

UNSETTLING JAPANESE CANADIANNES IN VANCOUVER: NEGOTIATED AND
HYBRIDIZED IDENTITY

by

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the identity construction processes and negotiations of members of the Japanese Canadian community in the Greater Vancouver area. In particular, it attempts to answer the following research questions: How do members of the Japanese Canadian community in the Greater Vancouver area construct, negotiate, and hybridize their identity in relation to their respective situations, such as people around them, their community, and the wider society? In particular, how do membership of the community and activities help construct their identity? This research looks at the concept of identity as relational, an on-going internal and external negotiation process, and hybrid based on the arguments of Bhabha (1990, 1994), Fuss (1995), Hall (1990), Nagel (1994) and Weeks (1990). This study also seeks to understand the informants' relationships with their environment, employing the argument of Lowe (2004) and Spivak (1987) as well as the concept of the "third space" proposed by Bhabha (1990). Based on these perspectives, this research collected the identity construction stories from several Japanese Canadian community members through interviews. With a purposeful sampling strategy, the informants were selected based on their interests and engagement in the cultural and social side of the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver, and the variety of their ethnic background—in other words, the different ways of being to some extent Japanese. Based on the informants' stories, this research argues that 1) the informants' identities are hybrid and constructed through diverse processes and negotiations, including what they call themselves; 2) the informants and communities put efforts toward the deconstruction of "dominant" and "minority" dichotomous positioning with the combination of a sharing-oriented process and strategic essentialism; 3) community space plays a role as a third space for its members. From these arguments, this research also questions the concept of ethnicity and Canada's multicultural

policy based on ethnicity since there are many people and phenomena that cannot be explained with this concept.

PREFACE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NJCCA	National Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association
JCCP	Japanese Canadian Central Project
NAJC	National Association of Japanese Canadians
NRC	National Redress Committee
JET	Japan Exchange and Teaching
DTES	Downtown Eastside
PSFS	Powell Street Festival Society
PSF	Powell Street Festival
JMNC	Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my grandmother, to Nikkei community in the world, and to this mask created by Yayoi Hirano and used in her art project, *Identity – ancestral memory*.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

People want to name what they encounter. Naming something allows us to figure out what it is and what it is not. Of course names are tentative entities and should be carefully examined for what they include and exclude as the things named would change in different time and spaces. However, it seems that once names have been assigned, we often stop thinking about this tentative nature of names and how they include certain things and exclude others.

Naming is like taking photos of a party. There are lots of people at a party, and some people are coming and others are leaving. Different dishes are offered and eaten. Different topics are discussed, and some people laugh and others may get mad. The music is constantly changing. However, no matter how many photos one tries to take, the photos can never capture the whole dynamics of the party and the many invisible elements, such as topics of discussion, tones of voice and music. Nevertheless, those who did not attend the party would learn about the party from the photos. The photos give people quite limited information, but since the photos are very handy and vivid, people tend to be satisfied only with the photos and forget that there must have been other things that the camera did not capture. People forget that they are looking at representations of the party and not the party itself.

Photos become the definition of the party. Faced with the photos, people rarely analyse who took them, with what perspective and intention, and what kind of information the photos actually provide and withhold. They just see photos and feel that they understand what happened that night without much analysis.

The party of Japanese-ness has been photographed a lot and the photo album has been constructed in a certain way. Party celebrities like *sushi* and Hello Kitty have received more

attention than other less famous guests such as the stories of village elders. Moreover, no matter what the photos capture, those photos never show the dynamics of the party, like new topics being introduced, new people joining in, etc.

The party of Canadian-ness is much the same. More visible minorities and people of mixed race are coming to the party, but the photographer is somehow not capturing them, not letting them into his framework. It appears that the photographer tends to capture white people or some typical images of ethnic groups and their foods and costumes.

Attending this party as an international student from Japan, I would like to see the dynamics created in the Japanese Canadian community in Vancouver, and suggest how the photographer should capture the party, whether he should use different cameras, and how people should read what the photographer shows: and since no matter what kind of camera the photographer uses, it is impossible to capture everything that is happening at the party, people should also be educated in terms of how to read the images shot by the photographer.

1.2. Research question

My research attempts to understand the identity construction and negotiation of members of the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver through their community. More specifically, my research seeks to answer the following questions: How do members of the Japanese Canadian community in the Greater Vancouver area construct, negotiate, and hybridize their identity in relation to their respective situations, such as people around them, their community, and the wider society? In particular, how does being a member of the community and actively participating in community organizations influence their identity construction? Through these questions, my research attempts to understand the multiplicity of Japanese Canadian identity and considers the limitations and possibilities of ethnicity as a concept.

1.3. Significance

The Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver is one of the best places to examine the identity construction of members of ethnic groups as well as the relationship among these members, and wider society. This is because there are various phenomena related to ethnicity at play in the Japanese Canadian community. For instance, there are many groups of people who are creating their own original Japanese Canadian culture, such as *taiko* groups, which stands in contrast to the so called “Japanese culture” (Izumi, 2001) in Japan. Japanese Canadians in Vancouver community are heterogeneous in several ways (Asai, 1995; Izumi, 2001; Makabe, 1998), which calls into question the homogeneous label implied by “Japanese Canadians.”

This study will begin to explore Japanese Canadian identity construction processes in relation to their community in Greater Vancouver. It will analyze the relationship between Japanese Canadian identity construction processes at play in their community and how these communities help to shape their member’s sense of identity as they negotiate and interact with dominant Canadian society. This study will also examine the particular ways in which some Japanese Canadians are trying to deconstruct the binary relationships of “dominant” and “minority.” This is an important process to understand since any attempt to discard such dichotomies is necessary if there is to ever truly be a an equal society for ‘all’ people. Examining how one ethnic group in Greater Vancouver is dealing with this issue could also provide some suggestions for other communities and cultures who wish to work toward building a better society in the world.

This study will attempt to articulate the limitations of ‘ethnicity’ as a concept so Canadian society can begin to develop in a way that is more inclusive and fair to the multiplicity of individuals and cultures that comprise it. This issue is very important to consider because, as Thompson and Nakagawa (2006) says, Canadian multiculturalism today is not designed for those complex and changing situations of race, ethnicity, and culture, and excludes people with hybrid

and multiple identities. This situation should be changed as all Canadians should be recognized, treated equally, respected, define who they are as a starting point for their identity negotiation.

This research can also serve as a counter-narrative as it highlights the current post-ethnicity movement through the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver. Moreover, this research aims to understand how people of a minority group struggle to exist and try to create a space within the unequal power relations with the dominant culture. Thus, this research, with the stories of the Japanese Canadian community, can empower those minorities who are not represented in today's Canadian society and their value systems that are not respected by dominant systems.

1.4. Outline of thesis

Chapter 1 describes the purpose and significance of this research and its research question. Chapter 2 studies the history of Japanese Canadians from the arrival of the Japanese in Canada to their contemporary situations. This chapter examines Japanese Canadians' struggles with Canadian racist attitudes toward them as well as their negotiation with and recovery from such treatment through redress. This chapter also touches on a brief description of the contemporary realities of Japanese Canadians. Chapter 3 discusses the argument around identity as process, negotiation, and hybridity as well as the relationship of dominant and minority groups. It also develops the theoretical framework for the research. Chapter 4 explains the methodology and research process. This research takes a qualitative approach specifically by employing semi-structured interviews. This research attempts to understand and represent the informants' identity construction processes in their lives as a whole, and the content analysis method is used to analyse the information provided. This chapter also explains the informants' demographic characteristics as well as the limitation of this research. Chapter 5 provides the findings and discussions of this research. It first introduces each interviewee's story about their life sense of

identity being Japanese in some way. Next, it provides an analysis (based on the theoretical framework found in Chapter three) of the informants' identity construction process and how they and their community influence each other to create a better space for them as well as negotiate with the wider society. Chapter 6 concludes this research, citing Canada's multicultural policy as one of the factors that creates struggles around identity through its "inaccurate" framing of society. On the other hand, this chapter also discuss multiculturalism as one of the means through which a better, more nuanced version of the identity of the subjects could be represented. This chapter also mentions possible future research directions that are required to develop and deepen minority studies.

CHAPTER 2

JAPANESE CANADIAN HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the historical background of Japanese Canadians from the first arrival of the immigrants from Japan to their cotemporary realities. Their history is replete with constant struggles that were the result of the racist attitudes of the Canadian government, (including the obvious racist policies created before the Second World War, the internment camps and dispossession during the War, “repatriation” after the War, and the movements towards the redress). After the redress, Japanese Canadians experiences the high rate of interracial marriage and the creation of the “model minority.” In doing so, this chapter looks closely at Japanese Canadian history and provides a background for today’s Japanese Canadian community.

2.2. Before the Second World War: Struggles to gain civil rights as Japanese Canadians

The first Japanese immigrants arrived in Canada in 1877. Since then, the British Columbia government practiced racial discrimination against Japanese Canadians, who were considered as the “Yellow Peril” (Miki, 2004, p. 20). Soon after the Japanese immigrants’ arrival, in 1895, the B.C. government disenfranchised “Japanese” people as well as other Asians and First Nations (p. 20). On September 7, 1907, a huge anti-Asian riot occurred led by the Asiatic Exclusion League that included many kinds of citizens, such as trade unions, religious groups, and veterans’ groups, and the government did little to quell this racial activity (p. 20).

Japanese Canadians, as well as “Chinamen, Hindus, or Indians” (Miki, 2004, p. 17), were disenfranchised, not granted the right to vote, and unable to be public officers or professional workers, such as lawyers. Japanese Canadians tried hard to gain their rights as citizens. One of the earliest Japanese immigrants, Tomekichi (Tomey) Homma, who was naturalised as a “British

subject,” tried to gain the right to vote, hoping that his status as a British subject would outweigh his outward racial appearance; however, his attempts were thwarted. Later on, Japanese Canadians organised the Canadian Japanese Volunteer Corps and joined the First World War to show their loyalty toward Canada. Coming back from the war, they tried to acquire the right to vote; however, it was denied again. Years later, on April 1, 1931, the right was given only to this group of veterans who, at this point, were quite elderly, and this enfranchisement would die with these veterans. Moreover, in the 1920s, the government took the fishing licence away from Japanese Canadians, and did not allow them to use gasoline engines in their boats in the Skeena River region. They were also not allowed to employ women and girls under the law of “An Act for the Protection of Women and Girls in Certain Cases, Revised Statutes of British Columbia 1936, Chapter 309” (quoted in Miki, 2004, pp. 17-18).

In this era, the franchise issue was a huge concern to Japanese Canadians. In 1936, four delegates of Japanese Canadian Citizens’ League went to Ottawa to discuss the situation and the interests of Japanese Canadians in B.C. In Ottawa, those delegates’ statements and their behaviour impressed the MPs, as their manner was like “Englishmen.” However, a few anti-Asian MPs strongly claimed that Asians were a threat. Ultimately, the special Committee for the issue decided to do nothing toward resolving the B.C. government’s treatment of Japanese Canadians. By 1937, after Japan invaded China, the attitude of white Canadian society toward Japanese Canadians worsened (Miki, 2004). Thus, from the arrival of the first set of immigrants, the Japanese had been subjected to racist and exclusionary treatment, a situation that only got worse around the time of the Second World War.

2.3. During the War: Japanese Canadian identity destroyed

During the Second World War era, the Canadian government treated Japanese Canadians badly as well just because of their Japanese ethnicity. By this time, most Japanese Canadians were born

and educated in Canada. However, Japanese Canadians were still treated as enemy aliens, and forced to leave their land and property behind and go far beyond the West Coast. For those who grew up in Canada as Canadian citizens, this was a betrayal by Canada, and the denial of who they were: Canadian citizens of Japanese descent (Miki, 2004; 2005). The experiences of World War II destroyed Japanese Canadians' communities and families as well. The government seized their properties, forced them to leave their communities and move into various interment camps during the Second World War (Miki, 2004). This racist treatment had a huge influence on their identity construction as Japanese Canadians were made aware of their Japanese-ness and to feel ashamed and embarrassed by it (Miki, 2004; 2005). Such treatment by the government during the war was harsh enough to destroy Japanese Canadians' pride in their identity. They were made to think that they were not valuable and good Canadian citizens because of their Japanese-ness. They were made to think that being Japanese was a shameful and embarrassing thing in Canada. Traumatized by the Canadian government's violent racist treatment, Japanese Canadians could not reconstruct their identity from this negative identification of Japanese-ness for decades, even after the War.

2.4. 1945-1977: Negotiations again after the War

The end of the Second World War did not mean the end of racism toward Japanese Canadians. The government encouraged Japanese Canadians to "voluntarily repatriate to Japan" (Sunahara, 1981, p. 140). Sunahara argues, however, that many people had no place to go in Japan (p. 145), and that this policy was not voluntary. Japanese Canadians were not allowed to stay in B.C., but had to go either to Japan or to Alberta, except those who were not "relocatable" (p. 140), such as sick or unemployable people. Mary Murakami Kitagawa talked about her experience of this "repatriation" order in a 1997 CBC interview:

They said, “We’ll give you a choice,” but in reality, it was an (not clear). Move east of the Rockies, or be deported to Japan, but they didn’t say “deported,” they said “repatriated.” How do you “repatriate” somebody who was born in Canada? (McClughan, 1997).

Moreover, the government policy ensured that Japanese Canadians did not live close to other Japanese Canadians because it was feared that a visible Japanese Canadian presence could cause trouble in those communities (p. 141). Through those experiences, Japanese Canadians hesitated to rebuild their communities. They came to believe that being visibly Japanese had caused excessive problems and that assimilation into mainstream was the key for a peaceful life. Since then, Japanese Canadians have never built a stable, physically based community (Izumi, 2005; Shiomi, 1982).

Fortunately, this racism did not remain for a long time; the public in B.C. was much more liberal than their representatives in parliament. In 1948, the forest workers stood up against the B.C. government’s regulation that banned Japanese people from the logging industry (Sunahara, 1981, p. 150). This movement against discrimination, even though based on an economic reason, was successful in changing the government’s attitude. In 1949, Japanese Canadians finally gained the federal and B.C. franchise (p. 151).

Japanese Canadians were not silent either. They, mainly Nisei or the second generation, started taking action for the compensation for their treatment and loss of property during the War period (Omatsu, 1992, p. 95; Sunahara, 1981, p. 151). Understanding that it was important to unite, Japanese Canadian associations across Canada formed the National Japanese Canadian Citizens’ Association (NJCCA) and Cooperative Committee (Sunahara, 1981, p. 155). The calculation of the losses was never easy because they were huge amounts; moreover, taking several years to calculate was not desirable for either the Japanese Canadian side or the

government side. Therefore, Japanese Canadians agreed to the proposal made by Justice Bird, and the compensation was paid in 1950. However, this compensation was far from a satisfactory accord, so Japanese Canadians intended to continue the negotiation. The government, however, would not entertain further negotiation with the Japanese Canadians by saying that justice had been done and that the public that had supported Japanese Canadians was satisfied with what had been done. Since then, the Japanese Canadians' justice issue was not discussed until the redress movement in the 1980s (pp. 156-160).

2.5. Since the 1970s: New negotiation of Japanese Canadian identity

2.5.1. The redress movement: The diversity of Japanese Canadian community

While Japanese Canadians were scattered all over Canada, there were movements of community building around Powell Street in Vancouver. These movements occurred mainly from new immigrants after the Second World War, newcomers from outside of Greater Vancouver, such as Toronto, young Nisei or the second generation, and Sansei or the third generation of Japanese Canadians (Shiomi, 1982, p. 341).

Later on, the movement of younger Nisei and Sansei searching for their Japanese roots occurred in the 1970s (Shiomi, 1982). Sansei attending the University of British Columbia started studying the Japanese Canadian history that neither the school system nor their parents had taught them. Parents did not tell the story to their children because the parents' generation perceived "Japanese-ness" as shameful and did not want their children to be strangers in Canadian society (Izumi, 2005; 2007; Shiomi, 1982). On the other hand, even though their appearance as Japanese was an obvious marker in society (Miki, 2005), younger Japanese Canadians felt open and curious rather than ashamed and embarrassed as their parents did towards their "Japanese-ness." The younger generation started not only studying the documents but also meeting with Issei (first generation Japanese immigrants) to listen to their stories (Izumi,

2005; 2007). Some Sansei also visited Japan, as their possible home where they did not need to feel like they were strangers; however, the experiences in Japan only reassured them that they were not Japanese but Canadians (Izumi, 2007; Miki, 2005). As Kibria (2002) states, for children of Asian immigrants, their ethnicity is definitely a major marker in their social lives, but such markers do not necessarily explain who they are as individuals. Studying, story telling among generations, and visiting Japan were some of the activities undertaken in the process of re-interpreting and negotiating “Japanese-ness” in the 1970s.

Moreover, newcomers accomplished great work for the Issei around Powell Street, who were old, not fluent in English, and impoverished,. For example, Jun Hamada from Toronto and Takeo Yamashiro from Japan started a drop-in centre to support Issei. This centre still exists, and it is now called Tonari Gumi (Japanese Community Volunteers Association). Michiko Sakata, a postwar immigrant, also established the Language Aid (Izumi, 2005; 2007; Shiomi, 1982). Elder Nisei, who were originally from Vancouver, did not always welcome such salient activities by newcomers. These aids for Issei were, nevertheless, successful as new immigrants’ ability to communicate with Issei in Japanese was actually a great help for Issei (Izumi, 2005, p. 315; Shiomi, 1982).

With such experiences of identity negotiation with various types of Japanese people, those Japanese Canadians established the Powell Street Revue, and they also started the Japanese Canadian Historical Photographic Project, which was later called the Japanese Canadian Centennial Project (Izumi, 2005, p. 325; Shiomi, 1982). These activities became the base of today’s annual Powell Street Festival¹ in summer and led the redress movement during the 1980s. Thus, from the beginning, the movement around Japanese Canadian community was done by many different types of Japanese related people, such as Nisei, Sansei, those from outside BC

¹ <http://www.powellstreetfestival.com/>

and those from Japan. In other words, Japanese Canadian community was diverse and hybrid from the first movement.

The year of 1977 was the centennial of the first immigrants from Japan to Canada (Miki, 2004, p. 144; Omatsu, 1992, p. 95). For the centennial, the Japanese Canadian Central Project (JCCP) did a photo-history exhibition (Miki, 2004, p. 144). However, JCCP's activity did not finish there. In Vancouver, the members of JCCP and those who shared their concerns started meeting again in 1981, and this was the beginning of the redress movement (Miki, 2004, p. 144; Omatsu, 1992, p. 96). At the same period, NJCCA, which had been apolitical for decades, renamed itself as the National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC) and started considering redress (Makabe, 1998, p. 35; Omatsu, 1992, p. 96). Both associations were led by curious Sansei who had little education about their history.

The redress movement claimed compensation for the government's injustice done to Japanese Canadians during the Second World War. This movement sought not only financial compensation but also an official acknowledgement of the government's actions. The movement tried to establish awareness that the government did injustice to Japanese Canadians. However, it was not easy to achieve this redress for several reasons.

It was difficult for Japanese Canadians to unite as a political group. There were diverse voices, and mainly two groups claimed different types of compensation. The main difference was whether the redress would include individual compensation. The National Redress Committee (NRC), led by George Imai, the former president of NJCCA, claimed that redress should not require individual compensation; on the other hand, NAJC intended to gain individual compensation as a part of redress. According to Omatsu (1992), Imai's attitude was based on old Japanese values, "shikataga-nai (resignation) and enryo (restraint)" (p. 96). Kimiko Okano Murakami also used this value when she and her daughter Mary were interviewed by CBC about her property that was sold during War time.

Murakami: They never asked us, just sold my property.

Interviewer: So what did you think?

Murakami: Can't help anything.

Kitagawa: See, this keeps coming up with my mother, "it can't be helped." That's how they dealt with everything, "it can't be helped."

(McClughan, 1997).

Because of these values, Imai did not strongly claim Japanese Canadians' rights to Canada. Moreover, it seemed that Imai wanted to make the issue more a multicultural issue than a justice issue (Miki, 2004, p. 175). As Nisei, Imai might wanted not to challenge the government so that Japanese Canadians did not look troublesome to the state again as it happened during the Second World War.

NAJC, on the contrary, led by Sansei who had not experienced severe racism and were educated to believe in democracy, understood the issue as the redress of human rights. Its claim was that injustice was done to individuals during the War, so redress should be offered to individuals (p. 229). NAJC's claim focused more on individuals than on Japanese Canadians as a group. In that way, NAJC tried to avoid highlighting the Japanese-ness of the movement; in other words, it tried not to racialize Japanese Canadians through the movement. By focusing on human rights rather than Japanese Canadians, furthermore, NAJC tried to show that the issue was related not only to Japanese Canadians but to all Canadians so that the public could have an interest in the issue (Omatsu, 1992, p. 158).

Even though it was understandable that there were diverse aims among Japanese Canadians, it was more important that they were united and strategic so that their claim to the government would be stronger. In Toronto, several Japanese Canadian intellectuals formed the

sodan-kai to decide on the goals of the redress movement. Sodan-kai organised community meetings and house meetings to hear from as many Japanese Canadians as possible. Such gatherings gradually revealed that the community's opinion was opposed to Imai's group. As a result, Imai's group dissolved in 1985 (Omatsu, 1992, pp. 102-103). In 1986, the finally united redress movement made their agenda public. Their standpoint was around "the principle of citizenship and the violation of citizenship rights" (Miki, 2004, p. 266) not on "Canadians of Japanese ancestry" (Miki, 2004, p. 267).

2.5.2. Reactions of others: External negotiations

Even though Japanese Canadians considered the redress movement as a claim to citizenship rights, other people, such as politicians and media, did not consider the redress movement as such. They tended to understand the redress as a "Japanese" movement. Multiculturalism had been implemented by this time and also reinforced their understanding based on ethnicity rather than citizenship. After the long pressure of assimilation that Japanese Canadians sincerely pursued, now they were encouraged to be and be seen as Japanese again. The difference is, this time they were considered model citizens for their achievement of middle class status (Miki, 2004, p. 310). Japanese Canadians have always been used in one way or another by the Canadian government.

A group of Japanese Canadians also made educational materials and distributed them to the public and media. However, this perspective was not quite understood. CBC reported the redress movement with the image of the Japanese flag (Miki, 2004, p. 275), and in 1976, Prime Minister Trudeau acknowledged in Tokyo the injustice done to Japanese Canadians (Miki, 2004, p. 311). In both cases, Canadian media and government perceived the issue as Japanese but not Canadian.

2.5.3. Struggles as Japanese: Internal negotiations

Thus, the redress movement included the complex identity negotiations of Japanese Canadians. They were Canadians, but the racism before and during the Second World War made them “Japanese.” In 1973, Muriel Kitagawa and Hide Shimizu answered in an interview by CBC radio:

Interviewer[I]: Both of you were born here, and both of you are as Canadian as I am. Did you have any sense of being Japanese [before the Second World War]?

Shimizu [S]: No [laugh]

Kitagawa [K]: No, neither of us.

S: In fact, I think as youngsters I kinda ashamed our Japanese connection [laugh]. We were made to feel that way because, you know, Japan was criticised so much since they started entering Manchuria.

[...]

K: Now they try to disappear into the woodwork, figuring that if they can't be seen, they won't be hurt. And that is one of the unfortunate ones, and others are very sensitive about being Japanese, and others become aggressive about being Japanese like me.

I: You mean you said you didn't have the sense of being Japanese before they took action against you. That reinforced your sense of being Japanese Canadians?

S: That really made us Japanese.

(Gzowski, 1973)

After the War, Japanese Canadians made huge efforts to deny Japanese-ness and to be Canadian. They had been made to believe that their “Japanese-ness” caused the racist attitudes towards them during the War and that assimilation was the key to continue their life without

suffering from racism. Such a blaming-the-victim attitude was strongly internalised by the older generation, and they did not want to face such a painful past and humiliating experiences either (Makabe, 1998; Miki, 2004; Sunahara, 1981). With the effort to be just Canadians with those beliefs, they had achieved middle class status. However, this achievement came at a cost. A number of Japanese Canadians were traumatized and avoided and tried to forget their pain, and assimilated into Canadian society with shameful feelings toward their Japanese-ness. Even though they achieved middle class status and were called a “model minority”, they suffered from internalised racism. They did not express such pain because they felt shame, fear, and pain to face the facts and speak up. They were afraid that if they spoke up they would be considered troublesome “Japs” or “enemy aliens” again. As Sunahara (1981) describes them, Japanese Canadians were like “the rape victim” (p. 167). They could not speak up, similar to the way it is very difficult for a raped girl to say that she was raped, even though she knew she was not wrong at all.

The redress movement was a political negotiation but also a healing process for such Japanese Canadians. The redress movement began in 1981, almost four decades after the end of the Second World War. Four decades might have been the necessary time for Japanese Canadians to be able to look back at what had happened to them objectively. Their pain was so huge that they had to wait for someone who could examine the situation more objectively. Sansei were the ones who took this role since they were interested in and able to consider the issue from a distance. They heard the Nisei’s voice sincerely, and that healed Nisei. Tad Wakabayashi, a Japanese Canadian said in a newspaper, *The Toronto Star*, in 1987, “[...] I lost the most productive years of my life. I was just existing to keep the wolves from the door” (as cited in Miki and Kobayashi, 1991, p. 145). This describes the feeling that many Japanese Canadians had had since the end of the Second World War in Canada until the redress was done. They needed someone who would understand them, hear them, and tell them that they deserved justice.

The reason that the redress movement was not easy was not only due to the fear of backlash, but can also be attributed to a model-minority syndrome which made people reluctant to take part in the redress movement. “Model-minority syndrome” (Miki, 2004, p. 260) is an attitude that understands the situation of Japanese Canadians in a way that they have achieved middle class status so well by assimilating into mainstream Canadian society with a lot of effort on their part and strong belief that Canada is a democratic country. The question was: why dare to remember the painful past that we no longer need to think about as we have achieved middle class status and have finally been accepted by Canadian society as a model-minority? (Miki, 2004). Miki (2004) says, in his book, *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*, “redress had nothing to do with need and everything to do with social justice for the abrogation of rights” (p. 236).

Thus, the redress movement was the effort for Japanese Canadians to externally and internally negotiate the meaning of their identity with “Japanese-ness,” which is different from stereotypical “Japanese” assumed from Japanese-ness in Japan but unique to themselves in Canadian context in that era and to make Canadian society understand such a new meaning of “Japanese.”

2.6. The current situation of Japanese Canadians: New negotiations

Even though Canadian society tends to have a clear image of “Japanese” or of different ethnicities, Japanese Canadians do not simply accept such an essentialized notion of ethnicity as “Japanese.” With redress being done, Japanese Canadians no longer need to be ashamed and embarrassed about their Japanese-ness, and Japanese Canadians have been constructing new relations with “Japanese” ethnicity with new ways of negotiation and hybridization.

Now it is time to think about what Japanese-ness means in the new era. As Omatsu and Makabe state, the Japanese Canadian intermarriage rate is very high (Makabe, 2005; Omatsu,

1992, p. 172), and the boundary between their ethnicities is becoming blurred. As a result, few people might identify themselves as Japanese Canadians in the future. Moreover, as information technology has developed, it is very easy to access culture in Japan, possibly easier than to access Japanese Canadian history. Thus, the images of “Japanese-ness” within Canada have changed dramatically in the past 20 years, and there could be diverse Japanese-ness in Canada today.

Under these circumstances, “Japanese” may be interpreted more freely as Izumi (2001) describes. One example is the *taiko* groups in Vancouver. Inspired by San Jose Taiko that came to perform at the third annual Powell Street Festival in 1979, Sansei started learning *taiko*, and since then, several *taiko* groups have been established in Vancouver (Izumi, 2001, p. 31). For the members, the *taiko* group communities are the place to connect to their roots and the place where they can fit in among similar people (p. 42). However, *taiko* groups are not necessarily the spheres to experience quasi-“Japanese-ness” but the spheres through which the members express their uniqueness as Japanese Canadians that is different from stereotypical “Japanese” of Japan.

On the one hand, *taiko* looks so exotic, so groups are welcomed as good diplomats within the multicultural context. On the other hand, the meaning of *taiko* music is sometimes more complex and political. For instance, they express anger towards the history of racism done to Japanese Canadians through a piece of their music (Izumi, 2001). Thus, according to Izumi (2001), what Vancouver *taiko* groups represent is not a simple “Japanese-ness” rooted in Japan but the invention of complex and unique Japanese-ness in the Canadian multicultural context, Japanese Canadian-ness. This ethnicity is created by those who seek their identity in Canada to express themselves in their own way but not by the way mainstream Canadian society defines them. In other words, *taiko* has offered the opportunity to empower one of the minority groups to create an alternative meaning of “Japanese” (p. 50).

Moreover, there is another type of Japanese Canadians. As Makabe (1998) describes, many Japanese Canadians have already achieved middle class status and are well assimilated into Canadian mainstream society, and some of them are not interested in their Japanese side. These differences among Japanese Canadians are not just based on social class or individual interests but also generation as Asai (1995) argues. With the American context, Asai (1995) describes how different generations of Japanese Americans pursue different type of music, such as Japanese traditional ones, western ones, and fusion music.

Furthermore, some community organizations are moving their bases from Powell Street to other places. For instance, the Japanese Canadians Citizens Association, the National Japanese Canadian Museum, and New Sakura-so Senior's Residence moved to Burnaby, the suburb of Vancouver, in 2000 when the National Nikkei Heritage Centre opened there. Tonari Gumi also moved out in 2001 (Izumi, 2005, p. 326). With this phenomenon, it is considered that "Japanese" or "Powell Street" is more psychological rather than physical or actual existence.

2.7. Conclusion

Thus, Japanese Canadians have been experiencing a lot of struggles between what dominant Canadian society perceive them as and how they want to be seen though their own history. Their existence in Canada has never smooth or just. They have had to battle with dominant constructions, stereotypes and racist attitudes about who they should be as Japanese people. However, Japanese ethnicity is not homogeneous, and becoming symbolic as Izumi mentions (2005, p. 327). This raises the question of what it means for Japanese Canadians and Canadian society to identify and categorise a certain category of people as members of the "Japanese" ethnic group.

Based on this history, this research attempts to understand more closely the identities of current members of the Japanese Canadian community in Vancouver. In particular, it

investigates: How do these individuals negotiate their identity and hybridize with others through the Japanese Canadian community and with wider society? What role does the Japanese Canadian community play for its members and vice versa? The next chapter will discuss how this research approached these questions.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction

This chapter constructs the theoretical framework of this research. This chapter discusses the concept of identity from three points of view since identity is the central concept being investigated in this research. First the chapter analyzes identity construction as process, next, it addresses identity negotiation, and then it examines identity and hybridity. This chapter explores identity not as a fixed entity but as a process of constant negotiation with others. Identity as a process of constant negotiation with other means that identity is in fact hybrid, and is always in the process of creating a third space. This chapter also argues that the interplay between hybridity and the negotiation process with others is never neutral but a constant power struggle (particularly for those of ethnic groups who must struggle to create a sense of identity against the images and values imposed by the dominant group).

3.2. Theoretical framework: Identity

The central concept in this study is *identity*, a complex concept that has been analyzed and defined from a wide range of perspectives, including psychology, philosophy, and cultural studies. As my research focuses on the identities of members of the Japanese Canadian community in Vancouver's Lower Mainland, this section will draw especially on perspectives that take the cultural context of identity and identity formation into account.

Jeffrey Weeks (1990) argues that

identity is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others. At its most basic it gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core to your individuality. But it is also about your social relationships, your

complex involvement with others, and in the modern world these have become ever more complex and confusing. (p. 88)

Here he points out two important elements of identity. First, he says identity is “about belonging” and provides “a sense of personal location.” The second part is the awareness of the relation and negotiation between self and others; as he notes, identity is about “what differentiates you from others” as well as “the stable core to your complex involvement with others.” Thus identity is constructed by a sense of self as well as the relation and negotiation with others.

Diana Fuss (1995) also emphasizes the relationality of identity. Focusing on this factor, she uses the concept of identification, instead of identity, as “the physical mechanism that produces self-recognition” (p. 2). For her, “every identity is actually an identification come to light” (p. 2). Each identity, among all other ways of identification, happens to come to the forefront at a certain time depending on others and the larger context. She says, “identification is, from the beginning, a question of *relation*, of self to other, subject to object, inside to outside” (p. 3). In other words, her argument is that what I am is enormously dependent on what the other is, as she says “Every relation, most especially the self-relation, is a response to the call of the other—the other who always exceeds me, the other who withdraws me from myself” (p. 3).

If this is the case and everyone has identifications and relationships with many others in themselves, it is not surprising that those are quite complex, confusing, and possibly conflicting. At the core of those confusions or contradictions are, according to Weeks (1990), “the values we share or wish to share with others” (p. 88). He says that even within an individual, there are often conflicts. For example, the second generation Japanese Canadians may have the values of Canadian individualism as well as the collectivist values of their Japanese parents. The individualism may put more importance on expressing one’s opinion rather than asking and listening to others’ opinion and examining the situation where one is situated carefully; on the

contrary, the collectivism may be the opposite. Having those two values, it is to be expected that second generation Japanese Canadians may encounter occasions when they find a conflict within themselves.

As contradictions exist within the individual, it is probable that diversity and contradiction exist within a group as well. Weeks (1990) illustrates this diversity within a group with the example of the political Left, and he concludes that it is dangerous to see a community as a unified whole. His point is that this kind of difficulty and conflict around diversity is not only an experience in a special situation, but “a major cultural experience for us all” (p. 94). He does not say this is a negative thing. Rather, he states that “different identities, and the social solidarities that sustain them, reflect the variety of individual and social needs in the modern world” (p. 97). Moreover, he argues that such needs in society change over time (p. 97).

Under these circumstances, Weeks (1990) proposes the necessity of language that can “speak to difference and uncertainty within a framework of common principles” (p. 98). He argues that recognition is just a starting point and that it is important to accept differences and to look closely at how to run a society with these differences. For instance, it is important to examine how to negotiate differences and conflicts “in a democratic fashion” (p. 99). On the other hand, Fuss (1995) claims it is difficult to practice such an ideal approach. She argues that identification is not just about a personal value but about a political choice. There is the dominant group and the oppressed, and the oppressed need to struggle with the power the dominant group exercises (p. 8). She argues that identification involves to some extent a symbolic violence for the acquisition of the place that the subject desires. For instance, if those who self-identify as “Vancouverites from Japan” are perceived and treated as “Japan specialists” by the mainstream society, symbolic violence is done to them. The “Vancouverites from Japan” may want to identify themselves as students or mothers or reggae fans. However, by being essentialized as “Japan experts” and asked about good sushi restaurants or Japanese anime rather

than parenthood or reggae bands, their reality is reduced to their Japanese descent. This is the power of symbolic violence from the dominant group over the oppressed, and the oppressed always have to struggle to find, secure, or create their space.

Thus, identity construction, or identification, is a complicated and difficult process of relating to and negotiating with others. As stated above, individuals negotiate their identities with others as well as themselves. The following section will focus on two parts of this troublesome concept: process and negotiation.

3.3. Identity as a process

Similar to the argument by Fuss (1995), Stuart Hall (1990), focusing more on the process of identity formation than on identity as product, argues that identities “are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a positioning” (p. 226). Homi Bhabha (1990), mentioning negotiation as well as process, also discusses that “identification is a process of identifying with and through another object, an object of otherness, at which point the agency of identification – the subject – is itself always ambivalent, because of the intervention of that otherness” (p. 211). Thus, identifying oneself is a process, and such a process is closely related to another factor of identity, negotiation. Identity is constantly changing, depending on with whom one relates or negotiates at a certain situation in one’s life.

As Bhabha (1990) and Hall (1990) argue, it is important to understand that identities exist as process rather than fixed entity. For example, this way of thinking about identity can be useful to think about and deal with racism, or “ethnicism” (May, 1999, p. 12), as these “isms” are only possible when there is a clear distinction between people who practice racism and the victims of racism. In other words, if identity is considered as process, there could be more social movement as people could be freer from specific expectations, restrictions, and pressures from society about

their background, such as skin colours or ethnic backgrounds, and also they would be able to construct their own identities more actively.

Nevertheless, it seems that people need to name things around them and see the world as a collection of fixed entities. As stated in the opening paragraph, it is necessary to name things to help recognize what exists. If there is no boundary between what something is and what it is not, it is difficult to recognize that there is something. Thus identification depends on differentiation. For instance, the Japanese concept of *kawaii* (cute) is distinct from *kimoi/kimochi-warui* (gross). However, those entities are not fixed as such forever; on the contrary, it should be understood that what exists is a process and on-going negotiation between one entity and another that are named and given boundaries. Indeed, there is a word, “*kimokawaii*” or “*kimokawa*” that has a new meaning with two nuances of “*kawaii*” and “*kimoi*” at the same time (see Figure 1 and 2).



Figure 3.1: Kimokawaii goods. Taken in Japan by the author



Figure 3.2: Kimokawaii goods. Taken at the Powell Street Festival by the author

Bhabha (1994) argues, “what is theoretically innovative, and politically crucial, is the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences” (p. 1). Hall (1990) also argues that “the boundaries of difference are continually repositioned in relation to different points of reference” (p. 227).

On the other hand, people's tendency to focus on this tentatively named entity rather than the actual process is to some extent understandable because it is much easier to recognize and control the phenomena around them, such as culture, as fixed entities. Even though "cultures are never unitary in themselves, nor simply dualistic in the relation of Self to Other" (Bhabha, 1994, pp. 35-36), it seems people do not care much about the ongoing process of identity formation. For example, not many people may pay attention to California Roll as a middle point of on going process of hybridizing *sushi* into North American style. On the contrary, people tend to be satisfied once they find which culture or ethnicity a thing belongs to, in this case, just *sushi* as Japanese food, and stop thinking further about the moment of a process that they are actually encountering. In this case, *sushi* may become increasingly hybridized and may, for example, start using French fries and ketchup as ingredients in the future and may not be considered simply Japanese any more. Thus, to understand the culture, one has to be aware of and pay attention more to the process. As Bhabha (1994) argues,

The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation. (p. 2)

3.4. Identity negotiation

Anthony Giddens (1984) discusses negotiation with the term structuration. According to him, agents (individuals) and structure (society) influence each other. Agents are able to exercise a certain power to influence others and society. However, the decision making for their actions is more or less influenced by the structure of society. Whether intended or not, the agents' activities often result in reproducing the existing social structure. What this means is that the social

structure influences the behaviour of the agents, but at the same time, the structure is influenced by the agents' actions.

Giddens (1984) also writes that “all actors are positioned or ‘situated’ in time-space” (p. 83). Social structure, even though reproduced constantly, is a very time and space specific existence. Within such a condition, he states,

A social position can be regarded as ‘a social identity that carries with it a certain range (however diffusely specified) of prerogatives and obligations that an actor who is accorded that identity (or is an “incumbent” of that position) may activate or carry out: these prerogatives and obligations constitute the role-prescriptions associated with that position. (p. 84)

Thus, the agents can use or are limited in their power within the position where they are situated. On the other hand, as stated above, the structure is not a stable entity. It changes as time goes by and place changes. In this sense, agents are always positioning themselves within this changing structure. In other words, what those agents are, or their identity, is always in negotiation.

Joane Nagel (1994) also discusses this identity as negotiation. She focuses more specifically on ethnic identity. She argues,

Ethnic identity [...] is the result of a dialectical process involving internal and external opinions and processes, as well as the individual's self-identification and outsiders' ethnic designations – i.e., what you think your ethnicity is, versus what they think your ethnicity is. (p. 154)

Ethnic identity is thus the negotiation between internal factors, what one thinks one is, and external factors, what others think one is. This means that one's identity changes and is circumscribed according to the situation, such as acceptable ethnicity in the society and the people one encounters. Again what should not be forgotten is that both the external and the

internal structures are not eternal. Therefore, identity is a continuing negotiation through one's life.

3.5. Identity and hybridity

The argument that identity negotiations are on-going means that people are always in hybrid or in-between situations, such as between external factors and internal factors. To explain hybridity, Bhabha (1990) uses two concepts: difference and translation. Bhabha explains “difference” as a concept that problematizes the binary division and as a counterpart of “diversity,” with which “[a] transparent norm is constituted, a norm given by the host society or dominant culture, which says that ‘these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our own grid’” (p. 208). By using the term “difference,” Bhabha argues that things are often incommensurable with each other and that it is impossible that the universalism or relativism from Western culture accommodates everything (p. 209).

Bhabha (1990) also talks about “cultural translation” (p. 209). He argues that all cultures are related in a way and that “culture is a signifying or symbolic activity” (p. 210). He argues that translation is an activity and that culture never exists without it. What this means is that there is no essential culture that is to be translated to something else, as actually culture itself is the symbol-forming activity. “The ‘originary’ is always open to translation so that it can never be said to have a totalised prior moment of being or meaning – an essence” (p. 210).

Based on those two concepts, difference and translation, Bhabha (1990) develops the idea of hybridity. According to him, the character of hybridity is “not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity [...] is the ‘third space’ which enable other positions to emerge” (p. 211). There are no two essences from which hybridity is made, but hybridity is the negotiation space, “third space,” that has a possibility to create something new. For instance, “*kimokawaii*” mentioned above is not simply “*kimoi*” or just “*kawaii*”;

“*kimokawaii*” is a new concept that covers a meaning that is beyond “*kimoi*” or “*kawaii*.”

Therefore, “hybridity” can be differentiated from “in-between.” Using the “*kimoi*”, “*kawaii*,” and “*kimokawaii*” example, “in-between” describes something that consists of both “*kimoi*” and “*kawaii*” elements as part of what it is. On the contrary, “hybridity” creates something new beyond “*kimoi*” and “*kawaii*,” such as “*kimokawaii*.” If all culture is hybrid as Bhabha (1990) says, this argument suggests a different approach to understanding the world where nothing is simply pure and homogeneous with clear borders but where everything is in continuous negotiation, hybrid.

This hybridity is actually nothing new. Smadar Lavie and Ted Swedenburg (1996) argue that “hybrid articulations ... have long been matters of routinized, everyday life for members of the margins in First and Third Worlds” (p. 8). Hybridity is now simply becoming more visible in the centre of the First World as well. They also state, with the dimension of dominant and minority culture in mind, that this hybrid activity is not a neutral process but a struggle between unequal positions, “in which the stronger culture struggles to control, remake, or eliminate the subordinate partner” (p. 9). In other words, Lavie and Swedenburg (1996) argue that hybridity or the third space is a struggle between the dominant group who tries to “assimilate or destroy” the minorities and the minorities who try to “appropriate and creolize” the dominant power (pp. 9-10).

This way of seeing the world is important when ethnic identity construction is considered. Lavie and Swedenburg (1996) write that “living in the border is frequently to experience the feeling of being trapped in an impossible in-between” (p. 15). This shows that there is no simple and pure notion of “I am Japanese” or “I am Canadian” or even “I am Japanese Canadian.” Within a Japanese Canadian group, each member will identify with a different degree of Japanese-ness and Canadian-ness. Or even within an individual, there is a constant negotiation. Moreover, those negotiations vary depending on what kind of environment a group

or an individual is situated in. As Bhabha (1990) says, “political negotiation is a very important issue, and hybridity is precisely about the fact that when a new situation, a new alliance formulates itself, it may demand that you should translate your principles, rethink them, extend them” (p. 216). Trinh (1991) also states that hybridity is a space of the “lives of those who dare to mix while differing... [in] the realm in-between, where predetermined rules cannot fully apply” (as cited in Lavie and Swedenburg, 1996, p. 16).

Thus, identity has many perspectives and is very complicated. This section has analysed the concept of identity from the relationality, such as how one is identified with the relation to others, and such identification is an on going process and the negotiation with others. In other words, identity can be a hybrid entity created from self and others, or different selves within one person.

3.6. Dynamics between minority groups and the dominant group

In addition to those concepts around identity, this research also looks at the relationship and the dynamics between the dominant group in the society and the members of an ethnic minority group, in this case, Japanese Canadians, as the influence from the dominant group is significant and cannot be ignored. In other words, even though this research focuses on the members of an ethnic minority group, those members cannot be completely disconnected from the dominant group, and the dominant group influences their identity construction to a greater or lesser extent. Therefore, this section will discuss in greater detail how this research understands the dynamics between the dominant and minority ethnic groups.

As Lowe (2004) states, an ethnic minority group negotiates the boundary between self and other created by the dominant group as many of their community members do not simply fit in any single ethnic category. Therefore, minority groups try to find and establish their own identity that represents them more precisely in society while they try to deconstruct “the current

hegemonic relationship between ‘dominant’ and ‘minority’ positions” (p. 1035). The position of minority groups is not simply as an entity in or at the periphery of a dominant circle, nor are they a homogeneous group as structured by the dominant group. In other words, they are in the process of empowering and creating a “third space” where they can situate and explain themselves in their own way.

Minority groups have been negotiating to create their own space by themselves in society. That activity should be fine, and the dominant group should respect such activities as valuable as its own activities to create its own space and vice versa. This mutual respect towards each other’s activities could discard their relationship as dominant vs. minority. Of course this is not simple, because, as Benhabib (2006) states, there are always conflicting values. It should be completely encouraged that one argues about those conflicting points as a member of a democratic society. This continuous negotiation is the process of creating the third space while discarding the binary positioning of dominant and minority groups. What is important here is that one should not start such an argument but treat others respectfully until they understand the conflicting point, such as why another group takes a different system, what kind of philosophy they are based on, what they believe as good life and good person, and so on, from the points of others as well. If one starts criticizing a thing by understanding the thing from one’s own perspective only, that would be simply an activity of imposing one’s value onto others. After understanding the way the other groups see the world, the negotiation should start to find agreement between those two or to create a third space.

As stated above, in order to be able to negotiate the conflicting issues, difference has to be recognized not only from the dominant perspective but also from the minority’s perspective, and in order to be recognized, to stand at the starting point of negotiation, it is important to think about what Gayatri C. Spivak (1987) argues as “strategic use of positivist essentialism” (p. 205). She argues, even though minority groups are quite fluid, heterogeneous, and changing, it is

important to strategically essentialize a minority group, as a certain extent of essentializing, being something, is necessary to be recognized in society. In this way, they can have a certain power and position to give their voices in politics (Lowe, 2004), or in Spivak's words, strategic essentialism "would allow them to use the critical force of anti-humanism [...] even as they share its constitutive paradox: that the essentialising moment, the object of their criticism, is irreducible" (p. 205).

3.7. Conclusion

Based on these ways of conceptualizing identity, this research attempts to understand the ways that members of the Japanese Canadian community in the Greater Vancouver area construct, negotiate, and hybridize their identity in relation to their respective situations, such as their unique life experiences, being a member of wider Canadian society, Japan, other people around them, and being a member of their community, which is a space for them to express themselves with more control and entitlement.

The next chapter will explain the methodology of this research: the way this research illuminates the complexity of contemporary Japanese Canadian-ness through an exploration of the identity situations of ten members of the Japanese Canadian community in the Greater Vancouver area.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the methodology employed for this research. In this chapter, the methodological framework is explained first. Following this, I will discuss interviews as my method of data collection and content analysis as my method of data analysis. Next, the informants' demography will be described in detail, as well as the background of the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver where this research was conducted. Finally, the limitation of this study is addressed to further clarify its focus.

4.2. Methodology

In order to gain insight into the identity construction of the members of the Japanese Canadian community and the relationship between them, the community, and broader society, I have used a qualitative methodology. According to Bruce L. Berg (2007), this is different from quantitative research, which refers to “counts and measures of things” (p. 3); qualitative research is about “the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things” (p. 3). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) also discuss qualitative research, offering the following definition:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the word. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world.

This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to

make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study; interview; artifacts; cultural texts and productions; observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. (pp. 3-4)

With a qualitative method, research can access the unquantifiable sides of people either directly or indirectly, and the researcher can share how people understand, perceive, construct, and give meanings to their lives (Berg, 2007, pp. 8-9). This approach to the subject matter is suitable for the purposes of this research project as it is an attempt to understand people's perceptions, negotiation processes, and meaning-making processes of their identity in relation to the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver.

4.3. Methods

Amongst the various means of qualitative research stated above, this research also makes use of interviews. Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (2001) state that interviews are not simply a way of obtaining information through the activity of one person questioning and the other person answering. Rather, they argue that in a society that is comprised of people with individual opinions, the interview is an “integral, constitutive feature of our everyday lives” through which “we have become and could possibly be as individuals” (p. 11).

As the interview has become understood beyond stimulus and response, the meaning of the interview in research has changed as well. The interviews are perceived as an occasion for participants “to *construct* versions of reality interactionally” (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001, p. 14). This means the interviewee is actively involved in the interview rather than merely offering data; through the process of offering what the interviewee has to the interviewer, the interviewee constructs his or her information. Therefore, interviews are not about passing information from

one to the other, but is an interactional and collaborative work by the two participants: the interviewer and the interviewee (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001, p. 15).

This relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee can empower the respondent to become an equal partner in the interview. Elliot G. Mishler (1991) refers to the activity as “speech event or speech activities” (p. 35) rather than as interview to focus on this side of what is happening during the interview: “discourse between speakers” (p. 36). Mishler argues that in order to make this relationship possible, it is important to “empower respondents so that they have more control of the processes through which their words are given meaning” (p. 118). He discusses that empowerment is closely related to the narrative and that the relationship between the interviewee and the interviewer should be designed to “encourage [respondents] to find and speak in their own ‘voices’” (p. 118). In other words, through the interview, researchers “provide respondents with the opportunity to convey these stories to [researchers] on their own terms rather than deploy predesignated categories or other structured formats for doing so” (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001, p. 19).

If the interview is processed in this way, it is important to think about the interviewer’s role during the interview as there is no clear line between the two participants anymore. This is not a new issue around in-depth interviewing (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001, p. 28); however, it is important to be aware of this aspect. In other words, through the interview this research attempts to discover how the respondents perceive their lives rather than their life itself, and research is about the researcher’s understandings of the respondents’ interpretation of their lives.

Considering the nature of the interview, it is suitable to use interviews as the data collection method for this research project because this research does not treat the informants as the data of the study; on the contrary, this research is interested in the way the informants construct their stories around their identity. This research is about understanding how members of Japanese Canadian community in today’s Greater Vancouver understand and negotiate the

value and impact of their experiences on their identity. More specifically, this study attempts to understand how their identity construction process is negotiated by situational circumstances, such as life experiences, wider society, and the Japanese Canadian community, and how the community—which is different from the wider society in the sense that the community is created by them through history—would influence and be influenced by their identity construction. Such a process of meaning making is a crucial part of the research, as identities are “a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being,’” and “the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past” (Hall, 1990, p. 225).

Based on this perspective, I conducted semi-structured interviews. The questions asked were about: 1) their background, such as ethnic background, family structure, and their relationships with their community and Vancouver, 2) the process of constructing their identity, 3) their negotiation with the fixed images of Japanese or Japanese Canadians in wider society, 4) the influence of the Japanese Canadian community on them, 5) their purpose of being engaged in the community, and 6) the meaning of being a member of the Japanese Canadian community or the meaning of using the word “Japanese” in their self-identification. I let the interviewees talk about whatever would occur to them during the interview, regardless of the relation to the questions, as the central interest of this research is how they construct and understand their identity or their stories about themselves. If they think something is worth talking about or relevant to the topic during the interview, that is what is to be heard. This research attempts to capture interviewees in their uniqueness in order to show the diversity of the identity construction process. This research tries to give a voice to interviewees and understand them as people, rather than simply use them or their voices as data.

4.4. Data analysis

Donna M. Mertens (1998) argues that the analysis in qualitative research is an on-going process (p. 348). Embracing this process, I conducted the interviews either in English or in Japanese, depending on the preference of the interviewees, transcribed the information from the interviews, and translated the information if necessary. Going through these processes allowed me to obtain a general idea of open codes as well as a sense of the situation as a whole.

The information obtained from the interviews were analysed using the content analysis method. Berg (2007) argues that content analysis is “a careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases, and meanings” (pp. 303-304). Content analysis is appropriate for this research as the method is useful for analyzing the information derived from in-depth interviews (Berg, 2007), and it is important to closely look at, interpret, and understand what the informants intended. The method is limited to already recorded information; however this point could be overlooked as each interview was recorded from the beginning to the end.

For the coding, following Anselm L. Strauss (1987), I conducted open, axial and selective coding on the transcript in order to identify themes. Open coding is the first process of coding done by closely examining the documents, such as the interview script, in order to generate the concepts that seem to relate to the information. This is the stage to open up the possibilities for interpreting the data for the next step. The next step is axial coding, which occurs as open coding is conducted for a while. Axial coding is the process of finding relationships amongst the themes found during the open coding and linking them. These relationships are organized systematically during the selective coding process into core categories based on the theory used in the research (Strauss, 1987, pp. 28-33). During this process of analysing the information, categories were determined in both inductive and deductive ways based on the transcripts as well as the theoretical framework used in this study. During the analysis, I humbly

and respectfully approached the information and tried to understand data within the situation that the data was mentioned. In other words, the analysis was conducted in a way so as to not downplay each informant's story and his or her identity as a whole, which can occur when data is cut from its context.

4.5. Informants' demography

For this research, I conducted interviews with nine people in the Japanese Canadian community in the Greater Vancouver area through the summer of 2009. The "purposeful sampling" strategy was used to recruit the informants to "seek information-rich cases" (Patton, 2002, p. 230). As Patton (2002) argues, from information-rich cases, "one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry" (p. 230), which is the question about the identity construction negotiation process of the members of the Japanese Canadian community in Vancouver. According to the 2006 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada, n.d.), 30,235 people in Metropolitan Vancouver area identify Japanese as their ethnic origin either as single origin or as one of their multiple origins. However, this does not necessarily mean that the Japanese Canadian community has over 30,000 members because some may not be interested in the community, while those interested in the community may not share the same view about the community. For example, some may have a more business-oriented community and others have more culture-related interests. People may have different political interpretations towards the redress and the reconstruction of the community after the redress. Moreover, community can be many different things, including a local community, an imagined community, a transnational community, and so on. Here, since my focus is on personal identity construction rather than community itself, I will not discuss the concept of community further. The community in this thesis means the collective human activities with the space where people practice activities. A community organization means a group with its name, the definition of the group and its

members, and the members, regardless of their activities or the level of recognition by Greater Vancouver society. This research has employed “homogeneous samples” (pp. 235-236) in terms of the degree of community engagement and the type of the community activities. Among those different types of community activities, this research selected people who are actively involved in the cultural and social side of the community as core members. Of course this does not necessarily mean that the informants are not engaged in other aspects of the community, such as politics or business, nor do those things, culture, politics, social groups, and business exclude each other. They all intermingle with each other. What is meant here is that this research focused more on the cultural and social side rather than others. On the other hand, this research also used the strategy of “maximum variation sampling” (pp. 234-235) among the core members of the community, aiming at finding some commonalities as well as the degree of the diversity among the members of the Japanese Canadian community. Therefore, the selection criteria were 1) the interests and engagement in the cultural and social side of the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver, 2) the variety of their ethnic background, or in other words, the different ways of being to some extent Japanese within the cultural and social side of the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver area.

The informants were recruited from Japanese Canadian community organizations, such as Tonari Gumi/Japanese Community Volunteers Association, Powell Street Festival Society, The National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Centre, the 20th Redress Anniversary, and Japanese Canadian community media and other organizations. All but one informant have been involved for years in the Powell Street Festival, which is one of the biggest and most important events in the community, as staff, volunteers, artists, or in other ways. In order to obtain various perspectives, I also tried to include a person from a group who is not involved in the Powell Street Festival; in a way, this person can be seen as an informant from a minority within the minority group in Greater Vancouver.

Applying the criteria, most of the informants were selected based on their active involvement in community organization and can therefore be considered “core” members of the community. As a result, the informants are all in the age range of 30 to 40, except one person who was introduced to me as an elder of a community organization. However, other aspects of their backgrounds varied considerably. For example, not all of them are from Vancouver. Some of them are from the Greater Vancouver area, while others are from outside of British Columbia, from Japan, or from neither of the two countries, which also means that their nationalities are more than either Japan or Canada. Their generations vary from Issei, Nisei, Sansei, to Yonsei, and their ethnic background is also different, such as, mixed race, non-Japanese descent, Zainichi Korean, and Okinawan.

The interviews were conducted either in English or Japanese, depending on the interviewees’ preference. Each interview took one to two hours. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and, if necessary, translated.

In addition to those informants, even though I already had a general idea about my answers before, I included myself as the tenth “interviewee.” Since I am also a member of the Japanese Canadian community and involved in the Powell Street Festival and other activities as a volunteer and influenced by the community as well as having other relationships outside of the community and am influenced by them, such as the university I attend and the wider society in which I participate, I have stories and experiences that can be shared with those of other participants in this research. Being interviewed myself and articulating my thoughts also enabled me to show my perspective and standpoint towards this research. I had someone else interview me and analyzed my story in the same way as others’ stories. Because there was someone else in the role of interviewer, how I answered had to make sense to the listener, so it was a good experience for me to formulate thoughts I had never written out in that way.

4.6. Limitation

There are several limitations to this research. First, this research did not investigate much about the intersectionality of identity. Intersectionality “situates identity as multiple and layered and existing at once within systems of both oppression and privilege” (Jones, 2009, p. 289). This is quite an important part of identity. However, this research, focusing more on the ethnic side of identity, did not include people with layers of differences such as queer Japanese Canadians or Japanese Canadians with a disability to name a few, even though I have met many such people. Another limitation is that I did not include more people in this research. I have met a much wider variety of people in terms of race and ethnicity through my community involvement, such as a Black musician from South Africa who has lived and worked in Japan for more than 10 years and who now lives in Vancouver. Other people not included in the study include: a Caucasian person who practices Japanese dance; a person of mixed Black and Asian heritage from the Caribbean, where any Asian is basically considered Chinese; new immigrants who practice Japanese festival music; a band of Okinawa people who play J-pop; a Chinese woman who practices the Japanese tea ceremony; or a second generation Japanese Canadian who does not like to be identified as Japanese Canadian because she has nothing to do with the redress or the Powell Street, to name a few. I did not include those with other age groups nor different language speakers from Japanese or English, either. The third limitation is that this research did not include those who are not involved in the community, or who are involved with other types of community organizations within the Japanese Canadian community. There would be more variety of people who have an awareness of their Japanese-ness to some extent if the research had looked at a wider range of the population. As Marie C. Hoepfl (1997) argues, this limitation in the range commonly arises when conducting qualitative research. In other words, this research does not aim to reach conclusions about people in the Japanese Canadian community in general. Rather, it tries to understand a certain type of story by people in a certain area, Greater

Vancouver, in a certain era, 2009. On the other hand, limiting the range can be also the strength in this research as it can be said that even though the population is limited, there are already many complexities in the community.

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter explored the method of how the complexity of the identity situation of the member of the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver was studied in this research. This explained the methodology that the research employs and discussed interviewing as the suitable method to collect the information for the research. The way to analyze the data, the landscape of this research, and the research participants are also introduced as well as the limitation of the research.

Based on this methodology, this paper attempts to understand the identity construction of the members of Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver and their relationships with their community through close interviews with them. In the next chapter I will present the findings and discuss the results in the context of this theoretical framework and the methodology.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I first introduce the interviewees' stories about their background, life, community involvement, and their understanding of who they are. Second, I analyze the stories of the interviewees based on the themes discussed at Chapter 3 as well as with the methodology examined at Chapter 4. The names used here are pseudonyms, which I selected based on the real names of the informants. For example, I used English pseudonyms for those whose names are English and Japanese pseudonyms for those whose names are Japanese. When the name could be both English and Japanese, I selected a pseudonym that sounds like both.

5.2. James

“I’ve never felt so Canadian until I went to Japan. And yet, in Canada, I feel the most Japanese.”

5.2.1. Background and growing up

Three of James' grandparents are from Japan and one is from Vancouver. James describes himself as a third or fourth generation but mostly third generation Japanese Canadian. He grew up in Coquitlam where “there were not very many Asians.” He remembers that he was “always different than most of [his] peers when [he] was growing up in school.” In elementary school, he started Japanese school, but it was too much for him; he says, “I actually rejected kind of being Japanese. I wanted to be more white.” He finally met and befriended another Asian at junior high school, but this did not change his attitude. This desire to be white continued until he went to college.

He describes himself as “quite white washed” with “all Caucasian friends”; he says, “I didn’t really think of myself of very Asian when I was really young. And I always try to be as Caucasian as possible.” His attitude may have been related to the social conception of Japan when he was a child. He remembers the era that he grew up in below,

It wasn’t until maybe I was in later years of elementary school when Japanese things became cool. So earlier when I was growing up, Japanese stuff wasn’t cool at all. And when *ninjas* came out, people started learning about *samurai*, and *sushi* became popular, then all of a sudden it became actually cool to be Japanese. But previous to that, Japanese people were not for good things because they were known to the War, they were known for making bad cars and bad, basically bad everything. Electronics stuff were not very good, cars are not very good. So Japan was not known for being very strong or smart or good people. [...] back in the 70s, nobody, not many people drove Japanese cars. Not many people bought Japanese things unless they had to. [...] and *sushi* was considered really gross [...] because raw fish was considered gross. So when I was growing up, I didn’t eat any *sushi*, I didn’t start eating *sushi* until probably college. [...] it really became popular in last probably, last 10 years.

When he was in university, he met more Asians and started learning Japanese. He also got into a relationship with a Japanese woman, and this was one of the reasons that he became more interested in Japan.

5.2.2. Experience in Japan

With those interests in Japan, James traveled to Japan for the first time when he was 21 years old, and this was a really important moment for him to connect to his heritage.

For the first month I stayed with my relatives in Hiroshima, and that was my first real, I guess, taste of Japanese hospitality of Japanese culture. So I stayed for a month in Hiroshima, like uncle and aunt. And during that time, I saw all the good things about Japanese things like how nice they were to visitors and how nice they were to family. I got to visit a lot of places. They took me to Fukuoka, they took me to Okayama, Yamaguchi, so I got to see quite a bit. [...] And I also went to Tokyo for a month and I stayed there, we rented our apartment for a month, from a friend. And that friend was actually a friend of friend, and they took really good take care of us, and they didn’t even know us. But they took us with them everywhere. They showed us around, took shopping, they took Sunday trips, and they were really really nice to us. And after that, I went to Chiba, stayed with my girlfriend’s parents. And they are also very nice.

This kind of experience made him realize the differences between Japan-as-experienced-in-Japan and Japan from TV or from his parents' stories about his grandparents.

So at the end of all this, I figure that well, it was really interesting to see how Japanese people live, and not just what I've seen on TV or what I've heard from my parents or from my grandparents. So the first time I actually got to see what real Japan is like and I really liked it. And I was proud to be Japanese after that. So I really liked culture and I really liked people especially really friendly.

Back from the trip, he continued to study Japanese in university, and after university he went to Japan again to teach English there. This time, it was not just a trip but he actually lived there. He remembers, "I could understand more because I could read Japanese, I could speak Japanese, and then I could actually understand a lot more than what I had previously. So, yes so that after all that I really liked how people are very kind to me"

5.2.3. Community

In 2001, after James was back from Japan, he started volunteering at *Tonari Gumi*, a Japanese Canadian Volunteers Association that provides social and cultural services mainly for Japanese speaking seniors,² because he "wanted to give something back to Japanese people." Through *Tonari Gumi*, he became involved in more community activities, such as Save the Legacy Sakura of Oppenheimer Park coalition³, the Japanese Canadian redress anniversary⁴, and Honouring Our People.

One of the reasons that James became involved in *Tonari Gumi* was that his grandfather was involved in establishing *Tonari Gumi* about 35 years ago.

I joined *Tonari Gumi*, I met a lot of people that knew my grandfather, and I learned about a lot of the good things he did for the community, [...] so they are always telling me your grandfather help me do this, or your grandfather helped with the redress movement or

² <http://www.jcva.bc.ca/indexj.html>

³ <http://legacysakura.wordpress.com/>

⁴ <http://redressanniversary.najc.ca/redress/>

helped with the *Bukkyo-kai*⁵. So those kinds of things inspired me to want to become more involved with *Tonari Gumi*.

In *Tonari Gumi* both Japanese and English are spoken, and there is a mix of generations. He talked about the Legacy Sakura as well. Legacy Sakura are the gift of cherry trees from Japan, and *Tonari Gumi* members planted them in Oppenheimer Park in 1977. This was a part of the Japanese Canadian Centennial in 1977 (Masutani, 2010, p. 55). However, in 2008, the City of Vancouver decided to cut some of the trees for the park's renovation⁶. So the Japanese Canadian community started a coalition to save the Legacy Sakura trees.

[Legacy Sakura] originally started, for us to coalition, started April 2008 and we didn't really know how long it would take because the first objective was just to save the trees. And after that, well we didn't save all the trees. But we also didn't want this to happen ever again. So we wanted to make sure that everybody remembers the trees, 30 years later, and hopefully we don't have to do this again, we want to make sure that there is commemoration. So that's why we've got involved with the committee to ensure that there is some sort of commemoration so there is a kind of some writing on the actual field house that's gonna be there. And there is also some sort of plaque and picture so people will actually remember why those trees are planted and hopefully they are never gonna cut them down again.

He is involved in the community not only to connect to Japanese people as a new dimension of his life, but also to connect to his roots and history. In the community, his goal is "to join the different organizations within the Japanese community." He explains:

I would like to consolidate them and bring them together. [...] There was a lot of conflicts in the 80s. There was a lot of conflicts between Japanese Canadian groups, and that has lasted for the last 20 years. And it still hasn't stopped. Because a lot of those people are board members of these groups, and then they want to keep their groups just their groups. And people like myself, and I think like Keith, Ken, they wanna bring the groups together so that we can all share resources, we can share each others' knowledge, and it's I think it's more fun to be involved and participate in other groups than just one group all the time.

5 Buddhist Temple

6 <http://vancouver.ca/parks/info/planning/oppenheimer/index.htm>

Other than this situation based on the history, he is also very aware of the Japanese speaking group and English speaking group in the community.

Language is always one of the biggest barriers. And if Japanese person can't speak any English, it'll be obviously very difficult vice versa. Japanese Canadians can't speak Japanese and somebody who can't speak any English, then getting together is a big problem, so language is the most important thing. Building, I guess to bridge, either one of them has to learn the other language. And hopefully each of them understands both languages ideally. So that's what I've done is I've tried to study Japanese so I can understand more things because not everything is translated in English so I can't understand everything unless I actually understand Japanese language, so that's why I've tried to study about Japanese language.

However, the language is not the only difference that they have. He explains the differences between Japanese and Japanese Canadians.

There is a difference between the two. I found myself definitely with the Japanese Canadian group with the way I think, and I guess [...] Japanese Canadians are definitely hybrid. So we, we understand I think, most of Japanese culture, not all, we don't necessary agree with all of it, we at least understand most of it. And so we accept most Japanese cultural ideas. But definitely not all.

He gave some examples of his selective attitude as Japanese Canadian towards Japanese things.

One example is the attitude toward smoking and the other thing is racism.

I found it's very strange because generally, Japanese people are very caring about other people. So it was very opposite thing to do for people to smoke near other non-smokers. Inside of building or inside of a car, inside of anything. Whereas in Canada, you are not allowed to smoke near somebody who doesn't want to smoke, and I think that's much more fair, so that was one big difference, which was strange because usually, Japanese people are very considerate. They think about other people, and what they think before themselves, and usually Canadians are the opposite, but in this case, for some reason Japanese people are the opposite. I don't know why, so that's one thing that I don't understand.

I really like how considerate they are, and very hospitable, especially towards strangers. I think both Canada and Japan there's a racist people. And there are people like I guess the right wing Japanese people who are very against immigration, they are very against other people with something. So one of the things I really don't like was a like for example, Korean Japanese who was born in Japan, is not considered as Japanese. They are still considered as Korean even though they've been born there, even though they are 3rd of 4th or 5th generation, they are still considered Koreans not Japanese people. So that part, I

didn't like and there is like the "Uyoku7," that group is very against, well I guess, the new ways of Japan. So I like some of the cultural things about Japan and that they are very considerate about others usually, but they also have very right wing group that's too old style or too old fashion thinking.

5.2.4. Identity

James also told me about people around him. Through the community involvement or another way, he met very different kinds of people, yet all had something in common.

... our board of director of *Tonari Gumi* there are two people who are Caucasian they have no Japanese roots whatsoever, and the only reason, well there is two reasons, I guess. One reason is some of them married Japanese people. So they are involved in our community. Or they just really like the way Japanese people are. They want to give back and help Japanese people. So they've chosen to do so. And in fact, those two people, they speak Japanese a lot better than I do.

... [at the redress anniversary event panel that I organized,] there was two people that are half, one as David, [...]. He is half, his mother is Japanese and his father is Canadian. And the opposite is Christy that is Japanese [father] and her mother was Caucasian, but she was born in Japan and he was born in Canada. And I think both of them experienced racism but in opposite countries for the opposite reasons. So a lot of Japanese people didn't like her because she was half white. A lot of Canadian didn't like him because he is half Japanese. And when they went to the other country, he really liked Japan, and when she came to Canada, she really liked Canada. [...] they are pretty interesting people because they are both half and they both have, that the same story but opposite stories.

I have actually Korean Japanese friend. She is born in Japan. Well her I think her grandparents are from Korea. So she was born in Japan, her parents are born in Japan, they speak Japanese at home. But her last name is Lee. She is in Japan, [...] she knows exactly what is like to be Japanese but not really be Japanese. I think she only considers herself Korean. Even though she knows more about Japanese culture than I do and she speaks Japanese fluently but her last name is Lee so she is not Japanese.

For him, being Japanese Canadian means being hybrid, partly because the way other people see him is different from how he sees himself, and partly because his existence in this society where idea of ethnicity is structured in a particular way is a bit complicated.

When I went to Japan, the first time I went to Japan, I felt very Canadian, and when I was growing up in Canada, I always felt like I'm obviously different physically from people and my last name is Takahashi so I'm Japanese [...] because that was very common question where are you from. And I was saying I'm from Canada, people would say now

7 "Right-wing"

where are your parents from, when I say it's Canada, and they would be confused. So I would have to say okay my grandparents they are from Japan, so they say oh you are Japanese. And I always thought no I'm Canadian, but nobody ever accepted me as being Canadian they always recognized me as being Japanese. And when I went to Japan, unless I talked, everybody accepted me as Japanese person, I could walk around Japan and being invisible but when I talked, I was Canadian. And when people knew me, they recognized me as being more Canadian than Japanese.

At the same time, he himself takes being hybrid as a positive thing. He came to this conclusion after all the struggles and experiences in his life. The stories above are just a few examples, but this is how and what he tells he is at this moment.

So I accept, I try, not every case but I try to accept about good things about Japanese people, and I try to practice it myself so I try to be hospitable [...] so I've tried to take the considerate part I think the good things of Japanese people are being considerate, like well, it's trying to be punctual, hard working, those things that I see in Japanese people and I try to do myself, doesn't always work, but I try to do that. and the bad things that I see like the racist part, I try to avoid and I try to, I mean, I've had racist thing happened against me but I try not to do that to others. So I do have very Canadian mentality I love playing hockey, I love outdoors, so I do have very Canadian side of me. But I also try to do braise both sides. And I'm very aware of my physical being is that I am Asian, and I look Asian, but when I was a young kid, I didn't even think of myself as Asian I just thought myself as being a white kid very much. And I was anti-Japanese. I didn't like, I didn't try to speak Japanese, I didn't eat Japanese food, and I try to do everything as Canadian as possible. And now I accept I guess the Asian-ness or Japanese-ness. So that's why I think I'm rather hybrid.

5.3. Ken

“Those kind of I guess external expectations automatically start making you question: ‘should I know this?’ and if I don't know, it is a reflection of me somehow not being as complete a person, I guess, as I should be.”

“It's kinda cool to have these different cultural backgrounds. It's nice to go to another country and have like family and friends there”

5.3.1. Background

Ken is a second generation Japanese Canadian. His parents came from Japan in the late 1960s.

He is the youngest of three children. He remembers that his parents “tried best to raise [them] as ‘Canadian’ as possible.” His first language was Japanese, though he switched to English pretty

quickly. He says this is partly because of his family situation. He remembers, “My brother is 7 years older and my sister is 4 years older so they are quite a bit older, and they spoke English naturally by the time I was kinda aware of what’s going on.” Surrounded by this environment, he did not see the point of speaking Japanese, and resisted learning it. He says, “It’s kinda like a, you are forcing me to be in an environment that isn’t relevant and also isn’t a very comfortable to me because everyone else is doing this why do I need to do that?” At the same time, he also mentions the connection to Japanese things in his family, “I remember as a kid I used to go down to the area and pick up groceries and stuff once a year for the *Oshogatsu*”

5.3.2. Growing up

Ken grew up in the Greater Vancouver area, and even though his parents tried to raise him as Canadian as possible and he refused to learn Japanese, he says it was impossible not to notice the differences. One of the things that made him notice was the expectation of other people around him.

The biggest thing that in retrospective I think about was how much friends and teachers expect I knew about the culture. And I didn’t know. So people thought, well you are Japanese therefore you should know what this cultural thing is, or somebody in my class brings back something from Japan like their dad had a business trip or something and bought something back from Japan and ask me what is this or how you use it. I don’t know. I’ve never seen this before. But they assume you know. Or they ask different types of food or they ask you have *sushi* everyday for dinner ... those kind of I guess external expectations automatically start making you question, “should I know this?” and if I don’t know it is a reflection of me somehow not being as complete a person, I guess, as I should be.

5.3.3. Experience in Japan

These kinds of situations naturally made Ken start questioning about himself, and he made a trip to Japan in 2001. He had been to Japan before that, but he was still a child and did not really have the freedom to explore Japan as he liked. So he says, this time in 2001, “I just really tried to

learn about the culture at my pace. And then looking at what I want to see and just trying to observe differences.” This style of traveling made him realize many things about his way of being.

You just started pick up different things like this is the reason why I like to do things in this way, now I understand why because you know, my parents grew up in this culture and transfers those values to me. And that’s the reason why I tend to like to do things this way which isn’t always how my friends wanna do it. So those kind of things I started understand.

He told me one example of those values that his parents practiced that was different from his friends.

... like the way it’s supposed to be done, there is a way it should be done. Those kind of things or, what’s another one, trying to resolve differences not necessarily through any kinds of outward conflicts. That’s something my parents just really didn’t create right. We had a couple of troublesome kids in our neighbourhood while I was growing up. And they do just stupid things [...] I never quite could understand why my parents just didn’t go out and strangle them because you know that’s what I wanted to do. But then they just sort of resolved issues in different ways I think

Through the trip to Japan, he realized “how those values are a more little bit common to Japanese society than here.”

5.3.4. Community

After the trip to Japan, Ken started volunteering at *Tonari Gumi* in 2001. He went to Japan again from 2003 to 2005 to teach English with The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program.

Coming back, he started working for *Tonari Gumi* as an executive director. He remembers the influence of the trip to Japan in 2001 on his life after that.

So really what happened was in 2001 and I went to Japan for the 1st time by myself. And this was kind of exploring country then, and I think that’s sort of peak to my interest in terms of my cultural background whereas before I really didn’t have that much of interest or I had rarely explored that before. And so when I came back from the summer in Japan, I thought well, I wanna continue learning more of my culture and background.

He says that he started joining for “more of selfish reason. There is more to learn more to myself, than contributing to Japanese community,” but at the same time, “this is a volunteer-based organization so you have to end up contributing if you wanna get to be part of it, which is really great. So I got to meet a lot of different people, and I met few other people who are in my similar boat as I was or I am. And it’s been a really good experience.” Thus he might have started with his interest in Japanese, but this relationship with *Tonari Gumi* has developed more than that. He says through working in *Tonari Gumi*, he has also gotten to meet a lot of different communities such as cultural groups, groups of Downtown Eastside (DTES) areas, city workers, churches, the locals in DTES, and social services and health providers. Among those diverse activities, one particular story he told me was about the Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration⁹.

What happened was there is a Japantown cultural view that the city had done¹⁰. That was completed last year, right. And one I met there was some people from Vancouver Japanese language school and thought we should do something to help, you know, do something for 80th anniversary for diplomatic relationship of Japan and Canada¹¹. And we thought maybe we could do a festival or some sort of event to celebrate the release of this Japantown historical view. So then and the area is called Japantown, and the release is called the historical views of Japantown, so it makes sense to call Japantown. As soon as we did [started calling the event Japantown], we got all these people saying like you know, is it just Japanese culture [?] [...] we had so many those kind of comments, so then we had to try to emphasise the fact that there is a lot going on in that community there is a very wide range of Filipino and Latino communities as well. [...] so we wanted to try to do something to emphasise the diversity of the area. [...] I think that was successful in that sense of highlighting diversity.

Eventually the event became not just about the celebration of Japanese Canadian history but about the celebration of the diversity of the area that was used to be called Japantown. He says that the area “is a bit neglected” compared to other neighbourhoods such as Chinatown, Strathcona, and Commercial Drive, so the event wanted to raise awareness of the neighbourhood.

9 http://www.vjls-jh.com/en/ex/jmcn_programme_e-version.pdf

10

http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/dtes/pdf/Powell%20Street_Japantown%20Historical%20Cultural%20Review.pdf

11 <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/canada/pamphlet.pdf>

“We’ve made it as local as you possibly could.” And there was so much diversity from Flamenco dancers to Filipino music to workers’ group and so on. He says “I was probably the least aware of how diverse the area was, is, and how much talent and you know the culture and the art, all that [...] for me, it was really a great experience. I really enjoyed it.”

He really enjoys the work at *Tonari Gumi*, saying, “It’s really fulfilling and it says that you know, I think we can, I think I do just especially in my position here, we can do a lot to help the community and help people, that’s really important, and again just because of the nature of this organization, it’s connected to so many different you know, elements.”

The more people you talk to the more people you meet, the bigger view you have of the community of the cultural background and you know of the Japanese people’s characteristics, and that always helps you question other components or learn more about things in general, [...] it just learning more about a culture and society.

Through *Tonari Gumi*, he wants to provide better service for and advocacy work about “minority minorities.” He believes it is important for “minority minorities to have a voice to a lot of things.” He would also like to learn Japanese and cultural things about Japan through the community. He now has a daughter, and is really aware of and thinking about how to raise her. “I would like her to obviously be a very confident person in everyday life, but I think it’s very important for her to understand cultural background. So I like to have maybe a bit more balance than perhaps I would have when I was a child growing up.” He mentions the change of the environment around minorities in Vancouver.

When I was a kid, if you spoke like different language, or you have different background, people make fun of you, you know, sometimes not always some people would. But I hear now that there is a some kids who only speak English, they are getting made fun of. People who get to speak like 2 or 3 languages, it’s like “you get to only speak one language?” kinda like wow it’s pretty changed.

5.3.5. Identity

Having those experiences in his life, Ken talks about his being in-between. “Especially for somebody who is like a Nisei, because you are really really are in between two distinct cultures”

So to me I have like two communities. I have you know, friends from all different backgrounds, but also I have friends in the community and contacts and acquaintances in the community. So those two communities are I think I feel really comfortable with, and again it just really help me learn more about myself and being comfortable, reliabilities and all that stuff. Ah, and then and just it’s also a bit of a sense of pride to see what kinds of contributions Japanese Canadians and Japanese culture has been able to make to Canada. [...] It’s kinda cool to have these different cultural backgrounds. It’s nice to go to another country and have like family and friends there [...] there is a lot of neat things makes the world smaller, I have a lot of things to talk about to my friends, you know, those kind of I guess relatively small things [...] that make a big difference.

5.4. Toko

“People who met me would say things like, ‘Oh, oh you don’t look very Japanese.’ like it was compliment. You know, ‘Oh you look, you could pass, you know, white,’ which was confusing. I didn’t know, it’s like they meant it as compliment. But why should that be a compliment?”

“We may not actually be visible, visibly a minority, but that’s the way we are still treated and perceived so by the mainstream society. So I don’t yeah I haven’t necessarily always identified as Japanese but I have from most of my life identify, felt, like something not, something other.”

5.4.1. Background

Toko is a mixed race Japanese Canadian from Vancouver. Her mother is third generation Japanese American, and her father is second generation Jewish American. Her parents were both born in the United States, and immigrated to Canada. She says, “So I’m the 1st generation to actually born in Canada, but I’m 4th generation for North America.” She thinks that she was quite influenced by her parents who are “very non-mainstream people.” She thinks that “through them I was exposed to a lot of different people, a lot of different arts and viewpoints.” Now, she is more engaged in her Japanese side than in her Jewish side. She says, “I think because we are not

religious and my dad does not [...] have a community here. He [...] cooks some dishes, some meals, you know Passover and few other occasions but besides foods, no.”

5.4.2. Growing up

Toko, as a mixed race person, had various experiences that would be different from non-mixed race children. She talked about her experience as a school child:

When I entered high school, there was a large Jewish population and very large Asian population. So but not a lot of mixed people. So people are very quick, you know they would stick to their cultural groups, so I didn't, you know I didn't really have any. My group of friends was sort of all the few mixed people and just random. You know, it wasn't based on ethnicity, although you are mostly all some kind of visible minority.

She also mentions the reaction, evaluation of others about her mixed situation. “People who met me would say things like, ‘Oh, oh you don't look very Japanese’ like it was a compliment. You know, ‘Oh you look, you could pass,’ you know, white, which I was it was confusing. I didn't know it's like they meant it as compliment. But why should that be a compliment?” However her “complimentary” appearance does not always made her free from racism.

People just racial slurs, and yelling at them, and I have I was walking on Main street one day with a few friends. We were all Asian. And some guy yelled out of a car. I can't remember what they said any more, but they yelled out something totally racist. And it was, you don't expect that in Vancouver, and this day and age, but people still do it.

Moreover, when she was younger, she was involved in the indie rock music community where “there was very few women, and very few Asian people.” She experienced racial assumptions as well. “In terms of my ethnicity, only very minor you know people making assumption, ‘Oh you speak English very well’ or you know ‘where are you from?’ or you know, just assumptions which they used to bother me a lot more but not quite so much but you know ‘When are you going back to Japan?’ I've never been to Japan!” Thinking back that to time, she now reflects, “I think that was also a bit of internalized not racism but why should that be so offensive for

someone to think you are from somewhere. Like I shouldn't be offended if someone thinks that I am Japanese. I am Japanese. It's just maybe assumption that all Japanese people don't speak English even if they are in Canada." Also she told me a story at the Powell Street Festival about the CD that she was involved in. For the CD, a Japanese female artist designed the art work.

So she [the artist] had a booth at the Powell Street Festival, and she was selling our CDs, and a journalist for the Sun I think, he came across the CD. He thought that was a band from Japan. And he did a whole review of the CD, thinking that it was from Japan, talking all about J-Pop, pop culture and all you know this and that and analysing it and thinking having this completely other idea of in his head of what they were. And I was horrified I mean he didn't say anything terrible but that was very stereotypical and generalized and really frustrating because there are a lot of older Caucasian men who are quite fascinated with this idea of what Japanese woman is like. And I just couldn't believe, you know if he looked close, he would have seen that we are from Vancouver, but it didn't matter.

5.4.3. Community

Now Toko works as the executive director of The National Nikkei Museum & Heritage Centre. Before that, she worked and volunteered for the Powell Street Festival for a long time since she was a young child. She remembers she was always surrounded by the Japanese Canadian community people because her mother was involved in a *taiko* group.

I think I'm exposed to the community forever. My mom is involved in *taiko*. So since I think that, *Katari Taiko* started in '79, and I was just a baby so you know for my entire life, I've been around a lot of Japanese people, artists, and at least *taiko* part of the community. So that was not something I was unfamiliar with. But I you know I have never been to Japan. [...] I felt [Japanese Canadian community] was that was very familiar and I was very comfortable and you know being around other people in the community. I don't think I was, I don't think I really ever knew as a child what *taiko* represented in the culture. I think it was just oh that's Japanese drumming, oh that's my mom, oh these are family and friends, because my parents both immigrated, we have no family here. So that community was sort of our family.

On the other hand, her relation to the physical community is more symbolic. "I was born here, but my family, I don't have any literal roots to the Powell street. [...] [my mom] was still from America, she was interned so and she was involved in the redress movement. But I don't have any history here, I just have appreciation I guess."

She has been involved in the Powell Street Festival for a long time. From her viewpoint, the festival is “a Japanese Canadian festival, but that means Japanese, Canadian, Japanese Canadian, it really means everyone, but they use the term Japanese Canadian.” Through her community involvement, she has been learning a lot about the Japanese Canadian community and who the members are more than this notion. She continues, “I assumed that ‘Japanese Canadian’ was the accepted term for anyone here living here even if they are originally from Japan [...] I just thought that was fine. And then I’ve learned since then that some people are not fine with that.” She further explains the diversity of the community as,

I think I’ve just learned about the community [...] as I became more involved in the festival, which really does represent so many aspects of community. And so I became aware that the community is really really diverse. And some people identify as being a part of community who others may not. And just because of the fact that you know the Japantown that used to exist in Vancouver doesn’t any more and because of the experiences of the people during the war, and post war, there are so many different experiences. [...] Some people identify as Japanese, some as Japanese Canadian. Some people probably just want to be called Canadian. So I don’t really know. I think I’ve become a part of the organization which really wants to celebrate the whole community, because, I don’t know you know I don’t know what the distinction is. I know that being here they found this some term wanted to be called *Nikkei*, so that it would reflect everybody. But some people don’t even know what that means. [...] I know that there is a lot of people they just don’t happen to be Japanese like Roddy, he is Japanese to me, you know. You know I would you know he is a part of the community, more than you know. So it’s always kind of case by case situation. And really I think if they if someone identifies that they married in or they just really love the culture, then I have no problem with them, being part of the community.

She also told me another side of the festival that would even broaden the definition of the community member.

[the festival] is not only about culture but it’s about grassroots and activism and artists and so I think back a few decades ago, they it was Asian Canadian arts community and there still is I think. A real interconnectedness, and a lot of Chinese Canadians felt very connected to the Powell Street Festival even though it was Japanese, it was a very welcoming place for everybody. So that was also something that I really liked about the festival. And I think why when I was there we did reach out more to do to more collaborative kinds of events.

Thus, the festival is not just about Japanese Canadians or whatever people define, but also for everybody with collaboration/hybridization.

For her, the community is “part of [her] heritage” and “[her] way of connecting with [her] heritage” as well as “part of [her] identity.” She told the various ways that she wants to contribute to the community. She thinks that it is important for her to give back since she has been brought up in the community. She also sees there is still a need to rebuild the community after the Second World War experience as well as the need “to educate people about what happened during the War, and even pre-war.” She thinks that education is the only way to stop the racism that still exists in the society.

Moreover, she really wants to support artists in the community. She says it does not mean there is no artists in the community but there could be more. She wants to offer support for them to emerge by, for example, creating an opportunity to perform. She says, “They are not necessarily gonna get their first shows at art gallery, the Vancouver Art Gallery. So to have, I think, Japanese specific organization who they know they can go to to get support. I think that’s important.” This is also the mandate of the Powell Street Festival. She says,

Powell Street Festival, they’ve always had fairly strict guideline in terms of who is presented on stage. Because their mandate is really about supporting the artists as sort of more importantly over the art form [...] Powell Street Festival has prioritised the artists. So let’s say you (Japanese) actually wanted to be a violin player. You playing the violin would have more priority than Caucasian person playing the *koto*.

This philosophy is based on the reality that racism that still exists. She says,

“[racism] is not all overt. [...] but it comes out and way that people don’t have equal opportunities, and it still it still see a lot of, representation is lacking, whether it’s media or hiring of staff or a lot of different aspects of our culture, our society, somehow I feel it, people are still not given opportunities or encouragement. And somehow we need to do”

She also believes, “if we don’t have a physical neighbourhood, I think there is a need for events and festivals and facilities for people to come to.”

At the same time, she understands that there is an English speaking population and a Japanese speaking population in the community and hopes that there can be more of a connection. She finds that the Powell Street Festival Society (PSFS) is a heavily English oriented organization and has difficulty reaching Japanese speaking artists. The festival has Japanese as well as Japanese Canadian content, but she believes there should be more artists that PSFS is supposed to reach. Being an English speaker herself, she admits she did not know where to find them. Also, the volunteers and board members create a heavily English speaking environment.

5.4.4. Experience in Japan

Toko does not have many experiences of Japan compared to the other Japanese Canadians who I interviewed. She has traveled to Japan, and she describes her experiences as “I didn’t really have any connection. It was more like as a tourist.” As a worker for the Powell Street festival, she says she always wanted to go to a traditional *matsuri*¹². However she says, “The only other festival I’ve been to is actually in L.A. so I have not been to a festival in Japan. I’ve seen, you know, video footage of it. And so I think for some of those traditional elements you can’t get a taste of it here.” On the other hand, she is aware of the diversity within Japan, and just watching a couple of festivals would not be anything. She seems more interested in J-Pop culture, and she talked about it as she found it when she went to San Francisco. For her, it does not matter so much where she can access the Japanese culture that she is interested in. Especially when her interest is J-Pop, it is available in any big cities in the world.

5.4.5. Identity

Being in these environments, Toko talks about her life as “I’ve had pretty easy time. I’ve been exposed to so many things for my entire life, not in mainstream society. Not in school. But I

¹² Festival

think I've always been mainstream society not really for me anyways. So hasn't been an issue." She talks about their parents as "very untraditional" and she has "been brought up in a different kind of environment. She remembers her university life as she "went to UBC which is you know very conservative school, but [she's] immediately involved with the radio station which is extremely not, they are very underground. So [she] spent most of [her] time at UBC at the radio station." She thinks herself as she "probably consciously remove [herself] [from mainstream]"

It sounds like she was, under her parents, a naturally off-mainstream person and accepted it as such. Her ethnic identity for her may be not a special thing but just one of those differences in her life. However, when she speaks about her ethnic identity, she clearly distinguishes Japanese Canadian and Japanese. "I am not sure if I've ever thought very connected to Japan. But I think I definitely thought connected to the Japanese Canadian community. [...] So I don't know I think it was probably only when I started working at the Powell Street Festival I became more interested in Japanese culture."

She also mentioned that being off-mainstream is not just about her parents or the way she is. This is about how society treats her as well.

I will never identify that's just Canadian. I guess it's not that I really identify as strictly Japanese, because I don't know the culture as it is in Japan. but one thing I think is just being visibly something else as my whole life having to that's how I'm perceived so I honestly don't understand how someone could identify as just like anyone else if they are perceived by the entire society as something else. I'm not justifying anything but I know we talked about we may not actually be visible, visibly a minority, but that's the way we are still treated, and perceived so by the mainstream society. So I don't yeah I haven't necessarily always identified as Japanese but I have from most of my life identify, felt, like something not, something other.

5.5. Keiko

"I've always had to try to be who I wanna be. You know like my dad, you know like people around me, just having to, you know, like why why why do I have to fight to be me, what kind of me, why it has to be difficult."

"I'm now 40, and now I'm like finally starting mellow out, not feeling I have to fight to everybody."

5.5.1. Background

Keiko is a second generation Japanese Canadian, born in Winnipeg. Her parents are both from Japan, and all her relatives, such as grandparents, uncles and aunts, still live in Japan. When she was 4 years old her family moved to Calgary, where she started going to school. Her first language was Japanese and she started speaking English when she started going to school.

5.5.2. Growing up

Keiko remembers that growing up in Calgary was hard as she experienced a lot of racism. She told me her experiences in school in the 1970s:

I got always you know things like “chinks,” I got “chinks” a lot, or like you know, “go back to your country,” or like “buck teeth,” you know, everyone always like, you know they do that you know when Asians were called buck teeth, and slanty eyes, and they do the slanted eyes [...] They calling Nip, Nipper like Nippon it was like the, it’s like basically if you are black, they call you Nigger, if you are Japanese, you are Nip, or Chink.

She had such experiences not only in school. Since her father was a university professor, her family lived not in an Asian neighbourhood but in “a kind of middle to upper-middle class neighbourhood.” Her family was the only Asian family except for “the one other family that would have operated the corner store.” She told me how her family was considered in the neighbourhood. “My dad was a liberal minded Japanese, and he had a NDP sign on the lawn. People in my neighbourhood were not NDP. So they were like, not only are they orient but they also have an opinion, how dare you?”

Having Grown up with these experiences, she moved to Vancouver in 2002. Comparing her life in Alberta, she describes life in British Columbia as: “Alberta is still very red neck, right? ... BC is more liberal.” On the other hand, she feels there is still a different kind of racism.

I mean there is different kinds of race, race, racism here. I mean and some level, sometime it's not even that better, like I find that the racism in Alberta quite direct whereas racism here can be very passive aggressive and very like not direct, but it's still there, it's just not as much like, I know that there is often a big Asian kind of racism, uh, discrimination here, you know. People aren't happy with the number of Asian people coming in.

5.5.3. Community

In Vancouver, Keiko runs an art facility now located in Chinatown. She is the owner and the main director, and this facility does “arts, multimedia, arts related events, music events” as well as “DIY arts and crafts facility with the emphasis on screen printing, with the gallery and gift shop.” She is also on the programming committee for the Powell Street Festival. For her, joining the Japanese Canadian community “just seems pretty natural.”

While I grew up, around Japanese community in my whole life. I went to Japanese school, language school as a child. My parents, all their friends were Japanese. I went to Japanese summer camp every year. Japanese was my first language before I started speaking English [...] I guess it's while I was more natural my parents to be in Japanese communities. I naturally just made Japanese friends, you know, kids of the parents' friends. So it's just, it's always been there, you know. My dad always talked at Japanese glossary store, he get off his video tapes from Japanese television, he, you know they spoke mainly Japanese at home. So it's just a natural way.

For her, being in the Japanese Canadian community is quite a natural thing. Although she says that she “happened to be” Japanese Canadian, she likes it a lot and relates positively to it.

I grew up on a lot of cute culture, right, like Sanrio¹³ and... I used to love like all that stuff. I think that's just part of being a girl, too. I mean love cute sister. But Japan is so saturated with cute culture, right. So that's been something that I've always you know loved and been surrounded by, you know, animals, the personifying animals and cute culture, it's very Asian and you know. And I don't know like in terms of colour. I love colour too. Yeah, I guess, I just, I really, I like a lot of Japanese culture and aesthetic and minimalism, and the way they you know look at forms, sort of I guess they are really visual culture, they are visually oriented, and I like that, too. You know I like a lot of different things. I like a lot of difference, you know, other cultures, but you know this one just happened to be mine, right?

She talked about why she likes Japanese related organization as well.

13 A company known by its cute character goods, such as Hello Kitty

I guess I could join some kind of different organization, you know, but I guess I like it feels, I like their, I like how organized they are [laugh], I like how you know kinda very on top of things, and I like how they work, so that I find I like to work with them. [...] If they are not Japanese, they are not as you know like, there is a certain level of efficiency and organized-ness within the Powell Street Festival... maybe it could be because they are Japanese who knows. You know, it could be a cultural thing or it's just the way, you know, it is maybe I think it is partly cultural, to some degree, I mean. I work with different types of organizations and I like how efficient, you know, they get things done, and there is punctual and...

At the same time, she describes something Japanese as ambiguous. "Pretty vague, ambiguous, I put for the word, ambiguous. What's the Japanese for ambiguous? I think it's very ambiguous"

Based on these backgrounds, she runs an art facility in the community. She said that the art facility is itself "a bit of a community." She says that she likes "to hook up other people with other people." In her case, this doesn't only mean "to nurture culture and community in and all and bring artists and community together, like non-artists and artists" but she also wants to offer a space to those who, like her, feel different, especially Japanese girls, and who like cute things.

They [Japanese girls] come here because maybe Japan is too rigid or too formal for, and I think that girls specially have a harder time in Japan with kind of pressure about having to be in a certain way, and I think that a lot of Japanese women especially come here because they want actually to express themselves differently and have freedom to do so. [...] They can meet each other and have common things to talk about. It's nice I think you know. Because I think sometimes you know like if you are not from here, and you don't know that aspect to not being able to do a certain thing is a feel limited and they don't necessarily understand the importance of why you have to you know fight against

She says, "All of those girls are come and they just go crazy like and they are in good shape."

5.5.4. Identity

These activities Keiko does are influenced by her understanding of how wider society treats people like her. She talked about her experience as a Japanese Canadian. One thing she says is "I'm both" and "Happen to be Japanese Canadian," which she "wasn't always happy to be."

I found sometimes that I'm Japanese like that I'm a coloured person. When I looked around, I see other people and then I see Asian families and I forget that that's how

people view me. That's [now how] I see myself. I just see myself as me, right? And I feel quite, you know, Canadian, many ways, but I don't look, you know, Canadian, so sometimes it's confusing. When I'm out, people have a certain reaction to you, then you are like "what are they reacting about?" And then you are like "oh yeah, I forget that I'm not native" you know.

She had to face the reality of her difference. "I've always kind of stuck out whereas I've never lived, grew up in Japan where like everyone around me was Japanese. I don't know what's that sort of feeling is like. So I've always had to struggle with, you know, picking out." At the same time, she mentions, that being different is not what she tries to be. "[Being different is] not like I'm trying to be, that's just always been me as well, you know, I just happened to like things that is different. I've been different, you know all my life. I don't try to be the way I am. I am what I am." After sharing these stories, at the end of our conversation, she said, "I'm now 40, and now I'm like finally starting mellow out, not feeling I have to fight to everybody."

5.6. Michelle

"What Japan is to me, is, well, after all it is my background, I can't cut it off, I can't cut it off, and it is my root. So, even though I live and blend in to Canada, still mental side has been established in Japan and I can't forget it.¹⁴"

5.6.1. Background

Michelle came to Vancouver initially to work at Expo 86. When she came, she had an idea that she might live in Vancouver. She was at Expo 86 not as a writer, but since she was a writer in Japan, she started writing articles about Expo for *Vancouver Shinpo*, a Japanese language newspaper. First she wrote about Expo from the viewpoint of an inside person. After Expo, she stayed in Vancouver and continued to write for *Vancouver Shinpo*. She has also worked for a business firm.

14 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-1

5.6.2. Life in Canada

Michelle likes life in Vancouver, and describes the reasons she moved to Vancouver as, “It is less stressful and bothersome to live in Vancouver. Well, Vancouver is a bit too laid-back, but still there are less bothersome things. And the summer is beautiful. The Expo was from May to October, so I spent the best time in Vancouver¹⁵” She has lived in Vancouver for more than 20 years, and she thinks that her life is pretty much in Canadian society and that she blends in the society. She says, “Well, my office is not related to Japan, so when I am there, Japan is not really related to my life. [...] and stuff related to school is also not related to Japan, yes.¹⁶” Moreover, with such an environment where there are little Japanese elements, it is still easier to live in BC where there are more Asian elements in the society in general. She describes Vancouver as, “British Columbia is, Vancouver is, such a place that there are *sushi* places at the each corner of Broadway, so it’s easy to live. People understand more. I have lived in England, but compared to that, here is easier to live.¹⁷” Nevertheless, she always feels that she is reminded of her Japanese-ness and “the handicap that they think that [she] is Japanese.” She gave me a couple of examples.

Among Canadians, there are those Canadians who like Japan. They talk to me such things and talk to me like “the movie, ‘*Ponyo*’¹⁸ has started last week.” They talk to me such things because I am Japanese otherwise they wouldn’t¹⁹.

I feel I was made fun of and feel frustrated when I have difficulty in communicating. And, well, nothing can be done about this, but you know, when people who grew up here and went to junior high school in the same way get together, I can’t get in the crowd. Or if not that, there are those things like, on the other day, a couple of people were talking about some old TV shows, and I didn’t know it²⁰.

15 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-2

16 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-3

17 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-4

18 Japanese animation movie by a famous director, Hayao Miyazaki

19 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-5

20 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-6

5.6.3. Community

Living in such an environment, Michelle also connects to the Japanese Canadian community through a freelance job as a writer for *Vancouver Shinpo*. She says that she gets to know a lot of people and situations of the Japanese Canadian community through this job while she does not belong to any community organization herself.

Planting cherry trees in Garry Park in Steveston, or the biography of Gihei Kuno²¹, well, like the stories of those people, the book about *Nikkei* fishermen was published, I did those things for last a couple of years. And through that, I get to know *BC Wakayama Kenjin Kai*²². When I went to the Emperor's visit²³, I met them again, and you know I know who they are²⁴.

Since *Vancouver Shinpo* is a newspaper with Japanese language, the people she meets tend to be Japanese speakers unless she writes about an event that was organized by “*Nikkei* people.”²⁵ She talked about some people and groups that she has met. They are basically the Japanese speaking community. One thing she mentioned is that some of these community groups are declining. She feels that they have a difficulty to find members of the new younger generation. Also the community she talks about is not really related to Powell Street.

When thinking about *Nikkei* community²⁶, as I said before, people are less involved in organizations. There must be something. Sometime before, I went to write about *shigin*²⁷, I didn't know *shigin*, but the founder visited the *shigin* club here from Japan. Then later on, I was asked to join them. Well I guess everyone wants new people to join. Otherwise, you know. But on the other hand, there are those ones who remain successfully, such as *Mokuyokai*²⁸. And also ones that are newly established by new people, such as The Japan-Canada Chamber of Commerce²⁹. So well, I wonder how things go, *Nikkei* society. I mean those who came here long time ago³⁰.

21 The first Japanese immigrant to Steveston from Mio city in Japan (Capogna, 2005, p.6)

22 *Kenjin Kai* means an association of people from a certain prefecture. *Wakayama Kenjin Kai* means the association of people from Wakayama prefecture

23 Japanese Emperor and Empress visited Vancouver in 2009.

24 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-7

25 She uses the term “*Nikkei* people” here to describe English speaking Japanese Canadians

26 She uses *Nikkei* here to mean Japanese related community in general.

27 Chanting of a Chinese poem

28 <http://www.mokuyokai.bc.ca/>

29 <http://www.jc-coc.com/>

30 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-8

In the 90s, well, from the late 80s to 90s, when Japan was still in the bubble economy, at that time, when the OK gift shop was on Alberni, at that time, there were so many Japanese souvenir shops on Alberni. Saito was at the corner, and Seaborn etc. everything was there and that area was Japanese souvenir town. But those things are gone. [...] So it was after 86, since I came here, till the first half of the 90s, there were so many Japanese, well, that was the era when the middle aged people traveled a lot. So people used to be souvenir, saying, hey it's Kyosen's store³¹. In the old time that was couch sweater, but in the 80s, 90s, there were so many souvenirs such as maple syrup etc. There was such an era. This isn't really *Nikkei* people, but Japanese people, There were so many middle aged people, well there was young people too, but their power was terrific. They used to come with microbus, like the group of agricultural cooperative and so on, then drop by OK and buy a lot. I miss those things. That generation does not come anymore.³²

When I look at people in Steveston, the life of Sansei and Yonsei has little relationship with *Nikkei*. Probably they don't marry with *Nikkei*, but there are many who marry with Chinese in Richmond. So even though their last name is Japanese, they are not related at all. They have never been to Japan. I guess things are gradually blending in like this.³³

While she witnesses the decline of minor community groups or the Japanese economy, she finds people are still interested in cultural events, such as Powell Street Festival.

They don't really involved in the community usually, but those people still go to the Powell Street Festival. I guess they want to show their children Japanese festival. I hear a lot of people say they went. On the other hand, they don't really care about planting cherry trees or cherry trees are cut³⁴. Yet, they take their children to those places where they can feel culture. If there is *Mochi-tsuki*³⁵ event, especially when it is free, it's free at Nikkei Place, so many people come, and they want to show their children *Mochi-tsuki*. I have been there to report, and yes I see they want to tell their children their culture.³⁶

She feels the younger generation is not engaged in local community groups or political activity but they may be thinking that it is great to show some cultural things for their children. These cultural things are not just Japanese Canadian culture. Some of her friends even take children to Japan and let them temporarily experience Japanese school. She talks about her acquaintance, "Some people spend all summer in Japan. Or you know school finishes in June here, and there is

31 Kyosen is the name of a Japanese celebrity.

32 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-9

33 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-10

34 She is talking about Legacy Sakura

35 Rice-cake making

36 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-11

a month till July 21 [when Japanese school finishes], so some goes for this month³⁷” Some children have great Japanese language skill, and like Japanese culture from contemporary to traditional. For example, she says a son of her acquaintance enjoys shopping for “a COMME des GARCONS³⁸ jacket and [...] *happi*³⁹, [...] and *geta*⁴⁰.”

She also finds that language is a huge barrier that divides the community. In terms of the Powell Street Festival, she thinks the festival is based on English speaking people but not Japanese people, and that may affect who can be involved in the festival. She says, “Maybe that’s why Japanese people or people with working holiday visa wouldn’t be involved in the festival so much, I guess, because of English.⁴¹” Moreover, she remembers there were even some Japanese speaking people who organized a Japanese summer festival about 5 or 6 years ago. She believes that language is a reason that some people are not engaged in the *Nikkei* community.

5.6.4. Identity

With these experiences in Vancouver, Michelle still thinks of herself as Japanese. To her, Japan is background, root, and mental base. She says, “What Japan is to me, is, well, after all it is my background, I can’t cut it off, I can’t cut it off, and it is my root. So, even though I live and blend in to Canada, still mental side has been established in Japan and I can’t forget it.⁴²”

As shown above, she lives as Japanese in Vancouver and has come to know so many different aspects of the Japanese Canadian community, especially the Japanese speaking population, as a writer for the Japanese newspaper. She enjoys it by saying, “Looking at or

37 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-12

38 Japanese fashion brand

39 A kind of coat worn at festivals in Japan

40 Japanese wooden clogs

41 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-13

42 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-1

listening to something new, I can experience through other people's experience. I can get to know something that I didn't even have an interest till I did research about.⁴³” And this is how she is involved in the community.

I said that I was not really related to the community, but through research, and through my friends, there was time when I used to go to Steveston frequently. I enjoyed being with *Nikkei* people. I get to know *Nikkei* community and *Nikkei* fishermen's history etc. so those things, I didn't know them and wouldn't be interested before, but now I have interest in them.⁴⁴

She is now interested in introducing people who want to try something new, especially mothers who are working while raising children and those mothers who have finished child-raising, as she herself has experience of this balance between career and child-raising. One article that she recently wrote is about a woman who started a *Takoyaki*⁴⁵ stand at the night market while raising her child. She says she likes interviewing people, and “I feel wow, and I wish the readers can feel wow too by reading my article.⁴⁶”

5.7. Akie and community elders Kanae and Hiroshi

“If we can spread Okinawa's *icharibachode* spirit in the world, there would be nothing more wonderful.⁴⁷”

This interview was conducted with three people. Akie is the primary interviewee, but there were also two elders of the community. Those elders were not planned as the interviewees; however, Akie thought that it was good and important for me to meet with the elders of the community as well as interview Akie to understand Okinawan identity. Our interview was done not individually, but four of us sit together and had a conversation over tea and Okinawan sweets.

43 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-14

44 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-15

45 Japanese snack with octopus in it. *Tako* means octopus, and *yaki* means grilled

46 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-16

47 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-17

Since they agreed, I have used some of the comments from the elders as well when they are meaningful. The elders are also Issei and a married couple. Here I refer to them as Hiroshi (husband) and Kanae (wife).

5.7.1. Background

Akie is from Kyushu, married to a man from Okinawa. She came to Canada 28 years ago.

Initially, she and her husband stayed in Calgary then came to Vancouver. She describes her reason for living in Vancouver as below.

We went to Calgary, and it was, you know, the first winter was -25 degree. Then we were living in an apartment located on a hill, so we had a 180 degree view. And in the winter, we only saw white and black, the white of snow and black of blacktop and tree trunk. I really didn't want to be there, feeling isolated. At that time I didn't have a job, so I was really lonely and didn't like it. We had decided to go back after 3 years, but then before going back to Japan, we decided to drop by Vancouver, as we have heard that Vancouver is a nice place. So we came to Vancouver, and it was like, you know, there were flowers along the street, like at the sidewalk, and by shops. You know, it was like coming from no colour to full colour. I thought it was like Japan. So we stayed here, and then you know, there was good climate, and good food.⁴⁸

She finds Vancouver a better place to live compared to Calgary, by describing as “When I was in Calgary, I lived in the area where there was few Asians. So even if I just go shopping, people turned to look at me [...]. In Vancouver, there are so many people with black hair (Asians) around [laugh]⁴⁹”

She is engaged in *Okinawa-ken Yuai Kai*⁵⁰ and volunteers there. She really likes Okinawa culture, and that is how she was connected to the group first.

When I went to Okinawa, I saw old ladies dancing *Kachaashii*, and thought that was so cool. I came back while I was thinking that I wanted to learn it. And I ran into Mii-chan at a video store, a Japanese video store, so I said, “This is an Okinawa's dance isn't it?” then she said “But you are not from Okinawa” so I said, “I am not” then she was like “How about your husband?” so I said he was “from Okinawa” “Where in Okinawa?”

48 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-18

49 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-19

50 *Yuai Kai* is the name of Okinawa *Kenjin Kai*. *Yuai* means friendship in Japanese.

“Onna village,” “Onna Village? Oh, then just join the *Kenjin Kai*. We can teach you” So Mii-chan invited me, then later on, we figured out that she and my husband are relatives.⁵¹

5.7.2. Community

Yuai Kai is a group of people from Okinawa and their partners and children. The group is facing a generational change recently. The second generation speaks more English than Japanese, and as they become the core members of the group, the group is gradually shifting to becoming an English speaking group. Currently, Akie says that “the newsletter is written both in Japanese and in English.” The concern that Michelle stated, a lack of involvement by the younger generation, did not seem to be the concern here.

This group has a good connection to other groups, such as the Japanese community here and Okinawa group outside of Canada.

It just happened that we borrowed the space of Steveston *Bukkyo Kai* for the New Year party. Since then we are gradually establishing a relationship with *Wakayama Kenjin Kai*.⁵²

Through *Taiko*⁵³, we have performed at that venue, the Mariners⁵⁴, the place of Ichiro⁵⁵, we did last year and this year. Also in Washington, we have interacted with Washington *Kenjin Kai* in Seattle.⁵⁶

This group’s connection is not limited to North America’s groups. They also maintain a good relationship with Okinawa as well. For example, the group sponsors some students to study in Okinawa for a year. This is actually a good opportunity for students to meet Okinawa people and future partners.

51 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-20

52 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-21

53 *Taiko* here means Okinawa style *taiko*, which is different from *taiko* that is major in Vancouver.

54 The Seattle Mariners, a Major Baseball League team in Seattle.

55 A Japanese baseball player of the Seattle Mariners.

56 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-22

As international students, they spend one year in Okinawa. Sometimes, they find their partners there. [...] So the parents come from Okinawa to Canada, wanting to live in the continent, but Nisei, the second is unexpectedly, they are Canadians, they become Canadians, and then Sansei generation, they are this time interested in their grandparents' place. Well, Nisei as well, they are interested in their parents' place, then they are interested in Okinawa and some live there.⁵⁷

5.7.3. Okinawan values

Akie also told me some Okinawa value through her experiences in the group. She told me an example:

When I was still new in *Kenjin Kai*, a dance group was going to come, and I witnessed what *Kenjin Kai* people did, and it was like, wow. Like you know arranging a theater, sound effects, selling tickets, and also drinks and fruits etc. for the performers, so those shopping, they did everything, the Okinawa people here did them. So when they heard that dozens of dancers were going to come here from Okinawa, they started preparing everything beforehand. I was like oh my god, we are not a travel company!⁵⁸

She also expresses a little bit of concern that it might be a bit difficult for younger generations growing up in Canada to accept such values of Okinawan hospitality while she feels the importance of passing them down.

I think the ideal is to pass down Okinawa's *Icharibachode*⁵⁹ spirit, but I was thinking that this might be difficult for those who were born and raised here. We take so much care like taking care of everything, for example when a dance group comes from Okinawa, Okinawa people here do so much to take care of them. [...] So I was thinking that this level of caring would be too much for those younger generation and so that we should create a path so the younger generation wouldn't feel burden when they thought about that. However, recently, meeting with various people, I was like, well, [...] if we can spread Okinawa's *icharibachode* spirit in the world, there would be nothing more wonderful. Of course we can't force that, but [...] I think, well, I was wrong before. You know, Okinawa people take really good care of others. It is like if *Naicha*⁶⁰ people saw it, they might think it was too much. But I was there, and if I heard that people came from Okinawa, I would feel that I would like to show them around the town, like well we have one more hour, so I can take them there and show that one too, etc. The thing is, if I do

⁵⁷ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-23

⁵⁸ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-24

⁵⁹ This means "once we meet, we are all brothers and sisters" in Okinawa's language, meaning "treating people nicely like you treat your brothers or sisters, even though this is the first time for you to meet them," often used to express Okinawa's philosophy or spirit

⁶⁰ This means "people in main Japan" in Okinawa language. Okinawa people use this term to distinguish themselves and other Japanese people.

things that way, people are so happy as a result and you know, after all, those things can develop good things in the future. If we didn't do our best, this is after all the way human relations are, so things wouldn't develop further, but if we do it with Okinawa's *Icharibachode* spirit, I feel things can carry over to the future.⁶¹

Kanae also told me, "If you are Okinawa person, you would feel that you would like to practice hospitality to some degree before you see them off. That's a natural thing."⁶² Akie also experienced Okinawa values when she visited her brother-in-law in Okinawa with her husband.

It's like the door is open even though there is nobody at home. [...] When we go back to Okinawa, my family always visits our family grave, and then visits my husband's siblings' family from the oldest one. Then sometimes they are not home, but my husband is like "Well, then let's just offer incense [to the altar] and leave." So he just enters the house without asking, and even uses washroom and offers incense and souvenirs⁶³.

This story sounded quite familiar to me, as a person from the Tohoku region. I shared a story of my experience with her: one time our family went out while drying our laundry outside.

Unfortunately, it started raining, so we were worried that all the clothes would be wet by the time we arrived home. However what we found was that our neighbour had come over and put all the clothes inside our house before they got too wet. Listening to my story, Kanae says that this kind of neighbourly relationship is one of the values that Okinawa has. She even said, "That's what we say is the difference between *Uchina*⁶⁴ people and Tokyo people. Tokyo people don't know who lives next door."⁶⁵ Moreover, when I talked about my experiences of how different Tohoku and Tokyo are, interestingly, Kanae found a common thread our stories. I was sharing my experiences in Tokyo, such as I had to buy everything even vegetables and rice, and they are not tasty even after paying money for them, and the lack of relationship with relatives or neighbours.

61 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-25

62 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-26

63 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-27

64 This means "Okinawa" in Okinawa language.

65 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-28

After listening to my story, Kanae described my Tohoku as *Uchinanchu*⁶⁶. “That’s what *Uchinanchu* means.⁶⁷”

Kanae has affection towards Okinawa language as well. “When I speak the language during the meal, it just tastes better.⁶⁸” On the other hand, she says she does not speak the Okinawa language unless she is with people from Okinawa. She says, even within Okinawa, there are differences. “Even though we are Okinawans, there are differences between my husband and I, such as the accent.⁶⁹”

5.8. Mi Young

“I am really, I’m not Japanese and I’m not Korean. So you know if someone asks me about identity, I am really without doubt, *Zainichi Korian*, *Zainichi*, yes.⁷⁰”

“I thought, rather than being as a *Zainichi Korian* in Japan, I can do something more interesting as a *Zainichi Korian* in Canada.⁷¹”

5.8.1. Background

Mi Young was born in Japan as the second child of a Korean Japanese family; she has one older brother. Her parents gave her a Korean name and not a Japanese name. She grew up in a neighbourhood where there are few other Korean Japanese. She went to a Japanese kindergarten, a Korean school for the first two years of elementary school, after which she went to a Japanese school. Since her brother married a Korean woman, her sister-in-law’s home is in Korea.

At home, she mainly speaks Japanese. Her parents are almost bilingual. While she was in Korean school, she was able to speak Korean fluently. Even after she started going to Japanese school, her mother tried to teach her Korean at home. They mainly speak Japanese, but if they

66 This means “Okinawa people” in Okinawa language.

67 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-29

68 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-30

69 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-31

70 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-32

71 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-33

wish to speak Korean, it is not impossible. They use Korean for basic words, such as mother, father, as well as greeting words such as good morning.

5.8.2. Growing up

Growing up in Japan, Mi Young and her brother were the only Korean Japanese children in their kindergarten, and they were bullied because of their Korean names.

There is only one year difference between my brother and me, so we go to kindergarten together. Then we get bullied. You know, our last name is Kim, and it's rare in Japan. And also, actually, my first name, well, I haven't told you my first name yet, because, well, I am so careful and a bit scared. Well, but I think we will meet again in the future, so yes, I tell my first name only to those kind of people. Anyway, my first name is Mi-Young. This is Korean name. [...] So in kindergarten, when we were still 4 or 5 years old, we were already bullied, like "*Chosen-jin, Chosen-jin*"⁷². So we were forced to notice that it seemed we were different. This is not an active learning process, rather, more than anything, by being discriminated, by being bullied, I got to know that there is a boundary between them and us. [...] So all the time, when we were in kindergarten, my brother and I were inculcated with the reality that we are different⁷³.

This experience traumatised her and her brother and became a critical point of their identity, and they were made to think that they are not Japanese. However she was not simply a victim. She says, "It's my roots, being a *Chosen* person. So you know this is not something that I can change, then if I am bullied because of something that I can't change, then it is not my fault, but they, the ones who bully me are wrong. That's how I thought. Well, more like I was forced to think in that way when I was a child⁷⁴."

⁷² Korean people. Often contains disdain nuance, as usually, South Korea is "*Kankoku*," and North Korea is '*Kita Chosen*' in Japanese.

⁷³ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-34

⁷⁴ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-35

5.8.3. The Korean experience

Mi Young has been to Korea four or five times to see her relatives or her sister-in-law's family, and explains what it was like to go there. The first time, she went to Korea with her Korean acquaintances, and that made her more than just a tourist in Korea.

My brother and I are, after all, we are *Zainichi*⁷⁵, or more on the Korean side. That's our identity. So, in my case, when I was going to Korea for the first time, it was like exciting, or like well, I can finally go to or reach my root. [...] it was really pleasing to go with people from Korea. You know, how can I say, like you know I am not going there as a tourist, but like I can talk with local people. So I really wanted to go and went there. And after that, I went to see my relatives or for my brother's wedding. So you know it's not like going there as a tourist. It is more like looking for my root⁷⁶.

5.8.4. Nationality

However it was not easy for Mi Young to go to South Korea as she had a North Korean nationality.

My family is like that. So after all 11 years ago, well, it didn't mean that I didn't like the North-Korea nationality. I liked the sound of *Chosen*. But it is really really difficult to go abroad. And in addition to the fact that it is difficult to go abroad, it is also difficult for us even to go to South Korea. So you know rather than stick with the North Korean nationality, I thought to take advantage of being able to see outside of Japan or go to South Korea. [...] so I changed my nationality to South Korean. Then finally I was able to go. So that was a really happy moment. You know I can go without being pinned down. So I was talking with my brother too, but Seoul Olympic was in the 1988. It is close to Japan, and many Japanese people went there for the Seoul Olympics, but as for us, even though we are Korean, we can't go. You know, we see those Japanese people going and coming and looking so happy. And well it's difficult to articulate, but there's history, and also politics. Well, we, ahh this is difficult. I can't choose word nicely, but it's like we are tossed up and down by those history and politics.⁷⁷

5.8.5. Life in Canada

In 2002, Mi Young came to Vancouver to study at college. For her it was difficult to live as a Korean Japanese in Japan at that time. After obtaining a diploma in Vancouver, she once went back to Japan. Currently, she is studying at a graduate school in Calgary. She explains her reason

⁷⁵ Literally mean "residing in Japan." Also means Korean Japanese.

⁷⁶ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-36

⁷⁷ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-37

for coming to Canada as, “Well this is a long story, but to make it short, maybe the first reason that I came to Canada is because it was tough for me to live in Japan as *Zainichi*, I guess. So it was really tough life all the time, and one day I thought to go outside.⁷⁸”

First, she stayed in Vancouver about two years, and that is when she started a community association, *Zainichi Korian no Kai*⁷⁹. She told me about the beginning of the group. Just before coming to Canada, she happened to know a *Zainichi* person in Vancouver through email-list. So she contacted to him, and met him in Canada. While talking with him about what it is like to be *Zainichi* in Japan or in Canada, she thought that it would be interesting if she could do this with more people. With his support, she started the group. The first two people were Japanese, and they contacted her because they were interested in Korea. And the other two were *Zainichi*. She remembers that time:

I just wanted to talk about whatever I wanted in Japanese. Well, you are Japanese, so it's kinda not a happy thing to say to you, sorry, but you know, it is different from talking with people in the Japanese community in Japanese. I wanted to talk with other *Zainichi* about the differences between *Zainichi* in Japan and *Zainichi* in Canada like the difference in terms of social status, because I felt those things a lot, so I wanted to talk about those things with others. I guess that was the first motivation.⁸⁰

She says that it is difficult to join the *Nikkei* community here⁸¹. The reason is that she is afraid that the combination of her name and her Japanese skill will make her easily identified in the community and help others discriminate her, especially when she put her name in public with her group. She says, “I see those discriminatory comments at *JPCanada*. Well, you know, I have experiences of discrimination or differentiation in Japan, so it is really difficult, well, to fit in.⁸²”

78 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-48

79 a group of *Zainichi Korian*

80 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-39

81 She uses the term “*Nikkei* community” here to describe a Japanese speaking community

82 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-40

JPCanada is a type of information and networking site with Japanese language for those who are in Canada or thinking to come to Canada⁸³. She remembers how a certain population of *JPCanada* users reacted towards her activity. When she started the group, there were threads at *JPCanada*, some of which were quite discriminatory. Even though there were some supportive comments, this made her think to be careful to be in public with her Korean name to protect herself.

5.8.6. Community

Despite such an environment, *Zainichi Korean no Kai* does very interesting activities. According to Mi Young, first, this group started with regular dinners or occasional tea as a space where people can get together and talk each other. After a while, the group had a Japanese member who was very supportive, so with another group this person belonged to, they also did some talk events or film screenings for the public. On the other hand, they also continued to create a space for members to get together, for example, at her apartment. This space is more intimate atmosphere with the members of *Zainichi*, Korean, and Japanese. She says she undertook activities such as watching films about *Zainichi* and talking about the backgrounds or differences from Korea or from Japan. In addition, they studied *Zainichi* with *Zainichi*-featured articles from Japanese newspapers or *Zainichi* professors visiting UBC at that time. She says, partly because Japanese people also experience being minority in Canada and find commonality, “it’s not one-way, like just me speaking about being a minority. The others have their thoughts and experiences about it, so it’s different kinds of interaction, and this is really interesting.⁸⁴”

She wants to make this group as “a comfortable space for *Zainichi*.⁸⁵”

⁸³ <http://www.jpCanada.com/>

⁸⁴ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-41

⁸⁵ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-42

There are really few places where *Zainichi* can be majority, either in Japan or in Canada. Well, there is a variety of *Zainichi* groups in Japan, but they are, you know *Zainichi* is *Zainichi* because they are in Japan. So it becomes a bit political, and ideological. So then they become in conflict with each other. You know, different political views, or North and South, or stuff like that. But I think today's younger generation *Zainichi*, they are more like just wanting to be just friends without political leanings, in Japan too. So what I am doing here in Canada is to create a comfortable space at least for *Zainichi*. And that's how I started. But you know, after all those people who are interested is sometime Koreans, sometimes Japanese, like you know, who like Korean movies, or Korean food.⁸⁶

Thus, this group has other aspects more than simply as a space for *Zainichi*. This space could be for both Korean and Japanese people as well.

What I was so glad about is that you know we are such an in-between existence, but that makes us able to do those things, like we can do those things because we are in-between. For example, there are those Koreans who are interested in Japan, for whatever reason like business or personal or hobby. But it may not be easy for them to go to the Japanese community without being able to speak Japanese, but those Koreans who are interested in Japan can come to our group, right?⁸⁷

This group also attracts other type of minority as well. She gave me an example.

One person was sexual minority, well she was Japanese. She came to our group a couple of times, and what she said was that whether in Japan or in Canada, it is really rare to find a group where we can talk about being minority this much in Japanese. Well, she is also an ethnic minority, but I think she had stronger identity as sexual minority [...] so, it's not just ethnic minority, but each individual has a huge interests in minority-ness. You know, minority tend to be in persecuted or inhibited status. They tend to be weak.⁸⁸

For the future, she is interested in more advocacy activity as well as the networking. She talked to me about her vision for the future. "We want to not only do dinners, but also hold lecture meetings, or film screening for films related to *Zainichi*, like *Go*⁸⁹ or *Pacchigi*⁹⁰. I want to tell this is who we are, *Zainichi*, not just this, but I want people to feel familiar. And I want more

⁸⁶ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-43

⁸⁷ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-44

⁸⁸ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-45

⁸⁹ a film about a third generation *Zainichi Korian* teenager

⁹⁰ a film about Japanese and *Zainichi Korian* teenagers

people to know about *Zainichi*.⁹¹” She also thinks that networking is important for minority groups. For example, if someone is in trouble, sometimes they do not know where to ask for advice since their *Zainichi* status makes them different from Japanese people. She says, because most of *Zainichi* lives in Japan, there are so many social activities or political activities in Japan historically. However, there is not much knowledge accumulation about *Zainichi* abroad. She says:

For example, Japanese people can go to the Japanese consulate and get information. *Zainichi* also have their family in Japan and speak Japanese, well Japanese and English. So we sometime want to go to Japanese consulate for help. But they tell us, “You are Korean, so please go elsewhere.” But if we go to the Korean consulate, they are like “Why can’t you speak Korean?” We are not considered as Korean from Korea, either, I feel it a lot. So you know, for *Zainichi* living abroad, I would like to create a space where they can help and understand each other as there are occasions in which only we can understand and help each other.⁹²

This networking is growing, and now there is a *Zainichi* group in Toronto, too. In that sense, she says that it was great that she started the group and that she would like to keep doing. She thinks about the group as, “Not just ethnic minority, but sexual minority or other minority, there are those people who think they have some minority-ness. If our group is a comfortable space for them, even a little, I think it was worth making a group.⁹³” She also says, “I thought, rather than being as a *Zainichi Korean* in Japan, I can do something more interesting as a *Zainichi Korean* in Canada.⁹⁴”

5.8.7. Identity

When considering identity, Mi Young’s life in Japan as *Zainichi Korean* had not worked out for her at all. She thought she was Korean but not Japanese.

91 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-46

92 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-47

93 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-48

94 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-33

You know, even me, being born in Japan, if I had Japanese nationality from the start, like if I had Japanese nationality even though my roots are Korean, I would not have left Japan. You know, for example, I can't join Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers of JAICA⁹⁵ or apply for Working Holiday Visa. Even now, in various aspects that Japanese people may not know, we really have barriers. So, if I think about each of those things, it is like there is not many points of being born and grew up there. How can I say, I am not treated nicely in the country. I was born and grew up in Japan but I feel I am alien.⁹⁶

Living in Canada has affected her identity and her relationship with Japan and Korea:

I had a hard time in Japan, so I couldn't say something nice about Japan. Now, after leaving for several years, I you know, somehow I now can see some good things about Japan a lot more than before, now I think I can say, I can say there are a lot of good things about Japan. You know when I came to Canada, it was kind of because it was too much for me to be in Japan. So at that time, if someone told me that they like Japan, I was more like Japan was tough for me, I longed for Korea. Like if I had been in my root country, could I have been accepted?⁹⁷

On the other hand, in terms of her Korean-ness, she was reminded in Canada that she is not Korean either.

So I was thinking that I was not Japanese all the time in Japan. And I was thinking that I was Korean. [...] And then when I came to Canada, I was made to think that I am not Korean, so to say. [...] So of course we have some more interests than average Japanese or we know about the historical background. We pay more attention to Korea, we care about the relationship with North and South or Japan and Korea. But if we are asked whether we know the society, we don't know that much, unfortunately. So, for example, every time in *Zainichi Korean no Kai*, when being asked by Japanese members, I ask Korean people about Korea and I was like "Oh, I see, hmm." You know, I am saying "Wow, Korea is like that!" along with those Japanese members who asked the question. When I realize that I am saying such things, I am made to think that this is what it is like not to be born and grow up there. So I am completely different from native Korean, or Korean born in Korea. Also for example, when I am talking with Chinese friends, they say, looking at how I speak, that they think I am Japanese. For instance I bring my hand in front of my mouth when I laugh, [...] the body language, mine looks to them really like Japanese, and if they ignore which language I speak and just look at my body language, they think that I am Japanese. So coming to Canada, I really felt how big the influence of the place where I was born and grew up is.⁹⁸

95 Japan International Cooperation Agency (<http://www.jica.go.jp/>)

96 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-49

97 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-50

98 For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-51

She also realizes how Korean people see her here in Canada. For them, she is not Korean but Japanese because her Korean language is not that good enough to have a lot of discussion, for example. Due to this handicap, it is difficult for her to make Korean friends as well.

As a result, she defines herself as *Zainichi*. “I am really, I’m not Japanese and I’m not Korean. So you know if someone asks me about identity, I am really without doubt, *Zainichi Korian, Zainichi, yes.*⁹⁹”

5.9. Roddy

“I think my soul is more Japanese, of course, then Canadian too. Then American.”

“I’m Filipino, but that’s just genetic, but most of my spirit and activity and teaching is Japanese.”

5.9.1. Background

Roddy is a Filipino Canadian. His parents are from the Philippines. He was born and lived in Japan till he was six years old, and then his parents moved to the United States. First, his family lived in Texas and later moved to California. He spent from elementary school to university in the United States. After university, he went to Japan to teach English and also learn *shakuhachi*¹⁰⁰. After staying in Japan for three years, he came back to the United States, and then moved to Vancouver in 1997. He is now a *shakuhachi* artist based in B.C.. He has been to Japan many times. Excluding recent regular visit to Japan, he has been to Japan three times, “three years first, and then four years, and then another three years, later.”

⁹⁹ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-32

¹⁰⁰ Japanese bamboo flute

5.9.2. Meeting with *shakuhachi*

Roddy encountered *shakuhachi* in a library. He says, “First time I saw that it was in a library in a CD and book, so but I was listening to a *shinobue* 101 first. *Nohkan* 102 or something *yokobue* 103, and a movie, and then I like that sound so, I went to the library, then I did research on Japanese flutes, then through that research I found *shakuhachi*. And I thought oh I love that. beautiful.”

He loves Japan, but at the same time his love is very selective. He has clear ideas of what he likes and what he does not about Japan.

I like the Japanese idea of high quality of refine culture. It’s very interesting to me. They take something from outside and then they make it Japanese and then refine through hard work and then they make an incredible detail, like the *shakuhachi*, Japanese music or *Noh* or tea ceremony. It’s incredible. I love all, no one can touch it, you know. [...] So extreme! Yeah! They refine high level. It’s interesting. And then they do some parts of Japanese culture I don’t, I don’t really like. Like a you know, the killing of the dolphins and sometime they don’t respect. They have a double standard, like you know, Shinto is all about nature and so sometime they destroy nature. And they don’t think about the whole world in general, like environmental pollution. It’s strange. That’s not great. I don’t like very much in that.

The relationship between people. [...] If I’m talking about directness, sometimes that idea of Western being so direct, they don’t respect people’s space here a lot. Sometimes I don’t like that so much. [...] I like Japanese they respect the level of seniority. You know they really respect that. [...] they respect age, they respect skill level, and they really respect that. It’s very good that way.

His love towards Japan is more towards Japanese traditional arts and culture: however, he is also interested in contemporary arts and culture when it comes to the mixture with tradition. He showed me one example with excitement. “There is a new thing called... have you ever heard of

101 Japanese horizontal flute

102 Japanese flute used for Noh theatre

103 horizontal flute

the “BLEACH104”? [...] And [it] just had a release of a video game. [...] and they did the opening piece was *7 komuso*105. *7 shakuhachi* players.”

5.9.3. Experience in Japan

Roddy analyses that how his being is interpreted in Japan depends on the situation.

It depends on the situation. You know, generally when people see me in Japan, they think I'm Japanese. They don't, they speak to me in Japanese immediately. They don't think I'm a foreigner or something. and then when depending on the situation like if I'm a teacher, they treat me differently, then musician, but [laugh] basically you know if they know I'm a foreigner like Canadian, then they treat me better [because I know a lot about Japanese things even though I am a foreigner]. You know [laugh]

Moreover, being a musician gives him another relationship with Japanese people than being a foreigner. He connects to people through music, and in front of them, it does not seem that his non-Japanese-ness, or speaking English matters.

I'm, my level of *shakuhachi* is quite good, so they respect me. Most, tell you the truth, most *shakuhachi* players in Japan are not very good players. [...] but I have respect of all level of *shakuhachi* players, from a professional musicians, to low level players to *komuso* people, yeah, so they respect me because I respect, I'm interested in not only music but spiritual factors, and then the most of the people who are in the temple, they don't practice music so much, they just out of tune, and but I like their spirits because they just blow and [connect to sound].

5.9.4. Community

In Vancouver, Roddy plays, teaches and makes *shakuhachi*. He explains the variety of the interpretation of *shakuhachi* by his students.

Some people they want to have a consistent steady practice for music. Japanese music. A lot of people love Japanese cultural stuff. And they just want to have a good teacher to teach them consistently. [...] some people they you know they want to do some kind of meditation and they are not necessarily interested in Japanese culture. But they found *shakuhachi* that's fascinating flute. So “I like sound so I wanna learn that.” So they don't know me, I mean they know that I am a teacher of *shakuhachi*. But they don't know about Japanese culture, right? But I teach them, I tell them that I do traditional style. And

104 A Japanese comic

105 A mendicant Zen priest with *shakuhachi* and a deep sedge hat that covers the face

that's yeah even though you know nothing, you are gonna be learning this. And then yeah, so some people wanna learn *Koten Honkyoku* 106 only, and some people wanna learn ensemble music. So depends on the person, but I think most of the people who want to learn Japanese musical stuff, Japanese music ideas and practice.

His teaching style varies from one on one to through internet, depending on where his students reside, which are "from Australia, from Brazil, from Spain, all over Canada, the United States."

He also makes *shakuhachi*. His *shakuhachi* making starts from harvesting bamboo in Japan, and he takes his students to Japan to let them experience *shakuhachi* making as well as Japan. He talks about the importance of making *shakuhachi*. "That's very important. If you don't do that, I think you feel little bit missing something *shakuhachi* experience. And I love it because you know. It's unique in the world."

In addition, his main activity is playing music. He uses *shakuhachi* music everywhere. For him, *shakuhachi* is Japanese instrument, but at the same time *shakuhachi* is the instrument. He plays not only Japanese traditional music with it but also many different kinds of music from electric, ambient, with old instrument from all over the world, such as *dujulido* or Chinese *guqin*, Mac laptop, or anything that makes sounds. He says, "Collaboration. Here as a musician, in Vancouver, it's very important to do a lot of collaboration. [...] I learn a lot from these people because they are very good musicians and I'm inspired to play more. You know. So, it's very interesting."

His other interest is meditation. He mentions, "My main interest is first of all I guess is to create quality music, [...] I want to make music that makes me feel good. and I'm strange I know so I don't know how popular it's gonna be but that's what I want to do, right? Meditation, touching a meditation."

Other than those his own *shakuhachi* community, he is also engaged in Japanese Canadian community and enjoys this a lot.

106 classical pieces for shakuhachi

I'm getting fulfilment. It really because there is not really money or anything but I'm still doing. Yeah, and a okay I'm also getting a like promoting, promotion. The more I play, people know me more. And so that's good too. And then so that's for my business side, you know. And I can get students from that. And then I hope I'm giving something back to community too. That makes me feel good that you know I'm giving the *shakuhachi* music back to them. They feel, this is something you know, alive.

He says, "I mean as long as I'm living I'll be, I'll be doing a performing, I'll be teaching *shakuhachi*, I'll be yeah promoting *shakuhachi*, as long as I live, you know. Yeah so involving with, playing Powell Street if I have time I'll do the Powell Street and,[...] I've been thinking of inviting more *sensei107* to Japan to come"

On the other hand, he is not really engaged in the Filipino community. He describes his engagement with the Filipino community as:

(I'm engaged)...little bit. A little bit [laugh]. Once in every three years, I don't know. The only way I join is through, there is a traditional Filipino trio, [...] That was the only example of my contribution to Filipino culture, because I have no, I have never learned Filipino culture and all the stuff, ever. [...] Even language, everything. My parents never taught me the language. [...] I don't feel desire to be close to Filipino culture. It's just me. So that's why I don't have any connection to. But I have Filipino friends [...] But that's, it's more Japanese than, you know.

5.9.5. Identity

Because of his background, Roddy's understanding of his identity is very interesting. Towards the question about Japanese, his attitude was quite strong.

I think it's very unique, because I think my soul is more Japanese, of course, then Canadian too. Then American, but my spirit I have spiritual Japanese feeling. You know, of course I practice *shakuhachi* and I have a special even to Japan. You know, not just Japanese Canadian but Japan, their homeland, right? So I was born there, so I feel I have a connection because of my birth.

On the other hand, he strongly believes that he is not Japanese. "I've heard a lot of Japanese say that too. 'He is more Japanese than Japanese,' but I'm not Japanese." He says, "I know I'm not Japanese, because my Japanese is not perfect." He has a certain belief about being Japanese.

107 Master or teacher in Japanese

I think that Japanese, first of all, is genetically, you have mother and father Japanese, then you were born in Japan, and then you speak the language, 100%. [...] Yeah I think that's what Japanese is. And they don't have to know about tea ceremony or *shakuhachi*. You don't wanna have to know. Yea most people, that's not Japanese, you know. Because there is lots of foreigners like me, who like Japanese culture, and they even some people become high level teachers of whatever, but they are not Japanese and they never be Japanese.

Here he did not really talk about values but more about genetics and languages, and he strongly believes it. However, on the other hand, with the question about Japanese Canadian, he seemed a bit confused. First he denies that he is Japanese Canadian, but through the conversation, he was not sure anymore.

No I cannot be Japanese Canadian because I'm not. My parents are not Japanese. My, ah, that's crazy, good question! Because my connection to Japanese culture is really way more deeper than another Japanese Canadians here. [...] I can say yes. Probably. Hahaha. Probably yeah, I'm more. I'm not, I mean, I'm Filipino, but that's just genetic, but most of my spirit and activity and teaching is Japanese. [...] I'm more Japanese Canadian than Filipino. Yeah. For sure.

He also mentioned that he could never be just a Canadian. "Always something Canadian. I'm never just Canadian. [...] The Japanese is always in me. I can't separate, you know, I'm a *shakuhachi* player. I play Japanese music, that's my life."

5.10. Kozue

Kozue was born in a small town in the Tohoku area in Japan. She lived there until eighteen years old and moved to Tokyo for university education. After university, she worked in the Tokyo area for a couple of years and in 2004, she came to Vancouver.

5.10.1. Tohoku regional values

Kozue grew up in a rural area in Tohoku, and she remembers the life, which was quite different from her life in Tokyo or in Vancouver. Her family raised her as the first child of the family who

should be taking care of the family ancestors, relatives, and land rather than an individual who will be leaving the family when she becomes an adult. Her family encouraged her to study, though they did not encourage her to apply new ideas from school that contradicted the local and native philosophy that they practice. She remembers that the school textbooks were always treated by children or sometime by teachers as something other, foreign, not really representing or related to the life in the hometown. She remembers some stories at school.

I still remember in a class, a teacher was shocked because he wanted to talk about health and when he asked what we eat as snack, none of us said chips or chocolate, but mostly some fruits like strawberries, watermelons, persimmon, pears or those seasonal fruits, which was sometimes from our own garden. So that's the end of that class. Or, at school, I learned the national history that is more than 2000 years old but related little to my region. You know they say this project in history was a part of uniting Japan or whatever. But the local museum explains about the same "project" as the central Japan invaded our region. So it's like you know, contradictions here and there in textbooks and naturally we didn't take them seriously.

Obviously, her community prioritizes its own values and knowledge system over school education. Having lived in Tokyo and Vancouver, she now can identify some points that may differentiate her hometown from such cities.

... the community did not have a strong notion of "private property." Neighbours would come to our garden and pick some vegetables, but also encourage us to take some vegetable from their garden for free, as we think that it's better to share the products from their garden rather than waste them when they can't consume by themselves, which makes sense to me. Our relatives or my grandmother's friends used to bring something when they visited us. Sometimes it was food from mountain, such as mushrooms or wild plants. Sometimes it was from the ocean, I mean seafood.

The stories on TV were seen in a similar way as the school textbooks. Tokyo seemed as far as France or India, and new restaurants in Tokyo were as fantastic as Sci-Fi animation or old folk tales. TV was the thing that told fantasy, never be something that represent the reality. So I wasn't affected by the differences between my life and what TV told me. You know, people wouldn't be affected when their life is super different from Hollywood movies. It's too different to feel envy or want to be like that or stuff like that.

5.10.2 Various Japans

Kozue realised that her lifestyle or value system cannot simply be called Japanese culture as she found a different lifestyle when she started living in Tokyo, which is also Japan.

This world was the one shown in the textbooks and TV programs that I had never taken seriously. You know, it was like I cannot say, “That’s just a textbook thing” anymore. I had to deal with this gap between my worldview and the Tokyo world that existed as real in front of me. The lifestyle there was based on the textbooks, which explained civil rights and the economic system based on money, but did not mention the roles of relatives and neighbours or sharing. For example, I had never encountered after-school child care as a financial issue because in my hometown we would just ask grandparents, neighbours or relatives.

Facing this gap or differences within Japan made her wonder about “being Japanese,” “good person,” and “good life.” This made her think about what should be considered as good or ideal, or something Japanese.

I felt that, if school education was to make good Japanese citizens, such people must be those living in big cities like Tokyo as textbooks and TV shows demonstrated, like you know spend money for whatever and “contributing” to economy, not much importance on the relationships with neighbours and relatives. Maybe buying is better than sharing. My question was whether I should learn this lifestyle to be a “normal” and “good” Japanese citizen or I could keep the lifestyle from my hometown and being “deviant” or “primitive.” Although it was very different from the one in Tokyo, I couldn’t convince myself that the life in my hometown should be “fixed.” People in my hometown might not be rich like people in Tokyo. They don’t have money. Yet, it does not seem that people in my hometown are poor: they seem to have rich lives in a different way with their networks of neighbours and relatives and fresh food and water from the land they have been living with for generations.

Between those two different worlds of Japan in her hometown and Tokyo, she had lost the word that identifies who she is for a while.

You know, this doesn’t mean that I simply agree to follow my family’s philosophy in the hometown. I wanted to be a bit more free from a role of the successor of the family. I wanted to live as me. I wanted to think that it’s okay to explore what “I” am interested in rather than what “the successor of the Matsumoto family” should do. At the same time, I could not feel the lifestyle in Tokyo or the worldview in textbooks and TV as real, like an individual Japanese person. Although my passport confirmed I belonged to a state called Japan, I was not sure if I could simply say that I was Japanese. What does it mean? I wondered why and how Japanese I was or should be. I couldn’t feel it real.

She could not be simply “the successor of the family” nor be “an individual Japanese citizen.”

Having a university life with such question, one day, she found a journal at a book store.

I found a journal that studies the Tohoku area, the north-east region of Japan where my hometown is located. Reading the journal for the first time, I felt that considering myself as a “*Tohoku jin*108” was more comfortable and real than as Japanese. Finding this notion was a great help because I had lost the connection between Japanese-ness and myself. So at that time, I was really happy to find this concept that I can feel good with and that can explain who I am a bit more precisely.

5.10.3. Life in Canada

When Kozue came to Canada, she realised the careful identification of herself that she has been constructing through her life was all trivialized. She was treated as simple Japanese in Canadian society.

When I came to Canada I suddenly became Japanese in very specific way that I had never experienced or imagined before. “Japanese” here is such a simple concept from a certain point of view. If you have Japanese last name and look Asian and speak Japanese, you are Japanese. How simple is that? But the point is that they only care those parts, and never care what I am thinking and understanding about myself.

She showed some frustration towards such views that she receives. In a way this is a frustration caused by the fact that what she thinks she is is different from what they think she is. This case is, however, a little different from other interviewees in a way that this is not between Canadian and Japanese but within Japanese..

We don't have the same view towards whatever just because we speak the same language and look similar and have passport, right? This is really disrespectful to the cultures in Japan, I would say. I felt that I was objectified, exoticised, essentialised and my personality denied. Knowing that there are various ways of life within Japan and feeling that the value gap between Tokyo and Vancouver is smaller than the gap between Tokyo and my hometown, it is not easy for me to simply say that I am Japanese or accept that someone says that I am simply Japanese.

She said that she does not deny that she is Japanese, but she hopes that Canadians have a bit more deeper understandings or at least imagination about the complexity that exist in others' lives.

108 Tohoku jin means Tohoku person/people

She also thinks that Canada is not as multicultural as she expected. She explained her experiences in school. She now studies at the University of British Columbia as a graduate student in a Master's program. She expected to receive more respect towards cultural differences there as one of the top university in Canada. However, the reality was different to her from what she had expected before. She shared some stories about her experiences at the university.

At the international student orientation in September, we, international students, were told that we should learn North American culture to be successful and that it would be actually good for us as their Canadian culture is better and more open to students than our cultures where students cannot talk in classes and women are treated as less valuable. Isn't this a bit too much as an attitude of a university? Also, at the international student gathering held by the Faculty that I belong to, one staff member told us that we should learn here in Canada and bring it back to our home country and educate people there. Moreover, when I took a program for international students who are interested in working as TA here, the instructor's attitude was that international students should learn Canadian style to be successful. He even sent us, the international students, an article that argues why America shouldn't be threatened by a number of students from Asia. [...] As an Asian I was shocked that I was sent this article. Are we still the "Yellow Peril"?

She analyses her experiences with the university and stated as:

Constantly the university "supports" to "fix" rather than tries to understand and accept those who have different values from "North American." I wondered if they could understand that I am here not to be a North American but to study about North America. What's more, I wondered whether I can survive without giving up pride of who I am with my values and whether it is possible that my values are recognised and respected.

5.10.4. Identity

Kozue talked about who she is in her current situation.

If I am asked who I am, maybe I would really like to say *Tohoku jin*. But people wouldn't understand what that is here, and explaining it could be as long as an article about it. It is interesting that if I say Tohoku to my friends from my hometown, we may not need any more additional explanation of who we are. But if I say Tohoku to someone outside of Tohoku, I may have to explain what I mean by it. [...] At this moment, to be honest, I am tired of explaining about the diversity within Japan to Canadians who do not really have a respect or consideration about different being. But anyway this is what I think I am at this moment.

5.11. Discussion

There is a variety of stories around the identity construction of the members of the Japanese Canadian community as stated above. The first analysis here will be their identity construction stories as hybrid and diverse process and negotiations. Secondly, the discussion goes to the deconstruction of “dominant” and “minority” positions and strategic essentialization. And last, the community space as the third space will be examined.

5.11.1. Identity as a process: The shift and in-between

The informants all go through the identity construction journey in their lives. This section will examine the detail of their identity process from three points of view: their subjective understanding of their lives, negotiation with external situations, and hybridity.

5.11.1.1. Informants’ lives

5.11.1.1.1. Language

In terms of language, clearly, those who were born and raised in Japan chose Japanese for our conversation whereas those who were born and raised in Canada chose English. There are also a variety of relationships with Japanese and English even within the same language group. Keiko, as Nisei, told me that her first language was Japanese; however, she started using English as she started going to school. By contrast, Ken, also Nisei, did not really use Japanese even at home as his older siblings were already using English around him. For James, Sansei, and Toko, Yonsei, there was not a natural Japanese environment around them. Nevertheless, those from Vancouver do know some Japanese words and use those words in the conversations naturally. Some are more interested in and learning Japanese on going than others. In terms of those from Japan, they also use some English words in their conversations with Japanese, and during the interview with Akie, she sometimes used Okinawa language. Thus, the informants’ levels and types of Japanese

and English speaking varied a lot. Moreover, they understand that the language is more than a communication tool. James is aware that there is some Japanese that cannot be translated into English, Mi Young still use Korean words to say very basic daily words with affection, such as mother, and Akie certainly has affection for her own Okinawa language.

As some informants mentioned, language makes it difficult to communicate with people who use the other language within the Japanese community. Therefore, depending on which language one is attached to or the degree of one's skill of or interest in a second language, one's community landscape varies. For example, the community people for Toko are mainly English speaking people, and those for Michelle are mostly those who have a strong connection to Japan, such as those mothers who send their children to Japanese schools or the tourists from Japan. James, who is an English speaker with a strong interest in Japanese language, works more for *Tonari Gumi* where both Japanese and English are constantly heard.

5.11.1.1.2. Experiences and understandings of Japan

For those whose base is North America, their experiences of Japan vary, from just being there for a trip to having lived there for a couple of years to visiting regularly for bamboo harvesting, in Roddy's case. Those relationships with Japan give them a range of understanding of Japan as well. Their views were quite selective and they analyse what they think is Japanese and why and how they like Japan or not. If there is a tendency, it would be that, for them, Japanese-ness is not biological or racial, or material, but it is more about value, lifestyle, or ways of relating to the surrounding things and people. For James, it is about being hospitable, caring, and considerate. For Ken, it is the way one tends to do things. And for Keiko, it is being efficient, organized, punctual, ambiguous as well as more artistic value, such as saturated with cute culture, minimalism and visual oriented. Akie says that Okinawa is value or lifestyle such as *icharibachode*, and Tohoku for Kozue is also the lifestyle and worldview. Another way of

looking at Japanese-ness is as more biological and related to the environment in which one grew up. For Roddy, it is being born in Japan with Japanese genes and language. Thus, Roddy understands being Japanese to be about what one *has* as Japanese, such as blood, language etc while the others understand that being Japanese is about how one *is* Japanese; in other words, it can be said that Roddy's understanding is about doing, and others' is about being Japanese.

5.11.1.1.3. Terms for themselves and “Japanese”

The interviewees use a variety of terms to refer to themselves, such as “Japanese Canadian,” “Japanese,” “*Nikkei*,” “*Uchinanchu*,” “*Zainichi Korian*,” “*Zainichi*,” “*Tohoku jin*” and so on. What each term means also varies from person to person. For example, for Michelle, “*Nikkei*” sometimes means those who were born here with Japanese ancestry, and at other times, it means the community of those who are somehow related to Japan in general. On the other hand, for Mi Young, “*Nikkei*” means those who are from Japan and reside here. As Toko says, some use “*Nikkei*” while others do not even know what it means. Toko also explained that she first thought that “Japanese Canadians” would include all those who are related to Japan and live here; however she realised that some people are not happy with the term. In fact, none of the informants from Japan described themselves as Japanese Canadians. They are Japanese or *Zainichi* or *Uchinanchu* but not Japanese Canadians.

This way of identification of those from Japan could be because their connection to Japan is more than symbolic. Akie knows someone who has a house in Okinawa, and they live there half a year when it is winter in Vancouver. Akie also went to the U.S. as an Okinawa person but not as a Canadian or Vancouverite, or even Japanese. Michelle's acquaintances also let their children go to Japanese school in summer time. Mi Young has a mail list as well as a connection to newspapers and scholars from Japan as *Zainichi*. When their home place is so real in their life even when they reside in Canada, it is not be surprising that they do not consider themselves as

to some extent Canadian. Nor do they simply identify themselves as Japanese, which can be quite symbolic, simple, and abstract rather than real with the diversity within Japan.

5.11.1.2. Informants' negotiations: Being different

5.11.1.2.1. With mainstream society

Every informant, except Roddy, expressed an awareness of their differences from mainstream society; what they think they are is different from what others think they are. However, their perceptions of these differences are different from each other. Some experienced it as quite overt racism, such as Keiko and Toko. Others are made aware more indirectly, such as Ken or Michelle. At the same time, for Toko, because of her family environment, being different seemed to her a default situation, though this does not mean she did not feel uncomfortable with being treated as such. In Mi Young's case, she experienced racism in Japan. Some, like Keiko and Mi Young, reacted strongly toward it while James reacted in an opposite way and wanted to be as white as possible as a child. On the other hand, some others had milder question toward themselves, like Ken.

Those who came from Japan, in other words, who became "other" in society after they became adult, such as Michelle and Akie, even though they do not feel comfortable with being treated differently, seemed to accept the differences more simply. Kozue showed a bit more frustration about being exoticized.

5.11.1.2.2. With Japan

As should be expected from the argument above, the informants' ways of relating to Japan were quite different. For example, Toko has a strong understanding of herself as not Japanese but Japanese Canadian. So she is interested in Japan, but Japan is not something within her or to which she can relate strongly; Japan is an external thing that she is interested in. James and Ken

cannot ignore the Japanese elements of themselves, and sometimes they hate them and sometimes they are interested in them; it is a complicated relationship. They traveled to Japan and lived in Japan for a couple of years. James, as Sansei, did not have much Japanese influence as he grew up. However, he had to be reminded because of the way he was treated by his surroundings, even when the connection to Japan for him was just that three of his grandparents are from there. So Japan is an external factor for him as it is for Toko. The difference is that, through his life, he became more interested and attached to Japan than Toko did, and he is now trying to explore his Japanese roots more through the community. On the contrary, Ken, as Nisei, while he had no problem being Canadian, could not resist finding out some Japanese value in himself. Japan was closer to him than it was to James from the beginning. Experiences in Japan helped him understand why he likes a certain way of doing things, for example. Like James, he currently seeks to widen his understanding of Japan. Keiko—who, like Ken, is Nisei—has a more active relationship with Japan. She, saying that Japanese culture is hers, feels entitlement to the culture. When she was small, she was surrounded by Japanese people, such as her parents' friends and their children, for instance, and she liked and still likes Japanese cute things. She experienced strong racism due to her Japanese-ness, but it did not make her hate Japan. Japan is something internal to her, and she rather fought against the racism. Roddy, though he was born in Japan, spent most of his life in North America. As he mentioned, his encounter with *shakuhachi* was through library research; Japan is an external factor for him. Nevertheless, he is quite enthusiastic about playing Japanese music, and he has strong feelings towards Japan. He believes that he is definitely not Japanese. He is still not quite sure whether he can be identified as Japanese Canadian though others, such as Toko, think that he is Japanese Canadian and he thinks he is more Japanese Canadian than Filipino, which is his genetic ethnicity.

For those from Japan, experiences with Japan are quite different as well. For Michelle, it is her root and background, the place where she grew up. She is naturally Japanese and there is

no doubt. For Akie and Kanae, Japan is more like a place where Okinawa exists. When they say Japan, they mean Okinawa. Their attitude was that, if they are Japanese it is simply because Okinawa is located in Japan. In fact, they used different Okinawa words to distinguish people of Okinawa, *Uchinanchu*, and people of other parts of Japan, *Naicha* people. Yet, there is a bit of difference between those two women. While Okinawa is internal for Kanae, for Akie, coming from one of the main islands of Japan, Okinawa is in some way external, and she is still learning and consciously practicing Okinawa value through family, relatives and community. Kozue's case was close to Kanae, just that the place is Tohoku instead of Okinawa. In Mi Young's case, the relationship with Japan is more complicated. Japan is a birth place, and she grew up there; on the other hand, she does not have Japanese nationality, nor was it easy to go through her life in Japan. Her life includes racism as well as not having some basic rights. She describes,

Korea is like the mom who gave birth to me. We are biologically connected but far way from each other. And Japan is not biological, more like mother-in-law, well, more like foster mother than mother-in-law. Well I don't feel so close to be able to say it is my foster mother, though. Unfortunately. Like a bit cold foster mother. Like you know the mom in Cinderella, something like that, being a bit mean.¹⁰⁹

Moreover, the way she relates to Japan has been changing since she came to Canada. She said after she came to Canada she can feel a bit closer to Japan but still not biologically connected.

5.11.1.3. Hybridity

Most of them spoke about their existence as “in-between” or “hybrid.” On the other hand, maybe because her life is a bit complicated, Toko's comment was more like this is one of the off-mainstream things around her. For Roddy, it was a spiritual connection as well as being hybrid. The interesting thing is that Keiko says she is both, both Japanese and Canadian. Roddy also says he is Japanese, Canadian, and American, so they are positively in-between. On the other hand,

¹⁰⁹ For the original in Japanese, see appendix A-52

Mi Young says that being *Zainichi* is because “I am not Japanese and I am not Korean.” So her case was negatively in-between. For Akie and Kanae, indeed they use two terms, *Uchinanchu* and *Naicha* people, to distinguish Okinawa people and other Japanese, being Okinawan and being Japanese does not seem to be either-or thing while they believe that Okinawa has *icharibachode* spirit and deeper human relationships. Michelle’s case was unique among the informants in a way that she had a clearer notion that she is Japanese.

5.11.1.4. Summary

Thus, the informants have constructed their identities as hybrid through diverse processes and negotiations throughout their lives. What they have experienced in a certain era, certain space, with certain people, heavily influences their ways of making sense of themselves.

One common thing is that they feel that, even though their hybridity varies, they are to some extent hybrid. Adding to this, their identity has been shifting. For all except Michelle, Akie, Roddy and Kozue, first their identity was more about how different they are from the mainstream population around them, whether it is Caucasian or, in Mi Young’s case, Japanese. James expressed more internal awareness, such as wanting to be as white as possible and rejecting Japanese things around him rather than some external racist experiences. Ken’s story was more focused on external influence, such as the expectations on him in the classroom while he also internally knew there is something else in him. Toko, Keiko, and Mi Young experienced a strong racist attitude from others and in Toko’s case, she also learned that looking more white was a compliment in Canadian society.

Going through that period, attracted by their root country, they explored their differences. Sometimes that might have started as a negative. For example, Mi Young did not really have good experiences in Japan, and Korea was the place she desired to be. Others are more positive, such as the place of their ancestor’s roots or their own interests. Some traveled to the countries of

their roots. Some explored a more artistic, cultural path. They examined how close they are to their root countries. James, Ken, and Mi Young traveled and sometimes lived in their root country and gained a more clear understanding of what they like or dislike about their roots and how different and close they are to their roots. Toko and Keiko constantly pursue their favourite Japanese arts and cultures.

And now they express themselves as in-between or hybrid, or both or neither. Toko was unique since for her, off-mainstream is default, and being Japanese Canadian is part of her off-mainstream-ness. Others are really hybrid or in-between, and now they take this status in a very positive way. James is trying to practice the good parts of both. Ken thinks it is cool to have different cultural backgrounds. Toko and Keiko create some Japanese Canadian arts and culture, and Mi Young believes there is something she can do because of her in-between-ness and practices it.

Thus, they have been experiencing the shift between being Canadian and being Japanese and as a result they have found their being as in-between or hybrid. This also means they changed the way they see themselves from how the mainstream saw them with its could-be-stereotypical understanding of Japan, or Korean in Mi Young's case, and how different they are from the mainstream or such understanding from it, to the way they like with their own understandings of Japan, which vary a lot.

This does not mean that Michelle, Akie, Roddy, and Kozue have not shifted their identities. Their identifications don't follow a clear process or distinctive steps like the ones mentioned above, as their environments are different. Akie and Kozue have a similar understanding of their identity. They have different cultures from mainstream Japanese culture. But at the same time, both think that they are Japanese as well. Their cultures and mainstream Japanese culture are different, but it seems difficult to make them clearly distinct from each other. They are *Uchinanchu* or *Tohoku jin*, but this identity does not completely contradict from

nor exclude being Japanese either. Those differences are considered not distinct enough to say either-or but more like the differences within Japanese. They are more aware of the differences than other Japanese people, and carefully examine and reconstruct the concept of Japanese with other terms such as Okinawa and Tohoku. For Michelle, she thinks she is Japanese, and she was not aware of whether she is mainstream or not. This could be because she believes that she is mainstream, or because the differences are negligible for her.

For Roddy's case, he believes in a spiritual connection to Japan and practices Japanese arts. In other words, he spiritually connects to Japan through his art. This means that he was not aware of the Japanese or hyphenated Japanese within him until he found *shakuhachi* in the library. Thus, one day, he started connecting to Japan, and gradually became spiritually Japanese. Now, his current life, as an artist, is based on this Japanese art. He believes that he is spiritually Japanese but not really Japanese, as he believes that being Japanese requires physical elements, such as having Japanese parents.

5.11.2. Deconstruction of “dominant” and “minority” positions and strategic essentialization

As stated above, there is a variety of ways that the interviewees interpret and articulate their relation to and understanding of Japanese-ness. Contrary to the fact that redress played an important role to reconstruct the Japanese Canadian community, there were few who associated their identity with redress among the informants. Those who grew up in Canada believe it is important to remember and advocate about the redress in public; however, for those who were not born here, it seemed that the redress movement is not related to their life. This could mean that the redress movement has made it possible for those who are “somewhat Japanese” in Canada to have a positive relation with their Japanese-ness and take it for granted. 20 years after the redress, they do not even need to bother questioning, “is it okay to be Japanese in this

society?” or fighting for their being as “somewhat Japanese” in the society. Nevertheless, this does not mean that they do not feel racism or politics around them and happily live their lives in Canada. Rather, they are in a next phase of dealing with differences. The informants are aware that there are different types of racial politics, which is not blatant like the redress era but is done in a more discreet manner in casual daily situations. For example, James was constantly asked where he was from, and the answer that he was a Canadian was never accepted. Ken had to realise that he was not a simple Canadian because of the way his teacher or classmate treated him. He had to be aware that he was different because he was treated differently. Toko also received comments from her band community that assumed she was from somewhere else as well as the comment of looking white as a “compliment.” Keiko experienced more overt racism as a child, and is still made aware that she does not look Canadian after moving to British Columbia. Michelle and Kozue feel frustration in their lives because they cannot help realizing that they are in some way alien in the society. In other words, they are situated and differentiated as Japanese from the society, but the way they are situated is different from in the redress era. It can be said that they are more “culturally” rather than “politically” differentiated as Japanese, and because of this, they are feeling “other” or minority in the society. Of course this does not mean that they are no longer political beings. They take political actions when it is necessary. For example, when the City of Vancouver tried to cut down the legacy *sakura* trees that are historically important to Japanese Canadian community, they joined the community to stand up and worked to save the trees. The point here is that the politics that they are experiencing is more culturally oriented and therefore they take different and diverse approaches to deal with their being treated as “other,” which may be different from the politics of the redress era. These things are too subtle for many people, especially for mainstream society, to recognize as racism, and such activities by minority groups could be easily taken as over-reaction. However, it has to be noticed that these experiences affect minority people’s lives a lot and make them feel alienated

and conflicted about who they are, which mainstream people may not experience much in their life.

It seems that this different type of politics also changes the activities of the minority toward racism. As Mi Young states, the tendency of their approach seems more about trying to know and share the differences rather than political action for the differences. It seemed that they would rather try to create their own world than try to be valued by the mainstream standard. In other words, they are, rather than focusing on how different they are from the mainstream who may not value their differences, enjoying who they are in a more subjective way with the people who can appreciate and respect them as who they are, such as community members. Of course this does not mean they are not political, or stopped relating and negotiating with the mainstream society. They are political in a different way, or their political approach is different from the redress era. If the redress can be considered a more straight forward claim against racism, today's approach is more soft and indirect sharing-based negotiation toward discrimination and advocacy.

This could be because society has also changed so that they do not need to claim or fight back to protect their basic human rights anymore. For instance, probably the type of differences is not threatening to the society, and their being different does not make them be treated in heavily unjust ways from the mainstream society. Or this could be because they have found it difficult to make the mainstream society understand this type of difference, which is more about how than what, therefore not widely recognized as racism, by taking redress type of action, which is more useful with clear overt racism. For example, Ken said that he likes to do something in a certain way which is not always the same as with his friend. This is not about what he does but how he does something. Keiko likes working with Japanese related organizations because of how they work. Michelle also stated some barriers in this society. In her case, this is not about what language she speaks, as she can speak English, but the point is how

she speaks or interprets English around her. This ‘how’ element is the key difference that is talked about here, and the informants are negotiating this ‘how’ difference in a variety of ways.

This type of difference may not be easily understood as this can be called an “over-reaction” by the mainstream, so the informants are taking more sharing-based activity with those who are interested in the topics rather than claiming-based one towards those who have little interests, to address the issues, hoping that sharing and experiencing may help people feel and understand what it is like to be a certain type of minority more correctly. This is understandable with what happened to my informants. For example, James and Ken learned about Japan by going there and actually spending some time there. Mi Young also learned that she is not quite Korean by spending some time with Korean born Koreans. If those actual shared experiences have enabled them to understand about what it is like to be positioned differently more, it is natural that they may want to take a similar way to situate, negotiate, and identify themselves in, related to, and advocate the public. Thus this sharing based activity would encourage and enable other people who are interested to understand how the world looks like from the minority or different point of view and to give them an opportunity to negotiate to create the third space beyond dominant and minority relationship.

At the same time, while they are enjoying and sharing the diversity of who they are, they strategically unite as Japanese Canadian organizations. It is interesting to compare the Powell Street Festival (PSF) and Japantown Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration (JMNC) from this point of view. Both are organized by the Japanese Canadian community and held in the old Japantown area. JMNC more focuses on the diversity of the area which used to be called Japantown. This area contains a variety of ethnic groups, interest groups, cultural groups and so on, intermingling with each other, and the event shows the variety of activities, stories and artworks and therefore challenges a simple dichotomy of “dominant” vs. “minority.” There is no clear border between them as there is no clear minority group. On the contrary, the annual PSF is

one of the occasions that the members of the Japanese Canadian community show who they are as Japanese Canadians, to the public. Of course, as stated above, each group has a different hybridity by different types of people; however, at the PSF, all those differences can get together under the name of Japanese Canadians. It can be said that the both JMNC and PSF offer an educational opportunity for the public to understand the diversity of the community with different foci, through facing many Japanese related organizations, groups, and individuals such as artists and their activities. In other words, the JMNC highlights the diversity of Japanese Canadian related networks and communities while the PSF is the strategically essentialized version of Japanese Canadian related networks and communities. And both have the characteristics of advocacy to the public as well as the festival for the community members.

5.11.3. The community space: The third space

All the informants belong to some organizations or groups, from *Tonari Gumi* to *shakuhachi* group. Some organizations have been in Vancouver for a long time while other groups are quite new, as the informants themselves have created one. While they are related to each other, each organization itself is a community for a certain population. *Tonari Gumi* is a cultural and social space more for the Japanese speaking population, and *Zainichi Korian no Kai* is for those who are in some way connected to Korea. *Yuai Kai* is for Okinawa related people, and Blim creates a space for cute related Japanese female artists. *Shakuhachi* group is for those who are interested in *shakuhachi* but in English, and the Powell Street Festival Society is for those who are interested in Japanese or Japanese/Asian Canadian things. Once a year at the Powell Street Festival, those different types of groups get together and share what they think and like about and how they are in some way Japanese.

However, these groups are not only the space for those particular populations. While these groups offer spaces for certain populations to feel comfortable, the groups also offer a third

space to their members. *Tonari Gumi* is a place for old and young people and the languages used there are both English and Japanese. *Tonari Gumi* is a space partly for minority minority, such as Japanese speaking seniors. At the same time, *Tonari Gumi* is the place for younger people to communicate with each other or with seniors in Japanese as well as those English speakers like James and Ken who can learn something Japanese from other *Tonari Gumi* members through social and cultural activities. All these interactions create a comfortable hybrid place for them regardless of their nationalities or languages. *Zainichi Korian no Kai* practices the conversation between Korea and Japan as well as *Zainichi* (residing in Japan) *Korian* abroad. They learn each other's languages and cultures and societies, which might be difficult to learn in any other places for various reasons. *Zainichi Korians* support each other as well, and such support would be difficult to receive from somewhere else due to the fact that their situation has become really complicated through the history and politics around them. *Yuai Kai* also faces the bilingual reality and the negotiation of Okinawa value with new generation while their connection is spreading beyond more than just Okinawa and Vancouver. They can be called Okinawan-Vancouverite, and they are interacting with other Okinawans in the world as well as other Japanese related groups in Vancouver. Their experiences are very unique and different from Okinawa people in Okinawa or other mainstream Vancouverites. Blim offers a space for Japanese female artists to meet each other and feel a sense of community and from here some Vancouver arts influenced by Japanese cuteness are created. *Shakuhachi* group creates a new relation to *shakuhachi* beyond Japanese traditional *shakuhachi* art. In Vancouver, *shakuhachi* has been collaborating with many other instruments beyond Japan and creating very unique music. This shows that Japanese art and culture can be practiced in non-Japanese environments and become a very different entity. Moreover, these groups interact with each other or with other groups and organizations, and these interactions enable them to rethink their boundary and identity as groups and move toward better beings.

In this way, it can be said that these groups in Vancouver are the third space where hybrid cultures, arts, and interactions are created and practiced. The Powell Street Festival is another third space to practice and celebrate this hybridity in the community with English language, and *Vancouver Shinpo* shares those in some way Japanese stories in Vancouver with Japanese language to the community. One thing to be noticed is that people are in those groups because they are interested in the groups' activities but not necessarily because of their ethnic background. The central thing is about people's activities and interests, and ethnic background does not determine much about what they do nor what they are nor where they should belong.

Apparently, these groups are there not just to preserve and show mainstream Canadians what is considered Japanese cultural heritage by the Canadians. Rather, they are there as Japanese Canadians or *Nikkei* or whatever they identify themselves as. The community members are not only finding a space but also creating and developing the groups to enjoy who they are in their own way and support those who are like them, which is not necessarily simple Japanese but more hybrid. Moreover, the important point is that this hybridity varies as stated above. For example, there are those who consider themselves to some extent Japanese Canadian but in a way that is beyond ethnicity. There are people who are not of Japanese descent and mixed race people. Furthermore, their activities also vary, and include cultural, artistic, social, and political activities. Having this variety of hybridity within them, they create new space for themselves to practice such hybridity. This is obvious from the fact that I heard terms such as hybrid or collaboration so many times during the interviews. In other words, those groups are the third spaces where the members of the community create and practice who they are and what they are interested in from their own point of view rather than how they look like to the mainstream society, which may look like a variety of hybrid from outside.

5.11.4. Summary

Thus, the members of the Japanese Canadian community are very diverse and not simply Japanese Canadians, and the members take it for granted that there are many different types of people. They are aware that different types of people use different terms to express themselves, and there are people who use the same term in a different way. Moreover, they are aware that people practice diverse activities under those names that express who they are. Those differences are based on various internal and external factors, such as the place where they are from and when, the generations in Canada, the family history, the language that they speak, the types of experiences they had with their situations, the level of interests in Japanese or Japanese Canadian related community, their understanding of Japan, or the way they understand that they are Japanese or Japanese Canadian or something else, and so on. Under those circumstances, it seems that the ethnic term “Japanese” does not make sense any more.

On the other hand, even though they are so diverse, some commonalities are found in the way they go through their life. They feel they are in some way different, other, or minority, and the way they take care of their differences is an on going internal and external negotiation process. Their understanding of themselves, their ideal self, the comfortable places for them to be, for example, have been changing through their life as they constantly try to realize their ideal self with the influence from their surroundings. In other words, they try to create a comfortable space for them, where they can relate to and express themselves with comfort. In other words, they are trying to find or create a space where they do not need to feel different. Through such a space they create, their activities of sharing have also been toward deconstructing the binary relations of dominant and minority as well as working as an advocacy space.

Things about community are for the comfort of the members of the community rather than the Japanese culture and arts. Those cultures and arts are important only because the members have an interest in practicing them. In other words, the community and its members are

not here for the culture and arts to be preserved, but the culture and arts are here for the community and its members. Of course the environment of the members of the community here is quite different from the environment in Japan or the environment here several decades ago. Therefore, it is no wonder if today's community members would consider themselves in a different way from those who are in Japan or those who were active in the community several decades ago. At the same time, it is no wonder if the Japanese Canadian community, culture, and arts are different from those in Japan or those from several decades ago. If there is still such community under the same name after several decades, this is not because it is the same but because its members still think to relate to the community in some way, and the name could mean a completely different thing from the past or from Japan or from what the mainstream society would think of as Japanese. To clarify the differences, they sometimes use different words or create new words. Based on those differences, influences, and elements of human activities that exist at this moment in this space, the community keeps creating the third space for its members who are in some way hybrid.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

I, taking a photographer's position, have studied the party of the Japanese Canadian community. Starting from looking at the old albums of the party, I have focused on their identity construction and tried to capture the party with the interview, instead of the camera, as a tool. In the field, there are a lot of dynamics in different ways, and what I have been able to capture has been merely a small part of the party. In this chapter, I would like to conclude my study as a photographer of the party.

6.2. Implications

Through examining the stories of the identity construction processes of members of the Japanese Canadian community in Vancouver, this research articulated the ways they construct and negotiate their identity with their environment including their community and the mainstream society in Canada as a hybrid being, as well as their relationships with their community. After the stories, it is no longer possible to see the community as a homogeneous ethnic group. Even among a small number of people in a specific group within the community, not everyone is simply Japanese, as some are mixed race and others are of a different ethnic origin. Moreover, when the stories of those who are from Japan are included, even the definition of Japanese is in question. Within this complicated situation around Japanese-ness, the informants consider themselves in some way Japanese, but again, this "Japanese" means many different things. Even the way they call themselves is more than hyphenated Japanese. They use a variety of terms based on English, Japanese, or their native language. With this reality of complicated being, they negotiate who they are with their situations. For example, who they are in Canada and who they

are in Japan can be different, or who they are in the community and who they are in the mainstream society can be different.

This research also examined their identity as process through the negotiation with various factors around them, such as how others see and treat the informants, or how Japan is considered in Canadian society at a certain point in the informants' lives. Whether Japan is discussed as "cool" or as "gross" in the classroom or other environments also influences interviewees' perception of themselves as Japanese-related persons. Those negotiations change as their environment changes, such as era, place, and people around them. In other words, how Japanese, or how not Japanese they are is an on-going negotiation process through their life with the external and internal factors. Ethnic identity is fluid, and if one identifies oneself in a certain way, this is merely one way among countless other ways of identifying oneself throughout one's life. One day, they are Canadian, another day they are Japanese, and another day, they may be somewhere in-between or both or neither of them.

The difference around ethnicity is not only about their appearance or their parents' hometown or food but also their value systems. The informants realize the different value systems one way or the other. James and Ken realized the different values from their Canadian one when they went to Japan. Kanae, Akie, and Kozue's cases are more about the difference between the indigenous-like value system before modernization in Okinawa and Tohoku and modernized value systems like the one in Tokyo, rather than the difference between Japanese and Canadian value systems. Thus, two different kinds of angles to the ethnic identity are addressed here. One is ethnic identity as the one based on the differences from other ethnic people, such as Canadian mainstream, and the other is the identity based on the differences within the ethnic group. Therefore, it has to be noticed that there are these layers of cultures and values under the name of one, "Japanese," culture, and those layers must be acknowledged in order to understand an ethnic group in Canada. Moreover, even each layer would be hybrid.

This research also showed how the Japanese Canadian community negotiates with this reality. The community creates their own space, the third space, from their point of view as hybrid rather than based on how they look and are different from the mainstream society, or in other words, the white gaze. They are happy to share their stories, experiences, and interests with those who are interested in and respect such things. Their basic negotiation is a softer approach of sharing culture rather than a hard way of claiming or fighting against the dominant power. The attitude of sharing can discard the binary and potentially harsh confrontation between dominant and minority groups as well as provide an educational opportunity to anybody. Once one is interested in them in a respectful manner, they are happy to share their experiences and stories. On the other hand, the community sometime strategically essentializes and appears in public to show their existence with pride, to take action for their concerns and the injustice that they face, and to offer opportunities for other people to find out, learn, and think about the community. The community and its members' ways of negotiating, the way to situate themselves without losing a sense of who they are, can encourage many people who feel in the minority, alienated, discriminated, or ignored by the society. At the same time, this research can be one of the cases with which Canada can reconsider its multiculturalism policy to make Canada more inclusive and fair to its people.

This in-between-ness or hybridity or the activity along with it is the nature of identity formation or identification. Between something and something else, one is always negotiating and situating oneself in the third space to make sense of one's life. This should not be a stressful or frustrating process; nevertheless, it is sometimes confusing not to define something or draw a border. Therefore, society tends to draw many kinds of borders for society to keep moving smoothly. As soon as a border is drawn, the dynamics to create the third space occurs since there are always those who do not fit into any categories. Those activities may be considered as deviant as it challenges the border drawn by the authority to maintain the society in order.

Therefore, those who have a power to draw a border have to be really careful to do it when they need to do it so that not many people need to feel alienated from not fitting in to any category. At the same time, those with power also need to have flexibility to change the border based on the activities and movements to create the third spaces in society, instead of excluding or punishing those who create the third space in the society.

6.3. Multiculturalism in Canada

This research has examined those who create the third space based on ethnic identity among many different kinds of identification of human beings. This is partly because this ethnic space is the place in which I am situated by Canadian society on top of any other differences I have, such as being a person for whom English is second language, an international student, or musician to name a few. Somehow all those differences are put behind and my ethnic background has always been highlighted in my life here in Canada. Perhaps this is because of the policy of multiculturalism in Canada, which says, “no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other” (Canada. Prime Minister, 1971 p. 8545) and draws the borders among people of colour based on ethnicity. However, this research has shown that drawing the borders based on ethnicity does not really work out well and that “no precedence” is not practiced in reality. The informants of the study expressed that they feel different or other. They are socially constructed and they are not just Canadian but the members of a minority group even when they are aware that people of colour are not really minorities in Greater Vancouver. Why do they still have to feel like this? The mainstream society, such as Caucasian, English speaking, modernized western people, may not have any intention to racialize people like my informants or make them feel ‘other.’ On the other hand, this can mean that the mainstream has not even realized how their views have been excluding a certain people as ‘others.’ To think about this

reality, it is important to examine the policy of multiculturalism in Canada as a means to categorize and control others.

Under multiculturalism, people of non-European descent are classified according to their characteristics as observed from this European perspective (Day, 1998, p. 56). This classification is called ethnicity. In other words, ethnicity is the outcome of the essentialization of people along with European stereotypes of non-Europeans, and the Canadian policy of multiculturalism is based to some extent on this idea of ethnicity. This means that the statement of official policy of multiculturalism, “no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other” (Canada. Prime Minister, 1971 p. 8545) does not really make sense. Moreover, this concept of ethnicity does not have a sensitive awareness of the complexity and diversity that exists in an ethnic group, as Park (2008) argues.

Park (2008) states that there are many different ways of being Asian American and interpretations of Asian Americans. In his article, Asian Americans bring many different aspects, such as religions, different experiences as the second generations, and so on, to interpret the phrase, “Asian American.” This argument can be applied not only to this kind of pan-ethnic group but also to each ethnic group as not all the members of an ethnic group have the same interest and understandings of who they are as this research has shown. One cannot simply be in an ethnic group, but realistically one is in a certain type of sub-group within an ethnic group with its own culture, depending on one’s definition of the ethnic group.

However, since this multiculturalism has become the official and dominant framework, this idea tends to make society categorise people of colour based on ethnicity, a concept that is based on a European perspective, and think that ethnic groups are the place for the people of colour and treat them as such. This “essentialization” of cultures by the policy of multiculturalism is a problem, and this problem can be explained from two points. One is that the reality of people of colour is more complicated and diverse than the ethnic groups that have been

created from a Western perspective. In this way there are so many people whose existence cannot be explained by this multicultural idea, and they tend to feel excluded from the society even though they are members of the society. The other is that there are people with layers of differences, such as people of colour with a disability and queer people of colour. These people are not widely recognised in a mainstream society. For example, people would not expect to see people of colour when they watch a queer channel on TV or people would not expect, when they see an Asian student having difficulty speaking English, that she might have a learning disability.

Under this reality of Canadian society, this research tried to show the first point above, the complexity and diversity of an ethnic group and how the informants are treated by the mainstream society, the non-recognition by Canadian mainstream society. This is really important because the situation around ethnicity is becoming more and more apparent and complex. This is not specific to Japanese Canadians in Vancouver. For example, Daniel Yon (2000) studied ethnic identity negotiation in classrooms in Toronto, and the negotiation is much more complex than the one between Canadian and another ethnicity. For the children, their ethnic identities are not just about where one is from or where one's parents are from, but about various interests and meanings, such as fashions, music, or behaviour depending on contexts (Yon, 2000). Furthermore, Mythili Rajiva (2006) argues that Canadian-born children whose parents are immigrants, the second generation children, struggle in Canadian society and that the struggles they have in Canada are different from the ones their parents have. While the parents practice their cultures at home, the children learn things from a Western perspective at school. Because of this difference, children feel alienated both at school and at home. They notice not only the difference but also the hierarchy that being white is more Canadian (Rajiva, 2006). Moreover, Minelle Mahtani's article (2002) argues that people of hybrid ethnicity express the feeling that there is no space for them in Canadian multiculturalism. Thompson and Nakagawa (2006) made a documentary film about mixed race people, and there is an on-going

project, *The Hapa Project* by Kip Fulbeck (n.d.). Thus, the reality is revealing its complexity with various forms, and this research is one of those attempts to understand specifically the reality of Japan related people in Greater Vancouver.

Thus, ethnic identity has many different versions, which is much more dynamic than being identified as “an ethnic-hyphen-Canadian” way. The reality is very complex, and today’s Canadian multiculturalism policy is not sufficient to explain this reality. On the other hand, this sensitive, subtle, dynamic, and nuanced version of identity can also be represented through multiculturalism once its modification takes place along with this complexity. It may be easy and comfortable to celebrate multiculturalism with little consideration of what the term actually means; however, it is important to think about its meaning and the modification needed for this policy to take effect so it can design of the ideal society and the provide the means to actualize it.

6.4. Directions for future research

This research has dealt with a small and specific population in a specific place in a specific time among those who are considered minority, or minority of minority. The voices of a minority are really difficult to be heard or be deeply understood beyond the “politically correct” way. As stated above, there are countless layers even within one ethnic group. Some of them are stated in the limitation sections, such as 1) intersectionality of identity, 2) more complicated mixture of race and ethnicity 3) wider range of community members, in terms of the level of engagement in the community and their focus, age, language, and so on. Moreover, this research also showed a shared experience or tendencies of the informants: identity as hybrid process and negotiation as well as the community space as the third space. However, this may be the tendency only within this specific group that this research focused on. Therefore, it is expected and encouraged to conduct further research with this topic with different types of populations, different area, and

different time to deepen the understanding of the identity situations of minority groups in the future to make a more just society.

Moreover, the indigenous cultures of the world, regardless of the current recognition from Western society or not, can be studied as well. Here “indigenous cultures” mean the cultures that are locally developed by the people natively residing on their land for over centuries. For example, some internationally recognized ones are the Ainu in Japan or First Nations People in Canada. Some others are more locally recognized, such as Kansai or *Matagi* people in Japan, and others may not be clearly recognized yet. Any cultural group in Canada is in some way hybrid within the mainstream society in Canada. It is important to examine how the mainstream Canadian society, or Western culture and philosophy in general, is influencing those groups if not colonizing them by its value system and the concept of ethnicity through education or any other ways. This does not mean that there are such pure indigenous cultures. The indigenous culture itself would be quite hybrid and an on-going negotiation; however, it is significant to pay attention to what kind of negotiation is going on with the focus of indigenous philosophies of groups to understand the influence of the Western culture in today’s situation beyond the framework of ethnicity. This could also help realize the differences within one ethnicity as well as what is being done under the name of modernization, capitalism, or other terms such as globalization and internationalization. In other words, how those activities and philosophies are different from or similar to colonialism. Through this research, the modernized society may be able to find some hints or solutions to its own problems from indigenous knowledge in the world.

Lastly, it would be interesting to study how the mainstream society is trying to learn and understand the minority not only from their own point of view but also from the minority’s point of view. This research is about the negotiation from the minority perspective. However, it is

110 “Japanese traditional hunters” (Taguchi, 2004, p. 191)

important to see how the mainstream, such as the educational system, media, as well as daily human interaction, is trying to understand, respect, and negotiate the minorities' perspectives and value systems. For example, how much is the mainstream society aware of and interested in and wants to learn and share those minorities' activities, from history, arts, politics, and movement with minorities from minorities' point of view, such as why is it always said that Asian students never speak but not that Asian students listen more in the classroom? This examination of the mainstream society's attitude is quite important since in order to negotiate and create the third space, both sides need to understand from each other's points of view.

6.5. Photography metaphor

At the very end, I would like to come back to the photography metaphor again. In the opening chapter, I asked how the photographer should capture the party, whether he should use different cameras, and how people should read what the photographer shows. Based on what has been discussed, I would like to try to answer those questions.

To the first question about the way to capture the party, I would like to say 1) approach the participants humbly and respectfully, 2) consult with the subject, and 3) do not forget that taking photos is not a one way activity but should be a negotiation with the subject, by constructing an equal relationship with the subject.

For the second question, if the technology is so advanced, maybe the photographer can use video cameras to capture the dynamics, or she can try to use more advanced technology such as USTREAM, which enables live broadcasting through the Internet and the live interaction with the audience. For instance, with USTREAM, the audience can access the party and even direct the photographer to capture what the audience wants to see at the party. Or if people at the party have some device such as cell phones or laptop computer with camera and the internet connection, the photographer may not even need to be at the party as they can broadcast the party

themselves with the various devices and the Internet. Moreover, the audience, even when they live on the other side of the globe, could join the conversations happening at the party. In this situation, the photographer would have less power to select and edit the scenes to make a particular impression about the party. However it is important to remember that joining the party though media, even with USTREAM via an attendee's cell phone, can never be the same as actually joining the party.

Finally, to answer the third question, the audience should not simply believe in what they see in the photograph or USTREAM. No matter how hard the photographer tries, media can never represent the whole party dynamics, nor can the photographer stop putting her viewpoint on it. So people should be aware of and examine what a particular media can do and cannot do, as well as what the intensions of the photographer.

6.6. Conclusion

This study began with the intention of understanding the realities of ethnic minorities in Canada with questions, such as: What are ethnic groups? What kind of people are Japanese Canadians? I wanted to know who they are and what the Japanese Canadian community is in Vancouver, and when I started this research, I expected to know those things. What has become clear after the research, finding various differences within a small portion of an ethnic group, is that it is impossible to understand what Japanese Canadians or the Japanese Canadian community in general are. This was an interesting shift in me from understanding them as an entity to understanding them as complex dynamics. For example, not every Japanese Canadian is involved in the community, those who are in the community are not necessarily of Japanese descent, their activities are not necessarily only in Canada or Japan, and even their identifications are not necessarily associated with Japan or Canada only. This “not necessarily” has been always around me, and this complex dynamics is one of the findings about the reality of ethnic

minorities in Canada. Yet, through conversation with the informants and participating in the community scenes, I hope the research has revealed a part of what it is like to be a minority in Canada, which is really difficult to understand unless one actually experiences it. All the informants went through the struggles and negotiation to make sense of who they are, which they might not have needed to go through in such a tough way if they had not been minority. At the same time, because they have gone through such processes, I have found that they have very inclusive attitudes and are very understanding towards other persons.

In conducting this research, I have met many people in the community and learned a lot from them and their community. These experiences have influenced my mind and encouraged me to keep going even when I am struggling a lot in this society as one of the minorities in many different layers. The people I have met are not academic people, but they have more actual experiences in their field and understandings about minority situation. I believe their knowledge and experiences are really significant for people outside of their community including academics to learn from in order to make a more just society.

This research has shown that a minority is not those who need to be helped or protected or supported by the majority. They have accumulated knowledge and the power to create and their own communities, negotiate who they are, and enjoy them. There are a number of things that the mainstream society can learn from them, including how to face the differences and learn from them. I hope this research can be the beginning of such a learning point to the non-minority population as well as empower other minorities who may be still struggling from not being able to receive respectful treatment from others.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: The original quotes in Japanese

1. 日本というともまあね、何でしょうね。やっぱりバックグラウンドだからやっぱり切れない、切れないし、その、やっぱり、ルーツでしょうね、だからその、精神的なものは、いくらカナダになじんでいても、どっかにやっぱり日本のあので築いたものがあるということで、決して無視はできない。
2. こちらのほうがストレスとかかわずらわしさがなく、まあちょっとのんびりしすぎてるところもあるけれども、やっぱりその煩わしさとか、ないということでしょうね。後は夏がきれい。Expoは5月から10月だったから、一番良いときを過ごした。
3. そうですね。普段がオフィスがやっぱり日本とは関係ないオフィスだから、だからそういう時はあまり日本関係ないですよ。[...]で後学校も関係も、日本語が関係ないしね、そうなんでしょうね。
4. ブリティッシュコロンビアはバンクーバーはやっぱり、そのBroadwayの各角にこのすし屋があるように、やっぱり暮らしやすいところだから、理解は、大きいですよ、そういう意味で、私は前にイギリスにいたことがあるけども、あの、ここはやっぱり住みやすいと思います。
5. カナダ人でもその日本が好きカナダ人とかもね、そういう会話をしたりとか、もあるし、先週ポニョの映画が始まったわね、とか、言ってくるから、それはやっぱり私が日本人だから言ってくるんだし。そういう会話はあつたでしょうね。
6. なんかこう、やっぱり意思の疎通がうまくわからないときとか、なんか、馬鹿にされてるな、とか、悔しい思いをするときとか、後は、どうしてもしょうがないのは、あ、ここでなんていうか、よくあの、ここで育つてここで同じように中学校に行った人たちが集まると、あの、やっぱりそのcrowdには入れないとか、そうじゃなくても、あの、何人かこの前も昔のテレビの話してて、知らない、とか、ありますね。
7. **Steveston**
Garryパークに桜の木を植えたとか、後何かしら、まあ、昔来たそのクノウギヘイさんの伝記というか、まあ、クノウギヘイさんとか、そういう人の話、あと日系フィッシャーマンの本が出たとか、そういうのがここ2、3年続いたので、それでBC州和歌山県人会の人も知ったりとか、でこの前天皇陛下んとこに行ったら23、その人たちがまた来てたから、そのときにあ、何さんって知ってたりとか。
8. 日系社会とかそういうので考えるとほんとにそのねさっきも言ったように団体とかがだんだんね、人がinvolve

しなくなってるから、なんか、あるんでしょうね。前に詩吟の取材に行って詩吟、私知りませんよ詩吟、なんて、って言って、でもそのなんか日本のそのなんていうの、先生、教祖、教祖か、教祖の先生が来たときに、いらしたら、ここにある詩吟クラブって言うのがあって、後からなんか、入ってくれませんかと言われて、やっぱり、ね、皆さん入ってもらいたいんでしょうね。じゃないと、入ってもらいたいんだなあというのがありますね。までもそのね、他にはあの、ま、やってるところはやってるでしょうね、木曜会28だとか、続いているところはあるだろうし、ね、日加商工会29とか、なんかまた新たな人たちが作ってるところもあるしね。だから、ねえ。どうなるのかなあって気はしますよね。日系社会というのはね。昔のその来た人たち。

9. 90年代はあの、90年ていうか80年代後半から90年代のまだバブルのね、あのころは、それころOKギフトショップがアルバーニにあった頃、ほんとにいっぱい日本のおみやげやさんがあってアルバーニにね。斉藤がコーナーにあって、シーボーンとかみんなあって、あの、まあそこは日本人のお土産やさん街だったのにね、もうそれも無くなった。[...]やっぱり86年以降ですか、着てから90年代前半くらいはいっぱい日本人のそういう中年の人があの、旅行出た時代だから、それこそ、巨泉の店だっていってみんなね、お土産を買って行って、ね、昔は買うちーせーターとかだったけど80年代はね、90年代からもういろんなねメープルシロップとか何とかね、だから、ああいう時代があった、それはそれである、日系人とは別に日本人のそういうね、中年の人たちがいっぱい来てま、若者もね、来たけれども、結構そのパワーがすごかった、マイクロバスが来て、ね、農協の団体とかね、あの、OKに来てもうばーっと買って行ったからね、ああいうのが無くなったのはほんと寂しいなあ、っていうかね。うん。でそういう世代がもう来なくなった。
10. Stevestonの人たちを見ても、だから三世、四世位はほとんど日系とは関係ない生活をしてるし、で、おそらく日系とは結婚しないで、リッチモンドでチャイニーズと結婚する人も多いし、だからLast Nameは日本人でもまったく関係ない人が多いし、日本に行ったこともないし、そういうふうにだんだんブレンドインしていくのかな、と。思いますね。
11. 普段ね、そうやって日系社会に関係ない人でもパウエル祭は行くでしょ、子供にお祭りを見せたい、でしょうね。結構行った、って言う人いるから、ね、じゃあ、桜の木を植えるとか、桜の木を切るという時34は別に関係ないけど、やっぱり、そういう文化はできる場所はつれてっている、だから持ちつき大会なんていうと、特にただだて言うのと、日系プレースただだからすっごい人がね、来てて、やっぱり子供に持ちつき見せたいと、言うのがあってうちもまあ、取材がてら行ったことがあるけれども、もうやっぱり文化は知らせたい、というのはあるんでしょうね。
12. 夏ずっと帰ってる人もいるし、ここの学校が6月にね終わって、一ヶ月あるでしょ、7月21日まで、だから1ヶ月行ってるとかいう人

13. そういう意味でもしかしたら日本人とかね、ワーホリとかあんまり関わらないのかな。という気もするけれども、やっぱり英語だからかな。
14. 新しいものを見たりとかね、聞いたりとかしてね、人の体験を通してその自分も体験できるという、後、知らないこともね、自分興味なかったことも取材を通してへえーってちょっと知識を得るというか。
15. 日系コミュニティにあんまり関係してないといいながらも、取材を通して、後、前にやっぱり一時期日系人の友達がすごくいた時があったから、何人かでね、4人くらいで、だから結構Stevestonに行って、あの彼女のおかあさん、いろいろご飯作ってくれて、いいなあ日系人って、とか、で、それから取材を通して、日系コミュニティとか日系フィッシャーマンの歴史とか、だからやっぱりそれはね、昔だったら知らなかったし興味もなかったけども、あの、興味ももてた
16. あの、へーって私も思うし、皆さんも読んでくれてへーってね。思っていただければいいなというか。
17. 沖縄のイチャリバチョーデの志を世界中に広めれば、こんなに素敵な世の中はないですよ。
18. あの、カルガリーにいったんですけど、もう、ね、最初の冬が氷点下25度だったんですよ。それで、ちょっと高台のところにあるアパートに住んでたんで、こう180度見えるんですよ。冬はもう白と黒しかないんですよ、もう。雪の白とアスファルトとか木の幹の黒。こんなとこやだー、と思って、寂しくて寂しくて、そのころ仕事もしてなかったんで、もう寂しくて嫌だ、って。で。3年したら帰ろうね、って言ってたから、ま、帰る前にバンクーバーっていいところらしいから、ちょっとまあ行ってみようと、と言われてて、でバンクーバー来たらもう、道路のまきに、この歩道のところにお花は並んでるし、お店屋さんとか、もう、色のないところから、フルカラーですもん。もう、日本みたい！と思って、でそこで住むようになって、で、だんだん、なんか、気候もいいですしね、食べ物もいっぱいあるし。
19. カルガリーのときはもう、東洋人がなんか少ないところに住んでたんで、ほんと買い物に行っても振り返られるくらいの
[...]バンクーバーはもう、頭黒い人ばかりいる(笑)ほんと。
20. 沖縄行ってあの、カチャーシー踊ってるおばあちゃん見て、かっこいいな、と思って、習いたいな、って思ってた、戻ってきたんですよ。で、みいちゃんとたまたまビデオ屋さんで、日本の、ビデオ屋さんで会って、で、あんた、「沖縄の踊りですよね」、って言ったら、「あんた沖縄じゃないでしょ」って言うから、「違います」って、「だんなは？」って言うから「沖縄です。」「沖縄どこ」って、「恩納村」、「お、恩納村?」、「あ、そう、じゃ県人会入りなさい、教えてあげるから。」って言われて、それで、だからさっちゃん最初に誘ってくれて、そしたら後で親戚だって。

21. たまたま新年会である、スティーブストンの仏教会のあの場所をお借りすることになって、それから、ちょっと和歌山県人会の方とも少しづつ、だからこう、徐々に輪が広がってきてるって言うか
22. 太鼓を通じてね。で、マリナーズの、イチローのあそこで、もう去年、今年、踊ってきたりとか、あとワシントンの、シアトルのワシントンの県人会とかですね。
23. 留学生で沖縄に一年行って、向こうでその、沖縄のお嫁さんとかお婿さん見つけて、[...]
だから、向こうに行ったらいいけど、男の子はね、こっちにつれて帰ってくることでできるけど、女の子はあっちに行ったらきりになると、ね、ちょっとかわいそうって、こっちにご両親いらっしゃるのに。面白いよね。[...]
結構ね、だから、親は沖縄から大陸に住みたいって行ってカナダからくるんだけど、二世、二番目は意外とやっぱりカナディアンで、なったりとか、で、三世の代になると今度はおじいちゃん、おばあちゃんのところはどなたとこだろ、って、二世もそうですけど、お父さんお母さんのところ、で、沖縄に興味を持って沖縄に今度住んだりとか。
24. 最初県人会に入ったころにあの、踊りが来て、その時に見てたんですけど、もう、その、あの、劇場の手配から、音響から、で、えと、チケットの販売でしょ、それで、出てくださいる方のその、飲み物とか、他たとえばこういうフルーツとか、そういうことだから買い物とかね、全部やってらしたんですよ、沖縄の方。で、沖縄から何十人踊りが来るからって言ったらもうその前からもう、ね、全部動いてやってらしたから、えー！って、旅行会社じゃないんだからって。
25. 沖縄のイチャリバチョーデ59の気持ちをね、継いでいけるのが一番の理想なんだけど、でもこっちで生まれ育って、ってやってきてる人たちに、今自分たちがたとえば沖縄から踊りが来るって言って、もう、本当に上げ膳据え膳みたいにこう、沖縄の方はよくされるじゃないですか。[...]次の世代の人たちがこれは無理だろう、って勝手に思ってしまったって、それで、できるだけ、後の人たちに負担がかからない方向にこう道筋をつけていかなくちやいけないんじゃないか、って思ってたんですよ。でも、最近になって、いろんな方を見て、あれ、って。よくよく考えたら、沖縄のイチャリバチョーデの志を世界中に広めれば、こんなに素敵な世の中はないですよ。で、それを強いることができないけれども、で、あー今までの自分は間違ってたなあ、と思って。で、やっぱりこう、ナイチャの方からみるとやりすぎでしょって思うくらい、沖縄の方々は良くされるんですよ。それで、でも自分もその場において、こう、沖縄から誰それが来たから、じゃ、ってやると、やっぱり欲が出て、じゃあ、一時間あるからこっちも連れて行ってあげようかな、みたいな感じにやってしまうんですよ。で、そうすると、それが結果的にすごい喜んでもらえることにつながるし、で、やっぱりそれが結局ね、いいことに先に発展していく、ここでああもう、大概にやっていったらやっぱり人と人とのつながりだから、それで終わってしまうけれども、でも、沖縄のそ

のイチャリバショードの気持ちでやっていけば、やっぱり将来何かにつながって
いくんじゃないかなあって。最近、思うようになって。

26. 沖縄の人だったら、ある程度もてなしてから帰さないといけないっていうこの、
気持ちというのかな、それが当たり前なんだよって。
27. 誰もいなくてもドア開いてたりね [...]
うちも帰って必ずお墓参りして、それで、親戚の奥間の長男のほうからずっとこ
う、挨拶に行くんですよ。それで、いないんだけど、あーもう線香上げていった
らいいじゃんって言って、勝手に上がって、ついでにトイレ借りたりしながら、
線香上げてお土産置いて。
28. そういったところ、ウチナーの人の違いも、そこよ。東京の人と、違うって言う
てね、東京の人はよそ、隣の人だって誰が住んでるか知らないもの。
29. それがあるから。それだと思っよ、ウチナンチュって言うのは。
30. ご飯食べてる時の言葉遣いが方言で話すると、もっと味が濃ゆいと言うのかな
31. 私たち二人だと、私たち沖縄の方言でもここと私と違いますからね。アクセント
とか。
32. 本当にI'm not Japanese and I'm not a
Korean. だからあ、だからその、私はその本当にアイデンティティが何かって言
われるともう間違いなく在日コリアン、在日だよって思う。
33. 日本にいる在日コリアンとして生きているよりも、カナダにいる在日コリアンと
しての私のほうがなんかこう、もうちょっと面白いことができるな、と思った。
34. 兄が一歳しか変わらないので、二人で一緒に保育園に通いますよね。そうするとね
、ま、いじめられるわけなんです。はい、やっぱり金って二人とも通ってて、ち
よっと名前が珍しいじゃないですか。で、実はあの下の名前、今まであの、松元
さんに、あの言ってなかったんですけど、すみません、これもちょっとね、あの
、すごい私、慎重なので、ちょっと怖がりなんです。あの、松元さんも今後ま
たお会いすることもあるだろうから、そういう方によやく下の名前も伝えるよ
うにしてるんですけど、ま、私の下の名前ミーヨンって言うんです。ま、民族名
なんです、これ。 [...]
保育園のその、ま、4歳5歳の時にすでに私たちはいじめられて、ま、朝鮮人朝鮮
人みたいな感じで、結局そこでもう、私たちは、どうもみんなと違うらしい。と
、こう、知らされてしまうというか、自分でこう知る、というよりも、何よりも
、まず差別されることで、いじめられることで、まず
彼らと自分たちの間にバウンダリーがあるということは、ま、知ったんですけども、 [...]

でずーっとだから保育園の時に、私と兄は、ずーっとなんかそうやってとにかく違うって言うことをまず、植えつけられちゃったというか。

35. 結局自分のルーツですよ、ま、朝鮮人であるということは。それを、そういう自分のルーツを変えられる過去だから変えられないと思い、それでいじめられるって言うのは私が悪いんじゃないで、いじめる側がおかしいんじゃない?って私は思ったんです。それで、ま、そこら辺は子供の時も思わされちゃったっていうか。
36. 私と兄は結構、その、自分たちが在日または韓国、まコリアン寄りって言う感じなんです。私たち、アイデンティティ的に。そうすると、ま、私は、まやっぱり初めて韓国に行くことになった時、やっぱり、ちょっとわくわく、というかなんかこう、ようやく、自分のルーツのところへこう、入れるって言うかその届くって言うかあの、そんな感じだったんです。[...]やっぱりその、韓国出身の方たちと、行けるって言うのも嬉しかったし、そうするともっとこう自分、なんて言うのかな、やっぱり、いわゆる観光客としてじゃなくって、ていう、やっぱりこう、地元の人としゃべれるしっていう、それがすごくあの、行きたいって言う、って言って、行ったんですけど、でその後に結局自分の親戚に会ったり、兄の結婚式で行ったり、だから単なる、いわゆる観光客として行くつもりはあまりない。自分のルーツ探してみたいなところがありますね。
37. 朝鮮籍だったんですよ、私たち家族が。で、それで、結局、今から11年前に、国籍、ま結局国籍と言うか、朝鮮籍が嫌だったっていうわけじゃ私はなかったんですけど、朝鮮って言う響きが好きだったので、結局朝鮮籍だと結局海外に行くの、難しいんですよ。それと、あの、海外に行くのが難しいのと、後、韓国にさえもなかなかいけないんですよ、私たちは。なので、そういう朝鮮籍にこだわるよりは、特に、日本の外の社会が見れたり、韓国に行けるっていうメリットをとろうと思って、[...]
- 97年に、国籍、というか、変えたんですよ、韓国に。それで、あの、結局、行けるようになったので、もう、なんていうんでしょう、すごく嬉しい、というかその、縛りがなくなって、行けるようになったって言う、ね。兄とも言ってたんですけどその、ソウルオリンピックって88年だったんですが、結局日本の近くでやってるし、日本人たちが大勢行きますよね、ソウルオリンピックに。でも私たちはコリアンなのに私たちは行けないんだよね、みたいなの。って言うのがあって、その、在日になる、って言うか結局ルーツは韓国だし、ほとんどの人は韓国から、地域的に来てるのに、そのいろんな政治的な、歴史的な背景などによって、結局自分たちこそ行きたい韓国に自分たちは行けない、で日本人たちは楽しそうに行き来して、ちょっとそこがすごく、なんていうんでしょう、言葉にするのは難しいけれど、こう、歴史をこう、ま、政治的にもそう、すごく、私たちがこう、あー、難しい、言葉が選べないけど、そういう、翻弄されるなみたいな、感じですよ。
38. えーっと、話し出すと長くなっちゃうので、簡単に言うと、ま、多分私自分が最初にカナダに来た、来るようになったのはやっぱりその、日本で、自分が在日と

して、暮らしていることがすごくしんどかったんですね。多分ね。で、ずっとしんどくって、ある時、あ、ちょっと外出てみようかな、と思って。

39. 私はとにかく日本語で、あのこう思いつきりしゃべりたい。それを、ま、本当に。松元さん、あの、日本の方だから、時々私言いつらいこともあるんですけど、すいません、ごめんなさいね、でもやっぱり、日本のたとえばバンクーバーにあるジャパニーズコミュニティの誰かと、日本語でしゃべればいいかって言うとやっぱりそうじゃなくて、在日と、なんかその、日本で在日、カナダで在日、っていう立場の違いとか、すごく感じたので、自分が、それを語れたら楽しいなあ、と思ったのが、最初の自分にとっての、一番最初の、その、理由だったと思うんです。で、7月に、バンクーバー新報にまず出したんですよ、広告を、そしたら、一週間以内に4人くらい連絡が来て、で、最初の二人は日本の方だったんですけど、ま、日本人だけでも、なんか、自分は韓国に興味があるから、みたいに連絡くださって、で、後の二人が、在日からだったんです。[...]
ま、そこから始まったと言うか、始まったんですけど。
40. 差別的な発言もJPカナダの掲示板でも見ますし、ま、日本でももちろんね、差別とか区別なりま、そういう経験を自分がしてるので、非常にこう、やっぱり難しいんですよね、その、入っていく。
41. すごくその私が一方的にしゃべるんじゃないくて、彼らは彼らの思いついて言うか経験ていうのがあるからすごくその、インタラクティブな感じに、それが面白いです。
42. 在日にとって居心地のいい場所
43. 在日がマジョリティで入れる場所ってすごい少ないんですよ。あの、ま、日本の中でもそうだし、カナダでもそうだし、でまあ、日本でももちろん在日の会みたいなのは、まあ、いろんなのがちょこちょこあると思うんですけど、結局もう、日本で在日、ま、日本にいてこそ在日なので、こう政治がかかってたりとか、あとイデオロギー、もう、で、すごくその、仲が悪くなっちゃったりとか、やっぱりその、対立した派閥、総連とみんらんみたいな、そういう、北と南みたいな、そういう派閥があったりとかして、やっぱりその、今の若い世代の在日は、そういうのが、政治的なことじゃなくて本当に在日として、純粋に仲良くなりたいていう人もいますよ。日本でも。で、カナダで今やってるのは私は、少なくとも在日にとって居心地のいい場所をまず作りたい、と思って始めたんですけど、結局、興味があるよって着てくれる人はその、韓国の人もあるし、日本の人もあるんですね。で、さっきも言ったけど、日本の方は、その、例えば、韓国の映画が好き、食べ物が好きって言うふうに来てくれる人もいる、もちろんいるんです。
44. 私が一番嬉しかったのは、あ、私たち、私はすごいin-betweenな人だけど、な存在なんだけど、だからこそやれる、私たちにやれることあるね、っていう。その例えば韓国の人で、もちろん日本に興味ある人もいる

んですよ。ま、それは仕事の上であれ、個人的なあの、興味であれ。でもやっぱり韓国の人たちがじゃあジャパニーズコミュニティに入って言って日本語しゃべれないのに、すごく仲良くなろうと思っても、そんな簡単じゃないかもしれないけど、韓国の人で、日本に興味ある人、うちに来たら、いいじゃない。

45. ある人が、ちょっと彼女はセクシュアルマイノリティだったんですけども、ま、ジャパニーズだったんですが、その人が、何回かうちの集まりに来てくれて言ったのは、その、日本、カナダで、日本語で、これだけ、そのマイノリティであることを、語り合える、そんな集まりはめったにないね。って。彼女はまあ、エスニックマイノリティではあったけど、どっちかって言うと多分セクシュアルマイノリティとしての自分、って言うアイデンティティが強かったと思うんですが、
[...]
その、エスニックマイノリティだけじゃなくって、ま、やっぱり、個人個人がね、その、やっぱりマイノリティ性って言うことにすごく関心があるんですよ。やっぱりマイノリティって迫害されやすいって言うか、阻害されやすい立場に、弱くなりがちじゃないですか。
46. 食事会だけじゃなくって、それこそ、講演会だったり、映画会。映画もいくつか在日の関係の映画とか、あの、まあ、あのGOとか、パッチギとかね。ああいうのを、上映させてもらって、なんか、その、それが私たちを在日なんだよ。って、まあ、それだけじゃないけど、でも、そうやって身近に感じてほしい。あと、みんなに在日を知ってほしいな、っていう、のもあって、私の中に。
47. 例えば日本の方は、日本の領事館なり、連絡とることができますよね。でも在日だって、日本に自分の家族がいて、自分日本語、ま、英語と日本語、やっぱり日本の領事館に相談したいことがあった時にも、いや、あなたは韓国ですから、他に行ってください。でも韓国領事館に行くと、あなたなんで韓国語しゃべれないんですか、みたいな。私たちは、別に韓国からも韓国人として扱われてないので、すごく感じるんですよ。だから、なんていうんでしょう、あの、そう、海外にいる、在日コリアンがああ、ま、生きやすいって言うか、なんと言うかああ、社会、なんていうんでしょうね、私たちにしかわからない、ああ、ある場合に、それを助け合えるように、したい。
48. エスニックマイノリティとして、っていうだけじゃなくって、セクシュアルマイノリティであれ、それ以外の、その自分が何かしらマイノリティ性を持っていると思っている人っていると思うんですよ。そういう人たちにとって、ちょっとでも居心地のいい空間であったり、そうしたら、すごくこう、うちのグループ、作ったかいがあるなあ。ってそんな感じですかね。
49. 私だってやっぱり日本で生まれ育ってて、もし日本の国籍を最初からもらって、それで、ま、じぶんはコリアンのルーツだけでも日本国籍を持つてる立場でもし暮らしていたら、日本出なかつたと思いますよ。やっぱりその、例えばほら、JAICAの青年海外協力隊に行けないとか、ワーホリに申請できないとか、今、だって日本の人達が知らないいろんなところで私たちね、本当に壁があるんですよ

、もう。そうそう、その一つ一つを考えると、もう、生まれ育った意味があんまりないかな。なんていうんでしょう、その国で大事にされてない、自分は本当に日本で生まれ育ったのに、異物なんだ、異質なんだって思います。

50. やっぱり、私はその、ちょっと日本でつらい思いをしちゃったりしてる時に、すごくその日本のことを、よく言えない時期があったんですよね。今はやっぱりその、日本を離れて何年か経ったので、やっぱり、あの、そうすると反対に日本の良さがやっぱり以前よりずっとずっと見えてきて、今のほうが多分言える、あ、日本いいところたくさんあるって。やっぱりカナダに来た最初のころは、どっちかって言うと、日本がつかなくて出てきちゃったのを、日本好きって言われても、その、日本がしんどくて出てきちゃったって、どっちかって言うと韓国にすごい憧れるというか、求めるというか、自分のルーツの国だったら私は本当は受け入れられるかな、みたいな。

51. 私やっぱり日本の中でそうやって私は日本人じゃないなあってずっと思ってた、でま、朝鮮人だ、韓国人だ、コリアンなんだ、ってま、思ってたんですけども、[...]えーっと、カナダに来ると、あ、やっぱりあたしは、あの、こう、いわゆるコリアンじゃないんだってことをまた、思わされるんですよ。日本人よりは多少興味があったり、歴史的な背景を知っていたりとか、まあ、あの、ちょっと注目してるって言うかその、たとえば南北の関係だって日本と韓国の関係だったり気にはしてるけど、じゃ本当にあの社会を知ってるかって言ったら、残念ながらそこまでは知らないのね、やっぱりその、日本人に聞かれるたんびに、たとえばその在日コリアンの会であれば、コリアンのメンバーたちに、あ、韓国ってどうなの？ああそうなんだ、へー。みたいな、自分も、その、ま、ジャパニーズの質問した人と一緒にへーそうか、韓国そうなんだ、って言ってる自分に気づくと、あ、なんか生まれ育ってないって言うのはそういうことなんだな、みたいな。だからその、あの、いわゆるネイティブコリアンとか、**Korean born in**

Koreaとはもう、全然違うんだな、と。その、例えばその、ま、他の友人たち、例えばチャイニーズの友人たちとか私の、その、しゃべってるしぐさを見ると、ジャパニーズだって思うって言うんですよ。例えば。その、例えばその笑った時に手を口の前に当てるとか、[...]

そのしぐさって言うんですかね、それがやっぱりジャパニーズぽくって、何語をしゃべってるじゃなくて、しぐさを見てるだけで、あれミーヨンジャパニーズ、って思うよって。比べると私も生まれ育った場所の影響があー、大きいよねーって言うのはカナダに来てすごく感じましたね。

52. 朝鮮半島は、生みの母みたいな感じですね。生みの母だけど、遠く離れてる、血はつながってるけど遠く離れてる感じ。で、日本は、血が繋がってない、義理の母って感じですかね。義理って言うか育ての親。育ての親って言うほど親しくさせてもらってる気もしないんですけど。ちょっと残念ながら。ちょっと冷たい、育ての親、みたいな感じ。シンデレラって言うのもなんですけど、あんな感じのお母さん、ちょっと意地悪な。

Appendix B: Contact letter

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Educational Studies

Mailing address:

2125 Main Mall

Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4

Tel: 604-822-5374

Fax: 604-822-4244

<http://www.edst.educ.ubc.ca>

August 17, 2009

Subject: Request for an interview

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am a MA student in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. I am working on a project, “Japanese Canadian Identity construction and negotiation – Case in Greater Vancouver, Canada,” for my MA thesis. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of the identity construction and negotiation process of members of the Japanese Canadian community, living in multicultural Canada as members of a minority group.

Given your life experience on this topic, I would like to meet with you for an oral interview. Your comments will be kept anonymous. The discussion will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this research.

I am appending to this letter a list of interview questions and the consent form.

If you agree to meet with me for the purpose of this research, please send a short email to Kozue Matsumoto at kozuem@interchange.ubc.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Kozue Matsumoto

Appendix C: Consent form

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Educational Studies

Mailing address:

2125 Main Mall

Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4

Tel: 604-822-5374

Fax: 604-822-4244

<http://www.edst.educ.ubc.ca>

CONSENT FORM

Project: Japanese Canadian identity construction and negotiation – Case in Greater Vancouver, Canada

You are invited to participate in a project on Japanese Canadian identity construction and negotiation for an MA thesis at UBC. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of the identity construction and negotiation process of members of the Japanese Canadian community, living in multicultural Canada as members of a minority group. You have been selected as a participant in this project because you are an active member of the Japanese Canadian community in Greater Vancouver. You will be asked to participate in an oral interview. Your comments will be kept anonymous. Transcripts will be stored separately in a locked cabinet for a period of five years after the study. After five years all data will be destroyed.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

There are no risks associated with this study. If you are interested in the research results, I will send you my final paper [Optional: please put your email/ mailing address here below].

TIME INVOLVEMENT

Your participation in this experiment will take approximately 60 minutes.

SUBJECT'S RIGHTS

If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact - anonymously, if you wish - the UBC Office of Research Services, Tel (604)822-8598. For questions about this study, contact Principal Investigator: Claudia Ruitenberg, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia, 2125 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z4, Canada. Tel. (604)822-2411. Email: claudia.ruitenberg@ubc.ca

Please sign both copies of the consent form. The extra copy is for you to keep

I give consent to be interviewed for this study.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

PRINTED NAME

Appendix D: Interview protocol

Interview Protocol

- 1) Their background
 - a. How old are you, if it's okay for me to ask?
 - b. What is your ethnic background?
 - c. Which organization do you belong to?
 - d. What do you do in the community?
 - e. How long are you in the community?
 - f. How long do you live in Vancouver?
- 2) The process of becoming Japanese Canadians
 - a. Could you tell me your story about how you have become Japanese Canadian? How did you come to think of Japanese Canadian thing?
 - b. What has brought you to the Japanese Canadian community?
 - c. Why Japanese Canadian but not the other side? (in case of mixed race people)
- 3) Their negotiation with the fixed image of Japanese or Japanese Canadians in the wider society
 - a. What do you think about the image of Japan or Japanese Canadian in Canadian society?
 - b. How do you relate to those images and stereotypes?
- 4) The influence of the Japanese Canadian community on them
 - a. What does it mean for you to participate in the community?
 - i. In terms of the objective of the organization, people there, and so on
 - b. Has anything changed in you or around you since you started joining the community?
 - c. What happened?
- 5) Their purpose to be engaged in the community, and
 - a. Why are you in the community?
 - b. What do you want to do through the community?
 - i. For yourself
 - ii. For the community
 - iii. For the wider society
- 6) The meaning of being Japanese Canadians or the meaning of using the word "Japanese" as their identity in Canadian multiculturalism context.
 - a. What does it mean for you to be a Japanese Canadian in Vancouver or in Canada?
 - b. Why are you in the Japanese Canadian community rather than just being a Canadian?
 - c. What does "Japanese" mean for you?