Germans totally agree with this statement.



**Figure 6: Cultural differences between Germans and Swiss Germans (by author)**

The 2nd part of the survey shows the findings I made within the Alemannic dialect area.

The sample size of Swabian is little with only 4 participants, while the sample size for Swiss Germany rests by 10 participants.

On the socio-cultural level I made the following findings for Swabians and Swiss Germans:

Confucian work dynamics: The Swabian respondent discern this value as partly given while the Swiss respondents distinguish it as mainly given. Both groups say that participants of the societies should mainly give attention on trust-based relationships.

Moral discipline: The Swabian respondents could neither agree nor disagree with the statement, that their society possesses a high degree of moral courage. The Swiss German respondents perceive that in their society partly possesses moral courage. Both groups say that participants of the societies should mainly possess higher degree of moral courage.

Integration: The Swabian as well as the Swiss German respondents neither agree nor disagree that mistakes are tolerated by their society. While the Swabian participants partly agree with the statement that their society should be more tolerant or not against mistakes made by a person living within the society, the Swiss German participants could neither agree nor disagree if.

Dogmatism: While the Swabian respondents neither agree nor disagree that different opinions are usually accepted by the society, the Swiss German respondents partly agree with this statement. Both groups mainly agree that their own society should be more open to new ideas and changes.

On the business-ideological level I made the following findings for Swabians and Swiss Germans:

Intolerance of ambiguity: The Swabian respondent perceive this value as partly given while the Swiss respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement. Both groups mainly agree that employees should be more involved into decision making procedure. The Swabian participants partly agree with the statement, while the Swiss German participants neither agree nor disagree with the statement. Both groups expect that conflicts should be mainly resolved by negotiating and finding a solution together with the employee.

Machiavellianism: While the Swabian respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement that superiors and managers put self-interests beyond the interest of the work group, the Swiss German respondents partly disagree with this statement. The group of Swabian respondents expects that Machiavellianism should mainly not be given in the company while the Swiss German group neither agrees nor disagrees with this statement.

Locus of control: Both, the Swabian and the Swiss German respondents partly agree that superiors can rely on the participation of their team members. Both groups mainly agree that superiors should rely on the participation of their team.

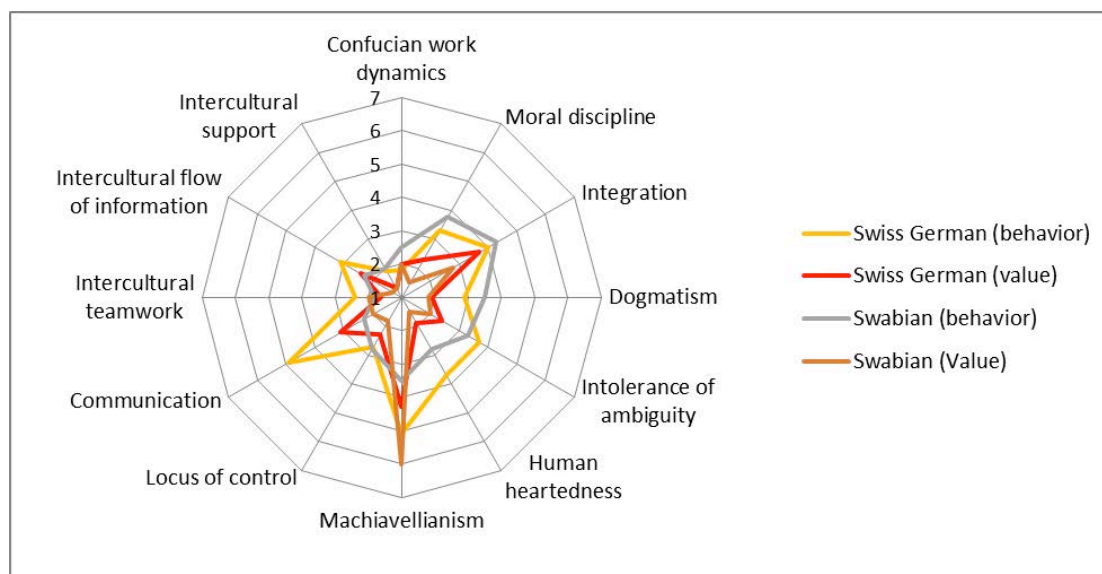
On the individual level I made the following findings for Swabians and Swiss Germans:

Communication: The Swabian respondents perceive this value as mainly given while the Swiss respondents partly disagree with the statement. While the Swabian participants mainly expect that the cultural differences due to communication should become smaller, the Swiss German participants only partly expect it.

Intercultural teamwork: The Swabians and Swiss German participants mainly agree that they feel very well integrated beyond their own culture. Both groups expect that they mainly should be very well integrated with members of other cultures.

Intercultural flow of information: While the Swabian participants mainly agree to the statement that they got the same necessary information as their colleagues from other cultures, Swiss German respondents only partly agree with it. The group of Swabians totally agrees with the expectation that they should get the same necessary information as their colleagues from other cultures. The group of Swiss German respondents mainly expects it.

Intercultural support: Both groups mainly agree that they get the same support from each team member, regardless of cultural differences. At the same time, both groups totally agree that they should get the same support from each team member, regardless of cultural differences.



**Figure 7: Cultural differences within the Alemannic dialect area (by author)**

## Conclusion

The empirical findings show that there are little differences between German and Swiss Germans based on selected cultural dimensions. This result supports the findings in literature of Hofstede, Trompenaars and the GLOBE study.

Finally the series of the survey exhibit significant cultural differences in only two cultural dimensions; in behavior for Machiavellianism and in value for intercultural support. Hypothesis 1 can be supported by the results.

Nevertheless, the findings in observation and the results of the survey show a different picture of the cultural understanding in behavior. In general, Germans see Switzerland as expensive tourist country with pretty countryside or as tax haven. I made the experience, that only few Germans which are involved in cross-cultural business with Swiss Germans really care about their cultural underlying. One main driver is the common written language why many Germans estimate are no cultural differences in business.

As we now know, this is a fatal error. My observation on socio-cultural level show that— others than the Germans – the Swiss Germans are frequently confronted with Germans mainly because Germans are the second largest group of foreigners working in Switzerland and they are mainly better educated than Swiss themselves. Thus, some Swiss Germans - especially voters of Schweizerische Volkspartei (conservative party in Switzerland) and popular Swiss media – show German phobic tendencies. I estimate fear and jealousy as main sources for this behavior because Germans are better educated and may destroy Swiss culture imposing their own culture.

Based on these results I come to the assumption that cultural differences between Germans and Swiss Germans tend to have a negative impact on a common cross-cultural project. The findings can be supported or rejected by comparison with Germans or Swiss Germans grown up in third cultures. This would lead to another hypothesis if grown-up outside Germany (for Germans) or Switzerland (for Swiss Germans) have influence on cultural perception towards the other culture. The analysis of

this would break the mold of this thesis. Therefore hypothesis 2 can be only partly supported mainly by observations.

Swiss Germans frequently call their Northern neighbors Swabians, even though it is geographically incorrect. Swabians are one regional group of Germans situated in the South-Western part of Germany and are socio-cultural closely related to Swiss Germans due to the historical heritage. Hypothesis 3 can be mainly supported. While there are no significant cultural differences in value system between Swabians and Swiss Germans, both show different behavior in the integration and obviously in Machiavellianism. The intercultural differences between Germans and Swiss Germans are more significant than the intracultural differences between Swabians and Swiss Germans. Based on these results I verify hypothesis 4. Due to the small sample size and the observations I collected no clear statement can be made. Thus, hypothesis 4 could neither be supported nor rejected.

In total, my findings give a glance that in or even inside related cultures, cultural differences play an important role in the outcome of a cross-cultural project. It shows that both cultures can learn how to deal with cultural differences of the related culture. Following this, Hofstede's comment that "cultures are more often a source of conflict than of synergy", can be rejected.

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*The Conserving Cultural Landscape as a Driver for Identification in Local Communities in Taiwan*

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**Abstract**

A cultural landscape, which encompasses various elements in a specific area, represents the combined works of nature and man. An organically evolved cultural landscape may represent a specific production process for a place, and may consolidate the identification for local people through conservation process of cultural landscape. With this concept, traditional economical model with special cultural meaning may be kept, and new model and idea may be created. Besides, specific and protected environment in a cultural landscape may become the visual source of memory which influences belongingness of local people and visitors. The legacy of knowledge, technology and beliefs which could be inherited may become social and cultural identification for local community. With the influence of globalization, local identity in rural area becomes crucial for the communities. The conservation of cultural landscape may create an alternative model on economic, environment and society, by which new local identity would be formed, and transformed as a new model for sharing. In this paper, cases of cultural landscape of rural areas in Taiwan will be discussed, especially the influences on identification of economic, environment and society during the conservation process.

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## 1. Introduction

Local rural villages are important in the long term history of regional development. A rural village, recorded history and memories, may be the center of rural land around which numerous farms have been cultivated, and become the place of interaction of people and goods. However, due to influences by globalization and urbanization, many rural villages have been declined: young people may lose their job opportunities in the rural villages, by which population ageing have been increasing in the villages, while houses, monuments and farms have been also abandoned gradually. Woods(2007) concluded five topics rural research and globalization and argued that globalization has both positive and negative impacts on rural development, and globalization has been associated with depeasantization which involved both the commercialization of production systems and the subjugation of localized rural cultures and social structures.

It is significant in the rural area in Taiwan which has been seriously impacted by globalization, especially the influences from the Agreement on Agriculture of World Trade Organization (WTO). The fallow policy in rural land has made the deterioration more serious. Consequently, the local culture, historic evidence, and other interactions between human and environment would vanish, while the farms and rural village became sites for real estate.

Nonetheless, a rural area should not be the place for housing or second home only. It may be a place related to food security, food safety, ecology, and the landscape modified through interaction of people and environment. The value of a rural area thus expanded from economic asset to an integral resource which encompassed economic, environment and social significances.

## 2. Cultural Landscape and Identification

### 2.1 Definition of Cultural Landscape

A cultural landscape, which encompasses various elements in a specific area, represents the combined works of nature and man. The definition of cultural landscape under UNESCO World Heritage focuses on the interactions between people and their natural environment, which often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land-use, considering the characteristics and limits of the natural environment they are established in, and a specific spiritual relation to nature. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2008). Since 1992, more than 100 sites have been nominated as cultural landscape in World Heritage.

In the system of World Heritage, three categories of cultural landscape are identified, namely (1) clearly defined landscape designed and created intentionally by man; (2a) organically evolved landscape - a relict (or fossil) landscape; (2b) organically evolved landscape - continuing landscape; (3) associative cultural landscape. More than 50% sites are category (2b): organically evolved landscape - continuing landscape, which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At



the same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2008). With the definition of cultural landscape in World Heritage, it is more emphasized on the process of interaction between people and land which may have specific cultural meaning through time. The demand for protection of tangible and intangible parts of an integral landscape may be revealed.

In Taiwan, the amendment to Cultural Heritage Preservation Act had been added the category of Cultural Landscapes at 2005, which includes the spaces and related environment of myths, legends, circumstances, historical event, community life, or ceremony. And the Operational Guideline of the Act further indicates the detail categories, which includes the location of myths and legends, the routes of historical or cultural facts, religious landscape, historical garden, the locations of event, agricultural landscape, industrial landscape, transportation landscape, irrigation facilities, military facilities, and the landscape interacted between humankind and the natural environment (Fig. 1, Fig. 2). Although these functional categories, unlike conceptual categories defined as World Heritage (Fowler, 2003), may lead to some misunderstanding in some sites due to the restriction of limit list of categories, cultural landscape has provided new opportunities for a rural site which has been transformed and accumulated various cultural significance through time, while is still functioning today.



Fig. 1 An irrigation cultural landscape in Taiwan



Fig. 2 A salt pan cultural landscape in Taiwan

## 2.2 The Core Value of Cultural Landscape

From the cultural heritage point of view, a cultural landscape should be a site reflects the interaction of people and environment/land, not a “landscape” of cultural idea, thinking, or viewpoint. It should be constituted with six basic components: theme, people, function, environment, objects, and time. A cultural landscape may be interpreted as functioning process made by people, at the same time some objects are made in the natural environment, while it is a dynamic and change process through time by which the historicity also accumulated.

The “theme” means a cultural landscape should be a site which “reflect how people use natural environment intentionally, while try to achieve specific purpose or work”. Plachter(1995) further argued that a site may be regarded as a cultural landscape where man’s culture and nature really shapes or has shaped each other. Besides, man is or was conscious of this influence in terms of defined aims, and the material structure of the landscape reflects those aims. Finally, he also noted that ecological mechanisms of control, reconstruction and decomposition are still at work, and man’s interactions with nature make use of these mechanisms. Thus a possible cultural landscape site may be not only analyzed and reviewed from the tangible structure of a

landscape, but also the functional process and interaction described as “theme” (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 *St. Emillion* – an UNESCO World Heritage cultural landscape site of vineyard



Fig. 4 “People” as an important part in a religious cultural landscape

“People” means a cultural landscape should be created and modified by people - especially many people and common people. Even the associative landscape in which the view is normally natural, it will not be considered as a cultural landscape if it is not used, interpreted, and associated by people, by which the meanings and significances have been internalized as part of culture (Fig. 4). Otherwise it will be only a natural landscape, and people just explain the view of a natural landscape. “Function” means how people work in the cultural landscape. The function must be made by people, while it should be also particular for environment limits or opportunities. The results of “function” will be “objects”, and only objects made by people with particular function may be considered as part of components of a cultural landscape (Fig. 5). Besides, “function” should be also related to the theme of a cultural landscape, which reflected “how people use natural environment intentionally” described by “theme”.



Fig. 5 The cultivation of sugar cane in a sugar cultural landscape



Fig. 6 The specific structure prevent heavy wind in the natural environment

A cultural landscape must be created from a natural “environment”. The environment is the subject of “people’s” interaction and the place for “function”. Thus, the view in a cultural landscape must be based on a specific environment, in which limits and opportunities due to the natural environment have further shaped the particular view. Otherwise, it will be just a phenomenon made by people while has no relation to the physical environment (Fig. 6). “Object” is the physical and visible part of a cultural landscape. It is not only a single or significant object, but also common and general objects made by people in a site. It must not virtual idea or imagination, but a physical material which may represent idea or imagination.

Finally, with the component of “time”, a cultural landscape has become the “Text” of a site, accompany with other components, which may describe the development history through time. In this sense, all elements in a cultural landscape must be changing through time, and also a dynamic process which will be continuing changing. Even the changing process may be stopped in the past, the influences should be still recognizable in the present.

### **2.3 Local Identification and Cultural Landscape**

Identity within people will be one of key factors in the conservation of cultural landscape. The identity is not only the appearance of heritage, but also the story behind it, and about the extend in which it gives identity both to the elements and the community (Kuipers, 2005). Cultural landscape as at the interface between nature and culture, tangible and intangible heritage, and biological and cultural diversity; represent a tightly woven net of relationships that are the essence of culture and people’s identity (Mitchell, Rössler, & Tricaud, 2009). With the suitable conservation work, it will provide the opportunity for local people to develop new levels of self- and place-awareness – a renewed sense of self-worth, community identity, positive realignment with local landscape and history (Jaworski & Lawson, 2005). However, the conservation may accompany with some restrictions, people who own, use or create the landscape may be affected. Only if the community wholeheartedly and prudently advocates the meaning and significance of the concept of “intrinsic value” as it relates to nature, habitats and species, will citizens possibly understand and consequently accept restrictions (Joos, 2004).

The conservation of a cultural landscape with heritage value should focus on people, especially local people. It is possible to conserve the significance of rural area through the integral concepts advocated by the idea of cultural landscape. If we try to enhance the identification of local people on the rural village, they might be willing to conserve specific living tradition and values. Especially under the threats of globalization, the continuing and traditional operation of a specific rural area may become more significant than those eroded gradually following general values. This also echoes with the idea of cultural landscape with cultural heritage value - basic components of theme, people, function, environment, objects, and time, which also implies the conservation method should not be limited on the “objects”, but extended to other components.

### **3. Sustainable Conservation and Identification**

In a site of cultural landscape with cultural heritage value, it will become important resource for raising local identity with the conservation from economic, environmental, and social aspects, the three pillars of sustainable development. However, sustainable development may imply continuing increase, or improvement from a worse condition. Nonetheless, cultural landscapes, especially those with cultural heritage value, are the products of long-term co-evolution between culture and nature which reflect specific techniques of sustainable land-use and inspire sustainability (Wu, 2011). The conservation for these landscape should protect the traditional functional process, while avoid creating new model completely irrelevant. Management is regarded as preserving an inherited landscape rather than forming a new one (Kendle, Rose, & Oikawa, 2000).

### **3.1 Economy and Identification**

The economic requirement of local people in a cultural landscape should be fulfilled. The concept of sustainable management would not pursue economic growth only. On the other hand, it would try to ensure a balance condition of six components through suitable and reasonable economic model. Sustaining ordinary traditional landscapes based upon rural economies such as agriculture, stock raising and forestry demands an adapted policy and supporting actions (Antrop, 2006), while the feature and value of cultural heritage should not be changed or substituted. Strategies for marketing and branding traditional products and crafts produced in and around parks as a way of strengthening economic sustainability, resource stewardship, and ties between local communities and cultural landscape sites (Diamant, Mitchell, & Roberts, 2007).

The sustainable agriculture in Taiwan would be more emphasis on the problem of the economic viability, and the quality of life for farmers. Besides, since the change of the economic features, the agriculture is also declining. This also results in the population outflow in the rural village, sometimes only the elder farmers and their grand-children still live in the village. For the economic development of the agricultural system, some strategies try to help promote the farm products and diversify farm income, such as direct marketing, agritourism, etc., many farms would rely on non-farm source of income (Committee on Twenty-First Century Systems Agriculture; National Research Council, 2010). Specific marketing strategies directly related to the feature of cultural landscape site would provide unique brand of products, and identification of local people may be also enhanced through the products and benefits from selling products.

### **3.2 Environment and Identification**

In most cases, agricultural cultural landscapes may only work in specific environment conditions, which have made a cultural landscape site different to other sites. It is necessary for a continuing cultural landscape that the balance between production process and natural environment. In this sense, preserving and maintaining local and indigenous traditional knowledge and community practices of environmental management are valuable examples of culture as a vehicle for environmental sustainability and sustainable development, which will foster synergies between modern science and local and indigenous knowledge (United Nation General Assembly, 2010). The environment for a cultural landscape site would be not only the place and resource for the production process, but also the image which has been memorized and cherished by local people.

In Taiwan, agricultural cultural landscapes could be identified through specific environment condition and production process related to the environment, which at the same time have been created unique images. Although the registration of an official cultural heritage would be an encouragement for the identification of the local people who use, create, involves in the landscape environment, the production image with the specific environment would further prompt people to cherish this memory. The cultural landscape of tobacco cultivation, the fishery and salt making cultural landscape along the seashore, the rice growing cultural landscape in the plain with specific irrigation system (Fig. 7), all have its unique environment and image of production which may become identification of local people, and nostalgia of those who ever lived and worked in it.



Fig. 7 The rice growing cultural landscape in Taiwan

### 3.3 Society and Identification

People in a landscape are not only the user of resource, but also creator. A corollary of the sustainability principle is that we must participate in it and be on our guard against irreversible actions (Thompson, 2000). It will become a social conservation, from the participating process, that the knowledge, technology, experience, faith, religion, and other resource will be inherited through people. Landscape provides a way of telling stories about the past and about cultural identities that are tied to place or region and to the local context within which identity and distinctiveness are forged (Fairclough, 2006). Local identity will also be increased from the intangible components of cultural landscape, while the significance of a site will also be differentiated through local identity and landscape features created and operated by people.

Thus the conservation on social aspect, through faith, activities, education, and impartation, will be necessary for local identity. Education, which often involves respecting and encouraging traditional, sustainable practices, is mainly concerned with raising the awareness of local people about the importance of sustainable approaches to agriculture (Phillips, 2002). In Taiwan, the fishery cultural landscape along seashore, and agricultural cultural landscape in an indigenous community have enhanced local identity through practicing, worship or memorial ceremony, and other activities (Fig. 8). These intangible parts, accompanied with tangible, have further enriched the diversity of a cultural landscape, whereby the local identity and local people is the kernel.



Fig. 8 A memorial ceremony in a cultural landscape may enhance local identity

#### **4. Conclusion**

The concept of cultural landscape, from the point of cultural heritage, has extended different vision on the issue of local identity. Six basic components of cultural landscape, namely theme, people, function, environment, objects, and time, covered tangible and intangible parts of a site which also become resources for local identity. With the conservation of cultural landscape, which focused on economic, environmental, and social aspects, local community and people may have chance to keep the ordinary living style.

Although the concept of cultural landscape is a new category in cultural heritage field, it provides a new integral conservation idea by which various elements in a site may have different contribution. It will become a virtuous circle of sense of local identity and cultural landscape conservation, and people are the key factor. Suitable conservation model would inspire people to rethink the significance of a place, and to increase personal identity to the place at the same time. Moreover, these inspirations will further encourage people to preserve the features of a cultural landscape.

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters "iafor" in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is surrounded by two large, overlapping circular arcs. The upper arc is light blue and the lower arc is light red, both rendered with a soft, semi-transparent effect.

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