

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Santa Barbara

“Performing Democracy”:
Kyoto’s Higashi-kujo Madang as a counter-public event

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Anthropology

by

Bruce Reid Caron

Committee in charge:
Professor Mattison Mines, Chairperson
Professor Mayfair Yang
Professor Chungmoo Choi
Professor Allan Grapard

December 1997

The dissertation of Bruce Reid Caron is approved

Committee Chairperson

December 1997

December 1, 1997

Copyright by
Bruce Reid Caron
1997

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my family,
whose patience and support made it possible.

Tinka and Louis: this is for you.

Acknowledgements

There are many people in many places who have helped to make this work possible. All of my committee members contributed substantially in this work and in the thinking behind this (however I take all responsibility for its contents).

Support for this research came from several sources, notably, the Department of Anthropology, Graduate Division, and the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center of the University of California, Santa Barbara and the Nihon Kagaku Kyokai (Japan Science Society)'s Saskawa Research Grant program.

In Japan, my work was made possible by the generous cooperation of the Higashi-kujo Madang executive committee, and by dozens of individuals in Higashi-kujo. My association with this festival was made possible by the suggestion of Professor Nobukiyo Eguchi of Ritsumeikan University in Kytoto. I would also like to thank Professor Sato Ikuya of Saitama University for his support. Nakamura Mayu and Nami Lee were very helpful associates in this research. The Namikawa family in Kyoto was very generous in allowing my family to rent such a wonderful machiya. The help of Bill and Yoko Powell and Robert Singer during our stay in Kyoto is also much appreciated, as are the many kindnesses of Yoshiro Masada. The Kyoto International School made this time in Kyoto a positive experience for my son.

I will always remember Tabata Hideomi, whose recent death in Higashi-kujo takes from the Madang one of its pioneering forces.

Vita

Born	Vancouver, Washington	11/13/1952
B.A.	University of Washington	9/1974
M.A.	University of Pennsylvania	6/1978
M.A.	U. of California, Berkeley	12/1981
Ph.D.	U. of California, Santa Barbara	12/1997

Employment

Cultural Advisor	The Ministry of Culture and Sports, Republic of Korea	1995-1997
Contributing Editor	<i>Kyoto Journal</i> , Kyoto, Japan	1993-present
TAships	UCSB	1995; 1988-1992
Director	Development, UCSB College of Engineering	1987-1988

Publications (selected)

<i>Kyoto Journal</i> . 28	Sanguinality: Transfusions of identity in Modern Japan	1997
<i>The Sacred Mountains of Asia</i> .	Magic Kingdoms: Towards a Postmodern Ethnography of Sacred Places	1995

Areas of Interest

East and South Asian cultures
Culture and democracy in late modernity
Visual social anthropology
Sociology of culture in urban settings
Identity formations among diasporic groups
Ethnography and digital text production
Civil society and the public sphere

ABSTRACT

“Performing Democracy”:
Kyoto’s Higashi-kujo Madang as a counter-public event

by

Bruce Reid Caron

The role of the public performance in the display and maintenance of cultural and social meanings and institutions has been variously described in and out of anthropology for some time, but this is only now emerging as a central topic in urban anthropology, cultural geography/sociology and cultural studies. My work updates the ethnographic critique of public performance within more general critiques of modernity and urban cultural practice.

My work reaches out to issues of civic space, civil society, popular culture, and the public sphere. The festival under study is a focal place for local democracy, and a tactical space of resistance to cultural hegemony by the state/marketplace. For “the festival” is also a primary example of civic participation, and offers a particularly clear model for community action within the modern public sphere.

Kyoto, Japan is an exceptionally valuable site for the study of urban festivals, due to the numbers of festivals that annually occur; the range of meanings imputed to these festivals; the central place of Kyoto’s main civic festivals as cultural properties within Japan’s national cultural self-image. Kyoto’s Higashi-Kujo Madang festival was organized by members of an undercaste community made up of Koreans permanently residing in Kyoto together with Japanese citizens from a stigmatized neighborhood called a “*buraku*.” I was extremely fortunate to have begun my study of this festival from the time of its initial planning and performance through its second year.

My critique of Kyoto is also aimed at the Japanese nation-state, where most of the efforts at cultural management are situated. Koreans in Japan are making demands that the society open itself up to multicultural civic participation. But what are the current qualities of the public sphere in Japan, and how does this open (or close up) to participation by a diasporic community? I will continue to work with the diasporic Korean/*buraku* community in Kyoto, and to look also at Kyoto, at its urban self-representations, how the city maintains its cultural spectacles, and at the governance of civic space within Kyoto.

You are listening to the first paragraph of this Preface spoken by an Apple Power PC computer.

Preface

Multimedia ready or not

As you are probably reading this from the CD-ROM, you have already crossed a threshold from the written page to whatever will come next, currently the screen on a monitor on your desk, but soon a pocket viewer as thin as a piece of note card, unfolding to the size of a sheet of music, which reflects an image from a thimble-sized projector. Becoming "multimedia ready" in order to view and hear what is on this disk may have been difficult and expensive in time and funds, but soon this capacity will be built-in to many devices and academic training from kindergarten, and will become as cheap as a well-bound book. But whatever the future holds on the digital front, you are experiencing one of its beginnings. And as a beginning, this project stumbles where others will later be nimble, and its grasp is far less now than will be possible even six months hence.

Most of the problems of "authoring" this text are the same as those that have challenged ethnographers for decades: finding a problem in the field that illuminates a larger cultural/social concern; developing a

rapport with the group where the practices under study occur; thickening the description of the circumstances of the situation to situate the practice in a manner that informs how and why and where this occurs; and then bringing all of these materials back to a room where they are transcribed, translated and transcoded for use; and finally sitting down to write the thing. These are the core tasks of ethnography that, I trust, are well displayed in what follows. But in what follows there is also something else, something novel in both form and content, something that, in its nascent outline, leads us to a new manner of ethnography.

making a digital text

One of the “moments” of my fieldwork in Kyoto was the use of my interest in the festival community by the community to achieve publicity for the event: in this case as a feature news story on the Osaka evening news (Yomiuri TV). At the same time, I was also performing a part within the festival drama—a part that had been written for me, in which I played myself as a visual anthropologist always sticking the lens of my video camera into spaces and rehearsal zones where it is not entirely welcome. This sort of interaction would be very difficult to explain without the use of the original video (on the right).

[NOTE: if this video space is WHITE: you need the Iterated Systems plug-in for Quicktime: GO TO the dissertation download link at: <http://www.rain.org/~matsuri>](#)

Knowing that my work relied on the use of visual



material, and that the reader should have control over this material, I decided to make a *digital text*. At first, I was thinking only of a book with videos where photographs would have been placed. Had I stayed in that idea, I would have simply used the digital capabilities of this text to mimic the written, paper form, with a few added “bells-and-whistles.” But somewhere in the middle of this project, I began to ask myself about the potential for a new form of writing—a text as different as it need be to express what is available from within the digital mode of textual production. No more asking how the text attaches to the older, paper, mode, but searching for its own logic. I opened the digital box, and out jumped this disc.

Actually, nothing actually jumped out on its own. Most of what you see below is several generations of design away from the original design notion, and the final version became possible only in February of 1997, because of a radical advance in Adobe Acrobat™. Choices in font and color, page layout and text organization were all improved during this process. Meanwhile, the World Wide Web (WWW) continued to grow in content and capabilities, and the text acquired the capability to connect directly to this. Today, we are almost to the point where field-sites and web-sites will both be required spaces for all new urban ethnographic work.

But the main difference in this text (from the one that was printed out on paper for a library that is only now beginning to consider digital texts) is that the lin-

ear order of argumentation used by printed texts no longer applies here. Because of “hyper-links” embedded in the text, the theoretical statements are presented through a collection of short essays that are held in what I call the “[commentarium](#).” These statements are called when appropriate by the main, communicator text that supports them and moves the central argument forward. There is no order to the essays within the commentarium: it would make no sense to try to read these together as a text. At the same time, it would make little sense to read the main text without referencing the commentarium as these links appear. The same essay may be called several times from the main text, to be re-read, or simply recalled by the reader.

The instant link to these, and other texts, allows the argument to “loop” between the essays, where theoretical nodes (at one point I called these “theoroids”) are articulated, and the main text, where these nodes are put to use in explicating an empirical observation or a theoretical move. The commentarium provides a set of fasteners (nails, screws, glue) and the main text a supply of structural materials (boards, bricks, steel rods), which, when put together in an iterative fashion, construct the arguments. Or by another, more provocative analogy, the entire text creates its own meta-language: with the main text providing the syntax, the commentarium, the semantics, and the vocabulary, specific lexical items.

The text-as-language image is useful as this pre-

sents the possibility of a fractal homology between the digital text and its iterative elements: including its linguistic form. Freed from the linear constraints of the page, the digital text may allow a more “conversational” and “dialogical” flow where the pragmatics will include a range of digitally encoded information.

The reader gains an ability to navigate a text that can include a much greater variety of source materials, and also an ability to offer direct (if infuriatingly slow today) feedback to the author via the World Wide Web. Every page has a “send comment” link which allows the reader to access a discussion forum for that chapter. This ability, when readers become more comfortable with it (and as it becomes less cumbersome), will open up a second text, based on the original text, but no longer authored by the original author (also he/she might participate). Readers can talk to one another in this dialogic text. Of all the openings that the digital text provides, this is perhaps the most interesting, and fundamentally provocative one. For it returns the idea of “publishing” a work to a public of readers who can bridge the divide between production and reception and add their voices to the text.

Still the challenge for the reader is to understand that a “chapter” of ten pages in the main text might also include links to fifty other pages, as well as videos to watch, and websites to view. At more than eight-hundred pages and two hours of video—some of it time lapsed for frame-by-frame viewing—there is a

whole lot of material here. And since some of the essays may be called more than once (although the reader may not need to re-read these more than a couple of times to remember them) the iterative dimensions of the text may make it read much longer than a linear text.

For the digital-text reader, texts become more of a resource compendium than a text to be consumed cover-to-cover. Individual essays can be read and then tracked through links to their various applications. Videos can be viewed with an eye for selected information. Individual texts (such as this dissertation) can be gathered into larger collections that are automatically indexed together to form information “oceans” on selected topics. When mounted on the internet, these can be referenced from anywhere on the planet. New forms of collaboration open up in the process.

The problem for the digital-text author is to gain enough of a purview of the entire field of possible information (usually this requires a small-scale research locale) to be able to generate a text that re-assembles this faithfully for the reader. This is similar to the need for “thick description” within written ethnographies, but this task is complicated by the availability of visual and audio information. Everything just gets that much thicker.

through thick and thin

On the reader's side, the text needs to offer pathways through its “thick” information load. And here the digital realm offers real advantages. Hyper-

links are not only used to loop together theory and description, but to automate the reference functions that formerly involved paging back and forth between tables of contents, indexes and end notes and the text being read.

In the following text, the reader is linked instantly to a table of contents, to a series of indexes, and to an entire accompanying compendium (the [Quotadium](#)) where longer quotes are available for short citations given within the main text, and where supplementary texts, such as the [MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#) are also provided. There is also a side text, the [vocabulary](#), where special terms, or terms from Japanese, are described in the manner they are used in the main text.

Still, perhaps the most obvious difference between this digital text and the one printed out and sitting on the shelf is the inclusion of video and sound (not to mention the hundreds of photos and graphics). Here are literally the voices and the bodies of this Kyoto group. Because these images and sounds are now so readily available in the text—more or less on their terms (not to deny the editorial control of the camera) —the text itself moves that much closer to the field.

Here, for example, is one of the most important moments of the very first Madang: in fact, the defining climactic dance that signalled both the end of the event and the beginning of the social movement. The shared emotional intimacy of this dance re-animated the collective imagination of the group, as buraku-dwelling Japanese, resident Koreans, physically challenged persons, and others from the neighborhood and from Kyoto, created circles and danced into the night. Apart from slowing the action so that the reader might better see the expressions of the dancers, the video runs mostly in real time and space.

The video is presented to bring the reader a



more complete, immediate (also less-mediated), and convenient access to the sites of practice under study. The amount of information packed into video is itself rather humbling. For, at another level of description, any of the included videos could provide enough questions and materials for another dissertation. It is only the limitations of CD-ROM that prevented the inclusion of more video resources to this text (I was only able to use about one percent of my video).

With the advent this year of DVD (digital video disk), instead of ninety minutes of video, nine-hundred minutes of (similarly compressed) video will be possible on a disk, and so digital field reports will be able to (and so, at some point, expected to) achieve a site-reference capability: storing enough materials to approach either an encyclopedic reference of a short event in a small locale—literally bringing the site with it with multiple perspectives (equality of participation

between the ethnographer and members of the group who are also collecting these resources). For this we can expect that the skills of the ethnographer and the reader will necessarily converge: readers will have more direct access to massive amounts of field-site generated information, and will be enabled to ask their own questions based on this information.

Even in this nascent phase of digital text produc-

At a workshop on the Japanese sex trade, held at the YWCA in Kyoto in 1994, several women spoke. One of the speakers, an Filipina activist who had started a call-in hot-line in Tokyo, spoke with great passion about the “everyday racism” that Filipinas face in Japan. With estimates of more than 100,000 “Japa-yuki” Filipinas working—often under conditions that border on sexual slavery (subject to physical abuse, with their passports having been taken away by their bosses)—in Japan, their circumstances, much like those of resident Koreans, articulate the borderlands of Japane-ness. Since 1995, Filipinas and Filipinos living in Higashi-kujo have been active participants in the Madang.

The ability to see this speaker and listen to this voice is not incidental to the task of ethnography. Her passion is more than words. Video by the author.



tion, I have tried to increase the reader's control over the video materials. These have generally been presented without prior internal narrative editing. Sometimes a time-lapse video is used to show either an event across hours or a space through an entire journey. Other times, this means that several short videos with no internal editing are used to reduce the pre-narrativization of this material. In a few months, the ability to use hyperlinks to specific video stills or a short selection from within a video clip, will enable the videos to run interactively with the text. But, for

now, the interface between the video and the text remains that of juxtaposition.

The potentials opening up on the digital front offer many more challenges for than they do relief from the problematics of doing urban ethnography in late modernity. For the availability of digitally reproduced material adds to the burden of working with and through this. And as groups produce their own web-sites and videos, another layer of reflexive expression is added on to an already layered fabric of representations. At times it seems difficult to simply keep pace with the amount of self-ethnography being done by the groups we are attempting to study.

the work of ethnography in an age of digital reproduction

I do not here wish to present yet another argument about the need for cultural critique in anthropology. I hope that anthropology has gotten past the idea it cannot or should not be so engaged. After all, the peoples under study do this all of the time, and it is their reflexive critiques (or their lack), in and of the practices *they* do that makes up much of what anthropology might well consider its primary object of study. We commonly use *their* critiques to make *our* academic points. Not only are we obligated to them for the use of this, but the best way to repay this obligation is to then develop other critiques that are not available to the communities where we go as ethnographers, and to return these to the communities in some fashion. And here the “digital age” offers new conduits that connect in two directions: to and from

the field. For example, by linking webpages ethnographers and communities can join into a common network of action and critique.

being (t)here

This brings us to perhaps the most important aspect of digital ethnography: the increasing overlap between here and there, between the field and the classroom, in late modernity. This is not news: the time/space distancing effects of globalizing modernity have been discussed for decades now. But here I want to comment on the effect of these for the task of writing ethnography. Although the metaphor of a “global village” obscures the power effects of who gets to write and who gets written about in the ethnographic process, it does suggest that as much as we can now never completely “leave home” when we go to the field, we are also never that far from the field upon our return (Through the World Wide Web, the internet, and the mail, I am in contact with members of the group back in Kyoto.)

The work of ethnography in the age of digital reproduction includes staying in pace with the space-time distancing of late-modernity in order to merge the field (the old “there”) and the ethnography (the former “here”) in an engaged conversation.

The terms of engagement between the ethnographer and individuals within the group under study expand to include the group's study of the ethnographer, with digital connections into the ethnographer's

locale¹. These links are also made to symbolize a shared outcome from the work performed by the ethnographer.

This work includes critiques of some of the practices of the group, or of practices in the locale that affect the group—critiques that not only echo those available within the group, but that expand the entire arena for self-critique. By the same token, the group receives these critiques with counter critiques of their own directed at the critiques within the ethnography (and sometimes at the person or the background of the ethnographer). As long as the lines of engagement are kept open, then the work continues. When either the ethnographer or the group closes down these links, then the ethnography stops.

There are also individual, *personal* effects of working in this manner over time. For the field is not some place that can be left behind as the career of the ethnographer moves forward. There is a joint investment between the group and the ethnographer. An interest that informs both group and individual identities. The practice of ethnography in the age of digital reproduction requires the ethnographer to share an (imagined) identity with the group being studied. This means that the ethnographer must admit an internalized (or -izable) affiliation with the group under study, and vice

1. For example, I am pursuing a study of a festival in Santa Barbara, and in which I am a long-term member. Already I have taken video of this festival to Kyoto, and I will be providing more information about this event to festival organizers in Kyoto. I will also link my personal website to and with organizations in Kyoto, creating a shared “virtual presence” with them.

versa. This sharing reflects the intimate engagement between the group and the ethnographer that goes beyond what was always there: the proximal sharing of the space of the field site.

In late modernity this connection means much more than “eating with the natives:” particularly where the meal being shared includes a Big Mac™. Both the group and the ethnographer need to find a space where identities and interests overlap. Much of the communication will happen within this overlapping arena, and so the ethnographer (for whom communication with the group is crucial) generally works to widen this overlap as far as possible.

Today the differences between the ethnographer and those living at the field-site can mostly be reduced to a differential in their ken—in their percept-abilities of the situation at hand. There are many places where the ken of individuals in the group exceeds that of the ethnographer (this is why and where we learn from them), and there are a few places where the reverse holds: where the ethnographer brings new information to the situation at hand. There is not a “transcendental” perspective on either side, these kens are very simply different. And a main outcome of ethnography is to expand the kens of both the ethnographer (and her readers) and also of the group, through the practice of ethnographic engagement. When this happens, then the critiques of the group and the critiques of the ethnographer become mutually comprehensible and also mutually critique-able. And so the process con-

tinues.

placements and movements

The “Koreans” in Higashi-kujo are not going anywhere soon. Not unless the Japanese Government decides to send them all back to Korea. And yet their collective action is actually a movement in social and physical space: without their going anywhere. I am tempted to call their group a “social placement” instead of a social movement, for this very reason.

“A free city for international cultural exchange is one where peoples of any country may assemble freely and in peace, regardless of race, creed or social system, for the purpose of cultural exchange”

[Kyoto Declaration](#)

Their movement in physical space is to finally, after several generations of dwelling in the same neighborhood, appropriate this as their own cultural home. They are coming home to Kyoto by remaking this neighborhood on their own terms. Their movement in social space is to re-move the notion that some cultural/racial “Japaneseness” is required in order to live in Kyoto.

To do this they play on the City’s own words,

The “demonstrations” against ongoing the social discrimination toward Japanese individuals living in [Buraku](#) neighborhoods have been domesticated by the City. Every year, after speeches held inside the *buraku* area behind Sanjo Station (a place where only those who live in the *buraku* area can hear these), the City’s band strikes up and the parade moves out. By the time the parade approaches City Hall the band is silent. There are no speeches in front of City Hall.
Video by author.

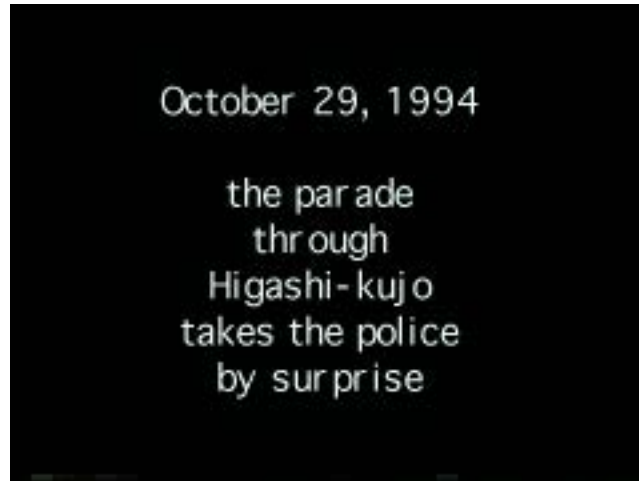


such as the [Kyoto Declaration](#), in which Kyoto’s City government pledged the city to be a “free city for international cultural exchange.” And they call on Japan’s

While virtually every other public event in Kyoto is planned in advance with the police, the parades that the Higashi-kujo Madang stage on the day before the event simply emerge from the housing projects and explode onto the street, sending the police scrambling to keep up. NOTICE: how the police are taking photographs of the parade.

adherence to international standards for human rights and civil liberties.

And, finally, they rely on the City's long-term



[Domestication](#) of its many festivals (*matsuri*) to hide the fact that *their* festival (*madang*) is an actual public festival, capable of fostering and sustaining a [civil crowd](#), and of reproducing a counter-public social movement.

The main problem I faced in preparing the reader to see how this Madang worked to re-place this district of Kyoto as a space of heterogeneous cultural production was to articulate the many, and mostly mis-recognized features of Kyoto's public sphere that made this replacement necessary.

In one paragraph, Alberto Melucci (1989, 12) lays out the problem of locating the conflicts of the public sphere, once these have been moved away from the political arenas where their resolution, under most definitions of democracy, would become possible:

"...new conflicts develop in those areas of the system where both symbolic investments and

pressures to conform are heaviest. These conflicts act increasingly at a distance from political organizations. They are interwoven with the fabric of everyday life and individual experience. The new conflicts are often temporary and they are not expressed through 'instrumental' action. Contemporary movements operate as signs, in the sense that they translate their actions into symbolic challenges to the dominant codes. This is understandable, since in complex societies signs become interchangeable: increasingly, power resides in the codes that order the circulation of information. In this respect, collective action is a *form* whose models of organization and solidarity deliver a message to the rest of society. Collective action affects the dominant institutions by modernizing their cultural outlook and procedures, as well as by selecting new elites; but it also raises questions that transcend the logic of instrumental effectiveness and decision-making by anonymous and impersonal organizations of power. Contemporary social movements stimulate radical questions about the ends of personal and social life and, in so doing, they warn of the crucial problems facing complex societies.

The essay on [State-nation modernity](#) shows how formative notions are developed in the Commentarium, and then applied, when needed to arguments in the main text. This one will be used often, as it carries a load of descriptive uses.

What Melucci did not bring to this description are circumstances that do not hold for nation-states such as Italy, but which are central to state-nations, such as Japan (SEE here: [State-nation modernity](#)). Namely, what we see in Japan is the interest *of the state* in removing conflict from the political/public sphere. In their public festival, the Higashi-kujo Madang organizers return culture to the public sphere.

Melucci does bring to the fore an ethnographic concern: the location of the effects of this social movement in Kyoto. And here, he is quite correct in steering us away from some external, instrumental outcome. To a great extent, it is the performance of the festival itself that is the desired outcome for this social movement: and the success of each iteration of the Madang is judged internally on the amount of cultural expression, and self-reflection that was done. When [The festival performs what it proposes](#), we need not look any further than the event itself.

From Korea to Kyoto: histories

Of all the diasporic groups trapped in the wake of colonial empires, global markets, and geopolitics, one of the least heard about or heard from is the Korean population in Japan. The population of persons holding North- or South- Korean passports who live permanently in Japan is close to 600,000, and about 40,000 of this population reside in Kyoto city. Actually, the great majority of Kyoto's "foreign" population are second-, third-, and now fourth-generation "Korean" residents who were born in Kyoto and who fully expect to live their lives there.

Strangers on a Japanese street

Today, this diasporic community is caught between two exclusions: they are divorced from affective ties to Korea (their "official" nationality) by their Japanese language mother-tongue and life-long residence outside of the Korean peninsula; and they are excluded, by their foreign (Korean) names, social/economic marginality, and their lack of citizenship, from identity with the larger Kyoto society.

It is against these twin exclusions that one group of Koreans living in South Kyoto have struggled, and their struggle has recently taken the form of a cultural

festival. The tactical use of this festival in creating an opening—both to an imagined Korean culture, and also within Kyoto society and the Japanese “public sphere”—brings to the fore the notion of the public sphere as a space of inclusion/exclusion, and of the sites of practice where inclusion can be tactically attained.

Who are the Koreans living in Kyoto? Why are they there? Why are they called “Korean” even though the great majority of them were born in Kyoto? Why are there no “Korean-Japanese” (or “Korean Japanese”) in Kyoto? What are the histories that can inform their present?

“Koreans¹” in Kyoto are a sub-population with a highly diverse makeup: economically, they range from wealthy families who have ridden the Post-War economic “boom” into conspicuous prosperity to families who have lived for generations in conditions of under-class poverty that most families in Japan would be greatly surprised existed within the nation (this surprise would also reflect a denial of the life-style conditions of many [Buraku](#) dwelling Japanese).

Today the Kansai area of Japan is home to several large concentrations of Koreans: Ikunoku in Osaka, Nagataku in Kobe, Utoro, south of Kyoto, and Higashi-kujo in Kyoto city. All of these districts have organizations that represent the major political divisions in the resident Korean communities, and there are multiple similarities and also many local differences between these neighborhoods.

1. I begin with the word Korean in quotes to make the point that this designation is highly problematic. Most of this chapter and the next attempts to explore some of the problems with the term “Korean” as this is applied (from the outside or by the individual) to tens of thousands of persons born in Kyoto, Japan.

“The life-style of the Koreans was always very difficult. In addition to the body-punishing [labor], there was a great difference between their wages and those of the Japanese. Even the 8-10% of those who were doing the same work as Japanese made only 50% of the [Japanese] wages...”
(Mizuno 1994, 69)

The resident Korean population (“*zainichi kankoku-/chosen-jin*” [persons with either North or South Korean citizenship permanently residing in Japan]) in Kyoto traces its origins to the “annexation” of the Peninsula by Japan in 1910. In 1913 there were only 87 Koreans living in Kyoto-ku, but by 1941, this number had risen to more than 80,000 (Mizuno 1994, 68). Their occupations were listed as “earth-construction” (55%) and “fabric industry” (44%). Earth-construction meant manual labor in the many public works projects of the time (notably the Higashiyama train tunnels). At first the workers were mostly men (80%), who worked on contracts and then returned home. But by the beginning of the War, a third of the population were women, and most families had created homes in Kyoto. This was the beginning of the community of Koreans that still makes their homes in Kyoto.

“It is in Japanese society, one where the myth of society as mono-racial and mono-ethnic is deeply embedded, that *zainichi* youths live their lives. An enormous amount of invisible pressure is at work to assert that being ‘the same as others’ is both vital and a matter of course. Even a slight deviation from the norm could render one a potential target of ostracism, bullying, and abuse.”
([Fukuoka, 1996](#))

Politically, Kyoto’s “Koreans” today are equally diverse, from party-line communists who have visited and admire North Korea, to ultra-conservative capitalists bemoaning the current economic conditions that may limit their portfolio futures. Local individuals and families are affiliated with a variety of religions, from ecstatic traditional shamanic practitioners to Methodist Protestant Christian churches. And they also exhibit the fissures that tend to occur between generations of immigrant families: gaps in language and background that pull apart parents and children into spheres of mutual incomprehension.

Because they are physically identical as a group with the surrounding Japanese community, and because they have spoken Japanese from birth, special practices are required to isolate and mark resident Koreans as outsiders. This is an actively applied racial/national identity, which, in many ways resembles a gendering rather than a racial distinction. Just as many lesbians, for example, have little difficulty passing as straight in everyday circumstances (assuming they desire to pass), the simple fact is that resident Koreans in Kyoto can easily pass as Japanese on the street. This fact decenters the notion of Japaneseness as being the product of a unique, shared blood- and place- based heritage.

In terms of their self-conscious identification with “being Korean,” this group of permanent residents (*zainichi*) is also strung along a wide spectrum, from passionate affirmation to equally passionate denial. As Fukuoka (1996) noted, much of this internal spread of identities and affinities is due to the conflicting logics at play in local identity formation. For as much time as it is possible, many of the young adult *zainichi* in the Higashi-kujo community, as well as other Koreans I met in Kyoto, simply tucked away the fact of their Koreanness during interactions on the street.

Being physically indistinguishable from other, “Japanese” locals (despite the fact that almost all of the Japanese persons I spoke with claimed to be able to make such a distinction¹), and raised in homes where the local variety of Japanese is spoken, they have no difficulty in “passing” as long as this interaction does not require them to show their official residence records. But this ability to “pass” on trains and in stores and restaurants serves also to remind them of the arbitrariness of their official outsider status.

Given that there is as yet no final way of either constantly asserting a positive “Korean” identity, nor in assembling a durable “Japanese” identity—the

-
1. I attempted to test this ability using a set of random street photographs I took in Osaka, but the experiment failed completely. Nearly all of the persons who volunteered to evaluate the photographs—after saying that they had no difficulty recognizing Koreans on the street—stopped mid-test, and requested that the test not continue. My interpretation of this pragmatic failure is that the person faced unacceptable consequences if the test were completed, such as the following: 1) an ability to distinguish Koreans may be perceived as a desire to socially discriminate against them; and 2) the actual task was far more difficult than they realized, and they risked publicly failing in this skill.

former because of the widespread negative stereotypes assigned to a Korean “national character,” and the latter because there is no broad support for a total assimilation of foreign nationals as “Japanese” in Kyoto—there will be times when any one identity position taken will not fit into the expectations of others, who expect a full measure of either “foreignness” or of “Japaneseness” but not something in between. And these expectations arise mostly from the way that “Japanese” identity is conferred and legitimated.

Even as notions of race were discursified in ethnological writings in Europe/America in the 19th century, notions of Japaneseness were also the product of ethnological speculations. One task of doing ethnography today is to rethink these earlier anthropological notions.

The discourses that have shaped the collective imagination of “Japaneseness” over the last couple of hundred years included centrally a string of “nativist” writings that were influential from the beginning of the nineteenth century, and which both heralded and warned against cultural changes. Here is one situation where the term “ultra-conservative” has an appropriate use, for these foundational ideas about Japaneseness were intended not only to conserve the present into the future, but to reanimate an authentic local/national past as the source for the present. And one of the primary tropes of this “Japanese” past was *the village*. As Hartoonian (1988) put it;

“Increasingly, it was believed [by nativists in the late Tokugawa period] that the Tokugawa village possessed a structure of ties based on relationships in place and blood. These relationships combined to create a natural communal unit. The strategic purpose of such a claim was to show that such structures were reinforced by a variety of communal, cooperative activities, which made possible the reproduction of the peasantry’s means of social existence. People lived, worked, worshiped, and died in the same place, with others to whom they were bound by natural relationships of kinship, friendship, and, above all else, divine necessity. This is not to say that Tokugawa villages lacked classes or hierarchical status relationships. But regardless of social distinctions, the village was able to enforce communal responsibility and, thus, reproduce the character of the cooperative, communal unit, despite the prevailing impulse toward “private activity.” Even though villagers might pursue

their private interests, the weight of the communal consciousness, which stressed kinship and necessary reciprocity as natural endowments, still guaranteed the performance of crucially important activities ensuring reproduction. The place of the village became the “natural environment” for carrying out reproduction. The village and reproduction were complementary; one was unimaginable without the other” (244).

While Japanese colonial emigrants were lured to the mainland with films that showed wealthy villages where Japanese customs ruled, immigrant laborers to Japan were made to fit into a cultural “mold” enforced through police surveillance, and police-run mandatory cultural education. This film, made by the Japanese government in the 1930s shows the good life for Japanese colonists in Manchuria. Notice the Shinto Shrine and the abundant harvest. *NHK TV*

Kinship (blood) and residence (place), as exempli-



fied in the model Japanese village, became the media through which communal identity and personal claims to belonging were forged.

“...In using the term *incorporation regime*, I refer to the patterns of policy discourse and organization around which a system of incorporation is constructed. All states develop a set of legal rules, discursive practices, and organizational structures that define the status of foreigners vis-à-vis the host state, and the forms and boundaries of their participation in host polity institutions” (Soysal 1994, 32).

Later, when colonies were being set up on the mainland, the image of the village needed to become mobile, but only one way: Japanese colonists were able to become the progenitors for new villages in Manchuria or Korea, but laborers from these colonies were not allowed to establish official residences within Japanese villages or towns. These diasporic populations, often fleeing the economic ruin of their own villages under Japanese colonial administration, became strangers on the Japanese home-front. They

were strangers, but not, as we shall see, permitted to remain individually or collectively *strange*.

Koreans, Taiwanese and others who came to

The Japan-as-village narrative continues to be used as a trope to describe modern Japanese society. In this clip from a promotional film of the [Jinjahoncho](#) (made in the last decade), the structure of ancient village life is said to provide the answer to the riddle of Japan's unique culture. Of course, this is a riddle that begs other, deeper deconstructions.



For decades, resident Koreans have faced the paradox of widespread assimilation practices that require them to learn to act “Japanese” and to reject and despise Korean cultural practices, while also being excluded from all claims of proper Japanese identity. One of the Madang organizers asked me, “Don’t you think that our situation resembles that of blacks in the US?” To the extent that African Americans are not allowed symbolic identification as “American”—to the extent that, to paraphrase Gilroy, ‘there is no black in old glory’—I would certainly have to agree.

Japan were subjected to a host of incorporation regimes aimed at controlling their movements and actions, and at lessening the cultural impact of their presence in Japan. Never meant to be absorbed into the host society, they were, none-the-less, forced to behave in a “proper” (Japanese) manner.

Here was a “melting pot” incorporation regime where the pot already had its lid on tight, and so all the cultural “melting” among immigrant groups—colonized peoples filling the bottom end of the labor market for the rapidly industrializing Japanese economy: mostly Koreans and Taiwanese men performing *bracero* work in mines and infrastructure construction projects (mostly railroad tunnels)—took place on the outside of the pot. The bitter irony of being taught to

resemble Japanese persons while being kept apart from the latter in areas where Japaneseness brings cultural, social, and economic advantages is not lost among Koreans in Kyoto.

This [Domestication](#) of immigrant laborers is a policy that has continued since the beginning of the century. And it is against this aspect of Japanese government policy and associated social discriminations that Koreans living in Kyoto today construct counter-discourses and practices.

Counter-histories

One of the features of working in Japan is the availability of local writings about the local situation. Visiting members of the local Korean population who were active in counter-practices to the institutionalized exclusions of Koreans, it was not unexpected to also receive pamphlets and books they have authored. However, those who have not acquired a position in the community where they are active (and authoring/authoritative) also tend to not openly express any opinion at all, even *offu reko* (off the record).

One aspect of the local critique of “Japaneseness” is the rewriting of accounts of the history of events and migrations between Korea and Kyoto or Japan. As with other post-colonial peoples¹, Koreans face a history that was once used to justify their domination. Not surprisingly, counter-colonial historical writings find arenas where histories constructed in Japan during the colonial period did not record the breadth of perspectives available. And so new voices and novel thinking about the historical relationship between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese archipelago are emerging.

The current, problematic presence of “Koreans” in Kyoto is simply the latest go-around in a millennium of migration between this region and the nearby Korean Peninsula. The official story of the history of

1. The deconstruction of the dominant colonial history is a task that all scholars in and of the region need to pay heed to, and so this is one area of constructive collaboration between local historians in Kyoto and students of Asia across the globe.

Japan may today foreground the isolation of the archipelago from the mainland until the “opening” of Japan in the middle of the nineteenth century. However, this notion of Japan’s closed—and thus independently developed, and so, unique—cultural history is itself a product of the nineteenth century, and, in any case, most accurately describes the immediate, premodern (1639¹-1868) period of Japan, while hiding several centuries through which the intercourse of persons and objects between Japan and its neighbors was active on many fronts. From the “Silk Road” that brought goods from the Levant to Kyoto, to religious institutions and pilgrimage to the mainland, to military incursions on the Korean Peninsula, movements across the narrow stretch of water between these two places were regular and extensive. A shared legacy of writing, literature, architecture, cuisine, philosophy, religion, military and agricultural technology, and biological and social heritage connected Japan with the mainland long before the Tokugawa shoguns shut this off in the seventeenth century.

It is useful to consider in what ways the Korean Peninsula and the Southern and Western parts of the nearby islands that are now part of Japan may have once constituted an informal social/economic/cultural entity, within which the islands and the mainland were simply internal destinations. For those centuries before the advent of the Yamato polity in what is now

1. Ironically, the very idea of isolationism was borrowed from the Ming Chinese, who instituted a similar policy after 1433 (Sansom 1963, 229).

Kyushu and Kansai Japan we have archaeological¹ records that suggest a continuum of farming and craft techniques between the Peninsula and the Archipelago, but how far should this suggest a shared social community?

-
1. Because so much of the imperial-family archaeological and textual evidence is either unexamined, or covered already with narratives that speak a whole story, it is proving difficult to renarrativize this story without simply “taking the other side,” which is what Prof. Hong from Seoul University (1994) has done by proclaiming the Paekche origins of much of modern Japan. Should enough scholars find clear reasons to doubt the existing narratives, this might help to convince the Japanese Imperial Household that it no longer has an advantage in withholding archaeological evidence.

“Korea: A rich peninsula extending out one-thousand, two-hundred kilometers from the Eurasian Continent, this is the bright sunrise of the East, and the grand country of the Han. The people living there are the closest neighbors of the Japanese. There, the ancestors of the people of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea created a wonderful culture [*subarashii bunka*]. Stand on a street corner in Seoul today and look around: it is easy for a Japanese to think they are not on a street corner in a foreign country. The features and figures of the people and their fashions are all similar to Japanese, and the food, although a little salty, is delicious to us. There is a draft *sake* called Makkari, and a brand of *shochu* [rice brandy] called Jisoro, and the beer also tastes like Japanese beer....” (ZenChoKyouKyouto 1993, 108). This retelling of Kyoto’s history with Korea by Koreans in Kyoto begins with the commonalities of the present, and then details the many connections of the past.

Geographically, from the peninsular shoreline to the island shoreline, merchants, migrants, and mendicants might have travelled by boat without considerable linguistic or bureaucratic difficulty. Beneath the political intrigues and military moves, we can imagine that a wide range of travel and trade occurred. What had *not* yet occurred was the creation of a Japanese or a Korean “nation-state,” and yet these more modern configurations tend to color our perceptions of the early history of the area.

This situation between the Peninsula and its nearby islands (now Japan) persisted in some always changing complexity from the earliest known migrations (and so earlier, as we have little reason to assume our knowledge is complete) through the time of the founding of Kyoto (794) and in the centuries following, when island powers attempted to shift the center of this away from the mainland. But this move by shogunal powers in Kyoto (and elsewhere) mainly served to increase the influence of China on the Korean Peninsula, as Hideoshi Toyotomi (a Shogun ruling in Kyoto) discovered in the late 16th century. His failing and enormously costly military adventure on the Peninsula, repelled by combined Korean and Chinese troops, was abandoned at the time of his death.

A short excursion into the history of the area will allow the reader to glean additional dynamics of the evidence of a shared history from local perspectives in Kyoto.

Korean Kingdoms and the founding of Kyoto

Many aspects of Kyoto's early history are coming into view of late, as scholars rework historical narratives that were first created during Japan's pre-WWII era, when political objectives, such as its recent "annexation" of Korea encouraged a singular interpretation of Japan's relationship to its surrounding nations. Japanese history and Kyoto's role in this (and also of Kyoto's history and "Japan's" role in this) form pieces of the narrative that serves to position Koreans in the social space of today's Kyoto. Much of this position is the result of Japan's modern, colonial history. But Koreans in Kyoto are not ready to forget the long history that connects their city to the Peninsula.

Clans and claims

The early history of Japan is dominated by the presence of two connected types of dominant organizations: noble clans (*uji*) with their affiliated occupational-clans (*be*); and clan-deity/Buddhist shrine/temple institutions¹.

-
1. With various elaborations, these lineage-based organizations dominated local Kyoto affairs (often with internal and many times violent conflicts) until the Meiji period, when the exodus of ruling families to the new capital of Tokyo (and consequent and subsequent political and social changes under Meiji and later governmental control) resulted in the acephalous political structure that remains today. When the Emperor Meiji departed, 130 years ago, the city's population dropped by about a third. Today, Kyoto, like any other Japanese city, competes for central government attention and largess. This attention comes with bureaucratic involvement, including assigned personnel from Tokyo to oversee how funds are used. While other cities may also chafe under these conditions, in Kyoto the loss of centrality still remains a deeper sore point. The transformation of Japan from a lineage-based ruling class to a ministry/corporate-based upper class needs to be further explored.

“The influence of Korea in this transmission of Chinese civilization to Japan has not yet received adequate attention among scholars...

Koreans and Chinese had migrated to Japan from at least the beginning of the fifth century. But during Silla’s rise to power the number of immigrants from the continent—especially refugees from Paekche and ¹Koguryou—increased substantially, as we can tell from accounts of how they were given land and allowed to settle in different parts of the country” (Varley 1984, 22).

Claims for the continental origins of Buddhist institutions are the most clearly documented. But the other institutions, the noble clans themselves (either their structure or their own clan histories, or both), and thus the clan deities as well, can also sometimes be traced to the Asian continent. And where this trace is obscure, this obscurity itself can no longer support a claim for aboriginal clan/institutional beginnings within Japan.

Some historians working on the history of resident Koreans in Kyoto tell another story of the early history of the archipelago. Because of its position downstream on the Yellow river from China, they remind their readers that Korea was influenced far earlier than Japan by Chinese culture, and so were in a more “advanced” technological state even from early pre-historic times (ZenChoKyouKyouto 1993, 108). During the final centuries of the Neolithic, Jomon, period of Japanese history, they note that:

“...many people used the oceans to travel to the Northern side of Kyushu and the San’in (Japan Sea) side of [what is now] Kyoto Prefecture.... These people, perhaps in groups of a dozen or so, would have come to Japan where it was warm and suitable for farming. They carried seed for food-stuffs, such as rice, tools for farming, and decorative goods for ceremonies. In various places [in Japan] they made paddy fields that used irrigation systems, and they increased the efficiency of their agriculture and their military with iron and bronze implements. This was the beginning of Yayoi culture” (ibid).

Contrast this account with that supplied by Tokyo University historian (now emeritus) Saitou Tadashi:

“The culture of the Yayoi period... is distinguished from the preceding Jomon culture by irrigated rice cultivation and the use of bronze and iron artifacts. There was considerable contact with China

1. Paekche, Silla and Koguryou were rival states occupying territories on the Korean Peninsula at that time.

and Korea during this period, and it is supposed that these technological innovations, which spread northward from Kyushuu, were made under continental stimuli..." (In *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* 1983 edition).

This idea of some non-specific "stimuli," rather than migration of peoples to Japan is also found in mainstream literature, such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

"In 108 BC the armies of the emperor Wu Ti occupied Manchuria and the northern part of the Korean peninsula, where they established Lo-lang and three other colonies. These colonies served as a base for a strong influx of Chinese culture into Korea, whence, in turn, it spread to Japan. The fact that Yayoi culture had iron implements from the outset, and bronze implements somewhat later, probably indicates borrowings from Han culture. ...

While these new cultural elements represent a migration to Japan from the Korean peninsula or China, the migration was not of a magnitude to change the character of the people who had inhabited the islands from Jomon times. Yayoi culture undoubtedly represents an admixture of new sanguineous elements, but it seems likely that the chief strain of proto-Japanese found throughout the country during the Jomon period was not disrupted but was carried over into later ages. Differences in Jomon and Yayoi skeletal remains can better be explained by nutritional than genetic reasons" *Encyclopedia Britannica On-line*, 1996).

Varly's "diplomatic" account of the early Yayoi (300 bce-300 ce) also influenced by earlier Japanese sources, acknowledges the spread of wet-paddy agricultural technology from China to Japan, but then notes that this was, "transmitted almost simultaneously at this time to both southern Korea and western Japan" (1984, 4), a feat that begs some explanation.

It is, of course, possible for technology to spread without significant "sanguineous" admixing—thus preserving a homo-genetic (and -geneous) story of pre-historic Japan. However, this would presuppose some sort of active, and effective control over migration onto the archipelago at this early date—i.e., some method of acquiring the technology, while preventing

those who hold this from moving in. Without evidence for this type of control, and with ample evidence for migration into Japan, and even of the active recruiting of cultural specialists from the Peninsula into early (Nara period—pre-ninth century C.E.) Japan, the above story becomes more difficult to accept. Instead we are faced with the task of uncovering a history of the migration of people, and not just of ideas. And, in fact, this history is now being explored.

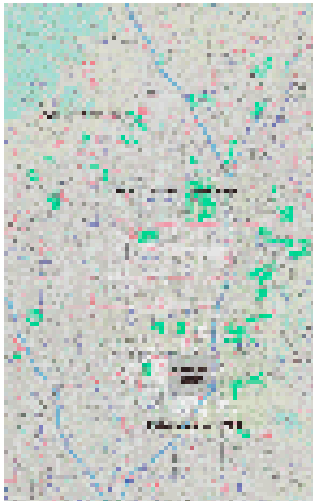
Sansom (1958) is fairly generous in his description of the cultural impact of early immigrants from Korean and China. “Such people,” he noted, “entered Japan in large numbers, if we are to believe the native chronicles, which record the arrival of hundreds of households of ‘men of Ts’in’ and ‘men of Han’...” (*ibid* 38). He is talking about a later migration from around 400-700 CE, and he goes on to say:

“...by the sixth century they were firmly established and were without a doubt a most important, perhaps the most important, element in the composition of the Japanese people, if we exclude the mass of agricultural workers. Their contribution to the growth of civilized cultural life was indispensable, for whatever virtues the Japanese possessed, prior to the fifth century their leaders were very backward in comparison with the exponents of the great cultures of the Asian mainland” (*ibid* 39).

And so, there is an alternative picture of the early Japan that is rather different from that promulgated by Japanese scholars before WWII—or, indeed, by some Kyoto historians today.

“The founders of Yamato Wa must have been a group of military leaders from Paekche’s ruling families who crossed over the sea in search of the New World.... Archaeological evidence clearly indicates that conquest was an important element in the formation of Yamato Wa. The development of Yamato Wa should thus be seen as one part of the history of Paekche.”
(Hong 1994, 271)

[CLICK BELOW](#) to go to ATLAS



“The Hatas, for example, reclaimed the Yamashiro basin in Kyoto, which became a bountiful agricultural area through their abilities. Until then, local people lived near the three rivers and on the hillsides, but the Hatas and others from Korea made a dam to store water, and transformed the low marshy ground [of Yamashiro] into a rice field. The Hatas also constructed the Kadono river dam near Arashiyama [in Kyoto] and they maintained their religious heritage. Hata Noimiki established the Matsuo great shrine in Fushimi where he prayed for the rice harvest... and [he donated] the statue of the Miryoku Boddhisattva at Horyuujii, which has been declared Japanese National Treasure number one...” (ZenChoKyouKyouto 1993, 108).

The uneasiness of city leaders in Kyoto to acknowledge the presence of tens of thousands of “Koreans” in that city also extends to the millennia of immigration, trade, warfare and other contacts between Kyoto and the Korean Peninsula (the one exception being spectacles of the diplomatic entourages of the Choson Court to Japan, which are available on paintings, and which can also serve to support the importance of the Japanese Court).

Resident-Korean historians in Kyoto recount the arrival of Korean clans in the Kansai area before and during the pre-Kyoto (pre-Heiankyo), Nara period (646-794). Various notable clan names have corresponding Korean names, usually from Paekche. And no clan was more notable, and more notably Korean than the Hata clan of Kyoto.

“Apart from the Hatas, the Yasakas made the Yasaka Shrine to their patron saint, which became the foundation for the Gion area [of Kyoto] and the Komats at Nansan castle... received visitors from Korea by the fifth century. If we turn our eyes if little bit east, to Lake Biwa, we find first the Wani clan, and from this the Onon Nishikiori, Ootomo, Okinaga... etc., who descendents are still there” (ZenChoKyouKyouto 1993, 108).

The Nara period was an time of active diplomacy and cultural borrowing between the Yamato courts and those on the Korean peninsula. The official support for Buddhism in this period increased the traffic in Buddhism-related artists and practitioners, and in associated literature and arts. At the same time, other clan/ancestor-deity related practices also maintained whatever historical connections they had with the Korean Peninsula, and it is likely that they also entered into new connections with contemporary counterpart institutions or the literature of these institutions on the Peninsula. (Here I am suggesting that there is little information to suggest that the Shinto stream of the religious practice was not somehow insulated from inputs external to the archipelago.)

The choice of (what is now) Kyoto as site of the new palace and its surrounding city (*heiankyou*) in the late 8th century is often described in terms of proper geomancy (the position of the surrounding mountains and the river Kamo). But the *social* positioning of this new imperial home¹ also suggests that connections with local, already established clans that were linked to Paekche were perhaps another consideration (as was perhaps some distancing from the powerful Kasuga/Toudaiji shrine/temple institution in Nara).

-
1. The possibility of direct kinship between the clan on the throne in Nara in the Sixth century CE (and therefore, later in Kyoto) and royal lineages on the Korean Peninsula is a topic that is difficult to examine, in large part because the tombs of early rulers in the Yamato area have not been excavated, in large part, one might suspect, to avoid the likelihood that the Japanese Imperial lineage might prove to be a side-family of some early Korean royal clan.

“At its beginnings in the eighteenth century, kokugaku [the school of “national learning”] concentrated on locating an authentic experience which had been suppressed by contemporary conditions that could be found only in literary works produced in the native idiom.

Kokugakusha [proponents] quickly recognized, however, that the representation of such experience in texts had been seriously compromised by the use of Chinese conventions and that it was necessary to resuscitate the native language, which was buried under alien and unnatural Chinese words, syntax, and sounds.” (Hartoonian 1988, 35-36)

For the emerging political and economic institutions of the time in Heiankyou (Kyoto), including recently imported Buddhist institutions, were heavily influenced and sometimes directly dominated by older institutions on the mainland. The building of the new capital on a Chinese model is a good example of the pervasive “continentalizing” of aristocratic, social and cultural production in Heiankyou.

Here we can see that Kyoto’s early “multicultural” institutions were a part of a widespread traffic in cultural materials and skills, a traffic that was, early on, dominated by cultural production on and from the Asian continent. Centuries before “modernization” or “Westernization,” other-Asian influences decentred Japanese cultural institutions (for example, priests first had to go to abroad to be ordained).

the nation story

The importation of peoples and skills also fostered avenues of local embellishment and innovation that produced the contents of what is now regarded as classical Japanese culture. There came a point, however, where the “foreign” roots of these localized cultural institutions became perceived of as a liability for the creation of a sufficiently credible *national* narrative. This point arrived at a time when other, non-Asian influences were also arriving: the mid nineteenth century.

Nationalist narratives inscribed over the last hundred and fifty years in Japan have overcoded the more complex historical circumstances between peoples and cultural institutions throughout the region, fashioning a narrative of national unity and of separation from the continent.

Koreans in Kyoto point to a counter-history: one of connections and mutual borrowings.

Unable to effectively hide the external cultural influences on its long history, Japanese cultural chauvinists (such as scholars who wrote works about *kokugaku* [“nation-knowledge”]) in eighteenth- and nineteenth century Japan still sought to find an essential Japanese culture within practices they claimed predated later Chinese borrowings. This extended to efforts to find pure Japanese words and meanings from within a language that had, for several centuries, borrowed not only its writing system, but its entire literary and institutional vocabulary from Chinese¹. It is precisely this early modern re-imagining of Japan’s national past that has created both the ground for subsequent misrecognition of historical circumstances, and fostered much of the misunderstanding between peoples living in the islands and those dwelling on the Peninsula, and those who move between these artificially separated spaces.

[CLICK on Map to go to MAPS](#)



The history of an early and continuing contact between Korea and Kyoto is a history of peoples living in close proximity across a short stretch of water (the coast of Korea is nearly as close to Kyoto as is Tokyo) for several centuries. The present obscurity of this history, particularly the details of its premodern scope, is a tribute to more modern political projects.

-
1. Institutions on the Korean peninsula also took advantage of the Chinese writing system (and with it Chinese as a court language), and were at times under direct Chinese domination. This serves to help conflate the origins of texts and other influences from the Korean Peninsula with those from China. Since before WWII the Asian cultural influences upon Japan have been almost entirely classified as Sinitic. Against this background, claims of Kyoto’s early *Korean* influences might be perceived as exceptional; when these influences were, if anything, mundane.

And one of the projects of some Koreans living in Kyoto today is to rearticulate this history, not so much with a mind to show the primacy of Korean culture, but rather to mark as exceptional the current lack of contact, and lack of respect, between these peoples.

The Korean Peninsula, with its long coastline, and its position between China and Mongolia and the islands that have since become Japan, is one of the world's social midlands—a position that is a blessing when there are new knowledges and skills to be had, but a curse when these travel by conquest. As with the Benelux or Cambodia, being in the middle often means getting caught in the middle.

Japanese Expansionism

The early Meiji era (late Nineteenth century) also brought in a new era of continentalism to Japan, however, it was Europe (and Europeanized North America) that became the source of new knowledges, which were articulated against the freshly constructed (but supposedly ancient) features of a “timeless” cultural Japanese history. And this time, Japan was the first society in the area to realize the military effects of modern industrialization.

“These enterprises [the Japanese colonial programs in Korea] pushed the Korean farmer from landed farming into tenant farming. In 1935 86% of the Koreans in Osaka prefecture were laborers who had been farmers. (Mayu 1994)

By 1900, Japan's increasing grasp of global geopolitics together with its growing industrial capacity made territorial expansion a credible prospect. The Korean peninsula again became the middle ground for its politically and militarily adventuresome neighbors. When Japan consolidated its “interests” in the Korean

Peninsula with the 1910 annexation, this was simply the first of other expansionist moves. The US, which had recently occupied the Philippines, could hardly complain, and then WWI gave Japan both political breathing-time and an expanding world market for its industrial goods.

By the 1920s, Japan was moving into Manchuria,

LOOK AGAIN: Japanese government films from the 1930s showed rural Manchuria as an agricultural bonanza to encourage Japanese emigration to this region. The creation of Shinto shrines also marked the extension of Japanese Imperial control over these new colonies. Of course this “new” land was expropriated from local landowners and tenant farmers.
(*NHK TV*)



and its colonial sway over Korea had expanded from early “land reforms” that put much of Korean agriculture into Japanese hands, to more invasive cultural experiments (such as the use of Japanese in the schools), some of which were alibied by a liberal sentiment of an eventual “Greater Japan” in which Japanese and Koreans would share equal status. But the severity of police control, the lack of social and employment opportunity, and the continuing drain of resources (including food) from Korea, pushed many people into fleeing the Peninsula either to Manchuria, or to Japan. By 1938 there were about 800,000 Kore-

ans in Japan.

Annexation of the Korean Peninsula

Back in Korea, Japanese military/police rule of the “annexed” Peninsula had encountered moments of serious resistance, and had responded with a program of cultural assimilation aimed at erasing those Korean cultural practices that informed this resistance (such as the use of the Korean language). A policy of assimilation to Japanese institutional cultures (business, government, and religion) and the promulgation of the Japanese language in education and official business replaced Korean dominant institutions and discourses with Japanese¹ ones.

-
1. A case might be made that this was a part of a plan to integrate the entire space of Korea and Japan into one nation/state. But any argument about the ultimate goal of this erasure of Korean cultural practices must also look ahead to the way that assimilated Koreans living in Japan were treated by the Japanese government under the American Occupation. For despite their knowledge of the Japanese language and familiarity with Japanese customs, and despite the fact that many had been born in Japan, as soon as Japan’s colonizer status dissolved, these would-be citizens were declared to be foreign nationals. In any case, as soon as the War started, the dominated status of Koreans became quite obvious.

“...When special supplementary rations were distributed to most foreign nationals in Japan, Koreans were not included. The SCAP directive of 8 January 1948 on rationing specifically stated that ‘nothing in this directive will be construed to change the food ration for Korean nationals who have elected to remain in Japan, and who receive the same ration as Japanese nationals.’ Furthermore, SCAP noted that legal jurisdiction over Koreans was to continue to be exercised by the Japanese authorities....”

[\(Lee 1981, 76-77\)](#)

The use of Koreans as conscripted labor in Japan during World War II—a time when the circumstantial slavery of colonization gave way to an outright enslavement of millions of women and men, including tens of thousands of women who were used as sexual slaves by the Japanese military—brought an increase in the Korean population in Japan to nearly three million (Fukuoka 1996, n.p.).

When Japan was defeated at the end of World War II, most of the surviving conscripted workers returned to Korea as soon as transport could be arranged. But many of the Korean families who had resettled in Japan from before the War, and whose language, livelihood, and affinities were now locally attached within Japan, did not leave for Korea immediately, for several reasons, including the fact that the American authorities (SCAP) were not allowing the export of capital resources (including family savings) from Japan as a part of the reconstruction effort.

Post-war predicaments

SCAP gave the Japanese a broad control over the Korean population, a control the Americans had kept for themselves when other foreign nationals were involved. This allowed the Japanese police to monitor and suppress nascent Korean political and social organizations (including Korean leadership in labor unions) and it presaged the difficulties that the Korean residents would have in asserting their claims for recognition and compensation for war-time service.

Again, as with the aftermath of the Kanto earth-

quake of 1923, when more than six-thousand Korean (and also Taiwanese) residents in the Tokyo area were massacred by vigilante groups, Koreans were scape-goated by Japanese authorities who faced a shattered economy and social unrest. Police reports of Korean acts of violence against Japanese individuals reinserted the difference between these populations.

This reported increase of violence and unlawful acts appears to have given the Japanese police sufficient excuse to resort again to the systematic intimidation of all Koreans, as had occurred in the prewar period. Subsequently, Koreans became frequent subjects of unreasonable search and seizure against which they had little defense. Long-held prejudices on the part of the Japanese were again overtly expressed. For example, during an anticrime campaign conducted by the police, a Korean emblem was used as background in posters illustrating a clutching hand reaching out to rob a cringing Japanese woman... [\(Lee 1981, 75\)](#)

In 1947, the Alien Registration Law was passed which can only be seen as a law aimed specifically at Koreans, who then comprised more than ninety-three percent of all “aliens” in Japan. This law, with some modifications, remains in effect today. The law, which is administered by the Ministry of Justice (the police), requires foreign nationals to register their residential and occupational information with the local district office (*kuyakusho*), to be fingerprinted, and to carry with them at all times, and surrender upon request a photo identity card.

Imposed “alien” status

While this law is similar to registration requirements imposed on foreign nationals in other states, such as the United States, its original imposition on Koreans residing in Japan occurred with another law that summarily stripped them of their status as Japa-

nese citizens. Overnight they became “aliens” subject to active police supervision. The application of the Alien Registration Law to this population and its descendents has been challenged continuously since 1947 on the basis of international human rights, social fairness, and historical documents that question the right of the Japanese government to selectively disenfranchise citizens living in Japan. For many resident Koreans, the card they carry marks them not as “aliens” but as criminals in the eyes of the police and the public.

This recent history of enforced assimilation colors the regimes of assimilation Koreans face in Japan today with a sour patina of colonialism. Until the Japanese government addresses the cultural measures it applied to the Korean population during its colonial period, many resident Koreans are not willing to grant its authority to demand cultural assimilation as a condition of citizenship. Quite the contrary, Koreans in Kyoto look to this history of required assimilation as a history of human-rights violations, and press for a public sphere where dis-similar peoples have equal access.

Literature on Resident Koreans

[CLICK on IMAGE to go to MAP of Korean Sites in Kyoto](#)



There is an available literature on Koreans in Japan, and also Koreans in Kyoto. Most of this is in Japanese but other sources are available in English, and much of it is useful in detailing the personal hardships, institutional discrimination, and identity problems that Koreans in Japan face. Of great value to the Kyoto situation is a two volume set, *Zainichi no ima—Kyoto hatsu* [*Resident Koreans Today—dateline Kyoto*], published in Kyoto in 1993 by the Kyoto branch of the National Resident Korean Academic Research Association. Part One of *Zainichi* 1993 deals mainly with problems in the Japanese school system, Part Two emphasizes information about lifestyle and local Korean cultural practices (such as the Higashi-kujo Madang).

Weiner (1989) outlines the first 13 years of Korean immigration to Japan after annexation (1910-1923). He ends his work with a discussion of the massacre of thousands of Koreans by vigilante groups after the Kanto (Tokyo area) earthquake of 1923. Lee and DeVos (1981) is a large anthology about the situation of Koreans in Japan, but this is not as up-to-date as one would like. Harajiri (1989) updates this discussion (in Japanese). And even more recent discussions can be found on a website about Koreans in Japan, including a copy of Fukuoka Yasunori's research into the history and identity problems of Koreans.

[http:\\](#)

Many of the recent writings on Koreans in Japan

note the “coming of age” of third-generation resident Koreans, many of whom have moved “beyond” debates centered around either repatriation to Korea or assimilation to some acquired Japanese identity. Norma Field (“Beyond Envy...”, and “Resident Korean Literature...”) has written about how Koreans are addressing their alienation within an ambient lifestyle that is both viscerally coded for immediate and continuous conspicuous consumption, and as intimately “Japanese.”

Resident Koreans still face unwritten forms of exclusion from the workplace.

“In the case of interviews for jobs, the results from school [work] are less important than the materials that are ‘not said, not written, and not submitted’.”
(Mayu 1994)

Field notes, (in “Resident Korean Literature...”) that “internationalism” in Japan includes a continuing distancing of the archipelago from the Asian mainland, a place which has relatively low prestige on the locally negotiated global scale of cosmopolitan centrality. This so-called “internationalism” thus continues an “ethnicization” of Koreans as irremediably “*esunikku*” [ethnic]—Asian types, just one of several varieties of whom now supply off-shore (but not on-shore¹) labor to large Japanese multinational corporations.

Field looks at recent literary works of resident Koreans, but she does not consider their festival production, which overlaps (in its dramatic narratives) with this, and which also brings a group performance into play, a performance that offers therapy ([A festival is a space of social therapy](#)) for the bodies and the moods of resident Koreans.

1. The same companies that work around Japan’s unenforced labor laws to avoid hiring Koreans in Kyoto—but which will import “pure blooded Japanese” from South America— are building factories as fast as capital can move to China, Malaysia, and elsewhere.

Resident Koreans in modern Kyoto

In the previous chapter we introduced to the history and circumstances of resident Koreans (zainichi kankoku-chosen-jin”) in Japan. Here we want to narrow the focus to the city and prefecture of Kyoto.

Higashi-kujo no Ima: East 9th street Today



As part of the Higashi-kujo Madang festival in 1994, I proposed a photography exhibit: “Higashi-kujo no Ima,” based, in part on the “Day in the Life...” Photography shoots that have occurred in many places, and that occur every year in Kyoto—but that do not adequately represent this district. I selected disposable panorama cameras (25 of were generously donated by Pix Panorama) so the image would record both what-

ever the photographer was focusing on, and also the surrounding space. The local volunteers included women and men from the ages of 13 to 70. A single day in September 1994 became the day when all the photos were taken. The idea was simple: photograph those spaces and objects in the neighborhood that either attracted affection or disaffection. As you read about Higashi-kujo Kyoto, please look at these local representations, selected from the more than 600 photographs taken on that day. [GO DIRECTLY TO PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THIS EXHIBIT](#)

The City’s image of Kyoto fronts the claim for a national-cultural cachet. Based entirely on its former status as the place of the imperial family, it reminds the nation that much of the imperial culture that has become the trope for “real” Japanese culture under the guidance of the Ministry of Education (Monbusho) used to happen in Kyoto. Today, only resident Koreans have managed to resalvage parts of Kyoto as local and disconnected from the recoding of the city as a national cultural icon.

“Resident Koreans in modern Kyoto” opens up a host of representational issues which are of interest in the exposition of how and where “democracy” is performed (or denied) in this city, and how a community that is fiercely “Kyoto-an” in its self-representation, is also completely excluded from the city government’s self-representation. “Higashi-kujo no Ima” provided a forum for the self-expression of place attachment and disaffection among residents of Higashi-kujo Kyoto. To provide the City’s side of representation, I have borrowed images from the city-backed Kyoto Chamber of Commerce & Industry’s convention promotion website. [<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>]

the “official” version of Kyoto

“Kyoto sells itself as a kind of Rome on the Kamo river: a place where ancient dynasties flourished and fought (and fornicated), and, in the process, forged that rare “alloy” known as “elite culture.” Ever dwindling stocks of this stuff make up the motherlode of Kyoto’s tourist drawing power. Kyoto spins less and less new “alloy” every year, and meanwhile, consumes itself in the process of pandering its historical image”

[Heritage management](#)

No one expects the City of Kyoto to advertise its thorniest urban/social problems when it markets itself to tourists and industrial concerns. It is, however, the lack of attention to these—and the *laissez faire* policy toward these— *internally* that is the most difficult for residents in Higashi-kujo to accept. But this seeming lack of concern for decades-old urban circumstances is also highlighted when the City announces urban design plans that continue to ignore the lifestyle conditions of its “*furyoujuutakuchiku*” [“inferior/delinquent residential districts”] now commonly known as *suramu*: slums.

Like most cities in the world, Kyoto tries to hide its slums. For decades, Higashi-kujo was visually removed from the adjacent Kyoto Station, first by the

remnant of the centuries-old city wall, and then by a city-built fence. These are gone today, but less-visible barriers remain—walls within institutions, gateways to opportunity that never open in certain directions, “glass ceilings” that keep certain people in minimum-wage jobs. Again, Kyoto shares many of these same social problems with Los Angeles and London, but the circumstances within Kyoto are also locally significant for understanding the creation of an entire social movement, in the form of a festival community, made specifically (although without the specificity that would allow for retaliation) to counter the city/state construction of Kyoto’s cultural and public sphere.

the now newly historical ancient modern city

The city government’s representation of Kyoto is self contradictory: not satisfied to maintain the cityscape as an historical site, with an economy centered on cultural tourism, fine crafts, and higher education (Kyoto has the largest per capita population of college students in Japan), the city also promotes urban commercial and residential growth and redevelopment. And the city government’s plan for Kyoto is basically a list of new construction ideas, from elevated freeways, to a new city hall and a new concert hall replacing the one they built 30 years ago. The major issues for historical management in Kyoto are available in: [Heritage management](#). For residents in South Kyoto, the plans to limit growth in the north incorporate plans to increase use density in the South, particularly as a site for industrial expansion.

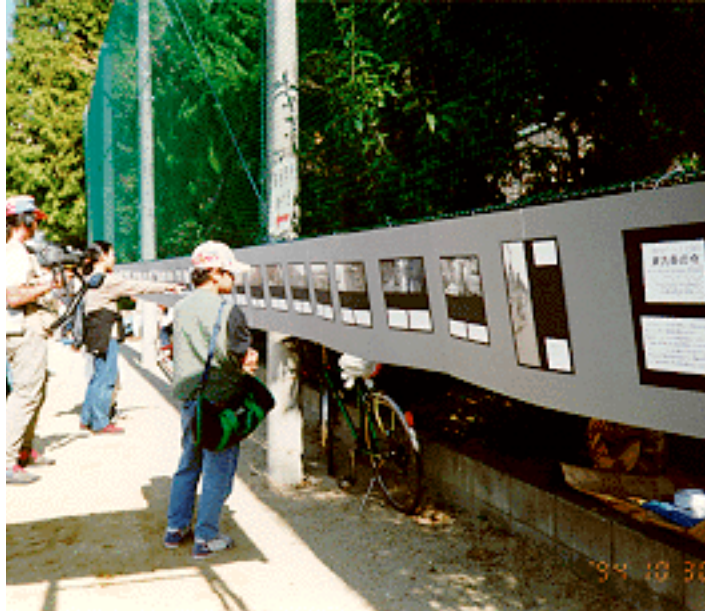
At the second Higashi-kujo Madang, residents of the neighborhood exhibited a selection of photographs taken on one day, a exhibit that revealed their ambiguous attachment to the place where they live. On one hand, they found a comfort in the exclusivity of exclusion—here was a place no one else would care to bother with, and so their community was relatively autonomous. On the other hand, they were surrounded by the consequences of urban neglect, and their exclusion from Kyoto's mainstream cultural centers did not enamor them of either the City or of the lack cultural services and places in Higashi-kujo. "[Higashi-kujo no Ima: East 9th street Today](#)" was photographed and curated by residents and workers in Higashi-kujo. We shall be looking at the results of this photo exhibit on the following pages.

Cornerstone of the City's plan to attract convention goers is the *Kokuritsu Kyouto Kokosai Kaikan* (National Kyoto International Hall), referred to in English as the Kyoto International Conference Hall, built in 1966.

photo from:

http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/go_to_next_Kyoto_web_photo

So much of the latter—the "New Kyoto"—has



destroyed so much of the former, old Kyoto, that the city itself is not recognized (by UNESCO) or recognizable (by residents or tourists) as an historical cityscape.



To be fair, building and rebuilding "public" works in Japan—as means to acquire the local share of Construction Ministry funds—represents the central activity for prefectural and

municipal governments. Taxation in Japan is dominated by national taxes, and cities often choose to

compete for nationally funded projects without careful consideration of local impacts beyond the benefits of new jobs in construction: this type of state-driven local construction occurs in virtually all nation-states, but it is most acute within state-nations, given the greater scope of central government power and purse (see also: [State-nation modernity](#)).

Convention center facilities in Kyoto were constructed for international events, but today, with the high cost of the yen, most events are regional or national.

Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>

[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)

[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



While a significant amount of housing in other Japanese cities was destroyed during WWII, much of the city's housing, although spared of

the WWII bombing, was built before the 1930s, and was in need of renovation in the decades after the war¹.

The changes in Kyoto's street-level ambiance are nowhere more evident than in the underground malls north of Kyoto Station, and in the central Shinkyogoku street mall, where tourist shops dominate. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>

[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)

[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



For decades, the notion of preserving at least the façade of the earlier architecture when rebuilding these urban residential areas was not promoted in any

fashion by the city, and actively opposed by Japan's steel industry, which benefited from new national laws constraining wood construction within urban zones. By the time the city began to tout itself as an historical city in the 1970s, almost eighty percent of Kyoto's

-
1. One of the local circumstances that residents faced in Kyoto was the increase in height of the local population. Interior wall openings in traditional buildings being only about 170 cm in height was no real problem until the Japanese population grew taller—by an average of more than 10 cm!—after the war. Old homes are physically too small for these new giants.

urban residences had already been lost to metal and stucco apartments and townhouses.

Cultural production for the tourist trade requires that formerly elite modes of craft work be reproduced mechanically at a much cheaper cost. Plastic “lacquer” dishes resemble the laquerware found in Kyoto’s museums. And it can be put into the dishwasher. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)

The opportunity to rebuild in a manner that



reflected the local history of wood construction was lost, and the city has become indistinguishable in most parts from parts of Osaka or Yokohama, or any other Japanese metropolis. Despite its cultural pretensions, the physical, street-level experience of Kyoto city is almost entirely a post-WWII experience today. The historical/cultural sites of value have been preserved behind walls with some paid admission required.

Living on the edge

[Go to map of Kyoto in 1873](#)
Much of the spacial underpinnings of the cultural geography of Kyoto in 1997 can be seen in this map from just six years after the Meiji emperor decamped.

For the most part, Kyoto’s Koreans who arrived since 1910 did not find housing in the city’s old neighborhoods, but rented spaces in the outlying areas: in Higashi-kujo, which before the war had been an agricultural district famous for its scallions; or in the new suburbs such as Yamashina, close to the camps built for Korean workers who dug the Higashiyama train tunnels. Their residential geography is today a map of

the outer limits of Kyoto society. As Yoshida (1994) put it “Yonju banchi [the riverside area of Higashi-kujo] is the crystallization of Kyoto’s social problems.”

Of course, “Koreans” residing in Japan face similar

“Here’s the Takaseigawa canal on one hot summer day.”

©1994 Teir Chin

Photos are from [Higashi-kujo no Ima: East 9th street Today](#).

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)



legal and other constraints based on their lack of Japanese nationality. Here they are no different from other foreign nationals in Japan (including, for a time, myself), although their collective history—as a group that suffered through Japan’s colonization of the Korean peninsula—should have long ago provided them with a final, agreeable resolution to the issue of their status in Japan.

The interior of the main hall of the Kyoto International Conference Center. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



The fact that Koreans born in Japan today are not automatically given the choice of Japanese citizenship can only be the

result of a conscious program of exclusion¹, as other reasons for this are insufficient to explain its origin and continued practice.

As Fukuoka (1996a) argues, it makes little sense

“We call this place ‘Hikari Park.’ What is noticeable is that it is full of chainlink fences, but as soon as these were put up, kids found broken spots to go play inside.”

©1994 Naomi Manabe

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



to see the practices of the Japanese government as leading either towards assimilation (with the aim of integration) or towards internationalization (with the aim of a multicultural state). Exclusion and geographic control are the operating logics, and these resemble very much the same logics that perpetuate [Buraku](#) places in Kyoto today.

Geographies of Exclusion

An internal *geographical* exclusivity is how the right of inclusion has long been enforced within Kyoto.

-
1. Japan is hardly alone as a state requiring infants born in the nation to also have one or more parents that are already citizens in order to automatically receive citizenship (it was only recently that the mother's nationality was sufficient)—more than half of all states do not give citizenship on the basis of birth alone, although this is becoming more popular. But Japan today is a singularly *exclusive* nation in terms of the minuscule number of naturalizations it does annually. ISSHO, an NGO in Tokyo recently (November 1996 at <http://www.iac.co.jp/~issho>) reported that Japan's total naturalization for 1994 was about 11,000 (with more than half of these were resident Koreans born in Japan). By comparison, the United States now records more than one million naturalizations in a year (while automatically conferring citizenship on all infants born in the US), and the EU countries combined record more than one-third of a million in a year. Clearly, so far at least, “internationalization” in Japan has not included the welcoming of immigrants and refugees from other nations.

“I tried to shoot something through the fence”

©1994 Seiko Taoka

The fences of Higashi-kujo surround land, to keep it from being used, as less visible fences surround the residents to hedge in their use of the life-style advantages that are reserved for others.

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

One of Kyoto city’s oldest universities, Doshisha University, unable to secure the property needed to expand within its primary campus, built this second campus outside of the city. Two other private universities in Kyoto have also created new campuses outside of the city. In the last few decades Kyoto city has lost every major opportunity to keep its higher education “industry” at home—at the same time as it failed to resolve the continued presence of *buraku* areas, several of which adjoin universities. One could certainly imagine a joint solution to both problems. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)

Social status under the Tokugawa *bakufu* (the Shogunal government) was administered geographically. Physical residence became a synecdoche for social position (“you are where you live...”), and movement throughout the countryside was under strict control (avoiding or running a checkpoint was a capital offense).

The Buddhist temples became party to this, as



their lists of parishioners became official residence documents, documents that served to place families socially and physically well into the 20th Century. Today, long-term residential addresses in long-time



upscale Kyoto neighborhoods are still given by proximity to important street corners and buildings, such as the (old) Imperial Palace.

Koreans and Japanese who dwell in *buraku* areas readily draw connections between their lack of social status and the status that is still granted to the imperial family in Japan. In large part this is because of the discourse of “blood” that connects the imperial family to a primordial “Japaneseness” and the same logic of blood that separates the Japanese body-politic from those outside groups (most specifically shunned *buraku* dwellers and Koreans, but logically extending to other “*gaijin*”) that share the city of Kyoto and other cities and neighborhoods in Japan. Through their custodial services some *buraku*-dwelling Japanese (such as the person on the right) find themselves sweeping up Imperial properties. But tours of Imperial properties are not generally high on their recreational agenda.

This is Matsunokimachi public housing where my friends live. It's a good shot I think.

©1994 Sachiko Yukihiro
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

On the other end of the scale, areas set aside for



out-grouped families had no address at all, and so the families who dwelled within also had no permanent official address.

It was this bureaucratically-enforced lack of



address¹ that marked those who were excluded from society.

1. With social reform movements in this century, *buraku*'s acquired addresses: but these addresses also were catalogued, and the lists widely distributed among potential employers, schools, and other interested parties (such as marriage brokers). So nothing really changed.

“When it comes to the hiring of high-school graduates, the public employment security office entrusts the school with the business of introductions...many times the application [made by the student to the school to pass on to prospective employers] seems to be withdrawn by the school at the point in time where it was understood that a foreign country family registration [was involved].”
Mayu 1994

This is the vegetable market where I usually shop. It's different than a supermarket—we can meet and talk person to person while we shop. It's a place to make contact with others. I like it so much I always go here.

©1994 Kanja Shin

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

Foreign residents, although required to register their address, and not to move or change jobs without notifying the city government, also do not have an official family residence, a central part of the family registration (*koseki*) laws¹ that the Japanese government and police use to monitor their population. Foreign residents are located thus by their lack of official location. But Japanese citizens are also *locatable* to an extent that the citizens of many countries are not.

To say that foreign residents in Kyoto are tracked



by the government is not to suggest that government does not also keep track of its own citizens.

-
1. This set of papers, which is held by the city government forms the basis for an official history of family members, including a history of every past residence. The Chinese character “*ko*” in *koseki* is the term for “door.” There are no post-office boxes for mail in Kyoto, no addresses that are not official. Today the city is computerizing all of its residence records, for the “convenience” of its citizens. The consequences of the Family Registration Law on the continuation of *buraku* discrimination should be enough for this to be abolished, if, in fact the government is concerned about resolving this on-going abuse of human rights in Japan. But as much as the Japanese government (through its Ministry of Education and other organs of state) seems determined to forget recent history (such as war crimes and later environmental “crimes”), it seems more than willing to track the histories of its own citizens for its own purposes.

One of the few remaining street scenes preserved from the pre-War period, this district today shows not only the urban vocabulary of an earlier time, but, by example, it shows how much the remainder of the city has lost in its post-War redevelopment. It is daunting to reflect on the fact that perhaps a majority of Kyoto streets could once have been easily renovated in this manner.

Photo from:

http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/go_to_next_Kyoto_web_photo
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



As in many other examples of Japanese government practices (such as when public schools monitor and intervene in the home life of their students), the overall effect of the spatial regula-

tions that manage the activities of people living in Kyoto is felt by the Japanese citizen population, if for no other reason than demographic ones: less than three percent are either Japanese living in a *buraku* area, or persons holding foreign passports.

And so when the residents of Higashi-kujo speak

In the morning the children gather at Matsunoki public housing before they set off together for school.

©1994 Naomi Manabe
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



of social change, they often speak of issues and conflicts that are not limited to, nor that only directly apply to either Koreans or *buraku* residents in Kyoto. In terms of state interventions into life-styles, citizens in state-nations such as Japan (see also: [State-nation modernity](#)) are not treated that much differently from resident aliens.

The wrong side of the tracks

For decades this part of Kyoto has been the center for “recycling,” from gleaning scrap metal in the early post-war years, to organized glass and metal collections today. However, the sight of collected refuse is also one of the features of the area that many object to, as it reminds them of their position at the bottom of the occupational status ranking.

Midori Taoka, an eighteen-year old resident of Yonju-banchi used her part in the “Higashi-kujo no Ima” photography day to document the conditions of this neighborhood

Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission

The original structures of Yonju-banchi were not constructed so as to be durable. In part their lack of sturdiness reflected an optimism about the situation between Japan and Korea in the 1950s—an optimism that was destroyed when the treaty between Japan and South Korea made no provisions for compensation of Koreans resident in Japan.

Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission

Yonju-banchi is really only a riverbank. And with 80% of its population being Korean, it is the most “international” neighborhood in Kyoto.

Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission



When residents of Higashi-kujo talk about their district, one particular location generally gets most of the attention. For Higashi-kujo is the home of one of Japan’s most famous “*suramu*” districts: Yonju -banchi (“address number 40”), also known as “zero banchi”. This is a collection of houses and buildings constructed on the flood plain of the Kamo river.



Much of Higashi-kujo before World War I was agricultural plots (the area was once famous for growing green onions) surrounding a few clusters of houses, some small industry, one of Kyoto’s larger *buraku* areas, and the river and its banks.



The clusters became the “old families” in the area, and the fields were slowly built in as housing (much of it substandard), and more

small industrial (piecework factories) and service industries.

More fences to keep out those who might have some use of the land.

Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission



The construction of Kyoto station and the railway line forced many to move

south into this district, as did the later (1960s) construction of the *shinkansen* (bullet-train) line and station.

Kyoto Station and its many tracks and trains separates the northern from the southern parts of the town. The northern (*ekimae*—in front of the station) side faces the old imperial palace, while the southern (*ekiura*—behind the station) side is the “wrong-side-of-the-tracks” side, where tightly-packed residential areas abut warehouses and small industries. This photo shows the new airport shuttle train. Photo from:

http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/go_to_next_Kyoto_web_photo
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/go_to_previous_Kyoto_web_photo)



Today the area is zoned for industrial use and for

the highest residential concentration in the city. The city's “Grand vision for 21st Century Kyoto” [see: http://www.city.kyoto.jp/index_e.html] calls for building “...a dynamic and attractive city: careful measures to preserve the natural and historical scenery of old Kyoto and surrounding mountains; harmonious regeneration of work, residence, learning and leisure facets of the city center; creative development in the southern region of Kyoto - the key to growth in the 21st century.” But for the Higashi-kujo district, the “creative development” plans to date include rezoning for

greater residential density and a higher level of industrial use, and a new 40+ meter tall Kyoto Station building creates a modern “*odoi*”: a visual barrier separating the south from the central old city of Kyoto. But then Korean have always inhabited “the wrong side of the tracks” in Kyoto.

“By 1950 the economy was starting to recover, and the [city] administration began to consider cleaning up this messy place. When foreign tourists and royalty arrive on the train through the tunnel from Yamashina and enter Kyoto station right there they see the barracks. In order to get rid of the black market and the temporary shelters in the 1950s [the city] started a policy of compulsory removal [of people from the barracks]. But because it doesn’t matter if you are removed, you have to live somewhere, and so a house is built whenever another is destroyed, so it was a vicious circle...”

Local activist
Interviewed in 40 banchi

Housing in Kyoto, particularly pre-war housing, is often built on a very modest plan, with narrow lots that can today only hold only a “*nagaya*” [tenement-house], or a house like the one my family rented (SEE: RIGHT), a “*machiya*” that maintained the floor plan that was designed for such a lot. The City has spent many resources trying to design modern houses that can fit these lots, but the results are not what they hoped for.



The end of the war brought thousands of Korean conscripts to Kyoto station—one of the main intact train centers in the area (Kyoto was never bombed in the war). These and many other migrants into Kyoto’s urban population found temporary shelter in this region adjacent to the Station. Boarding houses and other accommodations were available here, where they were not to the North.

Hundreds of temporary shelters were fashioned just south of the station and rented to this influx of transitional persons. So too, the proximity to the railways

and to regional highways made Higashi-kujo the central black market in Kyoto's post war period. In the 1950s the City received funds from national programs to upgrade housing in the *burakus*.

“If you were Japanese, even though it would take money, and was only a hut, you could slip into it [a new house] somehow. But if you were Korean with a foreigner’s residence or a family register, the authorities discriminated against you when you moved. “They’d tell you ‘You must understand that housing is not available,’ or simply ‘it is impossible [shikataganai=there is no way],’ or ‘do you drink liquor?’ or ‘I bet if you went and over in that area...’ but you’d go there and it would just be the same all over again—really, wouldn’t [you call] this discrimination?”

Local activist interviewed in 40 banchi

Although many Koreans had houses in the buraku area south of Kyoto station, unlike their Japanese neighbors they were not compensated¹ when their houses were destroyed to make room for public housing blocks. This created another source of animosity between the Korean community and the city, and between Koreans and their Japanese neighbors. Adding to the problem, Koreans also faced the difficulty of locating new housing: a difficulty that remains until today. Vacant apartments are suddenly not vacant.

This was the first of major “slum clearance” in the City, and it resulted in the razing of hundreds of houses and the construction of city-owned housing blocks with the *burakus*. But in the 1950s there were many problems with housing in Japan and Kyoto, and many still persist. The lack of adequate housing, particularly in terms of affordability and is perhaps the single greatest problem in urban Japan.

1. Until recently, when written contracts have begun to be used in these transactions in Kyoto, renters acquired an informal right to stay in the place they were renting, and the rents rarely increased. Landlords were not bothered for small repairs. In order to move a renter, some compensation was necessary. So too, moving into a new house would require “key money” a significant cash payment (\$2-20,000 US), which the landlord would pocket.

Resident Koreans in modern Kyoto—The wrong side of the tracks

—72—

Narrow catwalks connect the structures to a central spine running parallel to the river.
Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission



But in the 1950s this discrimination was not done surreptitiously, but

openly. “And so they [resident Koreans] went around and found no place, and they moved to the south side of the Kamogawa, where there was not a house in those days, only a grassy plain, and they began to build houses by themselves. That is the origin of Yonju-banchi [address number 40]. (resident of Yonju-banchi)”

This photographer’s work façade particularly on Yonju-banchi’s many fences.
Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission



The construction of houses on this site increased constantly through

the 1950s to the 1960s. By 1963 there were 150 structures, and the present state of Yonju-banchi was almost complete. This coincided with the end of the “slum clearance” of temporary shelters south of Kyoto Station.

Yonju-banchi is built out over the southernmost end of the Takaseigawa, where this joins the Kamo River.
Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission



This is no coincidence. The city was instrumental in the creation of this

neighborhood by pushing hundreds of local families onto the street with nowhere else to go.

Resident Koreans in modern Kyoto—The wrong side of the tracks

—73—

Each fence has its own sign warning against trespass.
Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission



The site itself is not in the city proper, as the flood plain of the river is

technically national land. This is one reason why the city has avoided the issue of creating alternative housing for these residents.

Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission

“Today there are 1300 people living in Yonju-banchi, in the mid 1960s there were 4500. They’d take a space for a pig-pen, and make a house, then they’d divide this into two with a wooden panel: [the result] an ‘octopus¹ house’

[*takobeya*].”

Local activist
Interviewed in 40 banchi



The overcrowding in this area has decreased as the demographics have

changed (fewer children). Today about 23% of the residents are elderly (over 65 years of age). And after fires and floods, the damaged structures are fenced off, and so the number of structures is slowly dwindling.

1. The octopus is famous for fitting its large body into the smallest of spaces.

Many of the structures have been damaged or have deteriorated in the last 30 years.

Photo © 1994 Midori Taoka
Used with permission

“On the north side [of the station] they gave compensation when they tore down the houses, but on the south side, they did not: it was determined as an ‘issue of national territory’”

Local activist

Interviewed in 40 banchi

In other words, because they were Koreans, they did not merit compensation when their houses were torn down.



The structures are not actually hooked up to a sewer system, and so

there is a problem of hygiene and odor. Families still live 4-5 to one small room, and in many cases there is only a single parent. High-school entrance is below the national average, as is the number of high-school graduates who go on to college, but these are statistics that are common to the local buraku area as well.

Well up river from Higashi-kujo (and north of the Gojo-minami buraku areas) expensive Kyoto-cuisine (*kaiseki*) restaurants have been given space to extend their premises out over the banks of the Kamo River. These patio dining areas are popular in the summer, but are generally unaffordable apart from business-expense entertainment. The riverfront south of Gojo offers the same potential ambience, but that area’s geographical stigma prevents its occupants from using this opportunity. Photo from:

http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/gg_to_next_Kyoto_web_photo
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



There is no water system for fighting fires, and when a wind comes up, the entire neighborhood is vulnerable to disaster. Should a hundred-year flood occur the entire neighborhood is likely to

be washed away. But there are some who would rather live here than in an other part of Kyoto. Though the rents are not justified by the accommodations, they are cheap by Kyoto standards. As this is a majority Korean neighborhood with virtually no official links to the city, it maintains a sense of cultural and social independence that some residents enjoy. Korean songs and food, language and dress are not marked here. “There is a carefree space here for Koreans who are working” said one resident.

Resident Koreans in modern Kyoto—The wrong side of the tracks

—75—

The aseptic hallways of the public housing block is an alternative that many people living in Yonju-banchi would not prefer to their own catwalks.

Photograph ©1994, Yu Chinmi
Used with permission



The area has a high concentration of day laborers, and it is difficult to

escape the mood that arises with too little available work (and too much hard labor when it comes) for too little money; too many bosses, and too few opportunities to move up. There are too many reasons here to become depressed about the present and desperate about the future.

Kyoto's *kaiseki* cuisine, probably the most expensive food in the world, represents one of the pinnacles of aristocratic cultural achievement in the city. With a dinner for two that could easily cost a month's wages for a day laborer in Kyoto, this is food that few persons outside of the corporate world can enjoy. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



The future of Yonju-banchi is an interesting question. I have seen a model of a proposed public apartment complex (the proposal came from Kyoto University) that would be built on this site, after it was raised above flood level. But the

money to build this is not yet secure. The city managed to celebrate its 1200th anniversary year without facing its most glaring challenge.

The campus of the self-proclaimed “International Institute of Advanced Studies,” where all of the research and all of the planning is done by Japanese individuals from Japanese universities and corporations. This is another example of the local use of “international” which does not include persons from other nations, but merely refers to topics or interests that are not limited somehow to Japan. Foreign scholars need not apply. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)

Yonju-banchi from the 10th Street bridge across the Kamo River. The towering public-housing block of Matsunokimachi danchi is on the left. Here hundreds of Kyoto natives who happened to have Korean ancestry built their own neighborhood, when the city and the nation destroyed their homes to construct the Bullet train line through Kyoto.
©1994, Higashi-kujo Today used with permission.

Yonju-banchi is one of Japan's most notorious



slum areas, having been the target of regular NHK (Japan's government television) programs.

After each program there would be a moment of



hope within Yonju-banchi that something positive would result from this attention. But today that hope is pretty much gone. So now TV cameras are not allowed into Yonju-banchi.

The sight of geisha on the street is on of the most enduring of Kyoto's photo-ops. The continuance of the geisha system, which requires women at a very early age to be pledged to a life of "cultural servitude" with both opportunities and constraints—neither of these within their control—is one of the social paradoxes of the vestigial forms of Kyoto's once-aristocratic (and nearly always sexist) cultural production. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go back to first Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



There are people in other parts of Higashi-kujo who find a small comfort in feeling superior to those who live such a precarious life on the riverbank, and so the isolation of

this neighborhood is rather fiercely drawn. At some point it will fall to fire, wind or water, or to old age and decrepitude. The city thinks it has time on its side. But the residents of Yonju-banchi may not go down to defeat so easily.

Here is a *geisha* that was sent to the Heian Shrine for a photo opportunity with a group of wealthy businessmen and their wives. One the way back to her cab she is also "acquired" momentarily by others (including the odd anthropologist with a video camera) who wish to capture her image as a memento of Kyoto. Look at how completely she maintains her acquired *geisha* composure. *Video by the author.*



This is a home ground of the Higashi-kujo Madang festival, and its residents are ready to transform their outsider condition into a new

demand for multiculturalism in the city.

They see their place not at the margin, but at the forefront of a more international society in Kyoto. But in order to move themselves and the city into a space of mutual respect and dialogue they will have to confront the city's public sphere and self constructed identity.

Higashi-Kujo today

During the four decades of Japan's remarkable Post-War economic growth (a period which ended—at least in its “remarkable” aspect— about 1991) Higashi-kujo Kyoto was remarkable for its visible *lack* of change. “Look ahead twenty years, and tell me what would be the worst situation you could imagine for Higashi- kujo,” I asked one resident Korean woman, during an interview at a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant in Western Kyoto.

“The worst situation?” She mused, and then said, “would be for it to be exactly like it is now, which is what I expect will happen. Look at it. Very little has changed here for so long.”

What new buildings there are in Higashi-kujo are

ON THE RIGHT

Take a half- hour tour (you can use the fast-forward button to go faster, or move the slider to skip through the video) down the Takaseigawa canal into the heart of Higashi-kujo. Take note, as you travel, of the many empty lots that are fenced off, and the lack of accessible open spaces, and the general lack of new (post 1980) buildings—although some of the standing buildings show signs of repair/renovation. Much of the residential stock of this district's non-*buraku* neighborhoods was created during the post-war urbanization of Japan. It is only now beginning to show neglect.

[Takaseigawa VIDEO](#)



mainly modest houses built by the residents, or city-built public housing blocks (*danchi*) that were constructed in response to the long-standing and visible presence of substandard housing in the area (and

nation-wide agitation from *buraku* groups (See: Hane, 1982).

Local industry in Higashi-kujo falls into four main areas: small retail and entertainment, refuse collection (and, dismantling, and rag collection, and general recycling), building maintenance, and small-scale metal fabrication and subcontracting. Back before Kyoto's neighborhoods were connected to city sewers, human refuse had to be picked up as well, and some of these "honey-wagons" also were a local business.

The one main ingredient in the local job scene—

One of the many service occupations that were often located in buraku areas was that of collecting human waste. Nationwide, nearly half of Japan's households are not connected to sewers. But in Kyoto, the punctual (and pungent) visits of "honey wagons" to the neighborhoods are now only a memory.



apart from the generally lower wages and social undesirability of these industries—is that most job locations (except for building maintenance or refuse collection jobs) are small enough to be operated by one family without a great amount of capitalization. Such services are also a part of the wider economy with relatively inelastic demand—even in bad eco-

conomic times, garbage must be hauled. And so, while this district did not enjoy a great bounty during Japan's economic boom years, they may not be as vulnerable as other parts of Kyoto's economy to the downside of the current recession.

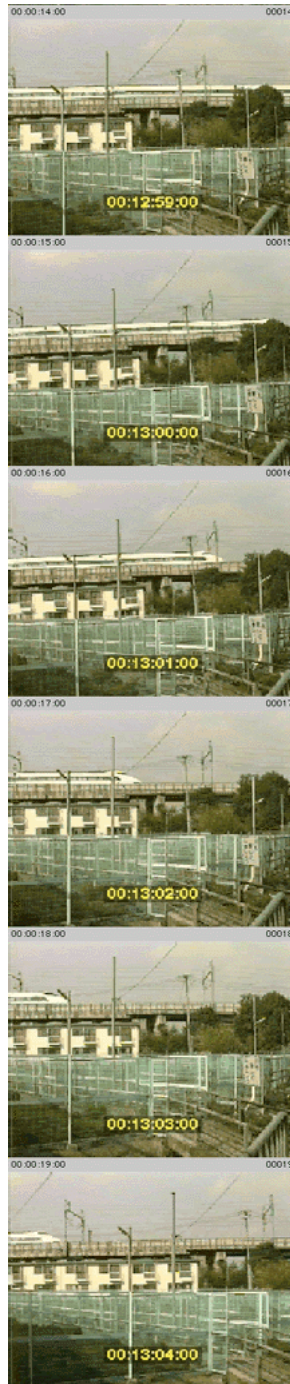
Resident Koreans in modern Kyoto—Higashi-Kujo today

—81—

In this sequence of shots, a field of empty lots, made empty when their buildings were torn down or abandoned, has become a thicket of wire fences. And open space for play and relaxation is thus appropriated by governmental institutions for no other reason than to keep the local people out, although children have created gaps to allow them to play within the space.

The proximity to the train station is not accidental. The first train line was created to link the city's southern edge, where property values were low. Many of the Korean families in Higashi-kujo have ancestors who came to Kyoto early in the century to help dig the tunnels through the eastern hills (Higashiyama) to allow the trains to pass through to Lake Biwa, and on to Tokyo. The location is near the raised tracks of the Shinkansen (bullet train) line. And here we see a train slowing to a stop at nearby Kyoto Station.

©1993 Bruce Caron



Higashi-kujo occupies the eastern (*higashi*) region surrounding a main east-west street (*Kujou*) south of Kyoto's main rail station (*Kyouto-eki*). On its eastern border is the Kamo River (*Kamogawa*) and its western reaches are the train tracks of the Kintetsu railroad. To the south are the southernmost districts of Kyoto city, notably the Fushimi region, and then unincorporated farm lands and suburbs of south Kyoto Prefecture. On tourist maps (for Japanese or foreign tourists), this area can be located by the absence of any marked tourist destination. There are no civic destinations (public parks, auditoriums, etc.), no government offices, no temples or shrines, no notable shopping centers (apart from the Avanti building immediately adjacent to Kyoto Station)—no tourist "destina-

“Indeed, in the past Japan's attentiveness to its international image has been an important factor in determining how the country responded to social issues and protests—occasionally with perverse results. For example, in 1951, when Japan was about to rejoin the international community and the country was gearing up for tourism, Kyoto city administrators, anxious that the poverty of a *burakumin* ghetto near the central train station would harm the city's image, built a board fence to screen the neighborhood from view; rather than address the ghetto's problems, in other words, they initiated a stark demonstration of conflict avoidance behavior.”
(Pharr 1990, 231)

the first 4:49:00 of the [Takaseigawa Video](#) tours the neighborhood described on the right. I had travelled through its quiet, tree-lined streets for a year before I discovered why its streets were so quiet.

tion” value whatsoever, and also a lack of facilities for local use.

Ceremonially, the neighborhoods of Higashi-kujo are not linked to any larger Shinto shrine, nor to the organizations (shrine or civic) that manage Kyoto's main civic events (the “big three” festivals: Aoi Matsuri, Gion Matsuri, and Jidai Matsuri). Higashi-kujo is the first and the last place that visitors who arrive on the Shinkansen (bullet train) see, as it is immediately to the south of the station. But it is a district where visitors rarely, if ever go to.

“Look across the river,” one Higashi-kujo resident instructed me as we were sitting in upstairs dining areas of one of Kyoto's 27 (at last count) MacDonaldis restaurants. Looking west I could see a row of single-story houses flanking the Kamo river north of where the trains cross the river, and west of these, a wall of five- to seven-story condominiums and office buildings. “Why do you think there are no tall buildings near the river?”

I confessed that I thought the city was trying to maintain a heritage of older buildings along the Kamo, but she said otherwise. “It's just neglect. That is one of Kyoto's *fumiirenai tokoro*— “a place you should not enter”—and it used to be famous for Yakuza [professional criminal gang] activity.”

She did not use the term “*buraku*”, and, in fact I learned that the area she pointed at has both *buraku* and non-*buraku* regions, the boundaries of which are best known to those who dwell in the vicinity. It also

has no Japanese inns, no tourist hotels, no tourist destinations at all. The whole strip of the city south of 5th street (*gojo*) and along the Kamo is today a space excluded from the casual perambulations of locals and tourists (apart from unknowing foreigners). “*Fumi-irenai tokoro*,” a “don’t set-foot-in-here” place.

The city/chamber of commerce organizers of the Kyoto 1200 celebrations choose Hiro Yamagata’s “Golden Pavilion” as the poster for the event. As with the majority of his work, which is enormously popular in Kyoto, the scene is peopled by images of frolicking individuals, none of whom resemble (either physically or by dress) the majority of the people who live in Kyoto. An assortment of blondes and red-heads gambol near Kyoto’s trademark historical landmark (completely reconstructed in the 1950s after a case of arson). Yamagata lives in Malibu, California, and most of his work that sells (often for six-figure US\$ amounts) in Japan depicts scenes of cities in Europe and the US.



Kyoto is a place where there are two forms of history: the history that is maintained through active promotion and recon-

struction (such as the “Golden Pavilion” that was burned to the ground in the 1950s and reconstructed on its site), and the history of exclusion—the maintenance of places through an active neglect which, over time, adds to their history as artifacts of urban social planning.

As the urban core of Kyoto is reconstructed without reference to its historical, architectural legacy,

neighborhoods that are excluded from real-estate speculation because of their stigmatized status ironically acquire cultural value as historically interesting districts. However, this unplanned preservation ultimately fails, as the buildings and the urban landscape (bridges, etc.) themselves degrade through a lack of repair, and eventually are replaced by empty lots.

In the 1994 Higashi-kujo Madang drama, a female character looks across the street to where fenced-off plots of land have sprouted fields of tall grass. On a far-off fence she reads the large sign: “Minami-ku utsukushikute...” [“let’s beautify South Kyoto”]. The sign represents the city’s only visible response to the widespread physical degeneration of this section of Kyoto.

In the empty lots of eastern Higashi-kujo one



senses the logic of some longer-range plan, where the resident population along the river—now about 80% “Korean”—is allowed to age and die. Their houses will be torn down when they too decay, and the land fenced against appropriation by other area residents. In time, the children will move away, perhaps to Osaka or Kobe. And by the time Kyoto celebrates its 1300th anniversary (2094) the entire region will be available for civic construction: something expensive, such as a soccer stadium. And the memory of Kyoto’s only international town will simply fade away.

National spaces and identity practices

the phantasmic emperor

“So it seems that at every rupture point between the moderns and the traditionalists there occurs a memory crisis—at the end of the nineteenth century and once again in the last few decades of the twentieth century—a problematization of the normal relationship of the present to the past... As every memory crisis recognizes that something is lacking in the present, a desire develops to collect tokens from the past, to store them in museums and collections lest these items be allowed to slip from our view, be forgotten in the dust of time, or be free to roam at will and thus disturb the road to the future.... And like the last half of the nineteenth century, we too have experienced a “frenzy of the visible”: a memory crisis of too many images, too phantasmagorical, too commodified, that inhibit the recall and recollection of images stored in the mind” (Boyer 1994, 26-27).

The political geography of any modern nation-state (or state-nation) larger than, say, Hong Kong or Singapore, often reveals a logic of centrality, unless there is historically a conscious program of decentralization. Almost all countries today are less “leveled” in their political geography than they are in economic and cultural geographies. Even so, there are some states where the political geography is so completely centralized that the national capital is a virtual (not just metaphorical) synecdoche for the nation. France is the usual example with Paris as the dominant space for the nation. Decades of state-nationality made Moscow the dominant city for the entire Soviet Union. In much the same way, but perhaps to an even greater degree, Tokyo dominates the state-nation of Japan. One feeder to this central-place logic is an older logic that Kyoto knows very well: proximity to the emperor.

Even today, the most central of national spaces are those made for and by and surrounding the emperor in Japan. To illustrate this, one only needs to consider the astounding amount of the nation's Realpolitik (and economic and cultural) practices that

occur within a half an hour's walk of the current Imperial Palace in Tokyo. This clustering of administrative and executive functions is not merely vestigial—it is not the simple outcome of the former imperial state, but is today firmly defended, against an increasingly compelling logic in favor of building a new administrative center¹ away from Tokyo's over-congested center.

Central state bureaucrats who find themselves in disfavor often find themselves moved out of the Tokyo office to some prefectural city: the more trouble they've caused, the further away they get. One health ministry official recently did a series of opinion articles in a Tokyo newspaper, commenting on the pressures of ministry work. He found himself reassigned, first to Shikoku, and then to Kyushu (the furthest main island away from Tokyo). But then bureaucrats are accustomed to travel, as central government funding for local projects usually is accompanied by a central government official to oversee the project. In this way, Tokyo maintains a level of direct control over regional governmental offices that belies the latter's claim to independent decision making. Without any clear separation of powers between the local "semi-autonomous" governments and the central state government in Japan, city and prefectural government offices serve also to implement central state policies. And again, these policies are made within that short

1. I once spoke with a top-level bureaucrat at the Ministry of Finance in Kasumigaseki, Tokyo, who noted that the Americans had taken over the building where we were then talking, and used it for a school. After the occupation, the Ministry moved back, "and we are never again going to leave," he assured me.

“There are all kinds of ghosts prowling these confused streets [of Prague]. They are the ghosts of monuments demolished—demolished by the Czech Reformation, demolished by the Austrian counterreformation, demolished by the Czechoslovak Republic, demolished by the Communists. Even statues of Stalin have been torn down. All over the country, wherever statues were thus destroyed, Lenin statues have sprouted up by the thousands. They grow like weeds on the ruins, like melancholy flowers of forgetting” (Kundera 1980, 158).

Although the ghost of Meiji is enshrined in Tokyo, his body is entombed in an enormous mound on a hill near Kyoto. As with other imperial sites, this one is also off-limits, and so a visit to the tomb allows one to stand outside a gate several hundred meters away (and several gates removed) from the actual mound.
Photo by the author

walk to the Tokyo imperial palace.

Meanwhile, Kyoto finds itself haunted by hundreds of vacated (but fenced and maintained) imperial sites from a thousand years of court life in a series of palace: a cultural production which ended abruptly when the emperor Meiji was restored in the 19th century and chose to move—as fast as was possible—into the shogunal palace in Edo (then renamed Tokyo: “the Eastern Capital”). Kyoto became *koto*: the “old” capital: as suddenly acephalous (in a political sense) as the tens of thousands of people—many of them Buddhist monks—who had been separated from their heads on the banks of the Kamo River during the course of Kyoto’s imperial era.

Almost since the day when the emperor (and a



hundred thousand or so of his relatives and other court and government officers) “skipped town,” more than a hundred years ago now—this after a millennium of building its own cultural production on the basis of the *presence* of the imperial aristocracy—Kyoto has been searching for some way to recapture

its imperial past. Early in the Meiji period, the phantasm of the emperor, lurking in Kyoto, became the core of the city's plans to retain its cultural position, this time as the cultural center of a modern nation. The primary construction for the 1100 year anniversary of the city in 1894 was the building of the Heian Shrine, wherein were captured and worshipped the spirits of the first and the last emperors to rule *in Kyoto* (the emperor Meiji, although entombed nearby, has his spirit enshrined in Tokyo—where it pre-occupies one of the only major, not-quite-public open spaces in the city).

Rather than being constructed on the model of other Shinto shrines, the Heian Jingu (Shrine) replicates the original palace of the early emperors in Kyoto. It is the home *not* for the current emperor, who has chosen to live in Tokyo, but rather for the phantasmic “ghosts” of the first and last emperors of Kyoto¹. Photo from: <http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



Marilyn Ivy (1995) has ploughed the fields of marginalized traditions in Japan's rural districts, finding at the far side of Japan's modernity a ghost of the past. This phantasm appears as the vestige of

the vanishing practices that were once so embedded into daily life that they were considered *atarimae*. And also, it appears as the continuing vanishing of past practices within those practices that now memorialize the past through novel media and means:

-
1. Japanese who visit on tours are reminded when they approach the main building that, in prior times, this would have been off-limits to them. In 1994 one of Japan's top rock-and-roll stars gave a concert at the Heian Jingu in celebration of the 1200th anniversary of the city. Instead of holding the concert in front of the gates where there is a wide public park, the city held the concert inside the shrine, and again the population was left out as the city's top officials distributed the tickets to their friends.

“An organizing theme of this study is that of the vanishing, which (dis)embodies in its gerund form the movement of something passing away, gone but not quite, suspended between presence and absence, located at a point that both is and is not here in the repetitive process of absenting. How is that moment—if it can be called that—made to signify? What marks it as founding entire regimes of authentication? The vanishing can only be tracked through the poetics of phantasm, through attentiveness to the politics of displacement, deferral, and originary repetition. Practices and discourses now situated on the edge of presence (yet continuously repositioned at the core of the national cultural imaginary) live out partial destinies of spectacular recovery. Their status is often ghostly. And it is through the ghosts of stories and (sometimes) stories of ghosts that I work, disclosing an economy of the appropriated marginal, of lacunae in representation at the center of the dominant” (Ivy 1995 20-21).

The same phantasms, I have found, are at literally work at the self-proclaimed center if Japan's national cultural project. In Kyoto, phantasmagoric emperors watch over the city's spectacles, which, in turn, pay homage to past emperors while overlooking the absence of the current emperor, who rarely visits Kyoto, although several residences are kept ready for such occasions.

The Jidai Matsuri travels from the Kyoto *goshō* palace to the Heian Shrine. It celebrates the times when Kyoto was the imperial capital of Japan. Photo from: http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/go_to_next_Kyoto_web_photo
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



Two of the three main “civic” festivals in Kyoto are reenact-

ments of imperial processions that now take place without an imperial presence. Costumed historical pageants, they move through the traffic-choked streets like a party of somnambulating geriatrics: out of time, and out of place—but still representing the central (imperial-ized), national space, and the

national historical project to a population that is regularly excluded from the many imperial sites that surround them.

The Aoi (hollyhock) Matsuri reinvents another imperial procession, this one from the *Kyoto gosho* palace to a shrine north of the palace. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



The old Imperial Palace (*gosho*) in Kyoto is today off-limits to Japanese citizens (overseas tourists can visit these at any time) except for a few days in the year; and the same holds true for the two nearby

“Imperial Villas.” In part, this is done to signify their potential use by the imperial family. Imperial tombs and temples ranging from modest to enormous are located in various parts of the city and its environs. The tombs are also shut off to the public: each one presents another closed gateway¹ and a high wall behind which one would find a well-tended garden space usually emptied of the living. These phantasmagoric spaces are tended by workers hired by the imperial household agency, and would, if they were turned to public use, provide Kyoto with much-needed open green space.

-
1. One of these sepulchral gardens lay along a road I often walked near my house. One day, after several months when it was closed, the giant gate stood ajar. I plucked up my courage (and armed myself with the usual foreign-tourist alibis) and wandered inside. I met no one. Along a curving hillside a gravel path with marble pavers led, surrounded by an immaculate garden of moss and ferns. Overhead there were palm trees (not usual in Kyoto), and a few hundred yards in, there was the granite marker, not quite an obelisk. I wandered back out the gate and down the road. On my return the gate was closed. It remained closed for the rest of my stay in Kyoto.

Kyoto City margins and centers

The Golden Pavilion, one of Kyoto's most popular tourist landmarks, was an aristocrat's villa and then a temple before a disgruntled priest burned it to the ground in the 1950s. It was then reconstructed, and it remains in this newly fashioned, traditional form, a metaphor for all that is from Kyoto's past that has been commodified in the present.

Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)

The city is full of margins and centers, and of



occasions that demarcate these with bright colors. The work of keeping the margins marginal is done in large part by the continual display of the center as central. In its *buraku* districts, Kyoto contains geographic zones of exclusion that are as *exclusionary* as its imperial zones are *exclusive*: an homology that is not lost among [Buraku](#) activists.

Most residents dwell in between these zones of exclusion: connected ceremonially to the imperial/national spaces, and connected also to the stigmatized neighborhoods by the everyday practices of discrimination required to avoid contact with *buraku* places. The “civic” middle ground mimics the imperial space, building fake palaces (such as the Heian Shrine) as civic projects, and marching in or onlooking at imperial parades that lack the essential ingredient: the emperor

is elsewhere.

The city-run art museum is a pre-war building across the street from a much larger national museum of modern art. Nearby is the city's main library, another pre-war building which offers a collection of books similar in size to that of a small-town library in the United States. The national Ministry of Education has not made local library support one of its priorities, and the city budget for cultural matters is inadequate to maintain a library of any size. The city's many universities also do not allow public use. In the absence of public libraries, local bookstores are usually very busy. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)

Perhaps the most famous of Kyoto's crafts is that of *yuuzen*—painted silk. Painted silk kimonos are still used for weddings and other occasions, but competition from abroad and a general decline in the market signal a long-term decline in this industry. To cut production costs, *yuuzen* factories now replace the home-based artists who created both the design and executed the drawing. Two of the main *yuuzen* producing centers are West Kyoto, and Fushimi in the south. Ironically, I was told by a worker in Fushimi that more than half of the laborers/artists today are Koreans. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



The city competes for Ministry of Construction (*kensetsushou*) funding to build national museums for its cultural legacy: subsequently turning over the management to the Ministry of Education, and

thus giving to the state (which exists mostly in that half-hour walking distance from the Tokyo imperial palace) control over the representation of Kyoto-generated arts and crafts, which are, in the process “nationalized.”

Almost all of the 60 or so museums in Kyoto



operate with the active management of national ministries (usually the Ministry of Education). In this man-

ner, the city government over the last fifty years has literally built itself out of control of the management of the elite cultural legacy that was its main value-added cultural commodity. The city-run museums (and the paltry few local libraries) appear to be grossly underfunded in comparison to the national museums.

The Gion Matsuri is Kyoto's largest civic event, although the crowds at its main parade of giant floats (*yamaboko*) are modest (40-50,000). As this is performed to be the exactly the same each year, almost everyone has already seen it, and anyhow, any interesting accidents that might happen will be shown on the evening news. Actually, the parade has been changed substantially in modern times: the route was altered to follow the newer, wider streets, and the parade must now stop and go to allow cross traffic to flow. But the more ironic changes occurred early on. This festival was originally performed by a Korean temple outside of the city (the city limits now encompass the Gion district) as a shamanic ritual (*mudang kut*) of cleansing (See: McMullin 1988). None of this history is provided in the current literature provided by the city about the event. Instead, the festival has become an icon of "real Japaneseness" and Gion-style festivals occur in several cities.

Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



The translation of local places and artistic works and even workers (living national treasures) into national sites and national

arts has been proceeding for several decades, and today adds yet another zone of exclusivity/exclusion to Kyoto's social geography: the national zone. While the valorized imperial zones and the stigmatized

buraku zones were geographically fixed more than one hundred years ago, the national zone continues to grow.

The popularization of Kyoto's formerly elite arts, such as the tea ceremony, add another layering of national culture onto that directly managed by the state. The schools of tea and also flower arranging that are based in Kyoto are managed in a hierarchical fashion throughout the nation. However, these are also the best example of Kyoto's claim to national cultural centrality. No wonder then that the head of the largest tea ceremony school was chosen as the head of the 1200th anniversary celebration. Photo from:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/hellokcb/>
[go to next Kyoto web photo](#)
[go to previous Kyoto web photo](#)



When one adds the grounds of private and public schools (man-

aged by or under the guidance (*gyoseishido*) of the national Ministry of Culture) to the national zone, and then the many Shinto Shrines (reconstructed under pre-war state Shinto programs, and still managed by a national organization (the *Jinjahoncho*) that was formerly a government office to this zone of national culture: the great majority of cultural spaces and nearly all open spaces in Kyoto are nationalized spaces where local residents are as much tourists as the hordes of school children that arrive every year on state-sponsored cultural trips.

in-corp-oration

The idea of “homogeneity” in Kyoto (See also: [the politics and semantics of homogeneity](#)), and in other places in the world where assimilation to normative cultural behaviors is a part of “incorporation regimes” directed at immigrants (or school children) may be

represented as the natural result of a national history. But this representation is merely the first institutional practice that needs to be interrogated.

“...In using the term *incorporation regime*, I refer to the patterns of policy discourse and organization around which a system of incorporation is constructed. All states develop a set of legal rules, discursive practices, and organizational structures that define the status of foreigners vis-à-vis the host state, and the forms and boundaries of their participation in host polity institutions” (Soysal 1994, 32).

The problems the Kyoto’s Koreans face when articulating their particular demand for heterogeneity in the face of a homogeneous cultural/national Japanese identity are, at moments, similar to those faced by lesbians/gays who would demand that notions of sexuality open up to a greater diversity of practice and imagination. At some point these demands must also find a social geographic target—a demand that actual (and media) spaces be opened up to these practices. But the practice of articulating such a demand in Kyoto is also made problematic by local constraints on protest in public.

Contours of the public sphere

Let’s turn now to look for the discursive and practical contours of public sphere participation in Kyoto and in Japan before we continue the task of locating where Korean residents fit into (or are excluded from) this.

“Priority will be given to basic aspects that are regarded as essential for future citizens, and education will be enhanced to give full scope to individuality. In addition, consistency in the curriculum for each subject area among different school levels, from kindergarten through upper secondary school, should be ensured.”
(Monbusho 1994)

The idea that this (national, paternalist) educational institution should instill “individuality” was first presented in 1985 (after many years of study). Fourteen years later virtually nothing in the curriculum has changed to promote this notion. But “consistency” has always been maintained.

Outside of the schools, the state, at various levels, continues to provide inputs into civic identity through state-run and state-controlled media, from television and radio, to newspapers, pamphlets, and fliers distributed door-to-door. Questions about the influence of the state over “private” media corporations—television networks and newspapers—are beyond the scope of this work¹. Until just recently, the Japanese consumer has not been provided with broadcast media sources of information originating outside of Japan. In part, this is due to Japan’s reliance on the Japanese language, which offers few international inputs, although programming for the Japanese market is now underway in Australia and elsewhere. Foreign language learning in Japan, a multi-billion yen business, is notoriously ineffective in terms of verbal ability (despite six years of required English in public pre-college schools, and more years of college English, Japan ranks low [46th in 1994] in national TOEFL scores).

However, the market for Japanese translations of foreign books is also huge, and works in French or German are often available in Japanese translation in Japan long before they appear in English translation in the United States. The growth of the internet and direct satellite television will give the Japanese consumer sources of information and knowledge outside

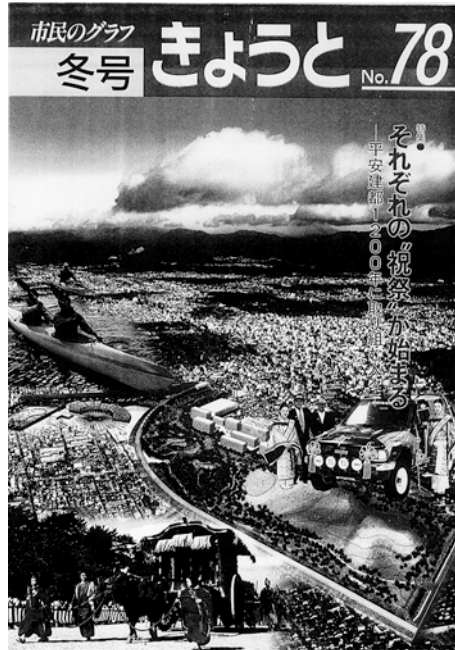
-
1. What is easily noted in this regard is the careful lack of critique concerning the imperial family, and the imperial system, and the fact that foreign governments that object to stories in “private” Japanese newspapers or television find it convenient and effective to complain to the Japanese government.

of the control or “guidance” of Japanese ministries.

Information overload

Government publications continually stress the government’s subservience to the desires of the population, a position supported by polls verifying “public opinion” in support of their programs.

The City of Kyoto publishes a free monthly magazine as well as a newspaper to applaud its own programs.



Government sponsored commissions work on determining responses to thorny social issues, and their reports are also available through governmental publications delivered free of charge to

every mailbox, as well as being reported on by the Japanese press.

Such commissions may take several years to attain a recommendation on their topics¹, but in the interim, the state can announce that the problem is under study. This glut of government-supplied infor-

1. A government commission on education reform, after long deliberation, in 1985 presented the opinion that Japan needed to foster “individual creativity.” The Ministry of Education responded that any curriculum changes would require at least twenty years to implement.

mation (which is not, however, information *about* the government, apart from applauding the services it provides the public) adds to the [Overcoding, Coding, and Recoding](#) of public spaces as places managed by the government...with access allowed to the public.

One outcome of the pervasive narrative of meritocracy—a story that the system under which all Japanese citizens live (Koreans and other foreigner citizens do not have entry into this system) places the best people into positions of power, and that, from the vantage point of their chosen/elevated (*erai*) position, everything that can be done on behalf of the lives and life-styles and the future of “We Japanese” is, of course, being done—is the assumption that the [ken](#) of people in executive positions is necessarily greater than that of the average citizen.

This story also hints that the rest the nation—the great majority who have neither the responsibility nor the perspective that only those who are in positions of power can acquire—cannot understand fully the circumstances that need to be understood in order to assemble an informed opinion. For this reason, all of the necessary opinions are somewhere being formed

and will find expression¹ at the appropriate time. Because virtually all of these times and their expressions take place in Tokyo, Kyoto (like other non-Tokyo Japanese cities) plays a greatly reduced role in national debates over policy.

place holding

Kyoto Prefecture’s glossy *Kyou* magazine is one of several media that local governments use to keep the citizenry informed about various government programs and services. The cover of this month’s issue presented the County’s “gift” to Kyoto for the City’s 1200th anniversary: mounted police in pseudo-Prussian uniforms. Posters of these police were also widely posted. Whether or not Kyoto needed this gift was a matter of some debate. I overheard one comment to the effect, “Just what we need. We ask for a fancier life-style (*seikatsu*) and we get fancier cops (*keisatsu*).” The title “Kyou” in Roman letters elides the homonym for the *kyou* of Kyoto (actually “*kyouto*,” the place) and the word “*kyou*” which means “today.”



This type of practice is a form of what I call “place-holding.” Place-holding occurs in physical as well as discursive spaces. Place-holding is most obvious when the government has nothing to say on a topic,

1. This delegation of opinion, of expression, explains both the silence below and the silence above: the reluctance of citizens to organize groups that propose national counter expressions; and the hesitancy of public officials from openly commenting on important issues. This silence leaves the space of expression open to others, but only those with the right credentials. For example, academics, preferably from one of the national universities, may become regular guests on television talk shows, where they speak from a position of (learned) authority while not having to claim responsibility to a political process. These are also courted by the national government as members of advisory committees that are formed to study vexing social issues.

A recent posting to the “Dead Fukuzawa Society” internet list noted that in Japan everything that is not regulated, everything that does not have some governmental rule, is impossible. In the US, to the contrary, he noted that everything that is outside of government regulation is fair game. In my work with the Korean Ministry of Culture and Sports, I have noted the former also holds in Korea. The idea of expression outside of government control is itself unthinkable.

but still stresses that it will have something to say sometime later.

Place holding also occurs when the government creates “government-sponsored non-government organizations”¹: organizations that might have been otherwise created within civil society, except that this space has been already taken by the state. Kyoto City’s new Institute for World Human Rights, created as a part of the City’s 1200th anniversary year celebration, acquires resources and visibility that an independent organization would need massive amounts of capital to match.

So too, the city-founded League of Historical Cities (formerly the “World Conference of Historical Cities”) includes Kyoto as one of 25 historical cities in the world—a designation that UNESCO would later deny Kyoto after reviewing the current condition of the cityscape.

1. I have been told that in Indonesia this term is actually used.

Kyoto's new mounted police were poster material for the national fall traffic safety campaign: "the 1200 year of Kyoto's building: [Let's have] everybody show Kyoto's traffic manners."



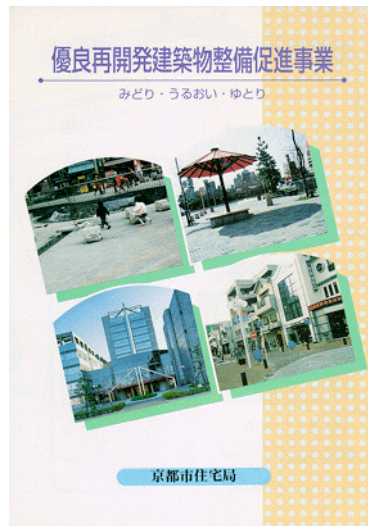
Out on the streets, the holidays, which are fairly numerous in Japan (due primarily to the fact that each new Emperor gets one), offer instances of "time-holding." Apart from "Golden Week" (a springtime multiple-day national holiday that serves as the only real vacation that many Japanese

will ever take), the other national holidays tend to be occupied by state-sponsored events that can, of course, be ignored (you can stay home), but not easily countered. "Sports Day" and "Culture Day" (both formerly Imperial birthdays) are holidays when the City's apparatus goes to work overtime providing athletic meets and public plazas where the city's politicians are conspicuous amid a potpourri of cultural offerings. There are no competing events of any size on these days, no counter-articulations for the holiday.

"Space-holding" is particularly noticeable in Kyoto, due to the lack of public open spaces. Apart from scattered tiny play areas (usually a swing-set and a sand box) and a couple larger open areas near the river, there is a lack of spaces available for un-managed

physical play in Kyoto. Schoolyards are locked after school, and university grounds are never available to the general public. The City continues to build sports facilities (pools, and courts) that it operates in an organized manner, but it refuses to create spaces that can simply, without prior approval, be acquired for casual play.

This City of Kyoto's Housing Bureau pamphlet describes its plans to create open spaces within the city: plans that call on neighbors to replace their current housing with high-rise housing that sits on only part of the reclaimed space. The cover displays the City's current modest achievements in this effort, a program marked by a lack of funding, a lack of regulatory constraints, and a lack of commitment by the City to use city property for open space. NOTE: the space on the upper right (with the red umbrella) was recently redesigned to prevent homeless persons from sleeping under the umbrella.



Open civic spaces are also in short supply. The open space in front of the City Hall has become a parking lot. Private residences and commercial buildings are constructed to the edge of the sidewalk (or to the street where no sidewalk

was designated) without setback regulations that would open up space for public use. And where there are openings in this wall of inaccessible space, most of these are memorials to an Imperial person or event, or gateways to religious spaces (Shinto shrines or Buddhist temples)—spaces guarded either by custom or by actual guards (or both) against appropriation as a place for resting or conversation.

The street in Kyoto is devoted to auto and truck traffic. Despite the fact that many of the streets were designed with only pedestrian traffic in mind, there

are few places and times where automobiles are not allowed. Even the City's own festivals make room for traffic today. Decisions about traffic are made by the City, and so here too, the City chooses to hold the space of the street for a use it controls.

Who controls Saturday?

One of the most visible features of time-holding, and government/industry cooperation in Japan is the continuation of the six-day school week and six-day work week. Saturdays in Japan are not days when families gather for their own recreation, or where children play in public parks (assuming these are available). Saturdays are work days and school days, although the Saturday curriculum is somewhat less demanding than the other days. However, this practice of late seems less and less in step with the government's own proclaimed goal of creating a "leisure society," and is also out of step with other nations that Japan desires to have as its international partners (e.g., the G7 nations). And so, for more than a decade, the Ministry of Education (*monbusho*) has agonized over how to solve this problem; in its own words:

"Introduction of the five-day school week requires substantial changes to an educational framework that is firmly established in society. The impact that these changes will have on schools, families, and communities must therefore be considered comprehensively.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture accordingly established the Consultative Committee for Research and Surveys Regarding New School Management and Related Matters Necessitated by Social Change. This panel, organized within the Ministry, consisted of people from various fields. It conducted in-depth studies of the issues involved and in February 1992 issued a report on its deliberations, in which it expressed the view that a smooth transition to the five-day school week could best be achieved by first introducing a monthly five-day school week and then proceeding to the next stage after resolving any problems that might arise during the initial phase. In line with this

recommendation, the Ministry introduced a monthly five-day school week, with schools closed on the second Saturday of the month. The new system was implemented in the second term of the 1992 school year.” (*monbusho* homepage: JAPANESE GOVERNMENT POLICIES IN EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE 1994, PART I ,Chapter 2).

The Ministry’s admonition that its own six-day school week is so “firmly established” in society that the consequences of simply switching to a five-day week required monumental pre-consideration might also be seen as its own reluctance to give up control over Saturday. The Ministry itself created the six-day school week earlier in this century. And a simple decision to close schools on Saturdays is certainly within its purview.

“Introduction of the five-day school week involves the structural reform of school education, which will affect the public in various ways. Therefore it is necessary to seek the understanding not only of schools, families, and communities but also of various other sectors of society. The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is taking this aspect into account in its approach to the task”

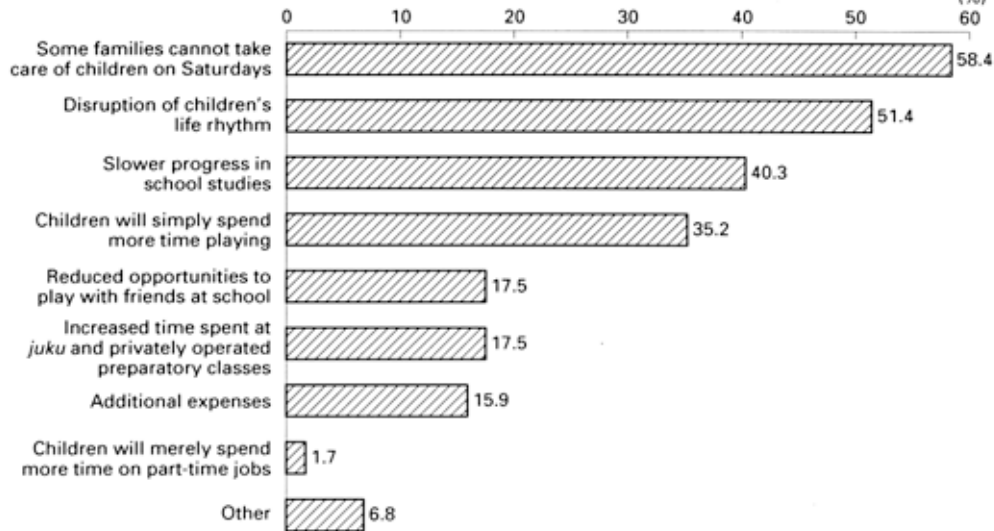
(*monbusho* webpage: JAPANESE GOVERNMENT POLICIES IN EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE 1994, PART I ,Chapter 2).

Its own solution to this problem, the release of students on only one Saturday a month beginning in pilot schools in 1992, has probably created more problems than an outright abolishment of Saturday schooling would have, because it put the parents of these children into a conflict between their roles as parents and guardians and their continuing duties in their jobs: and without sufficient justification for them to demand changes in their work schedule to accommodate their need to stay at home on Saturdays. And so, many children were left home from school on Saturdays without parental supervision, and some of parents of these children have asked that the schools resume classes on every Saturday. This predictable negative reaction permits the ministry’s ill-conceived implementation of what should be a straightforward reform to serve as an alibi for those who seek to maintain the government/industry hold on Saturdays.

In its defense, the Ministry has conducted surveys of the opinions of students, teachers, and parents, and recorded (to its own satisfaction) a general confusion about the move to a five-day week. As it provided the multiple-choice answers it wished to hear, these surveys have predictable outcomes, and are useful to the Ministry in defense of its decisions.

BELOW: one of the Ministry's charts, based on its own survey, from the Monbusho homepage.

Figure I.2.11. Reasons for Disapproval of an Increase in the Frequency of Saturday School Holidays (Parents)



Note: Responses have been abridged. Multiple responses were permitted.

Source: Same as Figure I.2.10.

Instead of coordinating the release of Saturdays as public holidays from work and school with the other ministries that exert “administrative guidance” over Japan's industries with the aim of fostering a space where this reform would lead to an actual increase in free time for families in Japan, the Ministry of Education couched this reform as a potential threat to the established “life rhythm” of Japanese children.

And so, while the institutions that hold onto Saturday in Japan and Kyoto have little obvious difficulty in cooperating to maintain this, they are stymied when it comes to cooperating in relinquishing this control.

The problem created by place-holding, space-holding, and time-holding is that this preempts alternative practices in these places, spaces and times. With public places, times, and discursive spaces already filled by the spectacular production of the state, counter-practices are pushed into the margins.

“Guided by an aesthetic, desensitized approach to politics, Mussolini conceived the world as a canvas upon which to create a work of art, a masterpiece completely neglectful of human values. I would argue that fascism’s conception of aesthetic politics here reveals its truly totalitarian nature” (Falasca-Zamponi [in press], 13).

And when the state brings to bear multiple resources—when it controls mass media outlets and levels of bureaucratic interventions into individual lives—then a ubiquitous hegemonic narrative becomes possible, and space and time may congeal into a single nationalized space/time. This collapse into a singularity of narrative and national interest (as managed by the state) is today mostly attributed to modern totalitarian regimes, such as Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy—or Pre-War Japan. Under these circumstances the state so colored public space and time that counter-practices could find no neutral ground from which to articulate alternative visions. There were no alternatives but sedition.

“More than any other type of role, hierarchal roles depend on the shielding of backstage rehearsals, practice, and relaxations. ...Judges, lawyers, and political leaders similarly try to shield their backstage areas. The greater the ability to hide the time and effort needed to maintain a high status role or rest from it, the greater one's seeming power and omnipotence”
(Meyerowitz 1985, 64-5).

During its post-war recovery, under the governance of essentially the same institutions that held power before the war, but stripped of its military pre-occupations (although its defense budget belies this lack of military power), Japan did little to alter this form of governmentality, which, after all, had taken it to the brink of global military power. Fronting its new pacifist constitution to the world, the nation turned to economic renewal as its primary task. But internally, despite the various openings that the American occupation, demilitarization, land reform, and the new constitution provided, the state-nation, centered, as before, in its bureaucratic institutions, consolidated its position as the source of authorizing power on the topic of things Japanese.

discourse, discussion, and dissent

Before I continue to talk about “being Korean” in Kyoto, I will explore briefly some of the contingencies of identity formation in Kyoto, particularly the inescapably present narratives of “We Japanese.”

The hegemony of the state over space and time in cities like Kyoto is again maintained by the overcoding of the practices it supports through the use of national narratives that reposition alternative articulations as “anti-Japanese.” But this is not rarely articulated in these terms. Instead one finds the obverse: “We Japanese don’t do such and such.”

“A free city for international cultural exchange is one where peoples of any country may assemble freely and in peace, regardless of race, creed or social system, for the purpose of cultural exchange.”

[Kyoto Declaration](#)

In the 1970s Kyoto’s government declared the city open to cultural exchange. By this they hold a position in the discourse on “internationalization,” a position hollowed by their refusal to hire foreign residents to city or prefectural positions.

This coloring of the space of discourse—this mapping of national symbolic onto a space that is only national because of this mapping—eliminates the crucial zone where public discourse can occur without this being labeled “dissent.” While discourse in a public sphere may lead to forms of active, and radicalized dissent (e.g., sedition), the public sphere itself (as such) cannot survive unless it also opens up to reforms that are constructed *within* the dominant space of discourse.

In 1993, the Japanese Government was forced to allow foreign rice imports because of a harvest shortfall. But the last thing the Government apparently wanted was to give the Japanese consumer a taste for high-quality foreign-grown rice, which sells on the open market for about a tenth of the price of good quality Japanese-grown rice. So they imported large quantities of mid-quality long-grain rice from Thailand¹, and mixed this with the other rice they imported. The resulting blend was difficult to cook consistently, and it was a poor ingredient for sushi. This government pamphlet (on the right), “Cooking points on how to steam delicious imported rice,” emphasized the many essential differences between Japanese and other rice, but did little to resolve the problem of cooking this. It finally recommended putting a lot of sauce on the stuff to cover its strange taste.



When the state fills the media with constructed opinions of its own programs it is holding the place where an independent opinion might be found in other circumstances. There may be actually nothing to say, apart from an assertion that

“those persons with the most information and the best minds are considering the problem.” But this assertion takes the place of other statements, which must be considered premature until the government findings are announced.

The inputs that the state has into population lifestyle goals and expectations hold the place in the “cultural imagination” (or the “cultural imaginary” as Stallybrass and White call this [1986, 193]) that might have been occupied either by individuated imaginations, or by competing ones provided by other sources, by capitalism, say, or religious institutions. Often, the state answer questions it has, itself, raised, or tries to push other questions into more manage-

-
1. The Thailand Government bristled at the bad press the Thai rice received in Japan, and noted that the Japanese Government had purchased an inferior grade of rice. After a few months, pure Thai rice (the only imported rice that was not blended) literally could not be given away in supermarkets, and, when the next harvest arrived, the Japanese Government exported tons of this to Africa as foreign aid.

able directions.

The cover of a pamphlet entitled “*tegami*” [letter], the City of Kyoto, as a part of what it calls its Human Rights campaign [*jinken kyanpeen*], encourages people to send more letters to one another. The inside back cover text reads: “From me to you, a message of love” and it recounts the five example letters the pamphlet contains: letters between parents and children when they are apart, or to a favorite friend or someone sick, or from a Resident Korean woman to a sympathetic former elementary school teacher.



Robertson's (1991) work on the Nakasone government's national cultural policy of “*furusato-zukuri*” [“hometown making”] describes how the government, foreseeing undesirable cultural effects from

Japan's rapid urbanization—namely a severing of the most pervasive thread of [Nihonjinron](#), that of an intimate tie to the land—sought to prevent this through a reattachment of younger Japanese to the places where they or where their parents had been born.

“‘Old villages’ are presumed to have existed in harmonious tranquility until vitiated and transmogrified by outside forces—such as westernization, industrialization, and urbanization. In the *furusato-zukuri* literature, change for the worse is described as precipitated by external agents. Change for the better, on the other hand, is presented as a wholly Japanese undertaking, a rallying against intrusive foreign agents. (Robertson 1991, 29)

Many of those who ventured back to their *furusato* were simply reminded of the many reasons that compelled them (or their parents) to leave. For urbanization in Japan has had many adverse effects upon rural communities. And as a counter-cosmopolitan strategy, the program had virtually no discernible effect after ten years. And the strength of the Japanese currency of late has, instead pushed hundreds of thousands of Japanese tourists into international travel circuits.

Cultural and social programs at the national and local governmental level, programs undertaken by the state specifically to correct the attitudes of the population in relation to some identified problem, rarely

view the workings of the state itself as a part of the problem. When the City of Kyoto advertises its “365 days [a year] human rights campaign” with messages that offer paternalist advice on how everyone should act with greater kindness toward each other, it hopes to avoid the questions of those who have tallied the social and economic circumstances and consequences of human rights violations in Kyoto.

“In the following lectures I will try to show how governmentality was born out of, on the one hand, the archaic model of Christian pastoral, and, on the other, a diplomatic-military technique, perfected on a European scale with the Treaty of Westphalia; and that it could assume the dimensions it has only thanks to a series of specific instruments, whose formation is exactly contemporaneous with that of the art of government and which are known, in the old seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sense of the term, as *police*. The pastoral, the new diplomatic-military techniques and, lastly, police: these are the three elements that I believe made possible the production of this fundamental phenomenon in Western history, the governmentalization of the state (Foucault 1991, 104).”

Place-holding discourses create totalizing messages, answers that carry with them (and that reinforce) rationales that are difficult to argue against. “If Japanese individuals held the tight-knit cooperative spirit of the ‘Old Village’ and a personal connection to the future well-being of their rural hometowns, then they would be invested in voluntary service to maintain these interests.” And then the state could rely on mass voluntary cooperation with its internal programs. And, “If everyone were nicer to each other, human rights abuse would disappear.” There is thus no reason to blame the city for this problem: it is everyone’s responsibility.

Further discussion about the types of knowledge and understanding that would allow people to become nicer (and not simply act tolerant) toward others, or about the government regulations that now allow for discrimination—these are not ever included in some next step in this discursive process. There is, in fact, no next step, only the next campaign, which will pick some other metaphorical message to hold the very same place.

But these formally announced cultural attitudinal campaigns are only the rare discursified tip of a larger practical arena, where instruction is provided in the home, at the workplace and in school, but where the practice is done on the street.

Public propriety

“...The first Kyowa National Conference, convened in Tokyo in December 1940, adopted the following pledge:
 1. In accordance with the wishes of Emperor’s universal benevolence, we pledge to become loyal Japanese subjects.
 2. In accordance with the principle of the Imperial way, we pledge to devote ourselves to public service.
 3. In accordance with the principle of unity, we pledge to reform and improve our life style.
 The Kyowa project was literally designed to restructure the souls of Koreans to conform to an Imperial Japanese society. Included in these programs were the changing of Korean names, compulsory Shinto worship, and the learning of Japanese language and customs.
 (Lee 1981a, 162)”

Notions of propriety and civility hold the place in the streets where individual and counter-group behaviors might find expressions. Ideas about public hygiene, rules for driving autos and riding bicycles, expectations of courtesy and of emotional control in public are only a few of the many bodily rules that create the [Public Body](#) in Kyoto, as in any city. Throughout this century, the central government of Japan, perhaps more than in any other nation/state of this size (Singapore is similar in scope, but much smaller in size), has chosen to instruct its population on the minutiae of correct behavior in public.

In part this was done to address the severe, class-linked behavioral semiotics that marked pre-Meiji Japan, and can be seen as an effort to include the general population (then called *heimin*, or “equal-people”) in behaviors that were formerly excluded to them. And in part this was done through a spirit of “modernization” which also contained new demands for bodily discipline (e.g., for factory work). But the position and distinctions of the Japanese nobility (*kazoku*) and gentry (*shizoku*) were also maintained until after WWII, and the manners that were taught to the population, and that are still taught, are essentially behav-

iors of deference, to be practiced in the presence of one's "superiors" (in social-class, age, occupation, or gender).

"Do former *kazoku* [nobility] have any role in democratic Japan today in relation to the emperor?

It goes without saying that the *kazoku* no longer constitute a centralized force supporting the throne. Although a large majority still reside in the capital, and the clubhouse in the heart of Tokyo, now called Kasumi Kaikan, provides a central focus for survivors, by and large former *kazoku* are today more scattered than centralized. Nor do they exhibit the prestige associated with the *kazoku* status, but rather maintain a low, cryptic profile and joke about their having become *shin heimin* ("new commoners," a post-Meiji name for former outcaste)" (Lebra 1993, 353).

Of course, some people can afford to laugh.

So the central logic of manners in public rests on these long-established, and now unspoken, hierarchies—hierarchies that are most visible at the top (the Imperial Household) and at the bottom (persons dwelling in *buraku* areas, and non-Japanese, particularly Koreans).

As Pharr notes, the more extreme "manners" required of the *buraku* dweller in Tokugawa time, were simply one end of a continuum of deference: "If all Japanese, by virtue of being women or junior to others, may occasionally find themselves treated unsatisfactorily or oppressively because of attributes that are beyond their power to change, *burakumin* experience a far more extreme form of status-based discrimination. Historically, prejudice toward *burakumin* often denied their humanity entirely; nevertheless, it is important to note that such discriminatory treatment, while extreme, was on a scale that encompassed all deference behavior—for example, whereas in Tokugawa times all status inferiors were expected to bow deeply to their superiors, for a *burakumin* this meant prostrating oneself before any majority Japanese" (1990 87-88).

Curiously, one of the markers of low-status in Kyoto, levied against *kawaramono* (people of the river), who included indigent laborers, beggars, and other dispossessed peoples—including the actors who cre-



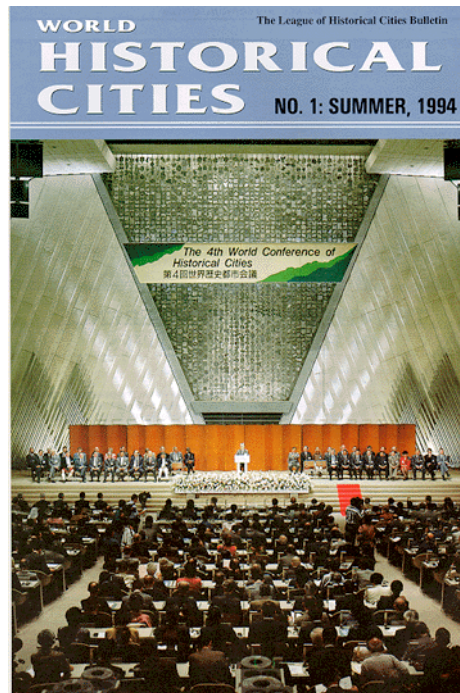
ated Kabuki along the Kamo River—was that they wear indigo-died clothing. Today, the market for brand-name indigo-died jeans in Kyoto puts most people under 30 into this type of clothing.

“In fiscal 1993 the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture [*monbusho*] conducted an exhaustive survey on the implementation of moral education under the new Courses of Study. The survey covered public and private elementary and lower secondary schools and boards of education throughout Japan. The results indicate that almost all elementary and lower secondary schools have now drawn up teaching plans for moral education and are using supplementary readers, and that moral education is being promoted both through the subject of “moral education” and through school education as a whole. *Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science and Culture: 1994*”

Acting fully within its established pastoral, paternal relationship to these new *heimin*¹, (which it had, through its own generosity, created—and without democratic interference) the Japanese state began to inform its population about the responsibilities and behaviors appropriate to citizenship. “Moral education” still occupies a prominent position within public education in Japan.

1. At first, *buraku* dwellers were not included in the *heimin* status, but they were later added, and given the distinction *shinheimin* (new, equal persons), a word that continued to mark their separateness from the general population.

One strategy that Kyoto City has used to reinforce its image as a “world-class” cultural destination is through the creation and sponsorship of an organization of sister-cities, based upon a claim to historical cultural properties. And in 1994, as a part of its 1200th Anniversary celebration, the City again hosted the bi-annual meeting of the organization it controls. The meeting was held in the International Conference Center (a building which my son suggested may be the world’s best example of “Romulan” architecture), and its theme was “the wisdom of historical cities.” This organization competes directly with the Organization of World Heritage Cities, [<http://www.ovpm.org>] which includes cities recognized on the UN World Heritage List.



Since the Meiji period (1852-1912), there have been national programs to conform the public body to expectations acquired through exposure to European cities. Public nudity (for example, laborers wash-

ing their bodies at the work site at the end of the work day, in public view) was prohibited. Public toilets were erected to discourage urination on the street. Prostitution was corralled into selected quarters. Police boxes (*koban*) were distributed throughout the city, giving the police visual access to every major street.

Police-enforced “harmony”

Before WWII, Koreans in Japan, citizens of Japan by right of their Korean heritage under Japanese “annexation,” were singled out by the Ministry of the Interior for corrective socialization, and all were forced to join Kyouwa (harmony) Associations ([Lee 1981a, 162](#)). These took the place of neighborhood associations [*chounaikai*] where similar instructions

about proper behavior were provided to every Japanese citizen.

However the “Harmony” associations were operated through the police precincts (as were the controls over prostitution), and were plainly used as a means of policing¹ the Korean population. The society’s membership card became an identity card that all Koreans were forced to carry with them.

“The *kyouwakai* [Harmony associations] opened lecture/film classes for the ‘general mobilization of the national spirit’, classes on Japanese language, and for Shinto worship, where Koreans were [encouraged] to offer their physical labor (construction or farming) as a service [to the Shrine]. There were also classes on “Japanese Dressing” and on incorporating Japanese culture into the daily life of Koreans.” (Mizuno 1994, 71)

The contents of this involuntary indoctrination included a combination of Japanese-style home economics, correct manners in public, Japanese-style ceremonial customs (marriage and funeral), proper attitudes toward the Imperial Household and the Imperial State, and also behaviors within Shinto worship, as well as instruction in the Japanese language. Korean children in Japan at that time attended Japanese schools, and no alternative schooling was allowed. But then Japanese children also attended Japanese state schools, with no alternative schooling allowed.

The main difference was the position of the Japanese student *within* the “We Japanese” [*warera nihonjin ha...*]discourse. The police made sure that the Koreans acted appropriately in public, but they were not given the authority to appropriate either the discourse of “We Japanese” nor the spaces where this

-
1. This intrusive police interaction with their lives is a memory that was not severed after the war, when Koreans (and all foreigners) were (and are) forced to carry their foreign resident identification at all times. Foreign residents can be stopped by the police at any time to have their identities checked, although this is not currently a common practice. It remains one of those practices that can become more common should the authorities desire this.

applied. At least the Japanese children were given a participatory narrative of encompassing authority—however completely this had been delegated to “public officials”—and they were, some of them, being trained to enter into government service.

Before the War, alternative public behavior, “acting Korean” on the street in Kyoto, and elsewhere, was not allowed, and the obligatory instructions were provided to ensure that none could escape the expectations placed on proper—Japanese—behavior in public. I contend that this attitude toward the street, as a place that is only appropriate for and available for appropriation by “Japanese” coded individuals has not disappeared either as a program within the State, and as a practical expectation on the street. The presence of non-Japanese tourists and foreign workers is made exotic by this, and a much greater load of “strangeness” is both applied and expected of these “strangers.”

“...There is no binary division to be made between what one says and what one does not say; we must try to determine the different ways of not saying such things, how those who can and those who cannot speak of them are distributed, which type of discourse is authorized, or which form of discretion is required in either case.

There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses.”

[\(Foucault 1990, 27\)](#)

In Kyoto, civility is coded through the expectations that have long been informed through discursive regimes practiced at school, in the workplace, and at home. These regimes not only code the behaviors that are appropriate, they also overcode the identities of those who can perform these behaviors “naturally.” Civility describes expectations on behavior in public places. (The current, increasingly visible, debate about “civility” in the United States, is, at one moment, a debate about the voluntary behavior of persons in public.) Civility generally describes the everyday disci-

pline that conforms bodies to these expectations. Public places acquire publicness through many practices: publicness is inscribed in laws, enforced by regulations, and granted and respected through formal and informal practices of those who enter the spaces. But public places are most generally described by the repertoire of practices that are appropriate within them, and by the cohort of individuals who can perform these practices.

The boundaries that exclude persons or groups from participating in public places are not limited to legal definitions of citizenship (for example, when land-ownership is a requirement for voting), but are created also when discursive fields overcode national identity with ethnic background, or when they overcode appropriate public behavior with sexual gender.

Michel Foucault, in his *History of Sexuality* (1990), described how discursive regimes create silences through the application of power (i.e., from a position of dominance). Silence thus becomes as much a part of discourse as are discursive practices such as texts, and these practices must also be studied in order to reveal the silences they produce and require.

What are discursive “regimes”? These are institutions that have an interest in positioning themselves (and their messages, their codes) within a discursive field. They achieve a position of dominance, I submit, by speaking in a manner that overcodes the space of the discourse (See: [Overcoding, Coding, and Recoding](#)).

By inserting the logic of an authoritative dis-

course—such as national myths of origin—into the content of potentially unrelated discourses—such as expectations on public behavior—an institution, say, a national school system, can overcode the latter with the former, creating a discursive regime that links manners with national identity.

When behaviors in public are marked as “properly Japanese,” alternative behaviors (and all behaviors¹ by persons who are not visibly “Japanese,” such as Europeans) acquire an unmarked, and unspoken “not-Japanese” connotation. Alternative behaviors may be seen as “wrong”, or “bad” as well. But they are also inextricably “non-Japanese.” And counter discourses about behaviors in public are forced into a position of first challenging the legitimacy of dominant institutions to be arbiters of “things Japanese,” before they can even begin to articulate counter-practices.

This overcoding of the street as a space peculiar to, and only properly appropriated by those who can claim membership in the group “We Japanese,” silences the expressive imagination of those who do not include themselves into this designation. Together, the strategies of “place holding” and “overcoding” result in a hegemony of representation over the articulation of how and by whom public spaces in Kyoto can be appropriated. These discourses have

-
1. In a recent (1996) show on Japanese television, the Japanese commentator was interviewing the proprietor of a restaurant in Tokyo. The proprietor was from India, but he spoke absolutely fluent Japanese. After the interview, the commentator expressed the opinion, “I prefer it when foreigners use non-fluent Japanese.” Attempts by non-Japanese to master behaviors that have been overcoded as Japanese will always fail for this reason.

been fully appropriated by the state, with long-time assistance from Shinto organizations and from industry.

Today the main threat to this status quo comes not from counter-state groups, such as civil-society organizations, but from the internationalist, and consumerist discourses of the Japanese capitalist market: i.e. from the growing transnational [market-state](#).

And today it is exclusion from the latter, from the means of accumulating capital or acquiring highly valued life-style commodities, that marks the central exclusionary effect of racial discrimination against Koreans living in Kyoto. But to gain access to the market, they must first recode the popular imagination that preserves the public sphere (such as this is) in Kyoto for persons of ethnic Japanese descent.

Kyoto's large-scale urban events serve as spectacles for the national cultural education trade (adult tourists, having "been-there and done-that" in school, rarely make a return trip to Kyoto). These events, in content so very similar to other urban events in Japan (they have copied one another for centuries), and in form, so completely scripted that one never needs to see them more than once, are repeated each year not to create a presence in the present, but to evoke the phantasms of a nationalized past—a past where the ghosts of victims of imperial rule should have vanished, except that they are also preserved through the spectacles of imperial (and post-imperial) rule. The continuing presence of a "Korean" population in

Kyoto is also an imperial spectacle—perhaps the only non phantasmagoric ongoing imperial event in the city today. Only since 1993 has a group on the margin challenged this national hegemonic hold on Kyoto's self image. And here is the story of Kyoto, of this outsider group, and of the event that puts them into the center for one afternoon every year.

Local Spaces and Counter-identities

recoding the strange

HERE is a description of the historical connections between the space that became Kyoto and that of the Korean Peninsula. This description looks only briefly at the major contours of this connection before it moves to more recent attempts to manage this past within narratives of nationalism. These narratives are the primary myths (alibis) that legitimate the continuing separation of those persons who are native to Kyoto—but who are called “Korean”—and others who are native to Kyoto and who are hailed as “Japanese.”

It is against the current construction of Japanese national identity and nationalized sites of culture that the *zainichi* Korean community in Higashi-kujo Kyoto directs its counter-public actions. In particular, the target is the notion of uniformity [*kakuitsu*] within this dominant identity, the sense that difference itself is wrong (actually, in the Japanese language a most common word used to mean “wrong” means “to differ” or “to disagree” [*chigau*]; so too, the word “change” [*hen*] carries the meaning of “strange,” or “suspicious.”). Culturally, uniformity is tied to the message of a shared national/racial/linguistic heritage—which results in a predictable (as the story goes) homogeneity among Japanese citizens.

“Compression and acceleration are the order of the day: children absorb more information even as cram schools repackage it and test makers reformulate tests; electronic bidets and specially designed shampoo sinks crowd into nonexistent domestic space and impose new standards of hygiene; taped bird calls provide instant natural stress relief telephonically. And for the unguarded vacant moment, there will always be the *ibento* (event), the festivals of capitalism (which have incorporated the once traditionally festivals marking nodes of agricultural time), the planning of which has become a much heralded growth industry” (Field, “Resident Korean Literature...”).

Today the construction of uniform identity—across the entire nation, but here, within Kyoto—utilizes at times a national(ist) narrative of “family” (*kazoku*) as a trope for nation (*kokoku*). This, again, is not new: the imperial family and the body of the emperor served a similar function in prior times. As we will soon see, the “nation as family” preserves the logic of a model form of *paternalist* family: a feature that needs to be remembered when “the family” is so presented.

The nation-as-family metaphor fronts the closeness of the nation as a whole. But it also disinherits those who cannot claim national “family” ties. And it also shuns those “children” who are different or who would chose not to obey the family’s “father”. These orphaned persons become strange-ers, outsiders (*gaijin*, a general and slightly pejorative term for all foreigners).

interrogating the familial

For a few, estrangement from the “national family” brings personal release—an opportunity to explore other identities— but for most people in Kyoto, the threat of estrangement is a subtle terror. Opting-out is always possible for anyone who is within the national identity fold, but once out, the way back is difficult at best. However, there is a time between childhood and adulthood when some degree of deviance has been institutionalized, and increasingly fetishized as the only period in one’s life when self expression (usually group-inspired) is possible. Many

college students also go through a phase of exploring alternative life-styles, including, recently, foreign travel in much greater numbers (see: [Four years of heaven](#)).

Those who do not go to college may join in youth gangs (see: [bosozoku](#)) for a time. But by the time of adulthood (at twenty years of age) these “anti-social measles” infections are expected to have passed.

This is also the time when adult buying habits are

“Giving that sense of freedom and that ‘something’” This ad done for the organization of commercial broadcasters, uses a montage of world events and Japanese events together with an astronaut whose identity has been made strange by his hair (strangely cut and colored) and his eyes (a light hazel color). Is he Japanese? Of course, but of that tribe of young Japanese seeking out adventures and identities in those few pre-adult years they have for themselves. “Something, something free...” the women sing in English. Increasingly the “something” Japanese pre-adults are seeking leads them out of Japan.



formed, and so Dentsu (the world's largest advertising agency) appeals directly to this age cohort and then to nostalgia for this time of life, with commercials that show young Japanese acting free and strange.

“I want to be strange (*hen na hito*),” one of my spouse’s Japanese college students admitted to her.

He had died his hair red¹ and matted it into dreadlocks. Spending hours at a tanning salon, he had darkened his skin, and he wore tie-died t-shirts with Bob Marley's photo on them. "I want to be Jamacian." He hung around reggae bars in Kyoto, and bought all the CD's he could afford.

"What happens after graduation?" I asked him one day.

"I cut my hair and put on a suit," he admitted, with resignation. After all, he was only *playing at* being strange, using the narrow opening of freedom that four years in a Japanese college provides, but knowing when to reenter the national "family".

Strange by birth

Korean's in Kyoto do not have the luxury of being strange by choice. They have "strangeness" applied to them with their Korean names. They turn strange the moment when they become thirteen years of age and must by law go to the local city office (*kuyakusho*) and register as Koreans. In families that are more open about their Korean status, their children carry this badge of "strangeness" to primary school every day. Some carry this off with skill and determination, while for others, the strangeness of "being Korean" is something they would do anything to be rid of. The literature about the experience of being Korean in Japan,

-
1. The use of the vegetable dye "henna" to mark one's desire to be strange (*hen na*) is a curious homonym. Almost all the women in my college classes died their hair into some brunette shade (anything but black), but the red-red look of henna dye was reserved for those with picaresque outsider identities. Juvenile gang members (*bosozoku* [literally "crazy tribe"]) in junior high schools or in vocational high schools do this, as do bohemian types in colleges.

particularly during childhood years, is characterizable by a common narrative thread of moments of black despair. And more than one *zainichi* Korean in Higashi-kujo spoke to me of suicidal moments, and relatives who had chosen this alternative.

Moments of Being Korean in Kyoto

In 1994, for the anthropology meetings in Atlanta, I wrote a list of the various identity “moments” that the Koreans I met in Kyoto had described to me as occasions where their Koreanness was most deeply evident to them. Let me repeat these briefly:

- Being Korean under Japanese colonial rule;
- being quasi-Japanese under the American occupation;
- being non-Japanese when Japanese government war-time compensation plans were determined;
- being “North” Korean when the South makes peace with Japan (without compensation for resident Koreans in Japan), or;
- being “South” Korean on your passport when the North builds schools in Japan (the only escape from the Ministry of Education’s walloping dose of pure-Japanese cultural content);
- being Japanese-enough not to know the Korean language well enough to talk with newcomers from Korea, or having learned Korean in a North Korean school, and so failing the Japanese government test that would allow you to be a tourist guide for Koreans, because your accent is wrong;
- being informed enough to despise the unnatural process of naturalization in Japan;
- being disconnected in a city where lives and livelihoods are built on connections—and also having no connections to give to your children;
- being a *buraku* dweller in a city where people make this sigma stick;
- being old and finally beyond most of the fears that have marked your everyday life, except for that of poverty, because being Korean means being locked out of the government pension system you have been paying into for decades—and also seeing your children and grandchildren kept out of schools, businesses, condominiums, and marriages, or;
- being young, and learning to labor instead of study, and wanting all the things that they show on television, but you can’t come close to affording them;
- being told that discrimination is illegal and the problem is being resolved, but watching as the Japanese government sets up a program to bring in “pure-blood Japanese” laborers from South America, while you work at three part-time jobs to scrape by;
- being tired of being shut out of social or economic interaction with Japanese, and so trying to

pass using some Japanese name, and getting found out and being exposed;

being told by your parents to never break the rules, to never give them a reason to say you did whatever it was you did because you are Korean;

being proud of being Korean despite not knowing what this means apart from it signifying a dangerous other within yourself;

being an “alien,” above all, in and to the city of your birth.

“Surrounded by magnificent hills, Kyoto with her poetry reflects the changing of the seasons, and has provided over the last twelve centuries a natural cradle for the art and culture of Japan, and a noble heritage for her people. For this reason Kyoto is known as the spiritual home of the Japanese people; it is said that without knowing Kyoto, it is impossible to understand the real Japan. But on the other hand, Kyoto is not only an old, former capital but also a modern city anxious to develop new culture based on a precious inheritance. Kyoto is now flourishing as the center of traditional industries, art, scholarship and religion”
Kyoto city tourist info webpage.
<http://www.rain.org/~matsuri/Kyontct.html/#8..>

These are some of the moments of being that roll through the resident Korean community in Higashi-Kujo Kyoto. Some of them reflect Japan's colonizing history. Other moments occur today on a daily basis. Many of these are moments that might connect them to other dislocated individuals in other cities around the world. At each moment, the individual must face a locally applied identity: “You Koreans...”. And there are more Koreans in Kyoto than one might guess and more than the City can even begin to officially ignore, although it also seems uneasy¹ with the fact that they are, by far, the most prevalent population of international residents within Kyoto. With the advent of the Madang, there are new moments, a few of which I managed to share with members of the community:

[Madang night.](#)

The outcome is silence

The *Korean* identity moments that resident Koreans face at home, on the street, and in schools, are not shared with the remainder of the city's population, (which has other moments, coded in other ways). And so, each moment takes the individual away from that shared feeling of belonging that is so assiduously

1. A few years ago, the city's “international” office stopped giving out the percentages of populations of foreign residents in its foreigner's “Guide to Kyoto.”

assembled for Japanese citizens in Kyoto. Capitalist consumer identity moments and desires flow over all boundaries in Japan, but again are shared unequally because of ethnic, class, and gender domination in this arena. Resident Koreans are more likely than most to find themselves on the silenced subject end of the domination of money as a means of expression.

“Consensus is a horizon that is never reached....”
(Lyotard 1984, 61).
“Abstract space, the space of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism, bound up as it is with exchange ... depends on consensus more than any space before it”
(Lefebvre 1991, 57)
“The 'normal' exercise of hegemony in the area which has become classical, that of the parliamentary regime, is characterized by the combination of force and consensus which vary in their balance with each other, without force exceeding consensus too much.”
(Jenks 1993, 83).

Later in this chapter I will be discussing how the international market place is working in an increasingly oblique manner to the aims of programs for national(ist) identity formation, and how individuals may be able to find a space in this divide for counter expressions. But first, I need to complete this introduction to the application of notions of homogeneity, and a resulting uniformity of identity/behavior that is the main source for the social exclusion of resident Koreans (and other foreign residents) in Kyoto. All activist groups—consumerist and ecology advocates, feminists, and groups of Koreans—make their counter positions against this façade of a uniform *consensus*.

the apparatuses of normality

This “consensus,” which is warranted mainly through the silence of complaint or dissent, is tied to a narrative of sharing—a shared history, ecology, heredity, and suffering by a population which is authorized to self-identify as “Japanese.” And this narrative is supported by institutional practices that are provided to a citizenry that is always within the ready reach of the state.

The notion of an inherent uniformity of being and

imagination among those who would make statements beginning with “We Japanese...” is certainly of a kind that is promoted in many states as a positive expression of shared patriotic belonging.

“On December 18, Kyoto City unveiled the [Kyoto Action Plan], a compilation of activities to be launched by the 1999 (Heisei 11) fiscal year. Made up of 216 projects, the [Kyoto Action Plan] is central to Mayor Masumoto's strategy for 'building a bridge to 21st-century Kyoto' during his first 4-year term in office. The general cost of the plan will be 550 billion yen [about US \$5 billion]. It has three cardinal programs: 'Kyoto Vibrant,' 'Cheerful & Vibrant City Office,' and 'Grand Vision for 21st-century Kyoto.' Together, the programs focus on five areas: people, city, industry, culture and nature. Mayor Masumoto declared his wish to invigorate Kyoto using this plan, and announced it would be identified with the catch phrase 'People-City-Dreams Vibrant City: Kyoto' http://www.city.kyoto.jp/index_e.html: “Hot News,” December 18, 1996.

“We Americans believe in freedom” is a phrase no US Senator would hesitate to repeat. Elsewhere (Caron 1997) I have discussed the general problematic of desiring to belong to modern “population cohorts,” such as national populations—a desire signalled by the enthusiasm with which statements beginning with “We [insert nationality here]...” are spoken. A desire to belong to any group, I suggest, might be better directed at groups where some form of mutual trust is available.

In any case, the idea of a singular, communal national imagination, which Anderson (1983) described as the basis for the *formation* of modern nation-states, is today increasingly inadequate to describe the realities of cosmopolitan transnationalism found in most localities—but not, as yet in Japan. If there is an exceptional quality about modernity in Japan this has been produced by decades of official refusal to admit internal heterogeneity. Few states in the world today stake as much of their claim to national identity on a history of isolation and separate (unique) heredity as does Japan.

As Ivy (1995) noted, the “refusals of heterogeneity” in Japan are multiple and real:

“Japan emerges as the armature of intense preoccupations with essential national-cultural identity, continuity, and community that mark and remark it with the signs of totality. The effort to sustain this totality announces itself in every tourist advertisement, every appeal to ‘home’ (*furusato*), every

assertion that ‘we Japanese are modern, but we have kept our tradition,’ every discourse on public (Japanese) harmony. This effort to maintain the self-sameness of Japanese culture thus exposes itself by its denial of social difference—race, ethnicity, class. This denial is not sheerly ideological, for the policies of the Japanese state and historical contingencies have determined that in fact those differences *are* reduced: less than 1 percent of the population of Japan are non-Japanese citizens, so say the official statistics. There are strong structural, institutional, and legal denials and controls of ethnic and racial differences; there are refusals of heterogeneity at many levels. While anthropologists and historians attempt to find difference, resistance, and ambiguity in Japan—and of course any polity as vast and affluent as Japan must generate differences, if only by negation— there is an equal necessity to come to terms with what is a powerfully normalizing and standardizing nexus of institutional, legal, and socio-cultural apparatuses” (26).

“The rate of advance to colleges and universities for Buraku students is about half the national average. The high school dropout rate is two to three times higher among Burakumin than non-Burakumin, and employment and marriage-related discrimination against Buraku people are still common. Today detective agencies are employed by families and employers to trace the ancestral origins of prospective employees or marriage partners. Data banks are maintained and computer lists of the names of those believed to be of Buraku origin are secretly purchased”
(Hirasawa 1992, 5-6).

This situation is mirrored in the resident Korean neighborhoods. See also: [the politics and semantics of homogeneity](#)

These apparatuses of normality are, again, common enough elements of what Giddens (1994) has called “disembedding” practices of modernity around the globe, practices used most rigorously by emerging nation-states in creating national spaces out of their territories and national populations out of their peoples. It is crucial, he claims, to see this feature of modernization as a “detraditionalizing” practice—even when the resulting content is a narrative of traditionality: “The evacuation of local contexts of action—the ‘disembedding’ of activities—can be understood as implying processes of intensified detraditionalization. We are the first generation to live in a thoroughly post-traditional society, a term that is in many ways preferable to ‘postmodern’. A post-traditional society is not a national society—we are speaking here of a global cosmopolitan order. ... It is a society... in which tradition changes its status. In the context of a globalizing, cosmopolitan order, traditions are constantly brought into contact with one another and forced to ‘declare themselves’” (Giddens 1984, 83).

Modern states have been “declaring themselves”

for many decades now, and many of these declarations have not been gentle: racism, colonialism, warfare, and genocide have found a place in the declarations of nation-contra-nation. Even the most rational-discursive forums for international affairs (such as the UN) have allowed the concept of “national sovereignty” to permit a continuance of nation-internal state-sponsored practices of racism, colonialism, warfare, and genocide.

The extremes that states must and do go to in order to “declare themselves” also serves to show the potential imbalance of power that can hold between states and their residents. This imbalance is most evident in state-nations (see: [State-nation modernity](#)), where the state’s interests are more complex. But all nations have shared in moments where national identity, most visibly in patriotic celebrations, but also within less visible forms of chauvinism, becomes a project of the state. And this project usually has at its central goal the creation of a shared unity of affect (See also: [orthoposture](#))—a collective, and reliable emotional position among the national population.

Nationalism has joined with pre-national traditions (e.g., fundamentalist religions) in an agonistic discursive project that forces people to “declare themselves.” In an actually “traditional” order, local traditions would be so self-evident and ubiquitous—so utterly *normal*— that such a declaration would be superfluous. It is only when the ground of tradition has been removed from under practices that confes-

Today, life-styles are created in counter distinction to this normality. Like all fashions, life-styles are counter-traditional in content. Participation in self-reflexive lifestyle projects creates a break with the “traditional life-style.”

sions are needed.

The notion, then, of a “traditional lifestyle” becomes oxymoronic when lifestyle becomes reflexively organized, as this is increasingly in late modernity. This is why Giddens calls this time a post-traditional order. A reflexive lifestyle is a lifestyle that seeks to become ab-normal¹, both formally (by achieving a reflexive awareness of normalcy) and in its content (by playing with the content of normalcy). When the normal becomes “kitch” it loses its unmarked normalcy. Here I only want to say that we can expect that the projects of the state in promoting a “traditional lifestyle” are increasingly problematic these days. When linked to a traditional order, state-sponsored normalcy is liable to be countered by lifestyle projects at all levels.

deconstructing *atarimae* nationalism

There is little one can do to escape Japanese national cultural representations within Kyoto. In fact, most of the several million annual tourists (and most of these on organized school trips from other Japanese cities) are there to indulge in this local/national spectacle. The calendar and streets are cluttered with events and places that remind resident and tourist alike of Kyoto's place in the nation of Japan.

-
1. Foucault has called modernity a era of confession, but nobody needs to confess to being normal; rather, the abnormal act, the artificial desire, the transgressive practice is the content of confession. A type of normalcy, reconstructed by the state in early modernity, and now increasingly with inputs from the market, has acquired the unmarked—unconfessable—position where a bricolage of “traditions” once informed daily life.

But for those who are excluded arbitrarily from being Japanese at all, in a place where all is the minimum—for there are no hyphens¹ in Japan—these inclusive Japanese events merely highlight their exclusion. This exclusion works on many levels.

I introduce here a work of [Nihonjinron](#) that I use as an example of the model for uniform identity formation in post-War Japan. [Here is JAPAN](#) was published in 1964 by members of a generation that had experienced World War II and its post-War economy. It prescribes the roles of the next, post-War generation, the generation blessed to live in a Japan that had already achieved industrial miracles. The nation is now (1997) at the point where the third generation of post-War population—those born after 1985— is reaching its teen years, and this new generation will face a future where a slow growth economy, an ageing society (Japan's birth rate is annually among the lowest in the world), and transnational culture (by 1999 Japan's cable television will grow from three channels to more than 300) are central lifestyle features.

Here is Japan was published five years after mass protests against the government's renewal of the security treaty with the US had failed to alter Japan's offi-

1. While various groups in the U.S. are now dropping the hyphen (such as African-American) as marking them as a subgroup of a higher level "American" (while adding terms such as "European American" to mark the history of European migration as one among many) Koreans in Japan have not even achieved a status that would permit them to add "Korean" to "Japanese." It would be interesting to see if a move away from "resident Korean" (*zainichi kankoku/chosenjin*) toward a Korean Japanese (*kankoku/chosen nihonjin*) would be possible.

cial policy, this book affirms the necessity of all Japanese to live in a harmony that is at once the outcome of their mutual ecological and genetic heritage, and also the means to continued prosperity. In Japan, the “’60s” was a time when the government ministries succeeded in destroying the last of the adversarial labor unions, replacing these with “company” unions where “harmony” with management was the watchword. By 1970, in the middle of the Vietnam War, when the mutual security treaty was again up for renewal, opposition to this had become only window-dressing for the state, a sign that opposition was allowed in democratic Japan. And by 1990, the only noises of opposition heard in Tokyo were the ear-splitting loudspeaker trucks of right-wing gangsters who could extort cash from politicians by threatening to either praise or vilify them.

“...the LDP [Japan’s Post-War ruling political party] as a whole regards *furusato-zukuri* as the means by which to forge a new ‘cultural state’ (*bunka kokka*) in tandem with a ‘new Japanese-style welfare state’ (*Nihonsei no atarashii fukushi kokka*)...” (Robertson 1991, 26).

I use *Here is Japan* as an example from a period in Japan when the state had first acquired the budgetary means to promote national programs aimed at cultural transformations. These programs included the new fast rail lines (*shinkansen*) that linked many of the outlying regions of the nation to Tokyo, and made day-trips to provincial centers possible. Such rapid transportation became the vehicle for later programs, such as the “Discover Japan” (*jisukabaa Japan*) campaign of the Japanese National Railway, launched in 1970 (Ivy 1995, 34). This was the period in which the institutional roots of the later (1980s) “*furusato*” program that Robertson (1991) describes were made.

I want to simply suggest that the roles outlined in *Here is Japan*—the Mother, the Everyman, the Sister, the Brother—continue to be one source for personal identity formation, even, ironically within the resident Korean communities. I would also suggest that these roles are, in large part, the locally constructed variant of the model for a bourgeois worker/consumer family that is found in many other states. For decades, television programming in the United States was dominated by images of model suburban families (“Leave it to Beaver,” “Father Knows Best,” etc.). Such models are not the only ones available, and are subject to parody and ironic reappraisals, but when promoted not only by the media, but by a national educational system, they acquire a potential hegemonic position within the state.

“In this organization, the story plays a decisive role....It even has distributive power and performative force (it does what it says) when an ensemble of circumstances is brought together. Then it founds spaces. ...By considering the role of stories in delimitation, one can see that the primary function is to *authorize* the establishment, displacement or transcendence of limits” (de Certeau 1984 123).

Here is Japan was a collaborative work of governmental, corporate and academic minds, who sought to encapsulate the entire story of Japan’s modernity as an essentializing cultural narrative of heredity (race), community (family), and ecology. It is a self-ethnography and a prime example of a story that seeks to delimit a space.

[Here is JAPAN](#) is helpful in understanding something else, something more than the articulation of the typical bourgeois family: it speaks also of, and tells an authorized story of the nation in terms of the family, it articulates the state as a national family. This is not a casual metaphor, but an organizing principle meant to explain the proper relationship the state and its citizens. Looking at the four roles proper to citizens something curious is missing. Adult males can be either “Mr. Average,” the salaried worker, or “Japan’s Brother” the factory worker. Pre-adult males are “Japan’s Hope: the Student” while females here are “Japan’s Sister: the Girl” up until they become “Japan’s Mother: the Housewife.” So what is missing here? What is not available as a role available to the citizen is the most important position in the family: where is “Japan’s Father?” This is the place the state (with some, not fully articulated space for the emperor) keeps for itself. From this space the state’s paternalism guides the future of the national family in collaboration with Japan’s industries, which are themselves most often likened to families. But the national family does not include everyone who resides on the archipelago of Japan. And there are no rules and no histories of adoption into this family.

“Agriculture, the traditional base of the nation, is still hugely important. Japan, in a sense, developed industry in the spirit of her agricultural past. The ancient Japanese ideal was to create a society wherein individuals could equally share the burdens of labour and their fruits. This same spirit infuses the proliferation of new industries which are changing the age-old agricultural landscape at such a fantastic rate today. The structure of even the most advanced Japanese industries, therefore, differs somewhat from their counterparts abroad. The ‘family’ ideal of the old agricultural days—when the ‘family’ embraced the nation as a whole — imparts an aura of mutual responsibility between worker and employer even if they are making electronic computers.”
[Here is JAPAN](#) 1964, n.p.

For example, Korean men in Kyoto do not qualify to be “[Japan’s Mr. Average: the White-collar Man](#).”

Companies that hire university graduates for such career positions avoid hiring Koreans on various pretexts—the competition for these positions is intense in any case (women also find themselves excluded).

Mostly this exclusion is not allowable under labor regulations, but it is also rare that such practices are successfully challenged in the courts [See also: [The courts](#)].

Public sector jobs at almost every level are closed to Koreans and other foreign nationals by laws and regulations that require citizenship for employment—even at the city level.

Korean women in Kyoto cannot hope to become “[Japan’s Mother: the Housewife](#)” as this role is occupied by those whose husbands work in the companies that do not hire Koreans. The luxury of not working is virtually non-existent among adults in neighborhoods such as Higashi-kujo. The realities of low-paying jobs creates the opposite scenario: the need to keep two or three jobs. While there are always jobs to be had in the service industry¹ (however, this could change in Japan’s worsening economy), the cost of living in Japan is such that the number of hours per week one needs to work to maintain a minimal life-style are often more than fifty hours.

-
1. The lack of persons willing to work for minimum wage (about US\$7) in Kyoto has pushed to hourly rate at local fast-food stores/restaurants up to \$10 or more an hour. But with the cost of living in Kyoto at something greater than twice that of the cost of living in New York City, \$10 an hour does not go very far. As one Korean said to me, “[You have to be rich to be poor in Kyoto](#).”

Young women in Kyoto, including Koreans, under these circumstances, may find part-time work in Kyoto's sex industry¹ to be their only source of employment above the going minimum wage. [Kyoto's sex industry](#), physically comprising hundreds of hostess bars, lounges, escort services, and "soap-lands" (formerly called "turkish baths")², caters to the likes of corporate and government (and male) workers and visitors. The traditional "pleasure quarters" of Kyoto, some of which are architecturally preserved today, rely more on local haute cuisine (*kaiseki ryori*) and high brow geisha entertainment, and are only proximally connected with the establishments that offer varieties of sexual attention.

-
1. While prostitution is illegal in Japan, the laws only cover direct genital-to-genital contact (Constantine 1993), and so there are any number of sexual "services" that are perfectly legal, and in any case, the possibility of being caught *in flagrante* are minimal. Sex parlors operate a few meters away from the police box near Shijo-Kawaramachi. A variety of "salons" and hostess clubs offer the championship of young women without necessarily leading to a sexual episode, and most women enter this part-time occupation as hostesses, and only then, and only sometimes, move on to more direct (and more lucrative) sexual services.
 2. Kyoto's many "love hotels" are typically used by couples seeking privacy and fantasy, and are the local equivalent to secluded "lover's lanes" in the US.

Hypercorrect behavior

“The derogatory epithet commonly used by the Japanese characterizing Koreans as *futei senjin* (rebellious Koreans) is said to have originated in this [colonial] period. In the eyes of many Japanese, the alienated behavior of Koreans supported the belief that Koreans were unwelcome intruders incapable of being assimilated into Japanese society. The stereotype of a Korean was related to “badness,” not only moral but even in respect to physical comportment. Even today, it is not uncommon to find a grandmother scolding her grandchild by saying, ‘Don’t sit like “Chosenjin” do’” (Lee and DeVos 1981c, 41).

While some residents in Kyoto are quick to assume that Koreans are (for reasons that seem to attach to “Koreanness”) more violent, less responsible, and in other ways not as reliable as Japanese, Resident Korean life in Kyoto is most often based on behavioral norms keyed to those available to their Japanese neighbors. The stigma associated with being Korean and living in a stigmatized neighborhood in Kyoto does not release Koreans from reacting to expectations on behavior in public. In fact, among the hundred or so most active Madang organizers there were very few individuals, one or two, who would, by their individual public behavior, perhaps attract notice in, say, an up-town department store. And the streets and homes in Higashi-kujo, although modest in content, were no less modest in their formal public presentation than homes in my own neighborhood.

For many families, the best response to the stigma is through hypercorrect behavior. By acting correctly according to the standards of the majority Japanese population in Kyoto, these families seek to distance themselves from the stigma of being Korean. However, this also makes them aware of their inability to be accepted as Japanese.

“I think we are better Japanese than most Japanese,” Ms. Yamasaki said once, “because we have to try harder.” I asked her to explain.

“People outside think that people living in Higashi-Kujo are, you know, not capable of proper liv-

ing. So my father always makes sure that everything is proper, that the street is clean outside our house, and that nobody can say anything against us.”

“The Man from Earth did not answer. But as the days went by, he began to see the details in the streets far below his room on the fourteenth floor of a new hotel. The people came into focus; they were not earthlings, but native to this star. Faces were kin to each other in a gentle absence of expression.

Change, too, was so much faster in the city about him. As a plant mushrooms in a hothouse, the city was growing faster than his eyes could record. Where there had been one factory, now there were two. His hotel had been 14 stories; now it had silently risen to 15, and atop the new height sprouted a roof-garden where there had been only a roof.”
[Visit to a Green Star](#) 1964 n.p.

But again, acting correctly is, in itself, insufficient to join the general Kyoto population for whom acting correctly is also connected to “Japaneseness.”

Popular perceptions of Koreans in Kyoto mark their “rough” ways. “In my primary school,” a Japanese friend told me, “All the Koreans were bullies. It’s true. They frightened me.”

This perception of Koreans as prone to violence underplays the role of violence in working class Kyoto, and so it hides the notion that working-class Japanese also, on occasion, use physical violence or its threat. One of the arenas where violence is now undeniable is in the schools. In Japan, bullying has been recognized as a general problem in all compulsory public schools. This is not limited to any nationality, class, or gender, although there may be occasions where the differential exit criteria for students might promote tough behavior (see: [learning to roudou](#)).

“...and so we being to look down on and to suppress the Korean things [in our life]. When I graduated from junior high school and took the employment exam, if I used my real, Korean name, I could have sent off 30 applications without getting one response...”
Mr. Smith¹, second generation resident Korean.

Because they face a barrage of (now mostly informalized) barriers to university entrance, along with a general lack of adult mentorship to help them through these, more young Koreans than young Japanese choose to find other, non-university futures for their lives. School then becomes also a space of involuntary disciplinary confinement².

Like bullying, street crime in Kyoto is a topic that is difficult to summarize, in part because of a general underreporting³ of such crime in the city (a friend who worked in 7-11 convenience store on the west side of Kyoto spoke of almost daily shoplifting and occasional strong-arm robbery, never once were the police called. Signs outside of convenience stores in Kyoto demand that motorcycles helmets cannot be worn into the store, as these hide the wearer from the surveillance cameras).

-
1. The names used to designate local persons who advised me or participated in the event and who desired to remain anonymous are chosen randomly from English names. Why English names? I have avoided using Korean names as these tend to be few in number (Kim, Lee, etc.) and might resemble an actual person. Many of the Koreans I worked with have a Japanese name they use when this is convenient. But these names are also loaded as signifying the inability to use their real, Korean name. English will have to do.
 2. As the Higashi-kujo Madang takes place on public school yards (the only spaces large enough for it in the district), it was particularly poignant for those Koreans who had attended the school to see it decked with Korean artwork, and ringing with Korean drums.
 3. For example, in the years I was living in Kyoto there were virtually no rapes recorded in the local crime statistics, while Sato [1991, 86] described gang rape as one of the activities of *bosozoku*, and certainly one would guess that various types of rape or of molestation would be present in Kyoto. The stigma of rape on the female victim in Japan still seems to preclude legal redress. And in general, calling the Japanese police into any personal situation is not something that merchants and individuals do unless this is unavoidable. Bicycles and umbrellas are regularly “borrowed,” and most of my neighbors had elaborate security systems against robbery.

“Although the problem of juvenile delinquency in Yao [Osaka] was not confined to the Korean community, it was recognised that a disproportionately high number of the troublemakers were in fact Korean and that furthermore the Koreans tended to be the ringleaders. Most of the Japanese people living in the area put the problems down to the youngsters’ ‘family backgrounds’ and were reluctant to accept that discrimination might have had a role to play” (Leveille and Nuttall 1997).

“Racism took shape at this point (racism in its modern, “biologizing,” statist form): it was then that a whole politics of settlement (*peuplement*) family, marriage, education, social hierarchization, and property, accompanied by a long series of permanent interventions at the level of the body, conduct, health, and everyday life, received their color and their justification from the mythical concern with protecting the purity of the blood and ensuring the triumph of the race” (Foucault 1990, 149)

In neighborhoods where there is a visible presence of resident Koreans, these are apt to be targeted as the “usual suspects” in investigations of local street crime, and the visible presence of Koreans living in a neighborhood may trigger an expectation among Japanese that the vicinity is a *furyoujuutakuchiku* (slum) neighborhood (See also: Yoshida 1994). While the city avoids a blanket racial explanation, “family problems” and “cultural deficiencies” are provided as reasons for street crime as this is attached to Koreans in Kyoto.

This also serves to isolate and define Koreans as prone to delinquency (see quote at the left). These are the same alibis that allow corporations to reject Korean applicants for salaried positions. In other words, however such alibis might help to maintain a notion that Japanese nationals (again, 99% of the population) in Kyoto are naturally prone to lawfulness (the flip side of the Korean lawbreaker stigma) there is far too much crime in Kyoto to pin this all on the Koreans, or on some temporary juvenile delinquent phase (see: [boso-zoku](#)) that will, like measles, heal all by itself.

The social/cultural discrimination that moves Koreans out of the general economy does not remove them from the surrounding discourse that articulates norms for behavior in public. In fact, in the pre-war era, Koreans in Kyoto were subjected to formal instruction on proper public behavior, as were (and are) all school children in Japan. But again, these behaviors are also overcoded with meanings relating

them to a nationalized history of Japanese culture.

Crime is a minor spectacle on the Kyoto's streets. The [Overcoding, Coding, and Recoding](#) of holidays (most of which are somehow connected to the emperor) as collective, national events, and the staging of numerous national competitions—the most visible being the national high-school baseball tournament— where only Japanese citizens are allowed to participate, these spectacles add to a collective *national* life-style imagination that remains closed to Koreans in Kyoto. The rites of cultural inclusion offered in the streets and in schools, always use overt “Japanese” symbolism, such as the use of “traditional” dress and participation by (generically Japanese) Shinto shrines. These rites bring the majority population into a regular reenactment of their national imagined commonality. But they do not reach out to include others living in the City.

“The fact that resident Koreans cannot get a job as a general prefectural public employee [in Kyoto Prefecture] promotes the trend in Japanese society to approve the situation of not employing resident Koreans. The big step [forward] will occur with the breakthrough of hiring a Korean as a general prefectural public employee.”
(Mayu 1994,)

Koreans, like the rest of the foreign expatriate community in Kyoto are only “visitors from Earth,” temporarily (only four generations so far) housed in Kyoto, but hailing from another civilization. There is no method that would allow them to belong to Kyoto's Japanese practices, no matter how long they reside under current circumstances. As much as Koreans in Kyoto cannot participate in these events, they cannot really escape them, as these events dominate the streets and television channels.

In the Japanese public schools, annual cultural festivals highlight national cultural practices and require

all students to learn these and to participate in cultural and historical pageants that present an official version of a history that treats Korea in a fashion that many Koreans can find fault with.

Before moving to explore the Higashi-kujo Madang I suspect that the reader may find useful some introduction to the practical circumstances of the public sphere in Kyoto. What follows are comments on the contours of Kyoto's public sphere, and about the discursive practices that are at work in this arena.

The over-coded public space

Publicity, visibility, ownership: participation in a public sphere brings varying degrees of such signals of inclusion to those persons and groups who find a place in its now highly mediated space. I will have much to say about the notion of "public sphere" below, but here I will start with the claim that a public sphere is the arena where transnational persons must negotiate their place within the democratic state. And I also propose that a public sphere has its own spatial properties, and this is determined by and serves to define those spaces we call "public places," which are anchored by physical places—streets and plazas—but which extend today into a variety of mediated interactions, from broadcast and print media, to the internet (See also: [The Street](#)). We have some recent demonstrations of the use of the street as a public sphere arena.

The use of crowd visibility on the street as a warrant for democratic inclusivity was demonstrated in Belgrade, when mass crowds occupied the streets for more than two months.

SOURCE: CNN

The recent (November 1996-February 1997),



prolonged, mass demonstrations in Belgrade, and the attempts by the government to repress reporting of these, shows how confrontations within the public sphere can include both physical spaces and media institutions.

“...We must rehabilitate our sense of ourselves as active human subjects, and liberate ourselves from the captivity of a purely national perception of the world. Through this “subjecthood” and the individual conscience that goes with it, we must discover a new relationship to our neighbors, and to the universe and its metaphysical order, which is the source of the moral order.”
(Havel 1993, 9)

The final decision of the government to accede to the demands of the demonstrators also shows how concerted, visible group action in the street can force access to a public sphere, at least when the state is not willing to escalate its response through its control of the means of violence (as what happened in the Tienanmen demonstrations). But where there are no visible confrontations, we cannot simply imagine that the public sphere is therefore open to counter-articulations.

“If one wanted to advance a modern version of the theory of national character—which has gone completely out of fashion, although we encounter national differences in everyday life without knowing how to specify or analyse them—it would begin, for me, with a theory of the educational systems in as much as they are formative of the structures of understanding, and constructive of our taxonomies.”
(Bourdieu 1992, 39)

The most effective controls of expression are often preemptive ones. And the main strategy (certainly in Kyoto) for preempting competing/counter-appropriations of the public sphere is to saturate the discursive field/space where civic identity is constructed. The public sphere is an important site for counter-state discourse. But often counter-expressions are lost in a fog of expressions produced by and for the state. These state-provided expressions may also include normative content and force.

body schooling

“Numerous factors in Japan constrain the emergence of democracy and egalitarianism as both the “real” and the “official” organizing principles in social relations. A key factor, as noted earlier, is that elites in Japan, who as status superiors enjoy the largest share of prerogatives, clearly have little to gain from actively promoting and legitimizing a social ideology that does not favor their interests
(Pharr 1990, 27).”

Counter-public discourses in every modern nation must compete with messages provided to the public from the state. From kindergarten through high-school, Kyoto's youth spend more waking hours in state-controlled institutions¹ than they do at home (and their waking time at home is often dominated by the homework they receive). Public schools in Japan, as in other contemporary nation-states, are sites for an education that trains the body while it informs the imagination. They promote a collective “memory” for the state through what Connerton (1989) calls “inscribing” and “incorporating” practices. These practices range from micro-body disciplines to collective group experiences. Connerton's comments on

-
1. One more word about school. The importance of schooling as the only possible avenue for social/economic upward mobility in Kyoto cannot be overstressed. And discipline in the public schools, in addition to the grades on tests, is tracked by a record that follows the student through to the university application (and perhaps even to potential employers, although I am not certain about this). This record of daily decorum and attitude is kept by teachers and is not available for inspection by the student or the student's parents.

handwriting are a good example for Japanese schools where many hours are spent on calligraphy:

“The teacher will place the pupils in the posture that they should maintain when writing, and will correct it either by sign or otherwise, when they change this position. La Salle is here proposing a training in rigorous docility, a kind of minuscule gymnastics. The essential point is that what is being prescribed and learnt is an incorporating practice. It also happens to be a practice of inscription; but that is a contingent feature of the practice in question, for, fundamentally, what is being learned is an act of incorporation” (1989, 77-78).

“Myth does not deny things, on the contrary its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact”
(Barthes 1982, 132).

Teaching and learning a “rigorous docility¹” is not necessarily restricted to those topics that involve “minuscule gymnastics.” Lessons about proper behavior and national history may also be taught in this fashion. This docile body is subjected to what Foucault called the “technico-political register, which was constituted by a whole set of regulations and by empirical and calculated methods relating to the army, the school and the hospital, for controlling or correcting the operations of the body” (1979 [1975], 136). But regulations and carceral and other institutions are only one side of the operation of this register. Governments—when they centrally control public education and public media—can also supply a steady input into the popular imagination, and inform social expectations about how the bodies of citizens² should behave in public. But again, the interest in state con-

-
1. The notion of “docile bodies” was earlier developed by Foucault: “La Mettrie's *L'Homme-machine* is both a materialist reduction of the soul and a general theory of *dressage*, at the centre of which reigns the notion of 'docility', which joins the analysable body to the manipulable body. A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved” (1979 [1975], 136).
 2. We have to look closely at how these inputs are received, and we also have to remember that mass public education within modern liberal democracies (Aronowitz 1993, 91) is also charged with equipping individuals to better counter even the arguments of the state.

“As Reich remarks, the astonishing thing is not that some people steal or that others occasionally go out on strike, but rather that all those who are starving do not steal as a regular practice, and all those who are exploited are not continually out on strike: after centuries of exploitation, why do people still tolerate being humiliated and enslaved, to such a point, indeed, that they *actually want* humiliation and slavery not only for others but for themselves?” (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 29)

trol over the physical bodies of its populations is developed to a much higher level under conditions of state-nation modernity (see: [State-nation modernity](#)), where it forms a center of internal state policy.

The states of state-nations make little effort to hide the fact of their interests in this area, and actively promote the role of public education as a source for “moral education.” Such lessons are coupled with an historical narrative—the myth of the nation— that provides them with a naturalized rationale. In Kyoto, a national school curriculum is followed locally, a curriculum designed to promote, “the shared quality of being Japanese” (Dowling 1997).

According to the current Chairman of *Monbusho's* (The Ministry of Education's) Curriculum Council, Mr. Miura Shumon, promoting enough of this shared quality requires that all the children in the nation be processed by the same mold: “Miura believes that ‘compulsory education is much like a processing plant where boys and girls are all hammered into identical little citizens of their nation,’ but adds that ‘any nation advanced enough to have a compulsory education system will attempt to force its children into a single mold’” (Dowling 1997).

“In the eyes of many Japanese, the alienated behavior of Koreans supported the belief that Koreans were unwelcome intruders incapable of being assimilated into Japanese society. The stereotype of a Korean was related to “badness,” not only moral but even in respect to physical comportment. Even today, it is not uncommon to find a grandmother scolding her grandchild by saying, ‘Don’t sit like “Chosenjin” do.’ There is no question that the Koreans comported themselves in a rougher and more overtly aggressive manner than was customary for the more obsequious and diffident lower-class Japanese. They aroused both fear and contempt among the Japanese, who were accustomed to docility on the part of subordinates.”
(Lee and DeVos 1981, 41)

The desired outcome of this molding is a ubiquitous, shared¹ “Japaneseness.” “Miura sees this shared quality of being Japanese as ‘a distinctively Japanese consciousness, a sense of identity which distinguishes Japan from other countries’ being shared spatially throughout all Japanese territory, and also temporally throughout the whole of Japanese history” (Dowling 1997). Here Miura is expressing the position that Japan is a “homogeneous society” (See: [the politics and semantics of homogeneity](#)).

What is really shared is the molding practice itself, and the resulting sameness—which is attributed by its planners to a long history of homogeneous Japanese culture and heredity—is in fact much more the outcome of several years of (old-time) Foucaultian discipline. In other words, if *Monbusho* used the same technique while switching “molds” (changing the content), the result would be a shared “Japaneseness” of an entirely different form. This ability to slide in new content with the same practice was practically demonstrated before and after the war, when the pre-war discourse of nationalized, imperial Shinto religion as the basis for national unity was simply recast into a discourse of the state itself, through its many ministries (now officially, but not entirely separated from Shinto) in partnership with the large *keiretsu* corpora-

-
1. Adult Japanese in Kyoto have told me that the shared experience of being in the mold—of going through the Japanese school system—is the most powerful experience of their lives. And school friends of the same year are the ones that can become life-long friends. Conversely, students who have gone abroad to study, or who study in Korean schools in Japan fail to acquire sufficient “Japaneseness.”

tions (also simply recoded from the pre-War *zaibatsu* conglomerates), as the dutiful father of the Japanese national family.

“Dentsu does more than any single corporation, anywhere in the world, to mould popular culture, both directly and through hordes of subcontractors. It also orchestrates major events such as expos and visits from the pope. It is highly active politically, about which more in a moment. Dentsu is directly responsible for one-third of all advertising on Japanese TV, and virtually monopolises the scheduling of sponsors during primetime hours, not to mention the control it exerts through its many subsidiaries and subcontracting firms. Some 120 film production companies and more than 400 subcontracting graphic arts studios are under its wing. Advertisers wishing to insert commercials in television programmes between 7 and 11 p.m. have almost no choice but to go via Dentsu, because it controls their selection and much of the programme material” (van Wolferen 1990, 176).

Apart from the schools and the government run media (and that which is government controlled in less direct ways), state inputs into “moral” or civic education can also be coupled to legal constraints. Admonitions against drug use, for example, are enforced through the criminal courts. (Courts might also be available for arguments against the interest of the state, but this has not been the case in Japan. [See: [The courts](#)].)

Even so, state inputs into the complex, ongoing identification that individuals make with their compatriots are never complete. The tendency to promote the activities of the state as totalizing ignores the many openings that are available for counter or oblique expressions, even in a state-nation. The capitalist market remolds young adults with its own blitz of nation-wide products and lifestyle identity features. So the final stamp of the “Japaneseness” mold belongs not to *Monbusho*, but to Dentsu: the world’s largest “advertising” agency (and much more than that).

state, market, shrine

In state-nations, as in nation-states, the state is not the lone producer of widely available identity narratives and tokens, although in the former, the state may attempt an outright hegemony of expression. Various religious institutions have long held personal identity to be within their domain. Industry also

looks to the schools, or provides its own schooling, for the bodily disciplines they desire for workers on the job. And the capitalist market, where consumption behavior is informed through identification between the consumer's bodies and consumed objects, is an increasingly public arena for the display of life-style based identities.

However, when industry, religion, and the state work in concert, a condition that may occur through coordination during times of crisis (such as wartime), or a condition that may be fostered through a strong, centralized state apparatus, such as a state-nation (see also [State-nation modernity](#)), which holds the means to either directly control or indirectly guide industrial and religious organizations, a "hegemony of representation" is possible. Yurchak (1997, 166-167) describes this condition in the former Soviet Union:

"In the case of late socialism the hegemony of representation can be visualized as a symbolic order of tightly interconnected signifiers that were exclusively state controlled and permeated most aspects of everyday life in the official sphere. These were verbal formulas (structural elements of the politicized discourse of the official sphere, such as names of Soviet institutions and public organizations and formulaic phraseology of official speeches), visual images (posters, pictures, placards, monuments), mass rituals (Party and Komsomol meetings, elections, and November and May parades), the topics in the media, literature, popular culture (all of which were controlled by centralized bodies and ministries), and tightly structured events of daily public life (the use of public transport, work at a Soviet enterprise where wages were centrally fixed, study in a Soviet school with centrally adopted curriculum, and shopping in a Soviet store with unified centrally controlled prices and choices)."

According to Yurchak, the main response to this fog of representation in the Soviet Union was neither dissident activity, nor active participation, but rather a cynical removal of emotion from these representations. Over-saturation did not promote an orthopos-

tural (See: [orthoposture](#)) attitude in the persons of Soviet citizens. Quite the opposite: the signs and slogans, the parades and spectacles became invisible through their ubiquity.

Yurchak ([Yurchak 1997, 167-168](#)) quotes Vaclav Havel, who noted how, when the omnipresent expressions of the state became so utterly predictable, they also became invisible/silent parts of the “panorama of everyday life.” But also invisible were counter-expressions, kept from the street (if not from back regions of everyday life) through official controls. Even though the street was filled with state spectacles, it remained devoid of all counter-expression.

“Through the self-construction of the self in violence, the hardman came to signify the self-contained and autonomous singularity of his community. The hardmen came from “hard” places like “The Hammer,” “The Bone,” and “The Nick.” As one hardman put it, “I live in the toughest area of Belfast. As you walk down my street, each house is harder than the next.

I live in the last house on the street.” There was a reversible transfer of moral substance between the hardmen and their communities. The differential relation of the hardman to other men became a metaphor for the relation of the hardman’s community to other places.” (Feldman 1991, 53)

Embodied (personal) habitus, family habitus and neighborhood habitus can acquire a homology that allows them metonymic access to each other: they can each stand in for the other. This also means they cannot be casually separated. Korean residents talk about the onus of not acting “Korean” in their neighborhoods, so as to maintain the neighborhood’s image.

In various nation-states the multiple sources that inform identities results in a tension, which sometimes develops into a discursive negotiation among these institutions. In the United States, for example, there is an ongoing, if at times backgrounded, discussion about just where life-style “values” should be acquired, with “the family,” “the church,” and “school” competing with each other, but mostly against “the street” (or commercial TV) as the source for such values. In the case of the Soviet Union, the state’s monopoly on public expression transformed all other expressions into counter-state expressions. Discourse in public could then be labeled as dissent against the state. But even where “the state” has not achieved an outright monopoly on expression in public, a “hegemony of representation” is possible.

In Kyoto, there has been for decades a strong congruence between the efforts of the government (e.g., *monbusho*, the Ministry of Education, the successor to the Pre-War *naimusho*, [Home Ministry]) to teach expectations about normative behavior, and similar efforts of nation-wide Shinto religious organizations (notably the [Jinjahoncho](#), which controls tens of thousands of Shinto shrines, and also runs the Boy Scouts, and which was also formerly part of the *naimusho*), and government/industry organizations (such as MITI, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry [*Tsuushousangoyousho*]) that control the “cram schools” (*juku*) where more than half of Kyoto’s junior and senior high-school students spend their

after-school hours.

The triumvirate of government/industry/shrine

Here we see Cub Scouts learning to behave correctly at a Shinto festival in Shiga-ken, near Kyoto. The use of governmental funds for events held under Shinto auspices is not legal under Japan's constitution, however, the courts have been known to agree that the overall event may also be a social event for the benefit of the community, and allow governmental participation¹ [See also: [The courts](#)]. Governmental, religious, and social organizations in Kyoto often overlap in ways that are not commonly seen, nor sometimes allowed (because of freedom of religion restrictions) in the United States.

Photo by author



organizations, sharing a common paternalist posture toward the population, provides a collective message that avoids internal schisms that might promote a critical distance in the receiver. The messages may or may not be couched in the racial metaphors of "[Nihonjinron](#)," as illustrated by the quotes from [Here is JAPAN](#).

And, in fact, the metaphors and the aesthetics used change over time—and here we are talking about time stretching back to before the beginning of the century (the Post-War Occupation period provided its own messages, but failed to break the thread of the narratives that preceded it). During this time, new media have been called into service, as when televisions were introduced at the time of the current

1. Oddly, this line of argument never seems to lead to the next logical step: a protest about the exclusive use of Shinto religious ceremonials during official community events.

emperor's marriage, and more recently, when the City of Kyoto provides (and so monitors) internet services for its citizens. But the message of a single, universally/uniquely Japanese way of living and behaving, is the common thread that spans these decades.

Kyoto City's weekly "Shimin Shinbun" (Citizen Newspaper), is published by the city, and distributed through the neighborhood associations (*chounaikai*). Its contents list the many programs and events happening in city-run facilities (culture, sports, health). This one highlights events that are said to provide a "Timeslip to the Heian Era," as a part of the City's 1200th anniversary of the construction of Kyoto year-long celebration.

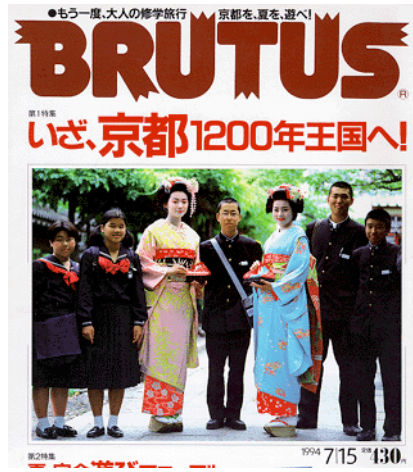


Various ministries and offices concern themselves with certain arenas of information, and manage these with

internal goals, and so coordination of this message is not always perfect (as when the Ministry of International Trade and Industry encourages the consumption of imported goods that the Government Food Agency would prefer to discourage). But then coordination is not necessary when the message is being overcoded with regularity from several sources.

Later we will see some of the ways in which the "[We Japanese...](#)" message is deflected and countered upon reception, for now, I would like to stress that the history of embedding a "We Japanese" discourse into other discourses, implicates those counter discourse that would comment upon the other discourses as first extracting this "We Japanese" construction.

BRUTUS magazine, a “Generation X” life-style journal, presented its Kyoto 1200 issue with the stereotype photograph of public school children in uniform posing with Kyoto geisha (also in uniform). The headline reads “Now to Kyoto’s 1200 year Kingdom” and the subtitle reads, “One more time [here is] an adult school trip... Kyoto...summer...Play!” This is the image of *shinjinrui* that the government promotes when it sends 4 million school children to Kyoto every year.



Increasingly today, comments on the problems of the intergenerational transfer of official narratives—Japan’s “Generation-X,” the so-called *shinjinrui* [“new humans”] is the

first generation without direct experience of war and post-war economic hardships—announce the fact that the reception side of this narrative needs more research (See also: Ivy 1995, 55-59).

Indeed, the rise of income levels, and the target-

Inside the same issue of BRUTUS, we find other modes of reception and production of the image of “Generation X” in Kyoto. Here a group of cross-dressing men pose on a bridge in Gion that is famous for photographs of geishas and tourists. The pop culture market seeks out playful and exotic parodies of the “We Japanese” posture.



ing of Japanese populations as consumer cohorts, has altered the valence of the available media inputs in favor of the marketplace. Increasingly, it is Japanese

consumption habits that informs the content of the “We Japanese” discourse.

consuming nationality

“We Japanese prefer quality over cost,” is one message, used to deflect the growth of large-scale discount retailers. “We Japanese are wary of the use of insecticides on our food,” is another message, used to close the gates on the import of apples and other fruits¹. But *shinjinrui* have their own uses of this message.

Apart from what Baudrillard would call the “simulation” of difference—multiple product lines produced to create an illusion of consumer choice—the internal consumer market in Japan shows visibly less variation than similar markets in the European Union or North America. One reason for this is the collaborative market domination of a few Japanese manufacturers. And so Sanyo’s quarterly catalogue mirrors that of Hitachi (below) and others. Lifestyle differences in Kyoto are marked by the location of one’s residence, and by a gender-specific progression of life-course changes through an expected portfolio of uniforms, fashions, hobbies, and duties.

Within market-driven image consumption too,



there is a visible lack of variation in Kyoto, and Japan.

-
1. Although the government does not make public information on the use of agricultural insecticides in Japan—the use of which is suspected to be quite intense, given the market for cosmetically perfect fruit.

There are a large number of life-style magazines—each targeting an age/gender cohort— but there are surprisingly few available television and radio channels, and the advertising on all media is controlled mainly by one corporation, Dentsu, which produces nearly all the media advertising (and much of the TV programming) in Japan.

Despite the large size of its population and econ-

“The Japanese consumer” is a cohort that receives regular narrative attention from the government and the marketplace. When the government is pressed to explain the lack of market penetration by imports, it replies that “the Japanese consumer” is very conscious of quality and design. When asked about imports of food, we have been told that the Japanese consumer has a digestive tract that is different from that of others, and so imported beef is difficult to digest. When asked why cosmetics in Japan cost so much more than the same products in Europe, Shinseido, the main Japanese supplier of these products points to the special skin of the Japanese consumer. But Japanese manufacturers, such as Hitachi (right) have few problems making products for this market and for the international market.



omy, there is a surprising lack of internal diversity either on the advertising side, or on the product side. The product lines of the large domestic household-goods manufacturing firms (Hitachi, Mitsubishi, Matsushita, Sanyo, etc.) are so similar that little customer choice is needed to make a purchase from one or the other. It is mainly when goods are made for export that the variety of features begins to expand.

The “Japanese consumer” is also a regular feature of the “[We Japanese...](#)” discourse (See also: [Nihonjinron](#)). The bodies, desires, tastes, and moods of this cohort

have been proclaimed to be unique in ways that foreign manufacturers tend to overlook, which explains (without reference to structural impediments) why the local market contains so few imported goods, despite the fact that these goods would generally be highly competitive in price and quality.

The Japanese Government's Japan Travel Bureau runs week-end tours to the summertime festivals throughout Japan. This one advertises "The height of the summer. The height of festivals: Japanese Festivals." At a hundred-thousand Yen a day per couple (about a thousand dollars), the tours choose festival destinations that are the most colorfully spectacular (NOTE: no Kyoto festivals were included in these summer tours).

The subtext reads as the following: "In the blossoming dusk of a summer day there are lanterns. In the village that was calm, the scroll of history unfolds: At times heroic, and then solemn, cheerful, energetic: because it is at the peak of its season, this dream story of summer is now visible.

Fleeting, passionate, fantastic, yes, welcome to the world of dream phantasms."



From my own limited experience of *shinjinrui* (See: [We Japanese...](#)), I would propose that the narratives of nation and history may be getting more than a little stale of late. The annual Japanese cul-

tural festivals that are held in the public schools, the day-trips to cultural museums and memorials, the longer school trips to national sites of culture, such as those in Kyoto, are all designed to add content and a weight of collective experience¹ to the notion "[We Jap-](#)

1. This is precisely why certain school lunches, on one day a year, contain a small bite of whale meat (carefully distributed from the catch allowed by the international agreement "for research purposes"): the bite that gives every child the taste of (if not automatically a taste for) this "traditional" food: what "We Japanese" eat. Students in my university classes had all tasted whale.

[anese....](#)” So too does cultural tourism, as Ivy (1995) discovered in her exposition of the domestic publicity campaign that the Japanese Government’s Japanese National Tourist Organization ran in the 1970s (“Discover Japan”) and the 1980s (“Exotic Japan”).

all for one and one for us

The main internal counter-discourse (although not organized as such) to the “We Japanese” discourse are the many practices that promote the fortunes of particular families and individuals in competition with one another in Japan (see: [kone and kane: connections and money](#).) After all the discourses have spoken on shared nationality and homogeneous culture, one does not need to look far to see that individuals in Japan are also determined to create distinctions in social circumstances, differences that offer a differential advantage to their family in the competition for capitals (cultural and cash).

This competition promotes the use of personal connections often made through institutional auspices (universities, corporations) but also reflecting familial histories (social position and marriage alliances). Practices that should, by their own definition be “public,” are made private by this exercise of personalized contact. Even the “public sphere” can become privatized in this fashion: see [Private public sphere](#).

some people are just more equal

“Theorists who allege that Japan has a ‘new middle mass’ that is politically fully in tune with what the System offers, thereby implying that the Japanese public has had the political means to express its preferences, have forgotten that no one ever told the Japanese people that they could set their own priorities. Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato summed up Japan’s political relations most succinctly when he said: ‘The government is the captain and the *zaikai* [business] is the compass of the ship.’ At no time have the chosen representatives of the people tried to bring bureaucrats or business federation leaders into line.”
(van Wolferen 1990, 410)

It is tempting to see this privatization as a predictable consequence of state-nation modernity, because of the lack of an external public sphere capable of exerting democratic oversight. And indeed the most egregious example of this, the creation of a dynastic succession in a Communist country (North Korea), lends support to this general notion. However, the potential for self-generated reform within governments under state-nation modernity cannot simply be dismissed. But what makes reform more likely, under state-nation modernity conditions is a bottom-up internal demand for this, and here is where the lack of democratic organizational logics is most acute.

Those who are left outside the “market” for cultural capital formation, and who thus have little means to influence the social/political situation, look to the promise of reform as the only means to secure fundamental civil rights in Japan. However, when unions, schools and civil organizations (religious or social) also operate in this non-democratic fashion, then the ability of civil organizations to provide internal, democratic leadership is questionable. While bottom-up reform may be the most likely avenue for political change in Japan in the near term, without skilling in inclusive, democratic practices even at this level, the possibility of such reform is difficult to imagine. Meanwhile, the interest in maintaining the social status quo, and the market for social connections finds little resistance. But while “democracy” as such suffers

To literally “drum-up” interest in the municipal elections, the “Municipal Committee for Youth Guidance” stages its start-of-the-election-campaign period parade.

under such circumstances, it would be wrong to suggest that this fact is not known to people in Japan.

Elections, particularly local elections often have



the participation of less than half of the eligible voting population. In opinion polls, large numbers of citizens express doubts about the quality of democracy in the government. Political parties contribute to public cynicism by not always hiding their contempt for their constituents. For example, in 1994, the head of public affairs of the long-ruling LDP party in Tokyo published a book, *Hitora Senkyo Senryaku* (Hitler's Election Strategy) in which he encouraged the LDP to follow Hitler's lead on manipulating public support (see: [Election book praises Hitler's methods](#)). And those official state venues where the public was supposed to provide input have become “invitation only” meetings arranged by government officials (see: [Who gets to speak at govt hearings?](#)).

While democratic reforms along the lines of those promoted by civil organizations in many nation-states—freedom of information, active acceptance of a plurality of life-styles, increasing responsiveness to the public sphere, etc.—are not possible with the arenas of discourse open within state-nations, governments within state-nations can still be held accountable to their own democratic self definitions. And in Japan, democracy is fundamentally a discourse of equality.

middle class democracy

“For example, in 1930, 84 percent of the populace —peasants and workers—possessed only 50 percent of the nation’s household income, while 24,000 families, or 0.0019 percent of Japan’s households, held over 10 percent of the aggregate family income of the nation. At the very top of this pyramid were nineteen families with annual incomes of over a million yen each, while, at the bottom, 2,232,000 families each had incomes of 200 yen or less. As for power, political authority remained in the hands of an oligarchy that emerged to replace the Bakufu and its regional rulers; meanwhile the masses ended by sacrificing their lives on the battlefields or in the burned-out cities of 1945 Japan (Hane 1982, 11).”

Inequality cannot today be legitimated in Japan through an acknowledgment of hereditary difference—of an heritable class prerogative—at least not within the discourse of democracy that the state maintains in Japan (while also maintaining an emperor). Indeed, the notion of “democracy” in Japan is centered on the idea of *social equality*, rather than on ideas of “freedom” (of choice, of speech, etc.) which is perhaps central to this notion in the United States. Equality in Japan is mostly pinned to the broadening of its middle class, and to a narrative of economic opportunity, rather than to a wider sense of individual equality in interpersonal relationships, or in relationships to institutions. [kone and kane: connections and money](#) are two arterials of power that belie the discourse of some eventually universal middle-class Japan.

The discourse on homogeneity in Japan sometimes alludes to everyone being “in the same boat.” Here too it conceals the fact that the boat has several

decks. Forty years of economic growth has allowed many families to make the climb up a deck or two, and so reinforce popular notions of equality/opportunity in Japan. But this very movement in society (and the looming potential for downward movement) also displays popular notions of actual social inequality based on connections to institutions.

“The aim of school education must be to foster the healthy development of each individual. Courses of Study for schools and the Course of Study for Kindergartens have been formulated as curriculum standards that ensure the actual achievement of this ideal in schools throughout Japan and ensure that specific levels of education are attained. All schools in Japan base their educational activities on the Courses of Study for schools or the Course of Study for Kindergartens....
...Priority will be given to fostering respect for Japanese culture and traditions. In addition, efforts will be made to increase understanding of the cultures and histories of other countries in order to foster qualities that will enable Japanese to live successfully in the international community.
(Monbusho webpage: JAPANESE GOVERNMENT POLICIES IN EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE 1994, PART I, Chapter 1)”

A positive sentiment about opportunity for personal advancement is fed by stories of those who, through draconian self-sacrifice (usually in collaboration with the “education-mother” [*kyouiku mama*]) and sheer ability, find their way into Tokyo University. The tales of dire circumstances during and after World War II, stories now mostly gleaned from grandparents and television, remain vivid reminders of how bad times can get. And the larger story of Japan’s emergence as an economic superpower is big enough and visible enough for most people to have their own small version of it within their families.

The great majority of families in Japan (apart from many rural families) would admit to improved circumstances, and would have to credit elite government and industry executives who control more of the state’s economic brain than they now like to admit—given the current downward trend in the economy. But these stories tend to conceal the less spectacular statistics that would reveal the overall picture of who

“...In a modern, industrial state—whether it be France, the United States, or Japan—this equation of citizenship and ancestry is no longer tenable. No modern solution is possible in maintaining a narrow, defensive ethnicity through contrastive separation that diminishes or incapacitates the individual. The individual cannot adapt or adjust through systematic denial of another culture. The minority group cannot escape considerable damage from such prevention of cultural assimilation. A defensive minority identity, by its very nature, is maladaptive in a complex modern society.”

(Lee and Devos 1981, 380)

gets picked by the bureaucracy¹ to join Japan’s “economic brain.”

Hartoonian (1988a) contrasts the new (post 1960s) governmental programs with those of Pre-War Japan. He asserts that these new programs embrace materialism and commodification, allowing “abundance [to] serve as the bond for reinforcing forms of ‘Japanese-like’ social relationships... (5)... the new representation appeals to the ethos of an exceptional culture (identical with ‘nature’) in order to explain the irreducible and unique source of Japan’s status... [this] reveals the operation of a newer division between... the ‘Japanized View’ and the ‘Westernized View,’ now facing each other as absolutes standing outside of history, accountable only to an unchanging ‘nature’ (read as culture) and ‘race’” (468). The state made a new “boat” out of the post-War economic “miracle,” but attached this even more to a naturalized “Japaneseness.”

This picture of how the state viewed culture as a national project, which is also evident in [Visit to a Green Star](#), transforms personal success within the system to a vindication of true Japanese nature. Curiously, failure to find personal success reveals not the inadequacy of the Japanese spirit to the task at hand, but

-
1. Curiously, there is more of an expectation that opportunities exist for personal advancement than is warranted by the available legal and social guarantees. Most people I spoke with in Kyoto were confident that hard work and talent would pay off. And, during decades of economic growth there has come a growth of opportunities for many. It is only in the last five years that the expectation of continuing prosperity has faded, and so, in the next decade, a decade of economic restructuring, the public’s trust in the meritocracy will be tested.

some defect in the individual—perhaps the surfacing of some residue of non-Japaneseness. The growing numbers of homeless persons camping out in abandoned buildings in Higashi-kujo, or under Kamo river bridges strain the “we Japanese” self-identity, and need to be ex-communicated as loafers and delinquents.

“This [Cornel West’s work] reminds us that the importance of the ‘exclusion of exclusion’ appears at the level of sexuality, ethnicity, and interest more strongly than any other: identity politics has been motivated in part by a struggle against those persons and practices excluding us because of our differences, a motivation which has called into question those exclusions operating within identity groups” (Dean 1996, 42).

These new *kawaramono* (“river people:” the older Kyoto name for outcaste vagrants) move (and get moved) spatially and discursively into the marginal places of Kyoto where the only emerging counter identity to the “we Japanese” that now excludes them is today the plastic “Korean” identity being promoted by the Higashi-kujo Madang festival community. In fact, the Madang organizers welcome and include Japanese day-laborers.

assembling the national *Umwelt*

“The individual, then, divides his *Umwelt* into the designed and the undesigned, into project and setting, into the self-oriented and incidental....” (Goffman 1971, 312).

Having examined the practices of state-sponsored normalcy, we need to now step back or away from this version to remember that, despite the intentions of ministries of culture and corporate advertisers, normalcy is also a condition of the lifeworld—and should the state and the market cease to be interested in it, this would still need to be cobbled together by individuals as a precondition for getting on with one’s daily life. Here my use of “normalcy” resembles what Goffman called the “*Umwelt*”.

Goffman’s *Umwelt* is a bi-modal frame within which the individual’s most immediate situations

expectations are assembled. One mode is the “undesigned” mode, wherein normalcy resides: this is the sum of all surrounding circumstances concerning which the individual assumes she has both no control of, and where this lack of control is shared with others. The other mode is the project (or design) mode, where the individual assumes that her actions are responsible for the maintenance of her surroundings. Making a play within a game is a well-formed example of the latter. But, as Goffman noted, the “question of how much of any particular scene is part of the individual’s current design of action and how much is undesigned is interesting” (1971, 311).

This question is interesting here because the state’s¹ central interest seems to be in informing the “undesigned” *Umwelt* of its population, often in arenas where individuals might have otherwise devised their own projects. Again, normalcy has always been a condition of the lifeworld, it is *the interest* by state and the market in this condition that signals a change within modernity. The Prince, as Foucault would remind us, had other things to worry about.

How is it that the state (and, particularly in state-nations, in coordination with national capitalist enterprises) can acquire a hold upon the *Umwelt*? If the liberal question is “why do we need government at all?” this other question raises the opposite concern,

1. Not only the interest of the state, but the instrumentalities available to the state and to capitalist organizations in modernity, as Habermas (1989) noted, increase the ability of the state and the market to penetrate into the individual’s *Umwelt* at the “undesigned” level.

which might be called the critical dilemma: How do we prevent the state from speaking for us? What are the preconditions of speaking against the position of the state?

“The lifeworld [for Habermas] is the realm of personal relationships and (at its best) communicative action. But to it is counterposed a system ordered on the basis of nonlinguistic steering media (money and power), integrating society impersonally through functional or cybernetic feedback. This split cannot be overcome, Habermas argues, because there is no immanent logic of capitalism to produce its dialectical transcendence and because large-scale modern society would be impossible without such systemic integration (and dreams of doing away with such large-scale societal integration are not only romantic but dangerous because reduction in scale can come about only in catastrophic ways). Nonetheless, the lifeworld is the locus for basic human values and is undergoing rationalization processes of its own; it needs to be defended against the continual encroachment of systemic media”
(Calhoun 1992, 30-31).

These questions are all the more salient within state-nations where the state controls a rhetorical position that stretches from the “national interest” to the “collective will” of its citizens [see also: [State-nations, and debates over democracy](#)]. Curiously, while enlightenment apologists would still look to a rationality as subtending modernity’s critique of its own founding circumstances, modern forms of *mystification* also must be accounted for.

Intentional, legitimated, and authoritative practices of misrecognition tend to obscure whatever rationality modern institutions might possess. This has led some critics of modernity to complain that this never achieved its own goals of replacing authoritative knowledge with knowledge grounded in reason. Others complain that these new forms of mystification are fully modern, and that only a post-modern reflexivity will push us to a new (and thus, ironically, modern) condition of life. Where various late-modern institutional-critiques increase [Institutional reflexivity](#) (e.g., an ability of institutions to reflexively monitor their own practices), this, in turn, may increase rationality within institutional discourses. However, this increased reflexivity may not extend to persons governed by these institutions (or expert systems).

The very act of governing, of acquiring an interest

in a subject, may require that the subject not attain a reflexive awareness (a [ken](#)) of the circumstances of their subjectivity (see also Althusser 1986 [1970]). Because of this dependency on discursive misrecognition, one of the primary effects of the state's interest in its population has been a substantial increase in the amount of "undesigned" *Umwelt* as compared to designed *Umwelt* as a feature of normalcy under conditions of late modernity.

normalcy and the state

“Taste is a practical mastery of distributions which makes it possible to sense or intuit what is likely (or unlikely) to befall—and therefore to befit—an individual occupying a given position in social space. It functions as a sort of social orientation, a 'sense of one's place', guiding the occupants of a given place in social space towards the social positions adjusted to their properties, and towards the practices or goods which befit the occupants of that position”
(Bourdieu 1984, 466).

What is most of interest to us here is the notion that normalcy itself, and participation in this, can also be authorized by the state as, for example, a privilege of citizenship. Turn this around from the perspective of the subject, and we find an entire *Umwelt* that is shared among citizens in a locale within a nation, but that is kept from others who are thus estranged from behaving in a normal manner, and who can, at best, only mimic normality.

One way of explaining how this is so is to see how the state can link the unmanaged *Umwelt* (in Goffman's sense) to *habitus* (in Bourdieu's sense): that is, to weld the connection between what is normal with what is automatically tasteful and proper in everyday life, with the latter carrying also a meaning of *proper to a national (citizen) population*.

“Through the economic and social necessity that they bring to bear on the relatively autonomous world of the domestic economy and family relations, or more precisely, through the specifically familial manifestations of this external necessity (forms of the division of labour between the sexes, household objects, modes of consumption, parent-child relations, etc.), the structures characterizing a determinate class of conditions of existence produce the structures of the *habitus*, which in their turn are the basis of the perception and appreciation of all subsequent experiences” (Bourdieu 1990, 54).

When we consider that nationality can be ascribed not as a blanket identity, but as an inherited habitus—e.g., within the discursive formation of “the nation as family”—then we can see how a national Umwelt can also become the “personal” property of a nation’s citizens, a heritage as discriminate as an aristocratic title. In this way, nationality begins to show a homology to class: forming identities that are thickly constructed from within individual, family, and, finally national histories. When Bourdieu describes habitus, he attempts to show an individual’s perceptions and expectations, (i.e., her Umwelt), becomes proper to her. It is not simply self-generated, but has been applied to the self, and supplies the social space proper to the individual. This proper Umwelt is articulated in a “system of preferences” that is the product of an intersection of practices and histories:

“...every economic agent acts by virtue of a system of preferences proper to him or her, but which is distinguished only by secondary differences from systems of preference common to all agents placed in equivalent economic and social conditions. The different classes of systems of preference correspond to classes of conditions of existence, and thus to economic and social conditionings which impose different structures of perception, appreciation and action. An individual habitus is the product of the intersection of partly independent causal series. You can see that the subject is not the instantaneous ego of a sort of singular *cogito*, but the individual trace of an entire collective history” (1990a, 91).

Bourdieu points to family and class as the sources for an individual’s inherited habitus, but where the state has overcoded these with narratives of the nation, then the nation (as family and/or class) also becomes a source for an inherited habitus.

“‘In the modern world,’ Benedict Anderson writes, ‘everyone can, should, will “have” a nationality, as he or she “has” a gender’. The implication, I think, is that just as every culture has *some* mechanism—different mechanisms—to constitute what Gayle Rubin refers to as a “sex/gender system,” a way of negotiating back and forth between chromosomal sex and social gender, so every *modern* culture and person must be seen as partaking of what we might (albeit clumsily) call a “habitation/nation system.” The “habitation/nation system” would be the set of discursive and institutional arrangements that mediate between the physical fact that each person inhabits, at a given time, a particular geographical space, and the far more abstract, sometimes even apparently unrelated organization of what has emerged since the late seventeenth century as her/his national identity, as signaled by, for instance, citizenship” (Sedgwick 1992, 239-240).

Anderson, as Sedgwick (1992, 239-240) noted, attached “nationality” as a required feature of identity under conditions of modernity. Everyone is expected to be able to answer the question: “What is your nationality.” For many people this reply would be a straightforward one: “I am...”. And for all but about one percent of people living in Japan, the reply would be simply “I am Japanese.”

The fact of Japaneseness as a ubiquitous feature in everyday life within Japan has itself become “*atarimae*.” For example, people of Japanese appearance (such as Japanese American¹s visiting as tourists) are often expected to behave “as Japanese.” When this expectation is violated the transgressor (the tourist) may be subject to ridicule.

Japaneseness is coded in skills that can only be mastered from a life that must be lived within Japan: in Japanese language fluency and dialectal specificity, in a Japanese name, in an official residence, in familial connections and a history of gift-giving and taking, and in the practical everyday manners taught in Japanese schools. But how Japaneseness becomes *atarimae*, and the consequences of this situation for non-Japanese persons living in Japan, and the means to shift national identity away from an inherited *habitus* and into the project mode of the Umwelt—these are issues of some importance for Koreans living in Kyoto.

-
1. Japanese Americans who visit Japan commonly complain of the discomforting experience of violating the expectation of “Japaneseness.” Europeans face no such expectation, however, those who stay on in Japan can also not expect to ever experience such an expectation on the part of others.

And here we also should remember that the Japanese “national habitus” is not be equally shared among those who make the claim, “I am Japanese.” There is, for example, a national habitus for men, and another for women (and virtually none for non-heterosexuals). There are also vestiges of the old class habitus (most evident in the imperial family, and in those who dwell in *buraku* areas). At times, the national habitus is doubly coded, for example, when it is also written into legal statutes (or, in Japan, into administrative codes in the absence of legal statutes). Ursula Vogel (1994), looking at the position of women under contracts of marriage within the legal conditions of citizenship, describes how citizenship can be used as a means of gender domination.

In Japan, the legal means to acquire Japanese citizenship are a practical equivalent to acquiring the national habitus: language, name, and behavior all figure into the naturalization process. This may be why the annual *per capita* naturalization rate in Japan is about that of the annual *per capita* homicide rate in the US (a statistic that says something about both countries). And then after the legal hurdles are finished, a new citizen still must somehow acquire the lifetime background history that enables one to behave properly “Japanese.” Having the official document is not enough. Most people who gain Japanese citizenship consider that this will be of value to their children, who stand a better chance of properly wearing this as an inherited/inherent status.

Here we can finally see why there are no hyphenated Japanese ethnic designations. There are no step-siblings for the national family. One is either all the way inside or completely out. Unfortunately, despite attempts at this, the Japanese state has not been able to have only Japanese citizens as residents within Japan. As mentioned above, most of the “foreigners” in Japan were born there—their ancestors having been victims of the Japanese colonial enterprise—and so their outsider status represents a day-to-day, life-long, situation: usually the dominant feature of their lifestyle in Japan.

“Dubois' concept of 'double consciousness' is only the best known resolution of a familiar problem which points towards the core dynamic of racial oppression as well as the fundamental antinomy of diaspora blacks. How has this doubleness, what Richard Wright calls the 'dreadful objectivity' which flows from being both inside and outside the West, affected the conduct of political movements against racial oppression and towards black autonomy?”
(Gilroy 1991, 4).

Against the uniform field of *atarimae* Japaneseness shared by ninety-nine percent of their neighbors, these “*gaijin*” stand out as strangers, as different, and necessarily—in the sense that they are not properly habituated to the local space—wrong. It is from this position of difference and proximity that thousands of Kyoto's Korean residents have gained a perspective edge on life in this city. The vast majority of individuals finds that the effortless fit between their Umwelt and Japaneseness gives them no reason to question the oddity that these should be conjoined in this manner. But when “Koreans” in Kyoto can readily pass as Japanese when they want to, and still experience daily discrimination based upon their “paper selves,” on documents that mark them as foreign, then the misrecognition of nationality as habitus surfaces as a mode of racial oppression.

Field (*Beyond envy...*) notes, “There is no question

here of speaking for the subaltern (one major difference in the situation of Korean-Japanese and African-American literature is that [the former]... contends with claims of undiluted homogeneity and therefore utter indifference to any minority cultural production); the subaltern must speak *for* the majority, remind it of its own oppression.”

If there is to be a place of refuge and resistance from the modes of national-discourse domination in Kyoto, then it is a place that first needs to be imagined, and this imagination is today being produced in Kyoto in communities of its resident Koreans. Here are the counter-expressions that would remake Japanese identity into a slippery habitus: one that might need active attachment to retain, one that might get lost or removed in favor of a habitus form from an individual's own reflexive Umwelt. A source of these counter expressions in Kyoto and in Japan can be found in resident Korean literature and in new cultural festivals.

Why festivals? Why not simply take advantage of the fact that, in Japan, the state cares little about what gets published (as long as this does not concern the imperial family or include photos with pubic hair—although the latter is also now possible ever since Madonna book *Sex* was allowed into Japan uncensored) since it is in firm control of what gets most widely read? Festivals are what I call cultural/political/spatial local-motives: they occupy public space, they articulate identity features, they force the expression

of passion, and they open to the potential for democratic participation. As we will see, it is entirely possible for the state to co-opt a festival for its own use: removing control over the content, and exerting a top-down, non-democratic administration. The event still might look festive. But in a sense I will develop in the coming chapter, it has lost its claim to being a festival.

Festival events and new social movements

waiting for communitas

When I first arrived in Kyoto¹, in the summer of 1992, I began that first week on what would be a futile year of searching for a local urban Shinto festival that would display inclusive, community-building features—an aspect of these events that was often noted in ethnographic and tourist literature as their main, if unintended, outcome.

-
1. Kyoto prides itself as a “city of festivals,” and *matsuri* events in the city are quite common—some sort of *matsuri* could be found on any given week. But even the old family Kyoto people I spoke with confessed that Kyoto’s festivals were not as lively as those in some other parts of Japan. Emotional display in public was apparently not Kyoto’s forté. Centuries of Imperial court oversight and cultural management and a capital city’s increased focus on crowd control might have served to “domesticate” festivals to an extent greater than in other locales during pre-modern times [See: [Domestication](#)]. So I have to remind the reader that I am not describing “Japanese” festivals here. I am not even describing a festival that could easily reveal similar features in all of the *matsuri* in Kyoto. As much as the factors that are changing festivals in Kyoto are present elsewhere in Japan, I hope this work adds insight to the study of similar practices in other Japanese cities. But I am not and would not suggest that my observations of a certain few festivals can possibly critique the entire festival production of Japan.

“I took this shot in the morning in Higashi-kujo from my flat in Matsunoki public housing. I see this view every day.

Last spring, I saw the fire that happened in 40 banchi.”

©1994 Chinmi Yuu

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

What I did not count on was the simple fact that



many of the neighborhood communities—or, at least, organizations that are said to represent these (*chounaikai*)— had been “preformed” decades earlier, and that this original construction was more inflexibly durable than I had first imagined, and this duration had extended long beyond the springtime of their creative formation. So, today, their original pre-performance is no longer per-formable. In Kyoto, no discussion of neighborhood events can begin without some background on “neighborhood association” organizations.

Chounaikai

Here is my son, Louis, running on my *chou*’s team in the district *undokai*. With so few children living in our neighborhood, my son became a valuable resource for the child-centered neighborhood events.

Photo by the author

The *chounaikai* organization of my neighborhood



had certain annual and other more regular activities. While preparing for the [Awata Matsuri](#) was its single

most labor-intensive activity, the organization also participated in annual fire-prevention drills, in the district's annual *undokai* (athletic meet) and in the distribution of literature provided by the district office (*kuyakusho*). Each year the organization also arranges a day-trip to some local destination (such as the Osaka Aquarium).

But the more regular activities of the organization were those that put it into an information-distribution role within the city government. The circulation of *kairanban* notices—official announcements that are passed from house to house on a clipboard, with each house recording that it has read the notice—the distribution of the city-published monthly newspaper, and many other occasional leaflets, and the posting of city announcements and posters on the neighborhood bulletin board (*kejiban*) were the main activities of the organization.

“In a coffee shop near Sanjo in Kyoto, I am sitting and writing. Even though this looks like leisure time, I’m really doing some work.”

©1994 Takeshi Watanabe

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



The *chounaikai* maintains an official position as an appendage of the city's district office. But it does this with a certain lack of enthusiasm. The various duties are passed from household to household, and com-

pleted with expected regularity. As Bestor¹ (1989) noted, there can be a significant divergence between the official position of the *chounaikai* to the city government, and the attitude of the *chounaikai*'s members to this position and to the city government.

In March of every year, the local fire station would send a squad to check the neighborhood's fire extinguishers and to refresh the neighborhood *chounaikai* on their use. Although women (and anthropologists) are mostly the ones who are present in the neighborhood at all hours of the day, the only persons who were trained to use this equipment were men. Photo by author



One of the benefits of having a neighborhood-level organization in place is the venue this provides when a common concern arises. Several years back, a multistory condominium block² was proposed within the *chou*, and concerns about the effects of this on mountain views and television reception were voiced through the *chounaikai*. At this point, if an inadequate response had been made by the developers, the *chounaikai* could have used its position to bring this complaint to the city.

-
1. In Bestor's (ibid) description of the *choukai* (= *chounaikai*) in his neighborhood in Tokyo there were many features and duties that were not present in my Kyoto neighborhood. I am not certain about whether this is due to an attenuation of a more traditional *chounaikai* organization in Kyoto, or a more straightforward difference between these types of organizations in Tokyo and Kyoto.
 2. As Bestor (ibid) and also Robertson (1991) noted, condo-dwellers are not actively included in the *chounaikai* organization. In Higashi-kujo, Korean families and those living in apartments or city housing are also generally excluded from neighborhood organizations. This adds to a suspicion within the Korean community that these organizations are actively antagonistic toward Koreans.

“This old grandmother (*harumon* in Kyoto Korean) came to shop at my store. In the old days, everybody made kimchi at home, but the number of people who shop for this is really increasing.”

©1994 Yoni Bekku

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



As it turned out, the condominium developers agreed to place a large television antenna on the roof and provide the houses of the *chou* with cabled access to this. But the mountain view disappeared in the process.

Because all neighborhoods have these organizations, and because they are held responsible for certain official duties by the city, *chounaikai* are much more a venue where the city speaks to its citizens than where citizens can organize counter-

movements against the city.

They are generally one-way conduits from the

“The Young Korean League meets twice a week. We work on Korean language and discuss history, culture and the current situation of resident Koreans in Japan.”

©1994 Myung-duk Koo

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



district office to its constituents. But they are structurally not limited to this role. And the history of the mis-appropriation of these organizations as a means of surveillance in pre-War Japan does not preclude them from moving in other directions: as local inputs to district policies, or as organizational groups for new festivals.

Later we will be talking about life outside of neighborhood associations, and how these organizations can become gate-keepers in the process of exclusion. For example, you can see this in [The great poster conflict](#). This incident took place at a general meeting of the Higashi-kujo Madang organizing committee, and it ended up with twenty people spending an hour inking out the madang's fundraising account number on hundreds of fliers.

In his book, *The Great Good Place* (1991), Ray Oldenburg argues that “third-places:” places outside the home and outside the workplace (cafes, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, bars, etc.) are vital to informal social life. In much the same way, “third-groups:” organizations outside of government and work, can be seen as vital to social life, particularly to a social life enlivened by cultural expression. This is, of course, where we find notions of “civil society.”

Externality—particularly from the state, but also, I would argue, from the capitalist market, and from religious paternalism— is the primary feature of civil society organizations, and it is through their independent position that they offer venues for critical reflection. Civil society organizations provide opportunities for expressive culture that are not managed in the interest of the state or the market.

However in Kyoto, status is displayed through spectacles organized by the city (together with Shinto organizations, whose prior connection to the state has been formally, but not actually severed). These ceremonial occasions bring into public view the differential axes of agency that flow from connections to official organizations. The close connection between the status displayed in connection with the City's ceremonial calendar and access to resources that are managed by the state, creates the disequilibrium of

allocative and authoritative¹ power that characterizes the structure of domination in Kyoto.

“In this daytime picture, while there aren’t any people, from all of the wash hanging up, you can see that this is a crowded place...”

©1994 Yong-suk Ryang
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



“The resources which constitute structures of domination are of two sorts—allocative and authoritative. Any co-ordination of social systems across time and space necessarily involves a definite combination of these two types of resources... (Giddens 1984, 258).”

The link between culturally based stigma and economic marginality that is so clear from any examination of the circumstances of domination of *buraku* dwellers imbricates the call for a respect of heterogeneity as a human right with the demand for political/economic justice, and equal access to jobs, housing, institutional affiliation, and social welfare resources. And at the neighborhood level, the exclusion of Koreans from *chounaikai* organizations positions them outside the gate of a host of city-led state-sponsored events, programs, and institutions.

-
1. Giddens (ibid) lists allocative resources as: “1) Material features of the environment (raw materials, material power sources); 2) Means of material production/reproduction (instruments of production, technology); 3) Produced goods (artifacts created by the interaction of 1 and 2)” Giddens (ibid) then lists the authoritative resources as “1) Organization of social time-space (temporal-spatial constitution of paths and regions) 2) Production/reproduction of the body (organization and relation of human beings in mutual association) and 3) Organization of life chances (constitution of chances of self development and self-expression)”. To both of these lists, I would add control over the means and the symbols of cultural expression: e.g., the wherewithal to celebrate in public.

“At sunset in 40 banchi, grandmothers and grandfathers take time to relax. It’s an everyday sight in 40 banchi.”

©1994 Min-ho Ou

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

As long as the *chounaikai* maintain a client rela-



tionship to the district city office (*kuyakusho*) they are unable to provide the space outside of the interests of the city and the state. The organizational presence of the city within the neighborhood may enhance the city’s public education efforts, but it also occupies the place and the time where an alternative, civil-society neighborhood organization might exist.

The *chounaikai* announces itself as the platform for democratic participation in the neighborhood without providing the most basic task for democratic participation: the right to change the organization itself. This appropriation of the neighborhood as an organized discursive space pushes dissenting groups into other spaces within and without the neighborhood.

Finding their neighborhoods already “organized,” when groups of Kyoto citizens concerned about urban circumstances—from quality of life issues to traffic concerns—attempt to deal directly with the city, they are told to take specific local complaints to the respective *chounaikai*, where the city can demand a

We will continue to look at status-quo displays of belonging and exclusion that form the local matrix of civic belonging against which Koreans are to building a counter matrix, based on the notion of heterogeneity. But we also need to look at this counter-movement as having a goal beyond making a *space* for counter-representations. The articulation of a respect for heterogeneity is a call for justice based on a democratic politics of redistribution as well as a democratic politics of representation.

near unanimous decision¹ before it considers any complaint.

In this way, “neighborhood democracy” becomes

“The Japan Railway trains go right near my home. These are a familiar sight.”

©1994 Midori Taoka

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



an impediment to the organization and the goals of civil-society organizations seeking changes in city policies.

And in terms of the role that the *chounaikai* play in local festival production, here too the festivals and other events (such as the *undokai*) are supported with regularity and attention to detail. The events happen every year. However, the events also take space and the time (the holiday on the calendar) away from events that might offer expressive openings that are not permitted in the current neighborhood festivals.

Somewhere else, some time ago

As I eagerly approached each new festival occasion, sometimes travelling to nearby towns, I looked for the signs of novelty and inclusivity that would suggest that here was an event which was managed to express a cultural sentiment that bespoke of new voices. But new voices were still silent in the events I

1. For example, to apply the historical protection statute at the neighborhood/district level requires the support of 98% of the area's residents (*Kyoto Journal* No.27, 86). Without this protection, owners can replace old buildings with newer (usually larger) structures.

“This photo is of an Higashi-kujo lane (*roji*) where I used to live. My husband grew up here, so this place holds many memories. Even now, many Koreans live here. There are children’s voices in the street: a haven for safety.”

©1994 Kanja Shin

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

witnessed.

But the next summer, I had realized that my origi-



nal expectations were largely misplaced, in the sense that I had expected a festival form to embrace the potential for renewal or reform. In festival after festival, there under the ceremonial scaffold, *nothing was being built*, and little remained when the ceremony was complete and the decorations and festival apparatus returned to their garages. Scaffold-building, it appears, had become the event. Display had replaced play.

Playing with fire

One of the main tourist attractions of Kyoto is the night in August when large fires are lit on the hillsides surrounding the city. The lighting of the Daimonji (a.k.a. Obon) fires brings to a close a period when families in this part of Japan perform ceremonies at family grave sites, and at temples, and at home-shrines to family ancestors, all of these under the guidance of Buddhist officiants. It is a time when there is an alibi to travel away from work for the purpose of performing these obligatory rites, although golf courses and tourist hotels also do a brisk business at this time.

“The Daimonji festival is precisely such a means for articulating, and thereby maintaining, community identity. Since the festival acquired a national reputation, it has grown into an event too good to abandon. (Wazaki 1993, 133)”

The Daimonji fires, such as this one in the shape of the Chinese character “dai” [meaning “large”] are lit on the hills overlooking Kyoto in the middle of August every year.

At the end of this period when the (invisible) ancestors are present to receive these prayers on their behalf, the time comes to help them back to whatever hell (or other other-world locale) they normally inhabit. The point is also to get them away from Kyoto for another year. Lights are used to assist these invisibles in finding their way back to where the dead must remain. And for three hundred years, various groups have been lighting fires on the hills surrounding Kyoto for this purpose.



These fires are actually made of many fires that are arranged into shapes that become visible when they are all alight: rather like a dot-matrix printer forming

letterforms on a page, but where each “dot” is a two-meter square blazing fire. The effect of this display (when it is not raining) is the nighttime pyrotechnic equivalent to skywriting... over the lights¹ of the city in darkening dusk, Chinese characters and other shapes emerge in firelight.

“This is the pacinko parlor where I go occasionally. Recently I’ve had good luck, but usually not...”

©1994 Young-ki Yoon
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



1. Until several years ago, the City assisted in this spectacle by turning off the streetlights for a time. But today the fires compete against a haze of mercury and other lights.

For much of the three-hundred years this has been practiced, groups have negotiated among themselves for the right (and the obligation) to perform this service. Wazaki (1993) looked at one of these festival groups. He also formulated a notion that these fires create a strong identification with the City, a sense of “citizenship” that is available to all of Kyoto’s city-zens.

“The definite order in which the bonfires on the five mountains are lit is a late invention. Previously, the five holy mountains competed with each other in the lighting of big fires at about 8 p.m. without any formal order. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Japanese economy began to develop rapidly and to achieve high growth rates. The national government intended to develop cities all over Japan through tourism. By this policy it sought to build economic and social recovery from the impoverishment left by the last world war. As a response to the policy, the administration of Kyoto 'rediscovered' the nationally famous festival of Daimonji as an economic rather than as a religious resource. It tried to adapt the traditional festival...into a modern capitalistic form. The municipal authorities insisted that the order of firing should be fixed to become a more satisfactory event for tourists. This was made a condition for granting economic assistance to the five Daimonji organizations. (Wazaki 1993, 137-138)”

However, much of his own text reveals that the City government has been active in creating this festival as a *national* space, as a focus for tourism: that is, as an event that is appropriatable by non-Kyotoites, and also less appropriatable by Kyotoites. Indeed, while in the past (say, fifty years ago) the viewing of these fires was an occasion fairly equally shared by the city, in the last couple of decades the construction of taller buildings (such as the Kyoto Hotel) have made this an event that can only be fully consumed through the purchase of a ticket for a roof-top beer-garden viewing spot.

Over four years that I watched the Obon fires I was never in a position to see them all (there are five).

I did see four one year¹, when I made the pilgrimage to the top of a hotel, and for thirty US dollars (¥3000) awaited the time when the fires would be lit. The roof-top was packed with Japanese tourists, and the heat of the day was slowly draining into the evening (as the crowd was slowly draining the hotel's supply of draft beer) when suddenly the rooftop lights went dim.

“This is a shot of the Toji Temple. I took the bus when I was going to adult education classes. It’s not a good photo...”

©1994 Jong-sun Kan

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



As the first fire was lit on the Eastern hillside, the hotel's sound system cranked up the appropriately romantic tune (actually, Glenn Campbell singing “By the time I get to Phoenix”) and in a hush of anticipation we watched and guzzled our Ebisu beer while the “sacred” fires one-by-one came into view—except for one of them, which was obscured by another tall² building.

Wazaki (1993) goes to great lengths to show how this event

binds people together into a collective Kyoto identity. But he does not question at all the fact that certain groups have been given control of the event, and that

-
1. There was a time when all five were visible from the grounds of the Goshō (the Old Palace), but this is no longer possible.
 2. The construction of the 30 meter + tall New Kyoto Station effectively blocks all of the Daimonji fires for much of Minami-ku and Higashi-kujo. By allowing such structures to be built, the city further distances its citizens from any collective experience of this event.

this control is not in any way shared, as it is based upon residential history centered on a few neighborhoods, and on those families with claims to lengthy tenure in those neighborhoods. Newcomers need not apply (unless, through marriage, they become connected to one of the “old families”). There is, for example, no procedure by which an interested volunteer from any neighborhood could gain a role in this practice.

“I work in a hospital pharmacy. This photo is at night. Sitting alone in a large room used for medical treatments... there is time for thinking.”

©1994 Myung-duk Koo

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



“By creating the story of ‘a city as a whole’ which the inhabitants can share with each other, they cement their mutual belonging.”
(Wazaki 1993, 138)

The contingencies of festival production in Kyoto today also means that the onus of doing this event, which, as Wazaki notes, is now “too good to abandon” (and which claims resources from the City for its continuation) is such that the traditional groups are obligated to assure that the practice is performed with predictable precision. The tourists expect no less. This, in turn, means that status/labor positions must all be filled, even though there are not enough individuals from “old families” to fill these today. And so a number of other families with fictive affiliations to the traditional group have recently been included, and some of the original group have dropped out, because of disinterest or disagreement (Wazaki tells us little about these “slackers”).

“Bath time. It is eleven in the evening, the water is hot, and I feel very relaxed. I soak for about thirty minutes.”

© 1994 Hideomi Tabata
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



Today, the claim to a primordial right of membership in this festival organization as the main reason for excluding other Kyoto residents from participation does not hold up to the facts. This right is a pretense that serves to maintain a festival status (and claims to resources) within the city. What is continuous in this event is not a sense of community, even within its core group, but rather its logic of exclusion; and what is displayed is status difference, not

collective (and certainly not democratic) citizenship in this “civic” festival.

“‘Uchuu’ [space, i.e., outer space] Park: a little green in the middle of Higashi-kujo.”

© 1994 Midori Taoka
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



The ascription of city-wide inclusivity, and nation-

wide cultural stature to this event—either by the city, or by anthropologists such as Wazaki—hang the mask of *communitas* on an event where this does not occur. However these appropriations of the practice also change the contours of the obligation to perform it: it must now be done without fail, and without internal changes to its content. Its expected form is now fixed

within the JTB (Japan Travel Bureau) tourist itinerary. Today the Daimonji fires no longer belong to the communities that light them.

This commodification of a once-local practice—a practice with a long history of innovation (e.g., there was at one time only one fire) and internal competition—by the state, for some national interest; and the resulting commodity, which is then appropriated by the city, show the outcome of a process that accounts for the current position of all of Kyoto's main public events.

“Stopping off at my friend’s shop,
on the way to the nursery school.”

©1994 Naomi Manabe

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

The issues of belonging, and of ceremonial status



are now imbricated within budgets and interests that the city and other national institutions have applied in order to appropriate the events for national consumption. Other festivals in Kyoto are performed in the shadow of these national events, their once-celebrated localness is transformed into a lack of national importance.

Looking for a good time

Festivals bring out displays of Kyoto's former opulence—often in the form of brocades, either as the result of local manufacture, or as goods acquired from Silk-Road trading (Kyoto was the Eastern terminus of this trade). This photo shows my neighborhood's festival display.

©Anjali 1993

When my early explorations of Kyoto festivals



were less than successful, I begin to ask people where I could find a festival that was really festive (*saireiteki*), or lively (*ikiikina*). Their answers would betray either a nostalgia ("things are not like they used to be, you know") or a remembered location unhinged by its television source ("I saw just what you're looking for on NHK last week, but where was that? Kyushu, I think, or was it Shikoku?"). Wherever and whenever it was, this festival was not here and now in Kyoto.

Later, more professional advice from ethnogra-

"Here is a photo of a garage barbecue. Barbecued meat is best cooked on a chichirin (clay grill). Everybody is helping themselves and drinking beer."

©1994 Yong-suk Ryang

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



phers from the National Museum of Ethnography in Osaka confirmed my predicament. "Why did you choose Kyoto?" they asked, "There's nothing like that going on there."

“In Kyoto there are many old temples, and you can really say that everyday, somewhere there is a festival, big or small.”

Kawabata Yasunari,
Kouou (The Old Capital).

[My translation]

Written in 1961, three years before the Tokyo Olympics, this work measures with regret the changes that were transforming cultural production in Kyoto. It is a story that also chronicles the yearly conduct of festival production.

“On the way back home from dropping off my child (at school) I have a nice ‘well-side chat’ with a local grandmother.”

©1994 Yoni Bekku

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

Kyoto advertises itself as a festival town. It is the hometown of Gion-style festivals, which now occur in several other cities. Certainly the lack of festivity in so many festivals was itself remarkable. Why would so many events followed meticulous scripts every year in so perfunctory a fashion?

Many people in the United States, for example, might complain about annual, obligatory family holiday gatherings. But imagine, if you will, that these gatherings were also scripted to an extent that the arrivals and departures and the table conversations, and, of course, the food, were all precisely known in advance. And then elaborate these to a ceremonial plateau, and then perform these in public (early Shinto, before the state took it over was dominated by familial interests), and do so every year.

As difficult as I figured it might be to maintain and



reproduce a festival where the energy always threatened to boil over into emotional excess, potential violence, and predictable property damage, it must be even more difficult to manage an event where the emotion had cooled to a dispassionate boredom.

Onlookers at Kyoto's most famous festival, the Gion Matsuri, fight against the boredom that the event's current performance (or lack) promotes. With the parade stopping and starting to allow cross-traffic, and with the absence of any performative innovation, the event can only succeed in its terms by resembling its prior performance. At least it offers an alibi for some *hirune* (afternoon nap). Here a crowd of ring-side onlookers has mostly lost the battle against boredom.
Caron 1993

In hindsight¹, the best outcome of not securing a



research fellowship before entering the field is when the object that was so carefully constructed in advance for the proposal turns out to be something else in the field. With no commitment to the study of a predetermined event, I was free to explore others.

“...The Shinto shrine brought to the local society a sacred order; by gathering at such jinja and jointly carrying out the festivals observed there, people gained a re-awareness of their membership in that [the primordial rice-cultivation] community, and achieved the very power which allowed them to maintain their social lives.”

Nihon wa Matsuri no Kuni
Japan, Land of Festivals
Tokyo, [Jinjahoncho](#) n.d.

The search would take another year. Each festival I witnessed (three or more a month in the first year) turned out—each in their own manner—to be an event scripted to look the way it was expected to look, which is the way it looked the previous year, and the years before that. But this ceremonial conservatism was not surprising, of itself. I just had no idea about the extent of conservatism within Kyoto society. Once I more fully grasped this, the festivals seemed to fit into the antediluvian logic of practice.

-
1. Elsewhere I have written about the problem of promoting the preservation of an historic event without attention to its original logic (Caron 1994). Here I would only elaborate on the need to not abandon the logic of one's research in the middle of the field, even if you have to continue searching for the entry point where this logic opens to a reflexive critique.

For these events display practices that are embedded into longer-term local histories, histories that are tended to with some devotion, at least to their appearance. What was surprising was the *effect* of this conservatism, now strategically accomplished, sometimes at great expenditures of labor and materials. Given the changing social and demographic circumstances of the city—the many aspects of the city that are not the same—actually keeping something from changing promotes change in its relationship to its surrounding space. And so, the more things stayed the same, the more they actually changed.

“Here I am making kimchi in my shop. The night before I add salt to the Chinese cabbage. I rinse this out in the morning. About noon I mix in the sauce I’ve prepared.”

©1994 Yoni Bekku
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



Time after time I learned that, in order to create this performative simulacrum, people (anyone was willing) were paid to dress up and act out the scripted roles. Festival participation had become another *arubaito*, a part-time job that area high-school and college students could take on as they wished. In some cases, companies¹ volunteered their workers, in others these jobs were filled from social clubs or university campus organizations. The result

-
1. There are now festival “sports” teams in Tokyo and elsewhere that carry around *omikoshi* “shrines” as a sort of group aerobic exercise. In the Kantou matsuri in Northern Japan, I saw *mikoshis* carried by corporate workers in company costume, where the *omikoshi* bore the corporate logo, and there was no pretense about any divine occupant.

“Matsuri are those occasions on which the Japanese people behave in their most truly “Japanese” manner.”

Nihon wa Matsuri no Kuni
Japan, Land of Festivals
Tokyo, [Jinjahoncho](#) n.d.

This appropriation of festivals as indexical of national identity dis-embeds local culture in favor of a putative national culture.

“This is a modern view of Higashi-kujo’s ‘zero-banchi’ area. I went and took this from across the Kamo river. Here is where the basis for the Korean life-style is built, but now it is quickly dying out.”

©1994 Kanja Shin
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

was a loss of social-geographic focus for the event. It was no longer a festival performed by a certain group of residents of a certain neighborhood.

Larger festivals have always relied on the use of labor from a large area. And so the Gion festival formerly matched urban neighborhood merchant communities with teams from surrounding villages who would supply some of the muscle-power. These arrangements were fixed and continuous. But again, dislocations, including the fairly rapid depopulation of agricultural villages after World War II required that new sources of festival labor be found, and so the festival *arubaito* (part-time job) was born.

On another side of the event, the service of pro-



viding street foods and trinkets for the festival crowds has become its own industry, and a national community of travelling side-show merchants set up stalls (*yatai*) and sell the foods and souvenirs that everyone expects to find along the street.

Festival foods in Japan are dominated by products that offer little variety from festival to festival (you can count on cotton candy, corn dogs, and candied apples), but they also maintain some genres of street-foods: fried fish, bean sweets, and *okonomiyaki* [Lit: “fried what you like to eat” shown here] a fat pancake of shredded vegetables, meats, and unique sauces. While the cuisine has become more uniform across the nation, at least street food¹ retains a firm place in these events. (Photo by author)



The financial and spatial arrangements for these merchants are difficult to determine, as they are negotiated between the Shrines, the festival organizing committees, the local organizations that manage all small retail businesses on the streets (i.e., local professional gangs—

yakuza), and the police.

But again, what could also be a source of partici-

“Kujou station is the loneliest station in Kyoto. Everybody gets on or off up at Kyoto station. I usually wait for the train here all by myself.”

©1994 Bruce Caron

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



pation and of income for local organizations has now been acquired by people outside of the neighborhood. While rural festivals are occasions that showcase local foods, festivals in towns and cities mostly provide a “national” festival food menu. And so festival foods and goods also do not carry a flavor of the local².

1. Until recently in Kyoto, food would not normally be eaten in the street, even when this has been purchased from street vending machines. And so this festival tradition marked a different sense of the street as a site where normally prohibited bodily behaviors were possible. Of late, one can see snack foods being eaten on the street with little opprobrium.
2. The Higashi-kujo Madang food and goods are all locally run, and do provide income and a type of participation for the community. The same is true of other events held within the *buraku* areas, where even the self-professed low-class festival merchants do not set up their stalls.

In promoting civic insiderness by implicitly encouraging the staging of shrinelike festivals as a style of citizen participation, the central government (LDP) and local municipalities resemble their Meiji counterparts. But where the latter created shrine-centered administrative villages in a concerted effort to foster national spiritual unity, the present government is expropriating local festivals toward a similar end. The outcome is both the cultural and political appropriation of the local by the national and the permeation of the national by the local. (Robertson 1991, 38)

“In Kyoto’s towns, on every lane, you can find a Jizo shrine. Jizo is a God who protects children. Adults and children will greet Jizo whenever they pass by.”

©1994 Yumi Sakamoto

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

When I would enquire about this practice of hiring performers, I was told, with a certain amount of uneasiness on the part of the teller, that it had become impossible to keep the event going in the way it was supposed to look with only people from the neighborhood. Either not enough people had lived there long enough to fully belong to the neighborhood, or not enough families had the numbers of children needed to fill all of the roles. And so other arrangements had to be made. Where prior social arrangements were still possible, these were usually maintained. But as the larger practice, now based on expediency, eroded the logic of collective ritual duty/status/reward for performance, these practices became increasingly emptied of significance.



The move to cash rewards created a logic of part-time professionalism that militated against stable social-geographical status rewards. The resulting festival may be performed in a neighborhood, but it was no longer performed by or for the neighborhood. Usually it was done to satisfy a diffuse but requisite civic expectation for the spectacle. There was an obligation to keep it going, even though there was little discussion about what “it” was that actually happened

every year.

The veneer of appearance

Through this overriding devotion to proper appearance, these events have become ever more like their folkloric records, which have noted in detail the appearance and ritual of such events, without examining their ethnographic complexity. Today many such events no longer hold much underlying complexity to be examined. And, as someone who had arrived in Kyoto to explore this very complexity, the discovery of its absence was indeed worrisome.

But the appearance of the appearance of these

“Here’s a shot of my girlfriend—just kidding! This is in front of the labor center. She’s coming back from buying juice for the madang rehearsal. I pretended I was shooting in the other direction and snuck a quick photo.”

©1994 Teir Chin

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

[GO BACK TO FIRST PHOTO](#)



festivals was also not really what it appeared to be. There are aspects of a festival where appearance is not enough. When even the excesses in behavior—from cross-dressing (at the *sagichou matsuri* of Omihachiman) to male nudity and bravado (at the *kenka matsuri* at Himeji), to public drunkenness at most events—are fully expectable, and kept in their place within the event, then the simulacrum fails to maintain the element of active risk that a performance needs to be a performance, and a festival to be festive. What is by all appearances a festival, ceases to follow a festival logic. What remains is pure spectacle.

There will come a time when no one alive remembers that the festival used to be different, that it used to wander off course or fall down or add new features, and that people used to get bloody or happy or both at the same time. Once that time comes then the simulacrum will have succeeded in closing with its referent and appearances will be all that is expected. When the memory of the festival fades, the spectacle steps into its place. And the lack of surprise is no longer surprising except to the stranger who came looking to be surprised.

The [Jinjahoncho](#) in Tokyo produced this video “Japan: Land of Festivals” in the 1980s to be shown at a trade fair in Europe, to explain why the Japanese rice market should not be opened to imports. A heritage of rice cultivation (following a strong determinist ecological anthropological reasoning, which claimed that the uniqueness of any culture is patterned from its interaction with its particular ecology) from pre-historic times is provided as the primary feature of modern Japanese culture. SOME QUOTES: “Until the present day the Japanese people have maintained their way of life on the basis of rice cultivation”... “Shinto¹ is...the history of the Japanese way of life... as the basis of Japanese culture, Shinto has culturally...supported the way of life of the Japanese people up to the present day...”

Again, it was not merely a lack of space for sur-



prise—for innovation or improvisation—which characterized these “festivals”, there was also a lack of a definite “social space” in the choice of performers. Traditionally, the onus of participation falls to/on those who represent the “native” population, those families with claims to long-term residence (and who also maintain close ties with local shrines and temples). Today, participation was offered as a paid job to people (mostly young men) hired on to do the heavy work of pulling and carrying festival objects through the streets.

urban matsuri literature

As with most ethnographies that track a commu-

-
1. I visited the Jinjahoncho in Tokyo through the gracious generosity of the Bamboo Association, a lay Buddhist organization. The video I was given did not even mention the presence of Buddhism in Japanese history. Nor did it mention the recent period in time when Shinto, as the official state religion of the Empire, provided a sacred aesthetic for fascism in Japan.

nity throughout the year, recent ethnographies in urban Japanese locales make note of the festival occasion (which is, after all, difficult to avoid), but are elsewhere occupied, and generally fail to explore the festival's performative openings. An exception to this is Bestor's work in a *shitamachi* (downtown) Tokyo neighborhood. Bestor notes the careful organization and the details in planning and execution of the festival. He remarks on how the event is at the same time a reflection of hierarchical social organization and egalitarian cooperation.

"The matsuri and the month or so of preparations leading up to it express several important, though sometimes seemingly antithetical, social themes. Social stratification and ranking in Miyamoto-choo are expressed and enforced through the assignment of positions on the festival committee and through public postings of residents' contributions. Strong distinctions are underscored between newcomers and longer-term residents in the selection and duties of committee members. Stratified authority governs decision-making for the festival. Tasks in managing and running the festival, and even the spatial and temporal distribution of activities during it, reflect rigid divisions of labor by age and gender. Yet despite the social differentiation that plays so visible a role, sentiments of solidarity and egalitarianism prevail, and when residents talk of the festival's meaning, they speak of this spirit of communal unity as the matsuri's dominant motif."

(Bestor 1989, 235)

Bestor provides in his discussion of the festival enough materials to suggest the social dynamics of the event (although he was basically unconcerned over matters of cultural expression, aesthetics and other, performative critiques). But even his description, as the above illustrates, deserves to be explored in much greater detail, as it elides the various problems it introduces by allowing for a gloss of the festival under the rubric of communal solidarity.

"When residents talk," suggests that there is an

unquestionable unanimity¹ of opinion, and that this would not reveal underlying disagreements if the ethnographer were more direct in pursuing this topic among various members of the neighborhood. Of all the events that a neighborhood might perform, it is the festival that should open up to multiple readings and voices because of the decontrol of emotions it fosters.

His description of the participation allows us to see that most of the egalitarian cooperation comes in the form of the widespread solicitation of donations to the shrine, although these are also limited by an appropriateness that is guided by residential status (to give too much would be presumptuous, and to give too little would lead to a general disapproval). His description of the event, however, shows that it retains its performative energy, the combination of muscle and crowd and alcohol that makes it dangerous.

“STACCATO WHISTLES, hoarse shouts of “Washoi! Washoi!, and the rhythmic counterpoint of wooden clappers shatter the late summer afternoon as a seething mass of sweaty men lurches down the shopping street under a float the size and weight of a small automobile. Brass ornaments glitter and tinkle in the frenzy. The tassels of the float’s purple lashings spin wildly above the men’s shoulders. Bystanders rush to remove bicycles and other obstructions from the mob’s path. Tiny children peer out from behind their mothers’ aprons, enchantment and fear in turn playing across their faces. Strong men push float and mob back, steering them away from a plate-glass window. Chortling grandmothers gleefully toss buckets of water from second-floor windows onto the steaming backs of the churning mass of men below. Bus and taxi drivers watch—some with amusement, others with impatience—as they sit stranded in the midst of the thronging celebrants who clog the streets and stop the flow of traffic for a few minutes. The mob of men— some clad like old-fashioned craftsmen

-
1. Does this tacit consensus reveal an effect of the festival, and, if so, has the festival become trivial because it can only evoke this one response? Bestor does not pursue the field of festivity as a way to open up a critique of the festival.

in matching blue and brown hanten (workmen's jackets), hachimaki (headbands), and haragake (tight-fitting black vests and leggings), others stripped to the waist—spin and whirl their way through all corners of the neighborhood during two or more hours of ecstatic exhaustion, almost hypnotized by the incessant, deafening, pounding rhythms of the cadence, of the clappers, of the whistles.

Miyamoto-cho's festival is under way, and the O-mikoshi—the palanquin of the tutelary deity of the local Shinto shrine, the Kami-sama of Tenso Jinja—has taken over the neighborhood's streets during the deity's annual round of inspection." (Bestor 224-225).

The sweaty men on the street here, we can only assume (as this is not given in the text) are all residents of the neighborhood. But how are they chosen? It would be interesting to return in 1997, to see if there are still enough men to carry the omikoshi, and if newcomers have greater access to positions of visible authority in the event.

Bestor's ethnography of a Tokyo neighborhood with as long-time history of festival production is well complemented by Jennifer Robertson's description of festivity in an emerging suburban Tokyo city. But Robertson also connects the organization of the new civic (*shimin*) festival in this city to national government programs aimed at re-traditionalizing Japanese towns.

“One can go so far as to assert that Japan's current development itself has been brought about as a result of this kind of close linking [through festival practices] between the Japanese people and their deities. In short, one can truly say that Japan is a 'land of festivals.'”

Nihon wa Matsuri no Kuni
Japan, Land of Festivals
Tokyo, [Jinjahoncho](#) n.d

Festivals in various locales in Japan have been promoted by local and national governments as the quint-essentially traditional (*dentouteki*) Japanese practice; a practice that brings with it the capacity to anchor its communities into a traditional mode of living. But what this national program failed to realize was the active residuum of “native” status in locales. Although the festivals were new, they were couched in tradi-

tional¹ Shinto forms, attached to long-existent local political and social/religious organizations, and so organized by existing hierarchically determined social groups based on residential tenure.

These new/old festivals failed to create a sense of belonging for newcomers to neighborhoods, who were mostly excluded (except for demands for contributions), and disaffected by these events. Even the “native” residents were more indifferent to these new festivals, preferring the ones they had long supported. Their contributions to new events exhibited the unscripted emotional release that was central to the older neighborhood events, only now it was all a part of the plan.

“The crowd loved the heaving, squashing, groaning, grimacing, laughing, carousing, yelling, and shoving. But the best was yet to come. Instead of melting, one by one, to a finish, the shrine bearers deliberately caused a crushing pileup, sending the delighted bystanders fleeing to the safety of the guard-railed sidewalk with the shrines in reckless pursuit. The spectators were thrilled by the display of festival mayhem (*matsuri sawagi*). This was more like a “really real” festival, raucous and rambunctious! As I groped my way out of the pulsing rush-hour throngs, I overheard one adventurous elderly woman exclaim, as she pushed and shoved and clutched indiscriminately, “You don’t know whose hand you’ll come out holding!”
(Robertson 1991, 64)

In large part, the unscripted openings of Japanese festivals were left unscripted to make room for the role of the local deity, whose invisible presence was both the chief alibi for, and the hidden animator for the event.

“Kodaira natives are aware of the deities’ absence from the mikoshi and consequently refer to the citizens’ festival as bereft of authenticity, the implication being that a “real” (shrine) festival is contingent upon a supernatural presence. One participant interviewed at a shrine festival remarked that

-
1. Many Shinto “traditions,” particularly festival traditions, were revitalized, reinvented, or simply produced *ex nihilo* during the late 19th century.

“without *kamigakari*, festivals are no fun” (Matsudaira 1980, 98). (*Kamigakari* refers to both the process of becoming possessed by a *kami* and the individual possessed.) The same person also remarked that one “can’t *kamigakari* at city hall-sponsored festivals” because the deity is not present. At the Kodaira citizens’ festival, the countless cans of beer quaffed by the bearers at the two half-hour rest stops apparently compensated for the absence of *kami*. Historically, alcohol (*sake*) has been a standard feature at festivals, especially at the social gatherings following a *mikoshi* procession. City hall apparently had considered banning alcoholic beverages but realized that without beer the “adult” shrine procession in particular would lack the essential zest”

(Robertson 1991, 65).

My neighborhood in Kyoto lacked the vigorous festival participation that Bestor found: there were no feasts, little drinking, and hardly any display of emotion. As the weather was good, some time was found to sit and relax. Small talk and snacks were available for those who dropped by. And the tasks of setting up and dismantling and storing the festival paraphernalia took some cooperative effort.

Here the presence of the *kami* did not encourage the trance possession that persons in Robertson’s study noted as the core event of a “real” *matsuri*, although the participants in my neighborhood considered their festival to be both a real festival and a civic event with some measure of importance. But again, I had been warned that Kyoto was not representative of Japan. However, this idea certainly did not match Kyoto City’s self representation as Japan’s cultural wellspring.

furusato of furusatos

As a city busily preoccupied with its own festival heritage, Kyoto was not party to efforts by the LDP (the Liberal Democratic Party, which has been in power [one way or another] in the National Diet

since the mid 1950s) to create the “hometown” (*furusato*) nostalgia that Robertson (1991) details in her work. *Furusato* images were meant to reconnect new-urbanites to the villages where most of their families had lived before five decades of urbanization brought Japan to its current level (about 85%) of urban habitation. Kyoto openly advertises itself as the *furusato* of Japan's national culture, and its historical heartland.

The dynamics of Kyoto's older (so-called “traditional”) events comes from the manner in which they are managed, and the rapid changes in local demographics. Changing demographics and residence patterns in Kyoto have also fostered the same native/newcomer conflict that Robertson found in a Tokyo suburban city. Increased mobility within Japan¹ has resulted in many “new” families into Kyoto's neighborhoods, and also reduced the relative number of families with claims to “old” status. The families that claim “old” residence maintain their claim in part through their position in the neighborhood organization, *chounaikai*, and in part through their status in the local Shrine—a status maintained through offerings and attention to status-linked duties (in other words, the

1. I was told that the average time between household moves in Japan is now about 20 years. (The average time in the US is only 5 years.) Kyoto is also the only large urban area that has lost population in the last ten years, a trend that is attributed to its lack of an industrial base, and its graying population, which has driven up the cost of national health insurance in Kyoto city, further encouraging families (particularly families with multiple children who pay these extra costs for each child) to move to suburban locations, which then accelerates the geriatrification of the city.

status is heritable, but not merely inherited). And these duties are mostly connected to the shrine's annual festival. But what happens when the population of "old families" in a shrine precinct shrinks through demographics and/or urban change (such as the replacement of old house estates—sometimes the only plot of land large enough for this purpose— by apartment or office buildings)?

When the children of the old families became too few in number to perform the festival activities, one solution would have been to share ceremonial stature with the new neighborhood families by opening up festival participation within the group of newer families. This option, with an alibi of fictive antiquity, is precisely what Wazaki (1993) found in the Diamonji community. He called this "flexibility," but what remains inflexible here is the logic of exclusion. Another strategy is to reduce the status of some participatory roles, while preserving the status of other roles. And so some neighborhoods/shrines reserve the visible leadership roles in the festival within their "traditional" households while opening up general participation not simply to newer families in their neighborhood, but to anyone who would work for cash¹.

And, as we shall see, even this diminished state of affairs may not be maintainable. For this event, like

1. However, in my own neighborhood, perhaps out of a lack of festival finances, this second option was also not pursued. Instead, the event replaced human labor with machines: they now carry the heavy festival objects on pick-up trucks. And so, despite its claims to antiquity, this festival can hardly be said to resemble even its own traditions.

some other Kyoto festivals (notably Gion Matsuri) is also linked to a form of residential building (the *machiya* or “townhouse”) that is quickly disappearing.

In short, Shinto festivals in Kyoto today represent probably the most conservative (in membership and action) notion of “community” available to their locale. In their routinized ritual forms, they hold out against modernity’s challenges. The aspects of exclusion and emotional detachment that Robertson (1991) noted in the new civic¹ festival (*shimin matsuri*) she studied, were in Kyoto also present in its established neighborhood events.

When I had mistakenly predetermined that a neighborhood festival would necessarily foster a democratic social grouping, a temporary *communitas* that would counter or even reverse hierarchical social roles, I was predicting this as a feature of the logic of festival practice. But what I found was actually what I might have expected: those Shinto festivals I examined in Kyoto do, in fact, reflect and foster the sense of community that is there in Kyoto, a community without *communitas*.

-
1. Robertson observed that the new *shimin matsuri* in her locale was created to look like an “oldtime” *matsuri*, a goal that was severely critiqued by the natives, who also maintained their festival. Kyoto’s new (since 1994) *shimin matsuri*, the Kyoto Matsuri, abandons the Shinto *matsuri* mode (perhaps because the city’s calendar is already filled with these) in favor of a grand parade and evening entertainment. It will be interesting to see how this festival further defines both its performers and its audience. The use of nostalgia in civic events in Kyoto is so completely pervasive that even their historical pageant is not just about civic history up to the present, but about a prior history of the city—its pre-Meiji, imperial past. What the grand 1200th Anniversary year (1994) showed most of all was a limit to the amount of nostalgia even oldtime Kyotoites could stomach.

Kyoto's festivals are “symptoms” of the city's social situation. *Matsuri*, in this model, is the *ritual* reenactment of “position¹” in its geographic and social forms. While they do not create openings within this society, they do put the local hierarchy on public display. However, the inability of festival organizers to marshal enough interest in these events to maintain a performative tradition means that even their ritual form could become vulnerable to a telling form of social and aesthetic criticism: apathy. Now apathy at the voting place is counted as a quiet statistic (percentage of voters), but apathy at a festival shouts its boredom on the street.

failed festivals

Many of the “failings” of *matsuri* as a medium of inclusion in Kyoto (assuming, as I once did, that inclusion is integral to a festival logic) can be traced to its failings *as a festival*—its lack of festivity, despite the violence, or nakedness, or drunkenness that it might inspire. At this point, I must point out, regardless of the social cachet carried by *matsuri* as a traditional event with high visibility and civic support, there are aspects of living in Kyoto that have been particularly detrimental to the continuation of *matsuri* as a festival practice; for example, the amount of time devoted to work and the traffic congestion in the streets.

The ongoing de-skilling of the population in festi-

1. These festivals resembled in many ways the Hindu *Utsavam* that Appadurai and Breckenridge studied in the 1970s as sites for negotiating elite status claims.

val arts, and the lack of spatial appropriation by festival events exemplify the central predicament of performing festivals in that city. Six-day work-weeks of ten-twelve hour days leave little time off either for workers or for their spouses to devote to learning festival skills. And then, on the day of the event, the streets of Kyoto are rarely completely given over its festivals. Even Gion Matsuri now stops and starts to allow cross traffic to flow through it. Apparently, there are now too many autos and trucks on the roads to permit the closure of the main North-South arterials for any length of time.

Complete appropriation of the street is a signal of festival space. Like any game, a festival demands that its participants disattend from external activities for the duration of their performance. And so stopping and waiting for cross-traffic not only adds to the boredom of the crowds, but preempts the festival mood among the participants. At the same time, because their customary performance requires an accumulation of physical strength and agility, many Kyoto festivals depend heavily on the voluntary services of the community's young adults.

Festivals may (and for some theorists, must) include all ages. But their most vigorous activities are pursued by young adults. This is the cohort of the population in Japan that has recently experienced both a decline in its relative numbers, and a massive increase in the demands on its time. With more than half of the city's high-school population attending both

school and after-school cram schools in preparation for the national university entrance examination, opportunities for play of any sort are all too rare. Indeed the crowds of onlookers at Kyoto's festivals are nearly entirely populated by individuals who are retired, female, or of pre-school age. Without even an opportunity to witness the festivals, the chances for skilling in their arts become even fewer.

By 1983 Miyamoto-choo had ceased hiring outside musicians, and matoribayashi came on cassette tapes. Mr. Shigemori, who was in charge of music for that year's matsuri, explained that the festival committee had decided against hiring live musicians for two reasons: they were outsiders rather than Miyamoto-choo residents, and in the wake of an expensive drive to purchase a new mikoshi, they were trying to keep expenses down. [\(Bestor 1989, 239\)](#)

The progressive attenuation of the city's festival performances, for example the recent (post 1993) use of pre-recorded Gion-bayashi music (a locally famous genre of festival music) in place of live music ensembles, and the use of trucks to carry or pull festival floats, signals more than the a loss of enthusiasm for (and in) these events, can only partially be linked to structural impediments such as those described above. This process is also the product of a nostalgia worn too thin and brittle, of an attitude of reverence toward the historical content of these events at the expense of their necessary creativity. Not that some reverence may not be due here—there is a heritage of festival forms here that should not be ignored. But this attitude is misplaced when it is not linked to the *festival logic* of the event, but rather to the ritual repetition of some spectacular performance.

Although Fukasaku insists that the people of Japan will begin to create “a new culture of their own,” he does not venture any suggestions about the form and content of this “new” entity. The “new” culture—the “authentic” community—appears as a state-regulated project in which the nostalgia for nostalgia is manipulated, on the one hand, to mask human responsibility for socio-ecological change and, on the other, to create a collectivist mythopoeia predicated on the reification of the “old village.” “Old villages” are presumed to have existed in harmonious tranquility until vitiated and transmogrified by outside forces—such as westernization, industrialization, and urbanization. In the *furusato-zukuri* literature, change for the worse is described as precipitated by external agents. Change for the better, on the other hand, is presented as a wholly Japanese undertaking, a rallying against intrusive foreign agents.... (Robertson 1991, 29-30)

Let me provide a somewhat hyperbolic example to show where I am going here. Imagine, for a moment, a championship game of baseball, a well-matched game that moves, play-by-play, through a series of remarkable feats of personal skill and teamwork, and ends with a dramatic finish on the final play of the game. This is a game that is later recalled by many as one of the best in their memory. But why stop at recollection? Now imagine that two teams are assembled every year to play this game again. Not to play a new game, but to repeat, pitch by pitch, hit by hit, and catch by catch, what happened in this now-famous game. Of course the pitching must be slowed to allow for predictable hitting, and the crowd must be coached to respond in a correctly enthusiastic manner. In fact, some of the skills required to precisely mimic the original event may be as difficult as the skills that were displayed originally (having to hit a home-run on a certain pitch). The final score is never in doubt (apart from a mistaken deviation from the script).

Imagine observing such a game from beginning to end. Admittedly, one does get a fairly accurate *representation* of the original game; however this event is nothing at all like a game of baseball. It only, at its best moments, looks like one.

Here the reverence for one single, memorable game has spawned an event that goes against the logic of the game itself: for a game is an open-ended agonistic event where the results must never be known in

advance, and each play is potentially significant to this outcome. It is this very same openness that helps to separate festival from spectacle. And in its lack, even were there to be plenty of energetic young participants and no traffic concerns, a festival will not be forthcoming.

the festival as counter-demonstration

I once mentioned to an organizer of the Higashi-kujo Madang that several of the current Japanese academics who study festivals have made a point of describing their experiences in the 1960s at universities in Tokyo, where massive student demonstrations took over the streets. In these crowds they found an essential emotional display that they also say they find within Japanese *matsuri*.

“But a demonstration is nothing like a matsuri,” she said. “They are almost perfect opposites.”

Her pronouncement struck me as a critique not of demonstrations or of festivals as these might be considered to be forms of performance, but rather of the distance between Kyoto’s festivals and the demonstrations that its Koreans and *buraku*-dwellers have staged in the past twenty years. She was born only in the 1970s, and the Sixties in Kyoto are at least as far away as they are, say, in Los Angeles.

A festival can be very much like a demonstration, and a demonstration like a festival. The question then is, what is there about a festival that makes this so? And what happens when this is not the case? I will turn now to a festival (it is called a *madang*) that is

very much like a political demonstration, and has the potential to become more of an overt political event (although the organizers have, so far, avoided this).

This festival and its neighborhood can be found a short bicycle ride away from my house, but the festival, like its neighborhood is as much outside of Kyoto's civic-led cultural production as the Awata Matsuri is inside this practice.

Like the [Awata Matsuri](#), the Higashi-kujo Madang struggles with the underlying features of daily life in Kyoto that make festival production difficult: a lack of free time, a lack of rehearsal space, and lack of open civic places for performance. But unlike the Awata Matsuri, and unlike all other festivals in the region, this one is managed independently from the city-lead, shrine-centered events that dominate Kyoto's cultural production.

While my interests have moved to the exploration of a festival (the Higashi-kujo Madang) that runs counter to the logic of *matsuri-as-spectacle* that is today central to *matsuri* in Kyoto city, I am still curious about the fate of this genre of cultural practice, which seems at times so robust, and also so fragile. The combined production of hundreds of *matsuri* events seems far too expensive in terms of time and space and labor to continue without increased support (both financial and social), and yet these events individually seem too well embedded into local social status markings to be easily abandoned. The result is perfunctory performances and attenuated meanings:

festivals in name only.

After several months of watching these, I heard about a neighborhood that was planning to create an entirely new festival later that year (1993). Novelty, at least, I remember thinking, would force them into a mode of creation: here was an event that simply could not resemble by any intention the way it looked the year before.

a festival in more than name only

“...it makes sense to think of an intrinsic connection between democracy, social movements and self-help groups, coming in large part from the fact that (in principle) they open up spaces for public dialogue. A social movement, for example, can force into the discursive domain aspects of social conduct that previously went undiscussed, or were ‘settled’ by traditional practices. The feminist movement problematized female and male sexual identity through making them matters of public debate; ecological movements have achieved a similar result in relation to the environment”
(Giddens 1994, 120).

We are getting very close to the event that will create the counter space of identity in Kyoto; open up to a public sphere on a public street; and show—not just for the small neighborhood of thoroughly marginalized peoples, but for the city and its nation—an alternative to everyday life as this is now supplied by the state. This event happened as, and still happens to be, a “festival.” Commonly described by its organizers as a *tabunka matsuri* (“multicultural festival”) its current name uses the Korean term *madang* (meaning *hiroba* [“commons”] in Japanese). As a festival it creates a space of festivity, with various entertainments, artistry, drama, games, food, music, dance: a whole repertoire of festival practices on display.

On June 6 of 1994, the City of Kyoto staged the centerpiece of its “festival” in celebration of the 1200th year of its original construction. As with most of the “public” events staged for this year-long “festival” the main show was performed for an audience of ticket holders. The tickets started at 3,000 yen (about US\$30), but again most of these tickets were available only to those with connections to the City or to the City sponsored committee in charge of this event. This video is from the state television (NHK) program.

But in another way this event is also a new social



movement, as “serious” as any movement, and as hopeful for social change as the outcome of its practice.

The Madang event program is a text that assembles all of the participating organizations and individuals into a document where their support for the event is acknowledged. Fifty pages long, it contains about 30 pages of advertising from local retail and service providers, and it also list contributors and it describes all of the events of the day. Moreover this document codes the event in a manner similar to other neighborhood festivals.



I will argue that this coincidence of “festival” and “social movement” is not coincidental, although the organizers may not have deliberately planned all of the ways in which these two might productively intersect.

The very same day that the City was celebrating its anniversary with a spectacle of music and song, it staged another spectacle: the invasion by hundreds of police of the offices of the North Korean Chosen Sooren organization in Kyoto. Claiming that the group had failed to file the proper use permit request for some land near Kyoto (it turned out that they had filed this permit—and anyhow that problem could have been settled with a telephone call) the police took away all of the organizations files. Koreans in Kyoto have good reason to fear official harassment when they organize outside of state-sponsored arenas. Video is from the local KBS television station.

However, once we have taken what we now



know about Kyoto's state-sponsored public sphere, and then look at the options available for counter-public demonstrations, we will see that this social movement happened—with some prior intention, and some later refinements—to find precisely the mode of expression that would allow them to shout their counter expressions out on the street (or the school yard: the streets have been given over to traffic) without creating a space that the state would feel obliged to close down, nor in a voice the state would feel the need to silence, nor marking individuals the state would decide to persecute.

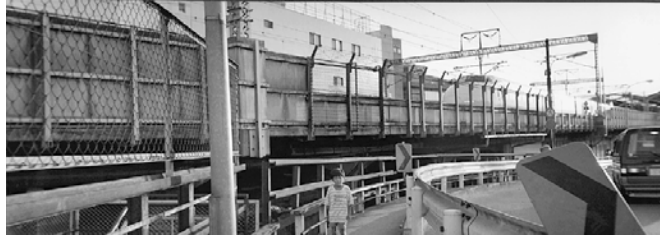
“Over where it crosses Kawaramachi street, caught in the tight space between the Shinkansen tracks and the JR tracks there is a temple. We were climbing the stairs on this side when a shinkansen train suddenly appeared.”

©1984 Naomi Manabe

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

Now the state might, at some point, decide to do



any or all of the above (and we will see some of the state responses in the next chapters).

For five years now (in 1997) the Higashi-kujo

“I took this on the way to my adult education class.”

©1994 Jong-sun Kan

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



Madang has managed to run the only public cultural show in town that does not require state approval or support. And with this “show” the organizers achieve two objectives: the organization itself—hundreds of volunteers and a communication and resource development system—and a venue for counter expression: a place of protest, where protest is masked in the same cultural mode that the state uses to mask its nationalist construction of normalcy.

In order to bring the reader to a point where the

“There is a little park on a lane near Matsunoki Machi public housing. Everybody enjoys this place, particularly the beauty of the large Ginkgo trees that grow there.”

©1994 Yumi Sakamoto

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



many festival practices within Kyoto—practices that now include the Higashi-kujo Madang festival—reveal their multiple meanings in the context of Kyoto, we first started with a brief history of Koreans in Japan and Kyoto, from ancient contacts through colonial and post-colonial times, up to the present, where we explored the geographies of their exclusion.

“Going to the nursery school.
The little rascal likes to ride on
the bicycle standing up.”

©1994 Yoni Bekku

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

“[Jameson’s notion of] Cognitive mapping is... also meant to allow people to become aware of their own position in the world, and to give people the resources to resist and make their own history. It is the logic of capital itself which produces an uneven development of space. These spaces need to be ‘mapped’, so that they can be used by oppositional cultures and new social movements against the interests of capital as sites of resistance”

[.\(Keith and Pike 1993, 3\)](#)



We then turned to the center, to the cultural programs of the state-nation, and how these inform a national habitus, which pervades the everyday life of those who live in Kyoto.

Reflecting this back on the margins we looked at the lifestyle exclusions which combine with geographical exclusions (physical exclusion) to determine the marginal “social space” of Kyoto’s “Korean” and *buraku*-dwelling residents. Now we are about to see how the deni-

zens of Kyoto’s margins are remapping their city and resituating themselves as city-zens within this.

Event-centered solidarity

Like the City and Prefecture of Kyoto, the Madang prints and distributes its own newspaper *Higashi-kujo Madang Nuusu* [News] which comes out monthly in the season before the Madang. From MN 1995 no 2:

HEADLINE “Turning to the Fall performance”

Subhead:”... Let’s make the Madang Circle ever wider!”

Copy: “As was told in the last issue, it has been determined that the Third Madang will be held on November 3rd at Sanno Elementary School...

...It’s time we really started to make the Madang. Now we’d like to introduce the actual groups that be working hard to produce the real Madang (apart from the executive committee):

The planning group; the public information group; the advertising mobilization group; the finance and general affairs group, and the public relations group. We welcome new faces to any group. If you can say “OK: I want to be a member of XYZ group” please contact us right away!



Like many new social movements in many parts of the world, the Higashi-kujo Madang community uses the event itself to reproduce the community across time, while the group also “performs itself” in public. The annual, nearly year-long preparations,

and the festival day performance requires that the organizers assemble all of the resources for this purpose: and in so doing, they construct an entire social/cultural movement as well. For the resources they marshal—from symbolic tokens to practical tools—are doubly useful. Whether the Madang is an excellent alibi for organizing a social movement, or whether a social movement is a good base from which to organize a festival is not the issue here. As we will see, the collective action of the Madang is not aimed at some external, particular, instrumental goal. It does not fail or succeed in those terms. It succeeds only on the aesthetic/symbolic terms that the group sets up for the event itself. However, the Madang organization is linked through the multiple affiliations (and

desires) of its collective members to a number of issue-oriented groups in the area. And, as a collective it has begun to achieve an independent voice of its own.

This proved to be the case in 1995, when the

“I went with some friends to eat barbecue and kimchi after we finished working on art for the Higashi-kujo Madang. This was really tasty!”

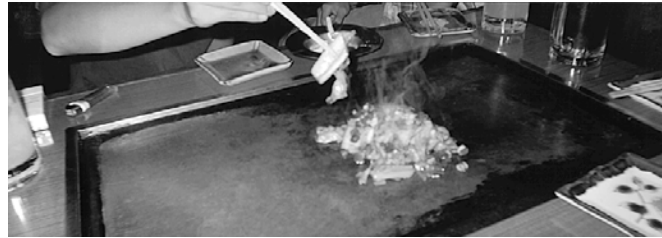
©1994 Chinmi Yuu

[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)

[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

“Collective actors invest an enormous quantity of resources in the on-going game of solidarity. They spend a great deal of time and energy discussing who they are, what they should become and which people have the right to decide that. This on-going process of construction of a sense of ‘we’ can succeed for various reasons: for instance, because of effective leadership, workable organizational forms or strong reserves of expressive action. But it can also fail, in which case collective action disintegrates. The task of sociological analysis is to understand how and why the game of solidarity succeeds or fails”

(Melucci 1989, 218).



great Kobe earthquake leveled the Korean neighborhood of Nagata-ku. The Higashi-kujo Madang organizers quickly used the *madang* collective as a base for gathering donations for the victims in Kobe. That year's *madang* also included a locally generated critique of the Japanese government's failure to respond adequately and fairly to the consequences of the earthquake. And so we can see that the event is capable of acquiring current issues as these occur, and then articulating not only an artistic expression, but a social/ economic response.

In one of the 1994 Madang plays, “Mangiri” is a local Korean man who has moved away and made a career in real estate. One of his big clients is looking for a site neat the station for a new building. But when Mangiri (who calls himself Matsuyama to conceal his Korean background) is showing the client around Higashi-kujo when a couple of childhood friends recognize him and so reveal his secret. His career is finished the moment they call out “Mangiri.” Combining comedy and pathos, the moment resonates with the arbitrary injustice of discrimination against Kyoto’s “Koreans” who are virtually indistinguishable from their Japanese peers until they are forced to show their papers, or are hailed with their real name.

However, an artistic expression remains the core



of the event. And after the first year’s allegorical play, the organizers have been pursuing expressions based on “*rearuizumu*” [realism]. For example, to make a drama (a *madang geki*) about how a career in Japan requires passing as Japanese, and how easily a life of hard work can fail at the moment of truth, the organizers create a committee to assemble the story.

From the perspectives of older and younger

“I am working here on my personal computer. Everyday I use a computer and a printer. This one’s an NEC.”

©1994 Hideomi Tabata
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)



(and male and female) the story is arduously pieced together until it has reassembled a predicament that the entire neighborhood relates to. The process moves from silence to an articulation that requires self

“Some kinds of social movements and self-help groups pioneer and...help sustain, democratizing influences by the very form of their social organization”
(Giddens 1994, 120)

“The wholesaler at Kyoto’s Central Market is putting the goods I bought into my van.”
©1994 Jong-sun Kan
[GO TO NEXT PHOTO](#)
[GO TO PREVIOUS PHOTO](#)

“...new conflicts develop in those areas of the system where both symbolic investments and pressures to conform are heaviest. These conflicts act increasingly at a distance from political organizations. They are interwoven with the fabric of everyday life and individual experience. The new conflicts are often temporary and they are not expressed through ‘instrumental’ action. Contemporary movements operate as signs, in the sense that they translate their actions into symbolic challenges to the dominant codes”
(Melucci 1989, 12).

reflection.

In building the Higashi-kujo Madang each year, the organizers participate also in the removal of their bodies and imaginations from a space that is, after all, only a remainder—what is physically been left out when the city rebuilds itself as a center for world tourism, and what has been socially and economically left out when the connections and the jobs are distributed.

Out from this remainder, the participants build a



new center for themselves, a small city, a little culture, a new social group. Tiny and fragile, still it belongs to them all. And its peculiar “strangeness” is something made strange not by an exclusionary rule of the center, but rather because it is something novel standing on its own, marking its own boundaries, and making its own rules. From a cultural strangeness that could only be coded within the dominant Japanese *Umwelt* as “wrong,” [*chigau*] this community is forging a strangeness that cannot but be counted as something significantly other: a challenge to the position of the dominant code.

The opening of an-other possible significance out of the uniformity of the national habitus is itself a major task, and the effort to do so and to hold this

open against the interests of the state lends this event a greatness far beyond its neighborhood scope. And so the particulars of this task deserve some careful attention. But first I want to also make clear the connection between this festival and the social movement that is its double.

festival as alibi

“Such general considerations are important when considering what is ‘new’ about the recent movements. One of their distinctive characteristics is the unstable pattern of their membership. The attributes of the actors are defined almost entirely by the action itself. This means that the energies and resources that actors invest in the construction of their collective identity are an essential part of the action, and not simply an accessory or ‘expressive’ dimension. The weakness of an exclusively political view centred on the ‘instrumental’ dimension of action is that it considers as ‘expressive’ or residual the self-reflective investments of the movements. But these investments in self-reflection are crucial for understanding the effects of movements on the political system.”

(Melucci 1989, 73-74).

Again, I want to start by noting that the choice of a festival, instead of, say, a parade, a demonstration, an assembly, or a riot, was a fortuitous one, both because of the location of the community, and because of the structural support that a festival form can give to this task.

In Kyoto, city/state run festivals, alongside those managed by the hundreds of Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, make the production of some form of festival an everyday event with Kyoto. For this neighborhood of Koreans and *buraku*-dwelling Japanese to make their own festival, in the midst of all the other neighborhoods that make theirs, seems at once reasonable and proper. And so, for the City (through its neighborhood associations, or through the PTA of the school, or through the district office [*kuyakusho*]) to deny this neighborhood its festival while allowing virtually every other neighborhood in the city their own festival, would be to flatly admit an official program of cultural discrimination aimed at Koreans and/or Japanese living in *buraku* areas of the city.

And as much as the City touts its desire to be Japan's most international city, to then act against the

only “international” cultural event in the City would also potentially damage this image. The City might still manage to shut down the Madang (see also: [Dis-association Trouble](#)). But until it finds a way to deflect the suspicion of its desire to shut down this festival because of who controls it, the event will continue to happen.

“It is obvious that neither social movements nor self-help groups are necessarily democratic in their aims; some such movements and groups, after all, have been dedicated to discrediting the whole framework of democratic institutions. Social movements are sometimes led by demagogues; such leaders may create a mass emotional identification that is the very antithesis of dialogic democracy”
(Giddens 1994, 120).

However, even if this were the only cultural festival in Kyoto, the choice of a festival form offers many practical and strategic advantages to the neighborhood as a medium to organize a social movement. In fact, such event-centered social movements are becoming one of the more popular modes for social movement formation: returning to an embodied, performative community as the basis for identities not formed from (or making) an imagined community, but rather resembling (and re-assembling) a new, performative “village”. This village is both a local neighborhood and a member of a globalized community.

Melucci (1989) has noted how new social movements are, in fact, new, in the sense that they have acquired the self-reflexive information and membership practices of late modernity:

“What is new about contemporary movements is first of all that *information resources* are at the centre of collective conflicts. Conflicts shift to the codes, to the formal frameworks of knowledge, and this shift is made possible by the self-reflexive capacity of complex systems. The *self-reflexive form* of action is thus another specific characteristic of recent movements. The decline of movements as ‘characters’ signifies the dissolution of the ‘subject’ and an increase in the formal capacity for self reflection. Finally, the *global interdependence* or the ‘planetarization’ of action profoundly alters the environmental conditions in which actors are formed and act: the field of opportunities and constraints of action is redefined within a multipolar and transnational system.” (Melucci 1989, 73-74)

All of these contours of action are visible within the Higashi-kujo Madang: 1) it acts as an information

center, and a site for challenging symbolic domination; 2) it is relentlessly self-reflexive in its artistic production, constantly interrogating its expressions and search for those meanings that best reveal the forms of misrecognition applied by the state to this community; and 3) it views itself as a player in a global struggle for human rights and civil liberties, and it critiques the Japanese state on the basis of global information sources.

In this sense, “madang” is a most appropriate

Madang Dinner Video

NOTE: this is a time-lapse view of an entire evening: Please preview this video by holding down the Fast Forward [>] button. The first 4 minutes show the pre-dinner period, when groups volunteered to place posters in all of the stores of the neighborhood. The remainder is an entire evening of talking, eating, reports from all of the committees, and an acknowledgment of the cooperation of all of the neighborhood leaders. While many of the food service practices show a gendered separation of tasks, the leaders of the Madang committees are from both genders. The meal was paid for from the Madang budget. September 1994, Matsu no Ki Machi Danchi, Higashi-kujo.



term for this collective, as it symbolizes a cultural commons, a place and an activity of shared expression and collective identity. After looking closely at the festival practices of the Madang in the next chapter, we will explore the forms and referents for the identities assembled through this event. But for now, I

want see how a festival¹ can be an event at the center of a radically democratic social movement.

There is an entire argument that can be made concerning the place of carnival laughter within festival, and festival as a return-of-the-grotesque that structurally dismantles social distinctions, and so reveals their artifice. For the purpose of this work, I will not be delving into this particular argument. Such an argument would attach in several places to my notion that [A festival counters the dominant bourgeois lifestyle logic](#), as this logic is precisely that which is punctured by carnival laughter.

“The concepts of efficacy or success could be considered, strictly speaking, as unimportant when considering this type of collective action, because the conflicts within the realm of collective action take place principally on symbolic grounds. They challenge and overturn the dominant codes upon which social relationships are founded. These symbolic challenges are a method of unmasking the dominant codes, a different way of perceiving and naming the world” ([Melucci 1989, 74-75](#)).

Although ludic moments are many within the Madang, here too is a festival that has not developed all of the creative sides made available to it. In this case, the unveiling of the grotesque has not been a central theme. In part this restraint comes as a response to the dominant cultural code: the Japanese Ministry of Culture loads its cultural spectacles with a great dollop of seriousness, and, by homology, this counter event acquires a more serious self presentation (at this point in the event, parody of Japanese culture would be politically risky). However, the event offers a thick arena of intimacy, and within this there are opportunities for a shared social therapy.

-
1. I tend to use the term [Festival](#) in a more restricted manner than this is commonly used. Like “culture” and “community,” “festival” is not a very useful technical term because of its expansive uses and referents. However, I also hope that by restricting the use of the term, or by using restrictive adjectives (such as “pseudo-” and “spectacle-”) with the term when these serve to front problematic uses of this term, that an increased reflection over what is and is not a “festival” might be stimulated among readers.

When I propose that [A festival is a space of social therapy](#), I am looking at the Madang in Kyoto as an engine for shared intimacy in public, and at this sharing of intimacy as the practice that enables a new form of membership: a type of emotional commensality (the eating together at a common emotional table, so to speak) occurs that is the rite of passage for belonging, while it also articulates the meaning of membership. Again, [The festival performs what it proposes](#).

“The function of contemporary conflicts is to render visible the power that hides behind the rationality of administrative or organizational procedures or the ‘show business’ aspects of politics. While visible power disappears from complex societies, it expands and is dispersed throughout the whole society. Even though power comes to play a crucial role in shaping all social relationships, it is difficult to pinpoint it within individuals or institutions”
([Melucci 1989, 76-77](#)).

Belonging means taking on the work of the festival, and the work of the festival means constructing an entire counter-culture against the dominant code of nationalized Japaneseness in Kyoto. The goal is reaching in the performance of the collective action of the event itself. As Melucci noted: “In contemporary collective action, the organization has acquired a different status. It is no longer considered as a means to an end, and it therefore cannot be assessed only in terms of its instrumental rationality. The organization has a self-reflexive character and its form expresses the meaning (or goals) of the action itself. It is also the laboratory in which actors test their capacity to challenge the dominant cultural codes. Finally, the organization directly governs the visible forms of mobilization; the present movements’ pursuit of an external objective is no longer separate from their internal forms.” ([Melucci 1989, 74](#)). The collective action of the Higashi-kujo Madang cannot be evaluated by some direct response by the Kyoto government. It succeeds through its performance: liberating its mem-

bers from being simply subject to the dominant code. They acquire through this cultural laboratory, the means to resist being hailed as Koreans in Kyoto and a spotlight to shine on the powers arrayed against their participation in local society.

Now we need to look directly at this event...

The Higashi-kujo Madang

New beginnings...

“Higashi-Kujo is a part of Kyoto where many resident Koreans live. Korean eateries and household stores line the streets, and the Korean language is in the air of this district. Resident Koreans, who, in 1910, found their farms stolen by the Japanese colonial government, and their harvests confiscated, who were rounded up and commandeered as forced labor, wound up living in Japan. Before and during the War Koreans came to live in Higashi-Kujo serving as low-wage manual laborers, working on the Higashiyama train tunnel, on the Kamo River bank-reinforcement construction, on the project to widen Kujo street, and in industries such as cloth-dying.”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

Late July in 1993, nearly three months before the very first Higashi-kujo Madang in Kyoto, the heat of the summer was on the city. As in other cities, such as Philadelphia or Madras, where the hot, sultry summers have long been viewed to be as unhealthy as they are unpleasant, summer hits Kyoto like a plague, punishing commuters, and pushing shoppers into the underground arcades. The air rings with the shrill buzz of a progression of species of cicadas, each with their own staccato rhythm. At times, it sounds as though an army of insects was trying to set the air on fire, and it seems as though they might succeed.

In my Kyoto neighborhood in 1993, nearly every other house has at least one room that is air-conditioned, but we make due with electric fans, and regular dips in a cold-water *ofuro* bath. (The next summer, 1994, was even hotter, breaking the big digital thermometer on the Hankyu Department store, and killing millions of fish in the rivers.) The compressors for the air-conditioners on the roofs of the other houses pump heat into the already steaming neighborhood, and the drone of their motors adds an alto chorus to the soprano cicadas.

As it was our second summer in Kyoto, I had already located a favorite air-conditioned coffee-shop oasis for the brunt of the mid-afternoon heat. However, mad-dogs and anthropologists cannot always be happy staying cool. Today I was on my bicycle, out on the street, with a bag of video gear across my back.

My bike was too old to attract thieves, but my son's bike and my wife's (twice) were stolen and had to be replaced. [While there are types of crime where Japan's rate is much lower than the US, when it comes to bicycles, Kyoto is no better than Los Angeles.] And when it comes to alternative transportation plans, Kyoto is way behind the times. The city makes almost no effort to encourage bicycling, and it considers the thousands of bikes that are parked each day near the train stations as a public nuisance. It regularly carts them off to an impound yard where it takes \$50 US and nearly a full day of travel and paperwork to retrieve them.

Here are bikes parked on the sidewalk near Sanjo-Station.
Photo by author



Bicycling, I had discovered years before while living in India, was much cooler than walking; the movement of the vehicle created its own breeze. I rode past hundreds of cars that were parked, many had their engines idling softly (and never seeming to overheat), their drivers slumbered in air-conditioned comfort, while their exhaust choked the already boiling pedestrians, the men sweltering in their suits, and the women fending

off the sun with parasols.

And as I was turned down-hill along East bank of the Kamo river, the river air was slightly cooler. I rode a ramshackle ten-speed, rolled past the Minami-za *kabuki* theatre, south, towards the factories down-river. Further down the river was Osaka and the

Pacific, but I was only going as far as Tenth Street, where I was to videotape the very first rehearsal of the very first drama of the first Higashi-kujo Madang. It was a new beginning for everyone, myself included.

It was to be a bicycle ride I would make a hundred times again, at all hours and weather, and in various states of exhaustion and intoxication (unfortunately, exhaustion and intoxication would normally precede my return trip uphill—the lesson being that one should try to find a dwelling downhill from one’s site of study, particularly if this study includes festivity).

“After the War, many Koreans from outside Higashi-Kujo came here to live close to Kyoto Station in preparation for repatriation, hailing the liberation of their homeland. However, in the Korean homeland, the growing opposition between the North and South solidified in the severing of the nation at the 38th parallel, and so many resident Koreans came to reside permanently in Japan without returning to their homeland. The first generation of resident Koreans were extremely robust people who safeguarded their ethnic pride under what were very difficult historical circumstances, and they devoted their energies to the ethnic/cultural education of their children and descendants.”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

There was a bus that ran nearby, but it stopped running at 11:20 P.M., and too many times I watched that last bus leave without me. My only option in that case was to run to catch the final subway train of the day, otherwise I was forced to walk all the way back home: few taxis would pick up a foreigner at that time of night. Besides, bicycling is still the only reasonable mode of travel in Kyoto. For a year I biked all the way across town, quicker than the cross-town bus, to teach at a university on the north-west side of Kyoto.

It was by bicycle that I found my way to the East Ninth-Street Labor Center, where volunteers were preparing to begin their rehearsals for the *madang-geki*: the street drama. I came with a simple introduction from the chairman of the organizing committee, whom I had met a few days before. The production organizer, a member of Hanmadang, was too busy to consider whether or not I should be there. And so I

took a seat with the others who were there to tryout for a part.

I had decided that I would be as inconspicuous as possible on this first day, and so I found a corner in the room where I could acquire video without much notice and without disturbing the meeting.

HANMADANG MEMBER:
“We started Hanmadang in 1986.
At first it was just Madang-
geki.[street theater]”

ME: “What was that first play
like?”
“At the time the US had begun to
export pork products to Korea,
and the farmers there, who relied
upon the [local] price of pork,
could no longer sell to the market
at the prices of American pork.
So we did a play about this situa-
tion. And we performed this in
several places, and then, instead
of disbanding we continued to
study Korean music and theater...
In those years we were continu-
ally busy with performance. We
couldn’t think about a career or
marriage or school... We did hun-
dreds of performances.”

The room was the size of a large two-car garage, with a cracked linoleum floor and fluorescent lights overhead. Perhaps thirty people¹ were trying out for the play and half a dozen children amused themselves for the next three hours or so in the room which had no air-conditioning, but only a couple of standing fans. Between the electric fans and the kids and hum from the fluorescent lights, my video of this first meeting sounds like it was taken in a busy bus station.

That entire first year (the months leading up to the first madang event), I attended every possible meeting and workshop and rehearsal, listening and videoing as was possible, but not yet interviewing. Asking questions at this point—since the event had not even happened yet—would not be very productive, and might raise issues about the event that could,

1. One curious thing I noticed at this time was that all of the prospective actors (except for those who had come directly from work) wore blue jeans. In fact, all of them wore Levi-brand blue jeans. And in fact all of these Levi-brand blue jeans were model 501 Levi-brand blue jeans. During a break, a documentary photographer from Osaka greeted me outside and noted that I was wearing Wrangler jeans, and so was he. I tried, in my nascent field-worker mode to think of anything significant in this, and failed. But I would later remember other signals of the uniformity that groups achieve in Kyoto.

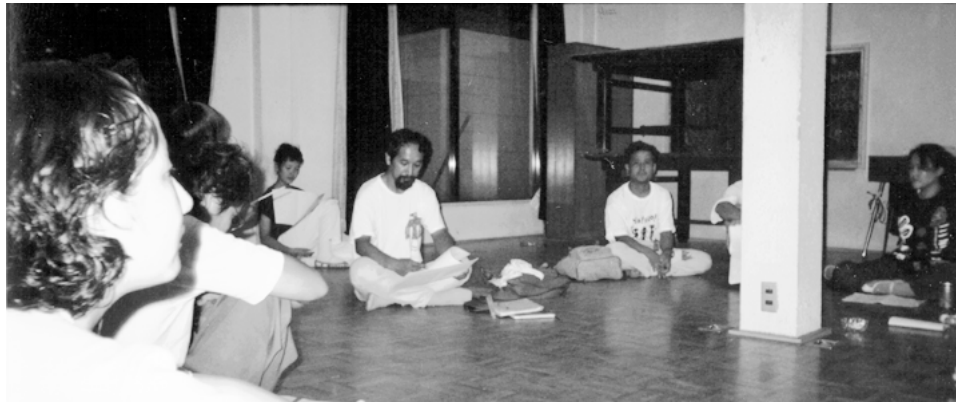
or should not have been raised until later¹. As this was the very first year of the Higashi-kujo Madang, I was, perhaps, hyperconscious about not wanting my presence to have any determinant affect on the planning and performance of the event. I was also considering that this very first year would be an exceptional time, and that as complete a record as I could assemble would be of incalculable value for any long-term study of the event, and for later reflection by its organizers.

“Today, the resident Korean society is centered around its second and third generation members, and is preparing to welcome its fifth generation. Lately, as marriages with Japanese people are now the majority of marriages, there are many children being born of mixed (or double) Korean-Japanese ancestry. Also, for a variety of reasons more than 160,000 Koreans were obliged to become “naturalized” in Japan.”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

I was also improving my facility with the local variety of Kyoto Japanese (*Kyoto-ben*) that was used in this neighborhood. An historically conservative form of what used to be the court-inspired (aristocratic) city dialect, it is thick with non-standard grammatical markers and vocabulary. The irony is, of course, that this once-privileged variant of Japanese is being preserved in the city's under-caste *buraku* areas where the residents may live their entire lives without venturing more than 100 kilometers from their homes, even though these homes are built in the shadow of the *shinkansen* bullet-train tracks.

1. In the second year, they asked me if I wanted to volunteer to help in the organization, but again, I was more comfortable as an observer. Even so, they gave me a place in the street drama (as an obnoxious videographer) and they allowed me to organize the photo display.



Many of the play rehearsals were held at a local non-profit center for day-laborers. When the drummers practiced, the Roudou Center spilled this music into the neighborhood.

The madang-geki, the street theater, the centerpiece of the entire event, was also the arena where the most acrimonious debates occurred, particularly in the second year, when the participants decided to abandon the more traditional rural-allegorical form for a mode of street-realism that more directly spoke to the conditions of Higashi-kujo.

Allegory and realism

“The term *madang* refers to a space where communal activities take place. The reinvested meaning of this space, however, invokes a utopian plenitude of the imagined non-periodized prelapsarian past and alludes to the advent of a postcapitalist unity in which the division between production and consumption collapses.”

[\(Choi 1993, 92\)](#)

The first madang play (*madang geki*) was a drama-



tization of a rural allegory, where an old village widow, always kind to everything and everyone, is being threatened by a tiger, who has eaten her son and is coming to devour her as well. But each of the things (mountains, and flies, and trees) with which she had been gentle comes to her aid. Together they kill the tiger, releasing her sons from its belly, and dancing on its pelt.

“...as if [everyone] together were dancing in one great circle...” This was the prescription that the Higashi-kujo Madang organizers gave for their first festival. It would show—the city, and also the participants—that Japanese and Korean residents in Higashi-kujo could find a common ground (madang) upon which to put aside their differences, and recognize their commonalities. And it was this image of dancing together that came about in the final decontrolled emotional state that signalled the presence of festivity in this festival. Much of the description of this madang is the back-story that leads to this moment.

It was this final dance of victory that crowned the



madang with its joy, and sent the first event into a maelstrom of dancing and emotional release. But the play itself was not what many of the actors had hoped it would be. Even before the event, there were arguments over its tone and content. But in the abbreviated time-frame of that first year, no one could imagine creating a new play, that task would have to wait until the next year.

The antagonist in the first Madang's *madang geki* (drama) was a tiger. It has been reported that tigers were used metaphorically in events in Korea as a symbol of Japanese oppression, and of its antecedents: oppression under Korean military/U.S. backed capitalism. But the members of the Kyoto madang took this as a straight allegory.

Photo by Anjali



The climax of the first year's Higashi-kujo Madang was the tumultuous dance that crowned its final hour. Beginning as the triumphal dance when the tiger-character was killed in the drama, it swelled uncontrollably to include

every person present in a whirling circular celebration.

“Because ethnic discrimination is so firmly rooted in Japanese society, we must press this very issue all the more. Having failed to hold on to our own identities, we are now a people who are shunned in society. This we must overcome—we must reassert our own independence and restore our ethnic identity.”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

Within this, one could sense an exaltation over the successful completion of this first event, and, in equal measure a release that was linked most specifically to the site—to the school yard as a disciplinary space—and to its successful appropriation as a festival place. This was the site of mundane schoolyard humiliations, of the pubescent terror of exclusion and ridicule, but today there was only joy, and a joy that was enabled and articulated as, of all things, Korean.

This counter-display, powerful in its expressive load, and pivotal in its re-imagination of the space and for this crowd, was the first moment in Kyoto where I could fully say that a festival had taken place. But I could not yet, within the theoretical apparatus that I had taken to Japan, account for what it was I had seen.

The backyard of the Uribunken Center was the site of much of the artistic production for the first Madang. An outdoor space about the size of a two-car garage, it also served for impromptu parties and meetings.

In this scene, my son, Louis, plays Gameboy to escape the boredom of having been included in his father's work,

I was watching three (even four) generations of



people, Japanese and Koreans, physically disadvantaged and physically nimble, devout Christians and devout Maoists, and they were gamboling in the dusk with arms linked and with a collective laughter that could not, within the realm of imagination, have come from this neighborhood.

“My grandfather and grandmother came to Higashi-kujo from Korea in 1920. He worked in a metal-working factory. [One day he was injured and] blood came out. ‘Red blood comes out of Koreans too’ a Japanese [worker] said. And he [my grandfather] got mad and quit.”

Hanmadang member, 3rd generation Resident Korean.

For this was a neighborhood that was riven by internal disputes and embittered by the dire reality of active social discrimination. Today that reality paled before a greater desire, and the daily load of worry and hatred was set down for a time. The realization that this load could be set aside was just one of the accomplishments of this first-year event.

The tiny Uribunken center was the only place where the group could freely gather on their own. Its small rear asphalt yard served as the focus for many meals where the Madang's performers and organizers tackled the issues raised by doing this event.

A week later there was a post-event party at the



Uribunken Center. Over sizzling barbecued pork and tripe and cold beers, I played back the raw video from the event.

“All of us in the Korean community want to make a madang for ethnic/cultural exchange, and so foster this type of exchange. What we mean is that the festival is a splendid and joyful event which is dedicated to the unity of the Higashi-Kujo area. On behalf of the young resident Koreans, we want this festival to provide great encouragement and to be a place that restores their ethnic identity and pride.”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

People came and went, commenting on the various scenes. But when the final dance began, they stopped their conversations, and watched, and remembered. The older crowd had departed early, and the younger, mostly third-generation Korean volunteers began to reflect on the event. I was surprised by their tone of disappointment, (although this might have been in part the result of reviewing the look of the event on the unedited videotape).

Despite the enormous effort that went into its production, it could not compete with the spectacles that the city produced, in part because its budget was comparatively meager, and in part because it did not participate in the professionalism that money allows, but which also excludes everyday participants. Its drummers were mainly drummers who had started drumming two months before. Its artists were volun-

teers with more enthusiasm than accomplishment. The resulting event looked as home-grown as it felt. But this appearance did not satisfy them.

One of them said to me, "I bet you wish you were back studying *matsuri*."

It was a bet he could only lose. For as the

A variety of non-official housing is found in Higashi-kujo. This abode, built near the Takasei-canal sports an array of personalizing artistic touches. From a video by the author



evening wore on, it became clear that these young organizers were only beginning to imagine where this event could lead them.

"*Madang guk*, [drama] then, is seen as a site where this utopia is to materialize through a carnivalesque communal festival and through a collective struggle against the ruling bourgeoisie as the commoners of the pre-rupture period are imagined to have carried it out."

[\(Choi 1993, 92\)](#)

They were conscious that they had not achieved the kind of critical artistic expression that they had hoped for, even though the triumph of simply doing the Madang was still evident. From the T-shirt designs, to the drama, to the artwork, satisfaction gave way to unease. They wanted to make an event that was real, that spoke their anger.

The first year had been too tame. Like the cat in the drama, it was only a paper tiger. The first year had shown that the *madang* could be done, but now they were ready to push the event up a few critical levels.

The challenge was no longer to simply, physically manage the event, but to carry this to its expressive limits.

“As there are few [Kyoto] people who feel comfortable mixing freely with the residents of this district, it is up to these residents to build up this area themselves.”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

In that circle, in the dark, with the embers of the barbecue fading at our feet, and the *shinkansen* train howling by, nearly overhead, everyone was given a time to speak, and every observation made was granted a space to grow into dialogue. And I was not certain if this space of inclusion was the result or the cause of the *madang*. But certainly it was a signal that the next year would be well worth the wait.

From allegory to realism

“The enthusiasm of the *madang* participants, who moved through the *madang* [space] without discrimination, created the feeling of the joy of ‘living together’ [*kyousei*]. Young folks, wanting to take a small step towards the peaceful reunification of the North and the South beat the *chango* drums.”
The Second Madang Report

For the second year drama, a committee was formed to write an original *madang geki*, one that spoke more directly to the audience. I want to spend some time with this play, for it shows the early maturation of the event as a mode of counter-expression and cultural critique. It displays the hesitation of direct criticism against dominant institutions. And it seeks to make the play into a space that resembles the space where it is performed.

“The students’ use of popular culture as an instrument for raising critical consciousness or mobilizing the masses...resulted from the students’ engagement with the lives of rural Koreans...”
(Choi n.d. 8)

And it also announces the willingness of the organizers to abandon an attachment to existing forms of Korean *madang* productions, and to innovate new forms using a logic of local action and social-political engagement. Madang plays as a genre historically determined by their performances on Korean university campuses in the 1970s, were mostly based upon rural allegories,

The Higashi-kujo center for day laborers was the main site for practicing drumming or rehearsing for the drama. Because of the volume of the sound produced by drumming practice, the organizers attempted to move this between several venues, but not near the schools where the Madang would take place. Spatial concerns were nearly as grave as those of the timing for practices. From a video by the author

Before we look at the content of the second-year



three act play, I want to look first at some representative spaces for the various rehearsals and organizing meetings.

This rehearsal at the Kibou no Ie (Hope House) nursery school was one of many that the madang-geki in staged in preparation for the Second Higashi-kujo Madang.



Within these rooms and throughout these spaces, a large proportion

of the event's social actions occur. It was here where the internal democracy of the event was enacted within discussions, quarrels, decisions, and reviews of prior decisions.

Monthly meetings of the working committee (*jikkokiinkai*) such as this one in August of 1994, kept the individual committees (art, drama, music, food, fund raising, etc.) in touch with one another. The meetings ran for about three hours, and were held at a Catholic Church run school facility in Higashi-kujo. Women were in charge of the majority of the committees for the Madang in its first two years, however, the executive committee, which also managed fund raising, was dominated by older men, many of them second-generation Koreans.

Beginning with the second year, the play would be



written, staged, directed, and acted by volunteers who brought enthusiasm, but few credentials to this task. Learning from their own short history of producing plays, they are building their own community theatre. The give-and-take of the rehearsals betrayed both the pervasive uncertainty of the group as to what was “right” in terms of upholding their desire to bring realism to the play, and also what would work dramatically. But they will acquire their own skills in this practice as the years progress.

“We want to make this a madang that is filled with joy in the recognition of our mutual livelihood: a place on which Japanese people can build their own lives and find the meaning of living as a community by meeting with each other; and a place where resident Koreans can hold firmly to their ethnic pride in this madang.”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

Here is where I learned to look behind the event. Milton Singer’s work on cultural events (1958) first sparked my interest in festival events as windows to the workings of culture. But what he did not realize was how much more there was to learn from rehearsals and other aspects of cultural events. I began my observations of festivals with some idea that culture is event-full, but I was slowly drawn into an appreciation for the simple fact that events are also culture-full.

And this fullness is most apparent in rehearsals.

Planning the madang

The planning for each year's madang begins with a call for volunteers. Volunteers who come to the initial meetings may serve on one or more of several committees. Volunteers are welcomed at any time, and in all aspects of the event, including participation in the executive committee. The Madang's openness was encouraged by its goal, and facilitated by its need for many more unpaid workers (and no one was paid) than it could attract. The various committees: for the drama, the music, the art, for logistic support, and for the food booths, were each headed and filled through an open call for volunteers.

“We want to make a festival for everyone, so that Koreans and Japanese in Higashi-Kujo can be united” with this thought wholeheartedly in mind, colleagues active in Higashi Kujo have been gathering since last year, holding many meetings in preparation for the festival.’

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

These committees manage all of the activities for the Madang, although the Madang executive committee (*i'inkai*), which is responsible for fund raising and budgeting, also connects with neighborhood community leaders who have been enlisted to secure institutional resources in the district (e.g., access to facilities for rehearsals). This pivotal committee was first populated by those individuals¹ who had the initial idea for the *madang*. Most of them were Second generation resident Koreans, but a few were Japanese living in the local *buraku* areas, and others were from the local Japanese Center for Independent Living (JCIL) a group

-
1. After the completion of the Third Madang in 1995, I was told that the original members of the *i'i* turned over this committee to a group of young volunteers, most of whom are young adult, third generation resident Koreans. This early “changing of the guard” at the top is another example of an event that attempts to keep its positions of authority in the hands of the people who are creating the event's most expressive content.



that advocates the rights of physically disabled individuals.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals/workshops for music/dance, costume/art production and drama were necessarily numerous, as the *madang* also recruited volunteers for these skills, and arranged for basic and advanced training. From the middle of the summer until October the evenings and weekends were filled with these rehearsals. Over ten weeks a new play would be written and produced, new drummers (adult and child) would be trained and then coordinated into choreographed dances, and enough artwork to disguise an entire school building would be designed and painted.

Costumes and masks were also made, as well as

This montage of photographs shows scenes from the various practices that led up to the Madang day. The drumming here was that done at the Avanti building in 1993.



all of the other necessary arrangements for food, trash handling, seating for the elderly, advertising and fund raising. Continuing meetings of sub-committees and general meetings of all volunteers were held to

keep everyone informed and maintain the event's focus and direction.

Finding time for rehearsals, and then acquiring space, were tasks that most often verged on the impossible. Mostly, the time problem was caused by the kinds of occupations that the volunteers held. Many times a volunteer could already have three or more part-time jobs. Working odd-hours on week-ends, and sometimes 12-15 hours a day left few hours open for festival rehearsals. Quite often, volunteers would arrive at a rehearsal directly from work, and then depart for another job after a couple of hours of practice.

These types of scheduling conflicts created frustration and sometimes anger—when a time was fixed that most people could attend very often this meant that some people were excluded by their schedules from participating in the manner they would like. None of the committee leaders were keen on making the decision that would force volunteers out of the event, and so the scheduling meetings were the event's most rancorous and least productive, until finally some decision was made against the silent knowledge that was no other way out.

It was the drama that suffered most from the lack of free-time in the neighborhood. The original cast would be supplanted and revised many times as work schedules shifted in the months before the *madang*. It was not unusual for a new cast member to be put into rehearsal in the last week.

During the rehearsals, the volunteers acquire a mutually social-intimate knowledge about each other. They enter into a process of active trust within the tasks they must, together, accomplish. While these volunteers are from the same district of Kyoto, they come from families with divergent and sometimes antagonistic social affiliations, but here they must set aside their differences.

Public relations

It was the task of the executive committee to secure the approvals for the use of the school yard. The first executive committee devised a plan to alternate between four district schools. This plan was advertised as a means to share the excitement of the event across the district, but it also served to decrease any effect the event might have on a single neighborhood. For each school had its own PTA and every school neighborhood had their own *chounaikai* (neighborhood association) and a serious complaint from either of these could give the school administration a reason to reject the madang's use of school property. Since the event would only be held at any one school every four years, the nuisance it might create (through noise, traffic, or litter) would not be as noticeable in any one area. Taking the *madang* out to the public schools is a means of taking control, if only for an afternoon, of a space outside of the *buraku*. It also makes the madang available for those citizens (perhaps a majority) in Kyoto who would not know-

ingly enter¹ a *buraku* space.

The public schools in Minami-ku (and, I would imagine in all of Kyoto) were not built inside *buraku* areas. This makes them relatively inconvenient for *buraku*-dwelling children, while it avoids having non-*buraku*-dwelling children enter these areas for schooling.

There are some open spaces within the *buraku*² where the Higashi-kujo Madang could be held, but that would signal a reduction in the socio-geographic scope of the event. The logic of this event requires that a public (non-*buraku*) space be appropriated as a sign of the right to perform in public. This is one reason why the first year the pre-event parade, a practice

-
1. I was walking to a restaurant one day with a friend in Kyoto, who had lived near a local *buraku* for all of his life. I had found a shortcut path to this restaurant, a path which avoided the crowded front street in favor of some quiet alleys. As I was leading him on this path, we turned a corner where he suddenly chose to go in a direction away from the restaurant. “This way,” I insisted, pointing ahead. He paused and then with measured reluctance, came with me. As we ventured into a space that I knew was a *buraku* area, my friend’s reluctance increased to a point of near panic. People on the street recognized him, and greeted him, and he them with bows and polite responses. They were people he had gone to school with, people who knew him well. But he mopped his forehead of sweat and seemed about to faint as we progressed through an opening in a public housing block and out the other side. Then I realized that in forty years of living not two blocks away from where we were, he had never before set foot in this place. It was as foreign and foreboding for him as if it were a nuclear waste dump we were casually strolling through. The stigma of the place was a physical blow to his body, a dank hand that touched him in a way I could not really imagine. Here he was, as nice a person as one could find anywhere, but his body was directly responding to a lesson it had learned despite his own tender predilections. Through this display I also learned the effect of *buraku* ideology.
 2. There are other *madang* that are held in local *buraku* areas and these have an entirely different quality about their performance. Since non-*buraku*-dwelling Japanese would not normally venture into these events, they maintain an in-group, back-region mood, at the same time more relaxed, and also less focused.

designed to advertise the event locally and to generate enthusiasm, moved out of the *buraku* housing project, up the main street, to the only public shopping mall in the area, the Avanti Building next to the Shinkansen entrance to Kyoto Station.

Dancing with the dog

“...In *Frantz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression* (1985), Hussein Abdilahi Bulhan proposes a very useful outline of what should eventually become a full-fledged psychology of liberation based on Fanon’s ideas. ...Bulhan finds the ultimate state of freedom in what he calls maximum self-determination: ‘Self-determination refers to the process and capacity to choose among alternatives, to determine one’s behavior, and to affect one’s destiny. As such, self-determination assumes a consciousness of human possibilities, an awareness of necessary constraints, and a willed, self-motivated engagement with one’s world.... Without the right of self-determination, we are reduced to rigid and automatic behaviors, to a life and destiny shorn of human will and freedom’ (pp. 265-66). (Erven 1992, 10-11)”

However, “self-determination” must also address and overcome the misrecognition that others apply to marginalized groups.

The Higashi-kujo Madang organizers looked to create an event that showed a seamless decorum, while promoting emotional display: not an easy task. One way they did this was to not allow alcohol at the Madang. Another way was to avoid the stigmatizing stereotypes that were all too familiar to the organizers. Here, the avoidance of alcohol also played a role: the stereotype of “the drunken Korean” was a display to be avoided, even though madangs held in the *buraku* (and virtually every Kyoto festival) served alcohol without much thought that an overconsumption by a few would be conflated with a group identity.

The avoidance of externally attributed characteristics left the organizers with a reduced inventory of symbols, and neutralized some of the expressive possibilities of the event. Un- and under-employment, for example, was eliminated as a topic, as it could also be construed as a result of “the lazy Korean.” Under-employment is perhaps the most serious chronic economic feature in Higashi-kujo, but mainstream Japanese perceptions of the national economy may not include the notion that social circumstances (such as cultural domination) could be responsible for a lack of employment. After decades of virtual full-employ-

ment (for the great majority of middle-class Japanese), the recent economic slow-down, the continuing trend to off-shore manufacturing and the discourse of economic “rationalization” (i.e., downsizing), will bring un- and under employment to thousands of young Japanese workers.

But in 1993, unemployment was perceived by the Higashi-kujo organizers as a stigma attached to those who, by a lack of talent or upbringing, are not deserving of employment. And in fact, “under-employment” for many in Higashi-kujo did not mean that educated individuals had no jobs, but rather that they were forced to work at several part-time, low-wage jobs: jobs that others preferred not to do.

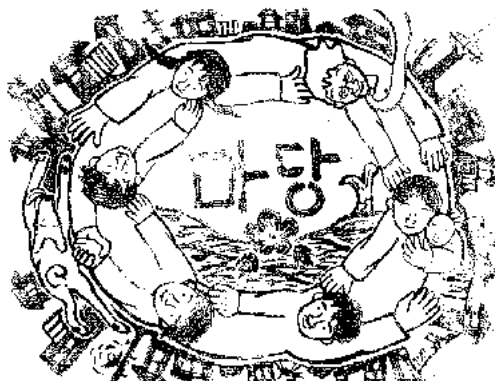
“To the extent that permanent residency in Japan might be said to be voluntary, these people are still following a divergent path from the normal Japanese life, for their way of life is dependent upon national/ethnic and generational factors. Mainly starting with the second generation, the conditions for those who do hold on to their ethnic pride get very difficult at times, they cannot profess their real names, they are inundated with negative images of Korea, and there are no school assemblies about their history, language, and culture.”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

Cross-cultural marriage was another topic that was out-of-bounds, but this time because it raised so many issues at the same time that the organizers felt a need to avoid the complexities of this topic. For a Korean woman, marrying a Japanese man solved many of the administrative problems of being Korean: the woman would acquire the man’s official residence and name, and the children would be Japanese. But for a Korean man marrying a Japanese woman, the result was a complex morass of identities, cross-tied by gendered and ethnic notions. Because of recent interpretations in the law, the children of such a marriage can claim Japanese citizenship. But the woman would give up her prenuptial family residence (*kosetsu*), and so the child would not have an official residence. If the Korean father’s residence was in the buraku, the child

would become a *buraku*-dwelling Japanese. The lack of symmetry between these situations has created a differential perception of Korean/Japanese marriage, and the entire topic is loaded with emotions that the Madang organizers did not wish to explore.

The original artwork for the second madang poster showed a circle of dancers of all ages with the Korean word “madang” in the middle, and scenes of Kyoto (notice the needle-like Kyoto tower on upper right). On the left, a dog joins the dancers, its tongue wagging as it happily circles. In the circle an ocean is surmounted by a Rose of Sharon (hyacinth) and the tail of a whale.



Virtually every artistic expression in the Madang was considered from the perspective of possible

mis- or counter-interpretation by the Japanese public. No expression that would admit easily to a stereotypical reading of “Koreanness” in Japan was allowed. And so the resulting picture of “Koreanness” was self-constrained in ways that some of the organizers regretted, but had little success in providing alternatives. As this was the only opportunity to create a visible source for collective resident Korean identity in Kyoto, it was too precious to risk an outcome that might be easily dismissed. A simple, graphic example of the care with which the organizers vetted the contents of the festival to eliminate potential stereotyping arose with the design of the poster for the second Madang.

The original design showed a dog dancing (or running) with a circle of humans linked arm-in-arm in a

adang circle. This design was circulated at an organizing meeting, and one of the organizers said, “You know what they will say: ‘We’ll dance with the dog today and then eat him for dinner.’ We’ve got to get rid of the dog.”

The final poster for the second madang was carefully crafted to include Korean type and Japanese lettering. And the original artwork was modified: the dog was replaced by a seagull (“sea cat” in Japanese [*umineko*]). When I showed this to an audience of Korean specialists, they also noted that the hyacinth flower had been removed from the center. This is the flower that represents Korean royalty (as the chrysanthemum represents Japanese royalty). Also changed was Kyoto tower, replaced by a construction crane.



There was laughter at this observation, but it was not happy laughter. Another organizer pulled me aside. “You see, in Korea, dog is a seasonal food, eaten for health

reasons, just as Kyoto people eat eel. And so the Japanese call us ‘Dog eaters.’ But here in Higashi-kujo we don’t eat dogs.”

Here is the same artwork done large to cover the school building at the madang.
Photo by author



Because the group was raised in Kyoto, the idea of eating dogs was as foreign to them as it was to their non-Korean

neighbors, but they knew it was a common practice on the Peninsula. And so this hailing of them as “dog eaters” affirmed and denied their claim to Korean-ness.

The care with which the organizers crafted the content of the festival was directed, in part, to deny a stereotypical Japanese response. But despite an obvious need to maintain civil relationships with school and neighborhood organizations outside of the *buraku* areas, there was never any discussion on reducing the amount or the volume of drumming at the event. The Madang was and is performed at a decibel level that few events¹ in Japan can match.

Arts meetings

“Bakhtin’s recovery of linguistic heterogeneity extends beyond sociolinguistics into the realm of social dialectics. Dialogism, in this sense, not only relativizes the universal claim of being the norm but also rescues the people whose voice has been silenced due to their non-normative “low” language, the language of the margin. As such, *madang guk* is a language which represents the life of the oppressed.”
(Choi 1993, 93)

The Uribunken Center is a small, one-story, two-room building tucked in between commercial properties on a narrow lane just south of Kyoto Station. Behind the building is an open space of concrete and asphalt, and a littering of broken glass, just big enough to paint a garage-door sized sign in, or to barbecue some meat for a dozen or so volunteers. Operated by resident Koreans as an office to distribute information about their various social and political actions, the building became the central site of *madang* activities. It was here that a group of volunteers met to write the play for the second Higashi-kujo Madang.

1. I have been to summer fireworks (hanabi) festivals which were as sonically impressive as they were visually. Some of the explosions in these events are not visual at all, but merely black explosions that shake the earth, and press against your face and clothing.

“What is madang *geki* [drama]?...They say that the first time the term ‘madang drama’ was used was at...Seoul University in 1976.” (Yan 1988, v)

The first meeting of the *madang geki-in* (the committee that would write the play) ended in discord and consternation, and an agreed time for the second meeting. The feelings of artistic frustration with the first year’s play, which had followed the pastoral allegorical mode of *madang guk* in Korea, had led many of the committee members to look to an alternative mode, one that used realism (*rearuizumu*), and that connected directly to circumstances within Higashi-kujo.

The poster for the 4th Higashi-kujo Madang shows how the event is moving away from older, pre-existing images of Korean cultural forms to the creation of its own “look.”
From the Higashi-kujo Website

Yan Mingee, a published authority on Korean



Madang, a long-time Han-Madang volunteer, and a director of the first year’s Higashi-kujo Madang geki,

argued that the play should still fit into a recognizable madang play genre. But here he was more concerned about the interaction between the players and the audience than about the setting of the play.

The key to the madang play, he asserted, was that

The importation of Korean student protest theater (*madang guk*) into Japan included its counter-colonial position on modernization and urbanization in Korea. The processes of urbanization were seen to include, at their core, metropolitan practices and desires that ignored and debased (or dis-embedded) local, small-scale social practices in favor of those imported from the U.S. and Japan. And the availability of cheap goods and commodities on the international market jeopardized the livelihoods the farmer and the artisan, and worked against organized labor. But madang plays did not (as Japanese television announced, and as Yan [1988, and personal communication] asserts) start in villages, but rather on university campuses.



it abolished the distance between the audience and the players. In this he was making a distinction between “drama” as a spectacle, and madang drama as something else, as a particular space between actors and the audience. “In traditional folk drama in our country [Korea], the actors and the onlookers were not divided.” (Yan 1988, ix). The result, he claims is that voluntary participation by audiences creates a theater that is a different sort of art than Western theater. This difference between madang theatre and western theater was also noted by Choi (1993):

“The dramaturgy and aesthetics of *madang guk* animate this counter-memory. *Madang guk* reaches beyond the Aristotelian tradition in Western drama, which purports to create an illusion and separates the play from its audience, and even beyond Brechtian theater, in which the spectators are informed of the theater’s double yet delegate analytic power to the actors. *Madang guk* rather pos-

its itself as a rehearsal of revolution, as Augusto Boal has suggested (91-92)."

"With two secret service men stationed in a car across from his home, Hwang Sok-yong told me that *madang* theatre is the only kind of political theatre that is able to evade censorship because it is performed underground. The South Korean news media are systematically censored and most newspapers actually have a Korean Central Intelligence agent in their editorial offices. 'Everything that goes into the newspaper has to pass through his hands. Censors are everywhere. There is a so-called Cultural Officer in City Hall who controls all scenarios for theatre performances. All scripts have to be submitted to him first.' Madang¹ is the public mouthpiece of the people's cultural movement and its performances are often linked with political demonstrations."

[\(Erven 1992, 104-105\)](#)

Higashi-kujo's madang drama also connects this form of "staged" drama with the everyday "drama" of the street. And indeed, the three "acts" in the second Higashi-kujo Madang all take the street as their point of departure. As a "rehearsal" for an everyday life that counters the lifestyle that Koreans in Kyoto can only partially acquire, but not control, the Madang drama twists the mundane world into a self-parody that reveals its hidden currents.

Young Korean men, denied access to Japan's high-school tournament, still fantasize about hitting the winning run in the ninth inning. Young Korean women, doubly disconnected from the job market, dream of marriage to a salaryman, and life on the up-scale side of the tracks. These dreams are shared with the Japanese majority, but access to their possible realization is not. A fuller recognition of this imbalance in lifestyle resources was the thematic thread that tied together the three acts in the second year madang drama.

Before new dreams can be imagined, the old dreams need to be discarded (devalued, demystified). The first step in discarding an old dream is to appropriate it discursively. This is the beginning of therapy.

-
1. The ongoing political conditions on the Peninsula (both North and South), the long period of separation from the Peninsula with the concomitant loss of Korean language ability, and the attachment to life in Kyoto despite a lack of attachment to "Kyoto" itself were the main reasons why the Higashi-kujo Madang exhibited little nostalgia for a return to a Korean "homeland." But the political conditions in Kyoto also precluded the first Madang from becoming a political demonstration.

The next step is to reevaluate other ideas, notions that are external to the old dreams. Here the need arises for novelty, for invention and improvisation. Instead of substituting another variety of the same old dreams (provided by the market-state) this dramatization looks to local resources, to friendship and to the *madang* itself as a practice, to inform new dreams.

“The opinions of JCIL (Japan Center for Independent Living) members differ person by person. One person described his impression [to me] like this: ‘why is that even though I participate in the meeting, I have the feeling like there are words, expressions, and circumstances that are understood by everyone [else], but when we describe our sense [of the situation], because it is said by a handicapped person, they don’t listen, and once it is said, [the room] acquires a tension, like the mood that comes about when a stranger speaks.’ I have to think that if it [the situation] is like this for the Madang Executive Committee, what can I say about the area (of Higashi-kujo) as a whole?”

Higashi-kujo Executive Committee Member.

But the *madang* is itself still tied to the circumstances of its founding. The *madang* has not yet become a site where counter-life-styles are assembled. It promotes a positive relationship to the locale, and an awareness of how inexpensive—and how valuable—are kindness and companionship. It offers counter memories that recode the official stories in the very site where the latter are acquired (the national school). But if the final goal is not to make local poverty more palatable, the *madang* must move from parody to urban planning. Let’s look now at the event itself.

I want the reader to remember here that this is an event in its own creative infancy. At this time, the organizers are at least as concerned with establishing the event in the neighborhood without tripping any of the signals that would lead the event to an early oblivion (e.g., by privileging a single political position within the event). Once the event has found its legs, once it has created the institutional inroads that would make it more difficult for the city to refuse to cooperate, the expressive possibilities should open up. Also, the experience of being in the event is too new for it to

have informed the life-styles of its participants. It is only after five or more years that the lessons and the skills of doing the event begin to show their effects within the event and within the lives of those who are committed to it.

“Thank you for letting us participate in the 3rd Higashi-kujo Madang. Parents and children spent a pleasant day together. We could feel how everyone brought all of their emotions into this festival. We were surprised how very powerful a spirit there was, and that here was a place where people could meet and touch one another without consideration of national differences. Entering into this place together with friends was a wonderful experience....thank you so much!”

A Filipina/o participant
Daisankai higashi-kujo Madang Hokokushuu [3rd Higashi-kujo Madang Report] p.19.



I will be tracking the ongoing creation of this event over the next ten years. Already, there are

movements within the organization that show how it is acquiring more self assurance: the executive committee has been taken over by third generation resident Koreans and younger Japanese organizers, and the third Madang included a Philippine dance troupe under the label “*huuman karuchyaa baraitai guruupu*” [Human Cultural Variety Group].

At the same time, in 1994 the City, which had previously exhibited little enthusiasm for such events in South Kyoto, decided to sponsor a “Fureai Matsuri” [contact festival] in Minami-ku and to hold this on a weekend in October—in direct conflict with the timing of the Higashi-kujo Madang. Madang organizers were not invited to participate in the organization of this festival, which will use city monies and the neighborhood organizations to appropriate a street for a

day of entertainment, possibly with some Korean performers. One can only suspect that the City plans to push the Madang back into the *buraku*, by holding the cultural space (claiming to offer a multicultural event) and time (an October weekend) that the Madang had appropriated for its own use.

At some point in the future, the Madang will probably be asked to fold its event into the City's event, in the "spirit of cooperation." At this point the Madang would either give in and cease to be an occasion where counter-city/state expressions are possible, or it will face an increasingly hostile, City led opposition that probably will close out any use of school grounds.

There are occasional Madang events staged in a small park in the *buraku* area of Higashi-kujo. The one I attended, called a Toitsu (*unity*) Madang was much different in its mood from the Higashi-kujo Madang. It was an entirely Korean event, much smaller in size and number of participants, with alcohol on sale, and a street theatre that was more directly aimed at a counter-capitalist topic. The video on the left (speeded up to save space) shows the main character, (cross)dressed as Uncle Sam, bringing peace and cheap rice to Korea, with the help of capitalist businessmen from Japan. The local citizen (dressed in a yellow shirt with the word *bunmin* (civilian) written on it, is pulled between the glitter of Uncle Sam's promises, and the money dangled in front of him by the businessmen.

At that point, the Madang will have to go under-



ground—staging its events in various places without prior publicity. Or it will simply retreat back into the *buraku* areas where the city has little interest in competing with its expressions, but where it will have little exposure within the larger public arena. And so, during these first years, the Madang organizers are extremely careful about maintaining a positive relationship with as many local residents as possible.

This need to please all the people all of the time results in self-censorship of potentially divisive content, and so, in a sense, the City has already asserted its power to monitor and moderate counter expressions within the City. But still the organizers and participating artists can feel the potential opening that the madang—and only the madang—provides in Kyoto. It is an event that is too important to risk a counter-counter response, but it is also an event too democratic to close out artistic expressions that will run

against the discourses of the state in Kyoto.

the event

The evening before the first Higashi-kujo madang, the pre-parade ended up at the Avanti building, where they appropriated the building's "public" circulation space for an impromptu concert. This appropriation of a public space by the madang marked the only time in two and a half years that I witnessed a public space in Kyoto being taken by a public group without prior permission/management by the city. The next year the group did not repeat¹ this tactic, although it might return in future years.

The madang officially starts the day before.



-
1. One of the general tactics of the "Madang game" is to not repeat its appropriations as an annual event. It moves its location between four school yards, and it maps out different routes for its parade. In the second year, the parade did attract police attention, and it was followed and warned not to interrupt traffic.

Once the parade had acquired the space in front of the Avanti Building, they created a concert that attracted the attention of many who happened to be passing through this circulation space. But mostly they played for themselves, reclaiming this space that had been a part of Higashi-kujo long before it was developed as a shopping center convenient to the Shinkansen (bullet train) station across the street. Before the Shinkansen station was constructed (through the forced removal of many Koreans from apartments and houses that were destroyed to make room for this) a wall removed the view of Higashi-kujo from passengers at the station.

A parade of drummers wends its way through the



neighborhood announcing the next day event. The first year, this parade began at the public housing block and ended at the small circulation plaza on the north side of the Avanti Building, adjacent to Kyoto Station. Here, without prior permission, the drummers set up in a circle for an impromptu concert.

“Areas in the southern part of the city where urbanization is to be actively sought hereafter will be considered as ‘region of concentration of new urban functions’.”
Outline of the New Master Plan of Kyoto City 1993.

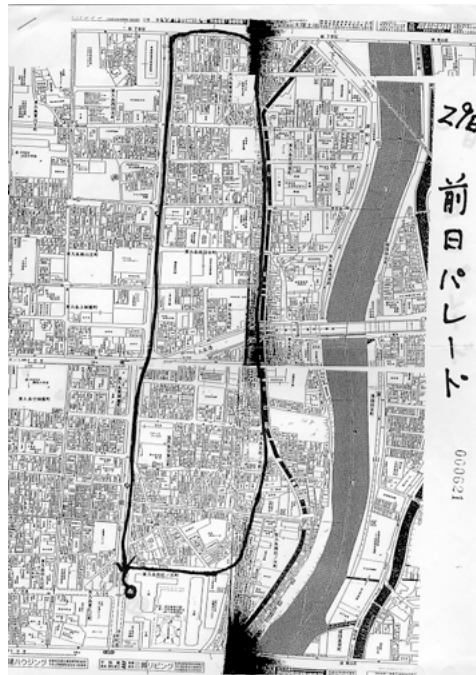
While other parts of the city are slated for upscale residential and commercial use, Higashi-kujo’s future is a “concentration of new urban functions” which primarily means the following: industrial zoning and arterial road widening.

The importance of this appropriation of a “public” space as a right of the festival community was not so much discussed, as it was assumed. “They don’t hire from Higashi-kujo” one organizer told me, speaking about the management of this department store. The store literally turns its back on Higashi-kujo, with its only entrances toward the North, it faces the station and is connected to the station through an underground pedestrian walkway. It was a clear target as a destination for their parade. Besides, it provided the only open public space of any size in the area.

The Higashi-kujo Madang—the event

—265—

Here is the map drawn by the organizers for the route of the second prior-day parade.



The second year, the parade was held during the day, to encourage participation by younger children, and it made a circle from the same starting point (Matsunoki Machi Danchi public housing). The prior-

day parade is echoed on the day of the Madang, as the han-madang drumming group parades to the Madang site, arriving to announce the opening of the event. Meanwhile, at the site, from early morning, food stalls, and sound systems, and other fixtures of the event are have been prepared, with the main tents being set up the night before.

Artwork

The artwork committee has the task of creating an alternative space from a Japanese school yard. This is both a task of masking the yard's disciplinary ambience with more playful motifs, and of creating visually Korean artwork to symbolize the appropriation of the space by a non- “We Japanese” cultural event.

The artwork is provided in three scales: murals that drape over large surfaces, displays that mark

The Higashi-kujo Madang—the event

—266—

areas, and costumes and small art objects.

The mural art at the first madang reflected an attachment to Korean madang performance. Here we see a display of a Korean madang, with drummers and masked characters. Other elements include Korean carved gate posts and the figure of a tiger. The tiger, used allegorically to represent the threat of oppression and the use of violence, can symbolize arbitrary authorities of any sort: from pre-colonial royalty, to colonial overseers, to post-colonial military governments.

photo by Anjali



The mural art is the main focus of the art committee, as it requires the most

labor, and as it provides the main symbolic media for the event.

The mural artist would work off a small color drawing of the art piece.

photo by Anjali



Mural painting was accomplished by volunteers who would show up at certain times, giving as much time as they could

(sometimes their lunch break, other times a break between jobs).

The Higashi-kujo Madang—the event

—267—

This mural depicts a utopian vision of people and animals dancing together. When I asked the artists if this was a vision of the future, or of the past, he said “both: it is our hope and our Korean heritage.”
Photo by author



The second Madang contained a mural that departed

from a Korean motif in order to symbolize an aspect of Kyoto life that Higashi-kujo residents rate as strongly imbedded of their neighborhood and life: the nearby Kamo river. In part, this is because many Koreans live in 40banchi, an illegal residential neighborhood within the flood-plain of the Kamo.

The second Madang produced a large mural depicting the relationship between the Higashi-kujo



community and the Kamo River, which defines the eastern edge of this district. [Photo by author]

Originally, the mural was going to include the wide variety of objects that are found in the Kamo (which gets more than its share of casual dumping, from old appliances and bicycles to the detris of MacDonalds and empty Coke cans).

The Higashi-kujo Madang—the event

—268—

Here we see uses of the Kamo that are no longer present: cloth dyers washing their products, women doing laundry.



But here too, “realism” gave way to a desire to promote the positive, and to relate to a history of use. And while the river in the mural teems with fish,

fishing in the Kamo is today limited to children and egrets pouncing on minnows in the shallows. Still the Kamo plays a large role not only in the imagination and daily life of Higashi-kujo, but in Kyoto, as its river-course provides the city with its largest public open areas.

City-run fairs use the built-up riparian works north of 4th street (Shijo).
photo by author



The city uses its up-town (and up-stream) river property as a site for annual

fairs. High-school and college students frequent the river as a place to meet and drink, and couples find it a romantic spot to sit together. In the summer, children wade in its ankle-deep coolness, netting fry and searching for anything that moves.

The Higashi-kujo Madang—the event

—269—

Playing music while lounging by the Kamo is one of the advantages that this river brings to a city where house construction does not provide sound proofing. Up toward Kyoto University, the entire band will be found on the river banks practicing together or alone.

Photo by author



But the Kamo is also a reminder of the outsider history of Korean and other Japanese in Kyoto, for this river was for centuries the environs of actors,

beggars, and makers of bamboo artifacts and cloth dyers—occupations that were summed up by the term *kawaramono*: river people.

Down in this end of Kyoto, the river has not been

Look again at this bit of video from Yomiuri Television. When they introduce Higashi-kujo, they start at the river and pan over to *Yonju banchi* before showing a street sign and the old grandmothers putting out laundry. The images are familiar visual signs of poverty and residential stigma.



acquired by the City as a quasi-park space. Here it becomes a neighborhood space, and very few people from outside of the area visit the river along this stretch.

The Higashi-kujo Madang—the event

The banks of the Kamo are not everywhere maintained by the City for recreation. They are also acquired as a residence, and they can become fatal, when the seasonal floods bring the river up from its usual trickle to a cascading fury. Those who live in the 40banchi area below Kujo (9th Street) are alternately endangered by flood and fire, as the cold winters and a lack of adequate insulation and electrical safeguards make the illegal dwellings dangerous to keep warm. These shots, taken on the evening of the 40banchi *natsu matsuri* (summer festival), show the intimate relationship between this neighborhood and the Kamo River.



—270—

There are those who claim that the pebble gardens of Kyoto's Zen temples were once the river gardens of *kawaramono* (which seems to be only a convenient notion, without much evidence). But the use of the river for pleasure goes back many centuries. One of Kyoto's still-active pleasure districts (now a restaurant/bar district), Pontocho abuts the Kamo. And the origins of Kabuki theatre have been traced to the theatrics of women actors who did shows on the riverbanks.

The symbolic appropriation of the Kamo River as a site of local Korean culture recodes the river, for which the city has made its own claims. And the use of this as monumental art project also displaces the Korean symbolism that dominated the first

madang. Indeed, the second madang had opened a new face for this event: bringing the struggle back home—to Kyoto.

photography

“I can’t say I hate them, but you know those places that are only souvenir shops (*miyage noya san*) mainly for the school excursion [trade]? Their only meaning is sightseeing. People come from schools in groups and buy souvenir trinkets. I don’t even consider walking in those places. ...I don’t go to the festivals [in Kyoto]. Just once to Gion Matsuri, I came when I was a college student in Kobe.since [Higashi-kujo] is a place that nobody knows about, people here want to make lots of friends. Of course this is the place where I want to live.”
Higashi-kujo Madang organizer,
Resident Korean.

My own contribution to the 2nd Higashi-kujo Madang was to coordinate a day-long photography shoot, which I called “Higashi-kujo no Ima.” The project grew out of my own frustration in acquiring information about the emotional attachments to place that local residents made or did not make to places in Kyoto. While I was constantly hearing about “Higashi-kujo” as a place, I was not having much luck finding out what locations, or what spatial attributes of Higashi-kujo gave it its “placeness.” What my interviews did show was a widespread disdain for Kyoto’s tourist locales and events, and a singular positive valuation on social life in Higashi-kujo.

“Higashi-kujo isn’t just a place,” one Madang organizer (a Japanese person living in a *buraku* area) said to me. “The name itself is a symbol of discrimination.” He wanted to be sure that the words “Higashi-kujo” stayed prominent in the Madang’s title. “Why is there no ‘Kujo-sushi’?” One person asked me. “Every other [numbered] street in Kyoto has a sushi bar [named for it], but not Kujo.” The picaresque quality of the neighborhood—its notorious outsider image—is played up in these conversations. But talking about and living in a neighborhood are not the same. I wanted to know where the emotionality that came out in their conversation found locations in the neighborhood.

“You did a good job,” one of the Madang organizers says to me.
“It’s done!” I reply.
“It’s done, really.”
“The photos are all beautiful and interesting.” I say.
“I’m glad...”

The photo exhibit took up one side of the school yard. The next year there were two photo exhibits: one was a history of 50 years of Higashi-kujo, and the other was a tribute to Tabata Hideomi, a Madang “pioneer” who died the year before. This use of photography to document the locale increases the discursive availability of spatial features of Higashi-kujo for its residents.

And so I devised a simple project: with a gener-



ous donation of twenty panorama cameras by the Pix Panorama Camera Corporation, I was able to supply cameras to individuals in the region.



Tabata Hideomi was a Madang organizer who was also a quadriplegic. He was active in the Madang drama committee, and a member of the working committee. Every evening he returned to his room on an upper floor of the

Matsunokimachi *danchi* (public housing) where a helper (or friends) would arrange his futon bed so that he could sleep for the night. He had no overnight help (there was no money for 24 hour care), and once in bed, he had no way of signalling anyone. His radio was set for a station that would sign on in the early morning, and he would wait until his day helper arrived. One night, very late, after drinking together, I helped to get him into bed. When another friend and I left, we turned out the lights and shut the door behind us. At that moment I sensed a bit of the terrifying isolation that Tabata-san must have felt every night. One morning, the year after I returned to California, his day helper arrived and found him dead. He died alone in his dark room. But he died surrounded by the thoughts and the memories of hundreds of people in Higashi-kujo. In this photo from his work in the Higashi-kujo no Ima project he showed how he prepared for sleep.

I distributed these through meetings of the Higashi-kujo Madang organizing committees, and also through the 40Banchi Kodomo no Kai (Children's Club). The instructions I gave were simple: photograph what you like and do not like about the neighborhood, or what seems to be most representative of "Higashi-kujo," of your everyday life. On one September day, more than 600 photographs were taken, and then 32 were chosen (by the photographers) to be exhibited at the Madang. ([go to photo exhibit](#))

What emerged from this experiment was a clearer picture of the spatial topography of the district. The noted physical features of the area included its small lanes (*roji*) which were fondly remembered, and its many fences which were greatly abhorred. The lanes provide a safe environment (no cars) for children, and a shared space for adults to meet and converse.

The pre-teen photographer, a resident of 40banchi took this photo of the area because of all the



fences. She hates the fences, she said. And they are everywhere.

A street shot in the evening in Higashi-kujo. Photos such as this display qualities of the area that



inform the connections that the residents make to the neighborhood, and they are scenes that are not easily available to outsiders. Here a couple of friends are “hanging out.”

The content of the photos ranged from close-up shots of stuffed animals, to distant shots of the entire district. But most of them included people in places, in the street, in stores and restaurants, and in the housing blocks that dominate the neighborhood.

masks

Masks, which were borrowed by Korean madang-gut (madang geki) from shamanic rituals, and from other theatrical genres that used masks in Korea, became decorative in their translation to Kyoto’s madang. In other Japanese madang (such as the Kobe madang in Nagata ku), the masks and their roles are maintained in the performance of now-traditional madang geki. So the use of masks in Japan can have differential referents to an earlier Korean mode of masking.

Photo by Anjali



Masks were also made by volunteers, from paper maché and tempera paints. The masks were modeled after a collection of Korean masks in a large book with color plates. But the specific meanings that originally attached to the masks were not consciously maintained. Here was an instance when looking “Korean” (i.e., instead of “Japanese”) provided enough of a meaning for a practice. This truncated importation of

festival materials signals the lack of traditionalism (and of tradition as providing meaningful information) and an awareness of a need to re-place Japanese festival activities with others.

This need to accomplish an artistic “critical mass” of expressions was not discursively available to the organizers, but was addressed through multiple inputs into when a threshold amount of artwork and music and drama was attained. And in large part, this perception of where a festival gained its look and feel of festivity, was gained through the experiences of Japanese festivals (public and school) in Kyoto.

Music

Children from the Catholic-run preschool in Higashi-kujo, Hope House (*kibou no ie*), show their colorful Korean costumes, and dance in a courtly style to drums. While their parents dress in a peasant style dress, the style of costume is not provided with a consistent social message. There is little to suggest a straight-line socialist bent to the event.

The music of the madang is drumming. Loud,



louder, and loudest: these are the three volumes in which it is available. Outside at the madang the drumming is noisy. Inside, during rehearsals, it becomes philharmonic. The drumming practice that we've already listened to ([GOTO: Kamo river drumming practice](#))

represents the more accomplished playing of long-time Han-madang members. At the madang these are joined by as many volunteers as the organizers can find drums for.

The drumming is most intense when the entire ensemble gathers for a grand circling *punmaru* (“farmer’s music”) performance. At this time the entire open area becomes a dancing ground. The actual movements have been choreographed at a



great dress rehearsal at the gymnasium of Kyoto’s South Korean high school (one of only two such high schools in Japan).

[PLAY Samul Nori Music](#)

Other Korean drumming at the Madang included *samul nori*: a percussion quartet that has become quite popular in Korea as a modern variant of a traditional folk ensemble. Samul nori uses two types of drum, a gong, and a hand-held cymbal to create a pattern of rhythms and syncopation that uses changes in tempo and volume to create an accelerating effect that is

The performance of a taiko drum band created a visible “Japanese” presence in an event that is dominated by Korean coded practices.

emotionally charged.

As the years advance and people in the area begin



to have a multi-year experience with such voluntary performances, the coordination of this part of the event should get easier. But in the first two years, the rehearsals (and the performances) failed to meet the aesthetic designs¹ of the organizers.

1. This disenchantment with the products of amateur art production is one of the effects of spectacular art production either by the state or the market.

The Higashi-kujo Madang—masks

—278—

[LISTEN TO THE MADANG SONG](#)

“Madang, Madang, Madang,
at last its our Madang.
Let’s come and make the Madang.
We’ve gathered everybody’s
dreams,

Higashi-kujo is full of smiles!”

The chorus to the madang theme
song. **AT RIGHT:**

“Tap the cymbals;

beat the drum;

strike the chango (hourglass
drum);

bang the gong...” **NOT In Video:**

“everyone has come to hear,
Bodies and hearts dancing...”

The ‘Pore Pore band’ provided
another musical interlude at the
Second Higashi-kujo Madang.



The Madang also
created its own
theme song
entitled
“Higashi-kujo
Madang,” which
was sung several
times at the first
and second

Madang. The song has a bright melody, and is played
as a pop tune. It was made to dance to.

Besides Korean drumming, there were many



other musical moments. The central microphone was
rarely silent, and the central open space was occupied
in sequence by several musical groups. A group
formed by members of the Japan Center for Indepen-
dent Living played a kind of inspired Jazz, and a local
Taiko drum group also showed how Japanese drum-
ming sounded.

participation by physically challenged individuals

Higashi-kujo has a relatively large number of individuals with various physical difficulties, due to chronic, and sometimes congenital physical problems. The reasons for this population in Higashi-kujo are multiple: the most obvious being the presence of low-income housing. Other reasons may have to do with older histories of prejudice against those with physical characteristics that made them distinctly different—and the marking of difference in terms of distance away from a shared, genetic, Japaneseness¹. I would be very interested in seeing how the discourse on genetic disease was articulated in Pre-War Japan.

-
1. I do not, at this point have enough information to make a claim that connects the spatial aggregation of physical challenged individuals with *buraku* segregation or with the discourses of *nihonjinron*. But I would suggest that any discourse that begins with the nation as a single, pure blood-connected unit (and with a royal lineage as its physical trope) may also carry a concern about the presence of anomalies in this bloodline, a concern that might be discursified in terms of externality. Anomalies would derive from external impurities, and the response to anomaly would be to re-externalize the persons so marked, but physically segregating them.

Yabuki Fumitoshi is the Secretary general of the JCIL in Kyoto. In 1994 he was also a member of the Higashi-kujo Madang Executive Committee. He organized the “wheelchair course” corner of the Madang, where individuals could see for themselves how difficult it is to maneuver a wheelchair without ramps and adequate turn space.

Here I chat with him about the availability of wheelchair ramps on Kyoto’s public buses.

“[There are only] six,” he replies. “And there are a thousand buses.... It is inconvenient.... [And the reason for this is simply] money. It’s [one of those] ‘after due consideration’ matters. Out of this year’s consideration they decided there will soon [mamonaku] be nine lifts. At this rate it will only take 330 years [to fix the situation].”

But then the fear of physical disability, the dis-



crimination against those who are physically challenged, and the lack of public awareness of issues of physical access to modes of transportation and communication, and to public amenities, and to jobs, is found in many places outside of Japan. The Japan Center for Independent Living in Kyoto, like its counterparts in other cities (including Berkeley, California where this movement began), can list a variety of issues that are of everyday import to its members, all of which lack popular understanding, political support, and effective resolution. The Higashi-kujo Madang is an event where physically challenged individuals make contributions to and participate in all of the main activities: music, dance, theatre, food (selling and eating); and they also find a space to relate directly with others and to respond to political inaction and popular misperceptions about their circumstances.

Cultural activities

The afternoon was also filled with activities that were cultural presentations, and opportunities for participation by a variety of ages. There was an ongoing sale of Korean and festival foods: barbecued meats, cotton candy, fried noodles, Korean pancakes (*shijimi*: a batter of bean flour with many spices and french onions [*negi*] fried and served with a special sauce [a Korean variant on Tonkatsu sauce]), *tako yaki* (fried octopus “hushpuppies”), cakes and cookies, and of course, several varieties of homemade *kimchi* (Korean cabbage pickle), and juices and coffee—but no alcoholic beverages. The food stalls, and other stalls that sold Korean handicrafts, or books, or shoes, or other clothing, were run by local Higashi-kujo organizations¹ who paid a small fee for the space, and collected the proceeds as a way to raise money. Organizations of both North and South Koreans, church groups, school groups, Japanese *buraku* organizations: the list of groups operating the *demise* [stalls] showed the breadth of cooperation that the Madang organizers had assembled.

-
1. One of the complaints made by the neighborhood organization was the impact of the food and good sales on commercial enterprises in the neighborhood. This type of complaint, as far as I know, is not commonly made about Shinto or City-run festivals, although there the food stalls are mostly run by professionals from other cities who make a donation to the local Shrine. Many of the vendors at the Higashi-kujo Madang operate as non-profit organizations within local *buraku* areas, and so the moneys will go to benefit those living in *buraku* districts.

The Higashi-kujo Madang—Cultural activities

—282—

The signal food of a Korean event in Japan is *Yakiniku* (barbecued meat). And there was plenty of barbecue at the Madang.
Photo by author



The amount of money raised in this fashion was usually modest (a few hundred dollars US), but there was also an opportunity to network with other groups and to advertise the organization's operation and goals.

The problem of how to allow, and yet not

encourage, and avoid conflict between persons who wanted to offer political books and pamphlets was settled at an executive meeting by providing one large table without any payment, letting first-come first-served space, and encouraging cooperation between participants.

A variety of books about the Resident Korean situation in Japan, about the history of Koreans in Japan, and about other matters that are of political concern for residents in Higashi-kujo are sold at a table provided free—and unmonitored—by the organizers.

Many of these books are not readily available in



area bookstores (sometimes because of their small audience), and so the Madang creates an arena where marginalized ideas can be brought to public view. Disputatious discussions were not encouraged at the madang, as this space was described as a politically neutral ground—a de-politicized zone—open to all ideas, but not available to an attempt to monopolize the space of discussion. There was also few announcements with any political content—these few were reserved to applaud the cooperation of various institutions, including the City and the regional neighborhood associations, and the PTA, and the school, and its principal, etc.

making rope

Woman's voice on the video:

“...I can't do this!”

“...It's a part of the rural lifestyle.”

“...Lots of people can't do this now.”

In a matter of minutes contestants wove ropes several meters long using only their hands and straw. This is a reminder too of the rapid pace of urbanization in Japan and Korea, and the differences in memories and lifestyle skills between older members of the community and its young adults.

One of the activities that fascinated many people



at the event was a contest where individuals made ropes from straw. This skill, which harkens back to an agricultural past in the lives of many older, first-generation resident Koreans.

There is no sport in Japan that is more coded as uniquely and even sacrally “Japanese” than sumo wrestling. The seasonal grand sumo matches are broadcast only on state television, and employ a panoply of religious symbolism. That Koreans do sumo differently, and that their sumo may be as old a practice as the Japanese form, is a feature of Korean society and history that many Japanese may not be aware of, or may not choose to accept. But then, I have spoken to Japanese who tell me how they wept when a foreigner was made grand champion.

Other activities, such as a great tug-o-war, were



designed to include as many people as possible. While

other activities were included to show Korean variants on practices that are locally coded as “real-Japanese:” such as Sumo Wrestling (*ssirum* in Korean) and karaoke.

The standing teetertotter dance/jump is a Korean practice (called *noruteigi* in Kyoto Korean) performed by women only. The vertiginous thrills of this were apparently joined by the view that the height provided over the walls of compounds where women were sequestered in pre-modern Korea.

Still other activities highlighted Korean cultural



practices with marked cultural value: such as Taekwondo martial arts, and the sight of two women jumping in turns on a seesaw.

The penultimate event at the Madang was the Madang drama, and so let’s turn now to this, the centerpiece of the entire event.

the madang drama

The madang drama was finally cobbled together as a three-act tragic comedy about national identity and local life-styles.

The madang drama begins with a dance that defines the circular stage area.

The three acts were evocative of the main problematics of life in Higashi-kujo: living in a place no one else wants to live in; living in a time when generation gaps are profound; living with an identity that must be

hidden when dealing with the world outside. The play also featured some of the gendered aspects of these situations, although it purposely avoided the issue of marriage. It also avoided issues that were exclusive to only Japanese *buraku* dwellers or to resident Koreans. Specific legal issues, and specific complaints against government organizations were not included. The play was political without engaging in a confrontational politics.



the play begins...

The *madang geki* begins when the players define the circle by dancing around this slowly. The dance marks out the time and the space of the drama. This dance also introduces all of the players that will be participating in the drama. The curtain between the players and the audience is opened both up (announcing a beginning) and out (starting a player-audience interaction that will last throughout the drama).

Madang One: places, homes, and kitchens

“The issues before my grandchildren today are the very same issues we faced so long ago. Nothing has changed. Perhaps nothing will change. That is what is so difficult: watching the young face the same problems we have worked so hard to resolve....The Japanese government has offered us hope so many times without result. We have no hope left.”
 First generation Korean grandmother. (in her late sixties, she still does house cleaning)

The first *madang geki* brings in a character whose role is to represent the aging, first generation Korean resident, or the aging *buraku* dweller. The main theme is that of the desires of those who have been left behind, or tossed aside by decades of change that have not touched Minami-district’s Higashi-kujo area.

For the sadness of the elderly in this area, a sadness that I noted in several conversations, is the sadness of waiting for promises that never seem to happen. Every time a problematic situation comes to an apparent closure, the results are disappointing as they are managed to reduce their effects on existing priorities. For example, for many years, resident Koreans have protested the practice of fingerprinting¹ that the Japanese Government insists upon as a part of the registration of all foreign nationals (but largely of Koreans). Finally, after years of unsuccessful court challenges, mass refusals and the potential for international attention if refusers were jailed or deported convinced the Japanese government to compromise and to not keep fingerprinting those Koreans who had previously gained permanent residency in Japan. But then the Koreans learned that the Government had computerized archives of their fingerprints, and had no need to fingerprint them again. And so a new

-
1. The fingerprinting dispute is at the center a dispute over the status of resident Koreans as special community in Japan, a community made special by the history of colonization and enslavement during the War. The act of fingerprinting, which is seen by many Koreans as a way of identifying them as criminals, also marks the continuation of pre-War police control over the community (even though the fingerprinting takes place at the district City office). The mark of the fingerprint is appropriated by resident Koreans as a symbol of their discrimination, and also as a marker of official sanctioning of this discrimination.

struggle has started to get the government to destroy these existing records¹.

At the same time, there is a sadness of watching affluence touch so many others, while knowing it will never find its way to Higashi-kujo. Kyoto is not at or near the center of Japan's Post-War economic/cultural efflorescence—that is Tokyo's place—and the stories of life before, during, and after the war in Kyoto, by Koreans and Japanese alike, are often stories anchored to a common, desperate poverty. Times were bad for many, and very bad, in particular, for Koreans in Higashi-kujo. What money was to be had in the decade after the war was made on the black market² in rice and other goods. But mostly families did what they still do. They work as hard as they can for what little they get. In the meantime, other parts of Kyoto, particularly the northern reaches and suburbs, have become up-scale middle-class neighborhoods, where the effects of economic growth become visible in real estate and consumer goods (automobiles, fashions, etc.).

In this act of the *madang geki*, two women happen to meet an elderly woman on the street, a woman

-
1. But then the record of Japanese Government agencies destroying records because of outside pressure is not clear. Apparently, American Occupation officials ordered the destruction of the lists of *buraku* locations, and these were ceremoniously destroyed. But later, copies surfaced, and these were somehow copied and quietly distributed to corporations and other institutions. It is perhaps more difficult to ensure institutional forgetting as it is to demand institutional reform.
 2. And Higashi-kujo, as a space abandoned to its own fates, was also a place where black-market activities were more possible. Its proximity to all of the train lines and to the river enhanced the possibilities.

who appears to be lost. But she is not lost in space, but rather in time. She is looking through a chain-link fence at her old house, on the other side of an abandoned urban lot, where grass grows deep and wild.

The younger women recognize this old woman as the person who used to deliver rice on her bicycle.

They engage her in conversation.

“Look, how tall the grass grows...”the young woman remarks, pointing to an abandoned lot. “and look over here, there’s a big sign. (reading) ‘Let’s beautify South Kyoto.’ “Well, how about that!”



Apart from some vestigial Korean conversation markers, even the old woman speaks in Japanese. The language of her childhood and young adult years has been left behind in her decades of residence in Kyoto, as she has been left behind by her children.

“Look,” one of the young women says, “how tall the grass grows here.” Stepping up to the fence, she reads a large sign in a nearby building: “Let’s beautify South Kyoto.”

“How about that!” She exclaims. The erection of signs like this is the only visible effort that the city has made toward this goal.

The actual long-range plans of the city include increasing industrialization of the south side (Minami-ku) as one way to preserve the non-industrial character of the central and northern areas. But again, one can suspect that *buraku* boundaries would play a part in the location of new industries (and their hiring practices).

The last major south-side construction was the erecting of the Avanti department store and building across the street from the *shinkansen* (“bullet-train”) station. This building was created on the site of the main bus terminal, and still serves that function. Several of the madang members complained that they and their friends could not find jobs in this building.

The old woman looks out at the shacks that line

Empty lots in Higashi-kujo are usually fenced off to prevent squatters from building illegal houses.

©1994 *Higashi-kujo no Ima*



the narrow lane where she lives. Her daughter has

The old woman (“*harumoni*” in Korean) remembers the wonders of her daughter’s house... a house outside of Higashi-kujo.

married a Japanese man, and moved away¹.

Korean and buraku women can leave their families—and their lack of social standing— behind them, by marrying outside the neighborhood, and thus acquiring a different name and official residence. Young men in Higashi-kujo have expressed their envy of this gender-determined escape route. This escape is often total, the daughter leaves and severs connections that might reconnect her former stigma to her new situation. But this severing of ties with the old identity does not necessary succeed in Kyoto, and forming new ties to new neighborhoods can be very difficult. A Korean woman I spoke with who lives in another part of Kyoto said that her loneliness was the payment for her children’s future happiness. But in this it is also the grandparents who suffer from the distance created between them and their children and grandchildren.

-
1. Although the *madang geki* did not focus on the issue of intermarriage, which is perhaps the most widely felt issue among area families, this issue showed through in the plots of the play. Both the engendering role expectations and the gendered job market in Kyoto are displayed in the drama. However, this display is not given a reflexive critique, and so we can point to gender domination as one of the practices in Higashi-kujo that would deserve more attention for the Madang drama to be both “realistic” and self-critical

Dreaming of the “System Kitchen” where everything works at the touch of a button... What the television shows and the catalogues display are dreams made real in plastic and wood. But where the household is not capable of acquiring these fantasy objects, they still remain dreams. “You push a button and water comes out (of the toilet),” the old woman exclaims, pointing to her derriere. The younger women sigh. The auto-bidet on the heated toilet keeps Japan at the forefront of lavatory science, but only a few can afford it.

It is the house of the daughter that the old



woman is thinking about, a place so far away, and to which she is not regularly welcomed. In that house there are modern appliances that seem to be marvels to the old woman. The toilet has a built-in bidet. In the kitchen there is hot and cold water at the push of a button, and the heat pump keeps the house warm in the winter and cooler than an electric fan in the summer. Their description of the labor-saving devices of the “system kitchen” brings into relief both the unnecessary extravagance of these consumer items, and their fetishized commodity values for those who cannot afford them.

The old woman's wonderment is shared by the younger women, who have seen these on television commercials. Their consumer desires are better informed, but no less intense.



Japanese household advertising often puts non-Japanese (and certainly non-Korean) faces into interiors that are borrowed from Europe or the US. The ad above is for utensils and containers for use with microwave ovens. *Verger 1994 catalog*

“System kitchen,” one of them exclaims when the old woman describes this magic house.

Later, in the second act, two other women will dream about finding a life somewhere else than Higashi-kujo. Dreams of escape, the desire for mobility, are commonly expressed in this neighborhood. As much as people find ways to cope with being here, they also know that their residence here can only be a negative factor in their children’s lifestyle hopes.

I invited a resident Korean woman who lives in the Kita-Shirakawa district of Kyoto to do her own “day-in-the-life” photo shoot. She agreed, but wished to remain anonymous. She is married to the owner of several pachinko parlors, and their house is opulent by Kyoto standards. They use a Japanese name, and their daughter goes to an expensive private school and to ballet lessons. Here she has taken a photo in an expensive Kita-Shirakawa food store, Daikokuya.



“Kita-shirakawa,” she exclaims. (This is Kyoto’s equivalent of

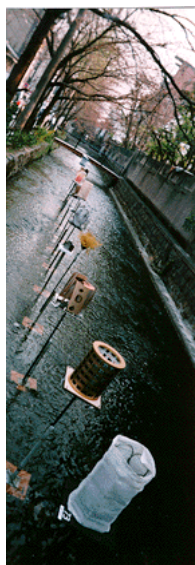
New York’s Upper-East Side district.) Hers is a dream of movement, of escape. But to get out of Higashi-kujo requires a husband with a position in a large, prominent company.

The Higashi-kujo Madang—the madang drama

—294—

Up river, when the Takaseigawa was allowed to run dry (see below) in Higashi-kujo, the City was sponsoring art exhibits in the rivercourse north of Shijo (4th street). Here where tourists play, the City has spent considerable funds to upgrade the pedestrian sidewalks, and to maintain a pristine urban watercourse. The neglect that residents of Minamiku (South Kyoto) including residents of Higashi-kujo feel, as an attitude that the city has toward its southern district, is only enhanced by the attention the City pays to selected regions, such as this.

Photo by author



“**Kabushiki kaisha** (a company listed on the Tokyo stock-exchange),” her friend agrees. Finding employment in one of the leading larger Japanese companies is difficult for any young person in Japan, and these difficulties increase for those with a social or economic disadvantage. Job discrimination is illegal in Kyoto, but enforcement is far from rigorous, and review by the courts is lengthy (several years) and not predictably satisfactory, as women in

Japan also have recently discovered.

At the end of the first madang geki the young women invite the *harumon* (grandmother) to come with them and eat, promising her that they will not serve her the mild, sweet Japanese sauce, but authentic, spicy, Korean-style sauce. Their dreams are not realized, but they can open up a space of consumption at a scale they can afford, and with a flavor they have acquired a taste for.

Madang Two: baseball dreams and summer days

The second madang play is a meandering street scene on a summer day. It begins with a pair of young men recounting an exploit at the Japanese national high-school baseball tournament, an annual event with a broad popular following. The young men come across the two young women (see above) who have been conversing about their plans to move away. Quite obviously, these two men do not qualify as

future husbands. The four are met by a man in a wheelchair being pushed by another man.

“The Takasei river goes by the Labor Center. It’s become a dump. To me its strange to think how easy it has become to toss things [there] without a second thought [*heiki de poi poi suteru*].

‘Why do they gotta toss it here?’ [*nande koko ni suterenneyaroo*] I ask you.”

Third generation Resident Korean

In 1994, for the first time in memory, the Takaseigawa canal was completely dry. For some residents, the bleakness of this empty canal was another symbol of discrimination (or, at least, of indifference) by the City.

They meet on the banks of the Takaseigawa, a waterway that was once a canal that carried goods to and from North Kyoto to the south towards Fushimi and Osaka. The canal boats have long since passed, but the canal remains the one feature of Higashi-kujo that physically and symbolically connects this area with the more posh northern districts.

In 1994, for the first time in memory, the city, facing a prolonged water shortage, decided to shunt the canal’s trickle of water back into the river at Gojo (5th street), well North of Kujo (9th street). For the first time the canal was completely dry.

photo ©1994 Higashi-kujo no ima.



Because there were no beneficial consequences to the City for shutting off the Takaseigawa water (the shunted water simply flowed south via the Kamo river) residents of Higashi-kujo, and of the *buraku* area south of Gojo complained to the city that they were being punished for a situation they did not cause and in a way that made no sense. After all, the City con-

tinued to allow the water to flow through the more affluent tourist quarters of Pontocho above Shi-jo (4th Street). And so, the Takaseigawa canal became another character in the *madang geki*.

For decades, the Takaseigawa was a working

Baseball dreams, summer glory at the High school national tournament.

The second *madang geki* shows us street life on a summer day in Higashi-kujo. Korean high-schools in Japan are not allowed to compete in this tournament. So these dreams of summer glory are made ironic by their administrative impossibility. So many avenues of access to social and cultural achievement in Japan are closed to resident Koreans simply by administrative fiat.



waterway, but its presence, in the sound of its slow running water, in the foliage it promoted, and in its annual crop of fireflies (*hotaru*), was also valuable as a local urban resource.

By turning off the summer water, the locals fear that the firefly larvae along its banks may not have survived. Whatever constructed urban ambiance there is in Higashi-kujo is linked to its connections with the Takaseigawa and the Kamo river. And the Kamo was also one main reason why Koreans lived in Kyoto before World War II: they were hired in large numbers to labor on the riparian works, cementing the banks against flood and erosion.



This Meiji era (turn of the century) photograph shows boats along the Takaseigawa... here on the great curve near Seventh Street.
From *Meiji Kyoto*

It is beside the Takaseigawa that the six characters of the second *madang geki* cross paths on a hot summer day. They know one another, and begin to plan to go somewhere together when an object in the water attracts their attention. Someone has dropped a wallet, and now all it takes is for one of the group to go in and retrieve it.

The entryway of the house of the Korean woman living in Kita-Shirakawa shows the influence of Western domestic architecture and the means for conspicuous consumption. She told me she would never go to Higashi-Kujo, and would not care to meet or know the people there. “You really should avoid that area,” she advised me. Her own story was dominated by the bitterness of the many times her “friends” had used her Koreanness against her.



With some reluctance, one of the group steps into the ankle-deep water and pulls from this a wallet. With great anticipation he opens this and announces “**Hundred-dollar bill!**” (*man satsu*), but then he revises his announcement... “**Ten-dollar bill**” (*sen satsu*). He counts out all of the money (about sixty dollars) and they begin to think of ways to spend this,

when he looks in a packet in the wallet and finds a photograph of a woman from the Philippines.

“Philippines?” The others exclaim?

They cluster to get a look, and one of the women reports that she has seen this Filipina working in a local market. She’s the one who has recently moved into the public housing block. Now they know who the wallet belongs to. With reluctance, but no hesitation, they decide to return it, and its money, to its owner, whom they know would need this. Together they wander offstage, contemplating a stop in a local noodle eatery.

The episode of the Filipina was one of the topics

The video on the right shows the opening of a wallet found in the Takaseigawa. The wallet turns out to belong to a woman from the Philippines who has moved into the neighborhood.



at the play-writing meetings that could have long-term impacts on this event. At that meeting, one of the participants remarked that he had heard that a Filipina had moved into the local public housing block (*Mat-sunoki-machi Danchi*).

Locating multiculturalism

“The neighborhood is getting more multicultural,” he said, and that started a discussion about changing the festival in name and in mood to a multicultural festival (*tabunka matsuri*). In fact, in the third Higashi-kujo Madang (1995), a Philippine dancing group joined the event. The future of this event will probably include embracing and articulating multiculturalism inside Kyoto but outside its government-run agencies.

The inclusion of a reference to the Filipina brings out a desire to situate the circumstances of the local resident Korean community within an international context. The Madang organizers point to the simple fact that they are at the front edge of non-Japanese, and equally important, non Japanese-government managed, cultural production in the area. The city's efforts at *kokusaika* (“internationalism”) manage to avoid having international persons (even those who were not born in Kyoto) as equal participants in decision-making at any level.

At one point in 1994, as a part of its 1200th anniversary, and as a project in its self-proclaimed goal of becoming Japan's most “international city”, the city government put together a meeting to discuss the future of *kokusaika*. It was billed as an *idobatakaigi* (literally, a well-side chat). But most of the chatting concerned the general but sometimes significant fear that some Kyoto residents have of foreigners, and the vari-



ABOVE: at a forum on the traffic in women at the Kyoto YWCA in 1993, a Filipina NGO organizer from Tokyo discusses the problems that the sex industry creates for all Filipinas who live in Japan. The Higashi-kujo madang's inclusion of a Filipina in the neighborhood stands as a counter example of the potential for multicultural understanding in Kyoto.

ous exclusions and administrative difficulties¹ that foreigners regularly undergo. There were no new initiatives announced to close the gap between these two groups of local residents. And the local Korean community was conspicuously not invited to attend.

Counter movements to the city- and national state-run programs to “internationalize” Kyoto society are bound to run against the logic of these programs, which attempts to manage the style and the content of what is imported, claiming to adjust this to unique Japanese tastes and circumstances (the consumerist end of *Nihonjinron*), but domesticating this in the process.

Making foreign goods and ideas safe for local consumption falls easily on the shoulders of the various government ministries² and their “public” corporations, agencies that assume a paternalist control whenever possible. Part of this process of “domesticating the foreign” involves the need to create an atmosphere of negative apprehension about the foreign. Products and people who are foreign are understood to be dangerous as these are produced or in the way that they live outside of Japan, and it is only prudent that such dangers are not permitted to enter.

[See: [fear of the foreign](#)] With foreign *people*, this has

1. My wife's purse was lost (presumed stolen) on the train, and so we had to visit the local police box (*koban*) with a letter of apology for her losing her foreign resident identity card, before we could go down to the city office and apply for another card.
2. The routing of funds through government organizations makes even (so-called) non-government organizations in Kyoto very much concerned about government perspectives. And so the idea that a group completely external to government control and oversight might acquire legitimacy as a source for internationalization would threaten the efforts of the government to manage this process.

long involved attitudes of superiority and also of fear, and thus a form of racism that is linked also to terror. A few examples are in order: As the Filipina NGO organizer described to the audience at the Kansai Forum on crimes against women, the more than 100,000 Filipina¹ women who are working in the Japanese sex industry, and working under conditions that most resemble a form of slavery, bring to Japan a service that supports the masculine appropriation of the public sphere. Their sexual services—their bodies—are offered to Japanese men as commodified and domesticated exotic objects. Their exoticness derive from their foreignness, and their submissiveness (the role they must take, unless, of course, the customer wants to be dominated) marks their domestication. Their presence in Japan can only be sustained through the complicity of silence by Japanese women.

The *madang geki* did not address the sex industry in Kyoto, again avoiding a topic specifically focused on gender issues. But this particular Filipina was presented in the Madang play not as a “Japa-yuki” prostitute, but as a neighbor who happens to hail from the Philippines. And so the play incorporated another call for a respect of local cultural heterogeneity.

-
1. Add to these women from Thailand and Taiwan, and other Asian, and more recently Latin American countries, and the total has been suggested to be more than 250,000 women, most of whom have overstayed their visas and are illegal immigrants... working in a nation where every citizen is required to maintain an official residence, subject to regular police verification. And so it is quite obvious that this industry enjoys government support.

The third madang: hiding and betrayal

In the third *madang*, the circumstances of both the spatial and social marginality of the neighborhood is portrayed through the depiction of practices of hiding and uncovering. The third madang introduces us to Mangiri/Matsuyama, a young executive in a real estate firm (Rakuraku Fudousan) who has been scouting properties for a commercial customer. The customer is looking for a cheap spot build a hotel, and Mangiri, hopefully, but foolishly (as it turns out), has led him to Higashi-kujo.

As they walk through this district, Mangiri points out all of its good points (it is close to Kyoto Station, and it has ample properties for sale, and so the potential for later expansion). The boss cannot help but pick out signals of the region's dubious ambiance (including the looming public housing), and worries about his company's image. They run into three young girls who are practicing their music for the Higashi-kujo madang (a play within a play) and Mangiri has to do some quick spin control to belay his boss's suspicion about the neighborhood.

After that there is a brief episode of comedy relief about a mother who sends her child out to borrow some salt and then punishes him when he returns empty handed. The comedy relief is for the crowd, but the additional figure of the character of the Japanese real estate client, who watches the scene with visible disapproval, moves its referent to the neighborhood itself. Higashi-kujo, we are being told, is the kind of place where such public displays are found, here

in a city where public displays of emotion are rarely made.

Then it happens. Two women wander by (one of them steps on the foot of the boss), and they recognize Mangiri, and call him by his name. With that he must acknowledge that he is, in fact, Mangiri, and so a Korean. The client will have nothing more to do with him, or with this section of town, and Mangiri is left with the women, and his anger, and humiliation.

“MANGIRI,” she cries out.
“Long time no see!”

And with that she uncovers his hidden Korean identity, and spoils his chance at business success. but then business life had not been so good to Mangiri. And the third act reminds the audience that being locked out of the Japanese economy has its up-side. Without the enormous mortgage (and later death taxes) to pay, life is far sweeter.



“Why did you shout my name out like that,” he asks.

“That’s how we talk in Higashi-kujo. Our voices are big.” She replies.

They learn that Mangiri managed to move away 15 years before, and, after completing an accelerated course on real estate, he had begun to prosper. But then the bad economy began to drag down the real estate market. He was buying himself a house, but

without a wife it was a lonely life. He kept thinking about Higashi-kujo.

The woman reminds him: “Life here in a tenement house (*nagaya*) is happier than that (alone) in a big home out (there).”

He gestures his agreement, and the women hatch a plan on how he can get a bank loan on his house and move back here.

“Everything I earn today goes into that house. But before I go broke, I’m coming back to Higashi-kujo.”

There is a notion of the picaresque quality about life in Higashi-kujo that is here consciously used as an emotional counter to the generally dire economic circumstances. Having reached the bottom of the local economy, locals have little fear of falling. And while the work they do is low-paying and often distasteful, it is also plentiful. And their children are released from the Japanese school “examination hell.”

Exclusion is also a release, and with mutual cooperation they can even manage to create positive alternative life-styles (such as the Higashi-kujo Madang festival) and to tactically reappropriate their situation. However, as much positive value as they can mine from their conditions, it is precisely these conditions that they seek to change. They are not looking to create a sentimental attachment to their poverty and marginal status.

They seek an end to exclusion through a direct attack on the cultural underpinnings of the institution-

alized symbolic violence that creates this situation. Their aim is to show how a local neighborhood can establish a respect for heterogeneity, and use this example as a lesson for the larger Kyoto public sphere.

To end the third madang, a final character is introduced. A “foreigner” (gaikokujin, or “gaijin”) wanders into the scene with a video camera.

“HELLO! (*konnichiwa*)” I called out.

It was my first line in the play. A month earlier they had surprised me by writing me into the madang, as a cameo part... I would play the obnoxious foreigner with the video camera. So, I was playing myself. But I was also playing an allegorical part: I was “internationalization,” (*kokusai*)—just another foreigner, like the Koreans, but not Korean. And my interest in the madang appropriated its performance in a manner that the organizers enjoyed and would themselves reappropriate.

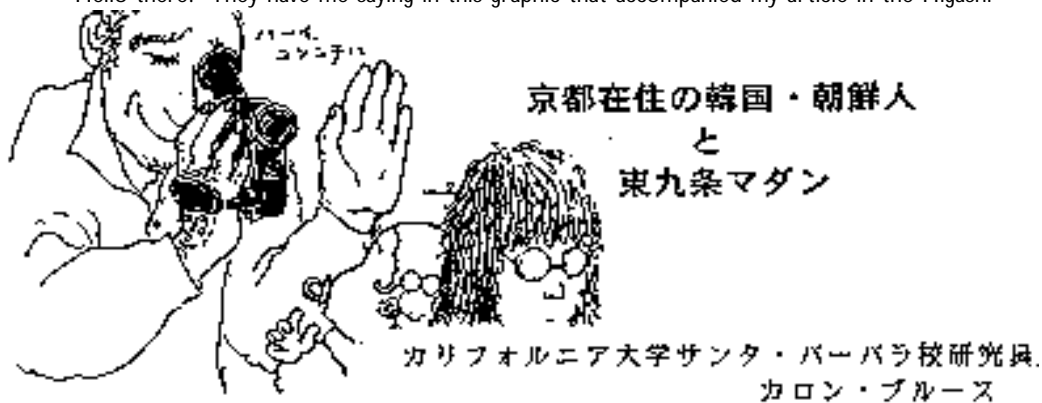
“Hello,” he calls out, startling the women, who



protest this intrusion.

“I hate this (kind of thing),” one woman says, “besides, I’m not wearing my makeup...”

“Hello there!” They have me saying in this graphic that accompanied my article in the Higashi-



kujo Madang Report. (Also note the inclusion of body hair on the back of my hand).

“I’ve been walking around here and there taking pictures,” the foreigner relates. “I’ve taken so many photos and video.”

“(To one of the women.) I took a shot of your daughter dancing, (and to the other) and your’s too. They were all very charming.”

“What about me?” One of them asks? “I’m her mother.”

“Ah, yes, well, you’re certainly very charming too...” And he takes a shot of them dancing, to show that he really does consider them to be charming, but he excuses himself then and moves along.

the final dance

The end of the third madang comes as soon as the foreigner leaves the circle. The old woman enters from the first madang, and they invite her to join them for some barbecue. All of the other join in an impromptu dance, and the crowd is encouraged to enter the circle. The madang drama is complete only when the audience and the actors dissolve the circle

As the climactic moment of inclusion, the mass dance at the end of the first year's madang exceeded the expectations of even its organizers, who had simply planned for the joyful dance of the end of the madang play to open up to the audience. Here the audience took this opening and pushed it to a limit of decontrolled emotional control. Exhaustion, rather than scheduling, finally brought the crowd back from this limit. NOTE: much of this video has been edited into slow motion to reveal the embodied display more fully. You can run this at near real-time by selecting and holding the fast-forward button.

The celebrations would continue into the night, as I discovered after the 1994 madang: See: [Madang night](#)

that was created by joining together in a collective celebration.

This circle dance, which further erases the actor/



onlooker distinction, will continue until it wears itself out.

Basically unorganized, it erupts from the end of the drama, and, as I have noted earlier, it creates a space of shared intimacy, both of bodies and emotions. Here is where newcomers and organizers also find themselves dancing together, it is another space of ENclusion, a place and a time when all who are here are welcome, and where all who are here are us. This experience is also a threshold through which first-year onlookers become *madang* "veterans". Here is laughter. Here is joy. Here are micro processes of mutual recognition and acceptance that cultural anthropology has only begun to explore.

Next I want to focus on the goals of the madang organizers, on how the event might succeed, and

where it can only fail to advance this community toward its goal. For one festival—and festivity itself—is not some democratic universal solvent that can wipe clean a history of real and symbolic violence. It is, rather, an available tactic, an opening, a chance for that those who have few of these, to push back against the representations that have shoved them into the margins.

Celebrations in Cities

Public spheres/public spaces

This chapter is a short step back, and up into the field of cultural management as this is controlled by city/state governments. The self-conscious management of history in many cities is centered upon the following: the city's position as a *national* cultural site; the privileging of a single narrative thread, an historical tale that reduces the contests that occurred in spaces throughout history to a domesticated historical representation of space; and, the selling of this story to middle-class visitors (tourists). Each of these features has consequences for City-run festivals, and for those events that are staged as counter-events to open up urban spaces to multiple appropriations.

Having taken a look at more widespread neighborhood festival practices in Kyoto, and then at the organization and performance of the Higashi-kujo Madang, we are ready to begin to reflect upon the field of festival organization/performance in public places. In order to outline the tactical concerns and maneuvers that such counter events make, we must first understand the conditions that are presented by and in their cities.

It is also important to critique the interventions of government and other expert systems into local cultural production, a critique that can be based, in part, on the expressed goals of this intervention, and in part on a reappraisal of the potentials for and the limitations of "managing" cultural production.

“...The festival is a game machine. It manufactures its field, its equipment and its rules. It trains its players, empowers its officials. It sets its time to start, and programs the timing machine for its own breakdown. The game happens in this space, in the street, at this time. The players know what to do. They cannot say what they know, but the doing gets done. No one is watching but the game machine. Next year it must be different, and it must be the same. The game machine recodes its own future.”

[Deleuzions](#)

For example, a festival (*qua* festival) cannot fully manage its own production. It is, at the time it occurs, a field of expression that is necessarily open to unexpected results. The presence of festivals shows an ability to “let go” of the street. It is a letting go, a letting loose, of expression. The circumstances that promote this ability are complex. The process of letting go requires that the space of letting go is bounded and transformed from its mundane coding into something completely different. There are various skills that need to be acquired, and the content that results is locally determined and highly singular. For example: [Imagine the festival as a building](#). The festival is the act of construction. The resulting edifice is the neighborhood as a festival community.

space at stake

“I start by imagining. I imagine a street, lined with buildings, buildings filled with businesses, and in back and above, apartments filled with people and consumer electronics. The street is also peopled. Apartment dwellers depart for the day, enter the street, produce a flow. Retail shops open and receive customers, offices fill their desks, small factories clatter with machinery. Machinery.”

[Deleuzions](#)

We are looking closely at spatial practices—at practices where space is not simply a “container” of a practice, but rather, one of its “stakes.” Much of the discussion that follows will focus on how the practices express personal and group identities. But from the beginning I want to look at their sites: at the city, the streets, and the ways that these spaces are transformed through various events.

Above, we talked about the [Public Body](#), and about the everyday coding of bodies and places. This coding is also accomplished through punctuating events that can either reinforce or disrupt the everyday coding of the street: or do both, as with the festival. The festival’s disruption of the everyday street reinforces the

“...To speak of ‘producing space’ sounds bizarre, so great is the sway still held by the idea that empty space is prior to whatever ends up filling it. Questions immediately arise here: what spaces? and what does it mean to speak of ‘producing space’? We are confronted by the problem how to bring concepts that have already been worked out and formalized into conjunction with this new content without falling back on mere illustration and example—notorious occasions for sophistry....”
(Lefebvre 1991, 15)

public body as a festival body.

In order to bring into perspective some of the transformative effects that urban festival practices lend to places, we need to know how places are made, and how this making can be refashioned. And one focus for our study of this refashioning is on how a place might be remade as the property of those whose lives are most intimately connected to it.

And today, the peoples who have the greatest need to acquire a hold on the spaces to where their lives have taken them are those people who are furthest from the places they once made claims over—the peoples whose former places, in other nations, are now forbidden to them. These diasporic populations are refugees from a variety of dangers, from genocide and war, from social oppression and from economic marginality.

margins move to centers

“The street is a conducting machine. It conducts electricity, relays messages, brings water, carries away shit. The street codes linear interactions. A code for the sidewalks: nods of the head, ritual greetings, facework among neighbors. A code for the gutter: spittings and hosing and the rakings of dust, the night vomitorium, logjams of cigarette butts. A code for the vehicles: keep to the left, keep moving, do not interrupt the flow. Parking is not permitted.”

[Deleuzions](#)

The circumstances that generate global migrations will be an increasingly central topic for social anthropology in the coming years. In the space of this work, I will concentrate on the circumstances not of leaving—of expulsion from, or nostalgic attraction to former homelands. I will focus on the circumstances of arrival—of access to local social/cultural/spatial resources: of homecomings. For even where their leaving, their expulsion, has been physically accomplished, and with some emotional closure, the issue of their arrival, and of the means for them to fully enter into their new places, also begs our attention. So

too, their struggle to make a claim for space in their new homes brings into relief the spatial circumstances that affect every resident in this space. And what these newcomers learn about the public sphere and the public spaces they encounter can become a civics lesson for us all.

“It occurred to me that here was another moment to the day’s festival, a moment not less significant by its intimate scale—the entire year of festival preparation and then today’s festival performance were also rehearsals for this moment. This party was not the end of this year’s event, but the budding communion that would assure the next. Here was fecund moment drenched in body sweat, and sweetened by a heady abandon.”[Madang night](#)

We need to explore how these strangers create the links to their new homes, and how these new places (through state institutions or by attitudes within the public sphere) attempt to manage this homecoming. The formalities of becoming recognized by local institutions (schools, banks, employers, the police) represent only one level of access to resources. There are other levels where this access must also be negotiated before the newcomer, the stranger, is no longer marked as being “strange.”

where migration stops

“It is beyond dispute that relations of inclusion and exclusion, and of implication and explication, obtain in practical space as in spatial practice. ‘Human beings’ do not stand before, or amidst, social space; they do not relate to the space of society as they might to a picture, a show, or a mirror. They know that they *have* a space and that they *are* in this space. They do not merely enjoy a vision, a contemplation, a spectacle—for they act and situate themselves in space as active participants”
[\(Lefebvre 1991, 294\).](#)

The location where this negotiation “takes place” is the place where the migration ends up. It is happening, for example, in every major city in the world. It happens in rural towns and districts as well, but here I will focus on urban contexts. This entire work is about the process of *movement*. The Higashi-kujo Madang is an expression of this movement. The movement represents what I have just been describing: the final arrival of a diasporic group to a new home.

The discursive space of this movement is centered on the demand that the social/cultural center grows large enough to accommodate diversity. The

madang demands that Kyoto opens up its public sphere to those who are now locally marginalized by their heterogeneous place of birth or by physical differences. Their only options are to tolerate the limitations imposed on their lives locally, or to move elsewhere (i.e., out of Japan), or to change the locale where they live.

“...The street is a desiring machine. It creates desires it offers to diminish. It arouses excitement in order to quell it through commodity fetish exchange. It overcodes as it sells itself. It is a zero sum desiring machine.
The street is a panoptic machine. It watches for strangers, monitors their passing, silently wishing them on. It listens for disorder, for the window broken, for running steps.
It has a thousand eyes and ears. The office help depart. The apartment dwellers return. The street hails its own. It inscribes their pathways. They find food and drink, they enter back into its full body. The shops close. The traffic stops. In the darkness behind its walls the street is alive with private whisperings and squirmings.”

[Deleuzions](#)

This final option transforms a diasporic community from one organized by its movement in space to one organizing itself by a movement within a place and within a society: that is, from an immigrant group into a social movement. And here they share the streets with other social movements. At the same time that strangers-from-elsewhere are becoming more numerous in the streets of every major city, strangers-from-within are also more numerous: the boundaries of lifestyle behaviors are now productive sites not only of avant-garde expression, but also of diverse popular cultures.

Demands for public acceptance and public-sphere representations of alternative or multiple cultural expressions bring gay/lesbian activists and migrant community activists to the same field of cultural action. And the feminist struggle to unmark gender as an organizing feature of the public sphere adds both new theoretical insights and counter practices to the picture. Books and magazines bring these features of late modernity into discursive arenas centered mostly on university campuses and majority-minority neighborhoods (such as the Castro district in San Fran-

cisco). But at some point, it all comes down to the street.

Space and time

Space and time have mutually enfolding consequences for cultural practices. Together, they determine a dynamic that is usually lost when social scientists attempt a description that ignores either one of them. But this dynamic is also lost when social sciences mistake the notions of space they bring to/with their studies for those spaces where people live. Lefebvre calls the former “representations of space:”

Representations of space: conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent—all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived.... This is the dominant space in any society (or mode of production).... (Lefebvre 1991, 38-39)”

The dominant space of Kyoto: this city’s iconic self-representation of space, is the Heian Shrine, built in the form of the original imperial palace. In this video too, we see the most dominant identity space of Kyoto: the *geisha*. So entirely dominated by her representational role—each *geisha* resembles all *geisha*, and as synecdoches, she represents all Japan—that she is allowed no personal expression whatsoever. Video by author.

Representations of space fill the space of theories



about space, and so these theories end up talking about the spaces that are produced at a level of theory. However, out there in the street, expressive cultural practices, such as festivals, architecture, and public art, color their spaces with other representations, constructing what LeFevbre called “representa-

tional spaces”—sites where culture is practiced:

“Representational spaces: space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’, but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who describe and aspire to do no more than describe. This is the dominated—and hence passively experienced—space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Thus representational spaces may be said, though again with certain exceptions, to tend towards more or less coherent systems of non-verbal symbols and signs (ibid, 39).”

One of Kyoto’s few emerging representational spaces is the Higashi-kujo Madang. Here a troupe of dancers from nearby Utoro join in the festival. Video by author

But are we then caught by some irreducible dis-



Residents from nearby Utoro, a small district south of Kyoto joined in the Madang.

cursive/practical divide? Are spaces of representation never built into places where they then inform representational space? Of course they are, and where Lefevbre is leading us in this discussion is to question just how and where these two spaces intersect, and from which side we should be grounding our ideas of the city. To begin with, we need to stop privileging spaces of representation over representational spaces: planning should be informed from the manners and

“...as I intend to show in the analysis of Brasilia, a counter-discourse would have to demonstrate that the delirium of power in master planning itself creates conditions over which the planners stumble and consequently conditions for its own subversion. Indeed, my objective is to produce such a counter-discourse, one precisely grounded in the tension that an anthropologically critical study of modernism creates between the normative ethnographic task of recording the natives' intentions in their own terms and the aim of evaluating those intentions in terms of their results. (Holston 1989, 8-9).”

symbolics of actually used space.

Lefebvre, by overstressing this distinction¹, perhaps hopes to show that planning from a space of representation results in spaces that cannot be lived as representational spaces. He puts this limit on the use of planned space, in favor of spaces that have arrived at their use through the work of users over a long duration of use. The planner should take their lesson not from Garnier's (1989) “Cité Industrielle” paper drawings of perfectly rational cities, but from the streets of Quebec or Old Delhi and the piazzas of Florence or Venice.

Indeed the hubris of planning a city despite its history of use, what Holston called the “delirium of power,” develops spacial notions that are most liable to the exercise of planning. This results in the design of places that are made so as to conform to what LeFebvre calls the “illusion of transparency” ([Lefebvre 1991, 27-28](#)). These offer the spatial forms of what Foucault noted was the “confessional” practice of modernity—from paper to concrete and back into discourse—the spaces tell their planners what the planners want to hear: that life itself can be planned, shaped by the space that contains it.

-
1. The disjunction between representational spaces and spaces of representation is nowhere more evident than in “planned” cities such as Chandigar or Brasilia. Even in these cases, however, local residents find ways to remake the built spaces of representation into lived representational spaces, although they do so against the will and the plans of the architect and the institutions that favored this plan.

“The production of spatiality is represented—literally re-presented—as cognition and mental design, as an illusive ideational subjectivity substituted for an equally illusive sensory objectivism. Spatiality is reduced to a mental construct alone, a way of thinking, an ideational process in which the ‘image’ of reality takes epistemological precedence over the tangible substance and appearance of the real world. Social space folds into mental space, into diaphanous concepts of spatiality which all too often take us away from materialized social realities (Soja 1989, 125).”

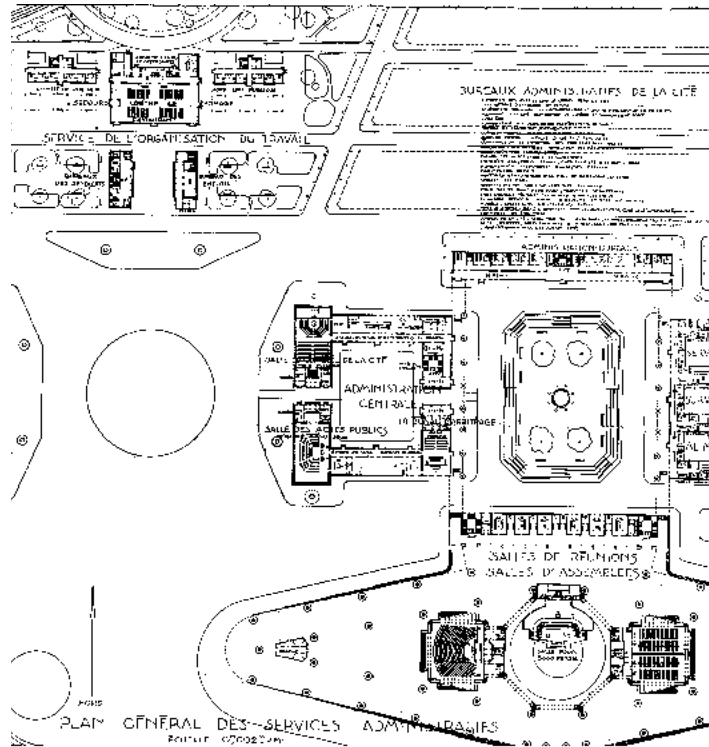
Indeed, the idea of (transparently) connecting the original drawing to the discourse on planning and architecture—often without the inconvenience of having to construct anything (as with Garnier’s plans, which were never built)—was a comforting confession for the modernist planner. Renderings and models of future cities, such as Le Corbusier’s Plan Voisin for the rebuilding of Paris (1925) were judged, critiqued, and copied without, or before, they were realized. The act of rendering buildings and cityscapes became the primary skill that separated the architectural super-stars from those who were simply good at making plans that worked. These drawings were reproduced in magazines and became the media through which modern planning ideas spread across the globe. Few people cared to ask about the built results.

Modern planning used its own rational spatial logic to inform the cities it would create:

“In this vast urban place, if one followed the dictates of Le Corbusier, space itself became a focus of social concern and an object of investigation and control. Everywhere the architect and city planner cut the fabric into discrete units and recomposed them into a structured and utopian whole: disorder was replaced by functional order, diversity by serial repetition, and surprise by uniform expectancy. These cuts and insertions, by imposing their ideal model of scenic unity in which solids dematerialized into transparent and interpenetrating forms and structures filled in or hollowed out space, decomposed the city into a random array of homogeneous sites, emptied of historic reference and ignorant of building types and city places specific to each location. Because this was a city where there was no need for tradition, only for documentation, history books were banished from architectural lessons, the picturesque urban schemes of the nineteenth century were ridiculed, and the cruel beauty of orthogonal grid-iron street patterns, elevating glass skyscrapers, and shocking modern mobility was celebrated. And so proliferated in the disciplined City as Panorama the mirroring curtain-wall skyscrapers in which today we see reflected the City of Spectacle. (Boyer 1994, 46).”

Tony Garnier’s “Une Cité Industrielle” urban drawings in the 1920s were early examples of the notion of a city (or a building) as a “machine for living.” His influential ideas included single-use zoning to separate industrial, commercial civic and residential districts, and a rationalization of movement based upon the automobile and mass transport. Many of these notions are apparent in the plans and the built environment of cities such as Kyoto. Kyoto, on the other hand, is aggressively moving toward its own vision of the industrial city, and its own history of mixed use—streets filled with shops and small-scale factories are being replaced by residential quarters, industrial zones, and shopping malls.

Such rejections of modern urban planning as an



answer to spatial concerns, are centrally a rejection of the insertion of a uniform, ahistorical rationality, and of the creation of a single rational space as the goal of urban planning.

In Lefebvre’s words:

“We have seen that the visual space of transparency and readability has a content—a content that it is designed to conceal: namely, the phallic realm of (supposed) virility. It is at the same time a repressive space: nothing in it escapes the surveillance of power. Everything opaque, all kinds of partitions, even walls simplified to the point of mere drapery, are destined to disappear. This disposition of things is diametrically opposed to the real requirements of the present situation. The sphere of private life ought to be enclosed, and have a finite, or finished, aspect. Public space, by contrast, ought to be an opening outwards. What we see happening is just the opposite (1991, 147).”

The rationality that might be of some use in the public sphere, has been (mis-)applied uniformly to include private spaces. The underlying critique is that

the over application of planning creates a repressive space, a space that can belong only to the planners and their benefactors.

“...if modernism and anthropology share certain critical intentions to shake the values of Western civilization, what makes their linking problematic is that both types of subversion are largely failures—or at least unfulfilled promises. That modernist architecture and city planning not only failed in their subversive aims, but often strengthened what they challenged will be demonstrated in the case study of Brasilia (Holston 1989, 7).”

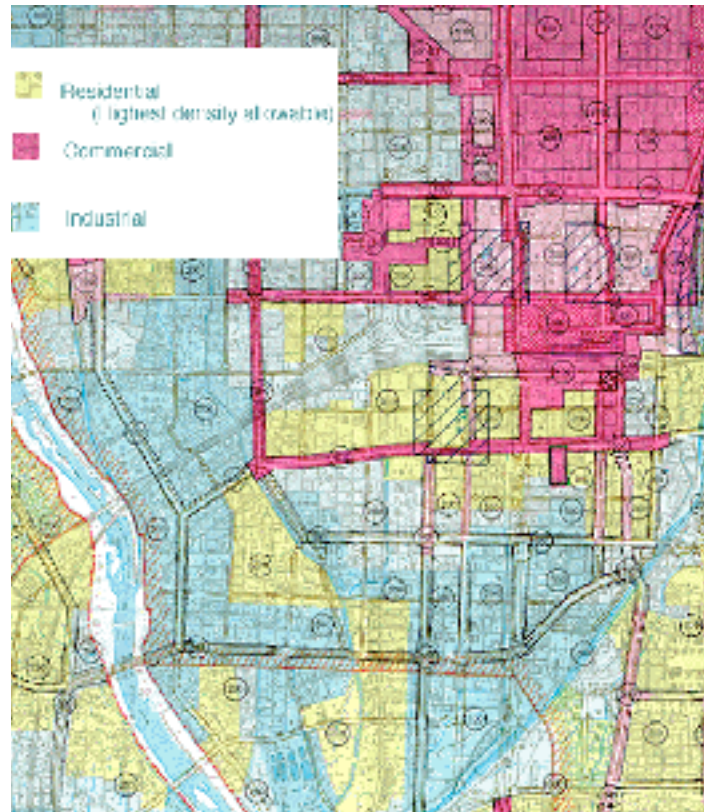
“The last condition [the ability to know friends from enemies] is not, however, met in modern urban environment. The latter is marked by the divorce between physical density and dense sociability. Aliens appear inside the confines of the lifeworld and refuse to go away (though one can hope that they will in the end). This new situation does not stem necessarily from the increased restlessness and mobility. As a matter of fact, it is the mobility itself which arises from the state-enforced ‘uniformization’ of vast spaces—much too large for being assimilated and domesticated by old methods of mapping and ordering deployed by individuals (Bauman 1990, 152).”

This is very much the same critique that post-modern planners and architects have made about modernist design. But much post-modern architecture, in its mannerist “playfulness,” seems to have learned not from cityscapes but from movie set designs. And the result is an enforced playfulness that is not any more accessible to be appropriated by their users than is Garnier’s industrial city. To enter someone else’s completely designed fantasy world is not much different from entering someone else’s factory.

Neither the modernist space nor its post-modern alternative is planned with an aim toward facilitating a distributed ownership of the design of the space. Both are pre-designed to a level that can preclude later creative appropriations. And both are commissioned at a scale that is too large to be adapted to local conditions of sociability, as Bauman notes. The scale of the modern city, not just its size, but the size of its internal zones, have become too large to acquire familiarity through use. They are, instead, designed to be familiar by their similarities—however this can have the reverse effect, as uniform similarity is never as familiar as something singularly distinct.

The City of Kyoto's "planning map for construction of international sight-seeing city, Kyoto" is a good example of modernist urban planning, where zoning districts create "use ghettos" that separate homes from workspaces from stores. In this case, the southern area of Kyoto has been targeted for additional industrialization, and for high-density (high-rise) commercial and residential use. The larger map of city shows the northern portion being reserved for low-density, exclusive residential use, and for aesthetic and scenic preservation. The object is to hold the line on the degradation of cultural and scenic parts of north Kyoto, as a destination for the tourist trades. But this overall city plan carries a policy of concentrating the "negative" aspects of the urban mix on the south side to protect the north side. There are no plans for aesthetic use of the many open spaces (the empty lots) in Higashi-kujo.

Apart from the features of the built-space, what



precludes new appropriations of space are those notions that hold the imagination of a space, as these are supplied by expert systems/institutions in and out of government. Impinging on the spaces that are lived are the spaces that are presented through the media: through television and film—spaces that occupy the life-style imagination through their link to the market for fashion-ability.

Certainly in Kyoto there is no lack of images of spaces presented through books, magazines, and other media, information provided about how space might and perhaps should be organized.

“Mediated experience, since the first experience of writing, has long influenced both self-identity and the basic organization of social relations. With the development of mass communication, particularly electronic communication, the interpenetration of self-development and social systems, up to and including global systems, becomes ever more pronounced. The 'world' in which we now live is in some profound respects thus quite distinct from that inhabited by human beings in previous periods of history. It is in many ways a single world, having a unitary framework of experience (for instance, in respect of basic axes of time and space), yet at the same time one which creates new forms of fragmentation and dispersal. A universe of social activity in which electronic media have a central and constitutive role, nevertheless, is not one of 'hyper-reality', in Baudrillard's sense. Such an idea confuses the pervasive impact of mediated experience with the internal referentiality of the social systems of modernity—the fact that these systems become largely autonomous and determined by their own constitutive influences (Giddens 1991, 4-5).”

These mediated spaces of representation: television programs that showcase the homes of the “rich and famous,” and magazines that portray idealized lifestyle spaces, create both a desire to apply these spaces of representation to one's lived (representational) space, and a felt lack (for most) because the ideal is maintained as a distance between actually lived spaces and those that only a few can afford. One of the main outcomes of visual media is a disenchantment with spaces that are actually lived, but that cannot compare with the spaces available in magazines and on television.

The other problematic that mediated spaces add to late modernity is their lack of locatedness, and their ability to travel great distances. They are everywhere and nowhere, and they bring this every/nowhere with them into places, into homes and streets alike. And our ability to theoretically apprehend the locus of what we studying is consequently confounded. As Jody Berland notes; “In theoretical terms, we need to situate cultural forms within the production and reproduction of capitalist spatiality. How does one produce the other: the song, the car, the radio station, the road, the radio, the town, the listener? What does it mean to conceive of producing a listening audience this way, to imagine it as mainly not temporal, not really subjective, not simply the expression of something called taste? Why is the literature on pop music, like that on other genres, other media, so often empty of cars, not to mention eleva-

tors, offices, shopping malls, hotels, sidewalks, airplanes, buses, urban landscapes, small towns, northern settlements, or satellite broadcasts? (Berland 1992, 39)."

"....something, something free..."
The space of representation of consumer desire is coded as the space of freedom: here visually coded as well as mostly a space outside of Japan, in this self-promotion by the Association of Japanese Commercial Broadcasters.

Today the larger part of studies of the public



sphere are now centered on the media. And these studies will, hopefully allow us to achieve a purchase on the spatial consequences of electronic media.

from media to management

“When the Man from Earth prepared to leave, he looked back once more at the Green Star city that had seemed to be so much like the life he knew at home. But now he saw the different levels all at the same time—the modern factories inspired by earth, yes; but also the fields of golden rice and the diligent people, between the onslaughts of storm, affectionately caring for their land and its produce. And he knew they would be singing in their festivals as long as the towns bred new towns, just as the pollens renewed the cycles of the plants. “

The Green Star is Japan, and Earth is the Earth—outside of the archipelago. And festivals inform a naturalized (literally) national narrative of continuity in this piece of fanciful [Nihonjinron](#) from a book written for foreign visitors from Earth to the Green Star of Japan: [Here is JAPAN.](#)

Here I wish to focus not on the representations of space in commercial media, but rather on the role that city/state government plays in generating spaces through programs that are designed to memorialize certain spaces and practices. For it is against this type of monological historical imagination that the festival communities under study construct their central¹ tactics. In Lefebvre's term, these festivals counter state-sponsored *representations of space* through the creation of novel *spaces of representation*.

Festivals too, are lived spaces, ongoing works that occupy the memories of those who first entered them as children. The familiarization of festival representations is rarely stable (a common complaint of older festival goers is how different the event was in their youth). Indeed, the current velocity of changes in material cultural practices, and in the media available for expressions, means that people in Kyoto and most other modern cities, live in spaces that are almost completely representations of spaces—simulacra of places that are largely unfamiliar, or familiar only in that they resemble so many other spaces. Most adults have experienced learning that their childhood spaces have either been remodeled or completely altered.

1. The Madang festival does comment on capitalist representations of space, but it is more focussed on countering the official nationalist stories of local places.

The participation of children in festivals opens these up to early attempts at self expression and public participation. Here they dance a “may-pole” dance, and also see how difficult life is for those in wheelchairs.

From the 1993 Higashi-kujo

Madang

Video by author.

While I will also submit that a [Practice creates its](#)



[place](#) and reproduces this creation when it is repeated, there are also other preexisting inputs to the construction of the space. There are built-in features of a place that make a space available to be reimagined—or that close this down to new imaginings. And one of the important representational aspects of a place is its self-professed historical imagination.

ON THE RIGHT: Kyoto's Gion Matsuri as this was portrayed in the NHK TV special on Kyoto's 1200th Anniversary Celebration.

“Kyoto hates Kyoto. It is probably the world's only cultural center of which this is true. The Romans love Rome. Beijing suffered greatly during the cultural revolution, but most of the damage was wreaked by outsiders, and the citizens of Beijing still love their city.

But the people of Kyoto cannot bear the fact that Kyoto is not Tokyo. They are trying with all their might to catch up with Tokyo, but they will never come close. This has been going on a long time....the people of Kyoto never forgave Edo for usurping its place as capital. When the Emperor moved to Tokyo in 1868, that was the final blow to Kyoto's self esteem. While Nara and other cities have also been uglified, this was mostly the result of thoughtless city planning. In Kyoto, however, the destruction was deliberate.”

(Kerr 1997, 158)

The main civic celebrations in Kyoto are meant to



be simultaneously current and historical—a desire that leads to certain practical dilemmas. The imperial pomp of the “Big Three” Kyoto festivals (Gion Matsuri, Aoi Matsuri, and Jidai Matsuri) has become ironically pomp-ous because of the prolonged, intentional *absence* of the emperor in Kyoto. For in 1868, the emperor did not simply leave: he moved the entire capital, and all of its attendant cultural and administrative services to Tokyo. (The resulting acephalous leadership condition might, at some level, explain the City's failure to capitalize on the wealth of historical architectural and urban facilities over the last hundred years.) Today, he (now the emperor Heisei) rarely returns to Kyoto, although various organizations cling to their tenuous hold on a claim of former court connections.

“It is changing so swiftly, this mid-twentieth century Japan that you, the visitor will see. For the Japanese themselves, the pace of change is so swift that they sometimes wonder what they have lost, what they have gained, and what the final balance will be...”
 Introduction to the [Visit to a Green Star](#) in the book [Here is JAPAN](#), 1964, n.p.

The Byoudo-in is the only building of any size still remaining in the Kyoto area (it is in nearby Uji) from the Heian period. Mysteriously it survived through eight hundred years of abandonment and neglect, until post-War Japan rediscovered it. Now it is also on the reverse side of the one-yen coin.

History is said to *imbue* the places where they it is also, occasionally, celebrated and paraded. Kyoto relies on the residuum of its many religious and imperial buildings and monuments, almost none of which are managed by the city, although they are protected by national historical preservation measures.

The city parades an image of its (constructed) historical continuity. Kyoto’s civic spectacles are said to portray 1200 years of continuous, unbroken tradition, even though all three of its main tourist events have been refashioned in the last 100 years for this purpose.

There are other historical discontinuities that get



elided in the official presentation of civic history. It is also against these celebrations of history that counter-celebrations have been organized. And so it is this practice of presentation of history where I will focus my next argument.

histories of histories

There are many volumes of histories written about Kyoto, and even volumes of histories of precincts in Kyoto (although Minami-ku—Kyoto's South District—has not been honored with its own historical tome). As the thousand-year long home of the Japanese imperial family, Kyoto is mindful of its *national* historical stature. Within its boundaries there are numerous sites that are officially acknowledged as national treasures, and several places that are still managed by the Japanese imperial household. It also contains several major religious landscape/architectural sites, due again to a desire for proximity to the emperor. History in Kyoto is, in fact, almost entirely a site-centered commodity. There are only a few small *areas* of the city that have maintained an ambiance that recalls some earlier mode of use.

In the 1980s, Kyoto's leaders attempted to add international platform to its self promotion as the "hometown" (*urusato*) of Japan's culture. They convened the Conference of World Historical Cities in Kyoto, and this conference has grown into an organization that still cannot replace the subsequent, and obvious absence of Kyoto as a city on UNESCO's list of historical cities¹. At the last convening of the Conference of World Historical Cities, held again in Kyoto to mark the City's 1200 anniversary, most of the reports from other member cities showed an appreci-

1. UNESCO does include "the temples of Kyoto" on this list, thereby signaling the lack of an historic cityscape in Kyoto.

ation for large-scale preservation and a continuity of general social and cultural skills that are conspicuously lacking in Kyoto's token attempt at "[Heritage management](#)."

Re-savaged streets

The party that has begun on the city street when the Higashi-kujo Madang steps out from the curb marks the process of recoding the street against its mundane "domesticated" construction (See also: [Domestication](#)). As much as the street in its modern mode represents a space where collective emotional and bodily control is assumed, the decontrol of the body and emotions constructs a break, a moment from which other rules and other behaviors become possible. While the festival in its annual enactment might not express a revolutionary plan, it cannot escape its revolutionary potential.

In part because [The festival performs what it proposes](#), festivals work to decode the street-as-product even as they recreate the street-as-work. A festival is one occasion where we can see spaces of representation being torn down and reconstructed into representational spaces. Here is where historicity meets the present, and manufactures the works of art and life that can become the *patrimoine* for heritage management. But it is also a heritage beyond the grasp of any official narrative of state or ethnic communalism. Here the performance is the narrative, and those in authority would do well to learn to read this.

“In contrast to those, largely late-nineteenth-century theories, inspired by notions of the rationalization, commodification and modernization of culture, which exhibit a nostalgic *Kulturpessimismus* it is important to emphasize the tradition within popular culture of transgression, protest, the carnivalesque and liminal excesses (Easton et al., 1988). The popular tradition of carnivals, fairs and festivals provided symbolic inversions and transgressions of the official ‘civilized’ culture and favoured excitement, uncontrolled emotions and the direct and vulgar grotesque bodily pleasures of fattening food, intoxicating drink and sexual promiscuity (Bakhtin, 1968; Stallybrass and White, 1986). These were *liminal* spaces, in which the everyday world was turned upside down and in which the tabooed and fantastic were possible, in which impossible dreams could be expressed. (Featherstone 1991, 22)

Because of its physical and symbolic proximity to the government, a civic plaza is liable to become a site for revolutionary action, so too the festival, by its expressive openings and appropriation of public space, is liable to counter-practices that overflow its artistic representations, and articulate political and social demands. In part this is because the festival creates a link to the body which is oblique to the disciplinary bond that the state might prefer. [Intimacy is first a connection to the body](#), we might remember here, and in many festivals this connection is made through an applied eroticism.

The festival re-savages the civic space by reaching deeper into the intimate space of the body than does the state. It is the spectacle of these savage bodies in public that pulls back the hidden curtain of a constructed civility. Festivals managed by the state to celebrate state occasions might present an appearance of the un-domesticated body (usually through the use of intoxicants), but the difference between this simulation and a festival is not difficult to perceive—assuming that the perceiver has a memory of other festivals.

This is precisely why festivals were themselves hegemonically domesticated—(mis)-appropriated by the state—at various times and places in Europe and Japan. The effect was to replace the memory of festivals with a memory of these state-sponsored events. But even then, the return of an imagination of festival space and practice renews this counter-expressive moment.

Mona Ozouf (1988) finds this appreciation for the festival form in Michelet's accounts of festivals of the French Revolution:

"Not to have had any festivals": that, for Michelet, was a truly impoverished childhood. "My childhood never blossomed in the open air, in the warm atmosphere of an amiable crowd, where the emotion of each individual is increased a hundredfold by the emotion felt by all." And yet in Paris there was a splendid festival for each great imperial victory, when the wine flowed freely and flares lit up the sky. For the young Michelet, taken there by his father and mother, these were wonderful spectacles, but nonetheless depressing. Why? As a child Michelet did not yet know that a festival made to order inevitably has something sad about it; but the presentiment that he had of this is enough to explain the passionate attention that he was later to give to the festivals of the French Revolution. Indeed, what strikes one in his account of them—especially in comparison to the alternative accounts—is the absence of exclusion, derision, or anathema. We read of no secret festivals, no mock festivals, no condemned festivals. Even the enthusiasm aroused in him by the Festival of the Federation (in the case of almost all the other historians, this enthusiasm implies contempt for the festivals that followed) does not make Michelet indifferent to less successful festivals. One certainly senses this in the 1847 preface to his *Histoire de la Révolution Française* (Ozouf 1988, 15):

The sadness of the made-to-order festival, is the sadness of an occasion that fails its own logic. And the logic of the festival is one that counters the practices that "domesticate" the street. In a larger sense, this relates to the theory: [A festival counters the dominant bourgeois lifestyle logic](#). But here I want to look at the processes of domestication, re-savage-ation, and re-domestication. As this is practiced in many cities today, including Kyoto, heritage management is centered on the domestication of the past. And the emergence of counter-events, such as the Higashi-kujo Madang, marks the return of repressed and "savage" histories. However, these events are themselves a mode of heritage management—a form of living history and performing culture. And they would make their own claim, as Michelet (above) did: not to have

an festivals—that is impoverishment.

Domestication

Domestication is a discursive practice that produces notions of the exotic and the grotesque, even as “taste” includes the notion of “disgust”, as Bourdieu reminds us. Today, the globalized market for lifestyle products uses simulated diversity and fashion to lend temporal movement to the consumption of domesticated objects, so that those objects that were purchased yesterday become disconnected to the constructed life-style imagination. Today we learn to be disgusted with whom we were (or, at least, what we purchased) only yesterday. The past is coded as a land of rejected choices and faded favorites.

“The polymorphous pleasures of erotic ideology become the norm, rather than the transgression of the established order, and the fullest possibilities of sexual life take concrete form in the play of human bodies: ‘During the carnival everything is permitted in terms of sex or drugs. The carnival balls are, in certain places, a true orgy. Everything is permitted. You understand? There is no censorship, and the unrestrained exhibitionism and the desire to expose oneself are very common in the carnivalesque atmosphere. During this period, sex is present everywhere.... Within a society full of ups and downs, the permissiveness of the carnival is not interrupted by anything, and bodies, souls, and semen are left at their will, giving to everyone the freedom to do what they really desire. It is a good period for prostitution and the buyers of pleasure. Everything is sold, everything is bought, everything is given, everything is received with a lewd and inviting smile on the face. ... The streets become completely given over to the beat of samba and the frenzy of sweaty bodies having sex. (João)’ (Parker 1991, 147)”

Local festivals serve as counter-venues against the market-state’s desire to represent our interests, these events play at dangerous games in the face of domestication. Festivals not only de- and reconstruct cultural representations and personal identities, they also attempt to transgress the boundaries of domesticated space—by opening up a “savage” arena on the city street. Transgression of the limits imposed by market-state domestication is only one moment in the re-domestication of the space as a work authored by the participants of the festival. This re-domestication of the locale as again *local* is the starting point for emerging local tastes, desires and cultural practices. Those places (such as Venice) where “locality” remains a central feature of cultural production add local cultural value to everything they make. They achieve the primary goal of heritage management.

Domestication is never complete. For, as taste produces the grotesque object of its associated disgust, domestication creates its own savageness. In some later work I will explore the practical logic of domination and of festival play. But now I wish to return to the state in places like Kyoto, to see how domesticated national spaces resist re-appropriation by local neighborhoods, and where festivals can create a tactical opening in these spaces.

place and ideology

The erasures of locales in service of the nation-state or the market becomes an evident problematic for anyone engaged in the study of situated cultural

practices in East Asia, simply because it defines the “context of situation.” I am not suggesting that we valorize an unqualified nostalgia for the local in favor of the national. But we do need to pay attention to locality as a feature of the articulation of culture, and at the role of place in the creation of the nation and the market.

“Madang News 1997 no 31
4/13/97

HEADLINE: 5th Higashi-kujo
Madang
COPY:

Having made the rounds of the four primary/junior high schools in the Higashi-kujo district, the Higashi-kujo madang had become a completely established event.

After a heated discussion about making a new feeling for the fifth Higashi-kujo madang, the exchange committee had decided to make a change. At this time, for the first time four members of the Resident Korean Association of Hearing Brethren attended and two persons dispatched from the Kyoto City Hearing Language Center provided sign language translations, and a lively sharing of opinions and appeals was made....

More than a change of place and culture, the Higashi-kujo madang is a festival for everyone who shares the joy of living together.”

Throughout the Pacific Rim, various organs of the region's state governments have taken on the role of reinscribing local sites of culture as national sites of culture. The geographical rereading of local culture as national culture is probably the most pervasive source of change for locales throughout the region in the last several decades. (The same organs of the nation are today the most vocal in their alarm over international cultural influences: decrying everything from Levi jeans to ideas of feminism and democracy.) Nation-creation erases local traditions in favor of refashioned national histories, and makes cultural traditions the property of the state.

At the very same time, state programs encouraging industrial modernization remake the workplace to international specifications. And state intervention into the household and education, an intervention instrumental for what Foucault called a “pastoral” governmentality, redefines domestic spaces for national interests. And also at the very same time but from another source, the marketplace, within and without attempts at control by the state, refashions culture-scapes and media-scapes, and collectivizes life-

style imaginations according to increasingly globalized inputs.

All of these processes act to homogenize and unitize local spaces of cultural production. The effect is a reduction through a process of erasure and uniform reinscription. The resulting sameness of places across the state creates an even plane upon which national identity is applied as though the sameness were the product of a long history of common national culture. (This is described in some detail by Benedict Anderson.) In the marketplace, a very similar process results in the uniformity of products and services, but the sameness is then overlaid by a simulated diversity, offering the consumer the image of choice.

“What is an ideology without a space to which it refers, a space which it describes, whose vocabulary and links it makes use of, and whose code it embodies? What would remain of a religious ideology—the Judaeo-Christian one, say—if it were not based on places and their names: church, confessional, altar, sanctuary, tabernacle? What would remain of the Church if there were no churches? The Christian ideology...has created the spaces which guarantee that it endures. More generally speaking, what we call ideology only achieves consistency by intervening in social space and in its production, and by thus taking on body therein. Ideology per se might well be said to consist primarily in a discourse upon social space.”
(Lefebvre 1991 [1974], 44)

Ideologies, we are reminded by Henri Lefebvre (1991), require their own spaces. We need to look at how these ideological spaces, not just ideological discourses—how streets and buildings, not simply texts—are created, maintained, and internally critiqued within a region. Place is nowhere innocent, nowhere external to the power relationship that maintains it, nowhere the product of unreflective tradition: particularly those places that are managed and advertised as traditional.

The state and the market, often in concert (see: [market-state](#)), but increasingly with oblique goals, offer up cultural desires that share a common power aspect: they are beyond the control of the residents of the city, who are all treated the same as tourists: welcome to watch and spend, but not to act on their own to invest other meanings to the space. A domesticated national cultural place cannot be appropriated by local residents, it has already been reduced to a single meaning, and is closed to dialogic intervention.

national spaces of domestication

So, it is not only the foreign, exotic space that is subject to domestication by the marketplace. Domestication also describes a process that produces places of the state from a former landscape of local spaces. The state domesticates local histories (which are dangerous to national “unity”) into a single national history. But why do we tend to allow the state this process as a feature of its own production? And what are the tactics (in de Certeau's sense) that can re-

hybridize a nationally domesticated locale? In other words, how do we bring processes of domestication to a local, civil-democratic, practical level?

The center of this critique of the notion of domestication is largely a critique of the *scale* at which this is done: the nation-state is far too large a space to be domesticated as a single place. And the institutions required to perform this task at the national level can neither incorporate conflicting local demands for cultural distinctiveness, nor provide the intimate scale of assurances required for individuals to accept their fellows (the national citizenry) as co-domestics, although Japan, perhaps more than any other nation-state has approached this latter goal.

Domestication is best done close to home. If we look at a positive aspect of domestication—as this promotes a sense of closeness and familiarity: the mutual recognition between neighbors—we might see where this can be beneficial as a local practice.

The routinization of interaction between friends or daily acquaintances is a form of localized domestication for these relationships, which develops within a mutually negotiated frame. But here as well, daily routines may tend to reflect inequalities in status without allowing for any venue where this inequality can be resisted, as feminists have long noted. And so here is where the festival works also to lubricate the frozen junctures of those routines that might otherwise rigidly reinforce hierarchical social relationships. But to do this, the festival must create a de-routinizing

moment, a place and a time for risk-taking—a private space on a public street.

The nationally domesticated space is an unimaginably large (apart from, say Singapore) space where the imagined “national family” lives and works. In state-nations this tends to become simultaneously a privatized public space, and a publicized private space, in the sense that it codes public interactions as private relationships (within the nation-as-family; see also [Private public sphere](#)) while it also intrudes into the private spaces (and the lifeworld) of its citizens. By this, it overcodes local public and private spaces. And so the spatial counter-action to this dominant space is to recode both local public spaces (e.g., create a local public sphere) and local private spaces, by rebuilding a shared intimacy that is kept hidden from the state. The ability to hide from the state is essential for any form of democracy. This “civil right” to privacy does not carry a reciprocal right for the state to hide from its citizenry. [civic privacy](#) is a right only for individuals.

privacy and intimacy

Festivals play with the boundary between private and public in a manner that opens up both spheres to democratic rearticulation. The emotional release of festival arts is also a form shared emotional dialogue: a non-verbal articulation of [dialogic democracy](#). To understand how this works, let us now look at notions of “private” and “public.”

Most places one encounters everyday that are “private” are not private as sites of [civic privacy](#), but

rather they are private in a more general sense of avoiding visibility/audibility for the purpose of rehearsal, or for “private” acts. Lavatories, bedrooms, closets, doctors' examination rooms, and executive suites are all backstages for later public behaviors, or places for secret decisions, or sites of actions that are not allowed “in public.” These spaces form a sequential space of individual privacy that make up the places where a “personal life” or a “private sphere” is constructed and lived.

These “back spaces” can be used as retreats from the visibility of public spaces, but they can also be places where certain activities are sequestered from public attention. But coding certain practices and spaces as “private only” has other, unintended, and also undesirable consequences for the public sphere.

The sequestration of emotional display from the public street is the most problematic, I believe, as this leads to a diskilling in emotional expression *in public*. As bell hooks noted:

“I think about how privacy is to connected to a politics of *domination*. I think that's why there's such an emphasis in my work on the *confessional*, because I know that in a way we're never going to end forms of domination if we're not willing to challenge the notion of *public* and *private*... if we're not willing to break down the walls that say, 'There should always be this separation between domestic space/intimate space and the world outside.' Because, in fact, why shouldn't we have intimacy in the world outside as well? (hooks 1994, 224).”

hooks's call for a re-joining of private and public points to the domination of “the private” and “the domestic” by “the public.” This is another reading of the sequestration of women into the domestic sphere, and it also notes the impoverishment of “the world outside” when intimacy, confession, and general

“Once solidarity becomes reflective, we can no longer establish once and for all the expectations of solidary groups. How we understand ourselves as a “we,” the expectations we have of ourselves and others, changes over time, varying with respect to our needs, circumstances, and understanding of what is necessary to secure the integrity of our relationships. What it means to stand by and take responsibility for another differs according to the context”

(Dean 1996, 40)

emotional display is kept from this: emotions become incommunicable in public.

Here I want to note that most of the recent work (following Habermas) on the problems of the public sphere stress the return to a communicative public sphere. While in general agreement with the thrust of these arguments, I also feel that communication has been both instrumentalized and verbalized/textualized in the process. Are we really to suppose that the gestures which communicate our solidarity with others in public must be only or centrally verbal ones? I would also add that a continuing problem with our understanding of the public sphere is a lack of knowledge about its performative aspects. To be sure, [Intimacy is first a connection to the body](#). Everything flows from this connection. Dean (1996) reminds us that:

“what has been lacking is an emphasis on communication as a primary vehicle of social integration. In the liberal tradition, achieving a “we” has been conceived as taking place in a founding moment, behind the backs of members. For classical republicans, the “we” is merely given, viewed in terms of a preexisting ethical consensus. In contrast, the communicative notion of “we” conceives the achievement of solidarity as an ongoing process of engagement and critique. This thus allows reflective solidarity to embrace the universal ideals necessary for democracy as it urges us to strive communicatively to engage with and recognize each and all as part of our “we.” (44).

This lack, as she only alludes to here, concerns the performance of achieving a “we.”

“Intimacy” and “confession” are also central to Giddens's (1994) description of lifeways in late modernity, and he is concerned about how the con-

struction of gender is accomplished by de-emotionalizing the male gender and naturalizing of emotional skills of the female. The resulting un-natural imbalance in the skilling and the appropriateness of emotional expression loads obstacles to attempts at intimacy between genders. hooks's public confessions are admissions not of additions and obsessions (as Foucault's [See: 1990, 19] are), rather they are expressions of self-empowered feelings¹, and the sharing of these is very much implied in what Giddens² called "pure relationships," which are the, for him, a hallmark of a new turn to intimacy in late modernity³.

Pure relationships are also what Dean (1996, 40) calls a conceptual "court of appeal", and the most immediate one of several levels of potential social relationships. They form the ground for the most

-
1. An internet message I ran across recently carried this quote, "Never apologize for showing feeling. When you do so, you apologize for truth." Attributed to Benjamin Disraeli. I think hooks would agree here.
 2. "At one pole of the interaction between the local and the global stands what I call the 'transformation of intimacy'. Intimacy has its own reflexivity and its own forms of internally referential order. Of key importance here is the emergence of the 'pure relationship' as prototypical of the new spheres of personal life. A pure relationship is one in which external criteria have become dissolved: the relationship exists solely for whatever rewards that relationship as such can deliver. In the context of the pure relationship, trust can be mobilised only by a process of mutual disclosure. Trust, in other words, can by definition no longer be anchored in criteria outside the relationship itself—such as criteria of kinship, social duty or traditional obligation. Like self-identity, with which it is closely intertwined, the pure relationship has to be reflexively controlled over the long term, against the backdrop of external transitions and transformations. (Giddens 1991, 6)"
 3. This particular feature of Giddens's thesis about the shape of "late modernity" needs to be empirically examined in Asia Pacific locales. Pure relationships interrupt the types of hierarchical (paternalist or patriarchal) relationships I found to be quite common in Kyoto. Does this imply that Kyoto is not a part of "late modernity?"

immediate “we.” These voluntary, autotelic relationships that ignore (while they replace) all other family, class and occupational (i.e., paternalistic, hierarchical, status derived) relations as the basis for shared identities.

“...Friendship is mutual, social, and quasi-public. It is ecstatic in that its practice draws one out and towards a friend. *Philia* primes the bond, the among and the between. Marilyn Strathern has insisted how rare it is in modern Western societies to conceive of anything other than individuals and contractual relationships. *Philia* is based on trust. Trust is another virtue that has been almost entirely ignored in Western philosophy (with the exception of Hume)... Among other things, trust makes a non-war-like, agreed-upon disagreement -- *agon*-- possible” (Rabinow 1995, 19-20).

A pure relationship is built on a sharing of the strengths, skills, and emotions of the individuals involved, and is vulnerable to either a lack of sharing (a lack of intimacy) or to a failed expectation that all parties are worthy of trust. Such relationships resemble a certain ideal notion of “friendship.”¹ So I will use the term “friends” to speak of participants in a pure relationship (hereafter, a “friendship”).

Privacy, as a way of hiding unworthiness, or of avoiding intimacy, is not allowed in these friendships. It is this requirement of an ongoing (continually unfolding) *publicly* available, mutual confession that makes friendships a type of minimal public “sphere.” And the process of formation of these friendships has interesting parallels with the formation of larger civil

-
1. The near absence of studies of friendship in anthropology or sociology is not surprising, but needs some rectification. Once in Japan I confused an entire room full of strangers at a party when I introduced my spouse as my “friend.” When it later came out that we were (also) married, one visibly angry guest scolded me, and said, “your wife can never be your friend in Japan.” The idea of a modal form of friendship at the center of the individual's relation to the processes of late modernity has many problems, mostly in its univocality. But, as a probe into the amount of “democracy” in interpersonal relationships, it may have useful applications in Asia Pacific circumstances. Certainly “intimacy” or rather its lack is a major feature of the discourse over adult relationships in Kyoto. And, within the Korean community, the general practice of “passing” as Japanese alienates the Korean adult from achieving such a friendship with Japanese adults, or even with other Koreans (who hide behind their own Japanese masks). Profound memories of broken trust and a longing for intimacy are commonly heard within the Korean community.

society organizations.

Friendship is a relationship built between strangers. For each potential friend is first estranged from any outside status, and made to show a voluntary desire for intimacy, which reveals a self that is worthy of continuing trust. For example, a friendship between a daughter and her mother is possible only when their relationship as child/parent can be ignored (not an easy chore). The main rule in this relationship is a simple one: “No Secrets.” And the intimacy that results from friendship does not generate a need for privacy, there is no need to hide, everything can be discussed with (confessed to) others without shame.

So we've now returned full circle to hooks's idea of emptying out privacy into the public sphere. I would take this a further step and propose that we can imagine shared performances of confession in public as a means of consolidating a wider social friendship as an alternative to social movements based upon essentialized (imagined) commonalties. These events are themselves the commonalties, and shared participation provides both a time of intimacy and proof of trustworthiness.

There is a place for intimacy in public, and this I will call (trying to be consistent) “civic intimacy.” Civic intimacy is a practice that occurs when a certain type of crowd event allows for members of the crowd to temporarily achieve a controlled-decontrol of their emotions, and to speak (or yell) their minds in public. It is precisely the sort of event that Foucault (1979)

was calling upon when he used the public execution to illustrate the power of the crowd. And it is also this type of event, or rather the level of democracy within such events that E. P. Thompson (1993) describes in the crowds of early modernity in England. Against the dark fantasy of “the crowd” turned mob, running amuck down Main Street, we need to imagine a crowd of friends, using the street to consolidate their friendships, and using their friendships as a basis for dialogic democracy.

Emotions in public

Emotions are important to public spheres. For Kluge, it is the failure of cementing and verifying a consonance between emotional content and rational discourse that led to “1933.”¹ But not only have emotions been subtracted from the face of the public space, but this subtraction in the public sphere then proceeds to rationalize the “private sphere,” as Habermas concluded in his critique of Weber, and in his theory of the transformation of the public sphere:

“...It is not the irreconcilability of cultural value spheres—or the clash of life-orders rationalized in their light—that is the cause of one-sided life-styles and unsatisfied legitimation needs; their cause is the monetarization and bureaucratization of everyday practices both in the private and public spheres. This places Weber’s critical diagnoses in a different light.

To the degree that the economic system subjects the life-forms of private households and the life conduct of consumers and employees to its imperatives, consumerism and possessive individualism, motives of performance, and competition gain the force to shape behavior. The communicative practice of everyday life is one-sidedly rationalized into a utilitarian life-style; this media-induced shift to purposive-rational action orientations calls forth the reaction of a hedonism freed from the pres-

1. “Since 1933 we have been waging a war that has not stopped. It is always the same theme—the noncorrelation of intimacy and public life—and the same question: how can I communicate strong emotions in order to build a common life? (Kluge 1988, 33)”

asures of rationality. As the private sphere is undermined and eroded by the economic system, so too is the public sphere by the administrative system. The bureaucratic disempowering and desiccation of spontaneous processes of opinion and will-formation expands the scope for engineering mass loyalty and makes it easier to uncouple political decision making from concrete, identity-forming contexts of life. Insofar as such tendencies establish themselves, we get Weber's (stylized) picture of a legal domination that redefines practical questions as technical ones and dismisses demands for substantive justice with a legalistic reference to legitimation through procedure (Habermas, 1989 [1981], 325)."

civil intimacy

Civic intimacy as a common and ongoing practice, brings people to express their own emotions in the crowded street (or in a public school room, or on a public television program). After chasing public opinion/practice into private spaces, we have little choice but to go in after this through bureaucratic intervention. We cannot verify the presence and quality of justice in the "private" lives of people who are deskilled in expressing feelings in public. The absence of venues for emotional display in public creates a legitimation/information gap that opens up to a call for legal procedures to enforce practices that should be voluntarily monitored.

As Cohen and Arato (1992, 545) note, these legal interventions do not increase the availability of intimacy or the building of relationships, quite the reverse, they substitute client/expert relationships (with the courts or social workers) for interpersonal relationships between strangers—which is another term for "friendship." Like fences with neighbors, laws make poor friends.

But where Habermas would strengthen both the

private and public spheres, and the boundary between them, hooks would bring intimacy into public, and evacuate the private/domestic sphere. For her, (ibid, 225) privacy is an alibi that covers up something shameful. But the only —but overlooked (misrecognized)—reason for shame in this situation is the *domination* that supports the separation of the public sphere from private/domestic spaces. From these two perspectives, the engendered aspect of “privacy” becomes apparent. Probably nowhere on the globe is the public sphere more “masculinized” than in certain locales in the Asia Pacific region.

democratizing the national domestic

A civil democracy is realized through actions taken by its citizenry.

The role of intimacy in public, and of “strangers” in the public sphere and “friends” in civil society are aspects of the study of democracy in late modernity that I will be pursuing directly in my own work. Mostly this line of inquiry takes me away from the well-traveled paths of anthropology and sociology. But I think that there may be no more important sociological work today than that which can bring us to understand the place of strangers in our cities, and no better ethnography than that of friendship.

Let’s now return to the festival, and to the movement of people across national boundaries, and how festival production can loosen the grip that the nationally domesticated space holds over the city. A civil democracy is realized through actions taken by its citizenry. This use of the street for demonstrations of civic belonging and collective celebration or protest is

The protest in Belgrade is a prime example of democracy’s “sweat-equity.” When thousands of people will volunteer their time and their bodies every day for as long as it takes, they can push the government out of the buildings and into the streets. Take another look.

not merely windowdressing for the mass media.

Simply consuming the spectacles of the state is



not nearly sufficient to reproduce the ground for a democratic nation, and this ground—spatially and discursively—must be reproduced regularly. In particular, there must be room for the collective voice of crowds. We need to reimagine the street as a place of and for crowds participating in a variety of actions. The fear of crowds in a democracy marks a fundamental distrust of the public sphere. This lack of trust promotes the delegation of authority to representatives (or to unelected government officials)—authority that has to first be removed from venues such as crowds.

“Madang News 95 issue 2
 Headline: PLANNING:
 “The next planning committee
 meeting will be Monday August
 21 at 7pm at the Sanno day nurs-
 ery school.
 We are now looking for advice
 about the contents of the festival
 program. Up to now we have had
 five meetings with over 100
 (really!) people gathered. “What
 do you think about a Kimchee roll
 making contest” “Won’t it be dif-
 ficult to cook that much rice?
 We’ll need 20-40 liters” “Yeah,
 right.”... “People expect to the
 rope competition this year, lots of
 people.” “That’s right, we’d bet-
 ter do it this year too.” These
 kinds of discussions went on for-
 ever. Now we need to get into the
 really interesting task of doing the
 actual planning. More and more
 we need to gather people who can
 do this together.”
 Democracy is never easy

Places and crowds fill the histories¹ of democratic revolutions. Civic festivals are the reenactments of these founding moments, and civil societies are their offspring. Because there were crowds that used violence to protest social and economic circumstances, crowd control became another feature of the modern street. And again, this constraint was said to be aimed at others, at anarchists and gangs, but its effect was to preempt the crowd event as a regular forum for civic participation. By and large we can today track the disappearance of crowds on the streets of our cities. But then what are the effects of this absence on democracy and on the public sphere?

One effect is to separate the “founding moment” of civil rule as a uniquely special time, and so to forget that democracy is a primarily *performative* form of self-government. The heritage that needs to be preserved is not the spectacle of some reenacted historical event, but the actual reenactment of democratic rule in everyday life. This is where the street becomes a site for democratic and public sphere participation.

The ongoing performance of democracy is perhaps most important to those who have only just now arrived from some other place, but who will be making their home here. Here in the street, in the events that reproduce democracy as a collective performance, newly landed immigrants enter into the public

1. From Boston to Philadelphia, to Paris and London, to Moscow and Warsaw and Tienanmen in Beijing: the places where the public acquires its legitimate claim to its self rule are places defined by crowds and by protests and festivals. Note here the absence of such events and such memorials in Kyoto.

sphere not as spectators at someone else's party, but as bona-fide players in this festival of democracy. Inclusion in democratic life, a voice in public debates, a place in the public square, a part in the festival pageantry: these are signs of true arrival. So too, a historicity that opens to the retellings of old narratives by new voices leverages new lodes of local culture and history into the popular imagination.

Dancing toward a dialogic democracy

performance is the goal

“Our wish is that Higashi-Kujo might become a town where there is active, person-to person contact between the various peoples who live here. Think of the *madang* as encompassing this wish, which is the desire of various people to work together and make this festival a success. We want to make this a *madang* that is filled with joy in the recognition of our mutual livelihood: a place on which Japanese people can build their own lives and find the meaning of living as a community by meeting with each other; and a place where resident Koreans can hold firmly to their ethnic pride in this *madang*”

[MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

So now the festival is over for the year, the schoolyard is back in the hands of the Ministry of Education, the drums have been stored away, and the question lingers: what, if anything is different in the neighborhood, in Kyoto, in Japan? The goals announced by the organizers of the Higashi-kujo Madang (See: [MADANG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)) include the transmission of cultural knowledge between generations of Koreans, the acknowledgment of the need for all neighbors in the area to recognize their common problems and provide mutual support, and the recognition by the city and nation of heterogeneity as the basis for the respect of human rights. The festival, through its organization and performance, demonstrates the first two goals, creates a public space that supports the third goal. [The festival performs what it proposes](#) is the operating concept here.

“With the politics of equal dignity, what is established is meant to be universally the same, an identical basket of rights and immunities; with the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognize is the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everyone else”
[\(Taylor 1994, 37-38\).](#)

To an important extent, the performance is the goal. The cultural content of the festival offers younger community members an opportunity to learn and perform cultural arts that are different from those taught in Japanese public schools. The coordination between the various groups that bring the Japan Center for Independent Living in contact with South and North Korean social/political groups, and the Catholic Church in contact with the local Communist Party, and factions within the *buraku* together with each other: this cooperation is not only a goal of the *madang*, but also a precondition—without it the festival dissolves into acrimony. And so, on the morning after, the community knows that this symbiotic coexistence is not just a dream, but rather it is now a demonstrable fact, something real that will happen again next year.

Kyoto moderne

“Democracy is instituted and sustained by the *dissolution of the markers of certainty*. It inaugurates a history in which people experience a fundamental indeterminacy as to the basis of power, law, and knowledge, and as to the basis of relations between self and other, at every level of social life (at every level where division, and especially the division between those who held power and those who were subject to them, could once be articulated as a result of a belief in the nature of things or in a supernatural principal). It is this which leads me to take the view that, without the actors being aware of it, a process of questioning is implicit in social practice, that no one has the answer to the questions that arise, and that the work of ideology, which is always dedicated to the task of restoring certainty, cannot put an end to this practice (Lefort 1988, 19)”.

What is less certain is the impact that this one event can make on the conditions that hold sway for Kyoto’s public sphere. How can one event push hard enough to displace, even for a moment, the ocean of representations flooding the city every day? Given the firm grip that institutions such as Dentsu and Monbusho hold over time and space and media inputs, where does one counter-event make a difference?

Unfortunately, most of the writings about the public sphere are not helpful in evaluating or positioning the role of festivals. In large part this is because the history of the study of the public sphere has been dominated by reference to Western Europe, where festival production was waning during the formative period for the modern nation-states. And so, again, the necessity arises to create an expanded notion of modernity to include the place of festivals within the public sphere.

A critique of the notions of, and the evidence for, “public spheres” and “civil societies” is fundamental to a larger critique of modernity. My own work within this larger critique focuses upon performances *in public*, and most importantly, on the specific locales where modernities are assembled, recursively coded, paraded, challenged, and ridiculed: i.e., reproduced and deconstructed.

“...Confronted with an all-toototalizing system of late capitalism with its global reach and administrative rationalizations, however, the indeterminacies and undecidabilities of our postmodern stance offer no virtuous solutions with which to confront contemporary crises, nor allow us to oppose and resist the increasingly uneven development of our cities and nations” (Boyer 1994, 3).

Mostly this public panorama is dominated by the spectacles of the state and the market (usually in a friendly duet). The first task then is to critique the formations of this spectacular display and to locate openings and counter discourses within it and exterior to it. One immediate goal is to determine where and also how democratic action is (or needs to be made) possible within the public sphere under circumstances of late modernity.

First I want to reexamine some theoretical problematics within the study of civil society and public sphere, and look again at these as they are found in Kyoto, Japan.

Asian modernities and European models

The first point of engagement between those who mainly do theoretical work on social theory and those who are looking empirically at Asia/Pacific¹ locales is to question the origins of theories and their application to sites in this region. Notions of a civil society and the public sphere were first articulated in describing features of emerging modern institutions in Western Europe and North America. To use these notions in the description of modernities in other places we need to determine what would allow these ideas to describe features of “other” modernities. We have already discussed the major modal difference between nation-state- and state-nation modernities (See: [State-nation modernity](#)). Now we have to ask, in

1. This term includes the Asian mainland and various island nations from Indonesia to Japan.

what way are “other” modernities different from those that inform current theories about the public sphere? In particular, what are the features of governmentalities in the Asia/Pacific region that might help us to see where current theories may apply or need modification?

Looking at states in this region, including Japan, some general features are apparent, features that show mostly an overlap between the discourses of modernity East and West:

- 1) most states in Asia/Pacific represent themselves as democratic (or “democratizing”) states, and so they are liable to empirical and theoretical critiques of the scope and qualities of democratic practices within their governments and social institutions;
- 2) most states in Asia/Pacific participate in the formation of institutions for military, cultural, educational, and economic control, and these institutions have a reflexive awareness of their counterparts in other nations in all parts of the world¹. So there are commensurable *logics* in the governmentalities in place within government institutions between Asia/Pacific states and also with European states. These logics permit a general critique of these institutions. As state institutions commonly compare and contrast their own operations with one another on an international scale, they are also open to external critiques

1. I have spent the last two years working as a consultant to the Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Government of the Republic of Korea. The Ministry actively researches the programs of similar ministries in other nations.

that would compare them, although in ways they may not prefer;

- 3) most states in Asia/Pacific participate in international agreements on human rights and other matters, which implicates them in global discourses about social welfare and human rights. These states cannot then avoid critiques of internal practices that affect the global environment, the risk of military action, the treatment of workers and children, the equality of women, and the quality of life;
- 4) the governments of most states in Asia/Pacific welcome transnational corporate interests and are now interlocked into transnational flows of capital and cultural products. This makes a critique of the consequences of these flows an issue for most locales in Asia/Pacific; and,
- 5) For many decades now the various engagements among states and peoples in Asia/Pacific, and between these and other (e.g., European/North American) have been integral to the creation of what is now a global modernity. To claim a regional uniqueness today is to deny a history of external engagement—including engagements in Asia that informed the creation of modern nation-states in Western Europe¹.

In any case, much of the current rethinking of

1. The colonial experience of European nations in Africa and Asia was not a simple one-way conduit of ideas and influence. For example, the requirements of governing under colonial circumstances created opportunities for programs that had later application within the colonizing nations. The modern nation-state cannot be studied without some appreciation for the amount of self-colonization that it uses on its own population.

notions of civil society and the public sphere is already displacing notions linked to early, Euro-centric models, and is already drawing from empirical sources from Asia/Pacific nations. Moreover, this theorizing remain fixed to ideal and potential visions and theories of civil society and the public sphere that find little evidence in existing societies—for here we find discussions about the failure of modernity, and the need to rethink this, or to move on to a post-modern condition. This means that we are faced not with an issue of the application of an empirically derived model from Europe into Asia, but with the lack of any empirical model to apply anywhere. Modernity to date is nowhere as wonderful as this might be conceived of (or we'd all have moved there).

“The theory which Negt and I are trying to find has to do with the problem of 1933. ...It is never necessary to have National Socialism. We now feel confident of being able to predict such movements much earlier, and we know how to organize counterbalances. National Socialism is the problem, the problem of our youth, that Critical Theory worked on” (Kluge 1988, 45).

And so, at the more general level of national “governmentalities” there is reason for confidence that current theories about the public sphere and about civil society have useful application in the Asia/Pacific region—but not, however without serious attention to local circumstances. For although these are commensurable with local critiques, they are not usually directly applicable. Their value comes in re-signifying the local debate within a larger, transnational discourse. This may help to deconstruct the codes supplied by the state. There remain some caveats of which we should be mindful:

- A) Most importantly, we have to step back to gain a purchase on the *field of interests that the state manages locally*, and to remember that the potential

limits of a public sphere and a civil society within state-nations are fundamentally different from those in nation-states. Instead of a “public-sphere” we may need to talk about openness *within the state*, and about radical reform of the state to bring internal state discourses into greater public view. Counter-public discourses may need to be reformulated as counter-state discourses, which look for tensions within the state apparatus that might result in openings and change.

- B) It is important not to conflate the ideal concept of a “public sphere” or a “civil society” with any one of the existing empirical examples. All examples are liable to critiques that explore fundamental concerns—such as privatization of the public sphere and the appropriation of civil society organizations by the state; and each is seen as offering local practices that may be locally justifiable;

- C) We need to both examine the real evidence for “public spheres” and “civil societies” in many locales while we also rethink the ideal potential for these concepts in alternative future modernities.

Alexander Kluge (1988) starts his theory of the public sphere with the failure of this to prevent “1933” (i.e., the National Socialism's colonization of the public sphere in Germany). And so we need to imagine public spheres that are not liable to “1933s.” (NOTE: 1933 also marked the year when Japan left the League of Nations instead of responding to the critiques this group had about Japan's policies and practices in Manchuria.)

Look again at this clip about Burma. Notice how the street is the arena where civil crowds and battalions of police each make their own moves to appropriate this site. The use of house arrest removes leaders from the street. And the presence of tanks on the street reinforces the government's monopoly over the means of violence—but also it signals a lack of legitimacy, as such visible reinforcement marks a move back to a metaphor of "war," which includes to possibility of defeat. This CNN report reveals the importance that global visibility holds for local political movements—but the street is the site where this visibility is performed.

The possibility of (re)emerging "1933s" in the



Asia/Pacific—neo-nationalism in Japan, for example—gives our work some urgency, particularly after Tienanmen. But we need some direction to our imagination. One example would be to construct a model for a "utopian realist" (See: Giddens, 1994) vision of modernity.

- D) We need to look for modes of participation in the public sphere where locale is at stake. This is a corrective to current studies that are media-centric, and that ignore the potential for embodied action as a site of democratic practice. Festivals and political demonstrations are examples of this type of localized practice.

Future modernities

“‘Utopian realism, such as I advocate it, is the characteristic outlook of a critical theory without guarantees. ‘Realism’ because such a critical theory, such a radical politics, has to grasp actual social processes to suggest ideas and strategies which have some purchase; ‘utopianism’ because in a social universe more and more pervaded by social reflexivity, in which possible futures are constantly not just balanced against the present but actively help constitute it, models of what could be the case can directly affect what comes to be the case. An outlook of utopian realism recognizes that ‘history’ cannot simply be reflexively grasped: yet this very recognition adds weight to the logic of utopian thought, since we no longer hold fast to the theorem that greater understanding of history means greater transparency of action and thus greater control over its course”
(Giddens 1994, 249-250).

The futures of modernities throughout the Asia/Pacific region seem to be inscribing themselves in the present at an accelerated rate. The just-emerging big-picture of the scope of the collapse of economic growth and confidence in Japan, for example, and the pace of change (at times both faster and slower than anticipated) within China are today forcing transformative changes in the relationships between government, economic corporations, and civil groups.

Not only is this a time when we need better tools to understand civil societies and public spheres, it is a time when we should be offering better tools to groups who find themselves disadvantaged in the negotiations for inclusion in these arenas. The anthropology of cultures of/in democracy needs to engage the public sphere of the site of study. This engagement proceeds reflexively when local communities appropriate anthropological studies about their circumstances, but is also possible and desirable for the anthropologist to assist in this reflexive appropriation.

communities and publics

Anthropology has a long history of working with small communities, communities that were bound together by a shared “culture.” Cohen’s description of the relationship between culture and community, as this became the basis for anthropological study, shows the underlying tautology at work:

“Our emphasis upon culture focuses upon the diversity beneath the mask. It seeks interpretations, and the means by which they are made, rather than objective form. ‘Community’ can no longer

be adequately described in terms of institutions and components, for now we recognize it as symbol to which its various adherents impute their own meanings. They can all use the word, all express their co-membership of the 'same' community, yet all assimilate it to the idiosyncrasies of their own experiences and personalities" (Cohen 1985, 73-74).

In the days (not so long ago) of symbolic anthropology, symbols were as communal as communities were symbolic. Fieldworkers went out in search of collective symbols and returned with symbolic collectives. Culture was something like "everything you needed to know to belong to the group," and its transmission reproduced the group.

The fact that ideas were shared seemed enough to make these the glue that held together tribes, sects, castes, and classes. Language was the central feature of such systems of symbols (and also of such communities). Most of the small groups that anthropologists have studied show dialectal or linguistic boundaries that are central to the group's self-definition.

Of course, what was under-theorized in all this was the amount of knowledge/power (and the differential access to this) at work in the process. Structuralism in particular was neutral to the instrumental outcomes of the symbols it described¹.

-
1. This was mostly due to the linguistic underpinnings of structuralism. Language at its primary levels (syntax, phonology, semantics) was viewed as a power-neutral for two reasons: it was acquired in early childhood, presumably before political consciousness, and its mechanisms are not reflexively available to the user, and when they become available (through linguistic research) they are still not power-laden. It makes no difference if an English speaker knows that she aspirates word-initial unvoiced consonants but not word-initial voiced consonants. Post-structuralists, working from literary criticism, see rhetorical and other (e.g., psychological) potentials in language use that implicate this at all levels with power relationships, first between parents and children, and then in the public sphere.

What remains useful in this notion that shared ideas constitute a community is that this opens up an interest in how ideas and *imaginings* are managed to inform life-style behaviors and social participation in modern nation-states. The formation of the “national” community resembles that of the formation of small-scale communities, but because of the novelty of its “national” scale it places an added burden on the imagination.

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

The move in scale from the local communal experience to the imagin(ed)ation, Anderson would point out, did not replace an older, “true” community with a new, “false” one. Communities at the local level were just as imagined. But what Anderson did not explore was how this sharing of an imagined communion might interrupt the formation of a nation as a democracy that included people who were not (or did not care to be) included within its communal embrace.

The formation of the nation may have initially borrowed the metaphor of “community.” But this does not require nations in late modernity to reproduce this earlier borrowing. The idea of nations as imagined communities leads one to consider the public sphere as community property: an idea that positions the nation much too near to 1933. As we shall see, public spheres contain necessarily anti-communal notions.

struggle for the present

Before I continue, I want to first dislodge a couple

of very common notions, which may have occurred to the reader. The first is that what one finds in places like Kyoto, Japan are vestiges of authentically old communities that must today compete with very modern public sphere formations. Quite the contrary. Public spheres and local communities in many places (including Kyoto) must today be equally considered as local outcomes of available modernities. They are each constructed in and through institutional measures and modalities that are themselves the products of recent articulations. This is much less a battle between “the now” and “the past,” and much more a contest for the present.

Still, communities and public spheres are not equally “modern” in the sense that they may not share the modern impulse toward institutional reflexivity. The use of authoritarian control practices within some communities limit reflexivity and reform. And so, while a “public sphere” is a hallmark of a modernizing society, the articulation of ethnic communal identities can also resemble a “return to the past”, a revitalization of pre-modern practices and associations. But this return is mostly accomplished (to whatever degree it is successful) through modern agencies and instrumentalities.

It is in part due to the presence of a public sphere that an actual return to the past is now structurally impossible—unless the public sphere is itself appropriated as a primordial communal space. Even then, as with the Nazi colonization of the German public

sphere in the 1930s, the use of modern media and institutional logics undermines the goal of reauthenticating some pre-modern social order. And so even the most traditional communal organization cannot escape the modern practical logics (such as those of global markets) that inform the ways in which all organizations are now formed. This brings me to my second point.

“...In investigating democratization in these spheres it is worth keeping in mind the conventional association of democracy with deliberative assemblies; but it is the aspect of being open to deliberation, rather than where it occurs, which is most important. This is why I speak of democratization as the (actual and potential) extension of dialogic democracy—a situation where there is developed autonomy of communication, and where such communication forms a dialogue by means of which policies and activities are shaped” (Giddens 1994, 115).

The second notion I want to displace is the one that points to the public sphere as, at certain times and places, being in danger of being misappropriated by the presence of ethnic communities and their “special” interests. This is certainly possible (as Nazi Germany reminds us), but we also have to look the other direction: at the way the public sphere intrudes into communities. Here I am saying mainly that we can locate a modernizing process within the interaction between public spheres and ethnic (and other) communities, and that this interaction works generally toward a penetration of the community by processes acquired from the public sphere, rather than the other way around.

While we need a public sphere that cannot be colonized by any one community, we should recognize and find some agreement on the consequences that a public sphere has over the interests of ethnic or religious communities. I want to introduce a term here: the “active public sphere.” Instead of viewing the discursive space of the public sphere as a place where opinions gather like flamingos on the Etosha Pan (or

like flies on spam [author's note: these analogies were first written very late at night: and were left here for your amusement]), we need to consider a public sphere where opinions arrive, are discussed, and are worked into the precursors for policy decisions. We need to look at the public sphere as a frame that adds significance to expressions, and as a game where hidden meanings are exposed.

In his notion of a "[dialogic democracy](#)" Giddens promotes the idea that democracy is not well represented by looking primarily at "deliberative bodies" but rather needs to occur through "the spread of social reflexivity as a condition both of day-to-day activities and the persistence of larger forms of collective organization" (1994, 115). He goes on to distinguish his notion of dialogue from Habermas's "ideal speech situation." He concludes his description of this dialogue by promoting the idea of mutual tolerance instead of consensus as the desired outcome. I will be applying Giddens's notion of a [dialogic democracy](#) with particular attention to the intersection between performance, identity, active trust, festival events (and their organization), community formation, and the public sphere.

“Doubtless it is better to be tolerated than to be killed, as Pasolini was. But it would be better still to make reference to one's marked particularities without being specified thereby as less than public.

As the bourgeois public sphere paraded the spectacle of its disincorporation, it brought into being this minoritizing logic of domination”
(Warner 1993, 240).

Where Giddens is pointing to the need to avoid a univocal outcome to a dialogic process, I can agree fully that tolerance is beneficial, but I would take the idea of “tolerance” far beyond its “threshold” level (i.e., being aware of difference and deciding not to react unfavorably to this) to a point where the differences that are found in and that emerge through this dialogue are desired outcomes. This need to go beyond liberal tolerance is also central to what Dean (1996) has called “reflective solidarity”:

“...many people would probably accept the idea that contemporary, pluralist democracies should aim toward including the excluded and enabling persons and communities to develop their differing life plans and express their cultural values, provided that these plans and values incorporate a respect for those who do not share them. In this regard, some might say that reflective solidarity seems like another term for liberal tolerance. However, although reflective solidarity and liberal toleration are clearly on the same side of the fence, both rejecting positions that seek to establish one particular notion of the good as valid for everyone, reflective solidarity resists claiming neutrality, arguing instead for accountability. For instance, liberals might urge us to tolerate abortion and sodomy. But this “us” is predetermined. It explicitly positions those who perform or require abortion and those who practice “sodomy” outside the boundaries of “our” community. Moreover, such an appeal to toleration denies “our” accountability toward those others outside our boundaries. It suggests that so long as we do not deny the right of women to have an abortion or the right of homosexuals to engage in particular acts, we have fulfilled our obligations as citizens. Finally, liberal tolerance seems to adopt a just-add-it-on perspective toward inclusion. In other words, by denying our responsibility to displace those crystallizations of meaning constructing women and homosexuals as “other,” it fails to examine the oppositional and exclusionary interpretations of rights as they have become embedded in our legal system. The dif-

ference between reflective solidarity and liberal toleration, then, is essentially one of attitude—reflective solidarity replaces complacency with critique and engagement” (178).

Solidarity is negotiated within a civil crowd by an open armed acceptance of difference, but not as something other people are, and “that’s OK”, but as who we are and where we are going together—and different. In the process, difference is not elided.

The public sphere is too often seen as a place where differences—of opinion, desire, and taste—are arbitrated to the point where difference is itself dissolved away to produce a synthetic agreement. Novelty is incorporated into the center of aesthetic judgement by fitting into its pre-existing expectations (which means that only the forms of “novelty” that already fit this judgement are allowed). For example, “outsider art” produced by artists with no connection to cultural institutions becomes the latest artistic commodity by being framed and shown in the most prestigious galleries.

The normalization of difference is not unusual to the (bourgeois) public sphere, the assimilation of outside influences has occurred in every cultural group. This is precisely the point here: assimilation is a pre-modern practice that modern institutions have not sufficiently interrogated, until recently.

Part of the reflexivity of late modernity is a reflection on difference and plurality, often presented as “multiculturalism” or “personal choice.” This discourse produces a different notion of difference in the public sphere, one that promotes the experience of

difference *qua* difference, and looks to maintain difference in the outcome of any dialogue.

This discourse is performed today by counter-public groups, such as gay and lesbian activist organizations, and it claims that difference itself is a desired quality in the public sphere. Within this notion of the public sphere, the experience of difference must lead to an appreciation for difference as an aesthetic feature of and as a formative contour for participation in the public sphere. One outcome is a cultural “miscegenation” that will replace those forms of difference (gender, race, age) currently used as modes of domination, while opening up to the creation of new differences. Difference will be dislodged from its inherited position and become available to expressive intervention.

“Each separate sphere of modernist identity politics has typically mobilized its version of radical subjectivity around a fundamentally epistemologic critique of the binary ordering of difference that is particular to it: capital/ labour, self/other, subject/object, colonizer/colonized, white/black, man/woman, majority/minority, heterosexual/homosexual” (Soja and Hooper 1993, 185-186).

At this point, a dialogue can begin to support individual singularities—differences at the level of the individual body—a perspective that allows individuals to escape a politics of identity that necessarily ties them to a communal group. At this individuated level, dialogic democracy can focus on other identity issues, such as consumerism and workplace concerns. And at this level the binary differences of gender, class, and race become liable to a general critique of exclusion based on any putative “difference.” As it turns out, we are nowhere as different and not anywhere as similar as these “group imaginations” would have us believe.

But what is an active public sphere? Fraser (1992) uses the term “strong” public sphere to indi-

cate public spheres within governments (such as parliaments). Strong public spheres produce decisions rather than simply generate opinions. An *active* public sphere is the extra-governmental correlate to the strong public sphere within the government. An active public sphere is where civil society operates as an external check on governmental and market institutions. This is where guarantees of speech and assembly are exercised and where dialogic democracy (outside of government) is performed.

However, an active public sphere is also active internally. At its most democratic limit permits no exclusive enclaves, no *a priori* group memberships into its internal debate. And so it displaces traditionalistic communal imaginations and interests, and inserts those of individuals¹.

Like a festival, the active public sphere is expensive. It is shaped by thousands of individuals providing a voluntary commitment of time, labor, and resources. The individuals and groups that in aggregate activate the public sphere do so with an aim to oversee the decisions and decision-making process of representa-

-
1. The question about individualism and democracy (a question that is mostly raised by government mouthpieces as a complaint over the imposition of a “Western” democratic ideology on a non-Western social order that has no history of, nor desire for, individual freedom if this means the freedom to be disobedient to superiors) is usually poorly considered. Individualism is not the issue at all. What is at issue particularly in a dialogic democracy is the question: who gets to speak? Democracy requires collective, voluntary participation by individuals as individuals with the interests of the collective firmly in mind. “Non-Western” (or Confucian or some other, national version) democratic theory is usually a blind for paternalism, for the delegation of public expression to those who are older, “better born,” and more masculine than anyone most people around here know.

tive bodies in governments at all levels. Toward this aim they monitor government and market organizations and they interrogate the discussions happening within ministries and parliaments. The result, if this is successful, is a type of mirror government.

I would submit that there can be no strong public

Today it is almost as difficult to underestimate the role of mass media in the active public sphere as it is to imagine how today's transnational mass media corporations can be expected to "live up to the public trust"—this situation is compounded in nation-states (such as Japan) where mass media is state-operated or under state "administrative guidance".

When the Yomiuri Television crew came to watch the Madang play practice the producer's concern was that this story would not be seen as "newsworthy" on its own. He needed an angle, he figured, if he was to sell this one to his boss. I could see the bitter anger of the madang organizers, and I offered to refuse to cooperate. But more than they despised this lack of respect for their work, they needed to use television to show a wider audience what the *madang* was about.



Koreans and Japanese
jointly overcome racial
barriers to create...

sphere within government unless this reflects the active public sphere outside of government. The latter is a social/discursive arena that contributes to the governance of the society by articulating opinions as potential public decisions. The use of the initiative process to pass laws or to recall politicians is a good example of an active public sphere¹. Here is where

-
1. And then we can also say that the active public sphere relies as well on the more general public sphere as an arena for information exchange, dialogue, and opinion building. Japan is notoriously weak in all aspects of public sphere formation, mostly because this has been colonized by government ministerial and corporate PR interests.

public sphere and civil society notions become interlaced. Civil society, yes, but not communalist social groups, for as Alexander Kluge noted, public spheres must not be communally based. The public sphere cannot be some underlying traditional community in modernist dress.

anti-communities

Community formation and public sphere participation are mutually incompatible at their ideal limits, because of conflicting demands for exclusivity and inclusivity. Communities link their members through exclusive affective ties to imagined commonalities, such as religious belief, heredity, or place of origin. However, public spheres are not (or should not be) communally based—this is the first lesson of 1933.

An arena of democratic participation within the modern nation-state, the public sphere resists appropriation by any “private” interests, whether by the marketplace or by governmental organizations, or, in fact, by any one community: as long as the interests of which are defined as exclusive. As an actual or discursive “space” the public sphere links its participants through a mutual desire for access, that is, for publicity.

Public spheres require that individual participants retain a sense of individual choice, that they act independently of other corporate interests. And so, the extent to which individuals are able to “look beyond” the interests of the groups with which they feel a shared commonalty, is precisely the extent to which

their participation in the public sphere is legitimated as an expression of “public” sentiment.

unimagined publics

But is the nation/state at its core a community or a public sphere? Benedict Anderson's (1983) work locates an imagined community as the logic of the early nation-state formation, and we can see evidence of this logic in current national discourses. But a democratic state can no longer see itself in these terms alone, as we shall see. It is precisely the public sphere that challenges (or fails to do so) the monological imagination of a nation as a national community. This is particularly true today as mobile populations, goods, imaginations, and even locations (such as European villages being constructed in Japan) bring strange persons, objects and ideas into cities and towns. But strangeness is not itself strange today, and “strangers” play pivotal roles in public spheres.

Communities may seek to locate friends and strangers, binding the former into imagined kinship based on residence, language, or common heritage; and marking the latter as potential enemies. But public spheres work within an opposite logic: they demand that individuals find a commonality¹ with strangers who occupy the same territory, and, if necessary to speak and act against their imagined or real

1. Affirmative action programs are based on this concept: on placing the good of the public—as a place of inclusion—above the privileged interests of any one gender or ethnic group. It takes an active public sphere (backing up a strong public sphere within the government) to summon the participation of those who would abandon privilege in favor of inclusion.

kin group and its interests.

Warner (1993) calls this distancing from communal identity “disincorporation,” and he notes that is it somewhat easier for those whose bodies are already “unmarked” in the public sphere (e.g. in Kyoto, male college-educated ethnic Japanese not living in *buraku* areas) to abandon collective identity politics as a feature of the public sphere. He notes, “the rhetorical strategy of personal abstraction is both the utopian moment of the public sphere and a major source of domination” ([Warner 1993, 239](#)). But he fails in this argument to see that an alternative solution to this situation is to re-mark the unmarked bodies. It is unjust that those who have achieved recognition and acceptance in the public sphere fill this with a “public habitus” that they control, as this reflects their tastes and desires.

The [Domestication](#) of cultural expression in public is a major obstacle to wider participation by groups who are not already accepted in this arena. Cultural domination in this fashion needs to be countered by what Nancy Fraser (in a 1997 talk in Santa Barbara) called a “[politics of recognition](#).¹” The public sphere is the ongoing arena for this political struggle. In this process the imagined community of the nation is re-imagined in hitherto unimaginable ways.

I don't know you

In order for a public sphere not to collapse into a

1. A term she borrowed from Charles Taylor.

discourse of a “natural” national community, as this is imagined and reproduced during nation-state formation, the public sphere must remain a place of, by, and for *strangers*. This is most important. At the moment when voices are heard in public, each voice must not be identified with its body, it must speak for all bodies. But it must also be heard, and so barriers that remove certain voices from the public must be removed, and not permitted to be reconstructed in some other fashion. The [politics of recognition](#) looks at the ways in which the [ken](#) of individuals is managed, and it interrogates this mis-management as a source of symbolic violence. As citizens must become strangers within the public sphere, any stranger—expatriates, refugees, guest workers, international tourists, and even anthropologists—has access to this sphere. There are no privileged positions in an (ideal) public sphere, even as there are no public spheres that currently meet this ideal. But the recognition of the place of strangers within the public sphere moves this toward its ideal condition.

“For instance, the unforgettable and hence unforgivable original sin of the late entry: the fact that he [the stranger] had entered the realm of the life-world at a point of time which can be exactly determined. He did not belong ‘initially’, ‘originally’, ‘from the very start’, ‘since time immemorial’. The memory of the event of his coming makes of his very presence an event in history, rather than a fact of nature” ([Bauman 1990, 149](#)).

Each stranger is a diaspora of one, a nomad of democracy. A stranger is someone who has entered into a locale at a certain time, and has not, as yet, gone away again. The stranger cannot make a primordial claim of residence. Her presence is dated, and potentially ephemeral. This presence interrupts the naturalizing features of nation-states as imagined communities. To allow strangers to become citizens, and to demand that citizens act as strangers in the public

sphere—to assume that they ignore their identification with family and community—is a fundamental aspect of dialogic democracy in late modernity.

denaturalizing citizenship

“Citizenship” is promoted by the state to strengthen the sense of shared commonality at the national level, to strengthen the idea of the nation as a community, and to thus naturalize obligations to civic duties, including warfare. And so, one might also argue that, at this limit, citizenship also works against the logic of the public sphere, which must remain “above” all communal interests—including an imagined national community.

We have to look critically at practices that seek to limit public sphere access within a nation to citizens of that nation, and/or that require or encourage citizenship to be emblematic of a single “naturalized” national community. For a public sphere to remain open to counter-state expressions, there can be no fixed one-to-one correspondence between the nation-state, its formally recognized citizens, and the public sphere.

Minority/diasporic groups who recognize a lack of access to the public sphere are often the first to bring issues of citizenship and exclusion into public view. But the manner through which the community brings this message to the public sphere is actually quite important. For any group to operate as a legitimate voice within the public sphere, the group must articulate issues that are within the “public” interest. For

example, a demand for inclusion requires that the group opens itself up to a moment of reidentification with the larger “public.”

Class and publics

One reason why private interests are not legitimated, is class¹. Class, specifically the notions of an “upper-class,” with its corresponding “lower-” is a clear example of potential for the “privatization” of place and power. Class is also a good example of “community,” of the “alibi” (in Barthes's sense) that (even imagined) shared heredity can provide as a basis for group identity.

-
1. The public sphere, as this emerged, for example, in Great Britain, was the result of conflicts between the landed (and politically active) gentry and workers in the new manufactories who sought to bring democratic pressure to bear on issues of access to political power (As Negt and Kluge noted). The issue of access was potentially to be fought in the streets, with the potential (and, at times, imminent) result being a physical defeat (and then death or displacement) of the gentry. Public sphere agencies: newspapers, courts, parliaments—in each case subject to reflexive reforms to make them more open, more public—allowed the conflict to be concluded in other, discursive, arenas, and the resulting compromise favored neither the gentry nor the general worker, but rather, the emerging middle-class of literate professionals and urban skilled workers, who claimed also to speak for “the workers,” but whose interests were coincidental with those of the gentry. The resulting bourgeois public sphere occupies the center of information production in Great Britain, and through similar circumstances, in most Western European and North American states.

“One month later, on August 16, 1819, the movement reached its high point and turning point. A chain of mass rallies carried out in a disciplined manner raised the morale of the movement and, at the same time, disturbed the establishment. “The peaceful behavior of so many thousands of unemployed is not natural,” commented General Byng, incensed by the phenomenon of the working classes having begun to solve their organizational problems. The “transformation of the rabble into a disciplined class” was due not least of all to the experience of failure with underground and revolt actions. The mass demonstrations, with their hundreds of group leaders, bands, banners, and so on, revealed an organized exploitation of the traditions that stood available to the movement, in the form of army veterans, trade unions, auxiliary classes, and Jacobin rituals. ”

Michael Vester, *Die Entstehung des Proletariats als Lernprozeß*. Frankfurt am Main, 1971. 174ff.

Quoted in:
(Negt and Kluge 1983, 189).

One can say that public sphere formation in the Western Enlightenment period in Europe was at one moment, a counter-class practice, although it has subsequently assumed and promoted the desires of those who prowl it most effectively. This slow but thoroughgoing appropriation of the public sphere by and for corporate¹ interests gets noted more often than critically addressed in critiques of the public sphere. Gupta and Ferguson note: “The production and distribution of mass culture—films, television and radio programs, newspapers and wire services, recorded music, books, live concerts— is largely controlled by those notoriously placeless organizations, multinational corporations. The ‘public sphere’ is therefore hardly ‘public’ with respect to control over the representations that are circulated in it” (1992, 19). But how is this situation liable to change²?

A public sphere is not immune to the presence of inequities of capital and status. Instead, over time, it tends to articulate (and to mimic and diffuse) the institutional practices and pre-established priorities—the complex social topology—that forms its ground.

There is no mechanism internal to it to prevent it

-
1. The role of corporations in the bourgeois—is there anything more bourgeois than Microsoft?— public sphere needs much more attention. My notion of the [market-state](#) attempts to describe the latest movement in this global process.
 2. Habermas (1989, 1989a, 1992) outlines the progressive degeneration of the public sphere, but offers inadequate advice on how this might be reversed: inadequate because of the deficiencies of his linguistic theorizing, and also weak, I would say, because his picture of the degeneration of the public sphere is so formidable that it is very difficult to imagine a solution. But the current condition of public spheres in various places may be less severely “degenerate” and more tractable than he first allowed.

from warping in this manner (there is actually no mechanism to it at all, it is merely the total of available institutional and organizational practices). Without reflexive attention, a public sphere can become the quasi-property of those who manage its information flows, as Habermas noted: “The public sphere, simultaneously prestructured and dominated by the mass media, developed into an arena infiltrated by power in which, by means of topic selection and topical contributions, a battle is fought not only over influence but over the control of communication flows that affect behavior while their strategic intentions are kept hidden as much as possible” (1992, 437).

Current critiques of the bourgeois public sphere are usually aimed at opening up rival configurations, counter-publics that can recode the bourgeois logic of the public sphere into something more inclusive and heterogeneous. And so the current problem of the public sphere in Asian/Pacific places begins not with the issue of bringing private (marginalized, communal) interests into the public sphere/space, but removing privileged/privatized access to this sphere.

“On August 16, following a week-long drilling of peaceful demonstration forms, a mass demonstration was staged on the St. Peters Field in Manchester consisting of 60,000 to 100,000 workers, who were bloodily scattered by the cavalry units known as ‘heroes of Waterloo.’ The slaughter, since designated as ‘Peterloo,’ resulted in 11 dead and over 400 injured.”

Michael Vester, *Die Entstehung des Proletariats als Lernprozeß*. Frankfurt am Main, 1971. 174ff.

Quoted in:

(Negt and Kluge 1983, 189-190). Absent in Kyoto are similar fields of Peterloo, missing is a history of the public struggle for the appropriation of place and power.

This double movement of evacuating entrenched privatized interests from the public sphere while articulating the right to heterogeneity within the public sphere is emerging as the central counter-public discourse within the Korean diaspora in Japan. I would suggest that this discourse has applications in other parts of the Asia/Pacific. But where can we locate the *connections* between civil society, civic spaces, and the public sphere? And how can we further examine these connections?

Three notions are particularly helpful here: Henri Lefebvre's notion of the “appropriation of space;” Nancy Fraser's use of “subaltern counterpublic;” and Michel deCerteau's idea of “tactics,” that is, of strategies behind enemy lines.

The Higashi-Kujo Madang festival is, I would suggest, *a tactical maneuver that appropriates a public space and constructs a subaltern counterpublic event*. Looking at the festival in this manner allows us to understand how local practices of resistance can anchor a transnational diasporic group to the city where it dwells.

Appropriation

Lefebvre's¹ notion of the appropriation of space can be used in a critique of those urban places that acquire the label “public.” A common definition of a public space is something like the following: “a space devoid of private interests and controlled by the state

1. See Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Ltd., 1991).

for common use.” But this is hardly sufficient to define a space as “public.”

What we find using this notion is that a public space tends to be a place where surveillance and police control delimit, from among the various possible common uses, those uses that are supported by the state and/or by the marketplace. And so the public street of a city under modern totalitarian regime resembles—and often exemplifies—the bourgeois ideal of a modern public space: safe, sanitary, orderly. Clearly, we need to rethink our notion of the *public* street. And the sudden appearance of a festival in this space puts a new contour into the street and for theories that would describe this.

The question here is this: what legitimates the right of a crowd, particularly a noisy subaltern counterpublic crowd, appropriate a public place for its own interests? By arguing that the notion of the public sphere must be opened up to multiple publics, including subaltern counter-publics, Nancy Fraser calls for a new perspective on the public sphere.

Fraser notes, against Habermas's argument, that the “question of open access cannot be reduced without remainder to the presence or absence of formal exclusions. It requires us to look also at the process of discursive interaction...” (1992, 118). Even today, discursive interaction occurs mostly in specific

places¹. “Open access,” taken geographically, means the creation of public spaces, i.e., of physically available, inclusive discursive arenas, in and out of the government.

Such access is accomplished within a city by the creation and maintenance of public places: but only where a public place is a place that is freely appropriable by a multiplicity of groups. And so a more useful definition of a public place would be a place where all groups can negotiate access: where they contest for inclusion in a definition of the public. The ongoing civic “festival” of democracy is this self-expression of inclusion.

In practice, as Fraser notes, public spaces and the groups that vie to appropriate these, have multiple moments of articulation: “...subaltern counterpublics have a dual character. On the one hand, they function as spaces of withdrawal and regroupment; on the other hand, they also function as bases and training grounds for agitational activities directed toward wider publics. It is precisely in the dialectic between these two functions that their emancipatory potential resides...” (1992, 124).

This “dual character” of counterpublics requires that there be two necessary moments for the practice of achieving inclusion within the public sphere, and

1. Of course, from the perspective of subaltern groups, inclusion in the bourgeois public sphere is a self-defeating tactic as long as the logic of this sphere remains bourgeois. Demanding inclusion in this sphere represents the *de facto* desire to become bourgeois: a tactic that feeds the hegemony of the bourgeois camp.

each moment has its own public space. The first public spaces are those made for the internal use of the subaltern group—as a part of the community-building process that redefines the group as having shared interests. The second space occurs when this internal public space is then opened up tactically within the public sphere of the nation-state.

The tactic here is one of decoding and recoding, as Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 244-245) have noted, in order to break the unmarked flow of the memory of traditions of exclusion and insert a new memory, start a new chain, and begin the history of a new future for the space. Demonstrations of identity, of protest, of solidarity and complaint, festivals of cultural politics—this multiple re-coding opens up the street as “public” space. These moments accumulate in a fashion that relativizes dominance: spectacles of the state are thereby forced to march the same route as the annual *madang* crowd. The more times, and more groups that take (to) the streets in this fashion, the less room there is for the everyday articulation of a dominant narrative for the street. Because the state has a long-term¹ interest in supplying its own story, counter-articulation can not be a one-time action.

In Higashi-kujo, the Madang community continues to work toward an annual event that builds on its own history of articulation to wedge itself deeper into the

1. One long-term counter-strategy is for the state to re-appropriate celebrations of resistance to the state, transforming revolutionary memories into worker holidays, and filling these with its own displays.

local imagination. Its Madang makes an annual tactical foray into the heart of the factory of mono-cultural Japanese identity—into its public schools. Taking control of the schoolyard where they were disciplined as children by a government that disowned them at birth, and where their outsider status as Koreans and *buraku*-dwellers was forged into bitter memories and anger, the community has created its own cultural plaza: a space that not only announces their presence within the ancient capital of the Empire, but also makes their claim as legitimate citizens in the city that shuns them daily.

It is through this festival that they mark their arrival as local city-zens. They are, by this, no longer simply disenfranchised foreigners, but the producers of a variety of local culture, a culture that is done within and for themselves and their neighbors. But this is not the moment where the Madang stops.

The Madang has challenged the City of Kyoto to incorporate “a respect for heterogeneity” within its announced plans to champion the call for “world human rights” as a part of its 1200th Anniversary program. Heterogeneity here applies to persons with a wide range of “otherness,” most specifically other ethnicities (Koreans, etc.), other bodies (the physically disadvantaged), and other residences (persons assigned to live in *buraku* areas). Certainly, sexuality, gender, and age concerns would also fit within this call. But what is also interesting is the *tactical* nature of this counter-proclamation.

The tactics of subaltern groups, both to marshal their members, and then to agitate for inclusion within the public sphere, are fundamental to the continuance of a truly public public sphere. In many states today, diasporic communities are at the front of a new wave of democratization. And their methods must, by a necessary logic, be different than those that are used to deny them access.

Tactics

Strategies, de Certeau (1984) reminds us, are the privilege of the strong. For the subject, for the subaltern, there are only tactics. The appropriation of a public space by a subaltern counterpublic group for its own interests tells us several things; This appropriation moves the counterpublic into the center, geographically, and, by various proximities, socially. For the time of the event, in the memories of all who are there, the spectacle of diverse bodies, and of words shouted in public reminds the state that a public is constructed from diversity.

The counterpublic event succeeds from a position of externality. It must avoid reflecting the tolerance of the bourgeois public sphere, which, as Michael Warner noted, masks its unmarked intolerance under the generalized rubric of “we the people,” (1993, 241) or, in this case, “[We Japanese...](#)” thereby enclaving all subgroups.

The Higashi-Kujo Madang is not an example of multiculturalism or internationalism as this is paraded by the Japanese state, but rather it disrupts the notion

of “we Japanese”¹ by inserting within the public space alternative readings of cultural properties and identity.

In Kyoto, the unmarked exclusive identification of its Japanese (non-*buraku*) citizens into a univocal, mass-public reduces this public to silence. It is precisely this silence that is commonly presented to the world as a “consensus” of agreement with government policies. For when everyone speaks (or remains silent) as one, no *one* person can speak at all. It also reminds the city that more than three quarters of so-called “international” population of Kyoto was, in fact, born in Kyoto. Even more so, the event tells the city that its international community *belongs there*.

Kyoto's Higashi-kujo Koreans display what Paul Gilroy (1991; quoting Richard Wright) calls the “dreadful objectivity” of being inside *and* outside. This perspective, all too rare in Japan, makes their dramatic performance of their marginal circumstances a valuable critique of the city's social order. But the

-
1. Once again, it is difficult to gauge the depth of the unmarked quietus surrounding the notion of “we Japanese” in Kyoto (a place which, after all, is famous for excluding even other Japanese from its self-determined identity: “we Kyotoites”). It is easy to find people who complain about the presence of “foreigners” (*gaijin*) in Kyoto. But one can also find persons who are ready to converse on the problematics of Japanese national(ist) identity in an age of increasing “internationalism.” Indeed, Kyoto City has “vowed” to become the Japan's most “international city,” although its planning here seems mostly aimed at reducing the level of irritation between locals and foreign tourists and residents (See: [Kyoto Declaration](#)). This recent gesture towards “internationalization” (*kokusaika*) by the City has met with overt ridicule by the resident Korean community (again which makes up more than 80 percent of the City's “foreign” population) particularly in Higashi-Kujo, a district marked by decades of official neglect. Several Koreans I spoke with in Kyoto are also very knowledgeable about international human rights discourses, and about changing rules for citizenship in Europe.

Higashi-Kujo Madang also proves that even the city of Kyoto can be opened up to public participation by a diasporic group outside of the incorporation regimes of officialdom. And if “even” Koreans and *buraku* Japanese can work together to forge an opening in Kyoto’s public sphere, then such tactics must be available to other civil-society organizations.

National(ist) Identity Trouble

Public spheres don’t just happen, not in Kyoto, nor in Los Angeles; and they are not all alike, although I have tried to suggest some basic properties they may share. Similarly, public *places* don’t just happen, they are constructed by the groups that put bodies on the street, into the plaza, or into parliaments, to demand open access, to perform a celebration of heterogeneous *identities*, and thereby to become the *architects* of public spaces, and of the public sphere.

Japanese national(ist) identity; a *condition* thrust upon Koreans during Japan’s colonial rule of the peninsula; a *promise* of eventual equality and citizenship (in exchange for conscription and virtual slavery during World War II); a *status* that was withdrawn without compensation when defeat severed Japan’s colonial authority; a *privilege* now denied to thousands of people born and living in Kyoto; and a *discourse* that today binds together the mass Japanese public: it is this identity, in its unitizing, essentializing subjectivity, that the Higashi-Kujo Madang resists. And this resistance, couched as a call for a respect for heterogeneity, seeks to remake the entire public sphere into a space

of openness. And, while the Madang is mostly ignored by the city, and will not soon find a spot on the Japan Travel Bureau's tourist calendar, it does raise a small clamor in the usually silent street. From this noise, the voice of alternative identities in and for Kyoto is heard.

Today, the Higashi-Kujo Madang clings to its right to exist. Each year it performs that first moment of inclusion, bringing together the many feuding strands of the local neighborhood into a common, embodied community. And every year it attempts the second moment of inclusion by presenting itself to the city on equal terms.

The tactic of opening up this one tiny window of heterogeneous culture within the old Imperial capital of Japan can succeed only when this opening is seized by others who find the uniform of "[We Japanese...](#)" too constraining on their own identities. For when multiple groups learn similar tactics, these become a single strategy, and the small tactical openings coalesce into a new *openness*. This is the intended outcome of the type of "culture trouble" the Madang organizers are making. But admittedly, and unfortunately, the possibility of this happening in Kyoto seems remote.

It is more likely that the city will find a way to shut down the Higashi-Kujo Madang, or force it back inside the *buraku*. Already, the city government has started up a city-run, city-funded festival in the same district, timed to roughly coincide with the Madang. Probably the City will attempt to enfold the Madang

into this festival, while maintaining the City's (paternalist) control.

As of today, the Madang organizers are determined to maintain the independence of their event, but should the city actively oppose them, they may find themselves without a place to perform in—except the street. But as long as the Higashi-kujo Madang gets performed, then there will be one space in Kyoto where a *public* public space can be found.

Apart from this *madang*, crowd activities allowed on the streets in Kyoto are controlled and managed by the nation, the city, or by Shinto shrines in collaboration with city authorities. What is made clear by the opening of this one multivocal space, is the widespread closure of so-called public spaces within the city¹. The ubiquitous role of the state in Kyoto's public events points out a fundamental lack of spaces appropriatable by civil society organizations, and it marks the present as a result of a genealogy of state/imperial spectacles and monuments.

Korean counter-publics

Let's review what the Higashi-kujo Madang offers to Kyoto's public sphere. Since 1993 when the Madang was first performed, Kyoto residents have had the rare opportunity of seeing (or participating) in the

1. Absent also in Kyoto are sites of a history of public participation. For example, there are no plazas marked by the memories of prior public demonstrations. Instead, the city is multiply inscribed by its connections to Japan's imperial past, a past that lingers in the felt absence of the current emperor, and in the imperial pageantry of the civic spectacles. It is a city of palaces, and tombs, and imperial temples and shrines.

performance of democracy. It is just such a performance that can tactically appropriate a public space for a counter-public event. After openly recruiting an all-volunteer staff, and after months of democratic public meetings, the Higashi-Kujo Madang assembled the efforts of many local groups to bring food, music, dance, song, contests, and, finally, drama, into a common cultural venue.

“West’s black prophetic framework includes the oppositional moment of the externally designated “we.” This reminds us that the importance of the “exclusion of exclusion” appears at the level of sexuality, ethnicity, and interest more strongly than at any other: identity politics has been motivated in part by a struggle against those persons and practices excluding us because of our differences, a motivation which has called into question those exclusions operating within identity groups themselves. When differences are self-affirmed rather than results of labeling or traditional spatial and cultural boundaries, they provide “a standpoint from which to criticize prevailing institutions and norms,” helping to anchor a sense of involvement with the plurality of others in our communities, societies, and the world. Unlike ascribed identities, achieved identities provide us with a critical strength” (Dean 1996, 42).

At the center of this production is the *madang geki*, the street drama. In this drama, local volunteer actors use a self-scripted play to explore the predicaments of their everyday lives. The end of the drama signals the beginning of a final dance in which everyone joins in. As twilight deepens, the dance twirls to a final drum beat, and the *madang* collapses into itself, returning the schoolyard to its normalized state.

By design, this Madang is an event where the internal boundaries within the community are conspicuously ignored. It is a therapeutic space, a place of communal healing, a zone where conversation is possible between adversaries (and Kyoto’s Korean and *buraku* Japanese neighborhoods house several adversarial social groups). Standing in the crowd at the first madang, one of the Madang organizers directed my attention to two elderly men holding an animated conversation. “See those men. They live close to one another, but I’ve never seen them talk before. I thought I never would. It’s incredible (*shinjirareina!*)!” The Madang opens up an internal arena of active, discursive social negotiation and collective embodied

experience, which creates important memories for the entire neighborhood.

The visibly inclusive aspect of the Higashi-kujo Madang festival and the generalizable notion of heterogeneity (*ishitsusei*) translates the community demand for inclusion into a demand for a public sphere open to all people residing in Kyoto, regardless of gender, origin, occupation or physical ability. At this moment, the Korean community establishes the right of its members for inclusion in the public sphere, by articulating a message that is already accepted as part of the self definition of the public sphere in “democratic” Kyoto. The tactic points to the discontinuity between legal guarantees of access and common practices of exclusion.

unmarking

Too often we see the reproduction of all community as requiring moments that mark inclusion and moments that mark exclusion. Our idea of a “collective imagination” needs these reminders of who is allowed in and who is kept out. We look for boundary conditions as integral to community self-identity. Many times these boundaries are articulated spatially. The community clubhouse has its locks, gatekeepers, and its annual invitation-only affairs. But one unintended result of such practices is the privatization of the ethnic community: belonging goes both ways, and the group is no longer open to public member-

ship.¹ Another unintended outcome may be the use of “traditional” practices to reproduce internal exclusions based on age, or gender, or social status. Community membership may be a “package-deal” where the member is not given the authority to propose alternative practices within its boundary.

Spatially exclusive gatherings generally do the task of sorting out the others, and the right of admission displays the privilege of membership. These are events where solidarity is built as a boundary condition that marks the differences between the community and others. As long as a community's regular practices are only of this sort, the community remains “private” in its self-definition. And many communities, ethnic or social, do today mark their exclusiveness through spatialized practices of exclusion. However we also need to see how a community might make a practice of excluding exclusion.

1. I am well aware that it may seem odd to note that group membership which is presumably based upon some inherited circumstance is thereby “private” to those who claim to share in this inheritance. Here I am simply opening up to the [politics of recognition](#), away from the politics of identity. For the transformation of putative ethnic/gender identity into a self-inscribing identity does not create a place of resistance to the original “hailing.”

“In discourse politics, marginal groups attempt to contest the hegemonic discourses that position individuals within the strait-jacket of normal identities to liberate the free play of differences. In any society. Discourse is power because the rules determining discourse enforce norms of what is rational, sane, or true, and to speak from outside these rules is to risk marginalization and exclusion. All discourses are produced by power, but they are not wholly subservient to it and can be used as ‘a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy’... Counter-discourses provide a lever of political resistance by encapsulating a popular memory of previous forms of oppression and struggle and a means of articulating needs and demands”
(Best and Kellner 1991, 57).

Ethnic communities that imagine and articulate their sense of identity and the tasks and privileges of membership through practices that operate through this moment of exclusivity have acquired the logic of the dominant discourse: a logic of exclusion. But other logics are also available to them. Meetings, marches, and media discussions can articulate the contours of membership above that provided externally: above the stereotypes and the slurs. These practices can transform an external ethnic designation into a shared ethnic imagination. But they can do so only when the group also transforms the logic of external designation by refusing to design its own boundary conditions. Ethnic “pride” and self-marked identifications may result if there is a *voluntary* commitment to the community.

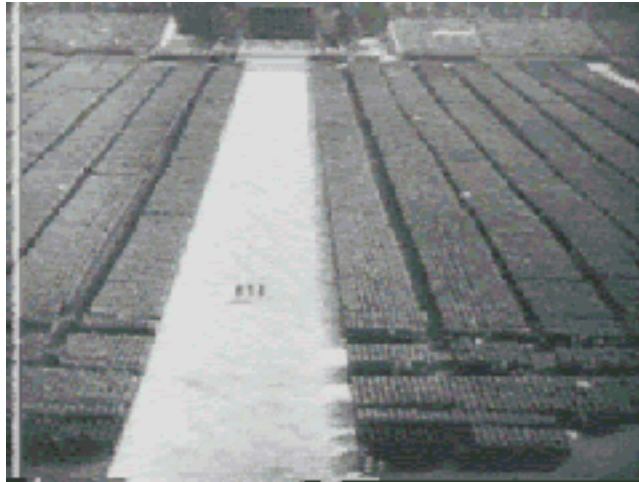
exclusion and de-legitimacy

Here is the most important outcome, in terms of the public sphere. A community that stops its own logic at a moment of exclusion announces its externality to the public sphere. It positions itself *not* as an alternative public sphere, but as an alternative to the existence of a public sphere. Such a group chooses not to participate in the critiques that are internal to the public sphere. Given the means, it would replace the public sphere with something else—with its own practices of exclusion. And so it can only provide an external critique: such as the critique that the Klu Klux Klan offers occasionally, when this group parades

It is all too easy to conflate events in public places with public events... that is, with events that offer a public sphere arena of discussion and decision. However, once we start to ask questions about the controls placed on expression during an event, we can begin to see where a “public” place has been appropriated for the private interests of those with the means to exert these controls. The ability to recognize practices that constrain expression in a “public” event needs to be informed by a sociology of such events and expressions. Most events in public are scripted to the extent that the constraints on expression are fairly easy to see. Look at this particular video sequence as a private event, and imagine what role a stranger would find in it.

its vision of a “racially pure” community.

Even when this parade steps into the public



street, it does not by this spacial move become a legitimate counter-critique; it still does not offer an alternative public sphere. This may seem to be a fine distinction, but it is one that is well worth remembering. Although we may see such communal spectacles in public places, they do not, by their spatial availability, thus acquire legitimacy¹ as counter-public events. But then how does a community achieve this legitimacy?

-
1. The current debate about multiculturalism generally overstresses the hostility between communities and the public sphere, because it lacks an understanding of the process through which plural ethnic communities can all add their own unique flavors to the “public pie” while preserving their own traditions. Stuck in the “politics of identity” this debate fails to see that communities can surrender exclusivity while maintaining traditional practices. Of course there are many groups, such as fundamentalist religious groups, that may prefer their exclusions to internal participation within the public sphere. The conflicts between the active public sphere and these groups are real conflicts where the outcome requires the elimination of either the public sphere or the communal group.

call me “Korean”

The mostly Korean neighborhood in Higashi-kujo Kyoto uses Korean cultural forms—notably, dress, music, and food— to mark what I call an “ENclusive” group identity. An enclusive identity has abandoned exclusion as a moment in its formation and reproduction: it practices the exclusion of exclusion. An enclusive community welcomes strangers into a common identity based upon mutually articulated desires. All a stranger needs for membership is to want in.

The Korean neighborhood festival, the Higashi-kujo Madang is most visibly “Korean.” It speaks most directly (although in Japanese) to the conditions of being Korean in Kyoto. But it is not at all exclusive to Koreans, and it does not make a claim that Koreans have a privileged counter-public argument to make.

Many of the “Koreans” coming out in traditional Korean costume are not, in fact, Korean¹. They may be Japanese, they may be people from other nation-states.

-
1. The community has opened up the semantics of “Korean” to include anyone who feels the effects of exclusion in Kyoto. Anyone who sees the injustice of the continuing urban disgrace that the presence of a *buraku* makes of Kyoto can be “Korean”. Anyone who finds the exclusion of physically disabled from mainstream Japanese society to be offensive can be “Korean.” Anyone who sees the Japanese emperor as a figurehead for an essentializing Japanese national community that would exclude all others can be “Korean.” Even the odd ethnographer with a video camera can be “Korean.”

How many of these “Koreans” dressed up in stylized peasant clothing are actually “Korean” by their family history? Many of them are, but others are members of the neighborhood and of the city who have voluntarily “become” Korean to show their commitment to the neighborhood and its demonstration against economic and social injustice. Being “Korean” is a metonym for all people who feel excluded from Kyoto. Korean is the lowest of all local identities. Celebrating this celebrates the grotesque (dirty, dangerous, and most of all different) bodies that Koreans are supposed to have.

To be visibly, audibly, gustatorially “Korean” is to



reject a claim of Japanese cultural superiority. These festival moments of Korean-ness in Higashi-kujo Kyoto are moments when the group unburdens itself of the everyday load of Japanese cultural representations. To be Korean and laugh, to be Korean and speak out, to be Korean and have a life: this denies their exclusion from social life in Kyoto, but it does not, by this, affirm any traditionalist position on being Korean.

Internally the event also learned to be its own public sphere, its own radical dialogic democracy. The event is entirely run by openly recruited volunteers. It receives no funds from the city. It operates in a manner that is consciously oblique to other social organizations in the neighborhood, organizations that would reflect various historically embedded status differences.

“The notion of a counterpublic, by contrast, refers to a specifically modern phenomenon, contemporaneous with, and responding to, bourgeois and industrial-capitalist publicity. It offers forms of solidarity and reciprocity that are grounded in a collective experience of marginalization and expropriation, but these forms are inevitably experienced as mediated, no longer rooted in face-to-face relations, and subject to discursive conflict and negotiation” (Hansen 1993, xxxv-xxxvi).

Within the *madang* organization, women, men, Japanese, Koreans, physically-disadvantaged people, and any others who want to help are given positions of authority and responsibility. Each meeting is an open meeting. All comments were fully discussed. Precious hours are spent not on the details of the event, but to permit other voices their chance to speak. Marathon meetings are held where little was decided apart from the time and place of the next meeting. Still, there are times when decisions are made without full discussion, but these are later discussed for future procedural correction. The organization of the event is itself a three-month long event, a



showcase of democratic, inclusive¹ decision making.

Here, then, is a community where the moments of ENclusion interrupt moments of inclusion/exclusion. These are events where the commonalities of the group with the wider public are marked, where the internal differences between members are accepted, and where an internal democracy is built from which a critique of internal exclusions becomes possible. The organization is acutely aware of criticisms about its own inclusivity. In part because its central message is a respect for heterogeneity in the

1. Here is an example.

In 1994, I had volunteered to manage a photographic exhibit of the results of a project I had just initiated to encourage a collective expression of place-attachment (positive and negative) within Higashi-kujo. “Higashi-kujo no ima” (Higashi-kujo Today) was one of those “Day in the Life” projects where several photographers take photos on the same day. Only this project was done not by professional photographers but by 20 volunteer residents of Higashi-kujo, using donated panoramic cameras. At one of the organizing meetings, I suggested that an exhibit of some of the photographs from this project could be shown at the Higashi-kujo madang. The idea was well received, but some of the members from the executive committee went along with me later to a local tavern to nail down the specifics before the next meeting.

Most important for them was the issue of editorial control. There are many areas within Higashi-kujo where people just do not ever take photographs, and where people do not want to be photographed. The area's unmarked (but precisely known locally, and available nationally) stigmatized boundaries run like sulfurous streams through neighborhoods and even through buildings. Outsiders would not know these places, and might edit the show inappropriately. Also, in terms of the flavor of the event, it would not be appropriate to bring in outside editors, even if they had some sort of credentials in photography.

“Who would select these photos?” They asked me. I shared their concern, and had been puzzling over this question for some time. “Why not have the photographers pick their best shots?” I suggested. I found it a little curious that they had not themselves thought of this idea. But as soon as I said it, it was clear that there could be no other choice. With that, the photo exhibition was approved. Several of the outside visitors to the festival replied to a questionnaire that the photographs added content to their understanding of the neighborhood.

public sphere, it has taken great efforts to apply this rule within its own organization. Again, [The festival performs what it proposes](#).

One feature of festival organization and performance (and these are all one practice) that is different from that of other events, but similar to most “games” is that the festival *is* what it *does*, and it can only do what it is. To perform “heterogeneity” the festival encourages this internally. And to do this better next year, the festival finds new ways to foster this. The Higashi-kujo Madang creates, recognizes, and supports heterogeneity. Even though it consciously uses art forms that are labeled “traditional,” the Higashi-kujo Madang festival community does not consider itself to be a traditional¹ community.

The Higashi-kujo Madang community is an example of what I call a “public community.” Communities such as this have learned a lesson from the public sphere, they have internalized an active “public” sphere for their own decision process. This civics lesson may not be welcomed by those who desire elite status within the group, because it gives space to other voices. But it is a lesson that, when applied sufficiently, effects the community's claim to legitimacy

-
1. There are pronounced differences in the perception of “traditionality” as a feature of this event, differences that are most marked from the standpoint of generational position. Many of the original organizers are second-generation Koreans in Kyoto, and they were motivated by a desire to pass along a heritage of specifically Korean culture and history to their children. But the use of the event for outright cultural transmission is also open to critique internally, and several second-generation organizers admitted that the event's goals were multiple and focused more on the local situation than on Korean culture per se.

within a larger public sphere.

New, reflexive communities

A public community is a group that has reflexively acquired its own dialogic democracy, and that is engaged in the active public sphere. Such groups usually do the former in order to do the latter. Other groups (including most religious, and many ethnic groups) have little interest in the former, and so they have limited success in the latter. Unmonitored lists on the internet are a weak example of a public community (weak because identification with the group is, and should only be, weak, although the internet may also serve as one of many information media for public communities). Activist movements for the environment and for human or animal rights may acquire public community status. But this is also available to more “traditional” groups, providing they acquire the (above) reflexive “post-traditional” membership and decision-making practices¹. This is the real question facing many communities today: what are the consequences of internal democratic reform? Fundamentalism is a negative response to this potential change, and so groups may split on this issue into a fundamentalist revitalization movement that seeks to undo

1. Granted, such groups are rare today. The Higashi-Kujo Madang community is, in this way, quite remarkable. And one might ask why would a traditionalist group would care to do so. What is more likely than an established group transforming itself in this manner is for a new group to be formed that competes with the old group for membership. Change will come about when the older group fails to reproduce its membership, and so loses its ability to maintain its “traditional” authority.

whatever reforms had led the group to question its traditional authorities and a reform community that seeks to complete the transformation of the community into something more or less like a public community, although vestiges of traditional authority may prove recalcitrant against these reforms.

The lessons that a community internalizes from the wider public sphere also show the penetration of the community's own logic by that of the public sphere. One could argue that this penetration—this recoding of the traditional order—is an illegitimate intrusion into the community's traditional culture. And here is where cultural essentialists and critical social theorists are bound to have some disagreement.

For example, those who look at this process as leading to the loss of unique cultural traditions might be forced to overlook (equally unique) critiques of cultural groups as sites of social inequality. The preservation of practices that promote inequality (such as female genital mutilation) as a right of some tradition further silences those voices that have already been silenced within the community. To say that these so-called traditional practices cannot be critiqued because such critiques are not, themselves, traditional, means that those subject to this are silenced in the face of their own domination.

public sphere and multiculturalism

Taking the side of cultural essentialists, one could argue that a strong public sphere, particularly in the current global world system, would simply erase cul-

tural differences, and moot any claim of authentic multiculturalism. Why talk about cultural differences while the public sphere promotes global cultural uniformity? In answer to this argument, I would again return to Kyoto.

A public community like that of the Higashi-kujo Madang—where traditional cultural practices have been subjected to internal critiques that make them a part of the community's reflexively organized repertoire of cultural articulations—provides us with an alternative form of community, one where still-unique cultural practices are actively promoted but also actively critiqued *internally*.

It is this internal dialogic that opens up the community without surrendering its own unique logic and practices. In the process, these practices and their logics are stripped of their legacies of exclusion and inequality. This means that some “traditional” practices may not be preserved¹. What is abandoned are those practices that do not survive this internal reflexive critique. What remains are cultural contents that serve the entire community, and that the community can use to both articulate its uniqueness and its place in the larger public sphere.

One might be tempted to say that a public community is a relatively *weak* social group, in that it does not, and will not, rely upon some essentializing narra-

1. For if the preservation of a community's cultural practices is also an alibi for maintaining gender or other inequalities, then the stage is set for a confrontation between a strong public sphere and the interests of those in the community served by the maintenance of these inequalities.

tive that is above critique, from which it can build an exclusive right of membership. It lacks the rigid identity boundary that other, traditional, communities spend so much effort maintaining. In fact its membership will be more of a voluntary association, even where membership is predicated, in part, on a well-defined claim of heritage.

“Koreanness” means many things in Kyoto. Within the Higashi-kujo community this no longer connotes an essential blood-tie to Korean ancestry, although many individuals in the community can make this claim. It is the public desire to be “Korean” in Kyoto where this desire seems so improbable, that marks this community and its counter-public event.

Strong communities

Take a final look at the climax of the first Higashi-kujo Madang. Remember that the participants are all volunteers, and that the dance is spontaneous, although it realizes one of the goals of the event. This climactic reversal of the disciplinary space of the Japanese public schoolyard by a group of people who live literally on the margins of Kyoto shows the strength that a public community can have. Nothing like this had happened in Kyoto in as many years as people could remember. And if the event had been suppressed after this one performance, it would still have achieved its goal. For here we can see how [The festival performs what it proposes](#). It is through these moments of performance that a public community builds, and reflexively knows its strength.

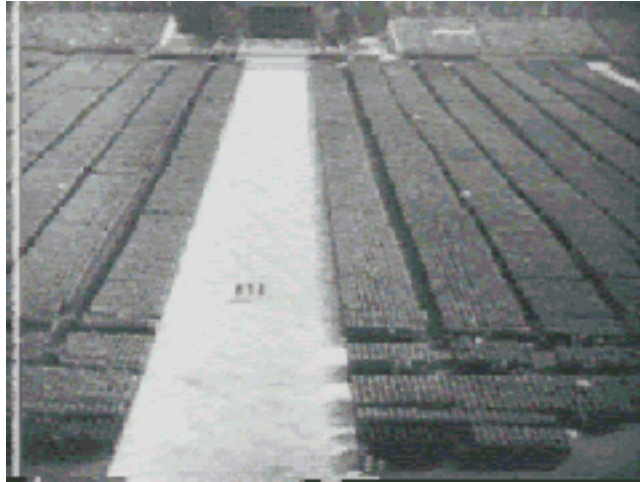
I would submit that the Higashi-kujo Madang



community, and public communities in general, are not weakened by their voluntary membership. They are strong enough to *not* make any boundary claim for membership, strong enough to welcome internal critiques, strong enough to open up to competing articulations, and strong enough to add its own cultural content and an additional critical apparatus to the public sphere. But again, the question would arise, is this still a “community” or has it become something else, say, a social movement?

Take a final look at his spectacle production, which in its own way exhibits the pinnacle of modern mass spectacle, and of communal terror. Here uniform obedience, and rigid conformity is used to show the strength of “the community” in order to further intimidate its own population and others. But strength here is a simple equation of armed might and enforced discipline. Such a group remains strong only as long as discipline can be enforced. And like a pyramid scheme, it promotes the interests of insiders by demoting the lives of others, a strategy that slowly uses up the resources of potential alterity. There is no possibility for inclusion in this community.

Something of both, I would say, returning to the



moments that define the community's practices. There is a moment when it celebrates its becoming a community, the moment of ENclusion. This is the time when it most resembles a traditionalist community. At this moment the group may front the same historical, ethnic practices as other, traditionalist communities. It may thus resemble a tradition-bounded group. However, by including strangers, it avoids the exclusionary logic of traditional communities. And in the next moment, when it opens up to an internal dialogic, when it creates the ground for inclusivity within the public sphere, it becomes something like a social movement.

Hundreds of hours of meetings, rehearsals, and conversations are all a part of producing the Higashi-kujo Madang. Before and after the event the conduct of these meetings and the performance of the festival is open to a variety of critiques. The potential for novelty is always present, and changes in the *madang geki* and other elements of the event are made until the last day.

Photo by author



These twin moments are managed internally by passing the traditional

practices through ongoing internal critiques, and also by evaluating these critiques not from the perspective of traditional authority, but rather by applying notions of equality either directly from the public sphere¹ or out of an experience of exclusion from the public sphere.

The combination of these two moments give a public community the cultural coherence of a traditionalist community and also democratic legitimacy within a public sphere. The place for ethnicity within the public sphere finds added legitimacy when ethnic communities choose to add this second moment of reflexive critique. In part this is so because it enables all individuals in the community to speak out, instead of reserving this right for a delegated few. And in part this is so because the resulting internal discourse has already become a “public” discussion within the group, and is now focused on concerns that are relevant to the wider public. The lessons that the group acquires from the public sphere are advanced through this internal discourse and so become lessons of value to

1. This brings up the larger problem of a bourgeois public sphere. What people learn from this type of public sphere are logics of fairness and equality that may be critiqued as exclusionary. The most visible example is gender inequality.

the public sphere. The student, often by painful necessity—the lack of justice teaches a harsh lesson—outpaces its tutor. The problem then becomes that of teaching the tutor to listen. And here is where festival performance becomes a tool, a tactic for reversing the lessons of exclusion.

The call for diversity within the public sphere is at once an opening to multiple voices and a demand for reflexive democratic processes that extend from the state to communities to the family. Through their own internal democratic struggles, public communities legitimize their collective voice within the public sphere.

something to say

Through their call for the respect of heterogeneity (*ishitsusei*) as a fundamental aspect of human rights, the Higashi-kujo Madang community opens a counter-public critique of Kyoto's (and Japan's) exclusively "Japanese" public sphere. Out of their experience of social, political, economic, and cultural exclusion from lifescapes in Kyoto, they have acquired a keen sense about practices that create exclusion while professing equality. The lessons they learned from the public sphere were lessons about *what not to do* when forming their own community. I would say that they learned these lessons very well, and the resulting Higashi-kujo Madang event and community is a civics lesson from the margin, a lesson of real value to other communities in Kyoto, Japan and elsewhere.

There remains a question that is large in the context of this work: why did the community organize

itself around a *festival*? And how did the festival create the space of the community? Above, I mentioned that Habermas's solution for the "degradation" of the public sphere was impaired by his inadequate (actually, it was more outdated) linguistics. So too, current theories of the consequences of modernity require a more adequate model of public spaces and public events and the expressive practices that put these two together in time and space on the street.

The practices and the lessons of Higashi-kujo are not only performing what they propose, and creating new expressive openings and counter memories for this neighborhood, they are useful in reflecting on how democracy requires its own performances. The above ex-position, like its festival object, is only the beginning of a longer, multi-site study of festivals in public—a topic from which cultural anthropology, cultural sociology, and cultural studies would all benefit.

Bibliography

- Althusser, Louis. 1986. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." in *Critical Theory since 1965*. Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle, eds. Tallahassee: Florida State University Press. Pp. 239-250. [Reprinted from *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, Ben Brewster, trans. New Left Books, 1971. Originally in French in *La Pensée*, 1970.]
- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London:Verso.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1987. "Decolonizing the Production of Culture: Cricket in Contemporary India." in *The Olympics and Cultural Exchange*. Shin-pyo Kand, John MacAloon and Robersto DaMatta, eds. Institute for Ethnological Studies, Hanyang University. Pp 163-190.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1990. "Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." in *Global Culture: Nationalism, globalization and modernity*. Mike Featherstone, ed. London: Sage. 295-310. p. 307.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1991. "Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transna-

- tional Anthropology." in *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Richard Fox, ed. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Aristotle. 1941. *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Richard McKeon, ed. New York: Random House.
- Aronowitz, Stanley. 1993. "Is a Democracy Possible: The Decline of the Public in the American Debate." in Bruce Robbins, ed. *The Phantom Public Sphere*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Pp. 75-92.
- Art into Life: Russian Constructivism 1914-1932*. 1990. Catalogue of an exhibit at the Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington. New York: Rizzoli.
- Avorn, Jerry L., et al. 1969. *Up Against the Ivy Wall*. New York: Atheneum Publishers.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1984. *Rabelais and His World*. Helene Iswolsky, Trans. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. [Originally in Russian as *Tvorchestvo Fransua Rable*. Moscow. Khudozhestvennaya literatura. 1965.]
- Barthes, Roland. 1982. "Myth Today." in Susan Sontag, ed. *A Barthes Reader*. New York: Hill and Wang. pp. 93-149. (Reprinted from *Mythologies*. Jonathan Cape, Ltd. 1972. Translated from *Mythologies*. Editions du Seuil. 1957.)
- Baudrillard, Jean. 1990. *Seduction*. Brian Singer, trans. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. 1990. "Modernity and Ambivalence." in *Global Culture: Nation-*

- alism, globalization and modernity*. Mike Featherstone, ed. London: Sage. 143-170.
- Bell, David and Gill Valentine. "The Sexed Self." in *Mapping the Subject: Geographies of Cultural Transformation*. Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift, eds. London: Routledge, 1995
- Benedict, Ruth. 1974. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. (Orig. 1946). New York.
- Berland, Jody. 1992. "Angels Dancing: Cultural Technologies and the Production of Space." in *Cultural Studies*. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler, eds. 38-55. London: Routledge.
- Best, Steven and Douglas Kellner. 1991. *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Bondi, Liz. 1993. "Locating Identity Politics." in *Place and the Politics of Identity*. London: Routledge. Pp. 84-101.
- Botsman, Dani V. 1992. "Punishment and Power in the Tokugawa Period." *East Asian History* 3. Pp. 1-32.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. R. Nice, trans. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990. *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. [Originally *Le Sens Pratique*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit. 1980.]

- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990a. *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology*. Matthew Adamson, Trans. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1991. *Language and Symbolic Power*. John B. Thompson, ed., Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson, trans. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1992. "Thinking About Limits." in *Cultural Theory and Cultural Change*. Mike Featherstone, ed. London: Sage. 37-50.
- Bourdieu, Pierre and Terry Eagleton. 1992. "Doxa and Common Life" *New Left Review*. Vol. 191. Jan/Feb. 111-121.
- Boyer, M. Christine. 1994. *The City of Collective Memory: its historical imagery and architectural entertainments*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press.
- Burford, Bill. 1992. *Among the Thugs*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Butler, Judith. 1989. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Calhoun, Craig. 1992. "Introduction." in Craig Calhoun, ed. *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Caillois, R. 1958. *Les Jeux at les Hommes*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Calvino, Italo. 1974. *Invisible Cities*. William Weaver, trans. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Canclini, Néstor García. 1995. "Mexico: cultural globalization in a disintegrating

- city." *American Ethnologist*. 22:4. Pp. 743-755.
- Caldiera, Teresa P.R. 1996. "Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation." *Public Culture*. 19. Winter. Pp. 303-328.
- Canetti, Elias. 1962. *Crowds and Power*. Carol Stewart, trans. New York: The Noonday Press. [originally *Masse und Macht*. 1960. Hamburg: Claasen Verlag.]
- Caron, Bruce R. 1978. *Spatial and Temporal Patterns in the Distribution of Hindu Festivals in Tamil Nadu*. University of Pennsylvania (unpublished M.A. Thesis)
- Caron, Bruce. 1993. "Magic Kingdoms: Towards a postmodern ethnography of sacred spaces." *Kyoto Journal* No. 25. Pp. 125-130.
- Caron, Bruce. 1997. "Transfusions of Modernity: Science and Blood in Modern Japan." *Kyoto Journal* No. 33. 116-125.
- Choi, Chungmoo. n.d. "Minjung culture and the construction of popular culture in Korea." mimeo copy. 28 pages.
- Coates, David, ed. 1990. *Shattering the Myth of the Homogeneous Society: Minority Issues and Movements in Japan*. Berkeley: Japan Pacific Resource Network.
- Cohen, Jean L. and Andrew Arato. 1992. *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

- Connerton, Paul. 1989. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cullen, Robert. 1991. "Report from Moscow: The Coup." *The New Yorker*. November 4. Pp. 54-67.
- de Certeau, Michel. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Steven Rendall, trans. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Debord, Guy. 1995. *The Society of the Spectacle*. Trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith. New York: Zone Books. [Originally published as *La société du spectacle*. 1967. Paris: Buchet-Chastel.]
- Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. 1983. *Anti-Oedipus*. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane, Trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. {Originally as *L'Anti-Oedipe*. 1972. Paris: Les Editions se Minuit.}
- De Vos, George and Hiroshi Wagatsuma. 1966. *Japan's Invisible Race: Caste in Culture and Personality*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dowling, Eric. 1997. "The Conservative Politics and Philosophical Moral Education in Japanese Schools." Posted to H-JAPAN@H-NET.MSU.EDU Mar 17 13:29:26
- Dumont, Louis. 1980. *On Value*. Proceedings of the British Academy. London: Oxford University Press.
- Durkheim, Émile. 1965. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Translated by

- Joseph Ward Swain. New York: The Free Press. (Originally printed in 1912 by Allen & Unwin.)
- Eguchi, Nobukiyo. 1995. "Festivals and the Reconstruction of Ethnic Identity among Koreans in Japan." Paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*.
- Elias, Norbert. 1978. *The History of Manners*. [The *Civilising Process*. Vol 1.] New York: Pantheon.
- Erven, Eugene van. 1992. *The Playful Revolution: Theatre and Liberation in Asia*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Falasca-Zamponi, Simonetta. [in press]. *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini's Italy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Field, Norma. N.d. "Beyond Envy, Boredom, and Suffering: Toward an Emancipatory Politics for Resident Koreans and Other Japanese." Photocopy.
- Field, Norma. N.d. "Resident Korean Literature and Japanese Postmodernity." Photocopy.
- Featherstone, Mike. 1991. *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*. London: Sage.
- Foucault, Michel. 1979. *Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison*. Alan Sheridan, trans. New York: Vintage Books. [Originally published as *Surveiller et Punir; Naissance de la prison*. Paris: Editions Gallimard. 1975.
- Foucault, Michel. 1990. *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1*. Robert Hurley, Trans.

- New York: Vintage Books. [Originally published as *La Volonté de savoir*. Paris: Editions Gallimard. 1976.]
- Foucault, Michel. 1991. "Governmentality." in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Edited by Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Translation from the Italian version transcribed and edited by Pasquale Pasquino, published in *Aut Aut* 167-8, September-December 1978. Originally a lecture given at the Collège de France in February 1978.] P. 104.
- Foucault, Michel. 1997. "The Birth of Biopolitics" in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*. Paul Rabinow, ed., Robert Hurley, et al, trans. New York: The New Press. Pp. 73-79.
- Fraser, Nancy. 1992. "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy." in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Craig Calhoun, ed. Cambridge: MIT Press. Pp. 109-142.
- Fukuoka, Yasunori 1996. "Koreans in Japan: Past and Present." Han Webpage. Reprinted from *Saitama University Review*. Vol.31, No.1.
- Fukuoka, Yasunori 1996a. "Beyond Assimilation and Dissimilation: Diverse Resolutions to Identity Crises among Younger Generation Koreans in Japan." Han Webpage. Reprinted from *Saitama University Review*. Vol.31, No.2.

- Fuss, D. 1989. *Essentially Speaking*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Garfinkel, Harold. 1984. *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Garnier, Tony. 1989. *Une Cité Industrielle: Étude pour la Construction des Villes*.
Introduction by Kriti Siderakis. New York: Princeton Architectural
Press.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1972. "Deep play: notes on the Balinese cockfight." *Daedalus*.
101:1-37.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of cul-
ture." in Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. pp.3-30.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1983. "Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought." in
Clifford Geertz. *Local Knowledge: Further essays in Interpretive Anthropol-
ogy*. New York: Basic Books, Inc. pp.19-35. Reprinted from *The American
Scholar*: Vol. 29, No. 2. Spring 1980.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1988. *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author*. Stanford:
Stanford University Press.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1984. *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the theory of structu-
ration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1985. "Time, Space, and Regionalisation," in *Social Relations
and Spatial Structures*. Derek Gregory and John Urry, Eds. New York: St.
Martin's Press.

- Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *Modernity and Self-Identity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1992. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1994. *Beyond Left and Right: The Future of Radical Politics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Goffman, Erving. 1963. *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the social organization of gatherings*. New York: The Free Press.
- Goffman, Erving. 1967. *Interaction Ritual*. New York.
- Goffman, Erving. 1971. *Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Goffman, Erving. 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1989. *The Theory of Communicative Action. Volume Two*. Thomas McCarthy, trans. Boston: Beacon Press. [Originally published as *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Band 2*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag. 1981.]
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1992. "Further Reflections on the Public Sphere." Thomas Burger, trans., in Craig Calhoun, ed. *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: MIT Press. Pp. 421-461.

- Hane, Mikiso. 1982. *Peasants, Rebels and Outcastes: The Underside of Modern Japan*. New York: Pantheon.
- Hansen, Miriam. 1993. "Foreword." in Negt, Oskar, and Alexander Kluge. *Public Sphere and Experience: Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. ix-xlii
- Harajiri, Hideki. 1989. *Zainichi Kankokujin no seikatsusekai [The lifestyle world of resident Koreans]*. Tokyo: Gubundou.
- Hartoonian, H.D. 1988. *Things seen and Unseen: Discourse and ideology in Tokugawa nativism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Harootunian, H. D. 1988a. "Visible Discourses/Invisible Ideologies." *South Atlantic Quarterly*. 87:3. Pp. 445-474.
- Havel, Vaclav. 1989. *Living in Truth*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Herzog, Peter j. 1993. *Japan's Pseudo-Democracy*. New York: New York University Press.
- Hirasawa, Yasumasa. 1992. "The Myth of Homogeneous Japan." *Focus* 20:7. Pp.5-6.
- Holston, James. 1989. *The Modernist City: an Anthropological Critique of Brasilia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Holston, James and Arjun Appadurai. 1996. "Cities and Citizenship." *Public Culture*. 19.Winter. Pp. 187-204.

- Hong, Wontack. 1994. *Paekche Korea and the Origin of Yamato Japan*. Seoul: Kudara International.
- hooks, bell. 1994. *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representation*. New York: Routledge.
- Huizanga, J. 1950. *Homo Ludens*. Boston: BeaconPress. Originally published in 1939.
- Hymes, Dell. 1975. *Breakthrough into Performance in Folklore: Performance and Communication*. Dan Ben-Amos and K. S. Goldstein, eds. Paris.
- Ivy, Marilyn. 1995. *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Jenks, Chris. 1993. *Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Kant, Immanuel. 1952. *Critique of Judgement*. J.C. Meredith, trans. London: Oxford University Press.
- Kerr, Alex. 1997. "Kyoto hates Kyoto." *Kyoto Journal* 33. Pp. 156-159.
- Kluge, Alexander. 1988. "On New German Cinema, Art, Enlightenment, and the Public Sphere: An Interview with Alexander Kluge." Stuart Liebman, interviewer. *October*. 46. 23-59.
- Kundera, Milan. 1980. *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*. Trans. Michael Henry Heim. London: Penguin. [Originally published as *La Livre du rire et de l'oubli*. 1979. Paris: Editions Gallimard.]
- Kundera, Milan. 1982. *The Joke*. Trans. by Michael Henry Heim. London: Pen-

- guin. [Originally published in Czechoslovakia as *Zert*. 1967.]
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. 1980. *Metaphors We live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Langer, Susanne K. 1972. "On the Mythological Mode." in Walter Capps, ed. *Ways of Understanding Religion*. New York: The Macmillan Co. pp. 303-308. (Reprinted from Susanne K. Langer. *Philosophy in a New Key*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1942.)
- Lebra, Takie Sugiyama. 1993. *Above the Clouds: Status Culture of the Modern Japanese Nobility*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Le Bon, Gustave. 1960. *The Crowd*. New York: Viking Press. [originally: 1895. *Psychologie des foules*. Paris]
- Lee, Changsoo. 1981. "Koreans under SCAP" in Changsoo Lee and George De Vos. *Koreans in Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 73-90.
- Lee, Changsoo. 1981a. "Ethnic Education and National Politics." in Changsoo Lee and George De Vos. *Koreans in Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 159-181.
- Lee, Changsoo and George De Vos. 1981. *Koreans in Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Lee, Changsoo and George De Vos. 1981. "The Colonial Experience, 1910-1945." in *Koreans in Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp.

31-57.

Lefort, Claude. 1988. "The Question of Democracy." in *Democracy and Political Theory*. David Macey, trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1966. *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lippmann, Walter. 1937. *The Good Society*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.

Lyotard, Jean-François. 1984. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Press. {Originally *La Condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir*. 1979. Paris: Les Editions de Minuit}.

MacAloon, John J. 1984. "Introduction: Cultural Performances, Culture Theory." in *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle*. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.

Marcus, George E. 1995. "The Modernist Sensibility in Recent Ethnographic Writing and the Cinematic Metaphor of Montage." in *Fields of Vision: Essays in Film Studies, Visual Anthropology, and Photography*. Pp.35-55. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Marcus, George E. and Michael M. J. Fischer. 1986. *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An experimental moment in the human sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Massey, Doreen. 1995. "Places and their pasts." *History Workshop Journal*. 39.

Spring. Pp. 182-192.

Mc Clelland, J.S. 1989. *The Crowd and the Mob*. London: Unwin Hyman, Ltd.

McMullin, Neil. 1988. "On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace: the Case of the Gion Goryou Cult." *History of Religions*. Pp. 270-293.

Mines, Mattison. 1994. *Public Faces, Private Voices: Community and Individuality in South India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mizuno, Naoki. 1994. "Kyouto ni okeru zainichi kankoku/chosenjin no rekishi: 1945 izen" [The Pre 1945 history of resident North/South Koreans in Kyoto] in *South/North Koreans living in Kyoto*. Kyoto City: International Exchange Association. Pp. 68-73.

MONBUSHO. 1997. "The model for Japanese education in the perspective of the 21st century: First report by the Central Council for Education" Japanese Government Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture (*Monbusho*).

Morgan, Sophia S. 1984. "Borges's 'Immortal': Metaritual, Metaliterature, Metaperformance." in John J. MacAloon, ed. *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals Toward a theory of Cultural Performance*. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues. Pp. 79-101.

Morris-Suzuki, Tessa. 1988. *Beyond Computopia: Information, Automation and Democracy in Japan*. London: Kegan Paul International, Ltd.

- Myerhoff, Barbara. 1979. *Number our Days*. New York.
- Neary, Ian. 1989. *Political Protest and Social Control in Pre-War Japan: the Origins of Buraku Liberation*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, Inc.
- Negt, Oskar, and Alexander Kluge. 1993. *Public Sphere and Experience: Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. [Originally published as *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung: Zur Organisationsanalyse von bürgerlicher und proletarischer Öffentlichkeit*. 1972. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag.]
- Noguchi, Michihiko. 1990. "Discrimination and the Buraku." in *Shattering the Myth of the Homogeneous Society: Minority Issues and Movements in Japan*. Berkeley: Japan Pacific Resource Network. Pp. 4-17.
- Oldenberg, Ray. 1991. *The Great Good Place: Cafés, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangouts and how they get you through the day*. New York: Paragon House.
- Parker, Richard G. 1991. *Bodies, Pleasures, and Passions: Sexual culture in contemporary Brazil*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Pharr, Susan. 1990. *Losing Face: Status Politics in Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Rabelais, François. 1990. *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. Burton Raffel, trans. New

York:W.W. Norton & Company.

Rabinow, Paul. 1995. "Science as a Practice: Ethos, Logos, Pathos." Revised from a paper given in Santa Barbara in 1995.

Rabinow, Paul and William M. Sullivan. 1987. "The interpretive turn: A second look." in Paul Rabinow and William M. Sullivan (eds.) *Interpretive Social Science*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Robertson, Jennifer. 1991. *Native and Newcomer: Making and Remaking a Japanese City*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sack, Robert David. 1992. *Place, Modernity, and the Consumer's World: A Relational Framework for Geographical Analysis*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins university Press.

Sansom, George. 1958. *A History of Japan to 1334*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Sansom, George. 1963. *A History of Japan 1615-1867*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 1992 "Nationalisms and Sexualities in the Age of Wilde." in *Nationalisms and Sexualities*. Eds. Andrew Parker, Mary Russo, and Patricia Yaeger. Pp. 235-245. New York and London: Routledge.

Singer, Milton. 1955. "The cultural pattern of Indian civilization." *Far Eastern Quarterly*. 15: 23-36

- Singer, Milton. 1958. "The great tradition in a metropolitan center: Madras," in *Traditional India*. Milton Singer (ed.). Philadelphia: American Folklore Society. pp. 140-82.
- Singer, Milton. 1984. *Man's Glassy Essence: Explorations in Semiotic Anthropology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Sontag, Susan. 1966. "The Anthropologist as hero." in *Against Interpretation and other Essays*. New York: Doubleday. Pp. 69-81.
- Staal, Frits. 1979. "The Meaninglessness of Ritual. *Numen*. Vol. 26. Pp.2-22.
- Stallybrass, Peter and Allon White. 1986. *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*. London: Methuen & Co.
- Thompson, E. P. 1993. *Customs in Common*. New York: The New Press.
- Turner, Victor W. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.
- Turner, Victor W. 1979. "Frame, Flow and Reflection: Ritual and Drama as Public Liminality." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*. Vol. 6/4. Pp. 465-499.
- Turner, Victor W. 1987. *The Anthropology of Performance*. New York: PAJ Publications.
- van Wolferen, Karel. 1990. *The Enigma of Japanese Power: People and politics in a stateless nation*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Wadsworth, Frank W. 1984. "'Rough Music' in The Duchess of Malfi: Webster's

- Dance of the Madmen and the Charivari Tradition." in John J. MacAloon, ed. *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle*. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, Inc. Pp. 58-75.
- Warner, Michael. 1993. "The Mass Public and the Mass Subject." in Bruce Robbins, ed. *The Phantom Public Sphere*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Pp. 234-256.
- Wazaki, Haruka. 1993. "The Urban Festival and Social Identity." in *Humanising the city?: social contexts of urban life at the turn of the millennium*. Anthony P. Cohen and Katsuyoshi Fukui, eds. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. Pp. 127-146.
- Wetherall, William. 1981. "Public Figures in Popular Culture: Identity Problems of Minority Heroes." in Changsoo Lee and George De Vos. *Koreans in Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 281-303.
- Weiner, Michael. 1989. *The Origins of the Korean Community in Japan: 1910-1923*. Atlanta Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press International, Inc.
- Willis, Paul. 1977. *Learning to Labour*. Farnborough: Saxon House.
- Wolfe, Alan. 1992. "Democracy versus Sociology: Boundaries and Their Political Consequences." in *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*. Michèle Lamont and Marcel Fournier. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 309-326.

- Wouters, C. 1988. "The Sociology of Emotions and Flight Attendants: Hochschild's 'Managed Heart.'" *Theory, Culture & Society* 6:2.
- Yamasaki, Masafumi. 1994. "Kyoto: its Cityscape Traditions and Heritage." in *PROCESS:Architecture*. 116.
- Yan, Mingee. 1988. *Ryokuzu no hana: Kankoku Madang Geki Shuu* [*The Flower of the Green Bean: A collection of Korean madang plays*]. Kyoto: Shiroutosha.
- Yoshida, Tomoyoshi, et al. 1994. "Kyouto no 'furyoujuutakuchiku'" [Kyoto's 'deficient residential districts']. *Kenchikubunka* 49:568. Pp. 152-157.
- Yurchak, Alexei. 1997. "The Cynical Reason of Late Socialism: Power, Pretense, and the Anekdot". *Public Culture* 9. Pp. 161-188.
- Zenkoku Zainichi Chosenjin Kyouiku Kenkyuu Kyougi Kai Kyouto [The Kyoto Branch of the National Resident-Korean Education Research Council] [aka: ZenChoKyouKyouto. 1993. *Zainichi no Ima—Kyouto hatsu* [Resident Koreans today—dateline Kyoto]. Kyouto: ZenChoKyouKyouto.

commentarium

Here is JAPAN

Here is Japan is a guidebook that was produced by the Asahi Broadcasting Company to “orient” foreign visitors to the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. Its editorial committee contained several of Japan’s most noted scholars and cultural analysts. The text is, of course, targeted not to the Japanese population, but rather with an aim of explaining this population to others. Again, within Japan, the most populous and durable “others” are the resident (zainichi) Koreans.

Here is JAPAN is a “native-ethnography” of Japan that was written from a desire to encapsulate the entire nation as a unique cultural place—a nation-state so unified by blood, history, and climate that its peoples live and think as one. It is filled with statistics and stories that seek to capture the essence of a Japanese mood of modernity. Thirty-two years later, these stories (in updated versions) still inform the Japanese school curriculum, and also governmental programs aimed at directing the self-projects of Japanese citizens.

One story speaks of the harmonious transformation of the nation from ancient farming to modern industry:

“We sow new seeds in ancient soil.
 For the secret is hidden in nature’s seasonal change of foliage.
 Wooden temples yield to baseball grounds;
 Castles bow to glass and concrete;
 Rice-fields embrace busy factories;
 And *Noh* masks peer into television sets.
 Forest creepers envy electric wires carrying power across the land,
 While huge trees are in awe at the soaring steel towers.
 Aged Buddhist statues still smile benignly
 At the age of movie stars.

All are Japan, the one no more an illusion than the other.

We grew with nature, we Japanese, as pliant as the cheerful trees.

Now we look upon what time has wrought—the fourth greatest industrial nation on earth.”

(n.p.)

The natural “flowering” of industrial modernization, through the careful husbandry of the Japanese state is seen here as bridging the contradictions that would otherwise attend this process: the trees are in awe of the steel towers, and the Buddha smiles (perhaps through a *Noh* mask) into the Trinitron TV tube.

Its prose and poetry offer up the Japanese islands as a nation-village-family-individual: a fractal Japan uniform and unique at all levels, bound by a single spirit and philosophy:

“The Japanese philosophy is deeply embedded in our individual consciousness, and it is a way of life we preserve through all the revolutionary changes of time... In a big family—whether of the nation or the individual—one’s own share necessarily is small....Virtue is expressed in mutual concessions.

The family feeling is continuous...Yet the concept is larger than the individual, and the family ultimately embraces the home, the place of work, society in general, the nation, and the geography of Japan itself.

...

Our houses are small. Yet even the humble family knows delicacy in food. Husbands work, celebrate a little with male friends, return to the love of the family circle. Wives bear and warmly rear the sweet children, chat with neighbors, study the arts or enjoy television. Small gifts express the appreciation of each other....” (n.p.)

This vision of an hermetically sealed island nation/family with a single national philosophy/heredity takes the imagined-nation concept described by Benedict Anderson (1983) to a level of detail rarely found in other nation/states. Those enabled to subscribe to this concept, through dint of birth, language, and education (Japanese public schools), are expected to inscribe its message on their bodies and practices.

Japan's Sister: the Girl:

“She astonishes us, the modern young girl who is our Sister. Breathing the air of democracy, she wants to be ‘more equal’ than anyone. Fiercely, she pursues university studies, or starts a career in offices, department stores, factories, and the professions. Her earning career usually begins earlier than those of young men, so her whims have great power over manufacturers. But the old virtues live in her; she is also tender, warm, accomplished in the graceful arts. Youth in its golden fling sometimes worries us. Yet we know our Sister is growing into the sensible wife and devoted mother who is the virtue of our Japan.”

(Here is Japan, 1964)



This nationalization of lifestyle contributes greatly to the lack of available individual lifestyle imagination. To fit into this national imagination—this second skin of nationality—not only requires assuming the epic history of the nation as that of one’s own past, but also, subscribing to a lifetime of practices, from cram schools and national exams, to drinks and sex out with office mates, or

classes in *ikebana* (flower arranging) with “the girls.”

**Japan's Mr. Average:
the White-Collar Man:**

We understand him, and love him, our representative White-Collar Man. The visitor might find him baffling: well-educated, even sophisticated, open to new ideas and new ways, yet suddenly curiously naive and sentimental. He aspires, through a company career, to the full life in the modern sense. For this, he will endure the wearying crush of the overburdened commuter trains twice a day. Dutiful husband—he often defers to his wife—good father, hardworking, he still has extra vitality for active leisure.

(Here is Japan 1964, n.p.)



Daily practices thus acquire a (curiously) patriotic cachet, and so commuting for three hours a day with half a million others is not just a personal circumstance, but a collective—national—duty. To refuse, to

complain, to allow the shadow of dissatisfaction¹ to cross one's face, is to also step outside of the national circle.

Japan's Hope: the Student:

The Student is our future. He is complex and uncertain today. The moods and rebellions of young people all over the world are known to him through his studies and growing international contacts. The Student feels responsibility for his country. When moved to political protest, he may resort to mass demonstrations. But we have faith in him. He studies harder than most of the world's young people; great personal sacrifices are made to meet the challenge of severe examinations. The Student knows his life is still to come. He prepares for it thoroughly.”
(*Here is Japan*, 1964, n.p.)



What is missing from this national family are the governmental and corporate institutions and executives who make the big and little decisions about its course and future. This vision of a homogeneous national community hides “Japan’s father: the bureaucrat.”

-
1. Dissatisfaction is expressed, but in private, or when drinking, as the drink becomes an excuse for shifting the frame of conversation beyond the limits of self control. In Kyoto, drinking is a ready alibi for raised voices, exaggerated expressions, and behaviors that would usually be frowned upon in public—anecdotally this includes punching out your boss. Getting drunk means never having to say your sorry. It is an extremely useful social solvent in Kyoto, but its use as such is restricted to males.

commentarium—Here is Japan

Japan's Mother: the Housewife:
The Housewife is the heart of our world. As bride, mother, and wise grandmother she is the warm link between many generations. Her ways changed with equality in modern Japan. The voice of the Housewife today is an economic force, influencing consumer prices. Desire for privacy with her own husband and children accelerates the trend toward living in apartments. As new appliances free her from pre-war drudgery, the Housewife, too, influences leisure patterns. Fashionable, intelligent, in formed, she is even more vital in the lives of husband, children, and grandchildren amid today's changing Japan.

[Here is JAPAN](#) 1964, n.p.
GOTO NEXT ROLE



—5—

And what is also missing are the other people, the strangers who cannot acquire the naturalized national lifestyle, because it, like the land itself, comes from

HERE.

Japan's Brother: the Worker:
“When Japan began to industrialize, our Brother, the Worker, had two great inherited assets: the Farmer's diligence and a magnificent tradition of handicraft dexterity. Today, the Worker builds mammoth ships faster and cheaper than anyone else. The Worker stood in the ruins of defeated Japan, bent his back, and rebuilt the industrial structure to current heights astonishing the world. Today, too, he raises his voice through the trade union movement, and contributes his thoughts and opinions to free society.”

[Here is JAPAN](#)
GOTO FIRST ROLE



The model Japanese roles described in Here is

JAPAN are now a generation old, and wearing thin, even among those who might have been the most eager to acquire them thirty years ago. “Japan's Mother: the Housewife” as an image of the modal life-style goal is not simply removed from the daily realities of working women in Kyoto, but that the conditions of their employability further push them into circumstances where the imagination of a chaste, dutiful housewife becomes exotic to the life-style imagination.

“...they [the Japanese] were not earthlings, but native to this star [Japan]. Faces were kin to each other in a gentle absence of expression.”
[Visit to a Green Star](#) 1964¹.

Korean youth in Kyoto can only fail if they try to be “Japan's Hope: The Student,” or even “Japan's Brother: The Worker.” If we center these positions according to entrance into Japan's universities or the workforces of its major production companies—these are goals that young Koreans learn not to desire. Only “Japan's Sister: The Girl” remains available to young Korean women, and then only because these positions are already reduced to the dominated gender² in Kyoto.

The gendered aspect of each of these roles is not superficial. *The Student* is male; so too *The Worker*. Women in Kyoto face a life where public life and public space is still coded by, of, and for men. But these spaces and lives are also coded as Japanese, and

-
1. “Visit to a Green Star” is a short story that was included in *Here is Japan*, as an allegory of a visit to Japan. The self-distancing of this place, this Japan/Green Star, from the Earth narrativizes the nativist movement in Japan, that has in many ways tried to separate the archipelago from the Chinese mainland, and then from the West.
 2. There is no “Japan's Brother: The Boy.” A male who does not achieve a career as a skilled worker, or better, a *salaryman* (white-collar) position, has failed to enter into a valued position within the national family.

Korean's need not apply.

But then it is not also easy for Japanese youth to acquire these same positions within the “national” family today. Jobs are scarce, and competition for university entrance has become a mind-numbing struggle with few winners. Many more students and their families cope with a life of expectations that has suddenly, and unalterably, become diminished¹ by a disappointing outcome in the competition for school admission. But enough Japanese youth do acquire the positions so revered in the national narratives of life-style success that this success—for all of its continuing difficulties (the life of a salaryman or his housewife is not an easy one)—gets reproduced as a general goal. And outside of these generalizable, but ultimately personal life-style paths, Japanese youth can also count on continual reminders of their responsibilities to community and the state.

This comment threads into the next, another portion of Here is JAPAN. [Visit to a Green Star](#)

-
1. More than half of the students in my classes in fairly prestigious private Japanese universities (Ritsumeikan and Doshisha) were profoundly disappointed in their failure to be accepted to their first-choice level universities (such as Tokyo or Kyoto universities). By the time they were sophomores, they knew precisely which companies would be recruiting them, and for what type of jobs. Their future life-styles were fixed beyond their control. By 1994, however, most companies were cutting back on hiring, and so a proportion of these students would soon find themselves in the limbo of having graduated and not being employed.

by Sakyo Komatsu
in Here is JAPAN, 1964.
Asahi Broadcasting Corporation, Osaka. n.p.
[COMMENTS follow the text of the story.]

The shock of the landing had made him breathless. It had been a long journey from earth. Now, for the second time, he had landed safely on what he remembered as the “Green Star” isolated on the frontiers of solar civilization.

There will be, he thought, the quiet villages beside their crystal streams amid the neatly-cultivated fields. Only the birds twittering will disturb the music of the people enjoying their old dances and folk songs when the day’s work is done. The shrines to the ancient gods will be fresh with flowers, and the immemorial rhythms of an agricultural race will leave the mysteries of nature unviolated.

But it was not to be like that this time. As he stepped to the ground from his space vehicle, he saw the tall buildings challenging the blue skies. Traffic hummed beneath a network of monorail trains; automatic conveyer systems threaded in and out of factories. He was looking at a passing helicopter when the Old Man came up to him, and said:

“How nice to see you again, my friend from earth”.

The Man from Earth gestured helplessly. “What has happened”, he said. “What are all these changes?”

“New seeds were brought from earth”, the Old Man answered. “Thanks to them, we now have prosperity, as you see”.

“Seeds?” The Man from Earth was puzzled. “What seeds? Wheat? Or maybe sunflowers?”

The Old Man only smiled as he guided the Man from Earth into the fashionable lounge.

“Where is the lovely and peaceful green star I knew before?” the visitor asked angrily. “Where is the beauty of sunlight on the golden seas of ripening rice? Have you thrown away the exquisite fabrics of your festival robes? Does the festival drum no more call the people to their simple and happy pleasures?”

The Old Man was still smiling. “All these things we still have”, he answered gently. “At home, I take off the earthling’s clothes and go back to the comfortable old ways”.

“Then I will find the tranquil atmosphere I appreciated so much on my last visit?”

“Of course”.

“Where, in all this concrete, glass, and busy machines? How can the old customs not wither and decay under the smoke and grime?”

The Old Man gestured at the window. “Look outside, and you will see all the things you desire,” he said.

The Man from Earth sneered. “You are joking”, he said. “I see only the same sights of industrial-

ized earth and our colonial stars. These are the things I fled”.

“You cannot see”, the Old Man mumbled sadly. “Because you are so new from earth, you cannot see there is no difference between the old and new. Stay a little longer than you did before. Then you will come to understand”.

The Man from Earth did not answer. But as the days went by, he began to see the details in the streets far below his room on the fourteenth floor of a new hotel. The people came into focus; they were not earthlings, but native to this star. Faces were kin to each other in a gentle absence of expression.

Change, too, was so much faster in the city about him. As a plant mushrooms in a hothouse, the city was growing faster than his eyes could record. Where there had been one factory, now there were two. His hotel had been 14 stories; now it had silently risen to 15, and atop the new height sprouted a roof-garden where there had been only a roof.

Perhaps the whole city was a growing entity, threatening to swell and expand until it floated, freely, skyward. Already the breezes played among the higher buildings.

When the Old Man came back to visit, he spoke with amusement “Soon Will come the season of wind and fire. You will understand everything soon”.

For the Man from Earth had not noticed the brief mention in his guide book of the season of violence. He knew it when the typhoon-like winds howled about the city, dumping their freight of rains until floods raged through the streets. The ground began to shake as volcanoes spewed aloft their fiery rocks and white hot lava rained down on the Green Star city. In flood, fire and earthquake, the city shook like a tortured ship in merciless seas. The Man from Earth killed his fear with sleeping pills....

Twittering birds were the sound of the morning. He was no longer in a luxurious hotel room. His bed was the grass beside a humble hut. “What fantasy is this?” he wondered, as he stood up to look where the city had been. There was only fire seared earth between the beds of solidified lava and flood-borne mud.

“Now what do you think?” The voice was that of the Old Man, smiling at him from nearby.

“This is awful”, the Man from Earth said. “Can such things happen?”

“Awful?” asked the Old Man. “We shall see”.

The full warmth of the sun touched the earth. More birds sang, and tiny plants began to sprout from the ravaged land. People appeared, seemingly from the naked earth itself. They bent their backs, working the land. Their songs rose to mingle with the music of the birds. Between each blink of his eyes, the Man from Earth saw first the fields turning golden with ripening rice; then the simple villages building in the valleys; and after, the colourful costumes of the people at a gay festival to celebrate the success of their labour.

“This is what you saw five years ago, isn't it?” the Old Man asked. “It had not really disappeared, had it?”

The Man from Earth made no reply. He watched the rice harvested, and the land plowed anew, and fresh seeds sown. Villages grew into towns, and from some of the buildings came the sounds of

simple machinery where only hands had worked before. The buildings grew taller, and just as the natural seeds yielded foods, the mechanical seeds gradually sent out new ribbons of roads; conveyer belts once more ran among the factories; and through the air flew machines to rival the traffic humming along the ground. Once more the great city lived, served by the people.

“Perhaps you understand now”, the Old Man said. “This sight is no different from the previous ones, either”.

The grass hut beside which the Man from Earth had awoken from the night of violence already was a cement and glass luxury hotel. He was back on the fourteenth floor.

“It must be fantasy”, he muttered. “Is this repeated every year?”

“We are not repeating”, the Old Man said. “The storms, the pastoral scene, and this urban community are all the same. Our civilization encompasses all the fundamental elements you have just experienced. Our world is an agricultural community, and our civilization is like that of flowers. I do not say which is better, your civilization of earth or ours. I only say that this is our way...”

When the Man from Earth prepared to leave, he looked back once more at the Green Star city that had seemed to be so much like the life he knew at home. But now he saw the different levels all at the same time—the modern factories inspired by earth, yes; but also the fields of golden rice and the diligent people, between the onslaughts of storm, affectionately caring for their land and its produce. And he knew they would be singing in their festivals as long as the towns bred new towns, just as the pollens renewed the cycles of the plants.

COMMENT

We are given a tour of the Green Star (Japan), a planet separate from, although at times and places resembling, the Earth. A traveler returns. He had visited this place in year's past, and is, perhaps, also implicated in the bringing of the “new seeds” from earth. With these seeds on such soil, the flowers that blossom are factories and high-rise hotels, which, as all flowers do, reproduce themselves as seeds, when the storms (typhoon) and the earthquakes rock the planet. And the peoples themselves, in touch with the same land, grow their rice as joyously as they labor in the factories.

“It is changing so swiftly, this mid-twentieth century Japan that you, the visitor will see. For the Japanese themselves, the pace of change is so swift that they sometimes wonder what they have lost, what they have gained, and what the final balance will be...”

Introduction to the [Visit to a Green Star](#) in the book [Here is JAPAN](#), 1964, n.p.

Who are these people? “...they were not earthlings, but native to this star. Faces were kin to each other in a gentle absence of expression.” Their common immutable, and non-transferable status has left them with the same face, and a face characterized by a collective absence of expression.

And the visitor (perhaps something of an anthropologist) longs to see the village festivals: He asks the Old Man, “‘Where is the beauty of sunlight on the golden seas of ripening rice? Have you thrown away the exquisite fabrics of your festival robes? Does the festival drum no more call the people to their simple and happy pleasures?’”

The idea of discarding the past to accommodate the present is presented as a flawed strategy, where what is tossed out is more precious than anything that can be acquired. And so the epic history of the place does not and cannot give way to a novelistic time of modernity.

Here is a tale of an peculiar form of modernity that grows as naturally as flowers from the soil and from the soul of this place and its kin-connected people—a modernity that is at once ancient and new. The myth of a shared agricultural lifestyle of mutual suffering and the shared joy of a good harvest is presented as fully transferable to the construction of cities and the nation itself.

The Old Man puts it this way: “...Our civilization encompasses all the fundamental elements you have just experienced. Our world is an agricultural community, and our civilization is like that of flowers. I do not say which is better, your civilization of earth or ours. I only say that this is our way...”

“...I only say that this is our way.” The traveler must remember his place. He cannot know fully the unified but hidden philosophy that drives the locals to do what is bred in their nature to do. And so he, and they, cannot bring this philosophy and its consequent practices into a discursive arena of judgement and potential reform.

The myth of nation thus seals itself and its people into a silence that cannot easily be fractured. Note here that the buildings and the helicopters are from seeds brought from Earth, although on the Green Star they do not create the troubles and the discontinuities that modernity brings to Earth. Here they are liable to the ravages of nature, and to the seasons that all seeds obey.

“You cannot see”, the Old Man mumbled sadly. “Because you are so new from earth, you cannot see there is no difference between the old and new...!” The naturalizing influences of Japan’s racial/cultural heritage is presented as strong enough to change without changing. And so to alter change itself, from the discontinuities of modernization into a change that only reasserts the unchanging nature of the place and its people. Because of its (unique) soil, climate and people, Japan is the place that changes without changing.

Women in Kyoto from an early age can earn many times the minimum wage through work in the local sex industry. In Kyoto the sex industry is filled with part-time female workers who also may be students, office workers or housewives. Ms. Jones¹, one of the Madang organizers (a woman who teaches at a night school, and whose students, she offered, sometimes talk to her about their experiences in the sex industry) said to me, "I hear that in the US there is a huge gap between women who do this and women who don't. That is totally unrealistic. Everything is all mixed up when it comes to sex. So why not make some money, too?"

The growth of the sex industry within Japan and organized sex tourism to other countries is a feature of modernity in Japan that deserves much more careful attention. A brief history of the sex industry in modern and premodern Japan is available in *Positions* 5:1. 1977; a special issue, "The comfort women: colonialism, war, and sex."

Of course, the above type of response moves the problematic of sexual services into economic terms, where the definitions of opportunity and exploitation

-
1. The names used to designate local persons who advised me or participated in the event and who desired to remain anonymous are chosen randomly from English names. Why English names? I have avoided using Korean names as these tend to be few in number (Kim, Lee, etc.) and might resemble an possible name. Many of the Koreans I worked with in Japan have a Japanese name they use when this is convenient. But these names are also loaded as signifying the inability to use the real, Korean name. English will have to do.

could be determined by the amount of profit that the sexual worker should share in, and the rights of the worker to determine the conditions of their labor (and to say "no" at times). It also points to the lack of such sexual services for (instead of by) women in Kyoto, and to the use of commodified sexuality as one of the markers of the public sphere as a male and masculinized space.

Entry into a Japanese home built on the pre-modern plan requires that the visitor open the door, announce their presence and wait inside in the entryway (*genkan*). The Kyoto *genkan* entryway has great metaphorical utility, as it symbolizes both social and economic status. To be invited up into the house from the entryway is to assume a status equality (at least) with the house's owner. I was told more than once that in Kyoto a new neighbor may not get past the *genkan* of their more established neighbor for three or more generations. In a discussion over the plan devised by Kyoto University for the city of Kyoto, a plan to tear down the illegal structures in 40 *banchi* and replace these with an public housing apartment complex, the architect spent several minutes describing the aesthetic qualities of the new structure, stressing the fact that they all have balconies. "Take away the balcony," one 40 *banchi* resident responded, "and give us a *genkan*!"

Governmentality

“As already mentioned several times, it is very important to cultivate a sense of justice and fairness that is impressed by good acts and repelled by bad ones, an attitude of willingness to put this sense of justice into practice, a sense of consideration for others, a sense of respect for life and human rights, a spirit that is moved by beautiful things and a willingness to engage in volunteer activities.

In addition, in the context of school education, there is a particular need to activate the qualities required for group living and to make still further efforts to cultivate an ethical perspective as embodied in basic social morality and social awareness expressed in, for example, the acquisition of rules for the formation of desirable human relationships or social living...”

(MONBUSHO 1997)

The connection between the cultural imaginations and the bodies of persons residing in a nation-state with the social programs of the modern state has become a key area of debate about the qualities of and changes within modernity itself. Foucault (1991) used the transformation of this connection via a change in what he called “governmentality” to mark the advent of modernity. The invention of modern “populations” and of a “pastoral” governmentality informs his description of modern nation-state creation.

In this perspective, the state is the shepherd that watches over his (gender marker intentional here) national population flock, with an eye to maximal productivity including the reduction of maverick individualities. The techniques required to perform this state function were provided by instrumental advances in statistics and surveillance, and the development of disciplinary regimes (in barracks, factories, schools, and prisons). These instruments work to the advantage¹ of the state and against the interests of a collective, public (democratic) control over the state.

It is not at all unusual in current nation-states for governments and corporations to offer advice about

1. The advantage that these modern instrumentalities provide to the state is one of the principal reasons why [State-nation modernity](#) is as durable as it seems to be.

and models for the social behavior of their citizens/workers. In 1996 in the United States a new think-tank was created to ponder a decline in “civility” within the nation’s population. The Penn National Commission on Society, Culture and Community at the University of Pennsylvania focuses the talents of several dozen experts on issues of uncivil public behavior, the failure of leadership and the fragmentation of communities (See: www.upenn.edu/pnc). Its findings are meant to inform public policy at the national level.

The agencies of mass, popular education in virtually every modern state have been seen as venues within which to teach basic social values. In Japan, the Ministry of Education (*monbusho*) takes the lead role in pursuing this use of the national public education system. As in many other nations, social values are also then described as proper to the citizens of that nation: the individual is taught how to behave within a national community of fellow citizens.

At the same time, as Walter Lippmann pointed out back in 1937 (262-263), education in a democracy must also take place outside of government-controlled schools and market-led journals in order for the citizenry to avoid the tautology of trying to govern the state and the market with only the knowledge that the state and the market provide to them. A “...democracy,” he noted, “must have a way of life which educates the people for the democratic way of life” (Lippmann 1937, 263).

“The concern with lifestyle, with the stylization of life, suggests that the practices of consumption, the planning, purchase and display of consumer goods and experiences in everyday life cannot be understood merely via conceptions of exchange value and instrumental rational calculation. The instrumental and expressive dimensions should not be regarded as exclusive either/or polarities, rather they can be conceived as a balance which consumer culture brings together. It is therefore possible to speak of a calculating hedonism, a calculus of the stylistic effect and an emotional economy on the one hand, and an aestheticization of the instrumental or functional rational dimension via the promotion of an aestheticizing distancing on the other. Rather than unreflexively adopting a lifestyle, through tradition or habit, the new heroes of consumer culture make lifestyle a life project and display their individuality and sense of style in the particularity of the assemblage of goods, clothes, practices, experiences, appearance and bodily dispositions they design together into a lifestyle”
(Featherstone 1991, 86).

What distinguishes the nation-formation programs in state-nation modern societies is an additional magnitude of imagined *national* commonality; an intimate, normalized, national *lifestyle*. Lifestyle patterns in nation-state societies tend to be distributed among and informed by non-governmental societal groups or by the (increasingly transnational) marketplace [see also: [State-nation modernity](#)].

Under nation-state modernity, the state (central and/ or local) may inform popular instruction in “social values.” By this, the state provides *inputs* to social behavior, or supplies social/legal *constraints* that hedge in social behavior. Under conditions of state-nation modernity, instruction extends from lessons on social morality, to actual lifestyle behaviors—informing the behavioral outcome itself. Proper behavior becomes unmarked as correctly learned, nationally coded—and naturalized—and normal(ized) behavior. Individual variations in behavior become marked as both unnatural, and un-national. The potential level of behavioral uniformity is much greater than that possible under conditions of nation-state modernity, where competing group identities mark conflicting behaviors. The central state under state-nation modernity has available to it the instrumentalities of what Foucault called “biopolitics,” which first combined in the “endeavor...to rationalize the problems presented to governmental practice by the phenomena characteristic of a group of living human beings constituted as a population: health, sanitation, birthrate, longevity,

race..." (1997, 73). Here I would also add "social behavior" as this is linked to populations. Issues of the margins of population behavior, that is, of criminality and insanity, can be shunted to penal and medical expert systems, but the problem of informing the norms for behavior still remain, and the remaining question becomes that of territory: should the state monitor, control and inform a normative behavior for the nation's population?

*lifestyle and state-nation
modernity*

One of the features of State-nation modernity, a feature that is only an extension of the state-nation governmentality in this area, is that the state takes upon itself the task of training the social behavior of its population. Mass public education is pursued not simply to provide social and cultural literacy, but also a moral education. And a central task of this training involves interactions within the economy: i.e., lifestyle.

"Schools should develop a form of education in which there is an appropriate balance between knowledge, morals and physical health and should aim to cultivate people who are imbued with a rich sense of humanity and a strong and vigorous physique" (Monbusho report 1997).

The state under conditions of state-nation modernity will articulate its plans for national life-style goals (a notion that would not even occur to states under conditions of nation-state modernity) through state programs for the environment, sports, the arts, leisure, education, health and welfare, etc. National costumes and traditional forms of music and dance also receive state support.

Such fine-scale control over individual lives and life-styles have been reported in the former Soviet Union, and elsewhere, and have been accomplished in various degrees in all nations where state-nation modernity has developed. In fact there is no better

example of biopower than in projects of the state where the spaces and times and practices of individuals at work, at home, and at play become interests of the state.

There are also places where such projects of the state are mostly absent. Spaces where state governmentalities do not penetrate into the intimate spheres of life. But if the state does not exert control in these areas of life, what and who will govern the self?

Projects of the self

In *Modernity and Self Identity*, Anthony Giddens explores the connections between globalized (and -izing) processes of modernity and an emerging politics based upon lifestyle choices, rather than on broader social change. His writings about “life politics” describe the emergence of this under conditions of what he calls “late-modernity.” In fact, this emergence is one of the hallmarks of late- (he prefers this to post-) modernity. In the following, he lays out his notion of life politics, and links this to practices centered on “the reflexive project of the self.”

“Life politics presumes (a certain level of) emancipation, in both the main senses noted above emancipation from the fixities of tradition and from conditions of hierarchical domination. It would be too crude to say simply that life politics focuses on what happens once individuals have achieved a certain level of autonomy of action, because other factors are involved but this provides at least an initial orientation. Life politics does not primarily concern the conditions which liberate us in order to make choices: it is a politics of choice. While emancipatory politics is a politics of life chances, life politics is a politics of lifestyle. Life politics is the politics of a reflexively mobilised order—the system of late modernity—which, on an individual and collective level, has radically altered the existential parameters of social activity. It is a politics of self-actualisation in a reflexively ordered environment, where that reflexivity links self and body to systems of global scope. In this arena of activity, power is generative rather than hierarchical. Life politics is lifestyle politics in the serious

and rich sense discussed in previous chapters. To give a formal definition: life politics concerns political issues which flow from processes of self-actualisation in post-traditional contexts, where globalising influences intrude deeply into the reflexive project of the self, and conversely where processes of self-realisation influence global strategies" (Giddens 1991, 214).

Giddens contends that the interface between the individual (person) and the global is now the primary locus for identity politics, a situation in which the nation-state is no longer a key player. In part this is so because individuals have been reflexively re-imagining their locales away from the nation (and so, living in and identifying with cities and neighborhoods instead of nations), and in part this is because the effects of modernization have eroded nation-state sovereignty and boundedness. Present-day concerns about the environment, human rights, disease, and gender equality do not admit to national boundaries, and global flows of ideas and cultural artifacts re-place national varieties in most locations.

However, while Giddens here refers to modernity in the singular, and seems to be comfortable with the idea that life politics has a currency and a positive valence at the global scale, I would argue that the emergence of a life-politics in any locale can be correlated to the presence of nation-state modernity at that locale. In those places under state-nation modernity conditions, the state remains the dominant cultural institution, and the nation its dominant idiom. And in those places, a "reflexive project of the self" as a group phenomenon would be liable to a critique that this is interfering with the state's ability to plan for the lifestyle futures of the nation.

Curiously, insurance is one area where both risk avoidance and participation in risk become possible. In Japan, and so in Kyoto, government and corporate responsibility (and thus economic liability) are far less well acknowledged in laws and in the courts. This means that individuals (citizens and consumers) generally assume a greater share of the economic/physical risk of their relationships with the government or corporations. There are festivals in Japan (none like this in Kyoto, however) where physical risk is extreme, and where serious bodily harm or death is not unusual. For example, there are a number of *kenka matsuri* (“fighting festivals”) in Shikoku where massive portable wooden shrines (*omikoshi*) are lifted by dozens of carriers and then smashed into one another in the street. Physical injury and even death is not uncommon. Voluntary participation in such events requires that the individual participant acknowledge and accept this risk.

Actually the issue of the place of aesthetics is central to the entire modern/post-modernist debate. Let me lay out only a brief overview. There are two radically competing images of modernity at work in the theory. The first is tied to Weber's description of the modern project as one which divides knowledge in to three spheres: scientific, juridical and artistic. These three are then the fields for three types of expert systems (science, courts, and cultural/artistic). One result of this is the monopoly of aesthetic "taste" in the hands of cultural-knowledge experts, and its removal from popular culture ([Habermas 1983, 8-9](#)). In this way, modernity also creates types of knowledge expert (and forms of knowledge) that are artificially limited each to only one sector. It is this description/prescription of modernity that Habermas uses as a foil to revive modernity as a project that can unify all fields of knowledge. But if the future of modernity as a project requires a fundamental revision of its description, is this not a kind of post-modern modernity? Or did Weber get it wrong in the first place?

This brings up the second view of modernity, one in which the "forgotten masses" reemerge, both as consumer targets of the culture industry and as low-rent aesthetes on their own. For, while science and law have been relatively successful in managing their expert cultural production, when it comes to art, everyone is an expert (in their own minds). And aes-

thetics, the valuation of the *images* of things, becomes a second life, not of people, but of objects.

The “peopling” of the lifeworld with aesthetically charged objects brings the “cultural dimension” to the fore, and the cultural capital invested into the “games” of distinction becomes a major stake in everyday life-style planning. Here the danger is from the institutions of cultural production that find themselves in an avant-garde position not only for their own internal game, but also vying to stay in the forefront of mass cultural commodity production; coupled with a global availability of cultural products. The stakes involved in the aesthetic “wing” of modernity threaten to override the rationality available from within science and law, creating a population obsessed with their relationship to aestheticized objects--including their own bodies. For identity with and through the body is itself colonized in this process (as it is also for the *expert* aesthete, who at least makes a career of this).

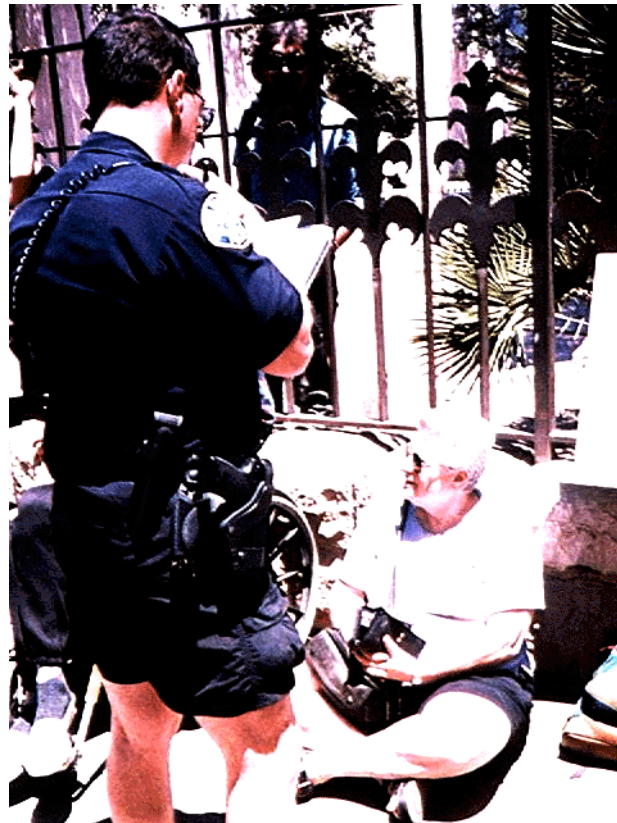
Claiming that aesthetic reason trammels moral and instrumental reason in the individual, Daniel Bell [see [\(Habermas 1983, 6-7\)](#)]--and also David Harvey ([Harvey 1989, 18-19](#))--conclude that modernity has gone beyond its own limits. It has become a type of postmodernity, which, depending upon who is doing the critiquing, is either a dangerous wrong turn or a runway to another mode of modernity. In either case the engine taking us down this tarmac is capitalism. And whether to *disengage* moral and aesthetic reason *from* capitalism (say, by reinventing religion or by reinventing

marxism), or to *invest* capitalism (and therefore the individual) with enough (also reinvented) rationality in order to recenter modernity as a project of enlightenment--this is the crux of the modern/postmodern debate.

In Santa Barbara, and in Kyoto, and in Cambridge, and Irvine, and elsewhere, we live in a “post-war” street, a street marked by the measures required to win the final battle (by armed police, health workers, sanitation crews, meter maids, ‘no loitering’ signs, ‘no sign’ signs, traffic signals, etc.)—a battle over disorder, disease, and discomfort.

In 1997, the City of Santa Barbara created a new law which prohibited sitting on the main city boulevard (State Street). Promoted by merchants on this street, the law is intended to push homeless persons away from the center of the downtown tourist destinations. In this photo: during its first week of enforcement several protests were made to create a legal challenge to the law. Here a Santa Barbara police officer prepares to cite a protester. Photo by author

Today, the goal of an orderly, disease-free, and



comfortable boulevard is now at hand. But this street is also marked by a lack of people using it in diverse

ways. Domination here appears not as a clockwork phalanx of uniformed soldiers with a marching band, but rather from out of the silences of what is not seen, and not heard at all. It is the loudness of the silence that makes the marching band unnecessary.

The task in front of us, as anthropologists and participants in the public sphere is to recognize the contours of the street in modern places, and to imagine moving beyond the restrictions that underpin the bourgeois coding of the street (i.e., the order and safety that is vouchsafed through the above agencies) into a space that may not appear or be as orderly or safe—for some—but which opens up to multiple forms of expression and representation. The role of festivity in articulating alternative uses for public streets cannot be understated (see: [A festival counters the dominant bourgeois lifestyle logic](#)).

The job required to create an inclusive, multicultural public street, is to make a place for difference. Not the pastiche of difference that Disney's Epcot Center shows us, where everything is *similarly* different, but a difference that arises, in part, from the vestiges of separate histories, and which is created, in ever greater numbers by processes of modern cultural production based on a late-modern logic of disparate desires.

I am looking ahead to a time, perhaps months away, when works such as this will be published directly to the World Wide Web. This then makes them public resources. Each reader can add new observations to an ongoing dialog that begins with an encounter with such a text. At this point, the original "publication" achieves its etymological meaning: to make public. Publication, which has been mainly a point of closure for a work, can now, instead, announce its opening. For this reason, I am experimenting with a format of electronic publication that can be translated into an internet-readable form.

The U.S. continues to provide a good share of the international popular cultural imagination in Kyoto. Films, fashions, television, music— sometimes the presence is comically ironic, as when a supermarket plays the latest “gangsta rap” as muzak, or when a pre-teen girl wanders down the street with a T-shirt that reads “The Devil sucked me off.” But more often the marketplace has made conscious efforts to manage and promote images and products licensed from the U.S. The marketplace increasingly works at odds to the governmental interest in domesticating these products, as it sells them as original and thus “raw.” This conflict of interests seems to be tilting in favor of the market. The government may even play into this when it fronts the dangerous differences between the US and Japan.

The dangers of the American lifestyle are a daily fare on NHK (the government-run TV/radio channel), particularly violent crimes and the lack of gun control. Japanese school groups that plan to travel abroad have been encouraged to go to Canada or Australia.

As a reverse example (i.e., making dangerous a foreign import), the government managed to enhance the dangerous and inferior qualities of foreign rice. When foreign rice imports were necessitated due to a terrible harvest in 1993, the Japanese government bought a cheaper quality of the long-grain Thai rice (which is, in any case, not suitable for making sushi)

and then distributed¹ it with information on how to cook it in order to get rid of its bad odor. They also insisted on mixing this rice with the Japanese-style rice they imported from elsewhere, so that the consumer never had the opportunity to taste Japanese-style rice from only one source outside of Japan. Reports of the pebbles and other matter that people discovered in their rice made regular news features.

A last example. When Japanese companies predicted a need for additional labor in the late 1980s the Japanese government began a program of recruiting foreign workers who could prove their “pure” Japanese ancestry. Most of these were from communities of agriculturalists who had expatriated to Brazil or Peru earlier in the century. The idea was to re-socialize persons who were already biologically similar to the local population so that their continuing residence, and their resulting lack of “foreignness” would not be so disturbing. The realities turned out to be much more what one could predict: the Brazilians were often less than enthusiastic over the lack of lifestyle amenities and the rigid constraints of the Japanese workplace. And the locals were even more frightened by the rumors that there were groups of people who looked Japanese but who might be more prone to acts of violence or crimes. At least with Europeans one could see them coming.

-
1. The Japanese government food agency made a reported profit of more than US\$4 billion on the sale of foreign rice at greatly inflated prices. They succeeded in reducing the demand for Thai rice to the point where they had too much on hand when the next harvest proved bountiful, so they exported this rice as a part of their ODA to African nations.

The Koreans and also *buraku* Japanese face a similar prejudice, a generalized terror about their potential for being different (in anti-social ways) that their ability to pass as mainstream Japanese only increases. A Japanese friend of mine was certain that it was Koreans who bullied her in her primary school days. After the great Kanto earthquake in the Tokyo region seventy years ago, vigilante groups massacred thousands of Koreans when rumors circulated that they were setting fires and poisoning wells. Even after the 1995 Kobe quake, which destroyed much of the Korean/*buraku* area of Nagataku in Kobe, there were rumors circulated as far as the National Diet, that the Koreans had set some of the fires.

Various polls in Japan periodically rank peoples of foreign nations in terms of their “trustworthiness,” polls in which the Koreans invariably rank last, close behind “Africans.” But even without attaching national groups to such a list, there is the more general idea that foreigners may not be trustworthy. It is such an attitude of mistrust that forms the ground for the racism that most affects “foreigners” residing in Kyoto.

“Privatization as an approach to social conflict would appear to be well suited to a political system and social order characterized by an emphasis on hierarchy and a tradition of benevolent paternalism.”
(Pharr 1990, 211)

At the center of Susan Pharr’s (1990) very valuable work on conflict management in Japan is a notion of “privatization.” Privatization is a strategy that removes discourses of dissent or counter-expressions from the public sphere, inserting them into a realm of private (lifeworld) concerns and interests. The discourse becomes a “conversation” between individuals who are in a hierarchical relationship: which means that the conversation is mostly one way—top down. And resolution of conflicts is made outside of any legitimizing discourse of dissent. As Pharr describes it:

“The Japanese approach thus is aimed fundamentally at privatizing social conflict. When faced with a social protest, authorities tend to respond by ignoring it; if avoidance fails, they work to contain the conflict, to keep it outside existing channels of resolution, and to discourage others from joining in. They strongly prefer to deal with conflicts case by case, and their favored methods are informal rather than formal. Whenever possible, they skirt solutions that might extend legitimacy to the protesters, which would have repercussions in the future on how problems of a similar nature should be resolved. Avoided also are solutions that generate principles having broad applicability across cases. As a result, outsiders remain outsiders and any gains achieved by protesters in a specific conflict episode have only a limited chance of becoming general.” (Pharr 1990, 208-209)

Only persons who have been elected (by vote or by selection to a position of authority, say within a governmental or corporate bureaucracy) can voice an expression that is legitimated as representing a

group¹. Selection elevates the chosen to a position of note (they become *eraihito*, “bigwigs”). Other individuals (such as “citizens” or “residents”) who are not in a position to speaking for an established institution (and the establishing of institutions is itself managed by government agencies) can only speak for themselves. Their ideas, complaints, or advice acquire whatever legitimacy they do through the personal circumstances of the individual's life.

A paternalist relationship is a type of group determined by this hierarchical role structure. And as this sort of “one-to-several” relationship is maintained in many different settings in Japan: in the home, in the school, at work, in relationships to expert systems, etc., a person is simultaneously involved in many of these. And in each of these relationships, the “inferior” members are bound by an expectation of deference to the person and the decisions of the superior, while the superior member is, in turn, bound by a duty to protect the interests of the inferiors—as this is seen by the superior.

Pharr describes an ideal model of how conflict, such as conflict that might elsewhere become a public issue, is contained within such groups, and “resolved”

-
1. Before WWII, the emperor spoke on behalf of the Japanese people, and the position of the emperor as synecdoche for Japan as a nation and a people was far stronger than what survived Japan's defeat and subsequent occupation. But where the emperor's discursive position was vacated, a democratic public sphere did not emerge to acquire this position. There is a discursive vacuum today at the top, and even the Prime Minister will refuse to claim to speak for the Japanese public: as Hosokawa after offering apologies for Japanese aggression in WWII on a state visit in Beijing returned to Tokyo and stated that his apologies were his own, and not meant to represent Japan.

through the actions of the superior:

“Implicit in these choices [of possible protest] is an ideal model of how conflict is to be avoided or resolved in a hierarchical society, with the following key tenets:

1. Superiors have the initiative in the relationship: ideally they anticipate an inferior's grievances and address them in the interest of preserving harmony.
 2. Collective pressures, such as from the community or company, act as a check on unacceptable behavior by superiors toward inferiors.
 3. Homogeneity (based on shared experience, attitudes, language, and so forth) operates to insure that superiors understand the vantage point of inferiors and take their position into account.
 4. A long-term perspective in social relations means that it is in the superior's interest to make accommodations now in order to insure good relations in the future.
 5. An inferior may let the superior know that the latter's behavior toward the inferior is unacceptable so long as the methods of relaying this information are consistent with the goal of maintaining social harmony.
 6. When the various correctives on a superior's behavior fail to bring about a desired result, the inferior must adjust to the situation—and there are payoffs for doing so.”
- (Pharr 1990, 30-31)

“By the nineteenth century, patterns of social hierarchy coexisted in England with a highly developed moral code based not on rule by status, as in contemporaneous Japan, but on individualism and rule by law. Thus, as groups on the lower rungs of society began to seek redress from the dislocations and inequities of industrialization, both features of the system were before them: on the one hand, they faced authorities who harbored a strong belief, which society widely shared, in their own natural superiority; on the other, they had at their disposal a well-entrenched value system, one fully accepted by those same elites, based on individualism, the rule of law, and the rights of man.”

(Pharr 1990, 212)

The final consequence of this form of “protest” is that the inferior has to live with whatever response the superior agrees to as being adequate to the situation. This consequence is the direct result of the inferior person accepting his inferior status. The more general problem is that, as public discourse becomes channeled into these privatized arenas, deference and duty preclude the articulation of conflict or of even the possibility of a plurality of interests within the group.

Throughout all of Pharr's work, there is little to suggest that there is a conflict between the widespread “inferiorization” of the great majority of people nearly all of the time in matters of presumably public interest in Japan, and the “ideology of democracy.” She does note that in Britain and Germany—nations with a history of social inequality—at some point a

ground of political equality undercut the notion of the population as being “inferior” to those that had acquired (by heredity, wealth, or means of access) positions of authority. But she does not see how Japan, by failing to gain this threshold, has failed to create the basis for public, democratic participation.

inferior is as inferior does

“Ideological shifts occurring over the last century, then, have laid the groundwork for major changes in protest behavior in Japan. Even if democracy and egalitarianism lack full acceptance as principles governing social relations, they have relatively strong support in the culture, and thus have become an important counterideology for status inferiors who wish to improve their position through protest.”
(Pharr 1990, 28)

The failure of democratic reform in modern Japan to create a public sphere where open public debate and the voicing of counter-opinions informs government policy is often linked to pre-existing cultural conditions: to a tradition of paternalist control, or to residual feudalism, or some other local circumstance. Japan lacks the cultural wherewithal for real democracy, this story goes. The lack of open democratic governance is also linked to the strength of bureaucratic agencies, and to the economic emergency of the post-war period, in which the bureaucracy acquired political and popular support for (presumably short-term) programs that put economic growth ahead of democratic practice. Elsewhere I present the notion that Japan shares a mode of modern governmentality with many other nation-states, several of these in the immediate region (see: [State-nation modernity](#)).

When Pharr presents the presence of an “ideology of democracy” in modern Japan as making a major—if not yet fully realized—shift in the ability of protest groups to legitimate their counter-public expressions, she is suggesting that Japan may be at a

point of abandoning its current governmentality. However, I see little evidence of this, even though the state in Japan faces many challenges in adjusting to changing global circumstances.

Pharr's work adds to our understanding of how a central state under conditions of state-nation modernity can maintain its control over a population without the legitimation of a public sphere. Japan's privatized public sphere—channelled through thousands of formal and informal paternalist relationships—multiply intersects the lives of each citizen. Again, the fractal image appears, as membership within the nation is duplicated at each level.

We Japanese...

13

“With my friends, or in a class discussion, sometimes there were times when I said something about ‘Japanese people,’ you know? The thing is that I called myself Japanese (*nihonjin*), and although in fairness, I shouldn’t say so. I would say ‘We Japanese [*warera nihonjin ha*] such and such’ ...Of course my best friends knew [what was going on], but still I really felt the burden of deceiving everybody by not really being Japanese.”

Higashi-kujo resident and Madang organizer

The “official version” of why “We Japanese” are like they are is provided in capsule form in this video produced by the [Jinjahoncho](#). Expousing an unbroken heritage from prehistoric society, informed by a “spontaneously” generated native religion (Shinto) and reflecting the unique (in the facile sense that all geographic locations are unique) influences of climate and agriculture—modern Japan is simply, and without an accommodation for modernity, the result of social, cultural, and racial evolution on the Japanese Archipelago from “time immemorial.”

For the last two decades it is Japan’s singular eco-



conomic triumph on the world stage that has bolstered internal arguments about the benefits of belonging to “Japan, Inc.,” i.e., to “We Japanese.” But still, there is a need to secure the message of this triumph as a national achievement, to implicate (if not reward—most life-style markers in Japan are far lower than the per-capita GNP would predict) the national population as the source and the means to continual success.

“To ask that Japan be portrayed as a multiracial, multicultural society is only to ask that the artist, journalist, and scholar be objective and humanistic. For Japan has never been a country for which the description “homogeneous” or “mono-ethnic” would be appropriate except as a reductionist, holistic caricature. During the one-and-a-half millennia for which we have reasonably accurate historical accounts of Japanese society and its population, it is clear that Japan has never been without ethnic minorities and ethnic conflict.
(Wetherall 1981, 203).”

“...Similarly, the cultural homogeneity of Japan is an important asset to authorities in carrying out their mandate. In a society where elites are not expected to be directly responsive to the public and where the direct articulation of grievances by social subordinates is discouraged, this homogeneity enables elites to understand and anticipate the needs of those subject to their authority.
(Pharr 1990, 222).”

For decades various messages given by the state—from those during the pre-War days that linked the citizenry to its sovereign Emperor, a link that was legitimized by blood ties and informed by “nature” (the monsoon climate of Japan); to the more recent refrains about Japan’s total lack of minority groups (eliding entirely groups such as the Ainu, Okinawans, resident Koreans and Chinese, the distinctions used against those who live in *buraku* areas, and the growing number of foreign workers in Japan)—have had one central theme: the Japanese population is one homogeneous group.

From the far north to the sub-tropical south, and from seacoast villages to mountain pass hamlets, from the great cities to the small towns: at all places and levels, what is presumed to hold in common is so much greater than what could be used to divide, that all persons (of Japanese descent) are equally (and unavoidably) members of the national “We Japanese” cohort. And so, when a politician starts his speech, “We Japanese...[*warera nihonjin ha...*]” everyone knows precisely for—and to whom—he is talking.

“Consider ‘paternal constructions,’ the rather large class of deceptions and fabrications that is performed in what is felt to be the dupe’s best interests, but which he might reject, at least at the beginning, were he to discover what was really happening. The falsity is calculated to give him comfort and render him tractable and is constructed for those reasons (Goffman 1974, 99).”

“...Where organisational and decision-making structures remain centralised, the consequence of socialisation is only a shift from the private control of knowledge by the corporation to the monopolisation of knowledge by the state. The position of the majority of the population continues to be one of ‘subalternity’, a situation (similar to that criticised by Hidaka in contemporary Japan) in which individuals regard themselves as ‘little people’, lacking all power to influence the wider society, and therefore devoid of all responsibility for the outcome of social change (Morris-Suzuki 1988, 206).”

What is most suspicious about this discourse of underlying homogeneity, which has also been acquired by many social scientists looking at modern Japan¹, is that this seems so blatantly to be used in the service of inequality. What the Japanese public holds most in common, it seems, is that it is collectively obligated to all of those elevated (*eraï*) individuals (the new paternalist nobility, including one’s parents and teachers) who are said to be in a position to know, and have the facilities to understand, and [one can only hope] the integrity to act on behalf of the Japanese public.

In the same way that deference to one’s “betters,” i.e., to elders, to men (if you are a woman), and to anyone with a higher position in an organization, or with any job in an organization with higher status, is taught as “manners,” in Kyoto, an entrenched lack of equality² is passed off as “homogeneity.” What is shared here is a common, limited *ken*, a mutual lack of perspective on a situation. This lack is both an outcome and input to the delegation of authority and the relinquishing of opinion that so marks the public sphere in Japan, and which is central to a government-

-
1. Susan Pharr’s (1990) work on conflict management in Japan is a very good case in point. Her arguments are most convincing when they point to specific programs and instances of status conflict and state responses to this, and much less credible when she credits blanket cultural bases for these actions.
 2. One of the primary referents to democracy in Kyoto is “equality” as exemplified by a commonly held notion that the range of affluence between the rich and the poor in Japan has narrowed appreciably since the 19th century.

tality often termed “paternalistic¹,” although this term does not adequately reveal the dynamics of the situation.

-
1. Paternal “games”, as Goffman (1974, 99) noted, requires the management of the subject's ken in a way that hides the mechanics of this management. The “dupe” is told what the pater believes is good for him to know, and is shown what the pater believes is good for him to see. But at a more subtle level, paternalism is also a delegation of expression. The pater speaks for the family: for that socius over which his authority has been granted.

Because the idea that Japan is a singularly homogeneous nation is one of the central notions that Koreans in Kyoto wish to interrogate, I looked in various places to see where and in what fashion this notion can be found. One of the places where this idea has some currency is in universities in Kyoto.

Going off to a university marks the first time when many young adult Japanese find a period of relative independence and a lack of demands on their time. It is a time when personal, cultural and other pursuits are available and expected. College years are remembered by many as the best of times. The college lifestyle in Japan has been called “four years of heaven” for its lack of pressure and surplus of free time. It is a pivotal period in the skilling of the emerging adult in the adult skills of consumer capitalism: a time when preferences and attitudes congeal. And so I would often inquire of the students in the university classes I was teaching about the types of activities they were pursuing (this was mainly a ploy to encourage them to respond about topics of interest).

Two pronounced outcomes emerged from these discussions: a sharing of common interests throughout the class (a near unanimity of tastes), and a lack of interest in any of the forms of “traditional” Japanese cultural practice (such as tea ceremony, flower arrangement, Kabuki or Noh theater). Such practices did not fit into the age-group repertoire of shared

“In the case of Japan, its very homogeneity—the common language, shared history, and extraordinary sense of “we-ness” that Japanese people feel—creates a strong basis within inferior-superior relationships for status inferiors to believe superiors capable of understanding their situation, a basis that is often missing in societies with major language, religious, ethnic, or other differences. (Pharr 1990, 30)”

interests—and just at what age and within what group they will, in the future, fit is another interesting question. Karaoke, on the other hand, was favored by virtually all students.

Virtually none of my students (out of about 300) would admit to an attraction for Japanese traditional theatre, and none would admit¹ knowing the name of any Kabuki or Noh play or actor. Conversely, most were familiar with a wide range of internationally marketed music (several could name many Seattle grunge-rock bands) and films. Despite this devotion to international commodities, more than eighty-percent responded that Japan is a culturally homogeneous nation.

The reasons for this were simple, they argued, noting the circumstances of living on an island nation, with a language that is geographically specific to the national space, and a common heritage, both in history and as a people. But when I pressed for the content they would use to describe this homogeneous culture, I found that this was not informed by a narrative of ancient rice culture, nor a long history of elite cultural production, but rather the products of modern industrialization: televisions, VCRs, automobiles, cameras, video games, anime (cartoons), and karaoke.

“We Japanese” manufacture the best electronics

-
1. Of course, such an admission may mark the student as different from their classmates in terms of their taste, much as an admission of liking classical music might in a Junior High classroom in the US. But then these were university students, and this is the primary period of their lives when they have the free time to acquire new tastes.

in the world. “We Japanese” have the highest per-capita income in the world. The content has changed, but the message is as strong as ever.

“Because of the potential political consequences linked to survey results, faithfully confessing to some unknown pollster on the telephone may seem like a public duty.

Quite the contrary, the act of consciously misleading a pollster may actually do more public good in the long run. As an act of civil disobedience, this is a fully legitimate counter-population practice: it announces that the individual refuses to be interrogated for some institution's convenience. And it is not even illegal, not even in Japan.”
(Caron 1996, 124)

While Pharr's (1990) arguments about “conflict management” in Japan contain some assumptions that are difficult to accept (such as the “fact” of homogeneity, which she does not sufficiently critique), her work, read with attention to constraints on expressions in public, reveal practices that defer (and so defeat) discursive access by the majority of the public to the public sphere in Japanese cities such as Kyoto.

By looking at the (mostly pre-War) history of protest by women and *buraku* dwelling Japanese, she reveals a pattern of institutionalized delegitimation of protest. She describes how the steep requirements for legitimating public protest and the institutional practice of settling disputes without legitimating the right to dispute either the original situation or the settlement constrain public protest, and public discourse in general.

Japan: a lawless state

“...Acts of civil disobedience are examples of self-limiting radicalism par excellence. On the one hand, civil disobedients extend the range of legitimate, even if initially extralegal, citizen activity that is accepted by a given political culture. Few would be shocked today by a workers' strike, a sit-in, a boycott, or a mass demonstration. These forms of collective action have come to be considered normal, yet all of them were once illegal or extralegal and could again become illegal under some conditions. Thus, civil disobedience initiates a learning process that expands the range and forms of participation open to private citizens within a mature political culture. Moreover, it is well known that, historically, civil disobedience has been the motor to the creation and expansion of both rights and democratization. On the other hand, civil disobedience defines the outer limits of radical politics within the overall framework of civil societies” (Cohen and Arato 1992, 567).

Because it is not used as a popular forum for counter discussions (which might lead to protests), the public sphere in Kyoto may be said to not exist as such, at least as this term is currently¹ being used to necessarily include counter-public protests. Of course, a similar argument has been leveled against the bourgeois public sphere in other nations: i.e., the lack of serious counter discourse brings into question the viability of the public sphere as an arena for social change. However, in many states (mainly in nation-states, rather than in state-nations—Tienanmen is a counter example) there are signs of life within the public sphere: feminists challenging the masculine domination of this, and environmentalists challenging the market's place in this. These challenges often appear in the form of mass protests. And so we can look for these events as a barometer for the viability of the public sphere.

Public protest is no more legal or illegal in Japan than it is in most parts of Europe and North America. And so why are there so conspicuously few protests on the streets in Japan? In part, we can suggest that this is due to a longer history of a lack of mass protest (combined with a lack of an acknowledged history of mass protest— state controlled history books do not

1. As (Hansen 1993, xi-xii) notes: “If these and similar questions are perceived today as part of the problematic of the public, it is itself a measure of major changes in the constitution of the public sphere, in the very fabric and parameters of experiential horizons.” A critique of the public sphere based on the opening this defends for practices of protest is itself a conscious re-visioning of the public sphere (in a practical utopian manner).

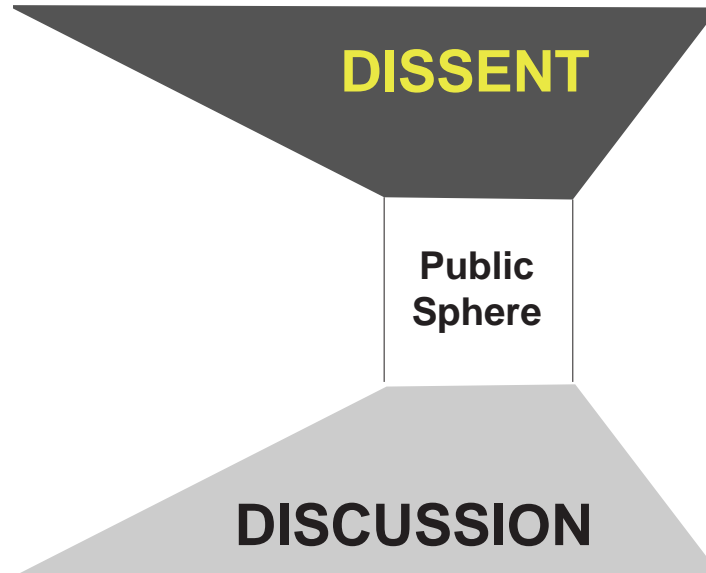
reveal this history). Civil disobedience is a practice that requires, well, practice. And the space it opens on the margins of social action needs to be used regularly in order to be kept open.

The state in Japan used the threat of Communism in the 1950s to move against the industrial unions, and since 1960 it has tightened its control over universities and teacher unions to the point where student protest is virtually non-existent. And so the memory of protest and civil disobedience has faded in Japan, allowing the state and industrial organizations to exert social, pre-legal forms of constraint against protest, in effect making these practically illegal without the use of the legal system.

Pharr describes another reason for the lack of protest: in Japan, a [Private public sphere](#) takes the place of the (public) public sphere. The (public) public sphere is evacuated, a space of silence, while discussions of national policy and social grievances are instead pushed into the private enclaves (the boardrooms and back offices) of those who have acquired the auspices to speak and to act on behalf of the general population.

One of the chief outcomes of a public sphere is the opening of a space between acts of active dissent and those of simple articulation of alternatives to official policy. Dissent is still possible within the public sphere (although this may take a more symbolic form, such as flag burning, to self-define it as dissent and not just another argument) but so too are discussions about and against official policy. Under State-nation modernity, where the public sphere is pre-occupied by the state, all public discussions of state policy acquire a potential interpretation as active dissent, and may result in sanctions by the state.

The lack of a public sphere is observable in all



public discourses, from coffee-house conversations, to political speeches.

A public sphere opens up a space between simple expressions or discussions of alternative views and statements of active dissent from official policy. Verbal acts of protest are treated within this sphere as legitimate discursive practices. Within a public sphere, official policies (and those who manufacture these) are liable to a wide spectrum of comment, from serious critiques, to parodies and cynical dismissals. This broad discursive space allows for a variety of discussions to happen without these becoming illegal, or de-legitimate, and thus subject to social sanctions (silence) or state interventions.

The lack of a public sphere involves more than the lack of recognized public spaces and arenas for discussion, it actually precodes discourses in public as

being anti-state, and by extension (as the state reserves for itself the voice of the public), anti-public.

the safety of silence

To speak out under these circumstances is to place oneself in a position of conflict with the state, even though this conflict may be perceived as minor. In the course of my research in Kyoto, Japan, I wanted to ask several of the people I was talking with about their opinions concerning how well the City represents their interests. In order to give them some time to reflect upon these issues, I made up a short list of topics that I handed out at the end of one of my conversations with them. I considered these topics to be fairly straightforward openings to the conversations I hoped to have about their circumstances of living in Kyoto. The following is the list of topics/questions that were translated and handed to interviewees to think about.

“ALL Interviewees: Questions for them to think about...”

1Q-A.What differences do you see between Japanese and Korean cultures? How are these cultures similar?

2Q-A.What do you think of Japanese culture today? What kind of things are good examples of modern Japanese culture?

3Q-A.Japan and Kyoto have democratically elected governments. How well do these governments represent your interests? Are you satisfied with the condition of democratic government in Kyoto? IF NOT SATISFIED: how would you change Kyoto's system of government to make this more democratic?

4Q-A.Kyoto society has many social divisions. Do people in all of the parts of Kyoto society participate equally in the city's government and benefit equally from the city's economy? [IF NO: describe the reason for these social and economic inequalities.]

5Q-A.Kyoto and Japan uses a family residence law that records where people live. Many other nations (for example, the United States) do not have such a law. Does Kyoto need this family residence law? What would happen if this law was not used?

6Q-A. The Higashi-kujo community is a large community with many groups. Describe in as much detail as you can the different groups in Higashi-Kujo (the name of the group, who is in the group, where do these people tend to live).

7Q-A. What are the most important changes that you have noticed in Kyoto in the last 10-20 years? How do you feel about these changes?

8Q-A. What will happen to Higashi-kujo in the next ten years? Do you think there will be any changes in the place or in the society? IF SO, what kind of changes do you predict?"

Before I began to distribute these questions, I gave them to an associate who responded, "This is a mistake. These people are not in a position to speak on these issues. If you give them these questions it will only make things difficult."

"In many areas of Japanese life, such as the private business sector, public bureaucracy, and rural community, a hierarchically grounded ideology of social relations operates as the "real" ideology, even if the "official" ideology, as set forth in public pronouncements, is based on democracy and egalitarianism." (Pharr 1990, 26)

And she was quite right. I did go ahead and distribute this list, but *none* of the local residents would comment to me in any manner that would be linked to them (although some spoke "offu reco" [off the record]) about topics three through six. "It is not good to speak out about such matters," I was told, and a few people refused to talk with me at all again.

This is not to suggest that there is no internal discussion about these issues that I, as an outsider simply did not have access to. I am certain that all such topics get talked about in private. In this instance I was more interested in the characteristics of what would be said *in public*. So I also took this refusal to be an important finding about the lack of casual openness concerning many of the issues that are of some local interest, and that are also made available for discussion at and through the Higashi-kujo Madang.

“The persistence of status inequalities as a major characteristic of the Japanese social system has been recognized in virtually all studies of the society, from Ruth Benedict's early analysis of 1946, to popular accounts today directed at American managers hopeful of doing business in Japan, to works by contemporary social scientists. Generally, these analyses all discuss status in equality in terms of the importance that inferior-superior (or junior-senior) relationships and other rank and status considerations are accorded in the ordering of social relationships in Japan. ...”
(Pharr 1990, 8)

Giddens (1994, 58) develops a notion of a “cybernetic” governmental model, in which a central economic (mechanical) brain controls a dispersed organic body-politic. This model has some value describing the instrumentality that creates the otherwise oxymoronic situation we find in Japan: namely homogeneous inequality¹. The underlying inferior-superior relationship that holds between the general public—the body politic,—and those of the governing oligarchy that manage the affairs of commerce and the state at the center (in Tokyo) is legitimated for the polity as an outcome of a natural process whereby the most talented individuals automatically rise to the top (and, in Japan, migrate toward Tokyo). This idealized “meritocracy” also hides a persistent, class-based system of privileges.

social hierarchy

The presence of social hierarchy within a “democratic society” is again not unique to Japan. This is, for example, one of the features of capitalism, i.e., the de-

-
1. Although reports of the actual salaries of executives of top Japanese corporations show that their monetary income is not so much greater than that of the skilled factory workers, the executive's access to non-salary, monetizeable and non-monetizeable resources (houses, transportation, golf-course memberships, entertainment, etc.) push this inequality into a range that is difficult to figure, but certainly comparable to that of top executives in American corporations. And it includes an addition feature: the non-monetizeable resources (including personal connections) are non-taxable and also heritable.

equalizing effect of unequal personal wealth¹. And it applies as well to the formation of elite bureaucracies in other, e.g., socialist nations.

One senses in Japan that the internal discourse of democracy (*minshushugi*) is more centrally connected to notions of social equalization and equal rights (*byoudouken*) within the society, than it is with human rights (*jinken*). The Meiji period can be seen as a time of equalization, where the nobility and the samurai lost their hereditary advantages. And subsequent efforts to eliminate inequality at the other end of the old social scale by remedying the situation of those who dwell in buraku areas, is also seen in terms of social levelling (*douwa*). What is perhaps problematic for democracy in Japan, articulated through the idea of an “equal society,” is the lack of counter-features to the underlying social hierarchy: the absence of a history of taking away the privilege of the elite², the lack of memorialized sites where the public once-and-for-all asserted its right to govern, the lack of celebrations of this right.

A history of centralized, national control over social and economic features of life in Japan intensifies the vertical hierarchy within government bureaucracies to the point where its apex again resembles a form of nobility, a family within the family, or a brain

-
1. The fact that capital makes some people “more equal than others” in the marketplace still does not legitimate the influence of wealth in the political process and the public sphere, as President Clinton has discovered in his campaign finance debacle.
 2. Meiji was an elite-led reform in which status was “shared” with other classes with the stated end of ending class distinctions, but without an effective public oversight of this process.

within the body. The institutional outcomes of a governmentality that nation-states—most commonly, but not exclusively, in state-socialist governments—devise in order to maintain conscious, centralized economic control at the national level are liable to acquire a self-electing authority in the process of guiding national interests.

“Given the awesome power of the System to deprive the Japanese citizen almost completely of the means to litigate, it should come as no surprise that action taken by the private individual against the government is virtually unthinkable. The Supreme Court refuses to use the powers of review given it by the post-war constitution as a means of safeguarding democracy. In combination with the far-reaching formal powers of government agencies in pursuing broad social policy, this has had the effect of almost totally insulating bureaucratic activity from judicial review. When activists persist in countering administrative decisions with lawsuits, the officials perceive this as a 'radical', almost violent action, hampering national policy-making.”
(van Wolferen 1990, 215)

In a more structural vein, what is also missing is a “court of appeal” where the government is itself held accountable for its power. That the “supreme” court in Japan early on abdicated its power to be a “constitutional court” means that every law passed in Japan is an abridgement on the constitution, and the right to challenge either law or practice is basically unavailable through the court system. The courts will only rule on how a particular practice might not reflect the intent or the wording of the law—not on the law itself. And it is precisely “the law” here, as [\(Thompson 1993, 34-35\)](#) notes, that should provide the opening that the judiciary makes in favor of those who are ruled through its use.

The close hold that the state maintains on the courts in Japan is fairly typical of the role that courts play under circumstances of [State-nation modernity](#). Despite the physical existence of courtrooms in Japan, this state-nation has not yet undergone what Habermas called the “first wave of juridification,” in which the courts assume an emancipatory posture against the prior, sovereign order:

“The first wave of juridification had a freedom-guaranteeing character to the extent that bourgeois civil law and a bureaucratic domination exercised by legal means at least meant emancipation from premodern relations of power and dependence. The three subsequent juridification waves guaranteed an increase in freedom insofar as they were able to restrain, in the interests of citizens and of private legal subjects, the political and economic dynamics that had been released by the legal institutionalization of the media of money and power. The step-by-step development toward the democratic welfare state is directed against those modern relations of power and dependence that arose with the capitalist enterprise, the bureaucratic apparatus of domination, and, more generally,

the formally organized domains of action of the economy and the state. The inner dynamics of these action systems also unfold within the organizational forms of law, but in such a way that law here takes on the role of a steering medium rather than supplementing institutional components of the lifeworld” (Habermas 1989, 366).

Here, Habermas describes how the courts in the early development of nation-states, supply a “steering medium” that operates externally to both the state and the market. This operation has not occurred in Japan to date, and its lack is one of the hallmarks of Japan as a state-nation (see: [State-nation modernity](#)).

In terms of new social movements, the lack of courts of appeal increases the risk of protest, as this is subject to claims of illegality that cannot be subsequently countered by some court’s ability to overrule the state in the interest of the public. The public has, in fact, no proven, legal interest outside of that which is granted by the state in Japan.

“No nation of comparable economic power seems so territorially constricted, so ethnically standardized, so culturally contained: Japanese themselves commonly insist that theirs is a small island country (*shimaguni*), a homogeneous place. Its economic expansiveness is parried by a national inwardness and a disavowal of internal differences along class or ethnic lines, a disavowal most often laid at the feet of culture. The image of Japan as the great assimilator arises to explain away any epistemological snags or historical confusions: Japan assimilates, if not immigrants and American automobiles, then everything else, retaining the traditional, immutable core of culture while incorporating the shiny trappings of (post)modernity in a dizzying round of production, accumulation, and consumption” (Ivy 1995, 1).

Whether it is entirely the outcome of long-range nation-state formation activities by the Japanese state, or in part an outcome of Japan’s physical/cultural/linguistic dis-connection from the Asian Continent, or, more likely the latter overlaid and transformed by the former, national identity in Japan now assumes a high degree of similarity, and the presence of a national habitus that is shared by nearly all of its citizens.

The politics of homogeneity—the various ways that this notion affects relationships between individuals in public—is a central concern for resident Koreans in Kyoto, who, by their official “national” identification, are excluded from becoming Japanese, even when they become naturalized citizens. “*Even if I become a Japanese citizen, I still have this Korean ancestry.*” One resident Korean in Kyoto explained to me. While the official incorporation regime that prospective citizens must follow demands a public and sincere desire to acculturate to Japanese life, the unofficial exclusions of the national habitus do not admit newcomers into the “[We Japanese...](#)” identity.

Koreans who grow up in Kyoto are virtually indistinguishable from their Japanese neighbors, and can easily pass as Kyoto Japanese in anonymous transactions. But when their Korean ancestry becomes known, they sense a shift in the manner in which others will interact with them. They feel the marking that removes them from assumptions that apply within the

“We Japanese” group identity.

One alternative, which informs their festival Madang, and also their continuing discourse on international human rights as these apply locally to Kyoto, is to attack the very notion of homogeneity as the basis for a national population. They also take their dual identity, their Korean-Japanese heritage, not as a halving of both traditions: they are not half-Korean and half-Japanese; rather they talk about a doubling of identity: they are both Korean and Japanese. *“Isn’t a tree with two roots stronger than a tree with only one root?”* a resident Korean asked me, illustrating this position.

What Koreans in Kyoto have not done (yet) in their arguments for heterogeneity is to critique the idea that Japan is naturally/historically a homogeneous society. They may, in fact accept this notion as being valid. But they would still argue that homogeneity cannot be used as the basis for citizenship today. But Koreans in Kyoto are not alone in their tacit acceptance of Japan as a homogeneous society, Even Pharr, who was writing about inequality in Japan, made the assumption that the formation of the nation-state was informed by its homogeneity, which gave the rulers a natural legitimacy to acquire political authority.

“Education has expanded and developed dramatically in Japan, due to factors that include the priority given to education, which is part of the national character, and rising income levels. Education has been a driving force behind Japan's economic, social, and cultural development. (*Monbusho* *ibid* 1994.)”

“For Adorno, notably, any existing collectivity—under the homogenizing force of monopoly capitalism and fascism alike—could not be but false; truth was buried in nonidentity, to be grasped only in the paradoxical autonomy of modern(ist) art” (Hansen 1993, xviii).

Pharr (1990, 214) also makes the argument that in Germany, where heterogeneity was (in her argument) more evident, the state could not assemble the requisite sense of commonality to achieve uncontested delegation of political authority (at least until Hitler did so). “The great heterogeneity of Germany, with its major religious, ethnic, and regional cleavages, foreclosed the possibility that any such delegation of authority could have occurred there, even if such a pattern had been more consistent with German traditions. Thus, authority figures at the national level had to evolve methods for mediating among the competing interests of society.”

Pharr's argument that public-sphere formation was possible in Germany because social heterogeneity required additional arenas for mediation also fails to predict the collapse of the public sphere in Germany in 1933, and it implicates a very general historical precondition as necessary for the creation of a public sphere: by this it denies the possibility of the creation of a public sphere as the result of political practice. This last point reveals the lack of critical attention to the *position* of the notion of homogeneity in Pharr's work.

Notions of a homogeneous culture

“...As Tokugawa economic life became more complex, self regulating occupational classes and functional groups developed. But even though the urban worker, merchant or artisan was occasionally made aware that power also emanated from sources other than his own superior or guild, he would still have had no sense of any impersonal political organisation, any possible precursor of the state, that might judge his conduct objectively. ‘Public’ affairs meant simply the sum of those things that occupied the attention of his superior.
[\(van Wolferen 1990, 164-165\)](#)

The word “*doushu*” is described in *Kenkyusha’s New Japanese-English Dictionary* (Fourth Edition) in its adjectival form as meaning “of the same kind [sort, description]; of the same family [species]; similar (in kind); same; identical; kindred; allied; congeneric; congerous; homogeneous; of the same race.” *Doushu* is the Japanese term used for the notion of “homogeneity,” for example, when this is used in describing some national Japanese society. But note that the Japanese term’s semantic field differs from current English language¹ use of “homogeneous.”

“Similarity” and “uniformity” in the English meaning are descriptive of the current condition of the object described, and are in semantic counterposition to objects that show “heterogeneity.” In the Japanese borrowing of the term, current similarities are outcomes of a shared ancestry. Similarity of organic objects, including humans, is explained within this term by racial or familial connections.

This brings up a fundamental flaw in the debate surrounding [Nihonjinron](#). This discourse on “Japaneseness” has essentialized its object to the point where “being Japanese” is an unmarked position that 1) can only be appropriated by certain individuals (i.e., citi-

1. The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* gives the following definition: “1. Like in nature or kind; similar; congruous. 2. Uniform in structure or composition throughout.” The second meaning of the English term more resembles the Japanese term “*kakuitsu*” [uniform], while the main meaning has lost the etymologically available sense of “same beginning” [Medieval Latin: *homo-geneus*].

zens of Japan who have lived their life in Japan); and, 2) the right “being Japanese” can be lost through any of several ways of marking the individual as divergent from a group Japanese habitus.

“...I am attempting to write of the western nation as an obscure and ubiquitous form of living the *locality* of culture. This locality is more *around* temporality than *about* historicity: a form of living that is more complex than 'community'; more symbolic than 'society'; more connotative than 'country'; less patriotic than patrie; more rhetorical than the reason of state; more mythological than ideology; less homogeneous than hegemony; less centred than the citizen; more collective than 'the subject'; more psychic than civility; more hybrid in the articulation of cultural differences and identifications—gender, race or class—than can be represented in any hierarchical or binary structuring of social antagonism.”
(Bhabha 1990, 292)

But for resident Koreans and others who grow up in Japan, the Japanese group habitus, the “harmonizing” homogeneity that sustains the “[We Japanese...](#)” discourse, presents an ethnic barrier that no amount of assimilation (assuming there is a desire to assimilate) can overcome. And so, as I talk about the discourse surrounding “homogeneity” in Japan, I would remind the reader that this is not disconnected from discourses of race. So too, the demand by the Higashi-kujo Madang festival organizers that Japan recognize heterogeneity as a human right, is a demand that is not only made to assert cultural difference, but also ethnic and bodily diversity within the nation-state of Japan. This demand is also a local reflective appropriation of “multiculturalism” as a transnational practice with “obscure and ubiquitous” (See: Left) local implications.

One theory of optimal, or autotelic, experience has been developed following the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi at the University of Chicago. This theory reverses the dichotomy between play and work found in some theories of play such as those of Huizanga (1950) and Callois (1958). These latter theories held that play, i.e. any game, as opposed to work, was a completely bounded experience, the risks of which had no effect outside the boundary of the game.

What Csikszentmihalyi (1975) argues is that play is simply any activity that is internally motivated (hence autotelic). This means that work (labor) can also be play to the extent that it provides internal motivation. Certain structures of an activity increase the amount of its internal motivation and experience it creates. “Common to all these forms of autotelic involvement is a matching of personal skills against a range of physical or symbolic opportunities for action that represent meaningful challenges to the individual” (*ibid.* 181). This experience of play Csikszentmihalyi calls *flow*, a name derived from a common element found in many descriptions of this experience.

Highly autotelic activities tend to reduce the participant’s awareness of time and of self. Yet these activities involve intense attention to a perceived set of well defined parameters. Flow activities are

sequences of events that engender immediate challenges (risks), that demand a high level of mental and/or physical participation, and that reward this participation with a correspondingly high level of enjoyment. Thus the effort to meet the challenges provided within the context of the flow event is matched with an immediate sense of pleasure. Participation is its own reward.

The greater the perceived risk, the wider the symbolic arena of activity—up to the point where the individual feels preempted from entering the activity because her personal skills cannot possibly meet the challenges involved—the more profound the flow experience will be. Furthermore, flow is apparently not entirely a quantitatively measurable experience: one experience of an extremely “deep” flow nature is thus not equatable to several “shallow” flow experiences. Deep flow, once experienced, is apparently extremely psychologically addictive (*ibid*, 138).

Csikszentmihalyi's theory of flow has profound consequences for the study of festivals. To begin with, it provides a basic motivation for these events. Festivals are collective flow events, they provide a group of people with deep flow experiences. The ritual context of the festival creates the structured arena (the technology of experience) within which deep flow experiences can be obtained. The participants themselves create the need for the festival's continuation. Again, people seem to have differential talents and needs vis à vis flow experiences. This means that the

flow effects of the festival are differential.

Festivals vary in their success at engendering flow. The only aspect of the festival that is assured by its simple performance is its ritual¹. The rituals of the event provide what I call its “technology of experience,” they are the stage, the props, the elaborated context within which meaning will happen. Participation in a festival event varies from person to person, year to year. The actual meanings that do happen, that people experience, these are shared in that they respond to a shared immediate context, yet they are differentially experienced, they engage the participants in multiple ways, depending upon the role of the participant in the event, and on the participant’s immediate need and capacity to use the event as an optimal experience.

-
1. In Frits Staal's sense. Staal looked at ritual as a pure syntax of action, that is, action without meaning. The notion of ritual as meaningless action is joined with a concept of risk: ritual action is designed to reduce risk. The results of ritual action are thus guaranteed by the proper sequence of action itself. And so, ritual action is meaningless but not chaotic. Staal also looks at ritual as being prior to myth, as being the outcome of bodily actions that are relatively old in that they predate the formation of language and culture (as we know it). While at the present, this notion serves to isolate what Staal is doing from what others do—others study ritual that seems, if anything, overcoded with meaning—I believe that in the future a typology of ritual will be developed in which this will anchor one end of the scheme and cultural performances will anchor the other (with various types of dramas and ceremonies holding up the middle, I suppose).

A multistory structure on a commons in a city. A building with a most peculiar history: it would be built so as to be torn down and reconstructed once a year. Every year the building site is cleared and the entire building is constructed from the ground up. Construction takes two weeks of concentrated co-laboration, and it requires the work, the skills, the enthusiasm, and the financial support of the entire neighborhood. All of these are brought together when the time for construction is nigh. A collection of tools and skills, plans and paints, everything needed for this task remains in the neighborhood all year around, and the construction itself proceeds as the work of several teams that compete with one another and with their own history, for speed and skill. The teams have practiced their coordination and strategy throughout the entire year.

The object is to make the building complete again as fast as possible. At the end of construction a grand party inaugurates the building for public use. People who visit the city only occasionally and walk through the neighborhood would see the building with its neighbors, standing there as if it were like the surrounding buildings, but always somehow looking newer than the others. These visitors may not realize that the building is simultaneously the same and different from the one they saw last year.

Each year, within its completeness, something

new is added, and perhaps something else has been forgotten. Most of the people who use it (and who participate in its rebuilding) are not actively aware that it changes over time. They see it as their building, something whole.

Anyhow, the changes are appropriate to the space and its use. Two years ago the second floor was converted to a day-care center. Last year they added fiber-optic cables that connect each room to a computer network. And this year they took out the wall that separated the office of neighborhood's committee chairperson from that of the secretary. There are plans for more skylights, and for a passive solar-heating wall on the south. These changes keep the building alive.

And the ability to change is what allows new neighbors to add their newness to its completeness. Newcomers can either join one of existing building collectives or start their own. Last year, three families from Guatemala and another from Bosnia decided to add their own addition. And so an extra alcove that was never there before looks out over the street. It seems to fit just right, and its sudden presence is not at all obvious to most, but the newcomers point it out whenever they pass by—it is their piece of the local whole.

*Two ways to destroy this
“festival”*

SCENARIO 1

As a festival, this building is the most ephemeral of structures. There are only a few tactics that can keep it going, and so many ways for it to fail.

No matter how many years this building is built, it still takes a enormous amount of resources to complete it. Not everyone is happy with this situation. Hours and hours of rehearsal, planning, and coordination meetings are needed just so that the construction can begin. And during construction everything else, work, play, even sleep is forgotten. Employers get angry, the schools are not happy, and the local businesses complain about traffic tie-ups and lost revenue. Besides, the building is a perfectly good building. Why tear it down every year? Why not every three years? or five years? or ten? There are families who have not taken a real vacation in years. Why not give them a year off? And why is there this need to keep changing the building? It would be much simpler to have one plan and stick to it.

Meetings are held, votes are taken. But slowly, with some subtle arm-twisting, a majority is reached on a plan to construct the building every seven years using the plan that was constructed last year. There are to be no new cooperatives, and the existing cooperatives will each elect a single representative. These representatives will meet together as an executive committee and make all required decisions.

The first seven year period ended and the building was reconstructed. It took an extra twelve days, and some of the interior remained unfinished for three months, but the building was renewed. After the second seven year period, three of the cooperatives were unable to provide enough volunteers to

construct the main structure. After a month, the roof was still not finished. By the time the winter came, the building was still not ready to be occupied. On a cold winter night some persons found an entry and lit a small fire that destroyed the building. The site remains vacant to this day.

COUNTER SCENARIO:

Festivals are vulnerable to “slack” times. Because they maintain their own memory in their practice (unlike most sports which are codified in a manner that allows them to be relearned) they can be forgotten when enough people stop performing them. They are also relatively vulnerable/open to innovation, and so they change more rapidly than spectacle/rituals.

To preserve the memory of a festival it is important to maintain the continuity of its practice, under the festival logic. During slack times, the performance can be allowed to become smaller (the building can shrink in size), but it will not survive if the time between performances is too long. To counter arguments that the festival “takes too much time” the many diverse outcomes of the festival need to be understood.

In the case of this “building” festival, one might look at the improved condition of other buildings in the neighborhood (so many people know how to build), at the number of jobs that residents acquire in the building trade, and at the special qualities of the building itself, and how these might be better used. Document the interactions that take place in the plan-

ning and execution of the construction, and note the conversational opportunities within the event.

SCENARIO TWO: The museum effect

Let's say that one year the city determines this building and its practice of rebuilding is of "historical interest." They acquire this property, and they make a careful study of its rebuilding. Then they hire building experts to perform the rebuilding every year according to the precise calculations they have made. They advertise the rebuilding event to draw in tourists, and they set up television cameras to show this to the nation. The building is made a national monument. Books are written, tours arranged. And every year it is rebuilt in exactly the same way as the year before.

By this, the state hopes to preserve the building and its construction for centuries to come. The neighborhood no longer is burdened by having to perform this enormous task, and the tourists that come bring income to the local merchants.

However, by this the state has destroyed much more than it "preserved:" the building is now just another museum. There is no more festivity in its annual reconstruction. The stakes have changed: the goal is to do it "right" according to some preexisting determination. The art of incorporating change and invention in the festival/construction has been lost. The game is no longer a game but a duty, a ritual with only the most shallow resemblance to its prior logic.

COUNTER SCENARIO:

The neighborhood needs to realize that it owns

this event. It must tell the city and the state to not interfere. If the city/state is interested in this festival, then the festival participants can organize workshops to teach other neighborhoods how to do the same event in their location. The idea would be to spread the logic of the festival in its original form: local, democratic, always-changing.

Intimacy is first a connection to the body

21

“The world of *intimacy* is as anti-theoretical to the *real* world as immoderation is to moderation, madness to reason, drunkenness to lucidity. There is moderation only in the object, reason only in the identity of the object with itself, lucidity only in the distinct knowledge of objects (Bataille 1988 [1967], 58)”

“Tenderness is a relationship with another person’s body, which we treat as sensitive with the aim of heightening its sensitivity and enabling it to enjoy being itself; this relationship with another person’s body necessarily implies heightening our own sensitivity. Violence, by contrast, is a relationship of technological instrumentalization of the things of this world whose sensory qualities have been denied and it is, as a result, a form of repression which devalues our own sensitivity” (Gorz 1989, 86). [emphasis mine]

Intimacy is a currency based on a subtle mettle mined in the body. Intimacy is at a different moment a transaction between individuals, as in an “intimate conversation” or an “intimate caress.” And, as we will see, this transaction must be mutual if intimacy is to be maintained (SEE: [Intimacy is always shared](#)). In other words, what is transacted must flow in both directions. But what *moves* in this transaction?

The easiest place to see intimacy as this becomes a part of the body is in music, art, and dance: in the body’s intimate skilling with instruments, objects, and movement. Here the connection to and through the body is applied to gesture, melody, rhythm, shape, or color to produce a result that can only be attributed to the body’s intimate skills. In recent decades, professional sport has become more like art or dance in this way, and the bodies of athletes filmed in slow motion reveal similar skills.

The appreciation of art and music usually combines the facility for making distinctions (as Bourdieu reminds us) with an attraction to the persons (and bodies) who can perform these feats. Musicians, artists, and sports figures inspire fanatical devotion in others who see, or believe they see, not only the virtuoso ability of their “star” but some intimate quality that is necessarily genuine. The idea that artists are somehow “more alive” or “more attuned to their

environment” is a transference of the bodily intimacy that surrounds the artist’s skill to a more general capacity for intimacy. The attraction of visible intimacy in art, the seduction that the artistic spectacle of “sensitivity” creates, is linked to the later necessary moment of intimacy: to its potential sharing.

“When the new connections between sexuality and intimacy were formed, however, sexuality became much more completely separated from procreation than before. Sexuality became doubly constituted as a medium of self-realisation and as a prime means, as well as an expression, of intimacy. Sexuality has here lost its extrinsic connections with wider traditions and ethics, as well as with the succession of the generations” (Giddens 1991, 164).

The expectation that a talented painter should be talented in other applications of intimacy may more often than not prove over-optimistic, but the logic of this expectation is not entirely wrong. It simply neglects to account for the singularity of skilling in any art form. The same person who will not expect a painter to necessarily play the piano, may still assume that the painter’s intimate relation to her canvas is transportable to private conversations and personal intimacy. This kind of assumption is probably strongest with fiction writers who might have penned passionate conversations in their last novel, and who are thus (mis)taken as being skilled in personal intimacy. However, writing, like painting, is a solo performance.

mutual trust

Personal intimacy, now tied to a reflexivized sexuality, is keyed to mutual trust, and trust is a gamble where each person contributes their own stock of mettle and assumes that the other(s) have their own: “To trust the other is also to gamble upon the capability of the individual actually to be able to act with integrity” (Giddens 1992, 138). Getting involved with an artist is a tactic aimed at reducing the risk of this wager (of course the attraction of popularity is

another feature of this: the hope that popularity will “rub-off”).

“In the pure relationship, trust has no external supports, and has to be developed on the basis of intimacy. Trust is a vesting of confidence in the other and also in the capability of the mutual bond to withstand future traumas” (Giddens 1992, 138).

The point here is that individuals enter into intimate relationships, the continuation of which is determined by their capability in intimacy. In much the same way that each member of a music ensemble must *trust* the capabilities of the others, so too, each partner in an intimate relationship needs to trust that the other partner(s) have been adequately skilled in the ways of personal intimacy. These skills, like the talent of a top ballet star, are kept in the body, in a repository of the results of prior rehearsals, performances, failures, and lessons.

Intimacy is first a connection to the body. It is the body that sends the signals that the ongoing conversation (the discursive requirement of intimacy) is sincere.

Intimacy is always shared

22

“To say that Madame Merle improved on acquaintance states meagrely the impression she made on her friend, who had found her from the first so ample and so easy. At the end of an intimacy of three months Isabel felt she knew her better; her character had revealed itself, and the admirable woman had also at last redeemed her promise of relating her history from her own point of view—a consummation the more desirable as Isabel had already heard it related from the point of view of others” (Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady*).

The shared aspect of intimacy means simply that this must be reciprocal, otherwise it becomes a simple confession. The priest listening to the confessions of the sinner does so through a screen and makes no confessions himself. The paid sex worker goes through the motions of emotion and physical intimacy without giving sharing in what is really a sexual confession, and not intimate at all.

The moment of sharing is the performance of intimacy. Where the skilling in the body is its rehearsal, intimacy is performed only as a shared action. This means too that artists, musicians, etc., do share the intimacy of their art with those who appreciate this (but it does not mean that they share a personal intimacy with their audience).

It is this sharing that brings to the front the notion of trust.

The pure relationship is focused on intimacy, which is a major condition of any long-term stability the partners might achieve. Intimacy has to be distinguished from the more negative phenomenon of lack of privacy, characteristic of most circumstances of life in pre-modern Europe and in many non-modern cultures generally (Giddens 1991, 94).

“Objective distance from necessity and from those trapped within it combines with a conscious distance which doubles freedom by exhibiting it. As the objective distance from necessity grows, lifestyle increasingly becomes the product of what Weber calls a 'stylization of life', a systematic commitment which orients and organizes the most diverse practices—the choice of a vintage or a cheese or the decoration of a holiday home in the country. This affirmation of power over a dominated necessity always implies a claim to a legitimate superiority over those who, because they cannot assert the same contempt for contingencies in gratuitous luxury and conspicuous consumption, remain dominated by ordinary interests and urgencies....”
(Bourdieu 1984, 55-56).

This is not simply a wishful bit of nominalism, but one of those aspects of festivals that need further examination. Implied herein is an assumption that should there be a dominant lifestyle logic available at the place of the festival, and should this be describable in relation to some description of a local “bourgeoisie,” then a festival in this locale will operate counter to this. Such a statement is constructed as much on the description of (globally available) bourgeois lifestyle practices as it on notions of festival practices. The bourgeois life-style is at its core a spectacular display of the “affirmation of power over a dominated necessity,” as Bourdieu call this (See: left).

To live in a world that seems comfortable, where economic and physical threats are remote from the quotidian flow of time: this is a life project goal at the center of the bourgeois lifestyle. A history of the pursuit of this goal would include global institutions for policing and intelligence, agencies for insurance and transportation safety, for health care and, most recently, for environmental management.

All of these institutions provide several rationales for their cost, but they are each a party to the maintenance of a threshold of care-free comfort that lies at the core of the bourgeois life project. This becomes most noticeable in the travel industry, where the transportation, feeding, lodging and entertainment of millions of tourists must be accomplished without any

gaps in the “comfort bubble” that is meant to envelope the traveler from doorstep to doorstep.

Of course, the irony here is that this “bubble” also separates the tourist from the places they have travelled to. Their journey is an expense of time and money, much of which is spent avoiding their destinations. And when they stay at home, these tourists still expect that the level of comfort and safety that they have acquired in their neighborhoods¹ will do nothing if not improve over time. The bubble is created for/ by them on [The Street](#). The festival breaks this bubble.

A festival displays the domination of necessity, the hunger for desire, a need for laughter. And so a “bourgeois festival” is oxymoronic (elsewhere, as in Disneyland’s new “Festival of Fools,” the “oxy-” is optional). The most obvious elements in this claim are the direct connections of the festival to the body and to a type of sexuality (or sensuality) that is not determined by institutionalized “tastes.” Also, in festival there is the ad hoc quality of physical resources: which may be gathered from refuse or modified from everyday objects. The inclusion of women and of (other) marginal groups also works against the exclusivity of the bourgeois public sphere. The nature of festival performance, and the skilling it requires and promotes, is also a factor in this theory.

While this concept entails that events that do not

1. This expectation chooses to forget that, in the current world market, much of the comfort that nations with high-percentage middle-class populations enjoy is paid for by the lack of comfort of the populations of other nations and other groups within the nation.

counter the bourgeois logic of the dominant lifestyle are not festivals, it does not entail that all events that counter the bourgeois logic of the dominant lifestyle are festivals. Internal military actions against citizens, for example, also run against the liberal, democratic governmentality.

Therapy, in its broadest sense, attempts to bring unconsciously (non-discursively) acquired problems into the conscious, discursive awareness. Therapy works when it extends the reflexive ken of the person under therapy. The festival, practiced in public places, extends the reflexive apparatus of the community, bringing into its discourse those practices (and histories) of domination that normally—and necessarily—exist outside of the ken of its members. The festival is a model site for collective therapy.

A festival opens up a space of voluntary discourse and a democratic recoding of knowledges that are previously unavailable for comment. This space is an arena for public meta-commentaries about the social circumstances of the community. In short the festival is a discursive space where the availability of shared intimacy creates the potential for bringing into discourse circumstances that would otherwise remain misunderstood and thus oppressive.

Festivals are many things at the same time, so I do not want to imply that their therapeutic potential—which will be explored below—confers their only, or in some places, their main use. One can certainly imagine a festival where its space of therapy is rarely used, even as one can imagine a city neighborhood where social therapy is sorely needed.

Domination produces silences

25

“...the basis of criticism is not in theory but in the taste a lived experience of the world has for the person experiencing it. The task of theory (or rather philosophy) and literature, each in its own way and at its own level, will be to unravel the web of the dominant discourse which reduces lived experience to silence”
(Gorz 1989, 87).

Against the general notion of ideology as the articulation and enforcement of particular ideals (ideas with teeth), we have to also note the great silences between these ideals. If you add up the discursive space of a dominant discourse and that of the implied silences, the space of silence far exceeds that of articulation. Everything that “goes-without-saying” also belongs to the discourse that speaks through those who are authorized to do so.

Foucault put this well in his *History of Sexuality*:

“Silence itself—the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, the discretion that is required between different speakers—is less the absolute limit of discourse, the other side from which it is separated by a strict boundary, than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them within over-all strategies. There is no binary division to be made between what one says and what one does not say; we must try to determine the different ways of not saying such things, how those who can and those who cannot speak of them are distributed, which type of discourse is authorized, or which form of discretion is required in either case. There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses. (1990, 27).

This notion, following Foucault, points to silences within the public sphere. To look at silence as an expected outcome of the practices that dominate discursive fields shows this “black matter” that is as much a part of the field as what is said.

One type of counter-discourse is to get up in public and speak what goes-without-saying. Political satire can reveal the arbitrariness of government authority (a feature of governmentalities that governments will not speak about). But most of all, realizing that silence is a product of domination opens up the

process of self reflection to explore the unexpressed,
forbidden gray reaches of the imagination.

One of the great frustrations of planners and architects is that the users of their plans and buildings often find ways to make these into something different than was originally intended. These later appropriations of spaces disregard what the planner assumed would be the appropriate uses of them. Such later, ad hoc uses may be only temporary or they may be more permanent. Goffman provides us with a useful example:

“The great modern case is President Grayson Kirk’s office during the 1968 unpleasantness at Columbia:

‘One and a half hours after the President’s suite had been cleared of student demonstrators, Grayson Kirk stood in the center of his private office looking at the blankets, cigarette butts and orange peels that covered his rug. Turning to A. M. Rosenthal of *The New York Times* and several other reporters who had come into the office with him he murmured, “My God, how could human beings do a thing like this?” It was the only time, Truman recalled later, that he had ever seen the President break down. Kirk’s windows were crisscrossed with tape and on one hung a large sign reading, “Join Us.” His lampshades were torn, his carpet was spotted, his furniture was displaced and scratched. But the most evident and disturbing aspect of the scene was not the minor damage inflicted by the students. The everything-in-its-place decor to which Kirk had grown accustomed was now in disarray—disarray that was the result of the transformation of an office into the living quarters of 150 students during the past six days’ (quoted from: Avorn, *et al.*, 1969. p. 200).

The great sociological question, of course, is not how could it be that human beings would do a thing like this, but rather how is it that human beings do this sort of thing so rarely. How come persons in authority have been so overwhelmingly successful in conning those beneath them into keeping the hell out of their offices?” (Goffman 1971, 288).

For the larger majority of people who are neither architects nor university presidents, the occupation of space is a continual problem and opportunity. Living

in spaces designed by others, often for uses that are no longer useful, coping with advances in technology, and aging infrastructure: people more or less make do.

Counter-domination

“But should a stranger or employer or a janitor or policeman approach the two players, it will usually be quite sufficient to know that the men are playing a board game. The gearing of the game into the immediately surrounding workaday world is largely in terms of this relatively abstract categorization, for what are involved are such matters as the electric light, the room space, the time needed, the right of others to openly watch and under certain circumstances to interrupt the men and ask them to postpone the game or shift its physical location, the right of the players to phone their wives to say they will be delayed because of a game to finish. These and a host of other detailed ways in which what is going on must find a place in the rest of the ongoing world are relatively independent of which game is being played. By and large it is the mode of transformation, not what is thus transformed, that is geared into the world. And yet, of course, this independence is not complete” (Goffman 1974, 248).

This slipperiness of place, its vulnerability to practices, set the limit to the production of space as an act of domination. Practices of domination attempt to produce spaces of domination, which will allow domination to occur as the sole practice in the place. Prisons use panoptic availability to prevent prisoners from performing counter-practices. Cities use codes to prevent the homeless from using the streets as either work space (panhandling) or housing (sleeping or defecating).

Counter-dominant practices create counter-spaces by disattending to the spatial logic of the dominant order. Alternative rules and unofficial attitudes (such as cynicism) tactically retrieve a space for use by a local practice. More profound transformations of space by practice require pre-planning and an alternative logic. Jokes are a clear example of this, as are festivals.

Counter-domination opens up spaces within the dominant order. But the opposite is also true. The market/state has tremendous resources, and authority, as well as longevity. It can quickly reseal the openings that counter-events have made. The longer term answer is to reveal and remove the practices of domination within the market/state, to democratize democracy and capitalism. Only then will the prac-

tices of government and the market create places that are open and available to all.

A festival performs its goals, these are internal to the event. This little concept fronts the *performativity* of festival practices. It also hints at the need to repeat the festival event: as much as the performance is the goal, its effect is established through a practice of iteration. Iteration provides the memory of the festival.

“...Liminal propositions, or what Turner also called ‘frames,’ are ‘privileged spaces where people are allowed to think about how they think, about the terms in which they conduct their thinking, or to feel about how they feel about daily life.’ These frames place the spectator outside the system of instrumental propositions and objective measures used to conduct daily life. They recognize that other scrutinizing and evaluating procedures, really meta-languages, are required to talk about the system itself. At times the space of the city takes on this sense of liminality, it becomes a text to be read or a space to enter in order to retreat from and subsequently reflect on the social order and cultural significance of its architectural passages and transformations....”
(Boyer 1994, 211).

One idea here is to make a clear distinction between festivals and spectacles, the latter which display features external to the event: status markers of powerful, famous, or historically noted individuals, or reminders of military and police strength.

Think of spectacle parade as holding up a wall of specially constructed mirrors that reflect into the eyes of onlookers the surrounding buildings and their occupants in a light complimentary to the parade’s organizers.

And then think of a festival parade as surrounding itself with mirrors that shut out the gaze of onlookers, and distort and reassemble the identities of those within the parade, rendering external distinctions indistinct, and opening up to laughter, reflection, and sudden insight. This moment is the goal of the festival.

There is a tendency in the social sciences (in part because of an economic bent) to only ask what effect the festival has on quotidian life, to view the festival as an “episode” and everyday life and work as primary and external to such cultural episodes. In

response to this tendency, there are a couple of features of festivals that need to be looked at. The first is the need for rehearsal, and the second is the availability of “doubleness.”

A festival does not simply erupt from the street (there are a few exceptions to this), it is organized and rehearsed throughout the year. And so it is active in the lives and relationships of its participants all year around. It is its own “lifestyle.” This means it adds another “lifestyle” onto that provided by the market/state. This “doubling” of lifestyle helps to decenter consumerist lifestyle production in the life projects of individuals (one aspect of the festival countering the bourgeois lifestyle [see: [A festival counters the dominant bourgeois lifestyle logic](#)]). A festival becomes a double identity, which attaches to its performers and to its sites. Space is also doubled, and the street is made liable to short-term ad hoc appropriations by those who already know it as a festival space.

“Modernity produces certain distinct social forms, of which the most prominent is the nation-state. A banal observation, of course, until one remembers the established tendency of sociology to concentrate on 'society' as its designated subject-matter. The sociologist's 'society', applied to the period of modernity at any rate, is a nation-state, but this is usually a covert equation rather than an explicitly theorised one.

As a socio-political entity the nation-state contrasts in a fundamental way with most types of traditional order. It develops only as part of a wider nation-state system (which today has become global in character), has very specific forms of territoriality and surveillance capabilities, and monopolises effective control over the means of violence”
(Giddens 1991, 15).

“Modernity” is too often a term used as unproblematic *in the singular*. And the processes that lead to and through this period are too often considered as uniform and ubiquitous. Scholars working in and on Asian locales have led a counter-argument which notes that a plurality of modernities are to be found, each responding to local historical circumstances. At the same time, there is no escaping the *globalizing* aspect of modernity, which includes the development of nation-states in geographical and organizational counter-position to one another. So too, the disembedding features of modern nation formation have unlinked internal locales from local histories, recoding these as sites of the nation. And competition among nations steers their internal formations, resulting in homologous institutional arenas where the global holds sway over the local.

Industrialization, militarization, capital formation: there are several arenas within modernity where states compete. And this competition brings them into a dialogic relationship that reduces inter-national differences. Institutions learn from each other, and copy one another in the process. As with the bodies competitive athletes, modern states begin to resemble each other as they individually strive to master similar practices.

However, internal “governmentalities” in each nation also reflects a local history of rules (and rul-

ers), and of powers and places. But here, too, in a general—however, I would venture, in a productive—manner, we can speak of *dominant modes of governmentality* as well as localized practices. These modes of modern government are plural, but not as numerous as nations, and not as diverse as states might profess.

Here I am using Foucault's term, "government" in a meaning field that Foucault supplied:

"The things with which in this sense government is to be concerned are in fact men, but men in their relations, their links, their imbrication with those other things which are wealth, resources, means of subsistence, the territory with its specific qualities, climate, irrigation, fertility, etc.; men in their relation to that other kind of things, customs, habits, ways of acting and thinking, etc.; lastly, men in their relation to that other kind of things, accidents and misfortunes such as famine, epidemics, death, etc." (1991, 93).

Government, and its underlying "governmentality" is the dominant discourse of relationships among people, and between people and cultural objects. Government is not restricted to the relations between the state and the individual, although this relationship in modernity has a marked quality because of the state's monopoly over the means of violence—both carceral and military. And there are also nations where the state's hegemonic interests spread far wider than a control over the means of violence. In fact, here is where the major difference among locally-present modernities is to be found.

State-nations and nation-states

In some countries, the ruling state acquires a purview that has few limits, while in others, the state operates within externally imposed limits, and other institutions operate more-or-less external to the

state. The latter “nation-states” display a form of modern state that is found, for example, in places in North America and Europe, and is the primary model for a modernity (of the West) where issues of civil society and the public sphere are central to critiques of modernity.

The former (in order to distinguish them from the latter, I call these “*state-nations*”—as they tend to put the interests of the state at the front of the nation) are found, for example, in most places in Asia and Africa. In these countries, descriptions of the state, in its many interventions into the lives of its citizens, form the main critique of local modernities.

“For Deleuze and Guattari, desire is neither inherently good nor bad, only dynamic and productive; desiring-machines can travel along the path of becoming revolutionary as well as becoming-fascist; lines of escape can turn into lines of liberation or destruction” (Best and Kellner 1991, 105).

It is important to see both modes of modernity as a) informing the other, and b) capable of transforming into the other. State organizations in nation-states may envy those of state-nations, where the purview of state institutions is much broader. So too, civil organizations in state-nations may envy those in nation-states for the latter’s greater liberty of independent action and influence. Capitalist organizations recognize the benefits of direct government support for research under state-nation conditions, but also complain about state controls on the marketplace.

“Reich is at his profoundest as a thinker when he refuses to accept ignorance or illusion on the part of the masses as an explanation of fascism, and demands an explanation that will take their desires into account, an explanation formulated in terms of desire: no, the masses were not innocent dupes; at a certain point, under a certain set of conditions, they *wanted* fascism, and it is this perversion of the desire of the masses that needs to be accounted for” (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 29).

Both modes of modernity are, to some extent, keyed to the desires of their citizenry (although this connection generally includes paternalist attempts at control over these desires). And, to the extent that these desires, however articulated, are met, then the mode may be considered to have succeeded. Today, both modes of modernity are increasingly linked to a “capitalist-production machine” (to use Deleuze and Guattari’s term) that is, itself, increasingly global in scope. Of late, this machine has become more central to the articulation of lifestyle desires, desires that may run counter to existing or proposed state-nation or nation-state programs.

Both modes are not ever fully realized, but reflect plateaus where the tensions between the state and its population are resolvable. A universal command over the lives of its citizens is generally beyond the reach of even the strongest state, and so state-nations are only relatively state-centered. And, conversely, full independence from the state is not generally possible for civil-society organizations, and so nation-states are only relatively public-centered.

Several attempts at achieving a dual state-nation/nation-state: where the state behaves like a state-nation in terms of supplying social resources, but also acts like a nation-state in terms of economic and public-sphere issues have mostly failed, and this mostly because of the fluidity of capital. “Liberal welfare states” use tax monies to provide state support for

social services¹, but corporations and wealthy individuals can simply move away, or take their profit centers off-shore, and so pay few taxes, creating a chronic under-funding situation that eventually undermines the state.

“The fact that the welfare state becomes a focus of conflict as much as reducing it puts limits on the fiscal resources that can be generated to fund its services. ... The 'taxpayer's revolt' places limits on the resources governments can muster to pay for the welfare state in circumstances where they have to compete for marginal votes in the electoral system. This squeeze tends to get tighter rather than to relax. As levels of voter dealignment grow, the parties can rely less and less on their established supporters alone and have to capture those in the middle; a resistance develops to paying marginal rates of tax once broadly acceptable to those who carried the burden”
(Giddens 1994, 75-76).

In some countries, such as in Hungary, a history of state-nation modernity is being challenged by social movements in favor of a public-centered nation-state. Other countries hold a history of movement in the opposite direction—from a nation-state to a state-nation—as Germany did in the 1930s.

Most countries are still working within the founding situations of their own modernity, and it is important, when critiquing their current situation, not to direct an argument to this which lacks a purchase on the mode of modernity which holds sway locally. Now, the distinction between nation-states and state-nations does not correspond directly to any of the “classical” modern political discourses: left-right, liberal-conservative, socialist-capitalist, etc. Instead it points to the role of the state² and that of the public sphere within a nation as an outcome of a local, modern governmentality.

-
1. A few states, such as Norway, have natural resources (e.g., oil) that they sell to fund social services. This represents a temporary, artificial, situation. China's recent move to incorporate market capitalism within state-nation modernity is the most recent attempt to create hybrid state-nation/nation-state.
 2. As such it resembles the conservative/liberal (there is some debate about who “owns” this position) distrust-of-government discourse at times, and it also includes a more radical critique state-like authority in all organizations and groups, including families, e.g., a counter-paternalist discourse.

State-nation modernity

“Although he resigned in 1989 following charges of corruption, Takeshita’s brainchild, the *Furusato kon no kai* (Spirit of Furusato Association) was adopted by the present (1989) prime minister, Kaifu Toshiki, as his personal advisory committee. Political factionalism aside, the LDP as a whole regards *furusato-zukuri* as the means by which to forge a new ‘cultural state’ (*bunka kokka*) in tandem with a ‘new Japanese-style welfare state’ (*Nihonsei no atarashii fukushi kokka*)” (Robertson 1991, 26).

Japan, for example, is a place where a certain contour of modernity has been accomplished, a matrix of modernizations and reflexive institutionalities that in their combination assemble what might be called a “*state-nation modernity*,” a modernity where agencies the state figure centrally in modernization and modern institutionalities.

State-nation modernity occurs in nations in several parts of the world. It is one of the stable forms of modernity that have emerged in this century. Its basis is a strong, centralized government and a determined program of control over economic and social forms of life. For decades it has been the main form of the modern state for more than half of the population of the world.

State-nation modernity has the following six primary features:

1. Strong central state control over or active management of the means of production within the nation;
2. Centralized governmental control over or management of health, education, cultural, and social programs;
3. Centralized control over local governmental agencies;
4. Centralized state control over or active management of mass media, particularly over broadcast media and newspapers;
5. A weak and ineffective public sphere either within or external to the state;
6. A court system dominated by the interests of the central state, and a strong national police.

“Conscious control means economic planning, which to be effective even in principle has to be largely centralized. In socialist theory, this forms a ‘cybernetic model’ of economic organization.

The socialist economy (not the state, which disappears’) is regulated through a ‘higher order intelligence’, the economic brain, which controls ‘lower order’ economic inputs and outputs. As one prominent author of the earlier part of the century put it, production and distribution will be regulated by ‘the local, regional, or national commissars’, who ‘shape, with conscious foresight, the whole economic life of the communities of which they are the appointed representatives and leaders, in accordance with the needs of their members’ (Giddens 1994, 58).”

Most generally, we find a *strong centralized state* that pursues a national state interest in the economy (through nationalized industries or through bureaucratic intervention), and an interest in providing for health care, education, and a variety of social resources, together with an interest in managing mass media and in using the justice and penal systems in the service of the state.

The weak public sphere may be seen as an outcome of the strong state, but is, I believe, more a primary feature of the relationship between the state and its population within the circumstances of state-nation modernity. As the state is the primary conduit for all decisions of public interest, other arenas become peripheralized.

The state that emerges within conditions of state-nation modernity uses its institutions to exert conscious control over the economic, cultural, and social lives of its population. This control has been characterized by Anthony Giddens (1994) on the model of a “cybernetic” organism, where the state is the mechanical brain, and the population its organic body. The notion of [Cybernetic governmentalities](#) articulates the distance between the state and its polity, a distance that magnifies the power of the state to act upon its population, as the latter is fully objectified as a field of operation for the state.

“This politics of *The Prince*, fictitious or otherwise, from which people sought to distance themselves, was characterized by one principle: for Machiavelli, it was alleged, the prince stood in a relation of singularity and externality, and thus of transcendence, to his principality. The prince acquires his principality by inheritance or conquest, but in any case he does not form part of it, he remains external to it”
(Foucault 1991, 89-90).

State-nations are countries where the state has not rejected the externality of the *sovereign* state in favor of the internality of the democratic state. The state becomes positioned outside of the population. It announces its interests as those *of* the population, and it proceeds on their behalf, but it is not subject to interrogation by or oversight from the population via the public sphere. This produces a weakened public sphere both within (e.g., in the instrumentalities of parliamentary discussions and decisions) and outside of the state.

All the democracy that fits

Given the widespread persistence of sovereign governmentalities (including colonial ones) up to this century, and the ready-made access to economic means that this form of governmentality provides to a ruling elite, it is really not surprising that subsequent, modern states have, on the whole, not embraced the internalization of power that would erode and replace this governmentality with that of an actually democratic state. The practical advantages of ruling under sovereign conditions are not obscure.

Varieties of “democracy” have thus emerged in many countries that are not actually supported from a democratic logic, but which offer a modicum of democracy¹ as a legitimizing feature both internally and externally. State-nations use the discourses of

1. Even the most “democratic” of democracies (wherever these may be found) struggle with questions over where and when a democratic logic should apply. The notion of democracy within the family in the U.S. is an example of this debate, as is the notion of democracy within the military.

“Japan’s experience demonstrates the insufficiency of equating democracy with the formal or nominal presence of certain institutions. The country is not a democracy in the Western sense” (Herzog 1993, 18).

democracy to code their own practices, but in the form of an alibi, rather than a logic of practice.

This opens up the states of state-nations to critiques of democracy as this is practiced by the state. However, an expectation of democracy in state-nations is not well-founded *as a critique of the state’s role* in the state-nation. The same holds for expectations on an independent public sphere within state-nation modernity. What public discourse does take place in these circumstances is produced by or with the consent of the state, and so an independent public sphere is not an available option.

Critiques of local democracy acquire usefulness in the larger critique of modernity, that is, of the choice of the mode of modernity itself. Those who, like Herzog (1993), would argue that Japan is not a democracy, hold a misplaced expectation, given the state-nation modernity of which Japan is a well-formed example. But those who would critique Japan’s choice of state-nation modernity as the locally practiced mode can use notions of democracy to articulate alternative—nation-state style—modes of modernity.

The democratization of Japan, should this occur, would not only necessitate that the existing institutions (the constitution, the diet, etc.) operate as they now claim to do, but a more fundamental break from the state itself as the instrument of governmentality, and also a break from the paternalist governmentality that informs not only the state’s position vis-à-vis its population, but also relationships within corporations,

factories, schools, and families.

In short, democratization, as this process is pursued and critiqued within and about nation-states, is an ongoing recoding of relationships at all levels of society, and, most importantly under capitalist economic systems, a recoding of the relationship between people and cultural objects.

A critique of democracy within a state-nation is thus an external critique of the persistence of the state-nation system of governmentality, and necessarily includes a counter-public critique of the lack of a public sphere as the forum where such discussions can take place. But here we have to also mention that critiques of democracy within nation-states have also led to the formation of state-nations, even where there already exists a public sphere and a civil society.

Where there is an pre-existing strong public sphere (such as in Germany before 1933), the movement toward state-nation modernity is characterized by a state rhetoric of “national interests” and an erosion of public sphere discourse as a means for decision making or oversight of the state. This erosion is coupled to state efforts in acquiring control over the media, which may be accomplished under the rationale of “protecting” national interests. Finally, the centralization of institutional powers provides the central state with the means to direct the economic and social lives of its citizens.

Where there not a pre-existing strong public sphere, such as in cases of direct transfer of power

from a princely state (as in the Soviet Union, Iran, or Japan) or from a colonial state (as in Indonesia), or both (as in China), the emerging modern state might suddenly acquire an ability to speak on behalf of “the national interest” and a centralized state apparatus may already be in place. Under these circumstances, the notion of a strong public sphere or of active non-governmental organizations would only threaten the ability of the state to govern¹ in the manner in which it now operates.

With the collapse of communist regimes in Europe it may be tempting to typify the state-nation form of modernity by reference to these, and so to announce that this is no longer a viable alternative for local modernities anywhere in on the globe. However, state-nation modernity is still the most prevalent form of modernity on the globe, and it is nowhere more evident than in Asia. And in Asia, it is today not linked to the Titanic adventures of state socialism, but rather rides the tigers of Asian capitalism.

Japan is a reasonable example of a state within a state-nation modernity, and it demonstrates how this type of modernity can foster rapid industrial growth at

-
1. This type of modernity is also a current feature in debates internal to countries such as Great Britain and the United States. While both the left and the right have expressed concerns about state control, the left still looks to expand the state interest in social welfare intervention into the economy and society, and the right seeks to expand state cooperation with national economic/corporate interests. However, where these debates are carried on within the public sphere, few suggest that the state be given more control over the media or the courts. These controls occur only within conditions of state-nation modernity or some other form of modern nation-state (e.g., colonial governments) that has suppressed role of the public sphere.

a national level. By harnessing its control over the “national interests” of the population and corporations, central government planners in Japan created one of the world’s largest economies within a space of forty years. And much of this economic growth can be described as the outcome of this nation’s fostering its own state-nation modernity¹.

The consequences of state-nation modernity include a strong state with an enhanced capacity to direct the lives of individuals, and with the means to plan for and invest in economic and social programs of national scope, on the long term. Under these circumstances the public sphere is also “privatized” by the state (see also: [Private public sphere](#)). And so we now see the growth of “state sponsored non-governmental organizations” in nations such as Malaysia. The state penetrates the lives of individuals and encompasses the arenas for social and cultural participation.

Such a state looks to legitimate its actions through the seamless appearance of its capability to plan for the future, and its own servitude to the national interests it articulates and promotes. Its legitimacy does not rest on the claims it might make

-
1. However, economic growth has been much more elusive for other nations that share this type of modernity, and so it is really not possible to make any prediction about the economic consequences of state-nation modernity. The lack of transparency in the relationship between the state and the nation’s economic institutions (banks, insurance companies, and corporations) possible within state-nation modernity opens up a space for cooperation that can be used to promote overall economic growth and it can be used to hide gifts and favors that increase the transaction costs within the economy and hinder economic growth.

as a democratic state. Most of the population can discern how democratic a state is despite its own claims. However, the state becomes implicated in the goals it announces for national progress. As long as these are attractive (or reasonable) and it subsequently meets them, it is not liable to critiques over its lack of democratic decision-making. As formerly applied to the king (or the colonial power) this type of modern government often replaced, the state's "sovereign" legitimacy hinges on a combination of evident benevolence, ultimate justice, and visible power.

Above I mentioned that there are two dominant modes of modern governmentality. Under the circumstances of nation-states where we find a strong public sphere (e.g., a public sphere that is involved not only in discussion, but in actual decision making) one of the possible outcomes a *nation-state modernity*: a modernity where a strong public sphere, a state apparatus, and an independent marketplace confront each other in an open-ended contest where overall control is not possible or even desirable.

nation-state modernity

While state-nation modernity may be described as conservative, as it maintains a prior "sovereign" governmentality, nation-state modernity is an experiment in working democracy. These states are marked in their formation by events (and today, by memorialized sites) of democratic resistance to absolute sovereign rule, although, as state socialism reminds us, this history is not sufficient to warrant an ensuing discourse of democracy. Nation-state modernity has the

following six primary features:

7. Weak state control over or active management of the means of production within the nation;
8. Weak central governmental control over or management of health, education, cultural, and social programs and active non-governmental organizations in these areas;
9. Decentralized decision making: local governmental agencies have more control over resources and programs;
10. Weak state control over or active management of mass media—and so strong legal protections and social sentiments protecting the media from government control;
11. A relatively strong public sphere both within and external to the state;
12. A court system able to counter the interests of the state, and localized law-enforcement.

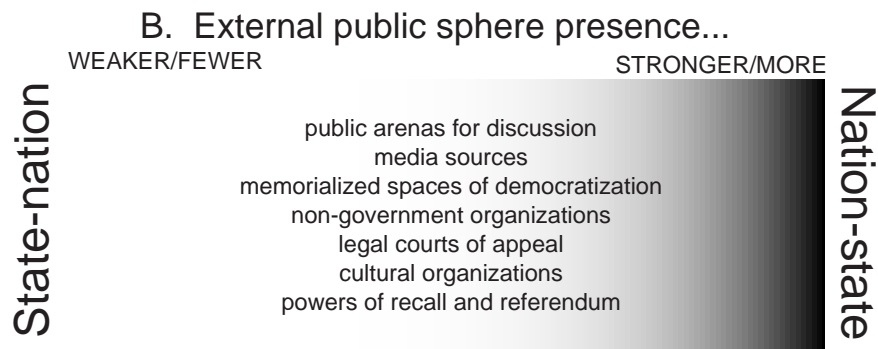
During the past hundred years several states have approached this mode of modernity, and others have abandoned it. National Socialism in Germany rejected this form of modernity in the 1930s in favor of state-nation modernity. The return of the king in Spain marked another move away from nation-state modernity. And welfare-state programs in nations of Europe and North America have tended to allow the state to penetrate the lives of citizens in much the same fashion as states under state-nation modernity. These modes are not fixed in any one locale and continue to inform and compete¹ with each other. Today, several countries are moving toward one or the other of the

1. For example, US semiconductor companies have looked to the Japanese government/corporate research practices and have pushed for similar practices at home.

modal modernities. And so there is an international discourse that critiques both modes, however this has often failed to recognize them both as “modern.” Too often, state-nations have been seen as “pre-modern.”

The following illustrates the main tensions between state-nation and nation-state modernities:

Features of the two modal modernities



Features of the two modal modernities

State-nation and nation-state modernities represent modal conditions for local modernities, conditions that reflect the local relationship between the state and its polity. In nation-state modernity, the state has been internalized by the polity and reemerges as a government subject to what Foucault

(1997) called “the question of liberalism:”

“...liberalism resonates with the principle: ‘One always governs too much’—or, at any rate, one always must suspect that one governs too much. Governmentality should not be exercised without a ‘critique’ far more radical than a test of optimization. It should inquire not just as to the best (or least costly) means of achieving its effects but also concerning the possibility and even the lawfulness of its scheme for achieving effects. The suspicion that one always risks governing too much is inhabited by the question: *Why, in fact, must one govern?*”... Liberal thought starts not from the existence of the state, seeing in the government the means for attaining that end it would be for itself, but rather from society, which is in a complex relation of exteriority and interiority with respect to the state. Society, as both a precondition and a final end, is what enables one to no longer ask the question: How can one govern as much as possible and at the least possible cost? Instead, the question becomes: Why must one govern? In other words, what makes it necessary for there to be a government, and what ends should it pursue with regard to society in order to justify its existence? (74-75 emphasis added).

By viewing government as an unhappy compromise predicated upon the current failings of society, liberalism¹ imagines a society where the least amount of government is necessary, and looks to the practices that will realize this utopian vision.

liberalism and the nation-state

Looking at the history of liberalism in England, Germany, and the United States, Foucault notes that each case presents its own forms of liberalism, and

1. If this strikes the reader as a position closer to the “conservative” side of current debates, this is mainly because of another “liberal” concern—a suspicion of corporations and of the marketplace as a source of economic control. It is about the role of the state as a check on the market and on corporations where “liberals” and “conservatives” (at least in the US and in Great Britain) as most at odds.

local distinctions between the state and civil society. But in each case, the above circumstances of nation-state modernity are evident. The presence of public-sphere institutions that are external to the state actually mark the state's position as internal to the public.

The public sphere is what surrounds and subtends the state. Under these conditions, the state is not granted a controlling interest in the economy, nor in mass media, cultural production, or legal proceedings¹, etc.. These social practices might share the same techniques of government that the state uses (and this creates the problem of "governmentality" as a logic that is hegemonic among even counter-state organizations), but they are managed independently from the state.

In state-nation modernity the state maintains an (earlier developed) external position to the polity. This is its founding condition, and remains the operational logic. Under these circumstances, the liberal question makes no sense. Society has already been equated with the nation, and the state has already acquired control of the "national interest."

1. It is not inconsequential how judges and juries are selected, and at restrictions on access to courts. State control over the proceedings of and access to criminal and civil courts is a hallmark of the state-nation.

“The era of big government is over”

US President Bill Clinton in a State of the Union Address;

“The era of big, centralized government is over”

British Prime Minister Tony Blair on the day of Scotland’s plebiscite authorizing a Scottish parliament.

It must be noted that state institutions within nation-state modernity are not “weakened” because of the state’s lack of interest in controlling the economic, social, or cultural lives of its citizens. These states may seem “thin” compared to the “thicker” layer of state presence one finds everywhere in state-nations, and there may be whole areas of life where the state plays no role at all (a circumstance that persons accustomed to life in a state-nation may find difficult to imagine). But even the “thinnest” state today still maintains its monopoly over the means of violence, and it supports the nation’s legal infrastructure, collects its taxes, and usually shows some interest in economic matters, for example, monitoring the market’s ability to monopolize economic resources against the interests of the consumer public. (The state works to make rational and fair constraints on corporations, which, in turn, views these as onerous.)

It may be said that today several countries in Europe and North America are well within the description of nation-state modernity, and that there is, in some other places, including Eastern Europe and Latin America, a movement toward this form of governmentality. This movement can be seen today in the collapse¹ of the welfare-state governmentalities that were the liberal-social varieties of state-nation modernity (e.g., “Thatcherism” in the United Kingdom), and

1. Such changes can result from the influence of strong multinational market interests rather than from a strengthening of non-governmental civil society institutions to replace state-welfare programs, and so these services (housing, food, health care) may simply disappear as “rights” and be recoded as “commodities” available for a price.

in the growth of civil-society institutions and public-sphere arenas in former communist states.

But it can also be said that state-nation modernity is, in many places, a central feature of the circumstances of modernity, and that this seems to be at least as durable in these places as nation-state modernity is in other states. In the People's Republic of China, for example, despite changes in economic institutions, there has been little change of late in the desire of the central state to control the media, and to penetrate the lives of its population. Notions of a strong public sphere there are about as local as Coca-Cola.

*State-nations, and
debates over democracy*

As was mentioned above, “democracy” seems to be the single universal feature of all nations today—either in its presence or absence, or both. Each nation on the global pursues, or refuses to pursue, democratic governmentalities in ways that are imbricated within histories of local practices. And so, definitions of “democracy” are debated locally in discourses that may not translate readily from nation to nation. For example, state-nations may promote forms of “democracy” that are fundamentally different from those of nation-states. This means that local demands for “democracy” within state-nations may have quite different goals than demands for “democracy” in nation-states.

Generally, calls for democratic reform in state-nations (coming from citizens or from politicians) are calls for reform *within the state*, which range from a

discourse of anti-corruption, to that of fairness in the state's dealings with groups of citizens who feel unfairly excluded due to social or geographical circumstances. Farmers, for example, may feel that the state spends too many resources on the cities. These calls for reform are very similar in structure and tone to the kinds of petitions that groups under a monarchy might raise to the king. Rarely do calls for reform question the *position* of the state within the nation.

Democratic reform movements in nation-states may also center on reforms within the state (corruption happens everywhere), but also include discourses concerning the very need for state intervention in certain arenas (e.g., regulating the internet). Again and again, the "liberal question" is raised. And here too, the final result may not be a petition to elected leaders, but a referendum that imposes the result of a debate from within the public sphere upon the state.

When analyzing democratic movements within state-nations, again, it is important to note first the position of the state within the goals of the movement. Social movements in nation-states may find their goals hampered by a lack of state controls, for example, controls over environmental conditions. These movements may then call for more state controls. Whereas social movements in state-nations may find that the state's control over the condition in question is simple refractory to external pressures. But what are the available counter-strategies in these circumstances? Instead of calling for a decreased con-

control by the state, a position that would suggest that the state is not legitimate, protest groups look to increase their visibility as supplicants to the state. This strategy only strengthens the state's claims to legitimate control.

*state-nation self-defined
democracy*

While the states of some state-nations, such as that of the People's Republic of China, distance themselves from the very use of the term and the practice of "democracy;" others, such as that of Malaysia, critique the model of democracy derived from nation-states in the West as inappropriate for their (state-) nation; and then others, such as Japan, maintain a façade of Western-style democratic institutions without considering that these lose their democratic force when they are controlled entirely from within the state.

"... there is a very funny, peculiar feeling that if it is democracy, then you must be fighting each other. Otherwise, it is not democracy. But we happen to agree. That is also a choice. We have a choice to consciously agree or disagree. But the fact that we agree or the fact that in this country if we don't change government and parties at every election, is in itself, an expression of free choice. The choice not to change"
Malaysian Prime Minister
Mahathir Mohamad.
October 4, 1996
(*Far Eastern Economic Review*
web site)

To reiterate, debates over democracy—and, oftentimes, over issues of human and civil "rights" and "freedoms," issues that are historically linked to nation-state democracies in the West—need first to account for the *position of the state* within state-nations. Only then can the debate move on to discursive strategies that would discursively "re-place" the state within the nation. While the states of state-nations may attempt to claim that they are the source of such rights and liberties, in practice, these rights and liberties must warranted as much by an external control over the state as they are by democratic institutions within the state. This condition on rights and liberties is an historical feature of the discourse's

founding within (Western) nation-states. And so, this is where the liberal question becomes a fulcrum that might just re-place the state in state-nations. For this reason, most state-nations—including Japan, where the state runs several “human rights institutes” — tend to overcode (see also: [Overcoding, Coding, and Recoding](#)) the state’s commitment to “preserving” human rights, although some state-nations, such as that of the People’s Republic of China, have simply dismissed the idea of civil rights as inappropriate for their locale.

Within a state-nation, counter-state discourses acquire the means to focus on issues of rights and freedoms (which are also linked to a public sphere operating outside of the state) by first asking the “liberal question” that Foucault noted was the origin of the modern (Western) break with the Princely governmentality—the question is: why do we need a state at all?

practice against the position of the state

Above, I noted that, to date, democratic nation-states all have sites that commemorate where counter-sovereign actions and discourses made a break with autocratic rule. This brings us to suspect that such actions and such places may be necessary for a public to appropriate the position of the state within a state-nation and lay the groundwork for a public sphere. Even where the break was not, initially, successful (as in Tienanmen Square, and in Kwangju, Korea), such actions may be integral to the success of counter-state discourse/practice. So too, the ongoing commemoration of prior democratic actions may be

in part responsible for maintaining a strong public sphere. For all of its nods to rationality, modern democracy is also a bodily practice that begs for exercise and rehearsals, and, most of all, for performance.

Nation-state modernity may be also characterized by the regular attention paid to the act of achieving the ground of a strong public sphere, and, correspondingly, we can expect state-nation modernity to celebrate the *formation of the state* as the basis for the nation. We can see here that modernities also reveal their primary modes in collective practices in the “theatres-of-the public:” in the streets of the cities, and in schools, as well as what happens in government chambers and corporate offices.

late modernity and the state

It may be useful to look at possible consequences which attend to either state-nation modernity or nation-state modernity under the conditions of what Giddens calls “late modernity”.

“In conditions of late modernity, we live 'in the world' in a different sense from previous eras of history. Everyone still continues to live a local life, and the constraints of the body ensure that all individuals, at every moment, are contextually situated in time and space. Yet the transformations of place, and the intrusion of distance into local activities, combined with the centrality of mediated experience, radically change what 'the world' actually is. This is so both on the level of the 'phenomenal world' of the individual and the general universe of social activity within which collective social life is enacted. Although everyone lives a local life, phenomenal worlds for the most part are truly global” (Giddens 1991, 187).

One feature of this notion of late modernity is the *disappearance of the nation-state* as the site of the construction of individual and group identities, lifestyles (see also [lifestyle and state-nation modernity](#)), and social movements. As transnational flows of technologies, workers, tourists, ideas, and cultural artifacts increase, the arbitrary, political boundaries of nation-states lose cultural relevance. The state's ability to restrict access to these flows becomes problematic, both because the transnational marketplace relentlessly seeks out local market outlets, and because isolation may have negative consequences for the local economy.

Under state-nation modernity, states rely on state-sponsored lifestyle programs coded as *national/natural* to promote social [orthoposture](#) and normalized social behaviors. But these now must compete with market-driven trans-national (and so “de-natured”) lifestyle inputs. Additionally, the emerging “free-market” global economy has been coded with the same “liberal question” that critiques the role of state governments to control national economies. The state's control over prices and production is now recoded as “protectionist” and the lack of transparent decision-making by the state becomes liable to claims of “corruption.”

At the same time the global job market in cultural production draws talent from smaller, national markets to international cosmopolitan centers, creating a center-periphery circumstance that marginalizes

nations where cultural production is managed (usually by the state) as being by and for a *national* audience. National programs in media and the arts may fare poorly in competition against those produced by the new cosmopolitan centers. And global media are now in a position (e.g., through satellite broadcasting) to ensure that this competition occurs despite state controls on local media.

What I am suggesting is that the circumstances of late modernity hold greater consequences for states under state-nation modernity than they do for states under nation-state modernity, and that this differential is now being felt acutely in places like Japan and China.

In Japan, the state's response has been to reassert a national character as one-among-many. In order to resist a future where individuals will look outside of Japan for cultural identity, the Japanese Government seeks to strengthen identity with Japanese culture—only this time, and ironically, in the name of “internationalization” (*kokusaika*).

“In addition, what can also be thought of as something to be prized and transcending different periods of time, is the need, in the education systems of different countries, to get children to learn their own country's language, its history, traditions and culture, and to foster in them a spirit and state of mind that will treasure these things. In the case of Japan, we have an important duty to see that our children, the rising generation who are to bear the destiny of our country on their shoulders, become fully familiar with the beautiful Japanese language, study the history that has fashioned Japan as well as its leading artistic and cultural accomplishments, its literature, its folktales and its traditions, and as well as developing a state of mind that treasures these things, become able to relate them and see them as relevant

to the present age in which we live...

In order to encourage zest for living in children in the context of steadily increasing internationalization and a further deepening of international interdependence, it can be seen as even more important than hitherto to educate ‘Japanese who can live in international society,’ trusted by the world, and to foster an attitude of respect for the culture and traditions of Japan as handed down from a continuous line of past generations” (MONBUSHO 1997).

This call for a renewed respect for the “culture and traditions of Japan” is made from a strategic position that assumes other nations are promoting the same national cultural goal, and so it fails to realize that transnational cultural notions—culture unbounded from states— are the real emerging “competition” for an increasingly globalized cultural imagination.

Nation-state modernities also face challenges under circumstances of late modernity. In particular, the ability of corporations to escape national legal systems (for example, the hiring of slave laborers in foreign countries) hampers the efforts of nation-based public-sphere organizations to use the agencies of state governments to monitor and constrain the market. Until the public sphere is seen as a global discourse, and civil-society organizations acquire international legal standings, international corporations will be able to escape local efforts to oversee their operations.

Neighborhood events

After years of reading about Japanese neighborhood festivals, and witnessing these in my travels throughout Japan in the 1980s, in mid-1992 I had moved into a Kyoto neighborhood that held one of these events, and, by that autumn, it's weekend was finally upon us¹.

Shinto festivals in Japan have played a prominent role in some recent urban ethnographies, from Ted Bestor's pathbreaking *Neighborhood Tokyo* (1989) to Jennifer Robertson's landmark *Native and Newcomer* (1991). Still, by far the greater literature on festivals exists in Japanese. Beginning with a period of burgeoning interest in local folklore at the turn of the century—an interest guided by the work of Japan's foremost scholar on this topic, Yanagita Kunio—many of the country's several thousand festivals ([matsuri](#)) have received some sort of scholarly attention.

-
1. I would have the opportunity to participate in my neighborhood's annual festival three times while I was living with my family in Kyoto. The first year, my 10 year-old son helped to carry the *kodomo-omikoshi* (children's portable shrine) around our *chou* (neighborhood). In the second year the house where I was living became the temporary local resting-spot (*otabisho*) for the main festival procession, and the temporary shrine for one of many representations of the regional deity. The third year, I mainly took video of the event.

Although it is a momentary punctuation in the year's activities, the festival illustrates many of the themes that suffuse Miyamoto-choo's mundane social life throughout the year: the hierarchical structure of neighborhood groups and the egalitarian ethos that permeates many residents' conceptions of the neighborhood; tensions between internal and external definitions of the community; Miyamoto-choo's assertion of its identity and autonomy through local events and activities that are self-consciously seen as parts of the neighborhood's evolving body of "tradition." These themes manifest themselves in one form or another in all aspects of neighborhood life. But they are perhaps nowhere more clearly and coherently evident than in the annual festival for the Shinto tutelary deity.

(Bestor 1989, 225)

our invitation

From local histories, to more analytic works, [matsuri](#) literature in Japanese is truly voluminous, although, like works on [matsuri](#) in English (and like works on ritual in any language) these invariably focus on the event's ceremonial activities and scripts, at the expense of any serious notice of the less-scripted actions that are also expected to occur. This means that we often have an extensive record of the ritual "scaffold" erected for and by an event, but a far less complete record of the event in its potential *performative* complexity. It was my original task to explore these other, less recorded, aspects of festival production in Japan, by looking at one or more festivals in Kyoto.

I was originally encouraged by the great number of *matsuri* events that happen every year, and by their self-professed position occupying the center of cultural production in Kyoto city (albeit in the absence of other modes—such as television and music— of cultural production).

On the second Friday of October, the *chounikaichou* (the head of the neighborhood association) poked his head into our house's *genkan* (entry hall) and asked if my son would like to participate in the carrying of the *kodomo-omikoshi* (children's portable shrine). I unhesitatingly volunteered my son's services, and took the child's costume that the fellow handed me, which included a headband, a happi-coat and belt, and a light brass bell that was to be attached to this belt. It would soon be time for the Awata Mat-

suri.

Awata Jinja

By that time, I had visited the nearby Awata Jinja (Awata shrine) on many occasions. Like other Shinto shrines in the area, it provides an open-space, park-like ambiance that is not easy to find in Kyoto. And, from its hill-side vantage point, I had watched the summer Obon fires¹ on the hills surrounding the city.

Awata Jinja's position at the Eastern entrance to

The view north-north-west from the Awata Jinja shows the Kitayama (northern mountains) that lie between Kyoto and the Eastern Sea (The Sea of Japan).



Kyoto on a hill overlooking the old Tokaido road between Kyoto and Edo (Tokyo) lent it some promi-

-
1. Kyoto is surrounded by hills on three sides, and every summer, at the end of the yearly Buddhist period of ancestor worship, fires are lit on these hillsides to encourage the visiting souls a successful return to their abodes. [Ancestor worship is most prominent accommodation between Indian Buddhist thought and family funerary practices in East Asia. The very notion of ancestors (and graveyards) runs counter to the original idea of this-world reincarnation. But today, in Kyoto, Buddhist temples make the largest portion of their income and devote the largest amount of their practice to the spiritual care and attention given to family ancestors, through rituals in the temples, rituals in home alters, and the maintenance of graveyards.] Obon occurs in August in Kyoto region, and is a time when families traditionally get together, and one of the best alibis for a few days of vacation.

nence¹ in former times. But today it has a moribund feel about it. In part, this might be due to its location: wedged between the expansive, and still vibrant Yasaka Jinja, and the even larger (as a national marker) Hein Jingu (Heian Grand Shrine), where the spirits of the first and the last of Kyoto's resident emperors have been enshrined.

Awata Jinja

The Awata Jinja is nearly always quiet, and it lacks even a marriage facility. On any given day it might appear abandoned, and often when I strolled its grounds I met not a single other person. It is not until the week of the annual festival that one can sense its presence in the neighborhood.

The Awata Matsuri is an annual festival put on by the Awata Jinja, a Shinto shrine located about four-hundred yards from my house. All of the neighborhoods in its precincts gather contributions from their member (*ujiko*) households for its operation, and some of these households also hold the right to set up temporary shrines where the main procession will pass by. In many ways, this small festival is a miniature of the city's one great festival: Gion *matsuri*. Like Gion, the Awata Matsuri's traditional practice relies upon the availability of historic-period architecture. This is where my house (although not my household) became the focus of the neighborhood festival the

1. The Awata shrine was connected to the Shoren-in temple, a temple that maintains imperial connections, although the Shoren-in's connections with the Awata Jinja were severed (as were those of virtually all Buddhist temples and Shinto Shrines in Japan) during the Meiji period. (Allan Grapard, personal correspondence).

second year of my stay in Kyoto.

The entire process of setting up the neighborhood display is guided not by some sense of religious or other meaning, but by the goal of reproducing the display according to a standard appearance, through the use of photographs. The duties were mostly divided between the adult men (who did the large construction and electrical work) and the women (who created the displays of fruit and nuts and did the fine work on the final display). Young adult men and young unmarried women did not involve themselves in this process.

The two-day festival includes some ceremonial and also entertainment events at the Awata Jinja, and it centers around a double procession: in the afternoon, a ceremonial halberd (*hoko*) is processed, along with the shrine's *omikoshi*, which was formerly carried by young men, but now sits on the back of a pick-up truck.

Here we see the shrine's main *omikoshi* (portable shrine) paraded through the shrine precincts on the back of a pick-up truck.



Later in the evening, another procession takes burning torches along the same route, as the main "ritual cleansing" aspect

of the event. Today, the main "cleansing" aspect of the event occurs when it is used as an alibi for neighborhoods to contribute volunteers to police some of the

areas that are common to more than one chou (such as the riverbank of the creek (the Shirakawa) that runs through the district.

Our neighborhood kept a storehouse for the ceremonial fixtures in an overhead room between two houses. The expensive articles (the brocade and the halberd) were kept at the home of the chounaikaicho. (Image from the [Awata video I](#), available by request)

Each neighborhood hosts a children's portable



shrine which is carried by children¹ to the main shrine after being carried throughout the neighborhood.

Posters are displayed to announce the main festival events at the Awata Shrine. This year, the classical festival music concert has been abandoned in favor of a karaoke event. (Image from the [Awata video I](#), available by request).

This festival,



1. By 1994 the number of children in my neighborhood had dropped to where most of the people carrying the children's shrine were adults.

the annual district *undokai* (sporting meet) and the summer's *Jizo-obon* festival are events that include participation not only of children, but also of retired people (mostly women).

Old families and foreign visitors

In my neighborhood there are today only a couple of families who trace their residence back to pre-Meiji times, when the area was a precinct of a local branch of a Buddhist temple¹ with Imperial family connections. I will call these the two “old families” in the area. They still own many of the houses in this small neighborhood, and are the local landlords. There are a few more families that have many decades (and several generations) of residence, most of these have retail or service businesses in the area and own their houses. I will call these the “main” families of the neighborhood, as they are the most active in neighborhood affairs.

-
1. The temple is still there today, and when the new Emperor first visited Okinawa in 1993, someone set fire to one of its out-buildings as a rather oblique means of protest. This created a period of plain-clothed police surveillance in the neighborhood that included a door-step interview at my house in which a policeman asked me if I'd seen anyone strange (*henna hito*) hanging around, and then noticed my Grateful Dead t-shirt and decided I might not be a good judge of what he meant by “*henna*.”

The large lantern stands are assembled by neighborhood men. (Image from the [Awata video I](#), available by request)

The rest of the neighborhood are relative “new-



comers,” including a disproportionately large number (seven) of households of foreign residents, all of them from the United States or Europe.

Most of these, like myself, were living in Kyoto while they pursue academic¹ interests. There were no other (non-European) foreign residents in the neighborhood, or, if there were, they were passing as Japanese.

Only one of the foreigner-occupied households has been stable enough (this one also contains a Japanese spouse) to be admitted into the *chonaikai*. The

-
1. Most of the foreign residents are tenants of one of the old families, which has, for many years, been a benefactor to foreign scholars: finding lodging in Kyoto is never easy, and usually quite dear—between the rent and the necessary “key money” bribe needed to secure a lease. The availability of a small house at reasonable rent in a convenient location is an invaluable opportunity for someone coming into Kyoto from abroad. The only real benefit that the owner maintains in the arrangement is that temporary residents will not stay long enough to acquire the rights that long-time renters feel they have in Kyoto. In the months when money was short, and the weather was bad, it was this lovely house that kept this researcher’s family from regretting the agreement to spend this time so far from their home.

At the same time that the neighborhoods were “dressing-up” for the festival, the Awata Shrine became a stage where the offerings of the precincts families were on conspicuous display. (Image from the [Awata Festival video II](#) available by request).

remainder of the foreign “contingent” are not included in either the deliberations nor the circular information that gets passed through the neighborhood.

One of the newcomers, whose family had lived in



the neighborhood for more than thirty years, but whose ancestors originated not only from outside of the neighborhood, but from outside of Kyoto, once complained to me that “it takes five generations to get past the *genkan*.” Admission to *genkan*, the front hall where visitors and service people enter the house, does not signal status equality, while an invitation to come up into the house does.

Neighborhood women assemble the interior display stands in my livingroom, after the front wall has been removed. (From the [Awata Festival Video I](#), available by request).

This complaint fit into a mode of complaint that I



often heard from Japanese who were not born in Kyoto—that old Kyoto families were emotionally “stingy” (*kechi*) or arrogant. Some explained this to me as a consequence of the city's thousand-year role as the home of the emperor. “Position” in the old imperial city, the relative proximity of one's house to the imperial center, formed a loose socio-geographical hierarchy centered on the imperial palace. But then I could imagine that similar complaints about “old-timers” might occur anywhere that local tenure means as much as it does in Kyoto. To the many who are considered newcomers to Kyoto (basically anyone who moved in after WWII), this lingering aftertaste of aristocratic sentiment leaves them mis-placed and sometimes out of sorts.

A festival of forms

The people I spoke with from my neighborhood had very little information to offer on meaning of the content of the Awata Matsuri processions, except to

point out that our neighborhood shrine contained a brocade that was noted for its beauty and antiquity. The inclusion of this brocade in a book about Kyoto brocades was celebrated by including a copy of the book in the display, along with the brocade.

Where Bestor's neighborhood used the event to

The entire display is created to resemble master photographs of each detail. The form of the display is thus reconstructed every year. But the contents hold little meaning, and have become empty signifiers. And I sometimes wondered what would happen if they ever lost the book of photographs. (From the [Awata Festival Video I](#), available by request).



demarcate its normally invisible boundaries within *shitamachi* Tokyo, the boundaries of the Awata Jinja's precincts are normally well-defined—to the west is one of Kyoto's largest buraku areas behind sanjo-eki, the third-street train station. To the south are the temple grounds of Sanen'in and the enormous Chion'in, Maruyama koen, Kyoto's largest public park (and a famous cherry blossom viewing spot in the spring), and the Yasaka shrine. To the east are the Higashiyama hills, and to the north is the civic plaza created when the 1894 eleven-hundred year City anniversary was held, and which now boasts the main art museum, modern art museum, zoo, library, concert hall, and the Heian Jingu.

This festival does provide the one time in the year when the boundaries of my own immediate neighborhood (*chou*) are marked. The children's *mikoshi* parade goes down every street and alleyway to the edge of the *chou*. And as the neighboring shrines—the Yasaka Shrine to the north and the Heian Shrine to the north—have festivals (Gion Matsuri and Jidai Matsuri) that are today appropriated as national civic spectacles, the Awata matsuri is the only local event that remains attached to a longer-term geographical place.

A syntax of obligation

The head of the *chounaikai* had a copy of the program that the shrine prints every year which he read from to give me some idea of the event. But even this document failed to narrativize the event as having either a definite purpose (although the use of flaming torches in one of the processions is generally explained as a technique of purification) or an identifiable myth. The program provided a simple calendar of events, and space to acknowledge local donors.

What I am suggesting here is that the *meanings* (a shared semantic load) provided by the event do not inform the main experience of it, rather, it is the events regular appearance, its syntax, that is most important. For example, I could not elicit a narrative story from any participant in my neighborhood. One volunteer at the shrine boasted that this festival is “older than Gion matsuri,” and that it is always covered by the local television station (KTB). (The first claim was not supported by others at the site, and there was never any evidence of television crews at

the shrine.) This twin claim of antiquity and current media interest fronts the main dynamic for referents to this event: it is produced as a visible display of history. It is nostalgia packaged as tradition and sold to others.

Following photographs from previous years, the women complete the offerings for the display altar. Japanese persimmons (*kaki*) and chestnuts are the primary displays. The work is tackled with general good spirits. There is no noticeable division among the crews. Older participants take on leadership roles without discussion. (From the [Awata Festival Video 1](#), available by request).

The performance of the festival in my neighbor-



hood, indeed, in my house as the locus of this event one year, seemed to be mainly focused outward, to fulfill an external expectation. To not do it, would be to abandon the neighborhood's position in the larger shrine precinct. And abandoning one's established position in Kyoto, where position is acquired through multiple generations of dutiful behavior, is not an acceptable option—even when this duty requires that the neighborhood rely upon the cooperation of a foreign resident.

Machiya as festival place

It was the second year of my residence in Kyoto when another person announced their presence in our genkan. This time it was a member of one of the

two old families in the neighborhood, a relative of our landlord. She was there to request that we allow the neighborhood festival to use our front room for the ritual display that marks the neighborhood's place in the shrine precinct.

Our living room has been transformed into an abode of the *kami* (the god himself has been installed in the form of a folded paper object). For the next two days we will share our house with this display. At the end of the festival, there was some discussion about what to do with the *kami*. “We probably shouldn’t toss it in the trash,” one woman observed, to the laughter of the others. “I’ll take it back to the shrine,” another offered, solving the problem. (Video taken from the street). (From the [Awata Festival Video I](#), available by request).

Again, as I had come to Kyoto to explore festivity,



this request was entirely welcome, although it was also puzzling. For all of the literature I had read about *shinto* festivals stressed the strict rules of ritual purity that any household serving as a locus of ritual activity would have to undergo.

The display at the Awata Shrine was not dissimilar to the displays set up at the main neighborhoods. In fact, uniformity of display and of practices, a feature that was not prominent among Shinto-Buddhist festivals in prior centuries, became the central feature of Shinto festival practice through the efforts of national reorganizations of Shinto shrines in the last 130 years. (From the [Awata Festival Video II](#), available by request).

To begin with, according to the literature on [mat-](#)



[suri](#), this should have been an honor extended with great care only to those families who had tendered long-term service to the shrine. And then the family, for the year before the festival, but with more attention in the weeks preceding it, would be required to avoid certain impure circumstances, such as the death of a family member. During the event, the family must be careful not to have women who are in childbirth or menses in the house. These various ritual obligations were described as central to the festival's task of ritually purifying the shrine's precincts.

The chounaikaichou was in charge of the construction of the festival display. But when I asked him for particulars about the history and meaning of the event, he could only suck air through his teeth and reply “Saa...” (A local performative response when one does not know a reply). Later, he offered me a program. “Here is a map of the event,” he said.

None of these obligations were applied to my



household. For it was not my household that the neighborhood was interested in, it was our house. “What is the meaning of this festival? What is its history?” Such questions raised only the intake of breath that signals a lack of an answer (or annoyance with the question). The head of the *chounaikai* was summoned as he passed by, and he had the same response. “We do it every year,” he said. “We always do it without fail.” Later he came by to give me a copy of the program that is printed by the shrine (mostly to advertise those local companies and people who had donated the larger amounts). “Here is a map of the event,” he said, “and here we are.”

With their own cries of “washoi, washoi” the children in our neighborhood (with some adult assistance) carried the children’s *mikoshi* (portable shrine) to the boundaries of the neighborhood (*chou*), and also to the shrine. Notice that the older children, those above grade school age, do not participate, as they are busy with school work, and so parents also help to carry the *kodomomikoshi*.

©1993 Anjali



It was for this reason that the relative of my landlord was standing in my *genkan* making a polite request that we allow the neighborhood to use our house for this purpose. On that year, the other old houses in the neighborhood were all, for some reason, unavailable.

And so, by default, the neighborhood turned to us. It was a request that I had already been coached to accept with equal or greater politeness. But I added my own enthusiasm to this acceptance. Indeed my only regret was that, on that year the neighborhood’s festival and the very first Higashi-kujo Madang were both taking place on the same day. After a year of misgivings, it seemed that my festival cup was finally running over.

When all the work was done, there was little left to do but sit back on benches in the street and sip sake and chat.
©1993 Anjali



Going by the book

I present scenes from my neighborhood's participation in the Awata Matsuri to illustrate various qualities of event as these can be said to represent the social space of the neighborhood, and the expressive limits of cultural participation in that space.

When meeting in public, practices of polite deference are still maintained by older people. The continuation of these practices is one of the unintentional outcomes of events such as the Awata Matsuri, where formal occasions and formal dress provide interpersonal situations where such behaviors are required. The continuation of these formal circumstances on an annual basis increases the overall “formalization” of the street as a site place where micro-bodily control is expected.
©1993 Bruce Caron



The space that is described in the neighborhood by participation in the Awata Matsuri bears a useful resemblance to the social perceptions/positions of the families in the neighborhood. Distinctions based on

length of residence, gender, age, and attachment to the volunteer lay organization of the Shrine are all displayed in this event, along with the positioning of the neighborhood as an integral part of the larger Shrine

precincts.

The economics of the Awata Shrine also center on the festival and on the donations that the festival produces. But donations are also accepted as these are appropriate to the position of the household within the shrine's long-time hierarchy, which maintains as a visible vestige the prestige of those households who were in upper class positions before modernization. To donate more than one should would be as ill-taken as to shirk one's responsibility to donate as much as one has always done.

The currency for status improvement is not cash, but rather time. As decades pass, the fortunes of houses may decline and force them to neglect their position within this donation scheme. This creates an opening for other households to step up in the ranks. This situation also makes it difficult for the shrine to take advantage of newcomers who might have the economic means to make significant donations.

And so the situation at the Awata Shrine can best be described by a long duration (now a century or more) within which the ritual requirements and the economy of the shrine are slowly weakening, but are not subject to major reform. As an institution, the shrine resembles (as it annually reassembles) a social order that was fixed well before its current members were born. Newcomers to the shrine neighborhoods are kept outside of positions of ceremonial importance, and, as migration is increasing, the participant base for shrine events decreases. The annual festival of

the shrine maintains as much of the display of prior events as possible, but it has lost nearly all of the performance and the meaning of this display.

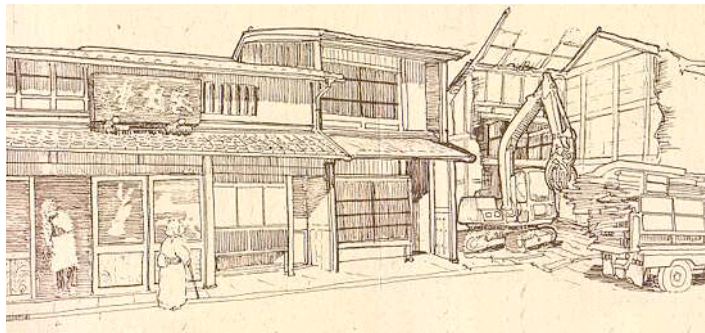
The fragile performative conditions—the amount and the organization of public performance—of this neighborhood may not be very different from other Kyoto neighborhoods, although I would not care to generalize either to the region or to Japan. The many events in Kyoto that today claim to link the present to the area's vaunted past share in this problematic: by preserving the formal aspects of events *at the expense of* creative and performative openings, they find themselves in control of events that no longer serve as expressive openings for cultural practice.

Ours was one of the houses in the neighborhood that had been built in the nineteenth century, in the prevailing architectural style of the time. And so its front room had a front wall that could be removed, exposing the entire room to the street. It is a *machiya*, a townhouse fronting the street, with three tatami-floored rooms in a row from front to back, an inner garden behind that, and a *benjo* (toilet) at the very rear. Constructed of wood and paper (now glass in front and back), with reed mats for floors, hand-stuccoed walls, and a ceramic tile roof, it was always drafty (a small blessing in the hot summer), generally dark. Its front wall was acoustically transparent to the street, which ran directly in front with no sidewalk.

Sitting in the middle room, one could hear quite

Preservation of *machiya* housing is the key for historical management in Kyoto, according to the International Society to Save Kyoto. [<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/bigkarma/issk/isske.html>]

In this scene from the ISSK website we see a *machiya* being torn down, opening up a tear in the local urban fabric.



plainly the hushed conversation of people walking in the street. And as I often practiced my Japanese aloud, I sometimes wondered what passersby would make of the sound of a voice repeating the same sen-

tences over and over again.

The house was elegant in its design and construction, with a *tokonoma* alcove framed in polished logs, a *horikotasu* sunken seating place, where we spent most of the snowy winter around a low table, with our legs dangling in a pit where a heater warmed our toes under a quilted blanket. Best of all the house had a deep *ofuro* bath, with its own noisy gas heater that took the frigid tap water to near boiling in less than half an hour. Here is where the aches of hours of filming festivals were soothed away.

With the lanterns out, and the place decorated, our house could have been back in the Edo period.

Having an *ofuro* meant that our trips to the local



public bath¹ were not as regular as they might have

-
1. Like other public baths it is now only marginally economical to operate or to visit. Within a few decades it will be torn down, like the one nearby that is now a parking lot. But public baths are not the only pre-War Kyoto amenities in danger of disappearing. Almost every day, in my bicycle commutes to various sectors of Kyoto, I would see old machiya houses being torn down and replaced by steel-frame houses built over garages. The contractors had found a way to fit all of the parts of a torn-down *machiya* onto the back of one truck, and it was a regular sight to see these trucks on the road carrying the historical residential heritage of Kyoto away as landfill. Many of these houses were in a state of some decrepitude by the time they were torn down, but still one could imagine a publicly sponsored industry that would recycle their best parts for use in restoring or maintaining other *machiya*.

otherwise been, but every other week or so, my son and I would visit the bath to enjoy its various pools.

For most of its first century, our house had been occupied by families of craftspersons making cloisonné ware for export. By WWII, the house's owners had abandoned artisan occupations for professional ones. But the original design of the house retained its multipurpose flexibility. Our house had been constructed so that its front room could be opened to display wares for sale. This meant that the house could also display the ritual items for the festival procession.

Regular gift-giving is one of the practices that articulates this informal network of “personal relationships” (*jinmyaku*). But gift giving in Kyoto exists within existing networks of institutional and familial connections, it is a medium that signals an active relationship of obligations, of which the gifts are merely tokens (although they may be rather expensive tokens, and at times—such as the New Year and mid-summer—the volume of gift exchanges may be considerable¹.) This means that those persons and families who are excluded from institutional connections (such as university or large corporate affiliations) cannot use gift-giving to enter into relationships of obligation. Although gift giving is seen as a practice that outsiders cannot perform correctly (as there are no correct reasons for outsiders to give gifts), this practice is not available as an official mode of national discourse. It is, however, integral to the local mode of state-nation governmentality that places top government officials—who are top-feeders on the gifting circuit—into a realm of economic security that has no relationship to their official salaries and perquisites. An entire gift

-
1. I spent a summer in a room I rented from the owner/headmaster of an elite kindergarten in Kyoto, and this person required a separate building to hold the gifts that flowed his direction from hopeful or grateful parents, and even this, was, at times inadequate. One day he called me over to his storehouse and told me to hold out my hands, into which he set cases of beer boxes of fruit, and other goodies that would no longer fit into this building. He looked at the bulging shelves and wondered out loud what he was to do the next day when the package delivery van showed up with yet another load.

economy elongates the vertical structure of the society, erecting pillars of social capital (with easy translations into cash) that attach to key positions in government/corporate hierarchy.

Where much of the gift giving in China (See:Yang 1994) seems to promote a *reciprocal* relationship of personal obligation, in Japan this usually promotes client/patron relationships that, in official spheres, resembles bribery and corruption—particularly when these “personal” relationships are allowed between corporations and government offices. Indeed, in both nations the practices of gift-giving¹ may run counter to official, professional and bureaucratic standards and codes of ethics, but this hardly diminishes the scope of the practice. And there are also at times official acknowledgments of the practice as “customary.” Recent disclosures of these practices in South Korea have prompted the government there to decry the practice as the “Korean disease,” a social affliction that threatens economic growth.

In Japan, despite the token public prosecutions that always keep one or two politicians in the tabloids, the creation and care of personal connections to officialdom remains the chief social goal of most families.

-
1. In Japan as well as in China, the ability to give a gift is not simply a matter of economic wherewithal. Politicians who forget this are often the first to hear from public prosecutors. Gifting is only one aspect of a more complex social relationship that, after all, must also conserve its established hierarchical order and practices of exclusion. It is precisely this conservatism that allows gifting to escape the label “bribery.” This is also why these connections work against foreign corporations, which do not have an established position within the local or national network.

Here too is where the “outsider” status of Koreans is most keenly felt. Even those few who have the economic means to engage in active giving, lack the social capital to do so. And for the rest, when the favors are determined, they are confident these will not come their way. One of the third-generation Korean Madang organizers once compared his life to series of Sumo wrestling matches. “I go out and do my best, but even when I throw the other guy, the judgement always goes against me.”

counting connections

“Isolation follows from the way in which the emergence of a bourgeoisie has been halted; from the way in which the middle class has been incorporated into the hierarchy of business firms; from the way in which the school system, rather than educating citizens for Japan, produces administrators and salarymen for predetermined levels of the System's hierarchies.

All this is most clearly demonstrated by the phenomenon of the so-called 'returning youngsters' (*kikoku shijo*) —Japanese children who have received an important part of their education abroad while their fathers were serving in overseas offices of their companies.”
(van Wolferen 1990, 431-432)

The realities of the reproduction of a privileged class in Japan through intermarriage and personal connections (*jinmyaku*) with the “gate-keepers” in institutions, such as the elite national universities, are suspected by many, and perhaps most. Public outcries about scandals over entrance-exam fraud occur with some regularity in the newspapers. And the differential access of wealthy, well-placed¹ families to elite preparatory schools, often with automatic admission into elite “public” universities (until 1945 these were imperial universities) is not at all hidden. And the cultural economy of connections is nowhere as fully understood as it is at the bottom of the scheme—among Koreans and Japanese living in *buraku* neighborhoods— and at the top, where, as van Wolferen notes, connections (*kone*) mean everything:

-
1. A friend teaching at a large private university in Kyoto revealed to me that more than a third of the entering students are admitted through “the side door” despite the fact that all students are required to take the same entrance examinations.

“Connections are crucial to life in Japan at all levels of society. Success depends almost entirely on who one knows. *Kone* (a Japanised abbreviation of the English word ‘connections’) often provide the key to admission to desirable schools, and to finding good jobs. If one wants the best medical treatment, a special introduction to busy doctors is almost indispensable. Most Japanese are thoroughly indebted in this sense to numerous other Japanese, and others in turn are indebted to them; one of the main characteristics of Japanese life is an unremitting trade in favours.

In the upper levels of society, the *kone* multiply to form whole networks of special relationships. These may derive from one-time favours, school ties or shared experiences, or may involve intricate mutual back-scratching deals. They are referred to as *jinmyaku -jin* meaning ‘personal’ and *myaku* a ‘vein’ such as is found in mineral deposits, so that *jinmyaku* means a vein, or web, of personal connections running through the fabric of society. *Jinmyaku* are much more widespread, and of incomparably greater importance, than old-boy networks in the West.

Among top bureaucrats, politicians and businessmen, marriage facilitates the building up of informal contacts with the élite. LDP politicians reinforce their positions by marrying the daughters of older, influential politicians, then match their own sons and daughters with the children of prosperous and influential businessmen. The resulting networks are known as *keibatsu* (family groupings through marriage)...” (1990 109-110).

Kone (connections) and *kane* (money) form the grease of social movement (up or down) that is, in many small and a few larger (through university admissions) ways open to most Japanese families, although this opening eludes Koreans and Japanese living in *buraku* neighborhoods. Kyoto adds an additional feature—residential tenure—to the game of connections. As we will see in the organization of religious festivals, Kyoto maintains the privileges of its “old families” to the exclusion of newcomers, even newcomers with cash or fame.

Here I am introducing the notion of “heritage management” for two reasons: the first is that this process informs the city sponsored spectacles that claim to represent local cultural practices; and the second is that it also describes the field where cultural production, anthropology, and urban planning intersect—here is where local cultural practices, and theories of urban planning are reflexively commodified (usually by city/civic (chamber of commerce) for sale to tourists and residents.

“The generalizing tendency is inscribed in the very principle of the disposition to recognize legitimate works, a propensity and capacity to recognize their legitimacy and perceive them as worthy of admiration in themselves, which is inseparable from the capacity to recognize in them something already known, i.e., the stylistic traits appropriate to characterize them in their singularity (‘It’s a Rembrandt’ or even ‘It’s the Helmeted Man’) or as members of a class of works (‘It’s Impressionist’).”
[\(Bourdieu 1984, 25-26\)](#)

All of the issues surrounding the management of urban cultural authority, legitimacy, and taste are born in this process, and in the longer term, people’s lifestyles and their bodies (*habitus*) are also managed. The appropriation of the work of artists and artisans leads to the formation of schools of art, and the exclusion of the works of those not admitted into such schools. And in Kyoto there are various city, county, and civic art associations for every genre of artistic production, and each has its own exhibits and its own gate that can open up to the “right” person, and can shut out the rest. The creation of positions within the field of artistic production informs dispositions that are never fully discursified. But the institutional stakes within the market for authenticated tastes (and here, for “real-Kyoto” arts and artifacts) are visible and quantifiable—for example, one can easily look at what is put into cultural museums.

I want to argue that there are alternatives to this style of cultural management, alternatives that are advantageous to the continuing production of cultural works in a city, and that also create openings for novel and counter-productions. When heritage (*patrimoine*) includes the ongoing “work” of art in the city; and when management engages the need to protect and enliven the plurality of urban cultural forms—then the city itself becomes a cultural work, a factory of local production that requires little management, and that creates and critiques its own tastes,

I will focus here on Kyoto, as the processes of heritage management were quite openly on display there during the time of my fieldwork¹ (1992-1994).

playing to the tourists

It is impossible to discuss Kyoto’s history and present circumstances without first addressing the realities of Kyoto’s tourist industry, and the effect that this has upon the city, its administration, and, most of all, its general economic future. In some ways, Kyoto has always been selling itself. For centuries the capital city, Kyoto was the locus of social and religious pilgrimages, and it sold its wares and pleasures to secular and sacerdotal aristocrats. Their patronage made

1. In fact, 1994 was a year-long “festival” in honor of the city’s 1200th anniversary, a celebration that was marred by the recent collapse of the local economy (and also of the national economy), a circumstance that forced the city to curtail almost all of the planned events (but curiously little of the advertising). This situation highlighted the down-side of heritage management as spectacle-production: this brings with it expectations that can be quite expensive.

Kyoto the center of a long and often remarkable cultural efflorescence.

In what follows, I do not want to even appear to belittle the artistic heritage of this city. But, the fortunes of Kyoto, which were not entirely good during the occupancy of the various emperors (the city was burned to the ground more than once) became much more problematic after the emperor Meiji moved to Tokyo.

In actual and symbolic terms, the creation of “Tokyo”—arguably the world’s most dynamic metropolitan center—has come at Kyoto’s direct expense. It was in adjusting to its reduced circumstances that Kyoto has made its share of planning mistakes. I do not intend to dwell on these mistakes, but will attempt, instead, bring certain social-scientific and urban-planning notions to the problems faced by Kyoto today.

Kyoto is a tourist town. By the city’s own count, about forty million tourists visit Kyoto every year, although this figure includes the annual tsunami (deluge) of school groups that peaks in the spring. To attract such hordes, Kyoto trades quite lucratively, if somewhat brazenly, on the longevity of its habitation.

Much of Kyoto’s early history has been rather recently reinvented (along with histories to be forgotten) to support the city’s contention that nothing essential here has changed. It takes, however, only a brief stay and a bit of looking around for even the most devout tourist—who, after all, has paid good

money to revel in Kyoto's antiquity—to arrive at just the opposite conclusion: here is a town where almost nothing is like it was before.

Valorizing the old capital

Kyoto sells itself as a kind of Rome on the Kamo river: a place where ancient dynasties flourished and fought (and fornicated), and, in the process, forged that rare “alloy” known as “elite culture.” Ever dwindling stocks of this stuff make up the mother-lode of Kyoto's tourist drawing power. Kyoto spins less and less new “alloy” every year, and meanwhile, consumes itself in the process of pandering its historical image¹.

Out on the streets, the cultural vending machines (the tourist traps outside all of the historic sites) are all in place, but today “authentic” Kyoto-esque merchandise, old or new, are far too dear for the tourist trade. Only those arts that, in former eras, were refined to meet aristocratic appetites for glamour and style, are today touted as uniquely Kyoto-esque.

Kyoto's famous goods: Kiyomizu pottery, Nishijin silk weaving, and hand-painted (*yuzen*) kimono—are all now fantastically expensive. Upholding the standards, and the prices (and control over production and style) of these “aristocratic” artistic traditions also locks out novel and creative inputs. The local artistic community is trapped by the effects of ten centuries of this cultural “gentrification.” Meanwhile, the sightseer is

1. The year 1994, the 1200th anniversary of the founding of the city, was particularly expensive for the city's historical image, as every local event, from a prize-fight to new sewer construction, was touted as a tribute to Kyoto's ancient times.

offered mass-produced trinkets—the same James Dean towel and “Hello Kitty” coffee cups they could buy anywhere in Japan—as remembrances of their visit to “historic” Kyoto.

This sort of reverse bait-and-switch marketing (show them the good stuff and then sell them kitsch) actually proves the deepest anxiety of the Kyoto tourist industry: the fear that authenticity—real places, real history, real pottery—might now longer matter to the tourist. When tradition becomes only a come-on for the hotel trade, then Kyoto is forced to compete with every other tourist destination in Japan on something like equal terms. The irony here is that Kyoto is also guilty of sacrificing “tradition” for image. As David Harvey noted, the substitution of a city’s image for actual historical continuity places cities, like Kyoto, in the same business as theme parks.

“...The irony is that tradition is now often preserved by being commodified and marketed as such. The search for roots ends up at worst being produced and marketed as an image, as a simulacrum or pastiche (imitation communities constructed to evoke images of some folksy past, the fabric of traditional working-class communities being taken over by an urban gentry)...At best, historical tradition is reorganized as a museum culture, not necessarily of high modernist art, but of local history, of local production, of how things once upon a time were made, sold, consumed, and integrated into a long-lost and often romanticized daily life (one from which all trace of oppressive social relations may be expunged). Through the presentation of a partially illusory past it becomes possible to signify something of local identity and perhaps to do it profitably.”

In this decade, in Wakayama and Toba city (both within a few hours by fast train from Kyoto) new “historical” theme parks have opened their gates to the public.

Porto Europa and Shima Spain Village both offer a complete, “historical” experience, from the cobblestones underfoot, to the banners on the turrets over-

head; a simulacrum of places long ago and far away, and with convenient hotels and thrill rides for the young. The latter expects to draw three million visitors a year. The “eighteenth century” Porto Europa is being built on a new island, which means that not even the land was there in the eighteenth century.

Managing the new/old Kyoto

As the home of the secretariat of the Conference of World Historical Cities, Kyoto has sponsored a network of cities with a similar problematic in front of them all: how does an “historical city” recreate its past as a project for its future? And how does it develop its own history to open up new avenues of cultural production for its city-zenry?

The most interesting input to the 4th World Conference of Historical Cities, held in 1994 in Kyoto, came from Kraków, Poland. The International Cultural Centre in Kraków has described a project now called “heritage management,” which takes historical-city urban planning beyond the preservation and conservation of existing historical sites, to the integrative reconstruction of the urban landscape as an ongoing work of history.

The tasks involved in heritage management are multiple and complex, dealing as they do with inventories of ideologically supported national cultural historical symbolism as well as valuable real estate. And nowhere are national symbols and real estate more highly valued than they are in Kyoto.

Heritage management requires that the physical

and mental landscape of places and ideas be opened up to a reflexive imagination. The heritage of any city is a pluralistic one, and the future of this belongs to all of residents of the city. So it is important that heritage management is done transparently, in a democratically determined arena where conflicting ideas are available and where the outcome remembers this conflict.

Whether or not there is the political will and the public financing necessary to accomplish the physical tasks of heritage management is a large question.

As a recent issue of *Kenchiku Bunka* [Modern Culture] (February 1994) reveals, there is no lack of informed concern and design skills available locally to accomplish the physical/design end of the project. It is on the other end of the task, on the cultural/symbolic side of heritage management, where there is need for new approaches if Kyoto is going to escape becoming a mere simulacrum of itself. There is, for example, a real issue in determining just how much “historicity” is good for the present.

What is historicity? To begin with, it is the living continuity of practices through time.

What is historicity? To begin with, it is the living continuity of practices through time. Historicity resides only thinly in the stones of the streets, the tiled temple roofs, and the screened windows of the remaining old houses in Kyoto. It dwells more deeply, and precariously, in the chorus of the feet that walk these streets, in the hands that build the screens, and the mouths that chant beneath these tiled roofs. If we use “historicity” in this sense of practices or places

Any city desiring to preserve its historicity must find some mode of dealing with its various histories.

with continuity¹ to the present, we can leave other types of urban history to paleontologists and curators.

Any city desiring to preserve its historicity must find some mode of dealing with its various histories. The problem is to bring a healthy coherence to this deal. As Michel de Certeau, surveying Manhattan from the top a skyscraper noted;

“Unlike Rome, New York has never learned the art of growing old by playing on all its pasts. Its present invents itself, from hour to hour, in the act of throwing away its previous accomplishments and challenging the future. A city composed of paroxysmal places in monumental reliefs. The spectator can read in it a universe that is constantly exploding.” (1984, 91)

For de Certeau, Rome is a city content to built upon its own history, while New York represents not only the modern impulse to build, but the modernist impulse to dismantle its past in the process.

de Certeau’s comment about the difference between New York and Rome applies internally and paradoxically to Kyoto, a city in the process of dismantling itself in the name of tradition. The outcome of this irreconcilable conflict in civic intention is that Kyoto is neither Rome nor New York, nor, eventually even Kyoto, as what it dismantles is not replaced by a conscious will to build. Kyoto is rapidly becoming simply another suburb of Osaka, a place that will, if conditions continue, be known mainly for its proxim-

-
1. Continuity is why the inner shrines of the Ise Jingu are legitimately the world’s oldest wooden buildings, even though they are completely rebuilt every twenty years. The architectural design, physical skill, and materials necessary to rebuild these survives intact (which is much more than can be said for many important buildings completed in the United States in the last hundred years).

ity to Nara¹.

Kyoto, as much as other historical cities, should know that simple age² does not make for historical interest. It is the living continuity of the past in the present which gives the present its tenuous hold on the long beard of history. So too, it is the grasping of the present for the future that determines the arena of cultural fashion.

But Kyoto seems confounded by the conflicting desire to be both completely traditional and also *au courant*. Or rather, one notices a concern that “tradition” and “fashion” (or innovation) have become mutually exclusive markets, and that all of Kyoto’s cultural eggs are most precariously perched in only one of these baskets. Precarious, because tradition itself is no longer treated with the measure of “traditional” respect that Kyoto had grown to enjoy.

In Kyoto the present and the past are never on very good terms. We have to consider that a major problem for Kyoto’s desire to maintain its historicity is directly due to the modernist impulse to reject history and tradition as the primary warrants for the value of practices and places in general. And so, for Kyoto to preserve the heritage of its past, it must first come to some decision about the nature of its present.

-
1. Nara was the site of the Imperial Palace before this was moved to Kyoto.
 2. Kyoto likes to think of itself as a city with a history of historicity. This history is also of modern invention. Kyoto has burned itself down many times and forgotten much more about itself than it now can, or cares to, recall.

The supermarket of the present

The present found at any place is an outcome of that place's past, and so these are all singularly different. The existence of local varieties of "the present" once provided the charms of travel (and thus, tourism) and the central project of anthropology: to explore—and commodify—this plurality¹.

Where formerly "a present" held its geographical singularity on a basically local scale (much the same way that "local time" once ruled the clocks), there is now "the present," a new place/time available on a much more distanced scale. This is the present of CNN and MTV, and of currency markets, the great urban metropolises (now linked by digital information nets and standardized construction codes), and globalized consumer commodity desires.

As Gavatri Spivak once noted, there are still places and peoples on the margins, and sometimes increasingly so, of this global cosmopolitan network. In Kyoto the desire to belong to a globally validated life-style is very strong. And the more this desire grows, the more it preempts locally validated cultural production. Buying in to the global present requires opting out of purely local cultural critiques.

The point here is that heritage management is

-
1. The notion that "the past is a foreign country" was also inverted in the nineteenth century, when notions of a single evolutionary trajectory for "culture" —a time-line arrow with its point pointed at Western Europe—allowed anthropologists to discover "pre-historic" tribes in remote (from Western Europe) places. This idea of looking for "our" past in "their" present dismisses the content and accomplishments of modernities in so-called "developing" nations.

extremely problematic in the context of a modernizing global present. To preserve historicity one must protect the value of local historic practices for people today. But you also have to accept that antiquity has precious little exchange value in the global supermarket of our common present. And so, if the task of preserving history is not simply to be handed over to those who would profit from establishing a market for local antique wares (i.e., to the museums and collectors) then we need to find some other reason to value the past as a local property.

Historical legitimacy and cultural value

Additionally, the wider historical problem we are faced with is actually quite the reverse of what we have proposed; it asks us to following: how do we escape those histories that seem to plague us? Histories of totalitarianism, of intolerant nationalism, of official cruelty, of war and genocide; and the smaller histories of families which holds their own violences. How can we expunge these from the present in a manner that does not invite their eventual resurrection in the future (even if, as Marx noted, this comes as farce)? How can the present strengthen its grip on the beard of the past while loosening history's fingers from its own hair?

The desire to simply forget, when history makes us uncomfortable, is a desire to avoid justice, to skip out when the bill comes due (it is the desire that *someone else* will forget). It was Henri Lefevbre who noted, "silence is not the same thing as quietus."

Keeping quiet about this has never once resolved a history of oppression. For this history, as Connerton (1989) [after Foucault and Bourdieu] reminds us, is inscribed in language and space, and embodied in flesh and stone.

In short, there are plenty of “traditions” around us that we might not want to preserve, and we have to have a way of disentangling these from those we do. The modern distrust of “tradition” as a blanket warrant for the value of practices makes all histories (including its own) subject to devaluation. This opens up an arena for the discussion of historical legitimacy and innovative intervention. It reminds us that the mere continuity of any practice does not signify its legitimacy. Finally, the main advantage of heritage management as a practice is lost if we are simply, and without recourse to critical intervention, stuck with all the history we’ve inherited. If that were so, I would be the first to say bring in the bulldozers.

To create the kind of historicity that the future might want as its past, we have to dance on the grave of injustice. And for this we have to re-place the sites of oppression. Such sites are not always memorialized on the ground somewhere (not even by their forgetting). This is because oppression also is carried in the body, the person: i.e., its subject. Preserving the heritage of Kyoto’s historicity matters little if this does not create a new personal heritage for all of Kyoto’s citizens. In fact, heritage preservation, at its best, offers a space of therapy, of person-place identity, of continu-

ity, of selfhood.

Spaces that work

One could, of course, assert that every Kyoto institution, practice, and object has its own history, and that these are intertwined into larger flows with durative episodes and also ruptures, and, finally that some even larger matrix contains the sum of what we could call Kyoto's "history." However, when the time comes to consider heritage management, it does not help us much to note that everything is, in this way, historical and connected to everything else. Kyoto's city-zens need a much firmer grasp on history. In fact, we require a grip somewhat stronger than the one history has on us, if we are going to begin to manage Kyoto's heritage.

Heritage management must sort out what to manage and what to leave to its own future. For this, it uses historicity as a theoretic-practical lever to pull from the historical field those practices and institutions that have (or that we want to have) cultural/economic value in the present, and to examine the reasons why value exists or, conversely, why practices that once had value have lost this.

Adding value

This use of historicity engages heritage management in the larger power arena of cultural production, valuation, and consumption. Here is where heritage management decisions will ultimately succeed or fail. Heritage management proposes to add value to the cultural assets of a city. It can do this in either (or both) of two ways: by legitimating the antique value of

the thing being managed, or by adding value its current manufacture. The former, antiquarian, impulse—the desire to produce monuments, historical parks, and museums—is generally (mis)taken as the main strategy for heritage management. And in Japan, where new building construction is viewed as a type of urban panacea, this impulse is particularly attractive to city leaders.

Rather, I want to suggest here that heritage management should look first to support practices which unify the place and its past with its everyday life in the present. This unity signals the active resonance a place has with its history.

As Henri Lefebvre noted, nowhere is this unity more evident than in Venice, Italy:

“Venice, more than any other place, bears witness to the existence, from the sixteenth century on, of a unitary code or common language of the city. This unity goes deeper, and in a sense higher, than the spectacle Venice offers the tourist. It combines the city’s reality with its ideality, embracing the practical, the symbolic and the imaginary....Here everyday life and its functions are coextensive with, and utterly transformed by, a theatricality as sophisticated as it is unsought, a sort of involuntary *mise-en-scène*. There is even a touch of madness added for good measure (1991, 73-74).”

The space of Venice is still being reworked as a vital cultural matrix for the lives of its inhabitants; Venice is a live performance where the curtain never comes down. Lefebvre is setting up Venice in contrast to other cities where, regrettably, the show has already closed for the season.

Lefebvre’s radical critique of modern notions of “space” is useful in determining the proper arena for heritage management. For Lefebvre, a space is either the result of production or the result of work. “Production” refers to a process of marshaling labour and

other resources, and the making of a “product.” Products (from VCRs to skyscrapers) share a common history as they are all outcomes of this production process.

making products instead of works

The scope of *production* has greatly enlarged in the last two hundred years to include not only household appliances and vehicles but streets, houses, office and municipal buildings and their sitings. Entire cities are now produced (e.g., Chandigar or Brasilia). And spatial production extends across the landscape in the form of highways and railways.

In a city, there are two possible types of spaces: the space-as-product¹ and the space-as-work. A space-as-product dominates the imagination. It announces itself completely. A space-as-product is not lived, but only used—and used in ways determined solely by the product. Museums and historical monuments transform all of their visitors into tourists. And cities that manage their own urban spaces as historical sites turn their own residents into tourists, who, like the residents of Kyoto (and Japan—although not foreign tourists) wishing to visit to Old Kyoto Imperial Palace, who must wait for that one day a year when the gates open and the guards are ready to make sure that nobody gets too close to the wood-

-
1. To Lefevbre’s notion of a space-as-product, I want to add one more crucial point: a product has no historicity—it does not continue its creation up to the present. The process of production excretes its products, guaranteed dead on delivery. As soon as a product is made, the history of its creation is finished. A product that acquires exchange value as an antique does so through the loss of its historicity. An artifact becomes “historical” by severing its use in the present.

work.

Lives and Works

For Lefevbre, “work” maintains its singularity, and its outcomes, such as “works of art,” are never actually finished. An artist (or a worker, in Lefevbre’s sense) always has the right to redo a work and change this. However, works also become products, individually when they are sold, and as an opus, on the day their worker/artist dies. If these products maintain their market, they will gain value as antiques.

A space-as-work is a site of ongoing creations, interventions and appropriations. It is an affirmatively anti-antique space, full of surprises and open to change. The “village square” in many different societies is (or, too often, was) such a space-as-work. Through it flows a panoply of festivals, markets, executions, rallies, and games.

A space-as-work is the outcome of a spatial logic that refuses to be reduced to a single dominant use. A space-as-work is not definable as the square, or the street, or the building itself, but rather it includes the daily life of these. A space-as-work opens itself up to the imaginations of individuals who enter this. This effect, of course, requires some careful upfront design-work.

From Bauhaus to Maihōmu

Modernist architects in the beginning of the century attempted to release the imaginations of those who live or work in their buildings by freeing their designs from static canons of ornamentation, scale, and construction. However, the proliferation of mod-

ern architectural products—those countless buildings in every city in the world (including Kyoto) that were constructed without serious architectural intent—heralded the failure of modern architecture (at least in its “international style” mode). Whether this was a failure to adequately articulate its own logic of design, or a more radical defect in this logic, is still being debated.

Instead of “less is more,” (a modernist credo) the world has discovered that “less” regularly means exactly that. And cities that settled for less are now saddled with it: hulking drab cubes with vacuous open floor plans and façades worth not even a first glance. These spaces-as-products, excreted from the same modernist design process, make up the great majority of post-war construction in Kyoto. By their graceless presence, and their lack of historicity, they are destroying the living unity of Kyoto.

The design task of heritage management is to utilize local spatial logics and vernacular construction skills to repair or rebuild buildings-, streets-, neighborhoods-, and cities-as-works that are lived, that are theatrical and festive. A city where people want will want to live, work and play. A place, in fact, much too good for tourists (which makes it that much more attractive to them).

The limits of cultural planning

Before getting to more specific ideas about heritage management in Kyoto, there is one caveat that needs to be aired. A central predicament of urban

planning is as follows: planning, because it is “product oriented,” produces cities that are products rather than “works.” The more that planners attempt to create a total environment, the more that their plans become totalizing: closed to further creative appropriation of the spaces so planned—and the more the city becomes a product, which is similar to other products, to other cities. In terms of historicity, this means the more a space is planned, the more it acquires the history of the planners and less it can maintain any *sui generis* local historicity. This limit to planning will become much clearer when we talk about festivals, but it applies just as well to buildings and parks as to parades (See also: [Imagine the festival as a building.](#)).

Good urban planning is intentionally partial. It provides the seed that starts the life of a city-as-work. This germinal effort must plan-in a load of complexity, ambiguity and, perhaps, even a little madness, as surprises for those who will live with these spaces throughout their lives. After all, any culture that does not delight its owners is better off forgotten. And so, heritage management must relinquish the desire to create a turn-key heritage landscape.

Festivity — *laissez les bons temps rouler!*

Here we have the final challenge for heritage management: how to conserve the performances of a local culture. Again, the tendency (in Kyoto and other “historic cities”) has been to treat all cultural performances as ritual dramas, and to repeat these, as much as possible, precisely as they were done the time

before. In this way, performance becomes a product, separated from its initial creative inception, and its space-as-product is but a dark, cold sarcophagus.

Every year in Kyoto, this sarcophagus is opened and the corpse of some former cultural work (now a helpless antique) is made to dance the very same ritual dance it has staged for far too many years. They call this event “Jidai Matsuri” or “Aoi Matsuri” (the two are, at times, as indistinguishable as they are undistinguished). Then the costumed body is sealed back up for another year. The tourists are sold on the authentic antiquity of what they are shown, which only serves to make them embarrassed by their own yawns.

The boredom of onlookers who wait through traffic interruptions and other delays to watch the spectacle of Kyoto’s biggest festival, Gion Matsuri, is a sad commentary on an event with a history of active festivity. Depictions of this event in prior times (the Edo period) show clowns and dancers engaging the onlookers who are themselves in danger of being in the path of the giant *yamaboko* floats.
photo by author

The festival-as-product can never improve on



itself, it can only fail (a horse throws its rider, a costume is worn backwards, someone forgets to light the sacred fire).

Today, many of the participants of the Gion Matsuri perform their stylized roles with barely concealed boredom.
Photo by author



Instead of laughter, such an event comes loaded with excuses (it was raining, the sound tape broke, they don't make 'em like they used to). But then, a festival-as-product is not actually a festival. A festival-as-product begs the question: "Are we having fun yet?" The answer, as

you already know, is this: "Not if you have to ask."

Vital signs

As I noted in relation to its repertoire of neighborhood festivals above, overall, the civic festivals in Kyoto suffer from what might not inaccurately (if perhaps too glibly) be called "cultural sclerosis," caused by a hardening of the artistry which once created the events. The major civic historical festivals of Kyoto (the Aoi Matsuri in May, the Gion Matsuri in July, and the Jidai Matsuri in October) are mostly well supported and competently managed, in the sense that they begin and end on time and look nearly the same as the did last year. And with some more careful looking the amount of artistry that went into an earlier construction of these events becomes evident in their costumes and appurtenances.

Indeed, with all of this activity and splendor it is even more curious, and rather sad, to note how completely many of these historical festivals fail to exhibit

either historicity or festivity. Given the resources currently made available for festivity in Kyoto, there is little reason to be pessimistic about the potential for Kyoto to reinvigorate its festival production. All this would take is some new creative imagination.

All production and no play

What Kyoto's planners lack (and this lack is widely shared among urban and civic planners in other cities around the world) is an adequate grasp of some rather fundamental predicaments of historicity and festivity. The concept of "historicity" is far too often confused with "antique value," even though these are roughly antithetical. So to, the notion of "festivity" is often confused with its "spectacular" appearance. As if looking festive was enough.

These two mistakes are often combined into events called "historical festivals," but which are, actually, "antiquarian spectacles:" pageants-as-products. I would suggest that festivity is related to its spectacle component much as a good meal is to its written recipe. There is an undeniable connection between the two, but which would you rather find on your plate?

In precisely the same way that a good cook and a great recipe work together to produce something awfully tasty, the city space and its community need to work in concert to make a festival "festive." It is the transformation of physical and social space during this work that gives festivity something to do. That makes festivity worth the attempt. Later in Part Two I will be focusing on festivity itself, here I will simply mark out

some performative parameters that define “festivity.” From these, we can begin to notice where this does not occur, might occur, should occur (but doesn’t), and, most of all, probably will occur any time now. We can, within certain limits, begin to plan for festivity.

In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald noticed that, during a party (any good one) there is a special moment when the party actually begins, despite the minutes or hours before this moment when people were also dancing, drinking, and laughing. At that moment a transformation occurs, a boundary is crossed.

Gatsby’s town is, of course, Hollywood:

“The bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter, and casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot, and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other’s names.

The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun, and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music, and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly, swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath; already there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the center of a group, and then, excited with triumph, glide on through the sea-change of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light.

Suddenly one of these gypsies, in trembling opal, seizes a cocktail out of the air, dumps it down for courage and, moving her hands like Frisco, dances out alone on the canvas platform. A momentary hush; the orchestra leader varies his rhythm obligingly for her, and there is a burst of chatter as the erroneous news goes around that she is Gilda Gray’s understudy from the Follies. The party has begun.”

Erving Goffman in his book *Frame Analysis* (1974, 262) used this quote to note how events such as parties (and here I would certainly include festivals) are planable only to a certain level, after which the organizers can only hope that their event, like an inspired infant, takes it to mind to stand up on its own and

begin to boogie.

New suggestions for heritage management

In a special “1200th Anniversary” edition of the *Kyoto Journal*, I suggested the briefest of outlines of a basic plan for city-wide heritage management in Kyoto. I also convinced the *Kyoto Journal* to allow me to approach the Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles, to ask its students to participate in a design project centered on a reexamination of the Kyoto Goshō—the site of the Imperial Palace before the Emperor moved to Tokyo. Here is the outline I suggested in 1994:

At the physical end of the task, heritage management must come down to the street level, to those remaining buildings and sites of any antiquity in Kyoto. The following plan represents the least intervention sufficient to reconstruct an historic living urban physical landscape for Kyoto.

As with any preservation scenario, this one starts with a moratorium on the destruction of buildings older than, say, seventy years in Kyoto’s downtown wards (Kamigyo, Nakagyo, and Shimogyo) and the conservation of these structures. But the more interesting task comes in the re-imagining and realization of the Kyoto streetscape itself as an historical site. Architectural review using a vocabulary of historically grounded design parameters needs to be instituted for all new construction. Finally the reconstruction of a contiguous street façade based upon some agreed

upon historical period will require the condemning and demolition of some modern buildings.

Historicity Pathways

Kyoto deserves to be strolled through; to retell its own stories in the echoing footsteps of the casual pedestrian. This is its true scale and rightful future. The major emphasis for heritage management should be the creation of pathways through the city. A selection should first be made of certain avenues that will serve as historically conserved pathways connecting cultural, retail, and commercial nodes. Along these historicity-pathways actual period (wooden construction) buildings could be assembled, having been moved from their current sites in and out of the city. Fortunately, the typical Edo-period city-house (*machiya*) is relatively easy to move and reassemble. The control of auto traffic and other measures designed to enhance the experience of these pathways, including the retail mix, will need to be determined in consultation with the people who will live on these streets.

The historicity-pathways should be managed as social and cultural residential/retail cooperatives, and used to attract a variety of artists into the city. This will help stimulate a creative mixture of art forms that have long local traditions, together with others that might inform new traditions. Some of these houses should also be made available to those city-zens of Kyoto who are now living in areas of the town that are subject to Japan's unique form of residential racism. To reduce the effects of gentrification, these properties should be held as a public trust, with man-

aged rents and careful attention to their conservation.

Still other sites need to be looked at to provide civic spaces for recreation and cultural production in addition to their value as historical places. And there is a need for hundreds of small-scale projects each aimed at enhancing a corner here, a building there, or a river course, in order to articulate the pluralistic desires and histories of individual neighborhoods. There it is, at its most programmatic level: a basic plan to jumpstart Kyoto's heritage management effort. But where to actually begin?

Central Park Kyoto

In Kyoto, the central space that most needs rethinking is the Gosho, the grounds of the Old Kyoto Imperial Palace, which is geographically and culturally the central place of the city, and should be opened up for multiple uses by the local residents. The Kyoto Journal is proposing a redesign project for the site of the Old Kyoto Imperial Palace (the Kyoto Gosho). This project, called “Central Park Kyoto,” will improve the economic and cultural value of the site in several ways, while returning this (or much of it) to all the city-zens of Kyoto.

The current Kyoto Gosho buildings and grounds are neither very old (by Kyoto's standards), nor very interesting in terms of their political history. This palace was mainly occupied during the time of political rule by various Shoguns. Japan's real “capital” during this period was Niji Castle and later Edo Castle. At the time of the Meiji Restoration, the Kyoto Gosho was hastily abandoned in favor of the Edo (Tokyo) pal-

ace. The various existing buildings and their furnishings—which are absolutely worth saving—would be carefully moved and rebuilt (perhaps on the site of the Tokyo Palace or on the grounds of Nijo Castle). One might note that Kyoto also has a long history of such re-sittings.

The current realities of the absence of the Emperor from Kyoto, and the new democratic political system of Japan, have turned this cultural work into another antique—into a product of history. Without the actual august personage in residence (and with the purse to make the cultural performances roll) the palace is only another period-style building. But the Gosho site, by its scale and geography, and its connection with the history of the imperial court, lies close to Kyoto's heart. It is a mirror of the city's self-image. And so the Gosho will be the centerpiece for any heritage management in Kyoto.

To explore the potential for redesigning the Gosho, the *Kyoto Journal* enlisted the help of graduate students of the Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles. In its proposal, the *Kyoto Journal* outlined the project in this way:

“The task for your students would be to redesign the Kyoto Imperial Palace grounds to emphasize multiple uses for this site...: [1] a new residence built to accommodate members of the imperial family...; [2] a public historical monument to the imperial history of Kyoto; and [3] a “central park” for Kyoto with maximal open space, and which is connected to the surrounding residential and business districts.”

The intention is to add value to this site for use by the city *and the city-zens of Kyoto*.

Giddens proposes that (post-traditional) late modernity can be described as a period of increasing *institutional* reflexivity, combined with a high level of individual reflexivity (e.g., in relations with expert systems). This increase is proposed in comparison to earlier modernity; not to pre-modernity. The relatively low level of individual reflexivity evidenced in early (“classical”) modernity was not a hold-over from earlier, traditional times, despite the popular perception of “tradition” as inflexible and intolerant to change—this perception describes, at most, the conditions of some traditional practices after these were subject to modern (and modernizing) discourses.

Here I would have to agree with Habermas and Bakhtin (in one of the few issues where they agreed with one another) that we need to find a way to look historically at the lifeworld before this was penetrated by the systems of modernity if we are to find how tra-

“...it is usually the case that normal appearances, typical appearances, and proper appearances are much the same,...
 ...impropriety on the part of others may function as an alarming sign. ...;conventional courtesies are seen as mere convention, but non-performance can cause alarm”
 (Goffman 1971, 240-241).

ditional practices¹ created normalcy in everyday life.

It is sufficient here to suggest that normalcy in pre-modern times included a number of necessary skills, which, because they were skills, allowed people to become more or less skill-full—based on their own initiative and talent. These skills opened up normalcy to the individual capacity for innovation and caprice. Both Giddens and Habermas see subsequent, modern, conditions of the *Umwelt* as characterized by a general trend of deskilling. While Marxists have looked mainly at deskilling in the arena of what Giddens called “allocative power,” e.g., in the means of production (including, as Bourdieu would remind us, cultural production), cultural theorists, often led by feminist theorists, are exploring deskilling in “authoritative powers”: particularly in the reflexive reappropriation

-
1. We can surmise that traditional practices (in pre- post-traditional times), the normalcy that the traditions provided was mostly governed within the individual as a toolbox of skills used by individual practitioners. Today, games retain this feature of traditional practices, and players are expected to show their skilling in their play. Because the practices were acquired individually, individual innovations, and also individual mistakes would have been commonplace. Traditional practices did not require that the individual maintain the traditions as a part of the “undesigned” mode of their *Umwelt*. Quite the opposite: a self-reflexively organized repertoire of skilling that individuals acquired would have been a central feature of the individual's *Umwelt*. To be proficient at doing the wide range of practices that one needed to know in order to get on would require that one designed one's time and effort toward this end. In fact, innovations in all areas of traditional practices—innovations arising from individual talents—would have been routine, except where these practices became subject to institutional controls.

Institutions (such as guilds and religions) that attempted to control access to certain “traditional” skills—mostly when these entered into a marketable arena— created a gatekeeper function that enforced secrecy and promoted authority in order to maintain discursive power over these knowledges. This type of “traditional” control—similar to what Giddens calls “authoritative power” (1979, 100)—is also maintained in modern states wherever selected people are authorized to perform actions not available to everyone.

of these, i.e., the power to become one's own author.

Similar to conditions that Willis (1977) recorded in England, there are two exit criteria which students face, and that play into their desire to monitor their own behavior in schools. Those students who are preparing for university entrance must work toward the examination, and also be aware that their general behavior is being monitored and recorded by their teachers on reports that they will never see, but will be made available to high-schools and colleges. For these students demeanor and performance requirements are quite severe.

Other students who are not preparing for selection into universities have less of a need to conform to the codes of correct behavior, and are freer to explore work-place style behaviors that may include a necessary show of toughness¹. They are, in Willis's terms, "learning to labor." In Higashi-kujo, where there is a higher percentage of day labor (*hiyatoi roudou*), and where the daily tussle for work requires the maintenance of a physical presence among one's fellows, toughness is just a part of the résumé.

-
1. The social and economic disparity between the lifestyle made possible by salaried employment in a large Japanese company or in government service after graduation from a university, and those of other careers, from agriculture and small-scale manufacturing to retail trades creates a divide that is perhaps the greatest single social threshold in Japan. For working-class families to have one their children cross this divide and be employed in a large corporation or government ministry marks a profound moment in the family's history. The growth of the large stock-holding (*kabushiki*) corporations in the last fifty years in Japan has brought many families to this moment, but only a token few resident Koreans.

“Where’s your camera,” she asked, shouting over the noise of the post-Madang party.

I was wedged into a vinyl padded booth of a restaurant that could have been a Dennys, except that on the floor next to the counter a dozen Korean drummers were pounding out a beat that sent a hundred revelers into dancing wherever they were standing. The restaurant’s staff had retreated to the kitchen, and took turns peeking out through the swinging doors. Near the front picture windows, a long buffet table stood emptied of its Korean fare, and the latest of many cases of 750ml bottles of beer was nearly gone.

“My camera?” I shouted back, “I’m out of film.”

“Video?”

“No more tape.”

She looked at the pockets of my utility vest. “Tape recorder?”

“Battery’s dead,” I replied.

She smiled at me. It was the first time in fourteen months of meetings and rehearsals and performances that she’d shown anything but cool distrust of my presence in her neighborhood. Trust was a scarce commodity between this neighborhood and outsiders. Most people who lived somewhere else would not even walk through this part of Kyoto. And when outsiders came here with video cameras, as NHK (Japan’s PBS) does every decade or so to produce another

documentary about its gritty underclass conditions, the residents already know its not done for them.

She was a person, like many of her friends, trapped in the middle of a load of troubles with no good way out and few expectations of any significant changes for the future. But then she was also participating in change by helping to organize the Madang.

It was nearing midnight on the day of the Madang. I had been up since 5 am finishing the photography exhibit. I had my own part to play within the Madang drama, and I was playing the role of ethnographer for a Yomiuri Television crew, who were using my interest in the Madang to create a feature news story. They were shooting me shooting the event, and I was also shooting them shooting me shooting the event. And now I was completely shot.

The Madang rolled to a close around seven, and then we all worked to get the tents down and the equipment packed and the trash collected and carted off, so that the schoolyard was neater than it was when we set up the day before. Last year, the PTA complained that the Madang had left a mess behind (which it hadn't, but someone just had to complain about something). So this year the schoolyard got an extra-thorough cleaning. This normally severe schoolyard, not much more than a rectangular expanse of gravelly dirt, which today had contained, but barely, the festival commotion, had finally been returned to its disciplinary mode.

When the last truck pulled out, the mood picked

up. It was time to celebrate. The party began around nine, and hit its stride an hour later. Those who relied on public transportation would begin to drift away by eleven-thirty.

I had stashed all my equipment at a locker at Kyoto Station. Like I said to her, all of my film and tapes and batteries were used up, and so was I. Now, after three hours of serious drinking (this was not a crowd to let a glass go empty) the uphill bicycle ride home was looking less and less attractive. The drummers had switched rhythms, pushing the tempo. People were dancing on the empty buffet table.

She gave me a second smile and poured beer into my glass.

"You came here anyway," she shouted.

"Mochiron," I said. "Of course I did."

"Welcome to the community!" she said and put her hand on my shoulder.

"Thanks." I returned the smile. "Nowhere else I'd rather be."

She nodded and headed away.

The party was hitting its limit. The drummers pushed the tempo further, louder. Everyone was dancing, jumping to the beat. Bodies touching, faces stretched into grins that verged on some permanent rearrangement of tissue. The crowd pressed itself together. And me without a camera.

It occurred to me that here was another moment to the day's festival, a moment not less significant by its intimate scale—the entire year of festival prepara-

tion and then today's festival performance were also rehearsals for this moment. This party was not the end of this year's event, but the budding communion that would assure the next. Here was fecund moment drenched in body sweat, and sweetened by a heady abandon.

Suddenly, with a sharp report, one of the drum-heads broke. The crowd whooped its approval of this signal that their passions had torn through some unspoken barrier. The other drums used the sound to signal their coda, and slowed to a final measure.

Some days later, I asked her one of my standard questions, "What's the worst scenario you can imagine for what Higashi-kujo will be like in twenty years,"

"The worst?" she replied, "is to stay exactly like it is today."

Thinking back on the party, I reflected that she need not worry about Higashi-kujo remaining the same. Already, the Madang had opened a space for comment, for reflection, and for social therapy. In one year the neighborhood had already changed.

October 1994.

Democracy also requires places that are *private*, hidden from view, unmarked on the map. These are spaces of hiding *from* the state——places that give the externality of civil society its physical presence. I call such places spaces of “civic privacy¹.” At its most basic level, civic privacy is performed by the curtain on the voting booth, where privacy assures the anonymity of the voter, freeing her from personally directed political reprisal. But the right to hold meetings in private opens up a shared space of privacy. Society decides not to use its x-ray, spy satellite, radar imaging on this or that place, conversations are not recorded, and some meetings not constrained by the visible presence of surveillance. While public space is generally perceived as the space of democratic action, actually, places of civic privacy and public-ity co-articulate the working space of democracy. But we have to be very careful in determining where and what types of hiding can be legitimated.

The “right to privacy,” is a right that can only be

-
1. Civic privacy is secured as the right to form a barrier against panoptic intrusion. Civic privacy creates a condition of externality to the state. Civic privacy is absolutely vital to the creation of a public sphere, to the maintenance of democratic society, and to the welfare of individual life projects. Many of the debates over social policy today (abortion rights, euthanasia, domestic violence, censorship) are really attempts to reset boundary conditions between state intrusion and civil privacy. We can only understand these debates fully when we comprehend their social geographical consequences. Civic privacy is also often used as an alibi for other types of hiding, so we have to be very careful about this notion. For example, the notion that a government organization has a right to privacy is a mistaken use of this concept.

legitimately exercised within a civil society; no other locations support this right; it does not exist within the state nor the marketplace. “Official secrets,” “black projects,” “covert operations,” and “trade secrets” are compromises made to purchase a localized strategic advantage of certain information against the designs of enemies and competitors. The grudging acceptance¹ of these practices should not be confused with the granting of a “right to privacy.” All information within the state or in corporations should be accessible to outside oversight organizations, and usually the courts fulfill this role (although, in Japan, the courts do not have an active history of doing so). The lack of oversight organizations in Asia Pacific nations, such as Japan, supports a “culture” of hiding, and marks a weakness in civil society's purview vis-à-vis the state or the market throughout the region.

What about openness within civil society? Above I noted that civil society is the arena for places and practices of “civic privacy.” Civic privacy is a necessary moment in a process of articulating views that are external to the state. The privacy protects individual participants against personal reprisals. Apart from this type of privacy, civil society organizations should reflect the same internal level of openness and transparent decision making that they expect of the state.

1. This acceptance is warranted through a discourse of shared advantage. National corporations (an increasingly anachronistic term) are represented as working in the interest of the national good. Therefore we all benefit when new technology is kept secret from “foreign” competitors.

The very issues of delegation¹ and representation that are often the focus of reform agendas brought by civil society organizations against the state are also active within civil society organizations themselves. Alexander Kluge's (1988) work on the process of democratization of production for a counter-public sphere gives us a good example of a reflexive attempt to marry theory and process within an organization.

However, today, even an acknowledged "right of privacy" does not ensure absolute civic privacy. The general conflict between the desired protection of individual member privacy and the need to be inclusive, to openly recruit members, generally means that a civil society organization cannot today assume that the contents of its meetings are actually unknown to

-
1. Bourdieu's arguments are sanguine here: "This process of concentration of power in the hands of delegates is a sort of historical realization of what is described by the theoretical model of the process of delegation. People are there and speak. Then comes the party official, and people come less often. And then there is an organization, which starts to develop a specific competence, a language all of its own. (Mention might be made here of the way the bureaucracy of research develops: there are researchers, and there are scientific administrators who are supposed to serve the researchers. Researchers do not understand the administrators' language, which may be bureaucratic 'research budget', 'priority'. etc.—and, nowadays, technocratic-democratic 'social need'. They immediately stop coming and their absenteeism is denounced. But certain researchers, those who have time, do stay. The rest of the story is easy to predict.) The party official (*permanent*) is, as the term suggests, the person who devotes all his time to what is, for others, a secondary or, at least, part-time activity. He has time, and he has time on his side. He is in a position to dissolve all the prophetic, that is, discontinuous struggles for power into the tempo of the bureaucracy, into that repetition that swallows up time and energy. It is in this way that delegates secure a certain concentration of power and develop a specific ideology, based on the paradoxical reversal of their relation with their mandators whose absenteeism, incompetence and indifference to collective interests are denounced, without it being seen that this indifference is the result of the concentration of power in the hands of the party officials... (1991, 218)"

the state¹.

A civil-society group *can* expect that its “private” meetings are not subject to public-sphere media distribution, and that the state's use of its information about private meetings is constrained and monitored. Laws that protect the state against organized efforts to overthrow it are legitimated as strategies against the potential of violence against the nation's citizenry, but they also serve the interests of the state against the citizen's rights of civic privacy, and these must be subject to external (e.g., legal) review.

-
1. Anti-Vietnam war protest meetings I attended were always assumed to include government informants, and the meeting organizers were often at a loss to find tactics to organize public demonstrations that might surprise the local police. Usually, on the day of a demonstration, the police tactical squad would arrive at the demonstration's “secret” starting place before the organizers did. This also led to increasing acrimony, disorder, and (perhaps justified) paranoid behavior at organizing meetings.

vocabulary

atarimae

1

“Atarimae” is a word with two related meanings: the first is “proper; right; just; fair... reasonable, natural...deserved, merited, due” (Kenkyusha’s New Japanese-English Dictionary). The second meaning is “common; ordinary; average; normal; usual (ibid).” Atarimae literally means “in front of the hit.” It is something so usual, so normal, so proper that it is absolutely *a priori*. Atarimae describes those aspects of everyday life that are so expectable that they need no attention: it describes all of the aspects of everyday life that are a part of the undesigned mode of (Goffman’s) *Umwelt*.

Buraku

2

Something that must be said right off: There is no such thing as a “*burakumin*.”

“Japan is now a highly educated and fairly “intelligent” society, much more so than America, where intelligence on the average is still very low. In America, there are many Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans.”

1986, Nakasone Yasuhiro, then Prime Minister of Japan. quoted in Coates 1990,p1

The term “*buraku*” in Japan marks a place, a neighborhood, a district that is set outside of the remainder of Japanese places, neighborhoods and districts. The term “*min*” or “*minzoku*” means “people” or “race.” (“*Minzokugaku*” is the term used for “ethnology,” and “*minzoku kokka*” is the term for “nation-state”—and so essentializing “nation” as a racially determined group). To apply the term “*min*” to the place “*buraku*” is to already accept that the stigma of the place can be located as well within the bodies of the people who dwell there. It calls into being a “race” of people defined by *buraku* residence. It connects a history of spatial segregation to the bodies of current residents of these segregated spaces. As I will be discussing how this connection between space and bodies was made, I will not begin by asserting this nominally.

This preamble to a description of places that are called *buraku* (or *toshoku buraku*) in Japan shifts the primary focus from the western notion of stigma, which is always first attached to bodies, and only then by their presence to spaces (e.g., ghettos). But I do not, by this, wish to suggest that the bodies of persons who have been forced to dwell in *buraku* areas are not also intimately affected by this circumstance. And there is an entire essentialist discourse that natural-

izes the historical and current reasons for separation of people from the “general” population of an equally essentialized Japanese “race.”

The discourse surrounding the term “*buraku*” starts with the idea of physical separation as its primary cause. The people who were resettled in these separate places are also *made* different by their history of separation. And now it is this difference that gives their continued separation added legitimacy in the imaginations of those who continue to make this distinction.

The term “*buraku*” is a designation that once meant simply a “hamlet,” a generally applicable term for a small-scale residential unit, widely used throughout Japan before the Tokugawa (1603-1868) period. Today *buraku* refers mainly to those “hamlets” where shunned, stigmatized individuals and their families were put, that is, they were either directly sentenced to dwell there by an official order, or migrated there as the only available destination when they were pushed out of other circumstances. Over hundreds of years, families in Japan’s *buraku* neighborhoods have been serving the punishment of their ancestor’s original crimes—sometimes this was the crime of coming in from the outside, from Tohoku, say, other times it was something more local, an indiscretion severe enough to force the family from their locale through a process of [murahachibu \(shunning\)](#). *Buraku* are those far-away places that “bad people,” or people who simply looked or acted different (congenital physical or men-

tal disorders marked persons in this way) found themselves banished to. But they were not far away, but close by, where all could watch the ongoing deprecation that their residential “sentence” produced.

Histories of confinement

The wedding of the Japanese Crown Prince in 1993 renewed the discourse on the purity of the imperial heritage and with this the concomitant discourse on the impurity of the heritage of “others,” most directly (although never mentioned in the press) the latter includes Japanese persons living in buraku areas. This photo, reproduced from the program of the 4th Higashiyama *buraku* liberation meeting, was used to illustrate the intimate connection between these logics of hereditary exclusion.



アサヒグラフ 3月8日号

To start to understand Kyoto's *buraku*, you have to begin with a history of institutional control over space. The notion of law enforcement and punishment in Tokugawa (1603-1868) Japan includes several practices, the logics of

which can be still traced in current practices, working either directly in modern society (such as the Imperial Household), or through their supposed reversal but continued marking (such as equal rights measures for women and Japanese living in *buraku* areas) as significant features where the discourse is silenced, but the practice is active.

The social ecology of outcasting, and of marking marginal persons in pre-modern Japan created a class/ caste economy that out-grouped those who could not muster the wherewithal to keep up with the marketplace. The penalties of falling behind one's neighbors were truly extreme. More than any other condition, this yawning gulf between those who have some socio-economic stability and those sinking into the oblivion of *hinin* status produced the desire for mid-

dle-class status in Japan. The sentence of this out-grouping punishment was designed to run in perpetuity, an expression of the implied longevity of social contracts which still carries great weight in Kyoto.

The fact also that the *buraku* were not remote islands, but rather, sub-urban prison-hamlets, made their inhabitants ([hinin \(outcaste\)](#)) visible signs of the downside of social bad-behavior. Their poverty and the jobs they were allowed to do (cleaning up everybody's shit, and tanning and working leather, disposing of dead bodies) added an ongoing stigma to their ancestor's "original sin," now long forgotten.

And their social isolation and collective guilt over time fed rumors that these were a different kind of people. I have heard this difference expressed as a difference in the consistency of their blood, for example, (which, I was told, was believed by some to be "thicker" than that of "Japanese" people).

Of course, the move to a representation of the Japanese government as a democratic state in the 19th century, made official discrimination dangerous to announce, although lists of each and every *buraku* address in the nation have long been available to companies and investigators, and Japan's formal residence registration requirements (one of many pre-occupation regulations that have never been eased) makes it impossible for a family to simply move away from the *buraku* and forget the past. No one, it seems, is really willing to forget, even though the government makes a point of expressing its desire to bring equality to all its

citizens.

After 1910 when Koreans began to enter Western Japan in large numbers, many of them were housed not in company dormitories (with the rest of the workers), but in boarding houses in *buraku* areas. And so the history of the buraku and that of resident-Koreans have, in Higashi-kujo, coalesced into a collective predicament. In terms of their cultural geography, Koreans living in Higashi-kujo burakus find themselves twice removed: being of an alien nationality and living in a highly marked, stigmatized neighborhood. And so, in Kyoto, and elsewhere in this region of Japan, Japanese and Koreans living in and near *buraku* areas find common complaints about social discrimination and lifestyle problems.

The more recent history of *buraku* politics and social movements has been summarized by Neary (1989) and Noguchi (1990). Ongoing efforts by *buraku* organizations in Kyoto¹ (e.g., Buraku Liberation Research, Higashiyama Executive Committee, *burakumondai o kangaerukai* [Meeting to Consider the Buraku Problem]# 4, 1994) and elsewhere highlight the fact that, despite official silence over their situa-

-
1. I attended an evening meeting, which was held in a hall that was filled with men in business suits. The speakers spoke with passion about their histories and circumstances. The audience listened with barely controlled impatience. The final speaker asked for questions. When there were none, the meeting ended. Outside, I noticed that, as they walked away from the meeting, and out of the *buraku*, clusters of government officials and business executives chatted animatedly. Many of them fumbled in their pockets, and returned to their lapels the lapel pin that marked their corporate affiliation—The pins they refused to wear even though their supervisors required that they attend this meeting. By this gesture they affirmed the active social discrimination that the meeting was supposed to address.

tion, the fundamental circumstances that have long characterized their out-caste condition have not been addressed.

Many of these practices are spatial in their effects, and they include relationships between neighbors as well as those between individuals and the state. For example, social control—formally managed for three centuries, mostly informal since 1945—in Japan has long been based on the practice of assigning individuals to groups which could then be held jointly responsible (and liable for punishment) for the actions of any one member. The resulting “cooperation” and “trust” between members of these groups, aspects of local social life that are often showcased as representative of harmonious life becomes cruelly ironic, as both cooperation and trust, in the usual sense of these terms, require voluntary participation. And this, in turn, requires a space for voluntary non-participation. Looking at individuals with no choice but to “cooperate,” in the groups they are connected to, and with constant surveillance as a hedge on “trust,” it is difficult to measure the possibility that, under circumstances where voluntary association (and disassociation) were possible, one might still find cooperation and trust, despite Fukuyama’s (1995) simplistic pronouncement of Japan as a “high-trust” society.

During the Tokugawa *bakufu*, five-person groups¹ (*gonin gumi*) (*ibid*, 6) linked neighbors to each other as

1. This practice has a long history as well in China (Mayfair Yang, personal communication), and was modified within the cadre system of Maoist China.

potential informants (one could only save one's own neck by individually and preemptively prompting an official investigation of a suspected infraction) and as a group that was officially complicit in any infraction of the rules. Surveillance became the duty every person against their neighbors, and out-grouping became a tactic for mutual protection. Preemptive ostracism (*murahachibu*) of troublesome neighbors was probably safer than any later confession to authorities, who were still in a position to administer group punishment (*renza*).

It is the arbitrary imposition of group culpability that lends terror to this exercise of power. And this terror, reflected by the group in its own internal policing, remains a shadow feature of modern neighborhood organizations (*chounaikai*). Before WWII these were also organized as “*tonarigumi*” [neighbor groups] five household units (every house is connected to the two across the street and the neighbors on either side) that served a self-surveilling function much like the earlier Tokugawa *gonin gumi*, but with added emphasis on the control of expressions in regard to official, national doctrine¹.

1. When we moved into Kyoto, our house was, by proximity, a member of my landlord's tonarigumi, and we were coached to be on our best behavior at all times. We failed in this duty more than once, I'm afraid.

“*Kumi* resemble the wartime *tonarigumi*, the neighbor groups that were banned under the Occupation in 1947 because they were seen as fundamentally undemocratic and tainted by their intimate links to wartime mobilization and social control. Though residents of Miyamoto-cho sometimes refer to *kumi* as *tonarigumi*, the *kumi* of today have none of the powers of coercion and control exercised by the wartime *tonarigumi*, such as collective responsibility for members’ behavior, control over the distribution of foodstuffs and other basic necessities of life, and formal statutory links to the state apparatus (Bestor 1989, 170).”

Counter-doctrinaire expressions could be dangerous to the entire group, and neighbors were charged with monitoring such matters. While legal guilt and punishment is no longer meted out *en masse* to neighbors or family, the relationships that neighborhood organizations manage retain an informally obligatory (rather than voluntary) force. And the city uses these organizations to broadcast its own version of how the city is managing its affairs. The *chounaikai* are still responsible to see that official notices are read by every household, and that other information (on public health, say, or about cultural resources) has reached each family. While urbanization has removed the economic threat of shunning (most people live at some distance from their job site), social relationships in the neighborhood can become strained, and bad feelings can persist for many years.

murahachibu (shunning)

4

The use of shunning (*murahachibu*) to punish—with the aim of driving out—a difficult neighbor before they might attract official notice (or for other reasons), gave local village organizations their own means of control. For losing one's official residence meant that the entire family would become homeless (*mushuku*) and potentially assigned (a process known as *hinin teka*) to outcaste (*hinin*) status and thus liable to be “sentenced” to reside in a specified *hinin* village (*buraku*), or some other confined locale. This change in status was not confined to the person or generation that first occasioned the original ostracism, but extended in perpetuity.

hinin (outcaste)

5

The result of expulsion from, or lack of integration into established residential groups was a status known as *hinin*. Even earlier than the Tokugawa era in Japan, there were persons and groups who were so out-casted. The reasons given for this practice are many and their margins fuzzy. Neary (1989) notes that an occupational¹ stigma (based on Buddhist notions of defilement) surrounding the handling of bodies or excrement of animals or humans was one feature of these areas.

Other groups, such as those who had been captured during conquests of outlying regions, or itinerant entertainers, filled a marginal zone of quasi outcaste status. But it was only when the land itself was measured and its tenure noted that the means of escaping this stigma became problematic. It was through the controls placed on residence and movement across the land that those who had no could were trapped by their lack of property.

Hinin were also workers in the penal system, from guarding prisoners to disposing of their beheaded corpses. And beggars, who were required to register during Tokugawa times (De Vos, 26), filled a liminal stage between *ryoumin* (good people) and *senmin*

1. Other occupations with less-obviously Buddhist-related stigmas (such as bamboo manufacture and indigo dying) also carried a stigma. These may have been occupations that required little capital or land, and were simply available to persons with little means, and so were marked by their lack of entry-controls.

(lowly people).

The spatial availability of *buraku* as receptacles of those who had lost their residences through shunning or through economic reversals in the early decades of the agricultural market economy facilitated the production of such homeless people, by removing them from the locales they formerly occupied. These *burakus*, many of which are still maintained through a combination of official inattention, bureaucratic marking, and (unofficial) social stigma, are the spatial outcome of the confluence of economic inequality under early capitalism and social/political controls levied directly or by proxy by the Tokugawa *bakufu* government.

Reaching again into the tool box of anthropology, I would like to bring up a notion that has had broad application in this field: the idea of “domestication.” Victor Turner (1969, 42) turned to “domestication” to describe the use of symbols during rituals to render safe what were formerly dangerous emotions among the Ndembu; while Susan Sontag (1966) noted that modernity seems to verge between two impulses: surrender to the exotic, and the domestication of the unknown, of the exotic, mostly by science.

Marcus and Fischer's (1986) comments on anthropology as cultural critique bring up an inverse notion: that of defamiliarization, of making exotic what had previously or elsewhere been domesticated. In his 1987 article on cricket in contemporary India, Arjun Appadurai commented on how cricket, one of the “hardest” of British cultural forms, has been domesticated within India. And we cannot overlook the literature on gender and the domestication of women.

In other fields, Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 13) accuse the Oedipal impulse (at the service of society) of domesticating our very desires. Finally, Zygmunt Bauman (1990) warns us that the domestication of space by the nation replaces the means that individuals and local communities formerly domesticated their own neighborhoods--making us incapable of telling friend from enemy--and thus ultimately failing as a

mode of domestication.

The national space, Bauman notes, is too large a place to be familiar, and so we all live in unfamiliar surroundings that resist our attempts at local appropriation. No longer given the authority to domesticate our own locales, we are now subject to larger (in space and time) processes of market-state domestication. We are, ourselves, domesticated along with the places where we stroll and eat, work and play.

Robert Sack brings a related term “homogenization” to his discussion of national memorial spaces:

“The multifunctional character of some memorials makes them less than sacred. Even among nationally recognized memorials, there is no hierarchy of importance, as there would normally be among sacred places in an organized religion. And what power are these places supposed to possess? Certainly not the power of miracles or even of eliciting the truth (which was attributed to even minor Chinese city temples as late as the nineteenth century). This does not mean that such memorials do not work. They do evince shared and often strong sentiments in the form of common memories. But mostly they work by thinning out the meaning of the events and the place so that they can be shared quickly by a modern, heterogeneous society. People visit them not only to remember but to quickly and vicariously experience adventures of the past. In this sense, national memorials are more like generic tourist attractions and theme parks than they are like shrines and sacred places.

Eviscerating the power of the sacred is part of the general modern tendency to thin out culture and homogenize modern places. This tendency is supported by several modern conditions. One is that the use of the public, objective, geometrical meaning of space makes it difficult to convey the specific and emotional contents of place and thus tends naturally to emphasize their generic qualities. The same holds true of the scientific perspective. Another modern condition is the trend toward a global economy and culture, which seems to require that places all over the world contain similar or functionally related activities and that geographical differences or variations that interfere with these interactions be reduced. After all, if we live in a global village, then we must feel at home anywhere, and the simplest way of making us comfortable is to remove the strange and the unexpected. The thinning out and homogenizing of culture can be expected as a consequence of yet another important condition—modern mass communication, especially television. (Sack 1992, 95-96)”

This removal of “the strange and the unexpected” has another consequence: a coding of those things

that are removed from the bourgeois public sphere as things that are irredeemably strange and unexpected. The criminalization of recreational drug use is a widespread example of this, as are the various modes of homophobia.

I will use the term “domestication” in two main senses: the first is the hegemonic reading: a domesticated space is a place under paternalist control. A place that services its owners. The second meaning is that of “familiarity”—the other space now joins the household, losing any exotic or dangerous meanings by this joining.

Domestication, in the two senses I use here—the creation of spaces both of the familial and the familiar—is a notion of some real value for anthropologists working in East Asia. It helps us see through the simulation of unity, and of history, to grasp the hybridity of places of local cultural production.

The domestication of Japanese history during Meiji hoped to cut the island off from its mainland cultural heritage, and the domestication of the West is today positioning the island somewhere off the coast of Europe. What we have to do, in our ethnographies, is to carefully avoid reifying the process of domestication, and work toward a better theoretical purchase on this process as it is found in various locales on the Pacific Rim.

The state and the market, often in concert, but increasingly with oblique goals, offer up cultural desires that share a common power aspect: they are

beyond the control of the residents of the city, who are all treated like tourists, welcome to watch and spend, but not to act on their own. A domesticated national cultural place cannot be appropriated by local residents, it has already been reduced to a single meaning, and is closed to dialogic intervention.

So, it is not only the foreign, exotic space that is subject to domestication by the marketplace. Domestication also describes a process that produces places of the state from a former landscape of local spaces. The nation-state domesticates local histories (which are dangerous to national “unity”) into a single national history. But why do we tend to allow the state this process as a feature of its own production? And what are the tactics (in de Certeau’s sense) that can re-hybridize a domesticated locale? This is a central problematic for my research.

Domesticated bodies

The other result of practices of domestication are domesticated bodies, bodies that are trained to act within the norms for self control. The presence of domesticated bodies in a space is vital to the ongoing domestication of the space. When all others in a space are behaving “appropriately,” the undomesticated body becomes marked and available to the attention of institutions that maintain surveillance (the police, local merchants, neighbors).

“If some of the crowd's actions can be seen as countertheatre, this is by no means true of all. For a third characteristic of popular action was the crowd's capacity for swift direct action. To be one of a crowd, or a mob, was another way of being anonymous, whereas to be a member of a continuing organization was bound to expose one to detection and victimization. The eighteenth-century crowd well understood its capacities for action, and its own art of the Possible. Its successes must be immediate, or not at all. It must destroy these machines, intimidate these employers or dealers, damage that mill, enforce from their masters a subsidy of bread, untile that house, before troops came on the scene” (Thompson 1993, 69).

When enough people find personal reasons to disattend to the “rules” of bodily domestication, then the tables turn, and it is the domesticated individual who becomes marked. The sudden turn that transforms a “crowd” into a “mob” is often mistakenly given as an example of this. But this transformation is more often a counter tactic with a direct, collective purpose in mind...and not well suited as an example of un-domestication. Undomestication, which occurs in festivals, is linked to an individual distancing from domestication, and is not liable to the “mass” effects that result in a mob.

So too, Buford's (1992) accounts of riotous football (soccer) fans showed that they used their numbers to confound the usual police response to individual crimes, rushing *en masse* into convenience stores and stealing absolutely everything, then using the empty racks to break the windows before rushing back out again onto the street. Like a flock of small birds distracting the hawk, the crowd enables lawlessness by submerging the individual into its mass.

Undomestication

I will take a better example from a work experience I had. In a large organization in which I was working as a writer there was a once a year “retreat” for all of the executives. This day-long event sent virtually all of the bosses off to a local resort for a day of pep-talks, strategizing, and conversation (later I became one of these and joined in this event). But that day was also a day when the remainder of the workers—the people who actually did most of the

work in the office—were left unsupervised. Within an hour the entire space had been reinvented.

Impromptu games (a football was tossed around until it broke a lamp) were assembled. People from different departments began to talk with one another, using the director's office (with its plush furniture) as a base for gripes about the general office situation. Orders went out for pizza to be delivered. Dresses and sports coats were exchanged for jeans and t-shirts. There were two people who did not find entrée into this transformation. The telephone receptionist was required to answer the phones, but between calls she signalled her desire to belong to the games. The director's secretary tried in the first hour to assert her authority and maintain office "decorum." She was unable to do so, and thereafter was "marked" as a possible snitch. While she stayed in her own office most of the day, when she wandered about, her presence provoked an irritated hush among those in close proximity.

The domesticated space and bodies of office workers is linked to the authority of superiors, and to the economic consequences of actions in their presence. This means it is weak form of domestication, or even a mere show of this. There are more durable forms. The domestication of public space, particularly in a democratic society where authority is legitimated in an inverse relation to its exercise (shooting into a crowd becomes illegitimate as soon as it happens, although the police have this authority), must be

enforced through “voluntary” compliance.

This compliance is accomplished by a discipline, the desired outcome of which is a repertoire of proper behaviors, and an orthopostural (SEE: [orthoposture](#)) attitude toward these behaviors. Domestication of the body (and the resulting decorum) is acquired as an aspect of individual identity through [body schooling](#). What results is the [Public Body](#).

Giddens's call for a "dialogic democracy," for a strong public sphere where differences are displayed and consensus is not the goal, points to a new politics of representation, and to the end of the nation as a homogeneous order:

"The potential for dialogic democracy is... carried in the spread of social reflexivity as a condition both of day-to-day activities and the persistence of larger forms of collective organization. Second, dialogic democracy is not necessarily oriented to the achieving of consensus. Just as the theorists of deliberative democracy argue, the most 'political' of issues, inside and outside the formal political sphere, are precisely those which are likely to remain essentially contested. Dialogic democracy presumes only that dialogue in a public space provides a means of living along with the other in a relation of mutual *tolerance*—whether that 'other' be an individual or a global community of religious believers" (1994, 115).

A dialogic democracy is incompatible with obligatory membership in a community—either enforced from without (as when Nazis required Jews to identify themselves as Jews) or from within (say, when a religious cult does not permit its members to abandon membership). But voluntary communal identity is not at issue within a dialogic democracy, as long as individual members of the community act as strangers when they enter into the public sphere. This latter idea has a couple of main features.

A dialogic democracy does not support the delegation of expression. A person may claim leadership in a community, but this does not add weight to the voice she or he brings to the public sphere. Another member of the same community with a different opinion carries the same weight (ideally). Second, the interests of the group are always seen as competing

with the public interest. There is no possible complete coincidence of community interest with that of the public. And so an expression of the group's interest as such is liable to critique of the conflicts between this and the larger public interest. Individuals who carry group markers into the public sphere may be suspected of not participating with an adequate distance from the interest of the group.

“These endemic problems do not, I think, account for the travails of liberal democracy in the present day—for the fact that its emergence as the only game in town coincides with its ailing condition even in those societies where it is most firmly established. Nor do they provide much of a clue about how democratization might be further advanced; here the well-established debates pitting participation against representation offer little purchase”
(Giddens 1994, 112).

The public sphere (like the democracy within which it operates) is not a gift from the government to its citizenry. It is, rather a task that citizens and residents take upon themselves. The misrecognition of media corporations and government ministries as “shepherd” for this practice (and of the mass of the population as its sheep) inserts what Foucault called a “pastoral governmentality” into the public sphere. But the public sphere is a place for active democracy, the space from which the future of liberal democracy will be determined. The “well-established debates” about representation and participation are founded on notions of modernity that are no longer (if they ever were) capable of describing democracy as a feature of nations within the emerging transnational cosmopolis. Notions such as that of a “dialogic democracy” enable us to imagine alternative forms of democratic action in late modernity.

Various meanings of the term “festival” overlaps in a most unhelpful way with other terms: feast, ritual, rite, celebration, pageant, rite of passage, fair, parade, occasion, event, drama, etc. Although I am on the lookout for a clever neo-logism, the word “festival” will have to do in the meanwhile.

Some basic aspects of this term as I shall use it are these: Festivals are group activities with purpose. They cause the participants to pay attention to certain symbols. They represent a genre of cultural performance that has historically been linked with religious institutions, however, this link is not universal. Festivals happen more or less regularly, they reoccur. Festivals have a beginning a middle and an end.

Festivals contain rituals, but they also entertain aspects of non-ritualized action. Ritual is the road the festival takes to a place and back; no matter how carefully the road is mapped, no matter how often it is travelled, the journey still brings surprising and unexpected vistas. Festivals are people doing culture; every time it is done it is done differently. The differences matter, to them and us. Festivals change the people that perform them. Non-humans (kamis, devas, kachinas, fauns, etc.) are sometimes invited to join festivals.

The group that participates in a festival shares, at least temporarily, a heightened awareness of intimacy. The people who are excluded from entering a

festival can be defined as a group outside apart from the festival itself (i.e., the inclusion/exclusion of people has a non-festival, social referent). Different people perform festivals for different reasons and show differential abilities to experience benefits and risks from their experiences. No two festivals are alike.

Festivals come in many local varieties. So, I do not wish to define these practices too narrowly. At the same time, there are many events called “festivals” that are, I believe, entirely misnamed.

A festival is an event organized to allow a de-control of emotions among its participants. It is made for collective, spontaneous enjoyment. People do these to have fun. This means that festivals fall into that non-work, non-family area of society we now call “leisure.” But this should not suggest that they are of little practical consequence.

Finally, festivals are group events, they are a genre of organized social play, and are performed in a public space. In addition to these spatial and experiential requirements, we can also say that a festival is highly inclusive; it avoids and denies the social boundaries that are normally maintained in a place. Festivals can be extremely democratic.

The headquarters for the main Shinto shrine organization in Japan is based upon the shrine system set up during Meiji, and has as its main shrine the Grand Shrine at Ise. This organization controls more than twenty thousand shrines spread around the archipelago. But the headquarters (as would be expected) are in Tokyo, adjacent to the Meiji Shrine, which is one of the largest open spaces in the central city, and one of its properties. The headquarters building was recently rebuilt and now resembles the headquarters of any large corporation: its tower is clad in glass, stainless steel, and marble.

I visited the Jinjahoncho in 1989, looking for information on the current situation of Shinto festivals in Japan. Their representative provided me with a video they had produced for an agricultural fair in Brussels, at which Japan's Agriculture Ministry was pleading for the continued closure of Japan's rice market.

I was also told about the plans to reconstruct the

The Ise Jingu as portrayed in IBM Japan's "small planet" website: <http://www.ibm.park.org/Japan/hometown/ise/ise-e.html>. This is on IBM home page for the 1996 internet World Expo in Japan.



Ise Shrine, an event that happens every twenty years. The next reconstruction would be the most expense of all, they noted. This wooden structure, about the size of a Santa Barbara 4-car garage, would be rebuilt at a cost of something greater than \$US 800 million.

“Doesn’t that create an economic problem for your organization?” I asked. They assured me that their annual intake was more than sufficient to cover this.

“So long as the work of education is not clearly institutionalized as a specific, autonomous practice, so long as it is the whole group and a whole symbolically structured environment, without specialized agents or specific occasions, that exerts an anonymous, diffuse pedagogic action, the essential part of the *modus operandi* that defines practical masters, is transmitted through practice, in the practical state, without rising to the level of discourse. The child mimics other people's actions rather than 'models'. Body hexis speaks directly to the motor function, in the form of a pattern of postures that is both individual and systematic, being bound up with a whole system of objects, and charged with a host of special meanings and values. But the fact that schemes are able to pass directly from practice to practice without moving through discourse and consciousness does not mean that the acquisition of *habitus* is no more than a mechanical learning through trial and error” (Bourdieu 1990, 73-74).

While the state and the market are busy in the production and control of micro-territories (which, in turn, results in the built environment of the street), much of the work of establishing normalcy is done not by politicians or bureaucrats and their business friends, but through regimes of social-schooling in the home¹, in public educational institutions, and through the media. This, mostly informal, education (taught, for example, at school but not necessarily in the curriculum) trains us in the micro-management of the body (as Giddens would call this).

The history and practice of body schooling has been attempted in part by Elias (1978) and by Foucault (1979, 1990). Elias looks at how the mannerisms and deferential courtly behaviors of the nobility were commodified and acquired by the middle class as “manners” and “courtesy.” Foucault points to an increasingly pervasive governmentality with an interest in the discipline of entire populations, and the consequent development of technical apparatus for this purpose (schools, factories, prisons, asylums, the use of clocks, the increase in surveillance, the discursification of “hygiene” as a public policy). Bourdieu (1984)

1. A common feature of this year's US presidential election is the call for “the family” to shoulder a greater share of this schooling. Of course, “the family” here is only a front for “the church” as the wellspring of moral instruction. Also implied in this return to “family values” is a critique of the marketplace as a surrogate source of social edification, and an underlying sense that necessary skills are not being learned, because nobody is teaching them.

would also add the vector of “distinction” which has both institutional outcomes (the creation of arbiters of taste) and bodily ones (such as a disgust of the lack of manners).

Body-schooling is the primary input to Bourdieu's notion of the habitus of class¹. In its carceral mode, it describes Foucault's² notion of a disciplined population. Advertisers use a more seductive variety (as Baudrillard [1990] noted) to feed consumer appetites. The sum effect is to teach our bodies how to act normal³ in the street and to expect and demand normal behavior in others (See also: [Public Body](#)).

-
1. Normalcy is also a territorial outcome of *class*. Streets, neighborhoods, and districts become concretized articulations of class desires, moulded also by class-directed market forces. For example, in Kyoto, the city's several *buraku* neighborhoods have been obviously excluded from the massive real estate speculation that remade most of the city in the last 50 years. But the “hardware” of city life: buildings and trains and boulevards, are not the topic of this paper, although this is also important in the creation of the “reality” of the street. Here I will be looking at the “software,” at cultural practices and expectations, and at the use of space to express cultural imaginations.
 2. It was, of course, Michel Foucault who noted the transformation of governmentality from an external, princely rule, to an internal pastoral rule as a condition for the modern nation-state. He also noted that this transformation created a break between the open display of violence upon the bodies of subjects—as, I would add, feature of normalcy—and the modern government's carceral programs of institutionalized (and hidden) re-schooling of criminals; a practice that was sequestered from the street. The rehabilitation of criminals in their prisons was not different, Foucault noted, from the training of children in government-run schools, nor from the regimenting of armies in military camps, nor from the disciplining of the workforce in factories. A carceral regime developed which acted upon bodies as docile instruments of this new governmentality. Having read this before I moved to Kyoto, I was at times struck by the visual uniformity of the street in Kyoto, which could very well have advertised itself as Foucault-land, except that it really is no different in this respect than other cities in the region.
 3. This fulfills Aristotle's notion (in *Nicomachean Ethics*) of the “right education,” that is, one that teaches us “both to delight in and to be pained by the things that we ought...” (1941, 954).

dis-modernity

“Enlightenment thought (and I here rely on Cassirer’s, 1951, account) embraced the idea of progress, and actively sought that break with history and tradition which modernity espouses. It was, above all, a secular movement that sought the demystification and desacralization of knowledge and social organization in order to liberate human beings from their chains. It took Alexander Pope’s injunction, ‘the proper study of mankind is man,’ with great seriousness. To the degree that it also lauded human creativity, scientific discovery, and the pursuit of individual excellence in the name of human progress, Enlightenment thinkers welcomed the maelstrom of change and saw the transitoriness, the fleeting, and the fragmentary as a necessary condition through which the modernizing project could be achieved”
(Harvey 1989, 12-13)

Compiling the recent accounts of body schooling can be a disheartening task. The resulting cocktail of historical, anecdotal, and theoretical descriptions and notions is simultaneously convincing and confounding. While the most basic notion of the Enlightenment might include the increase in “reason” against unreasonable authority (kingly or religious) and an increase in rational thought against revealed (and so unknowable) knowledge, the story of modernity seems to produce the opposite outcome: domination, misrecognition, authoritarianism in the most mundane arenas (such as clothing styles) and a general reduction of populations to uniform subjecthood and an epistemological coma.

Today, political power is wielded through a skein of democratic (or so represented) practices, from population polls to popular elections, but this power is also ubiquitous and intrusive on the lives of all residents. In contrast, in other, former times, the dictates of the monarch or pope were arbitrary and final, but they were also limited in scope. So much of everyday life seemed to go on without the attention of higher authorities. Power was apparent as the earthfall of some deadly asteroid, but those who steered clear of its path were also free of its effects. One of the unintended outcomes of modernity seems to be an astounding increase in available power, and a continuing acquisition of this by various institutions, against the power of individuals.

However, this equation, and the growing imbalance of power in favor of institutional interests is not somehow structurally fixed, but represents an opportunistic snatching of power. And so there is little to legitimate this taking. For this reason there are many opportunities for individuals (singularly or in groups) to take back resources and authority from institutions.

Giddens's work on intimacy suggests that individuals can work against body schooling, creating reflexive knowledge that can return the imagination to the individual, and bring a new equation to bear on relationships with expert systems. The festival experience, both in the planning and rehearsal, and in its public performance, is another shared body schooling that is external to, and which confronts that of the disciplined social body.

There is, however, an age-determined period within which deviant behaviors are allowed (although the deviance is also often uniformly enacted as Sato [1991] noted). Youthful folly is excused until the person attains an age when s/he is expected to move along (20 for non college students, graduation for college students).

Sato, who did his work among communities in the new city additions of western Kyoto, found that this expectation of a natural end to expressions of alternative life-styles was expressed as the “measles effect” of youth gang *bosozoku* (“crazy gang”) activity:

“It is widely acknowledged that *bosozoku* is essentially a youthful phenomenon and that few Japanese youths are *bosozoku* after twenty. This public recognition of the “graduation” from gang activity with the attainment of adulthood has led to a folk theory known as *bosozoku hashika setsu* (measles theory of *bosozoku*). This theory views *bosozoku* activity essentially as youthful indiscretion or as a manifestation of the “storm and stress” characteristic of adolescence. It is assumed that youths’ participation in gang activity is a sort of youthful fever which can be “cured” by self-healing, as in the case of measles, if one matures enough.” (Sato 1991, 158).

Every year, thousands of youth gang members across Japan reach the age where they are expected to trim their hair, change their clothes, find full-time employment and conform their public behavior in accordance with that of older people. Within months their connections with the gang have atrophied, and in a few years, they would not easily talk about this period of their lives.

Everyday interactions “in situations of co-presence” acquire hyper-reflexivity when a doubt arises as to the presence of a differential between the ken of various people in the situation. The doubt produces a suspicion that the situation has been fabricated to produce this differential. Cheating someone else at the market or in business or during a game of chance requires that the subject (the dupe) not become aware that the situation is being fabricated against them. The cards are marked, the frozen fish has been stuffed with ice, the oil well is dry, but these facts must remain outside the ken of the dupe.

Ken is the universe of what is knowable in a social situation. Almost all social interactions between friends and strangers begin with the assumption that each participant has roughly the same ken. Interactions with expert systems, on the other hand generally rely upon the notion that the expert system (and its experts) have an expanded ken.

The question in state-nations (also a question within nation-states) is whether or not the state is an expert system. If it is so, then it can legitimately maintain a differential between what it knows and what it tells its population. If this is not so, then it should make clear all of the knowledge it uses to come to a decision about any issue.

orthoposture

13

“The crucial point for the moment is that in taking on a subject position, the individual assumes that she is the author of the ideology or discourse she is speaking. She speaks or thinks as if she were in control of meaning. She ‘imagines’ that she is indeed the type of subject which humanism proposes—rational, unified, the source rather than the effect of language. It is the imaginary quality of the individual’s identification with a subject position which gives it so much psychological and emotional force” (Weedon, 1987, 31).

The terms available to describe the ascription of correct attitude in a population are not adequate—“orthodoxy” and “orthopraxy” describe an adherence to correct speech and behavior, but the additional notion of a proper attitude requires a bit of neologism. I call this “orthoposture.” Orthoposture describes the willingness of the individual to spontaneously submit to a supplied attitudinal condition in a social circumstance. It requires that the individual not maintain a distance from this requirements, and so not engage in any counter reflection. It thus avoids the outcomes of parody, cynicism, and critical scrutiny.

The condition of orthoposture can describe the complicit agreement of the subject position under circumstances of domination. This attitude masks domination by pretending that the subject is actually in control. The pretense is supported by narratives (myths) that naturalize domination as an inherent feature of the subject’s personality. The outcome is a subject that is, in effect, self-dominated.

Orthoposture is a common attitudinal requirement in many formal and informal encounters. For example, in the sport of baseball, the center fielder attending to the approaching flight of a batted ball, cannot afford to also simultaneously muse about the overall circumstances of professional sports. Orthoposture releases the player from such a critical perspective, and allows for spontaneous action. This

attitude is a factor in the successful completion of the current game encounter, and in the player's ability to enter future similar encounters.

“Why should the factor of spontaneous involvement carry so much weight in the organization of encounters? Some suggestions can be made. A participant's spontaneous involvement in the official focus of attention of an encounter tells others what he is and what his intentions are, adding to the security of the others in his presence. Further, shared spontaneous involvement in a mutual activity often brings the sharers into some kind of exclusive solidarity and permits them to express relatedness, psychic closeness, and mutual respect; failure to participate with good heart can therefore express rejection of those present or of the setting. Finally, spontaneous involvement in the prescribed focus of attention confirms the reality of the world prescribed by the transformation rules and the unreality of other potential worlds—and it is upon these confirmations that the stability of immediate definitions of the situation depends”
(Goffman 1961, 40).

The orthopostural attitude is that of *spontaneous* involvement directed as what is serious for the game—whether this be a baseball game, a political rally, a business meeting, or an intimate conversation—and an equal neglect of what is trivial within the game. *The central task of an ideology is to guarantee the orthopostural attitude of all its players.* The *illusio* here is to “buy-into” the game. Bourdieu is quite correct here. There is yet another *illusio*, which is also implicit in Bourdieu's sense of this term: which is the *illusio* that one is, in reality, a “player.” In fact there are two reasons why this may not be true. First, one may be a player in a low-level game that a higher-level game promotes, and which has the effect of limiting playership in the higher-level game, while tricking the player into thinking they are playing in the higher level game.

Bourdieu's notion of the dominated fraction of the dominant class describes how a game of “culture” is perceived to be autonomous to and equal to the capitalist “economy” game. But its autonomy is illusory, as is its equality.

And second, one might not be “a player” at all, in the sense that the ability and authority to effect changes (to “make plays”) may be tightly constrained by others. This is the common outcome of domination, and orthoposture here is both the main outcome of domination and also its main practice.

I use the term “market-state” to replace the term “nation-state” at certain locales in states that are politically decentralized to the point where local or regional control over resources allows cities and provinces to work directly with multinational corporations to create local sites of production (such as BMW factories in South Carolina) and consumption (e.g., privately owned shopping malls and amusement parks). The interests of “the nation” are, at best, only indirectly served here. The market-state¹ competes with the national government in constructing spaces for consumers. As more and more of the cityscape is managed by corporate interests, the public street

-
1. The rise of the market-state within the modern nation-state is a primary feature of late modernity. This process brings global flows of culture and capital to many a city, but it also interrupts the circulation of local spending, shunting this return flow of capital into the international monetary organizations that finance the market-state. The city in a market-state is a decentred space, defined not by its boulevards and plazas, but by the number of “world-class” consumption palaces it can boast and the number of minutes it takes the travel between these. The public street becomes only a conduit that takes people somewhere else. And so we cannot reimagine the public street without finding a way to release this from its service to the market-state. Note also that Japan (perhaps even more than Singapore) is a singular example of a *national* market-state where the national government and national corporations control local production for consumption to the exclusion of both local interests and transnational corporate interests. The slow relaxation of Japanese national cartel control, under external trade pressure, does not require the opening up to a market-state, although this seems to be what is happening in Kyoto.

loses the economic means to reproduce itself¹, and to maintain a positive mix of economic, social, and expressive cultural uses. Curiously, while private individual expression has been curtailed on the street, expressions of market-state desires are everywhere found.

-
1. The city that once embodied the nation-state now touts its private pleasure realms and curries corporate capital by offering tax incentives for private development of properties, development that leads to further abandonment of real estate connected to the public street and to sites of public history. Public parks that were once ceremonial centers, are now surrounded by vacant lots and shuttered businesses. Under long-term market-state conditions, the city can no longer serve as a metonymic site of a national heritage—except as a cynical mirror reflecting a lack of this—and even sites of local history fare badly in competition with the spectacles that transnational capital can provide. And so Los Angeles becomes the home of Universal City.

The descriptions of *matsuri* found in English language sources are generally brief (and in being brief, overly general). We find article-length descriptions and analyses of various *matsuri* (Inoue, Noriaki, Yanagawa), and article-length theoretical descriptions of *matsuri*. (Harada, Plutschow, Sadler). There is a longer description of a non-*matsuri* festival in the northeast of Japan (Yamamoto), and there are other accounts of calendrical festivals, such as *oshogatsu* and *tanabata*, etc. (Casal, Erskine).

On the Japanese language side, there is an encyclopedic body of literature on the study of various *matsuri* by Japanese folklorists and local historians. Since the efflorescence of Japanese folklore (*nihonjinron*) studies earlier in this century, *matsuri* have been a favorite object of reflexive folkloristic attention (in particular, see: Kunio 1985). These sources provide a welcome record of previous practices for specific *matsuri*, however, on the main, one expects that they promote the Post-Meiji unitizing description of *matsuri*, i.e. its correct performance (although local elements are highlighted) and its ahistorical beginnings as described by National Shinto. Other sources run from descriptions of festivals for Japanese tourists (for example, Koma and Asano, 1977), to major works intended for a scholarly audience, such as that of Sonoda Minoru (1990).

The descriptive apparatus of the latter is far more

detailed than that of the former, however, such phenomenological works provide little purchase for social theories of human action (however, the more rigorous ethnographic/sociological studies, such as Inoue (1979), Robertson (1991), and Bestor (1989) are exceptions to this general critique, and will be discussed below). There are several reasons for this limit, the main one being a lack of scope—the descriptions of *matsuri* usually fail to include descriptions of the communities involved as the latter are externally constituted. Instead, the *matsuri* is presented as complete in itself. Another problem, one common to the ethnographic literature, is a lack of a sufficient problematization of matsuri practices in their time and place. The structuration of the event is not approached apart from its general, and discursively available forms. What then do we learn about *matsuri* from English and Japanese language sources?

Matsuri ritual forms

Working from various sources on the descriptions of *matsuri ritual practices*, we find that there is: 1) some but certainly not a predictable overlap in individual descriptions, and 2) a wide range of interpretations from these descriptions. These conditions point to two main problems in the study of *matsuri*: fragmentary descriptive evidence and a lack of a grounding theory of *matsuri*. It is difficult to know if the lack of overlap in the descriptions is a product of the description or inherent in the event. A similar problem arises in theory: are the matsuri themselves so different in their functions and meanings, or is this the

result of studies disjointed at the level of theory?

The general matsuri ritual script

A basic frame for *matsuri* performance is provided in Plutschow:

The Shinto festival can be divided into three major sequences. According to Haruo Misumi, most Shinto festivals are thus divided. The first can be called *Kami-oroshi* (also *kami-mukae* or *kami-are*), meaning the arrival or bringing down of the deity; the second, *kami-asobi*, which means entertaining or placating the deity, and the third *kami-okuri* (or *kami-age*), sending off the deity [See Misumi, 1979, 80].(84)

Curiously, these specific terms do not show up in the descriptions of individual festivals, although the

three activities, as later described in Plutschow¹, are evident. Again, we find a trifold activity pattern (beginning/middle/end) which might also relate to the now-classical van Gennep structure for rites of passage (separation/liminality/reintegration).

The opening and ending parts of the festival seem laden with boundary demarcating rituals that set off—and also purify—the space and time allotted to the festival. Purification, and with it the notion of pollu-

-
1. The three sequences, in Plutschow's analysis, involve a dialectic between chaos/eros and society/civilization. In the middle, liminal state, chaos has been invited into the village. At the end it is again banished to a remote place. Thus the festival is a commentary on the control of dangerous extra-society forces:

“Japanese and non-Japanese documents suggest that the opening *kami-oroshi* sequence not only refers to the end of time but to the overthrow of the social order. Therefore the community reacted in noise and confusion, releasing hostilities, reversing social roles, and rousting about with erotic license and orgies. Such sexual license is recorded in the so-called *utagaki* (poem hedges), poems composed during the festivals dedicated to the deities of Mt. Tsukuba [cf. Manyoshu, 1965, 222]. Even today, violent competition and unruly behavior can be observed in Shinto festivals and injury to the shrine bearers is not uncommon. The ancient Japanese *matsuri* were certainly more violent than those of today, when the law curbs such behavior out of respect to human health and safety.”(85)

“Nowadays the *kami-asobi* sequence often takes place at a temporary shrine called *tabisho* (travel rest), specially erected to entertain the deity. After having toured the community on the shoulders of the shrine-bearers, the deity is finally brought to a temporary rest at *tabisho*. The *tabisho* today may be placed in a sacred reserved area within the human territory or it may be at or near the frontier between cosmos and chaos. As a neutral place, the frontier seems a most appropriate site to enact this sequence of the Shinto festival.”(86)

After the series of *kami-asobi* performances, which have properly appeased the deity, the community prepares to send the deity back to his territory or his shrine.... the deity in the Wakamiya festival makes his ceremonious return to this mountain shrine under the cover of darkness, symbolizing chaos. Dozens of shrine priests tightly surround the *shintai* (symbol of the deity) carried by the highest-ranking priest. Such *kami-okuri* (or *kami-age*) processions end the *matsuri* sequence and its ritual recreation of the original cosmogony. The Shinto festival having thus been completed, time and order are temporarily restored and the community returns to its orderly daily routines.”(93-94)

tion, is universally evidenced in discussions of festival ritual (Harada 100, Yanagawa 8, Noriaki 144). In fact, Harada uses purity as the defining feature of matsuri:

“The sacredness of a member of the Uji-ko [worshippers of the Uji-Gami, the village deity] is entirely due to his oneness with the deity and to his life with him. It follows, therefore, that each member of the Uji-ko retains his cleanness [sic] by living such a life as becomes his title. Retaining cleanliness is called *kessai* or purification. A Matsuri is nothing more than a series of the Uji-ko’s deeds to keep himself clean.” (Harada 1960, 100)

The main types of purification rituals described (See Yanagawa 8) include certain temporary food taboos, restrictions on contact with blood or death, and the hanging of special ropes (*shimenawa*) in homes and at the boundaries of the village.

The end of the festival often includes a special meal (*naorai*) which originally would be shared by all participants, but in larger communities is taken by neighborhood representatives (Yanagawa 74). The use of food during the festival, and in fact, a theory of feasting in general is not found in the English language *matsuri* literature.

The middle period of the festival has been variously described as “a temporary rupture of an everyday pattern that is stable and uniform” (Noriaki 159), an act of communal “consciousness-expansion” (Sadler 16) and, even as a dream: “... the festival brings disparate elements into a single space at a single time. If the festival was previously likened to a drama, here it seems rather like a dream.” (Yanagawa 41)

Of the various activities that occur during this period, one of the main, and perhaps the defining activity of matsuri, involves the parading of the *kami* in

a portable shrine, or *mikoshi*.

To go among its people, the holy spirit needs a vehicle.... That...is called in Japanese *o-mikoshi*, and is a splendidly ornamented and decorated gilt carriage, with silken cords and golden bells, and a golden phoenix at the top. It is carried by the young unmarried men of the village, who sometimes fast the day before the festival begins, and spend the night inside the shrine, in the presence of the holy. When the sun dawns on the festival, they don uniform *hapi* coats (over their undershorts), powder their faces white..., and ... they begin jogging down the streets, zig-zagging all through the town, chanting a work chant, and gradually surrendering themselves to a dizzy state of ecstatic exhaustion. The *mikoshi* is heavy, and although the elders go along to guide them and to try and prevent them from injuring themselves or damaging property, the *kami*-presence gradually takes over, and their procession becomes more and more erratic and exuberant. The *kami*, with their help, is going among his people's homes and dispelling evil influences, driving out infirmity, and bringing vital energy to all. (Sadler 1969, 6)

Another type of procession common to larger *matsuri* are those of neighborhood floats which can be quite large and are pulled along a set route by many men (Noriaki 144, 147; Yanagawa 10). One type of float is large enough to have a stage on which dances are held at various stops. [None of the sources offered an overall typology of the floats used in various *matsuri*]. Along the procession route are found a variety of artistic displays from drama to dance to poetic readings and music. The history and role of the arts within *matsuri*, briefly described in Plutschow, deserves a more rigorous examination.

Participants

An important feature of *matsuri* is that not anyone can participate. The choice of participants in the *matsuri* and in the ongoing supervision of the neighborhood *matsuri* activities is made according to several criteria, most of them related to visible social status and rank (Noriaki 141). Thus the festival is seen as a way to display neighborhood identity (Noriaki

147-8; Yanagawa 16) while enhancing neighborhood integration (Noriaki 147-8; Yanagawa 21, 13, 27; Inoue 177-8).

Descriptions of ingroup/outgroup distinctions usually differentiate between some type of “native-ness”. Inclusion at any level is often determined first by consanguinity and then by household location. To be included one would ideally be born to a family that dwells within the boundaries of the space demarcated for the festival. If a person moves to a new village, inclusion would be determined by this person taking active role in the community, through which she express a lasting identification with this new village. Presumably, participation in the old village’s *matsuri* might show a conflict of identity. Matsuri is thus often performed by and for the native-born inhabitants of its place (Harada 100).

Recent studies of urban *matsuri* both reflect and further problematize the notion of inclusion in the matsuri. Robertson (1991) noted that the creation of a city-wide “citizens’ festival (*shimin matsuri*) still maintained a native/newcomer distinction, even though it was created to bring these two groups together (ibid, 44). Particularly, this distinction was displayed in that segment of the festival event that mimicked other, Shinto-shrine based, festivals (in which the “natives” continue to participate at other times of the year and to the exclusion of the newcomers). Robertson was, of course, describing something different than the shrine-based matsuri: the differences are many, but

primarily those of a greater scale, a lack of bounded and transacted placeness (the festival occupied only the main street of the city), the inclusion of a variety of heterogeneous events (activities at various “corners”), and a conflation between the festival organization with that of the city government.

As this new *shimin matsuri* attempted to import the practices of shrine-based *matsuri*, it did so with perhaps counter-productive effects. The new festival failed to provide a level “playing-ground” in which the natives and the newcomers could all participate, instead, it reified distinctions it was designed to ameliorate.

These native/newcomer distinctions operate also in urban shrine-based *matsuri*, as Bestor (1985) described. Participation in the neighborhood’s *matsuri* was emblematic of recognition of a household’s status as a full-fledged member of the neighborhood, a status which is also marked by inclusion in other activities of the “neighborhood organization” (*chookai*) (*ibid* 147) and membership (acquired through economic and performative participation) in the local Shinto shrine¹.

Today, the *matsuri* presents a double facade—it is religious and also secular, a time to play with one’s neighbors and also to play with the local deity. There

1. Shinto shrines, and (before Meiji) Buddhist temples, have historically played an important political and social role throughout Japan, as the organization of shrine/temple membership was a ubiquitous means of communication and surveillance in cities and towns. In recent decades this role has been supplanted by organizations such as the *chookai*.

is a wide differential noted in how much of each side any particular individual will cathect (*ibid* 234).

Beyond function and structure

Bestor (1985) and Robertson (1990) both approach matsuri with a relatively unproblematized approach vis a vis the performative and micropolitical aspects of such activities. (In fairness, neither text was centrally concerned with *matsuri* per se, although matsuri played a key role in their main arguments, which would therefore have been strengthened—and probably will be *ex post facto*—by a fuller, more multi-dimensional, description of *matsuri*) While Bestor outlines the functional organization of his Tokyo neighborhood's *matsuri*, this description pays little attention to those who, for voluntary or exclusionary reasons were not included in this event or in other chookai activities. Similarly, Robertson loses the “voice” of the newcomer in her description of the dialogue between native and newcomer. The use of *matsuri* not only as a tool for neighborhood or civic inclusion, but also as a display of civic exclusion, of marginalization and centrality needs further examination. In addition, *matsuri* as performances are liable to a variety of aesthetic and experiential critiques—the people who do them and those who watch are aware of the performative failings and successes of such events. The dynamic processes of participation and reflexivity disappears almost entirely in both Robertson and Bestor.

One area of reflexivity that does receive some attention is that which concerns the notion of the *kami* (deity) and its participation in the *matsuri*. Rob-

Robertson discounts Inoue's (1979) conclusion that a festival without a *kami* falls outside of the central definition of "matsuri" (39), although she also provides some evidence that Kodaira natives do, in fact support this same conclusion:

Kodaira natives are aware of the deities' absence from the mikoshi and consequently refer to the citizens' festival as bereft of authenticity, the implication being that a "real" (shrine) festival is contingent upon a supernatural presence. One participant interviewed at a shrine festival remarked that "without *kamigakari*, festivals are no fun" (Matsudaira 1980, 98). (*Kamigakari* refers to both the process of becoming possessed by a *kami* and the individual possessed.) The same person also remarked that one "can't *kamigakari* at city hall-sponsored festivals" because the deity is not present. At the Kodaira citizens' festival, the countless cans of beer quaffed by the bearers at the two half-hour rest stops apparently compensated for the absence of *kami*. Historically, alcohol (sake) has been a standard feature at festivals, especially at the social gatherings following a mikoshi procession. City hall apparently had considered banning alcoholic beverages but realized that without beer the "adult" shrine procession in particular would lack the essential zest. (Robertson 1991, 64-65)

The notion that a festival without a *kami* is "authentic" as long as there is enough beer, while it does open up to the performative aspect of *matsuri*, it also closes down the affective role of the *kami* in such performances. Changes in the sincerity of belief about *kami* are reflexively discursively performed by the performers in this and similar contexts (For example, see: Ivy, 186). Particularly as the *kami* is felt to have a special affinity for those who were born and/or have a long tenure in its precincts, such changes would play an important part in the native/newcomer discourse. Also, as Bestor (234) notes, the presence of the *kami* in the *mikoshi* is important in that it supplies the motivation (integral to the process of *kami-asobi*) for the movement of the *mikoshi* throughout the neighborhood. The movement of the *kami* articulates the neighborhood as a place apart from its normal

description.

Origin of Matsuri

The sources provide minimal information or even speculation on the origin of *matsuri*. Harada's view is that in old days farmers worshipped the *kami* continuously and so were always in a state of purity, and therefore had no need of *matsuri*. It was only when non-agricultural occupations were made and when the need for agricultural surplus distracted the farmer from his daily worship that *matsuri* were started to periodically purify the people and the place. Here the dynamic is between purity and pollution.

Plutschow, on the other hand, sees the central dynamic in the dual nature of the *kami*.

The Shinto festival strongly reflects the belief in local deities who reign supreme over *ara*, or chaos, but who could be transformed—only in part and never completely—into *niki* or benevolent deities. Whenever people settled an area and transformed the landscape, they automatically divided the local deity or deities into his or their *ara* or *niki* aspects. Throughout Japanese Shinto one can recognize the belief that an uncontrolled evil deity, once appeased, becomes a benevolent deity, and that its original malevolence can be transformed, without losing its power, for the good of the community. (77)

The origin of *matsuri* then represents the on-going tension engendered by the need to control the *kami*. This control includes harnessing the protective aspect and banishing the dangerous aspect. An original "deal" appears to have been worked out where the *kami* is split and his dangerous side contends itself with a small area left undeveloped while his protective side is housed in a village shrine and worshipped constantly. Every year the two sides are allowed to rejoin

in the village for a set period of time. This is *matsuri*. (Plutschow 77).

The discourse concerning the origins of *matsuri* has been centrally occupied by the notion of *matsuri* as a purely Shinto event of great antiquity. The history of any *matsuri* needs to be problematized in light of recent discussions concerning the formation of National Shinto (particularly the breaking up of the Shrine/Temple multiplexes) during Meiji, and the subsequent articulation and spread of “authentic” (e.g., ancient) *matsuri* activities which reinvented and re-traditionalized these performances during the last hundred years.

Festival and change

A final aspect of festivals is their performative dynamic. As ritual, festival resists change. As performance, festivals embrace it. A tension is thus evident between the role of the festival as a medium of communication and its ritual context. This tension is evident in the description of a new “*matsuri*,” the Kobe *matsuri*. While the original idea of the Kobe *matsuri* excluded any *kami*, was open to yearly variation in its content, and specifically included tourists, the event is rapidly taking on the traditional ritual and activity framework of a *matsuri*. (Inoue 177). While the central *kami* has yet to be determined (and might never be officially included), various neighborhoods have already involved their *kami* in this *matsuri*. And so the ritual of the festival frames the communicative aspect, circumscribing attempts at change within *matsuri*. However, where *matsuri* is centrally defined by atti-

tudes toward the *kami* and toward purity/pollution, changes in these will, and probably are having a decided impact on the general attitude toward *matsuri*.

Inoue alludes to a work by Yanagita Kunio which supports the notion that *matsuri* has been giving way to other types of ceremony since the fifteenth century:

He [Yanagita Kunio] divided the general category of festivals into *matsuri* or classical feasts and *sairei* or religious festivals accompanied by para-festival activities, and he regarded the change from *matsuri* to *sairei* as a matter of historical change. In the *matsuri* particular respect was shown for the religious purification, abstinence, and ablutions of the participants, and communion with the *kami* or divine spirits through various ceremonies occupied a central position. In the *sairei*, on the other hand, the focus of interest shifted to the para-festival activities (for example, contests, parades, and public entertainments) that had once been of peripheral importance, and at the same time a separation between participants and spectators became prominent...Yanagita thought that *sairei* grew in popularity, especially in towns and cities, from about the fifteenth century.(Inoue 166)

Yanagita suggests that today's *matsuri* display the results of previous changes; a change from an original activity of *matsuri* bound up in notions of purification to that of an eclectic *matsuri/sairei* activity which incorporates a variety of additional ingredients. As Robertson shows, such revisions in the defining notion of *matsuri* are, in fact, ongoing. Changes in *matsuri* to include *shimin matsuri* (citywide festivals) and other forms of *matsuri*, with or without the inclusion of a *kami* will be further accelerated by the the new roles that *matsuri* play in the process of *furusato-zukuri*—in the recreation of the traditional Japanese locale.

Matsuri and the national imagination

Robertson (1990) places the recent resurgence of urban *matsuri* within the context of *furusato-zukuri*

(“native-place-making program”). The latter represents a style of nostalgia-based urban and social design which is pan-Japan in scope (it has central government inputs) and evidenced in a variety of ways in different places (part of its program is the articulation, the re-territorialization, of individual locales). These re-placed native-places become both tourist destinations (see also: Ivy 1988, 33-86 for an analysis of the Japan Railways advertising scheme [“Discover Japan”]; that promoted furusato as tourist destinations) and cultural-revanchist locales for their local residents.

The repertoire of supposedly ancient *matsuri* practices that Japanese folklorists and Meiji ritualists had described as central to this activity become essential in this quest for legitimacy, even if these had never been locally practiced. The local *matsuri* is thus disem-bedded from its original matrix (or, at least from any attempt a recreating this) and reembedded into a grammar of authenticated practices which make all *matsuri* somewhat identical. This sameness, which should, perhaps, reveal the contrived nature of these events, is instead employed to support its legitimacy as an essentially local and ancient practice. Such *matsuri* have thus become “simulacra.” They not only bear no resemblance to real (informed by the situated historical model) *matsuri*, but they achieve a higher level of reality by disregarding the real. The sameness also serves the discourse of nationalism, reinforcing the continuity of national history and practice as they produce new memories of a hegemonic “collective” past.

Furusato-zukuri relies upon the reconstruction of local practices and histories, emblematic among these is the practice of *matsuri*. “Television stations regularly cover local festivals and broadcast special reports on ‘traditional’ pastimes. For urbanites wishing to enjoy their leisure in a *matsuri* frame of mind. The Furusato Information Center provides detailed information on regional festivals and ‘traditional’ events accessible to domestic tourists” (Robertson 1991, 38). The use of *matsuri* in this process reinforces the reflexive demand for “authentic” *matsuri* activities. The reflexive appropriation of local *matsuri* practices by the national model reflects another change in the discursive and practical field within which *matsuri* operates. While Robertson and Ivy touch upon the connection between tourism, nationalism, and *matsuri*, there is much work to be done in this area.

The politics of recognition goes beyond any “identity politics” based on a simple identification with a gender, ethnic group, class, or age cohort. It presumes multiple planes of cultural domination and multiple counter-tactics aimed at both re-marking and removing privileged access to the public sphere, and reinserting marginalized individuals (as strangers) into the space of the public sphere that was formerly held by privileged individuals. It seeks to change the cultural/symbolic coding of the public sphere to allow for diverse diversities—for singularities and heterogeneities.

This politics goes hand-in-hand with the “politics of redistribution” that seeks to remedy political/economic inequalities and injustice. Symbolic change is too often offered by those who would “permit¹” this as an alibi to retain political/economic privilege. And so symbolic change first is not requested, but demonstrated, and second, is not allowed to replace or diffuse demands for economic justice.

-
1. “Allowing” multiculturalism while promoting this as a mere “play” of difference—for example, by forcing difference into a normative framework, where each group fills a pre-figured slot in a matrix of cultural practices—recreates difference as a variation on a single theme. Culture “X” is allowed this and that distinct cultural properties, and culture “Y” has corresponding properties of its own “unique” variety. Authentic, incommensurable difference is not allowed, and individual variations are not important. Difference is domesticated by being subsumed under a framework of expectable variation.

Nihonjinron

17

“Returning now to the Japanese case, one might say that it represents racism in the sense of being genetic determinism, because the Japanese are strongly aware of their ‘racial’ and cultural distinctiveness from other peoples and because they closely associate ‘race’ and culture. In the ‘race thinking’ of the Japanese, the second aspect (‘racially exclusive possession of a particular culture’) predominates over the first (genetic determinism). The concept of ‘property’ suitably expresses that sense of Japanese uniqueness, since possessiveness is its main attribute. Exclusive ownership is claimed upon certain aspects of Japanese culture.

“The Japanese philosophy is deeply embedded in our individual consciousness, and it is a way of life we preserve through all the revolutionary changes of time...
 Virtue is expressed in mutual concessions.
 The family feeling is continuous...
 Yet the concept is larger than the individual, and the family ultimately embraces the home, the place of work, society in general, the nation, and the geography of Japan itself.”
[Here is JAPAN](#)

Nihonjinron describes a discourse (*ron*) in and about Japan the topic of which is the Japanese people (*nihonjin*). Coming out of academic reflections that helped inform the Meiji reformation in the mid-nineteenth century, it later acquired its nationalist and racist vocabulary through interaction with more global discourses on nation and race. *Nihonjinron* is not atypical of discourses in and out of Japan—and in and out of anthropology—that attempt to encapsulate essential configurations of qualities that mark a national population as distinct in itself and from its neighbors. In the pre-War period, cultural configurationalism in anthropology linked tribes and their practices (including language) to a history made unique by isolation, and made possible and meaningful through practical adaptations to the surrounding environment and subsequent linguistic (symbolic) formations.

The mixture of ethnography, ecology, biology, nationalism, and racism that each supplied facets to this discourse has left a residue of meanings that are all present when “We Japanese” is called upon to make a statement or defend a policy. While individual writers at different times may front one or two areas of the larger family of meanings within *nihonjinron*, by not divorcing their remarks from the remainder of meanings that are active within the discourse, their works promote readings that are simultaneously all-of-the-above.

The other point concerns the Westerners' sense of difference as fundamentally one of superiority. This is understandable as racism arose in the West as an ideology to rationalise colonial expansion and domination. The sense of difference of the Japanese from the others (westerners) in the prevalent discussions of Japanese uniqueness has been basically that of horizontal difference or difference in kind. (This does not mean that the sense of superiority is absent among the Japanese as in the case of their attitude towards the Korean minority in Japan.) Many of the *nihonjinron* of the 1970s have presented the image of the Japanese as simply being very different without explicitly claiming superiority, though some literature has discussed the strengths of Japanese society.... The important point to be noted here is that explicit claims of Japanese superiority have not been so common as non-Japanese readers, who may equate the Western style of racism with race thinking *tout court*, might have supposed." (Yoshino 1992, 29)

The side of *nihonjinron* that separates Japanese people, in their bodies, their desires, their abilities, and their sociabilities, from other peoples (and most often and most noticeably in value-laden terms from their continental neighbors—Koreans) is less of interest to me than the amount of commonness that is ascribed within Japan in order to bolster this differential cultural calculus.

It seems that for the Japanese to be different, they all, at some essential level must be the same. Internal differences are muted, discarded, and disavowed in this process. The Ainu and the Rikkyu islanders disappear. Yoshino (1992) goes to some length to show that "racialism" in Japan cannot be transparently conflated with Western ideas of "racism." But then transparently conflating any such notion (e.g., culture, gender, paternalism, etc.) would be problematic. And where Yoshino would use this practical/semantic problematic to defend *nihonjinron* against the claim of "racism," his conclusion rests on the proposition that Japanese "racialism" is so intertwined with "culturalism" that no strong genetic determinism is implied.

The claims made in this video (and in other parts not show here) include the idea that Japan's ecology has created a unique society, which spontaneously (along with its religion—Shinto) developed through the use of rice cultivation, which was imported into Japan in pre-historic times. The notion of an unchanging cultural tradition that informs current society, and which, though the guidance of Shinto practice, provides a moral ground for living, is presented as a local (national) heritage which is at once historical and genetic.

The video produced by the Jinjahoncho to deflect



attempts by foreign growers to open Japan's internal rice market (a move that would save the Japanese consumer several hundred billion Yen every year; and cost the government-run food agency, and also farmers, as much) is a good example of *nihonjinron* from the 1980s.

“The Japanese mode of thinking and behaving is habitually associated with the ‘Japanese race’, itself an imaginary notion, in perceptions of Japanese identity. This perceived relationship itself, in turn, depends upon the ‘uni-racial assumption’ of respondents, according to which the racial homogeneity of the Japanese is unchanging.”
(Yoshino 1992, 120-121)

This conclusion fails to adequately theorize the cultural underpinnings of “racism” in the West, and it also fails to read the quotient of “racialized” meanings in the terminology (such as “homogeneity” which in Japanese carries a central uni-genetic meaning). To an extent greater than he allows, assumptions of race, and of blood and heritage may enter into the discourse even when overt arguments are not made on the basis of race. And so the racist elements of the *nihonjinron* discourse are perhaps more difficult to recognize and to counter than are the more overt elements of racism in the West.

The persistence of *nihonjinron* statements and their uses to the current day Japan is also of some concern (as is the persistence of racism, homophobia, and gender oppression in the West). This concern included Western scholars who continue to reify Japanese uniqueness in a variety of arenas, offering modern adjustments to Ruth Benedict's war-time¹ ethnography, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1974 [1946]).

van Wolferen makes reference to the practical uses of *nihonjinron* to defend economic policies in Japan that protect internal markets:

“Very little serious writing by Japanese on anything relating to their society is entirely free of *nihonjinron* influence. It is also amazing how much *nihonjinron* has crept into assessments by foreign authors. The possibility of coercion or indoctrination as formative factors of Japanese behaviour is not considered in the universe of *nihonjinron* imagery. And therein lies its propagandistic force. In the *nihonjinron* perspective, Japanese limit their actions, do not claim 'rights' and always obey those placed above them, not because they have no other choice, but because it comes naturally to them. Japanese are portrayed as if born with a special quality of brain that makes them want to suppress their individual selves.

It is striking how casually Japanese seem to accept that they are physically 'a race apart' from other peoples. I have heard officials explain to foreign businessmen that medicine manufactured by foreign firms must undergo special tests before being allowed into Japan because of the different construction of Japanese bodies. The former chairman of the association of agricultural co-operatives, Zenchu, Iwamochi Shizuma, once explained before an audience of foreign correspondents that since 'everyone knows that Japanese intestines are about one metre longer than those of foreigners' we should all understand that American beef was not suitable for digestion by Japanese. Visiting Washington in December 1987, the chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party's agricultural policy research council, Hata Tsutomu, also spoke of longer Japanese digestive tracts that had difficulty in coping with red meat.

The great 'scientific proof' of Japanese uniqueness was supposed to have arrived with the famous studies of Dr Tsunoda Tadanobu, who discovered that Japanese brains are essentially different from Western brains or, indeed, the brains of most other people in the world. According to this

-
1. This work has the ethnographic distinction of being written without the author having ever visited its location. Benedict used interviews with Japanese interred in camps in the US to write this highly influential book.

researcher, Japanese hear insect sounds, temple bells, humming and snoring with the left half of the brain, whereas Westerners do so with the right half.

Dr Tsunoda implies that Japanese reasoning is different from that of other people because they use their two brain halves differently. His testing methods are highly suspect. My impression, based on an account by one of his foreign guinea-pigs, is that auto-suggestion plays an important role. Yet his books sell well in Japan, and his views have been officially credited to the extent of being introduced abroad by the semi-governmental Japan Foundation" (1990, 265).

That a shared history of isolation would create not only cultural differences, but biological ones as well is a central feature of nihonjinron. And this logic of sharing a common and unique history is also available to use against Japanese living in buraku areas who have been isolated from Japanese society, often for several hundred years. The suspicion that these persons now have a divergent biology—that they no longer share the full genetic heritage of the "We Japanese" gives this discrimination its racist undertones. "Lots of people consider burakumin to be different," a Kyoto University student once told me, "for example, there is a belief that their blood is thicker than that of Japanese." Just how widespread such racializing notions are, I cannot say.

On a recent (1994) April fools day, *Kansai Timeout*, an English language, leisure magazine in the Kyoto/Osaka region, printed a phony story which claimed that doctors in Japan had just determined that the reason why Japanese had difficulty learning English was that their mouth was shaped differently from Westerners. A simple surgical procedure can alter the shape of the mouth, and those Japanese who have had this procedure suddenly speak fluently with ease. The magazine's editors were inundated with requests for

more information, and had to circulate a disclaimer in the next issue. For the editors, the very idea that Japanese mouths were different, that this difference might affect English language learning, was an obvious joke (after all, millions of persons with Japanese ancestry who grow up in other countries speak other languages without the need for surgical intervention). But for many in Japan, the joke overlapped with a discourse that they had been hearing for decades, a discourse that is used by government and industry and in the schools, and in the home.

“The objective homogenizing of group or class *habitus* that results from homogeneity of conditions of existence is what enables practices to be objectively harmonized without any calculation or conscious reference to a norm and mutually adjusted in the absence of any direct interaction or, *a fortiori*, explicit co-ordination. The interaction itself owes its form to the objective structures that have produced the dispositions of the interacting agents, which continue to assign them their relative positions in the interaction and elsewhere.”
(Bourdieu 1990, 58)

Despite the failings of Yoshino's (1990) theorizing about racism in *nihonjinron*, he is certainly correct to point out that, unlike racism, “Japaneseness” has performative aspects. In this way it is much more like Bourdieu's *habitus*. While the entry condition to appropriate this *habitus* is determined by heredity, continuing sincerity in observing its behavioral constraints is also expected. Those who venture outside its social institutions (e.g., the national school system) and its physical boundaries (e.g., living abroad, or even independent travel abroad) invite suspicion about their desire to remain truly Japanese. The sedimenting outcome of a shared *habitus* is furthered when sharing becomes obligatory, and the “harmony” that is so often associated with groups in Japan is far less a harmonic congruence of differences (a true harmony) than it is the repetition of similarity, i.e., uniformity. When everyone sings the same melody line, it is a simple matter to see, and to mark, anyone who misses

a note.

At Ritsumeikan University, where I had part-time employment, a semester abroad program sent those with a desire to do so (and with advanced English skills) to Vancouver, Canada. But returning students were many times so disoriented (or dis-Oriented) from this experience that special counsellors had to be hired to help them deal with: a) isolation and the loss of connection to groups and friends they had left (for 4 months); and b) various, new dissatisfactions with school life in and out of the classroom. The experience abroad had, in fact, achieved more than it advertised, it had dis-located students from a lifetime of pursuing “Japaneseness.” But it also left them strangers in their own backyard.

Omni-present

18

The omni-present is the present we find on the street. Not the “anthropological present” of narrative ethnography. It is the present that determined, as much as anything, the future. It is the present where the openings of culture are found.

Overcoding, Coding, and Recoding

19

“...The social axiomatic of modern societies is caught between two poles and is constantly oscillating from one pole to the other. Born of decoding and deterritorialization, on the ruins of the despotic machine, these societies are caught between the Urstaat that they would like to resuscitate as an overcoding and reterritorializing unity, and the unfettered flows that carry them toward an absolute threshold. They recode with all their might, with world-wide dictatorship, local dictators, and an all-powerful police, while decoding—or allowing the decoding of—the fluent quantities of their capital and their populations. They are torn in two directions: archaism and futurism, nearchaism and ex-futurism. paranoia and schizophrenia. They vacillate between two poles: the paranoiac despotic sign, the sign-signifier of the despot that they try to revive as a unit of code; and the sign-figure of the schizo as a unit of decoded flux, a schiz, a point-sign or flow-break. They try to hold on to the one, but they pour or flow out through the other. They are continually behind or ahead of themselves” (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 260).

Notions of “coding,” “recoding,” and “overcoding” refer to applications of meanings/values to bodies and practices, these meanings/values having been acquired from discursive/practical fields many of which are maintained (the meanings and the fields) by institutions such as religions, schools, corporations, hospitals (and other expert systems) and governmental organizations. The terms themselves are derived from the use of these in the work of Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and Michel Foucault, but with an added attention to semantic theory, particularly that of George Lakoff. And so, the linguistic vehicles for these practices are figures of speech that overlay and underlie the myths that claim to be figureless, i.e., that proclaim meaning as natural (as Barthes noted). These practices are at work within and between discursive/practical fields, and to a greater extent are now proving the inadequacies of attempts to limit knowledge to specific fields. This brings in a forth notion: “Decoding,” which dissolves the boundary conditions that allow the other three notions to operate as levers between knowledge and power.

“Coding” refers to the action of applying a meaning/value *within* a discursive field. The discursification of knowledge within a field of science results in this knowledge being coded into practices (grant applications, career opportunities, etc.). Coding is the output of discursification as this informs identity and

practice.

Coding is an ongoing process, a machine that doesn't work once and then stop. Coding is what reproduces a discourse over time. And because this must be done with some care, the institutions with an interest and position within the discourse develop strategies and procedures to ensure that the coding neither stops, nor is recoded by others. Overcoding (see below) is one strategy that maintains a code by applying this to other codes, and so reducing the potential for alternative narratives. But within the discourse itself, the code is also strengthened, say, by a consistent application of this to all practices and places, and/or through a monovocal logic that resists internal counter-narratives. The result is a singular code with universal application to a space: e.g., the national space and narrative.

In these ways, the code becomes "self-authorizing." Institutions and persons receive it, but claim to not have authored it, and the question of authorship does not arise. "Scientific knowledge" has this "found" quality: it is discovered, not authored. Even so, scientific institutions spend time and resources to code existing knowledge in ways that resist appropriation by others (e.g., through access to funding, and by authorized texts [journals]).

"Recoding" occurs when one code is replaced with another. Recoding occurs with some regularity in discursive fields where new knowledge is highly valued. Because most of discursive fields have preexist-

ing conditions, much of what occurs as a change within them today is the result of recoding. Recoding occurs for several reasons, such as the discovery (or the imagination) of new knowledge or the success of alternative sources of authority within the field.

“Recoding” is the central tactic that marginal groups have to break the chain of codes that marginalize them. However, recoding must take place within the discursive field, and so access to this field is central concern, and exclusion the main strategy of domination. And so, the job of recoding is a multipart operation. Recoding is also the tactic that individuals use to resist the identities that have acquired their own imaginations. The recoding of the individual by the individual is one of the primary moments of the recoding of a discursive space by a counter-discourse group.

“Overcoding” is the practice of applying meaning/values from one discursive field to others. This is where power connects with knowledge to create codes that dominate not only their own discursive field, but others as well. This may occur through active institutional programs which insist that their scope is universal. Religions, such as Christianity or Islam, may be promoted in this fashion, overcoding discourses of diseases, of sexuality, of economies, and political behaviors, etc.

But meanings/values may also spread as individuals apply these without reflexive attention to their useful limits. Overcoding happens at the reception

side as well. Meanings/value judgements about sexual gender, for example, may be applied to circumstances where this notion, upon reflection, is at best an arbitrary feature. But then a history of overcoding¹ configures the space within other discourses so that this imaginable arbitrariness becomes masked by everyday practices that avoid just this imagination.

When sexual gender becomes a logic that is applied to employment, to social roles (say, in public spaces), or to a role within the home, then this overcoding of these practices by the discourse of gender can acquire a history of use that obscures the fact of overcoding. In the same way, the coding of practices and spaces as “national” practices and spaces colors these practices and spaces in a way that, over time, avoids attracting attention to the fact that this meaning/value was overcoded from a more limited discursive field.

Overcoding also occurs when a discursive field acquires meanings/values from external sources, thereby enlarging its purview. Here again, “national” narratives that acquire (or reinvent) pre-historic, mythic narratives overcode these as national narra-

-
1. I once got into an argument with an economic anthropologist who insisted that women did not have the upper-body strength to handle a plow, and so could not receive the direct benefits of this agricultural innovation. Having seen women carry 50 kilo sacks of coal up steep mountain trails in India, I was not impressed with this claim. Rather, I argued that there were other reasons for the sequestering of women into domestic spaces, which then led to many women not developing the upper-body strength that they might use should they find themselves, unexpectedly, in a situation of having to control an ox and plow. But give them opportunities to strengthen their bodies as children, and nearly all women could do this task.

tives. National narratives may acquire local myths and recode these as national narratives. Anderson's (1983) description of nation-state formation is centrally a process of recoding and overcoding leading to a naturalized, geographically uniform narrative that is continually coded by the state.

Public Body

20

“I call it a scholastic bias—a bias to which we are all exposed: we think that the problems can be solved only through consciousness. And that is where I differ from Foucault, and would draw a contrast with his important concept of discipline. Discipline, in French at least, points towards something external. Discipline is enforced by a military strength; you must obey. In a sense it is easy to revolt against discipline because you are conscious of it. In fact, I think that in terms of symbolic domination, resistance is more difficult, since it is something you absorb like air, something you don't feel pressured by; it is everywhere and nowhere, and to escape from that is very difficult. Workers are under this kind of invisible pressure, and so they become much more adapted to their situation than we can believe. To change this is very difficult, especially today. With the mechanism of symbolic violence, domination tends to take the form of a more effective, and in this sense more brutal, means of oppression. Consider contemporary societies in which the violence has become soft, invisible” (Bourdieu and Eagleton 1992, 115).

The intersection of bodies and public spaces opens a host of potential outcomes. And so much of “history” has been performed and accomplished, determined and demolished (through warfare) in this intersection that it is surprising how little attention has been paid to the calculus of the public body.

In part, I would guess that a legacy of “private” elites (royalties and sacerdotal hierarchies) throughout much of recorded history and in many places where these records were kept has created an imbalance in the reporting of “where the action is”, while also delegitimizing the actions of bodies in public. That is, the above imbalance is both an artifact from and desired outcome of the externality of the rulers to an (not fully determined) “public” in both space and body. (So, we cannot simply “shoot” the historian.) And in part, I would also suggest that the more recent, although increasingly global, rise of democratizing institutions has brought increasing legitimacy to actions and bodies in public. This means that we need to be more careful to record public actions, and more rigorous in determining how to best study bodies and public spaces.

Anthony Giddens is one of the recent social scientists who has granted “place” its own place in his work. And while his writings still lack an attention to specific spatial, ethnographic locales, they present locale as a necessary feature of action. For example,

take the following:

“The zoning of the body seems in most—perhaps all—societies to be associated with the zoning of activities in time-space in the trajectories of the day within locales. Thus eating usually occurs in definite settings at definite times, and is usually also ‘public’ in the restricted sense of involving gatherings of family members, friends, colleagues and so on. The dressing or adornment of the body may not be universally regarded as ‘private’, but at least in most cultures seems to be so regarded. In spite of Elias’s claims that sexual activity was carried on in an unconcealed way in medieval Europe, genital sexuality seems everywhere to be zoned as a back-region phenomenon—with many variations, of course, in intersecting modes of public and private behaviour” (1985, 280).

Giddens’s “zones,” like Goffman’s “frames,” point to a multiplicity of “bodies” determined by—and also determining¹—appropriate actions in specific places and times. But where spaces determine actions, the questions are begged of how this comes about? How are these actions taught? Why are they accepted as appropriate? Why is this idea of appropriateness unitary?

[body schooling](#) accounts for the training of the body and the recognition of public spaces as having a single mode of appropriate actions. Body schooling, in its aggregate effects, contributes to the sense of “normalcy” we encounter—as if it were something of the place—when we venture onto the street. But normalcy is not cheap. This expense is counted both by the amount of coding required to normalize bodies and street-scapes, and by the increased effort required to counter or resist this coding—as feminists have discovered in their struggle to rearticulate the

-
1. Curiously, “public” places are usually seen as places where the former happens, where the place determines appropriate activities. Spaces where an individual’s actions can signal which “body” is appropriate are thereby marked as “private.” I say this is curious, because there might also a presumption of freedom of action in public space. It would not be bizarre to suggest that a public space should be open to multiple frames.

masculine-coded public workplace as a multigendered space.

The public body is the body we take into the street. It is the bodies we meet there. It is the body that apologizes without thinking for brushing against another on the sidewalk. And, as I mentioned above, it is the body, the presence of which, more than any other feature, that makes a place public.

This last notion is rather foreign to our awareness of our own presence in public. The discursively available part of the public body (our own body) tells us about the “rules of the road.” We can discuss, for example, eye contact, nudity, defecation, queuing for the bus, staring and being stared at, whistling, talking to oneself, picking one’s nose, using a public water fountain, and a hundred other topics where prohibitions and generally expected behaviors are known and knowable.

Why is it that we do all of these things without giving much attention to them? And why do we pay so much attention when others violate these behavioral expectations? Garfinkel’s (1984) ethnomethodology attempted to answer some of these questions for specific practices. But in general we can point to the construction of public space as a pre-determined “game” arena where we enter as players by assuming an orthopostural (SEE: [orthoposture](#)) attitude that disattends to the construction of the space. We have learned how to play, and what to do to repair our own mistakes. But how is this game managed? And

by whom? for what purpose?

“As an example of proprieties of the body we might consider table manners. The topic is addressed in explicit detail in a famous treatise by Erasmus, his *De civilitate morum puerilium* of 1530. This book specifies maxims of conduct with respect to what Erasmus calls 'outward bodily propriety'; such 'outward' proprieties, of bodily carriage, gesture, posture, facial expression and dress, being seen as the expression of the 'inner' person. The impact of the treatise was immediate, wide and lasting. In the first six years after its publication it was reprinted more than thirty times; it was rapidly translated into English, French and German; and in all there were more than 130 editions, thirteen of these as late as the eighteenth century. The questions addressed in this treatise... gave new precision and centrality to the concept of civilitas.... Since decorum and restraint were essential attributes of civility, it was natural that crucial importance should be assigned to the cultured control of appetite in the most literal sense, and hence to table manners”
(Connerton 1989, 82).

This is a question of some enlarged interest of late, as several think-tanks have been recently set up to ponder the “collapse of civility” in the United States. While there may be some argument about presuming that the US federal government has an obligation to reproduce the inputs to notions of public propriety (through school curriculae and other media), there is a more general agreement that this goal needs to be somehow accomplished (in families, through churches, etc.). In other nation-states, such as Japan, the lead role of government in this task is not questioned. And so the state makes its own claims over the construction of the normalized public body.

Reflexivity

21

“The reflexive monitoring of action in situations of co-presence is the main anchoring feature of social integration...”
(Giddens 1984, 191).

It would be difficult to understate the importance this word, in various uses, has acquired in the social sciences today. It is absolutely central to the debate about the conditions of late/post modernity: about modernity as an increasingly reflexive order wherein the “loops” of reflexive knowledge range from internal, personal “self-awareness,” to interpersonal, familial and social relationships, to global corporations that target trends in local markets by tracking innovations and reflexively appropriating these into new products. Reflexivity is the outcome and the input into the global knowledge industry. And it is the quiet voice of “self-help” that resists the influence of expert systems, reappropriating expert knowledge into the personal life project.

At one level, reflexivity describes the mirror with which the individual surveys their own [ken](#). This feedback loop allows the individual to assess the condition of their self knowledge, and compare this to their knowledge about others (and about the ken of others). This mirror is generally kept at arms length, and is one of the background features of life that does not rise into the field of conscious attention. In traditional life-styles, self monitoring was actually discouraged because the decisions (over marriage, career, and residence) were made by others (parents, clan leaders, etc.). However there have always been times when the mirror is held close and what it reveals becomes

of primary interest. At this time the mirror it itself open to inspection. Let me call this a moment of “hyper-reflection”. This moment used to be most common as the moment when a doubt arose about the circumstances of a personal interaction (for example when five aces appear at the same hand of poker). At the time of hyper-reflection the edge of one’s ken becomes known. And this knowledge is what allows the ken to grow.

The enlightenment promised a release from the mystifications of religion and cultural dogma; it proposed a new “rational” social order. This rationalization, as a project of modernity, has been shown to be both incomplete and, at times, inappropriate. “Modernity,” as an empirical accomplishment, is somewhere ahead of us still—fully as much as it is behind us—but this will not look at all like what its 19th century prognosticators foretold.

“Late modernity,” which describes our current situation, is seen as a time when an increase in the available information and the reflexive application of this information is pushing rationalization to its limit in certain arenas: notably in lifestyle planning, and in institutional management. As these feed-back loops become built into institutional plans and personal interactions the outcomes of these plans and interactions become destabilized, and so, unpredictable. The end of prediction is the beginning of late modernity. But where every consequence may become unknowable in advance, they are not all unintended.

Increased reflexivity is itself a desired consequence of the increase of knowledge, and in increased, democratic availability of this. Modernization, which for decades has been based upon an instrumental logic—industrialization, efficiency, control, prediction—proceeds, and even accelerates, but it must also coexist with reflexivation, as a social and institutional feature of late modernity.

For Giddens, reflexivity begins with the availability of individuals and institutions to reflect upon their own circumstances.

The point is that reflection on social processes (theories, and observations about them) continually enter into, become disentangled with and re-enter the universe of events they describe. No such phenomenon exists in the world of inanimate nature, which is indifferent to whatever human beings might claim to know about it...It is impossible to have a modern sovereign state that does not incorporate a discursively articulated theory of the modern sovereign state. The marked tendency towards an expansion of political 'self-monitoring' on the part of the state is characteristic of modernity in the West in general, creating the social and intellectual climate from which specialized, 'professional' discourses of social sciences have developed but also both express and foster. (Giddens 1984, xxxiii)

Of course, the academy is (or should be) a fountainhead of such reflection. Giddens goes on to note that one of the distinguishing circumstances of modernity is the active incorporation of reflection/correction/reform/response into institutional, interpersonal, and individual actions.

For sociology, itself an engine of reflection, to ignore the actual and potential practices of reflection within social organizations, is to make a fundamental error which reduces the grasp that its theories hold on empirical practices. Sociology and social anthropology have so far failed to account for reflexivity in

society. This inattention to reflexivity as a core organizing feature of modern institutions and lifeworlds is the central critique that Giddens applies to the works of earlier theorists (Marx, Durkheim, and Weber, for example). And the need to account for ever more locations where reflexive practices now occur means that a new sociology must be built, one that has the scope of Weber, and the critical focus of Marx, but one that is also constructed through and for a new account of discourses and practices as these are reflexively organized.

Symbolic Violence

22

The notion of “symbolic violence” as I will use this comes from the work of Pierre Bourdieu, this notion represents an extension of the term “violence” to include various modes of social/cultural domination. Symbolic violence is the unnoticed (partly unconscious) domination that every-day social habits maintain over the conscious subject. Symbolic violence should not be confused with “media violence.” It is not the acts of murder and mayhem portrayed on television. Actually, symbolic violence is not normally even “recognized” as violence. For example, gender domination, and gender itself (say, in the construction of sexuality) represents one prominent arena of symbolic violence.

Institutionalized modes of “discipline and punishment,” as Foucault noted (in his work of the same name (1979)), have also acquired a positive social value, without much further thought about the violence involved in these practices. Indeed, Bourdieu tells us that such “soft” violence has been mostly overlooked in social theories, and is subject to “misrecognition” in everyday life. Misrecognition allows symbolic violence to hide itself within dominant discourses as these are spoken, and within other forms of violence as these are applied to bodies.

We can further locate symbolic violence as *those forms of soft violence which, through their misrecognition, are applied by the subject to the subject*. Misrecognition is integral to the effects of symbolic violence, which opens this up to precisely the forms of therapy avail-

able in neighborhood festivals.

Much of the symbolic violence that Bourdieu is describing is “purely” psychological in the sense that it is internal to the self-consciousness of the individual, most often without tell-tale, observable features; to counter this, some form of individual psychotherapy is required. Psychotherapy replaces the misrecognition of this form of symbolic violence with reflexive discourses that allow the individual access to their self-consciousness.

However, some forms of symbolic violence operate upon the body, and these articulate a (misrecognized) relationship between the individual’s self-consciousness and their body. The body becomes the site of this violence. These embodied violences articulate the non-discursively available portion of social identity, which is reproduced simultaneously within the self-consciousness and also as a social practice, that is, as a shared *habitus*.

From one vantage point you can call a theory a type of concept. A concept-as-tool. You use it to articulate something formerly inarticulate. You use it to unscrew the inscrutable (as Ken Kesey would remind us). You use it up when you use it; once it has fully articulated its object it has no other conceptual use. For the object acquires the theoroid while being articulated. The inscrutable knows it's been (un)screwed. The concept is first set loose as a signifier, but then it is captured by its signified.

What type of concept is a theory? Well, all concepts in Deleuze's sense. Gilles Deleuze (1994 [1991]) unscrambled the omelete that is modern philosophy and renamed philosophical concepts as "centers of vibrations, each in itself and everyone in relation to all the others" (23). Concepts do not cohere, they are not building blocks in some greater construction, they are not a part of a greater philosophy; they constitute philosophy through their multiplicity. They are each a knife-edged bridge between what is and is not discursive. And they stay sharp by being replaced, not adored. Deleuze notes that concepts are "...like multiple waves, rising and falling..., ...the archipelago, ... a spinal column not a skull, ... concrete assemblages, like the configurations of a machine, ... Concepts are events, ... [they] pave, occupy, or populate..." (ibid 36). A theory is a concept that is directed at a practice in a place.

In contrast to “hyperreality” in which “reality” and its (unreal) image compete in a struggle that reality ultimately loses, areality is a state in which reality and its images coexist without struggle, but also without a default preference for “reality.” Arealty exists, for example, when an NHK documentary team goes to Nepal and then films a disaster that has been staged, without considering that this might be a problem. Arealty exists when a Japanese cabinet minister speculates that the “rape” of Nanking did not happen.

Arealty is the wedge between history as a recordable happening in a place, and the desire to forget what happened and record something else. It is the time between memory and forgetting. Because it can mix made-up images with found objects and practices, areality offers institutions a means to overlay a nasty and recalcitrant institutional history with images that deflect attention from this.

The presence of the real within areality masks the role of the non-real in this. The real becomes the alibi for other desires. The impact of collapse of the “bubble economy” in Japan has real consequences, but the concept of a “bubble” economy is itself an areal concept, as this takes away attention from the management responsibility of the Ministry of Finance (which had taken much of the credit for guiding Japan’s post-War economy until then). The bubble becomes something that happened to everyone, like a typhoon.

Another areal concept is “the Pacific War.” It is not just that most people in Kyoto talk about “the Pacific War” instead of “World War II,” but rather how they talk about this, as though it was another natural disaster that swept across Japan and then ended. “After the Pacific War ended,” they say, except for Resident Koreans, who might prefer, “after Japan was defeated in the last War.”

Arealty happens mostly in a passive voice. It is useful in describing circumstances that might otherwise reveal institutional involvement. It often describes a reality that is beyond intervention. In Kyoto, burakus exist in an areal haze of nationally funded remedial programs, and official inattention, and covert discrimination. What is real is the fact that little happens to change the stigma that keeps burakudwelling persons trapped inside their neighborhoods.

A civil democracy is realized through actions taken by its citizenry. The use of the street for demonstrations of civic belonging and collective celebration are not merely windowdressing for the mass media. Simply consuming the spectacles of the state is not nearly sufficient to reproduce the ground for a democratic nation, and this ground—spatially and discursively—must be reproduced regularly. In particular, there must be room for the collective voice of crowds.

Places and crowds fill the histories¹ of democratic revolutions. Civic festivals are the reenactments of these founding moments, and civil societies are their offspring. Because there were crowds that used violence to protest social and economic circumstances, crowd control became another feature of the modern street. And again, this constraint was said to be aimed at others, at anarchists and gangs, but its effect was to preempt the crowd event as a regular forum for civic participation. By and large we can today track the disappearance of crowds on the streets of our cities. But then what are the effects of this absence on democracy and on the public sphere?

1. From Boston to Philadelphia, to Paris and London, to Moscow and Warsaw and Tienanmen in Beijing: the places where the public acquires its legitimate claim to its self rule are places defined by crowds and by protests and festivals. Note here the absence of such events in Japan.

playing in public

I submit that violence or its threat is not a feature of the agency of what I call a “civil crowd.” The notion that a civil crowd has agency, that its formation can open up space where a difference is produced, has been almost entirely subsumed by the metaphor of the crowd-as-mob, and its agency reduced to anarchy. Bill Buford describes in fine detail the riots of British soccer fans, who created their own game, one that involved glass breaking, car turning, head busting, and police confrontation. There is, however, no civic intention in this, nothing inherent in the violence that makes the resulting rampage somehow work toward any external goal. Rabbleroising does carry its own history, but this history is not sufficient to explain the potential for civic action by a crowd. As Thompson (1993, 65-66) notes, “...the “to-fro lackeying” of the crowd itself has a history of great antiquity: the “primitive rebels” of one age might be seen, from an earlier age, to be the decadent inheritors of yet more primitive ancestors.

Too much historical hindsight distracts us from seeing the crowd as it was, *sui generis*, with its own objectives, operating within the complex and delicate polarity of forces of its own context.” In fact, the atavistic “mob effect” that Gustave Le Bon (1960 [1895]) discursified 101 years ago, is only parasitic on this agency.

What the civil crowd represents at its potential limit is a display of individual expression that is unconstrained, and therefore uncontrolled, and thus, in a

certain fashion, genuine. There is a moment when this crowd follows no leader, and, should it speak in a single voice, an actual consensus appears that is neither prefigured, nor subservient to an external interest. But consensus is not the goal of such a crowd. For it is a crowd of strangers, in that peculiar sense where all citizens must be strangers in public to join in the public sphere. And where this crowd of strangers finds consensual agreement may be a point less valuable than where the crowd voices a plurality of desires.

Whatever the content, the source of the crowd's inherent *democracy* is the performance in public of individual expression. The latter, in turn, legitimates the actions of a civil crowd in the public sphere (cf. McClelland 1989, and Canetti 1962). More than public opinion polls, which respond to questions posed by pollsters, and more than voting, which offers only a choice between preselected alternatives, the civil crowd opens up to dialogical and multivocal interaction. Here is where the melodies of democracy become polyphonic.

What I wish to discuss is how, and, more specifically, *where* civil crowds take place. For a civil crowd is a spatial performance that is not possible apart from public places that situate its practice. While the media now broadcasts images of this place to other places, such a crowd cannot be generated by the media itself. Most crowds are not civil crowds, although this notion is neither exclusive nor singular in its defini-

tion. The ability of a civil crowd to reach a plateau of genuine expression depends upon a complex series of moments; it is a game that must be played with some skill. And so this process is liable to various types of failure. For example, the internal dynamics of the process will collapse into an orchestrated simulation of a civil crowd, if the participants allow their expressions to be scripted. This is a common feature of political demonstrations where leaders with bullhorns prompt a chant from the crowd. Conversely, attempts at orchestration may also fail. Nicolae Ceaucescu's final orchestrated demonstration is an example of a civil crowd developing out from a scripted event. The force of this chorus of genuine expression sent him scampering for his helicopter.

And, though a civil crowd can come about without planning¹, I want to look at how one of these can be planned. How does one organize an event that cannot be led, in which individuals feel free to display a genuine expression of their desires? The claim that an expression is genuine is what needs to be examined here. Quite obviously, "genuine" here is a scalar notion. Its more-or-less quality is tied to the location of the expression in question. Which is to say that the more an expression is produced by the individual qua individual, the more this can be called genuine to the individual. The civil crowd is an aggregate of individual

1. Tienanmen is an example of a civil crowd fashioning a collective agency out of a wellspring of genuine expression. Its failure, was, in large part, due to the failure of bringing this expression into a realm of planning and into a coherent voice.

voices.

There is a whole literature on hegemony that describes how the expressions of individuals in modernity are externally managed, other comments on modernity detail the deskilling of individuals in various modes of experience and knowledge, and so we have to be careful in assigning the site of production to an individual, and we must ask what skills are required to author a “genuine” expression. These twin conditions of late modernity—the surrender of individual authority, and the bodily deskilling in expressive practices—are structural impediments to the civil crowd as a site of democracy. It may be that we are today “crowd-impaired” to an extent that it is difficult even to imagine the potential agency of a civil crowd. But it is not impossible.

getting private in public

I have constructed a theoretical scaffold for the notion of the civil crowd in public space. This theory is based upon the work of several social theorists, with some major enhancements, mostly accomplished by assembling scattered parts. There are times, I argue, when “private”¹ spaces open up within a public space. Festivals are typically times when this transformation can, and indeed, must take place. Step outside on a certain evening in February in the French Quarter in New Orleans, and normalcy is conspicuously

1. A private space “in public” is no longer “private”, but then neither is the public space during this event “public.” These terms show their limits under these conditions. It is this transformation that opens up a public space to a civil crowd.

absent, and in its place are usually private expressions of joy and sexuality. But Mardi Gras, like many festivals, is a civil crowd that refuses to take itself seriously, and so its range of expression is quite limited.

This takes me to my final point. A civil crowd is a *serious private party on a public street*. It is private because it opens up to a form of intimacy that denies the visual monitoring of the street. Individuals in the crowd dis-attend to the “publicness” of the street, and actively transform the space into an ad-hoc private realm.

Now, the crowd is a “party” because it uses embodied skills to carry the individual to a condition where emotional self-monitoring is no longer possible. This decontrol of emotions is what actually warrants the genuineness of the expressive display, and the (above) disattention to visual monitoring of expression is what promotes the sharing¹ of this content. The civil crowd is a festival rehearsing its own performance—but where the rehearsal is the performance.

Finally, the crowd is *serious* in that its expressions are representational of the participants' desires and perspectives. A type of “sur-rationality” emerges that

1. The word “share” here is important, as the means to arrive at this condition is mutually created. The participants rely upon each other's willingness to proceed to a plateau of collective intimacy. Intimacy is always shared (otherwise it is just another confessional episode of modernity), and in this sharing an active trust is formed. Like combat, or brain surgery, or baseball, the civil crowd makes a team out of individual participants, and it manufactures memories that persist. And, like, baseball or brain surgery, practice hopefully does make perfect.

is both hyper-reflexive and morally potent. A localized conviction congeals on the spot, binding words to emotions to bodies and to the crowd as a group. Such an event probably comes as close as one gets to Habermas's ideal speech situation. The work of the civil crowd can now begin.

Giddens (1994: 127) talks of "active trust" as a formative feature of a "dialogic democracy."¹ The crowd creates active trust between individual participants, beginning a public conversation that has long-term effects. To take the street away from the cops and the shops and the government for an hour or two decentres, if only momentarily, positions of influence, and brings new voices into the center stage.

The possession of the public square by a crowd establishes a claim to ownership, and to belonging in public. The voices emerging from (or spoken to) the crowd enter into a public-sphere arena of discussion and dissent. The crowd demands to be heard, and any democratic state that does not listen does not deserve the title.

Here I am also promoting the idea that a festival—should the process of organization and perfor-

-
1. During the course of the festival any number of expressions are possible, as these are produced dialogically and without scripting. Individual comments reverberate and are inverted, parodied, and reflect the plurality of individuals within the event. Bodies and words play an ensemble of discursive sonatas, the content of which is never predictable. But the content is also not what is foremost in the event. Here is where silence also speaks, as it is not, for a moment, the product of terror. The ability of a state to allow the festival in its streets brings with it a measure of legitimacy, as the crowd's voices and demeanor will comment on the state. The availability of civil protest also legitimates the state, as this marks its openings to democratic reappraisal.

mance of this be done with attention to the limits of scripting and an open invitation to its membership—is a model example of a civil crowd.