Consuming Japan:
The Consumption of Japanese Cultural Products in Thailand

Noboru Toyoshima

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies
Waseda University

January 2011

Abstract

As a study on the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, this thesis attempts to pursue two aims. One is to illustrate the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand through ethnographies and empirical data. The other is to seek a mechanism that explains how and why Thai youth has a positive attitude toward Japanese cultural products.

Since the 1990s, many academic studies on Japanese popular culture have been published and the mass media often publishes articles on the consumption of Japanese cultural products outside Japan. In the previous studies on Japan's popular culture in Asia, however, I found three points which limit the scope and the depth to analyze the phenomenon and this thesis has been designed to complement the previous studies. First, the discussions in this thesis include observations and analyses of Japanese cultural products such as J-Pop fan club activities, *cosplay* activities by manga, anime and game fans, Japanese food, and Japanese *kawaii* (cute) fashion in Thailand while the previous studies mostly focused on media products such as TV dramas, anime and games. Second, this study is designed to take a qualitative approach, ethnography in particular, as the tool to collect empirical data while the previous studies had a tendency to take the approach of media and cultural studies which mainly used published data and information from the media industry. Third, this study focuses on Thailand as the field of study while the fields of study in the previous studies were mostly limited in countries and regions in East Asia, namely in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea. Although the phenomenon of Japanese cultural

products being popular among Thai youth is mentioned in some studies, there is no comprehensive study which focuses on Thailand as the field of study.

The empirical data in this thesis starts with the results of the questionnaire research which examined the consumption of Japanese cultural products by Thai high school students. Data from collected questionnaires from 677 of seven secondary schools in Thailand has been designed to see which Japanese cultural products are vigorously consumed and to see how the students consume them in their everyday lives on an individual level. Subsequently, the four kinds of Japanese cultural influences found in contemporary Thailand are discussed with the ethnographies and the results of the questionnaire researches.

First, an ethnographic study of a J-Pop idol fan club in Thailand is presented. The ethnography of the fan club and the questionnaire research given to the members show the organization and the activities, which analyze how the J-Pop idol group has been accepted and how it is being consumed in Thailand. Second, *cosplay* activities in Bangkok are studied through ethnography and questionnaire. This study investigates the consumption of the Japanese subculture "kosupure" (*cosplay*) to view the consumption of manga, anime or video games from a different perspective than the previous studies. Third, the consumption of Japanese food in Thailand is examined. The ethnographies and the questionnaires of other cultural products have revealed that Japanese food is vigorously consumed by Thai youth. This study attempts to view the background of the Japanese food boom in Thailand and to analyze the reasons for the growing consumption. Fourth, Japanese fashion in Thailand is investigated. Japanese magazines for young women have recently been translated and published in Thailand, which suggests an increasing interest in Japanese fashion among Thai

women.   With ethnographies, interviews and published data, this thesis examines why and how young women in Thailand have become consumers of Japanese fashion.

Both the findings and results in the four ethnographic studies on the consumption of Japanese cultural products have suggested the important role played by Japanese language education in Thailand in terms of Japanese cultural products. Using the questionnaire research given to the students in the Department of Japanese Language at *Chulalongkorn University*, this thesis attempts to establish the relationship between language study and the consumption of Japanese cultural products.   The role of Japanese language education in diffusing cultural products and captivating Thai youth is also revealed by ethnographic analysis.

The discussions are further developed by the perspectives of "global and local factors," "the presence of Japan in Thailand," "cultural proximity" and "cultural affordance," which attempt to explain why Thai youth have a positive attitude toward Japanese cultural products and how they select their favorite cultural products from other cultural products.   Pursuing the aims of this study, this thesis illustrates the mechanism of consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand and reveals why Japanese cultural products are attractive to Thai people.   The thesis concludes with an epilogue which contains notes for future studies.   In the last chapter, the issues of *gender, urban middle classes* and *public diplomacy* (cultural diplomacy) are briefly discussed as memoranda for future studies.

iv

Acknowledgements

During the course of writing this Ph.D. dissertation, so many people have supported me in various ways. I am sincerely grateful to Professor Eiji Murashima, my supervisor, who helped me pursue this study with his continuous encouragement and advice. I extend my special thanks to Professor Shigeto Sonoda, who helped me shape my ideas with his sociological insights. I would also like to extend my warm appreciation to my teachers: the late Professor Masa'aki Takane, who taught me the fascination of social research; the late Professor Kazuko Tsurumi, for awakening my interest in the qualitative approach in sociology. I would like to thank Dr. Masakazu Iino, for his long-lasting friendship and encouragement in completing this work. I would also like to offer my gratitude to Dr. Pornpun Waitayangkoon, Dr. Somsri Tangmongkollert, Ms. Chantana Anulavup and other colleagues at the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST), an autonomous organization under the auspices of the Ministry of Education in Thailand, for providing me information about the education system in Thailand, and for their lasting friendship even after my assignment as a JICA volunteer in Bangkok (November 2003 through March 2005) was over. My thanks also go to Dr. Voravudhi Chirasombutti of *Chulalongkorn University* for his support in regards to my fieldwork research in Bangkok.

I am indebted to the many Thai students who assisted me during the time of my fieldwork, especially those students at *Chulalongkorn University*, and many young people who volunteered to be my informants and assistants in the fieldwork research in

v

Notes

Japanese and Thai names

In the text of this thesis, Japanese personal names are given in the order of family name first, according to the custom of Japan. The names of those Japanese who are known in the world in the customary Western order, however, follow the Western custom (e.g. Junko Koshino). In Japanese titles and languages, long vowels are written with macrons (e.g. kûkou). Thai personal names are customarily written with the first name first, following the Western order.

Thai Currency

For the convenience of the readers, in this thesis prices in Thai currency (Baht) are followed by the approximate prices in US Dollar in parentheses, except those numbers in statistical figures of tables and graphs. The prices in US Dollar is calculated by 1 Thai Baht = US$ 0.03.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: Key Factors on the Issue

Chapter Four: Ethnography – J-Pop Fan Club in Bangkok

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One

Introduction

Outline of the Thesis

As a study on the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, this thesis attempts to pursue two aims.   One is to illustrate the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand through ethnographies and empirical data.   The other is to seek a mechanism that explains how and why Thai youth has a positive attitude toward Japanese cultural products.

Today, in most academic and journalistic writings on cultural items for the mass market, the term "pop culture" (shortened for "popular culture") is used as well as being widely accepted by readers.   Without using a definition, many scholars use the term "pop culture" in their writings because it has been customarily used in academic discussions and many journalists use the term because it reads catchy and it sounds "cool."   But defining "pop culture" is very difficult to accomplish.   In the context of the diffusion of Japanese cultural products in the mass market outside Japan, the term is usually used in writings to refer to manga (Japanese comics), anime (Japanese animation), television programs, music and video games.   But manga and anime are sometimes categorized in subculture, and not in pop culture, because some writers have a conceptual image of manga and anime as a subordinate culture to pop culture while other writers differentiate the two by the size of the market – pop culture is for the mass

market and subculture is for a small and limited market.

The term "pop culture" has often been used in the academic field, called Cultural Studies, which emerged in England, in the 1960s. Cultural Studies is said to be associated with the establishment of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (also known as "CCCS") at the University of Birmingham, England since 1964. (King 1997:2) According to Stuart Hall, who served as the Director of CCCS between 1968 and 1979, 'Cultural Studies arose from a concern that major cultural transformation were taking place in society, not least in working class culture, yet none of the "traditional" disciplines were addressing them.' (quoted in King 1997:2) When Cultural Studies emerged in England in the 1960s, American consumer culture flowed into the UK youth culture and Cultural Studies tried to redefine the identity of the working class in the changing society by studying the imported consumer culture. (Yoshimi 2001:17) Thus, the "elite" culture or "high" culture were not the themes that the scholars in Cultural Studies concerned but "pop culture" that has been consumed by youth and working class in everyday life has been the focus of their studies.

Today, the scholars in Cultural Studies oftentimes intersect with the researchers in Media Studies. Stuart Hall, one of the founders of Cultural Studies, was also famous in mass communication studies for laying the foundation of the audience studies which was developed in Australia and the United States in the 1980s. (Ueno & Mouri 2000:93-105) Because of the close association between Cultural Studies and Media Studies, many studies on media such as television, manga, and anime have been conducted with the methodologies of Cultural Studies. But as John Storey presents six different definitions of popular culture (Storey 2009), the term is often used in different definitions or nuances according to writers and it is difficult to have a clear and

undebatable definition.   Some people define "high culture" as traditional cultures or arts with the rest of the "high culture" falling in the category of "pop culture."   Other people define "pop culture" as commercial culture which is mass produced and mass consumed culture.   Storey claims that the post-modernism approach to popular culture would "no longer recognize the distinction between high and popular culture." (Storey 2009:12, 2009:183)

Throughout the study, I use the term "cultural product" when I refer to each different cultural influence from Japan which can be observed in the Thai youth culture such as music, manga, anime, fashion and food.   But I use the terms "pop culture" and "subculture" in limited places such as the discussions of previous studies by other scholars, the news media reports and the discourses that need to refer to them specifically.   The reason for limiting the usage of the popular terms "pop culture" and "subculture" is that, in this study, some of the cultural products in the ethnographies are categorized in "pop culture" and others in "subculture"; consequently, neither word can cover all the cultural products contained in this study.   In addition, defining "high culture," "pop culture" and "subculture" is complicated and the distinctions seem vague in the borderlines.   For the purpose of this study, therefore, I use the term "cultural product" although I use the terms "pop culture" and "subculture" when the writers of news reports or academic papers use these terms in their works.

It is also important to note that the term "cultural product" in this study includes not only tangible products but also intangible Japanese cultural influences. For instance, the style and the activities of fan clubs for Japanese idol groups in Thailand are not tangible Japanese products but rather intangible cultural influences that they receive from Japan.   In this study, following the convention of the previous

studies, I use the term "product" and "consumption" as a metaphor for which cultural elements are treated as if they are industrial products in expressions. In everyday terms, manga is *read*, anime is *seen*, games are *played*, foods are *eaten*, dresses are *worn*, and the style and the activities of fan clubs are *copied* – but in this study, instead of using different verbs for each cultural product (influence), the verb "consume" is often used for the convenience of discussions. Despite that the terms "product" and "consumption" are often seen in discussions, this study is not about economic issue but it is about Japanese cultural influence in Thailand, both tangible and intangible.

Japan's Soft Power Grown in the 1990s

> "Asia is in love with Japan's pop culture.
> From Pokémon to Puffy, Japanese stuff is oh, so 'Q!'"
> (Koh 1999, November 8)

During the last few decades, Japanese pop culture has been very popular in Asia. The feature article of *Newsweek* on November 8, 1999 reported that many characters from anime (Japanese animation) such as *Pikachu* (Pokémon), *Hello Kitty*, and *Doraemon* are consumed by the new generation of middle-class Asian consumers, and that *X-Japan*, *Puffy* and many other Japanese music icons as well as TV stars have attracted the younger Asian generation that yearns for more Japanese pop culture. The article includes interviews of young people in Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea and countries in Southeast Asia, who admire Japanese culture. (Koh 1999, November 8) Especially in Taiwan, ardent fans of Japanese pop culture has been given a name "harizu" (Japan-crazy tribe) and Japanese pop culture has prevailed in the lifestyle of young

Taiwanese. (see Koh 1999, November 8; Segawa 2001; Wai-ming 2004; Sakai 2004) In the 1990s, the popularity of Japanese cultural products such as manga (Japanese comics), anime, games, music and fashion in Asia became prominent and mass media both in Japan and outside Japan realized that Japan has become an exporter of pop culture as well as industrial products. The news magazine *Time* presented a feature article on Japan as an "export machine" and reported the vigorous consumption of Japanese cultural products in Asian countries. (McCarthy 1999)

In the 1980s, Japan already exported cultural products to other countries. An article of a Japanese newspaper, *Asahi Shimbun,* on February 7, 1985 reported on the consumption of Japanese pop culture in Asia. The article explained the popularity of Japanese pop songs such as "Kitaguni no haru" and "Subaru" in Asian countries and the broadcasting of the television drama "Oshin" in South Korea and Thailand. The article pointed out that the fashion trend of Japan in Tokyo (Harajuku and Roppongi) had reached to Manila and Bangkok with little delay to become the new trends in each country. (Asahi Shimbun 1985, February 7) In a newspaper interview in 1988, a professor of *Thammasat University*, Bangkok, told the reporter that Bangkok has become a media society. Unlike the students who devoted their power for student movements in the 1970s, the students in the 1980s started to enjoy consuming pop culture such as manga, anime, pop music, movies, and television. (Asahi Shimbun 1988, April 11) Although not all of the pop culture consumed by the students in the 1980s in Bangkok might not have been Japanese cultural products, manga, anime and some Japanese television dramas were already become popular among the young generation and they were accepted as a part of the youth culture in Thailand.

Anne Allison points out that "starting in East and Southeast Asia in the 1980s

and other parts of the world such as Western Europe, Russia, Peru, and the United States in the early to mid-1990s, the global market in Japanese youth products has skyrocketed." (Allison 2006a)   In 1987, Damon Darlin introduced manga to the readers of *Wall Street Journal,* as its being a window on Japanese society which revealed fantasies and fears of the Japanese concerning work, the sexes and the outside world. (Darlin 1987)   Frederik L. Schodt, who wrote *Manga! Manga! The world of Japanese Comics* in 1983, recalls that his book did not sell well because most Americans have never heard the word "manga" at that time. (Schodt 1996:11) Schodt's comment illustrates that, in the United States, manga existed only for the limited population, like Schodt himself, who were fanatics of manga, while in Bangkok, manga was already popular among university students who enjoyed reading manga as well as other cultural products.   This suggests that, as Allison pointed out, the acceptance and the popularity of Japanese cultural products outside Japan did not occur simultaneously; the time and the kinds of cultural products consumed differ according to places.

In the 1990s, the Japanese cultural products gained considerable popularity in Asia.   Japanese television broadcasting companies started to export programs to Asia and Japanese video games were sold in many cities in Asia. (Asahi Shimbun 1995, January 1)   Although some countries in East Asia restricted the flow of Japanese pop culture to their countries, the young generations of the area have become interested in Japanese cultural products such as manga, anime, TV drama, J-Pop music and fashion, and they started to consume Japanese pop culture enthusiastically (Asahi Shimbun 2001, March 24).

The "Japanese pop culture" boom in Asia, which has been observed in the

1990s, called the attention of media and culture industries in Japan and many people have realized that Asian countries can potentially be an affluent marketplace for Japanese cultural products. In an article of *Nikkei Business,* a weekly magazine for business people in Japan, the economic relationship between Japan and ASEAN countries was discussed and the article positioned Asian countries as the market for Japan brands. (Nikkei Business 2001, January 15)

In 1990, Joseph S. Nye coined the term "soft power" in his discussion on the power of nations in the post-Cold War world. (Nye 1990a) Nye pointed out that the meaning of power has been changed in the world when new forms of communications and transportations have had a revolutionary effect on economic interdependence. The "hard power" of the United States, which is the political influence and power over other nations based on the strength of the country's military power, has relatively declined in the post-Cold War world and Nye emphasized on the importance of "soft power" in balance-of power strategies in the new era. (Nye 1990a) Over the years, Nye has been using the term "soft power" in discussions on the US politics and strategies in the post-Cold War period. (see Nye 1990b, 1990c, 2002, 2004a) In 2004, in his book *Soft Power*, Nye wrote:

> Japan has more potential soft power resources than any other
> Asian country. It is the first non-Western country that was able
> to fully modernize to the point of equality with the West in
> income and technology while showing that it is possible to
> maintain a unique culture.
> (Nye 2004b:85)

In Nye's book, the term "soft power" is used in the discussion of a nation's power for national security and the term refers to the cultural power to influence other nations.

Nye pointed out that Japanese cultural influence can be a strong soft power in the global information age. But the concept of soft power, presented by Nye, is not limited to pop culture, but it also includes the brand names such as Toyota, Honda, and Sony as well as the traditional arts, design, and cuisine, which have long found followers outside the country. (Nye 2004b:86) Although Nye meant the cultural influence in a broader sense, the term "soft power" has been used almost interchangeably with "pop culture power" in the discourses on Japan's pop culture and many writings, both in news media and academics, which have been published since mid-2000s.

Douglas McGray also noted Japan's soft power in the article "Japan's Gross National Cool."

> Japan is reinventing superpower again. Instead of collapsing beneath its political and economic misfortunes, Japan's global cultural influence has only grown. In fact, from pop music to consumer electronics, architecture to fashion, and food to art, Japan has far greater cultural influence now than it did in the 1980s, when it was an economic superpower.
> (McGray 2002:49)

McGray uses the term "national cool" to explain the soft power of Japan. By examining the cultural flows of Japanese consumer products in globalization, McGray points out that Japan has the power to distribute cultural products directly to other countries while other cultural products that have been distributed through the consumer market of the United States, which is the cultural flows of American power. (McGray 2002:46) Despite recession and political turmoil that Japan has suffered in the 1990s, McGray finds that Japan has grown soft power which may lead the country to be a superpower again.

8

The discourses that Japanese pop culture as soft power and Japan as an exporter of the soft power by scholars and journalists outside Japan have made the Japanese realize the potential power that Japanese cultural products may have. The people in the cultural industries that produce the cultural products and the economic journalists who write articles and books on Japanese business have started to write about Japan's soft power and pop culture. For example, in *Nihon no poppu pawâ (Japan's pop power)*, journalists and producers of cultural products as well as scholars contributed essays on Japanese pop culture. As the lead of the book cover goes, "The real image of the contents that changes the world," the book addresses to the readers who work in cultural industries and who are interested in Japan's soft power which is consumed in other countries. (Nakamura & Onouchi 2006)

Studies on Japanese Cultural Products

In the last few decades, many scholars have published studies on Japanese pop culture and/or subculture; some of them have written on cultural products which were observed in Japan and others have written on cultural flows in Asia and other countries. But when we focus on Japanese cultural products in Thailand, not many studies can be found; a few previous studies include Thailand as one of the countries in their fieldworks. Before we step forward to the outline and the methodologies of this study, some of the previous studies on Japanese pop culture are presented as an overview of the issue on Japanese cultural products.

In the mid-1990s, some works were published to illustrate popular culture found in Japan. For instance, published in 1995, *Women, Media and Consumption in*

Japan, edited by Lise Skov and Brian Moeran, compiled essays written by seven scholars from the feminist and Media Studies perspectives on the issues of contemporary Japanese popular culture and the discussions included television drama, magazines for women, images of women in Japanese media, consumer marketing and literature. (Skov & Moeran 1995)   *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture,* edited by John Whittier Treat, is another example of the studies on pop culture observed in Japan, which is a collection of ten essays on Japanese popular culture by scholars of Japanese studies whose topics range from Japanese music to soap opera to novels and discuss the issues in the style of cultural studies. (Treat 1996)

The cultural flows from Japan in Asia and other parts of the world in the 1980s and the 1990s have made Japanese pop culture and subculture protuberant outside Japan. The more mass media reported the cultural trends in Japan as well as the consumption of such cultural products in Asia, the more scholars have become interested in the topic and published studies on Japanese pop culture.   For example, *Network Power: Japan and Asia*, edited by Peter J. Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi and published in 1997, focused on the relationship between Japan and Asia, which consisted of nine essays on the regional dynamics of Asia, including discussions on economics, politics and cultural relations of the region. (Katzenstein & Shiraishi 1997)   In the early 1990s, Japan lost confidence as an economic superpower in the world after the collapse of the "Bubble Economy" of the 1980s and it needed to re-position itself in the world, especially as a member of Asia, for the twenty-first century, which might have inspired scholars to discuss the relationship between Japan and Asia as well as the cultural dimension of Japan.

In the late 1990s, more discourses on Japanese pop culture diffused in Asia

were published to analyze the cultural dimension of Japan and to examine Japanese cultural products to export abroad. Published in 1998, *Henyousuru Ajia to Nihon,* edited by Akio Igarashi, contained 13 essays on Japanese pop culture consumed outside Japan. (Igarashi 1998) Most essays in the book were case studies of countries such as Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Egypt; essays on other topics such as globalization of anime, cultural export and traffic of information are also included. In the epilogue of the book, Igarashi wrote that the "Japanization" or the phenomena that the Japanese pop culture had been exported to other countries, mainly to East Asia, have been reported in the newspapers and discussed in international conferences because it was an interesting topic but few academic analyses have been done and the book was first monograph which collected the essays on Japanese pop culture in East Asia. (Igarashi 1998:352)

In 2000, Timothy J. Craig edited and published the book *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*. There are seventeen essays in the book; an introductory chapter by the editor and essays on the categories of "popular music," "comics and animation," "television and films," and "Japanese popular culture abroad." Although the book is devoted to the issue of Japanese pop culture, it focuses more on Japanese pop culture "in Japan" and less on "outside Japan" as there are only four essays on Japanese pop culture outside Japan and the topics of them are limited to anime and pop music idol. (Craig 2000)

Published in 2001, *Higashi Ajia no Nihon Taishûbunka*, edited by Kenichi Ishii, which is based on the reports of fieldwork research conducted by the authors between 1996 and 1998 in Taiwan and Hong Kong. The fieldwork studies contained questionnaire research to study the consumption behavior and the use of media in Taiwan and Hong Kong and the topics of the book also included ban of Japanese pop

culture in Korea, political friction between China and Japan, and the media traffic among countries. (Ishii 2001) Although the questionnaire researches are limited methodologically as well as theoretically, the empirical data of the book, that are the questionnaire results and the compiled published data, have shown the image of consumers of cultural products in these countries.

Scholars of Japanese Studies, who have been studying Japanese culture and society from sociological, anthropological or historical viewpoints, have also shown their interests in the position of Japan in the world of the global age. Harumi Befu and Sylvie Guichard-Anguis edited and published a book in 2001, *Globalizing Japan,* focusing on the theme "Japanese presence" in the world. The book is consisted of fourteen essays on the issue of "globalizing Japan"; except the introduction by Harumi Befu, which illustrates the overview of Japanese presence in the world, the rest of the essays of the book are grouped in the categories of "human dispersal," "organizational transplant," "cultural diffusion," and "images of Japan in Asia, Europe and America," to examine Japan's globalization. (Befu & Guichard-Anguis 2001)

Some scholars approach the issue from different perspectives. Koichi Iwabuchi's book *Recentering Globalization* (Iwabuchi 2002) is one of the most cited book in the discourses of Japanese pop culture today. Although the cultural products that Iwabuchi studied in the book are limited to audio-visual products such as television programs, pop music, and video games, the book is one of the first monographs that analyzed the cultural flows from Japan in details from the perspectives of Media and Cultural Studies. The Japanese "transnationalism" that Iwabuchi discussed in the book presented important insights for the analyses of Japanese pop culture in the global age. Another approach to the issue, Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin's study focuses on Japan's soft

power in East Asia in light of international relations. He analyzes that "the dissemination of the Japanese popular culture in East Asia in the 1990s was driven by the market forces, facilitated by the mechanism of commodifying and distributing culture, and invigorated by piracy" and the process of consumption develops "new images of Japan." (Otmazgin 2008)

Among the published work on Japanese popular culture in the last few decades, there are some topics which are favorably chosen by scholars to study as a part of Japanese popular culture. For example, *Doraemon* is the name of the robot cat which has been created by Fujiko F. Fujio, one of the most successful manga artists in Japan. Just like the character *Doraemon* has attracted nearly every child in Japan and in Asia (Schodt 1996:216), the popularity of the character *Doraemon* in the world has been studied by some scholars. (see Schodt 1996:216-220; Shiraishi 1997, 1998, 2000) *Pokémon* is another superhero of Japanese cultural product that is consumed widely in the world today. *Pikachu* is the name of the main characters in *Pokémon*, or "Pocket Monster" when it was first released as a game cassette for the portable game machine Nintendo "Game Boy," and some scholars in Media Studies and Cultural Studies have published studies on *Pokémon*. (see Tobin 2004; Allison 2006b:192-233)

Bishôjo Senshi Sailor Moon (Pretty Warrior Sailor Moon) is another superhero (super-heroine) from Japan, which has become popular in the United States and other countries in the mid-1990s. The *bishôjo* (beautiful girl) heroine Serena Tsukino transforms from a human to a super-heroine *Sailor Moon* to fight with evil. Debuted as a manga series in the girls' magazine *Nakayoshi*, published by Kodansha in 1992, *Sailor Moon* has soon become a superhero in manga and television anime; related products such as video packages, books, and computer games have been sold and the

"character" has been licensed to be used for products such as stationeries, toys and clothes. (Allison 2006b:128-162)   According to Allison, *Sailor Moon* is different from other superheroes in the following two points:

> First, she's a *girl*, in a genre (and from a country) traditionally dominated by male heroes. Second, Sailor Moon is a *Japanese* superhero whose success in conquering evil and audiences at home has been matched by a high level of popularity overseas. (Allison 2000:259)

Sailor Moon attracted scholars in gender studies as well as Media Studies because the superhero is female, notwithstanding the country in which she was born in seems to be a male-dominant society.   Another successful Japanese character who succeeded in consumer markets in the world and attracted scholars to study is *Hello Kitty* which was created in 1974 by Sanrio Company Ltd.   Although Kitty was not created as a manga or anime character, the popularity of the character has become prominent in the last few decades and some scholars overseas published studies on it as an icon of pop culture from Japan. (e.g. McVeigh 2000; Wai-ming 2001a, 2001b)

There are more works on Japanese cultural products, particularly on manga, anime, the superheroes or subcultures.   Anne Allison's book *Millenial Monsters* is a collection of her essays on Japanese cultural products found in the United States, focusing on the toys and characters goods of the superheroes of Japanese anime and television series such as *Pokémon, Sailor Moon*, and *Power Rangers.* (Allison 2006) Thomas LaMarre analyzed *otaku* movement in Japan, in which careful observations and discussions on anime otaku (Japanese animation fan) and "otakuology" are presented. (LaMarre 2006)   Susan J. Napier wrote two books; *Anime from Akira to Howl's*

Moving Castle (Napier 2001) is an introduction to contemporary Japanese animation and *From Impressionism to Anime* (Napier 2007) is a collection of essays on the fan culture of anime in the West. Also, *Japanese Visual Culture* (MacWilliams 2008), edited by Mark W. MacWilliams, is a collection of studies on manga and anime with in depth analyses on the contents and the narratives.

The transnational consumptions of Japanese television programs and Japanese music in Asia are also favorite themes that scholars in Media and Cultural Studies tackle on. For example, Yoshiko Nakano's study showed us how the Japanese "trendy dramas" (television dramas for the young audience) were being consumed in Hong Kong (Nakano 2002) and Anthony Fung's study was an attempt to analyze the consumption of Japanese soap operas in Hong Kong. (Fung 2007) *Feeling Asian Modernities*, edited by Koichi Iwabuchi, collects the essays that study the consumption of Japanese dramas in East and Southeast Asia and the modern youth life in the region. (Iwabuchi 2004) Furthermore, there are many studies on Japanese television dramas in Cultural Studies as audience and television studies are the favorite field for the scholars of Cultural Studies.

Limitations of Conventional Studies

Many academic studies on Japanese pop culture have been published and the mass media often reports the consumption of Japanese cultural products outside Japan, which created the "Japanese Pop Culture Boom" and the image of "Cool Japan" in the media. The concepts of "soft power" by Joseph S. Nye and "Gross National Coolness" by Douglas McGray along with their evaluation on Japanese cultural power have made

Japanese pop culture a new hero of the country; more writers celebrate Japanese pop culture and more Japanese readers enjoy reading about it.

The previous studies on the issue of diffusing Japanese pop culture in Asia have shown evidences that some Japanese cultural products are consumed in Asia today and the discourses in Media and Cultural Studies have analyzed the cultural flows with some theoretical frameworks. The previous studies and the conventional theories have presented many insights to understand the phenomenon but I find tendencies in these studies and problems of neglecting the gaze of the people who are actually longing for and consuming the Japanese cultural products.

Having overviewed the major studies on Japan's pop culture in Asia, I have found three points underlying in the previous studies, which limits the scope and the depth to analyze the phenomenon. First, the Japanese cultural products that have been studied in the past are mostly limited to media products such as television dramas, manga, anime, video games and music. These cultural products are distributed through media – broadcasting, Internet or package media such as CD or DVD. This tendency was inevitable because most previous studies on Japan's pop culture have been presented by the scholars in Media Studies but it is problematic that we left out the studies on other cultural products such as food, fashion and subculture, which also have gained considerable popularity outside Japan. Therefore, it is important to spotlight the cultural products which have been left untouched in the previous studies.

Second, the methodology is limited in the approach of Media and Cultural Studies. The scholars in these fields tend to view the phenomenon from the media industry. In most previous studies, statistical data from media companies, organizations or governments have been used as empirical data to carry on their

discussions to analyze the popularity of Japanese cultural products. Some studies claim that they used ethnographies in their approach; in some studies, interviews with producers and distributors of media products are included while, in other studies, some questionnaire results and interviews with small number of consumers are incorporated. But these ethnographies are only fragmented in most studies and the actual consumers of Japanese cultural products and their consuming style have not been illustrated nor observed in depth. The tendencies of the research approach to the issue, which are the dependency to use the published data and information from media industry, limit the kinds of cultural products that they can study to "media products" only. This limit of the methodology consequently causes the first limit of the previous studies.

Third, the countries studied are mostly limited in East Asia. In the case studies about Japanese pop culture in Asian countries, which try to describe the popularity of the Japanese pop culture outside Japan, the countries and the region in East Asia, namely Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea, are usually chosen as the fields of study. On the other hand, many of the studies in Media and Cultural Studies as well as in the discussions in international relations take a wider region in Asia, namely East Asia or Southeast Asia, as the field of the study. Although the phenomenon that Japanese cultural products being popular among Thai youth is mentioned, and results of interviews and some questionnaire research are presented in some studies (e.g. Otmazgin 2008; Iwabuchi 2002), there is no comprehensive study which focuses Thailand as the field of study. On the academic issues of foreign pop culture in Thailand, for instance, there are studies on the popularity of Korean Pop music in Thailand (Siriyuvasak & Shin 2007) and on the popular culture and social transformation in Thailand. (Siriyuvasak 2004) Also, a few studies on Japanese

cultural products consumption in Thailand can be found: a study on the Japanese television drama "Oshin" and its acceptance in Thailand (Singhal & Udornpim 1997) and case studies (master's theses) on J-Pop consumption and Japanization of Thai youth. (e.g. Viparat 2001; Pattanasuwan 2008) But generally, the previous studies have not paid enough attention to Thailand whose youth consumes Japanese cultural products vigorously.

Methodology

To compensate the previous studies, this study has been designed to go beyond the limits that the previous studies had. First, the discussions of this study include observations and analyses of the Japanese cultural products in Thailand which are not limited to media products but extended to cultural influences which are sometimes mixed culture or subculture, such as J-Pop fan club activities, *cosplay* (costume play) activities by manga, anime and game fans, Japanese food, and Japanese *kawaii* (cute) fashion. Although these cultural influences found in Thailand also include some elements of the media products, namely manga, anime, game, and J-Pop, which have been the objects of study in the previous studies, these cultural products are observed and discussed from the different perspectives, in fan club activities and *cosplay* activities, that have more emphases on the individuals who consume them rather than the media producers and distributors.

It is important to note that the cultural products in this study may include the cultures that were originated in outside Japan and customized in Japan before they were exported to Thailand. For instance, Japanese fashion in this study does not mean

kimono, Japanese traditional clothes, but it is the fashion that derives from other culture and has been customized and developed by Japanese women as well as Japanese fashion designers and industry. Most clothes that are worn in Japan today originally came from the Western culture but they are now made in Japanese style and exported to other countries in Asia. Therefore, the cultural products in this study are not of traditional Japan but are the creation of modern Japan.

The cultural products in this study were incidentally selected; in some cases, I started observations because my Thai informants invited me to join their activities, and in other cases, I traced cultural products from observations in downtown Bangkok. But all of them have been found while I was in Thailand. They looked prominent in the landscape of Bangkok which attracted the author to start ethnography.

Second, this study is designed to take the qualitative approach, ethnography in particular, as the tool to collect the empirical data. Much of the previous studies focused on the media distribution rather than the consumption by the individuals, which has consequently led the discussions to the conceptual analysis, with less or no in depth observation on the consumption behavior of the individuals. Although I appreciate the findings and the conceptual frameworks at the macro level that the scholars of the previous studies have presented in their studies on the countries in East Asia or in the scope of the broader region, I find it lacking in empirical data that none of these studies did not try to show real faces of the individuals who enjoy consuming Japanese cultural products. Therefore, this study starts from the research on the everyday lives of Thai youth. The ethnographies that are collected though observations of the individuals or the certain groups in the Thai society comprise the empirical data with additional information collected from interviews, questionnaires, and publicly available statistics.

Another important point in the approach of this study is starting each observation outside of assumptions and suppositions that other scholars have established.

> There are many things that we take for truths in our ordinary lives or because we are attached to given philosophical or scientific theories, but for Husserl, as for Descartes, these may not be genuine truths and may be open to doubt. One cannot, therefore, begin by accepting anything as already given: one has to *establish* where the certainties lie and one must therefore withdraw allegiance from all suppositions that one can abandon. The aim is to bring presuppositions to consciousness and to see which, if any of them, one is compelled to accept. Therefore phenomenology involves an unremitting effort to make a completely new beginning. (Sharrock & Anderson 1986:7)

This study is not designed as a study in phenomenology but it is designed to collect ethnographies outside of the conceptual frameworks of the previous studies. It is designed to search for findings in the collected ethnographies to establish assumptions and suppositions within this study, which will be later compared with those of the previous studies.

The procedure of this study – data are collected first and interpreted later – is called *post factum* explanations by Robert K. Merton. (Merton 1967:147)

> The defining characteristic of this procedure is the introduction of an interpretation after the observations have been made rather than the empirical testing of a predesignated hypothesis. The implicit assumption is that a body of generalized propositions has been so fully established that I can be approximately applied to the data in hand. (Merton 1967:147)

To avoid the logical fallacy that the method of post factum explanations may make (Merton 1967:148), this study collects multiple ethnographies and uses supplemental data such as interviews, questionnaire and other published data, to test the validity of the findings from the observations.

Third, this study focuses on Thailand as the field of study. It is an attempt to call attention of the readers to see Thailand, which is located in Southeast Asia, as a vigorous consumer of Japanese cultural products. I did not choose to study the broader area, that is Southeast Asia, because I wanted to avoid the comparative study among multiple countries as it may cause some problems for research. For instance, the consumption of Japanese cultural products in one country is influenced by many factors such as history, regulations, geographic location, and economic situation of the country. Consequently, popular Japanese cultural products differ in each country and it is especially difficult to compare the popularity by ethnographic analysis. Also, there are practical reasons to focus only one country, which are the limitations of resources for the research. Therefore, I designed this research to be a case study of Thailand, with in depth observation of the individual, which uses the *micro-ethnographic* approach. If this study succeeds as a model of a research on cultural products, the methodology will be hopefully applied to other countries in future studies.

Empirical Data Collection

The empirical data of this study have been mostly collected in Thailand. From November 2003 through March 2005, I lived in Bangkok as a volunteer of the *Japan International Cooperation Agency* (JICA). The ethnographies, interviews,

questionnaire researches, observations of events and some library work in Bangkok have been conducted during the assignment of JICA and in the fieldwork trips after the assignment. Other data collections such as library works, information retrieving and interviews with Japanese companies and organizations have been conducted in Japan. Also, the Internet has played an important role to collect the empirical data in this study. I have been acquainted with many of the informants of this study through the Internet. Most of them are university students who taught me the lifestyle of Thai youth. The Internet is also used to obtain information and communicate with interviewees in Thailand and Japan. The detailed method of data collection will be explained in each chapter.

Outline of the Study

This study is consisted of ten chapters including this introductory chapter (Chapter 1). In Chapter 2, the key concepts to understand the transnational cultural flows in the previous studies are introduced. As an introduction to the issue of the diffusion of Japanese cultural products in Asia, the major theoretical frameworks such as globalism, transnationalism, hybridism, and cultural proximity which have been applied to the explanation of the cultural flow from Japan in Asia are explained.

Chapters 3-8 comprise the empirical data of the study. Chapter 3 presents the results of the questionnaire research which examines the consumption of Japanese cultural products by Thai high school students. Research from collected questionnaire forms from 677 of seven secondary schools in five regions of Thailand has been designed to see which Japanese cultural products are vigorously consumed and how the

students consume them in everyday lives at an individual level. The chapter aims to illustrate the consumption of Japanese cultural products by Thai youth as well as to see the correlations between the cultural products.

Chapter 4 is an ethnographic study of a J-Pop idol fan club in Thailand. A fan of a J-Pop idol group started a homepage on the Internet and it has grown rapidly to become an unofficial fan club of the J-Pop idol in Thailand. As the fan club is unofficial, no formal support is provided from the official fan club from Japan but they organize the fan club by themselves. The ethnography of the fan club and the questionnaire research to the members show the organization and the activities to analyze how the J-Pop idol group has been accepted and is being consumed in Thailand. Chapter 5 studies cosplay (*kosupure*) activities through ethnography and questionnaire. Cosplay is a compound of "costume" and "play" and it is an activity that we often see at the conventions and expositions of manga, anime and video game fans. The chapter investigates the consumption of Japanese subculture "cosplay" to see the consumption of manga, anime or video games from a different perspective from the previous studies.

Chapter 6 examines the role of Japanese language in consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand. In the studies of the J-Pop fan club and cosplay in Chapters 4 & 5, many of the questionnaire respondents are found to be Japanese language learners. Using the questionnaire research given to the students in the Department of Japanese Language at *Chulalongkorn University*, this thesis attempts to establish the relationship between language study and the consumption of Japanese cultural products. The role of Japanese language education in diffusing cultural products and captivating Thai youth is also revealed by ethnographic analysis.

Chapter 7 examines the consumption of Japanese food in Thailand. The

ethnographies and the questionnaires of other cultural products in the previous chapters have revealed that Japanese food is vigorously consumed in Thailand. There are many Japanese restaurants found in the streets and in the shopping malls in Bangkok. The chapter attempts to view the background of the Japanese food boom in Thailand and to analyze the reasons for the growing consumption. Chapter 8 investigates Japanese fashion in Thailand. Fashion is intangible and difficult to study. However, Japanese magazines for young women have been recently translated and published in Thailand, which suggests increasing interests on Japanese fashion among Thai women. With ethnographies, interviews and published data, this chapter examines why and how young women in Thailand consume Japanese fashion.

Chapter 9 examines the empirical data and findings in Chapters 3-8 and they are discussed in light of the key concepts found in the previous studies (Chapter 2), which could be the feedbacks of the Thai case to the general theoretical discussions about the cultural flows. The discussions are further developed to seek the reasons for consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand. The chapter attempts to explain why Thai youth have positive attitude toward Japanese cultural products and how they select their favorite cultural products from others. The chapter also summarizes the image of Japan and the Japanese cultural products for Thai youth and presents the mechanism to choose a certain cultural product for consumption, which could be the model of acculturation.

The thesis concludes with Chapter 10 which contains the notes for future studies. Due to the characteristics of the research method and the limits of the resources of this study, a few important discussions on the consumption of Japanese cultural products outside Japan at the macro level have not been scrutinized. In the

25

last chapter, the issues of *gender, urban middle classes* and *public diplomacy* (cultural diplomacy) are briefly discussed as memoranda for future studies. The analyses on these issues should be valuable for the policy makers of the state as well as for the people in cultural industries and mass media to assess the popularity of Japanese cultural products in the next decade.

Chapter Two

Key Factors on the Issue

Discourses in the Previous Studies

The aims of this study are to illustrate the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand and to seek the mechanism and the processes that the Thai youth consumes them, which also explore the reasons for them to have positive attitudes toward Japan and Japanese cultural products. To pursue these aims, then, the micro-ethnographic approach as well as other qualitative approaches will be used to focus our attention on the people and the places of consumption of the cultural products in Thailand.   On the contrary, in most of the previous studies on the issues of transnational cultural flows in Cultural and Media Studies, the researchers paid attention to the production and the distribution of the cultural products which were oftentimes media products that conveyed contemporary Japanese culture in the form of media, and presented the discourses on the diffusion of popular culture at the macro-level, by tracing the processes and the channels of distribution of the media products from Japan to other countries.   Consequently, most theoretical frameworks, concepts and explanations about the cultural flows beyond national boundaries in the past have been found at the macro-level or in the global-system discussions.

Although this study focuses on the individuals, who consume the cultural products, rather than on the producers, the distributors or the industries that deal with

cultural products as their business objectives, the theories, the concepts and the explanations about the phenomena in the previous studies will be beneficial to our discussions when we want to have a clearer understanding about the milieu that the individuals live in. Consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand is a consequence of activities by various kinds of actors who are involved in the processes of production, distribution and consumption. The economic factors as well as the cultural and the socio-psychological factors of the individuals and the society underlie in the milieu where the consumption of cultural products takes place.

In this chapter, some key concepts and theories about cultural flows that are found in the previous studies will be explained. Although consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand seems to be a simple economic activity by the individuals, understanding the underlying factors that realized the consumption of the cultural products is a very complex task. Consumption of the Japanese cultural products by the individuals occurs in the context of the contemporary Thai society, which has complex and close relations with Japan and the Japanese in various aspects. When we analyze the ethnographies in this research, therefore, the knowledge about the social context and the milieu of Thailand, which may be under the cultural influence of the contemporary world, are necessary to understand the meanings of the behaviors of each consumer of Japanese cultural product. In this chapter, therefore, the key concepts and the ideas of the previous studies that attempt to explain the cultural flows in the world will be briefly discussed to know the macro-level perspectives on the discussions of cultural flows among nations before we will go on to the ethnographies in Thailand.

Globalization – The Center-Periphery Model

> Most treatments of globalization portray it as either internationalization (increased interaction and interdependence between countries and/or inhabitants of different countries); liberalization (the reduction in barriers to the cross-border movement of goods, services, money, and financial instruments); universalization (the spreading of objects and experiences to people worldwide); or, Westernization (modernization and processes of homogenization that lead the world to become more Western, or American).   (Croucher 2004:11-12)

Today, globalization is a term that we often find in the discourses of academic circles as well as in the publications of mass media, which refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole. (Robertson 1992:8)   The term has been used since the mid-1980s (Robertson 1992:8; Croucher 2004:9) and every year the number of books and articles with the term in their titles has increased.   But globalization has many dimensions and definitions vary in emphasis from the economic and technological to the sociocultural and political (Croucher 2004:10; see also Giddens 2003:7; Bhagwati 2004:6), which makes the concept of 'globalization' broad, various, complex and indefinite.   Moreover, in the academic literature on the issues of development in contemporary societies, there are also other terms, such as internationalization, Westernization, Americanization and modernization, which are used in the similar way as the term globalization, and the discourses on these issues can be too complex if we try to define all the terms.   For the purpose of this study, therefore, I will choose a few concepts from the literature of the globalization, which seem to be pertinent to the discourses on the cultural flows.

In early versions of globalization, the concept was mostly based on the

West-centric ideas in which modernity was considered to be spread from the Western countries to the rest of the world. (see Giddens 1990; Axford 1995; Spybey 1996)   One of the conspicuous ideas in the early versions of globalization was the 'center-periphery' model to explain diffusion of pop culture in the world.   Pop culture was considered to be diffused in the world by the economic activities of multinational and conglomeratic corporations of the West.   Especially, America has long been considered to be the center of economics, politics and culture in the post-colonial world and many multinational corporations in America have spread American pop culture with their consumer products.   The diffusion and presence of American influences in the rest of the world such as 'McDonaldization' were sometimes criticized and discussed as "cultural imperialism." (see Schiller & Nordenstreng 1979; Thomlinson 1991; Golding & Harris 1997)   The phenomena that there are McDonald's in major cities in the world, that young people in the world listen to American music and that they listen to British music through America, for instance, were assumed as the evidences that America was the center of pop culture in the post-colonial period and this idea explained that culture would flow from a center to its peripherals.

McGray summarized the discourses of the cultural globalizations as two types, the McDonald's phenomenon and the "world music" phenomenon.   The former is to explain globalization as "the process of large American multinationals overwhelming foreign markets and getting local consumers addicted to special sauce," which is brought by the cultural flows from American power.   Globalization in the latter type, on the other hand, means that "fresh, marginal culture reaches consumers in the United States through increased contact with the rest of the world." (McGray 2002:46)   In this type, cultural products of some other countries that have been accepted by American

consumers are considered to be distributed through America to other countries, which is also the cultural flow from American power.   In both types, in the center-periphery mode, America is considered to be the center of the world, which emits pop culture to the rest of the world.

Homogenization and Cultural Imperialism

In addition to the center-peripheral model, the early versions of globalization theories were often based on 'homogenization.'   According to the homogenization theory, culture would permeate anywhere in the world equally.   Through the observations of the successful penetration of the consumer products of American brands such as McDonald's and Coca Cola in the major cities in the world, the homogenization theory understood that pop culture would be diffused from the center to the rest of the world equally.   The same kind of perspectives are also found in the discussions of Americanization, Westernization, internationalization and modernization, all of which have propensity of the West-centric idea and America and/or Europe is considered to be the center of cultural power and the West influences the rest of the world unilaterally. The unilateral relation between the West and the rest of the world has been discussed in the dichotomies such as the West versus the East, and the North-South divide. (Bhagwati 2004:8; Giddens 2003:15; Nye 2000)

The discourses of the homogenization theory are also the basis of 'cultural imperialism,' which presupposes the traffic of culture moves in one direction, from the center of the power to the rest of the world.   The global movement of the cultural goods is taken as "a process of cultural imposition and dominance – of the imposition

and dominance of western (predominantly American) culture over the remainder of the globe." (Inda & Rosaldo 2008:15)   The discourses of cultural imperialism has started as a criticism against the American dominance in the cultural globalization but in the last few decades, because the Japanese pop culture has gained considerable popularity in Asia, there are some discourses found in the previous studies that try to analyze the dissemination of Japanese popular culture in Asia by globalization and cultural imperialism. (see Igarashi 1998; Ishii 2001; Iwabuchi 2001, 2002)   In the discourse of Japanese cultural imperialism, Japan is seen as the cultural power in Asia and the efforts of the commercial domains that sell Japanese cultural products in the region are objects of criticisms.

The homogenization theory, in which culture is believed to be diffused equally in the world, seems simple and true like the law of natural science that a drop of ink will be dispersed equally in a glass of water.   But in social science, it may not be as simple as in natural science.   If the homogenization theory can be applied to every cultural aspect in the world, then the countries in the world should be more homogeneous and have less cultural differences among societies.   For instance, McDonaldization has been presented as an example of homogenization of the pop culture in many writings but close investigation reveals that there are differences between McDonald's in America and in the East Asia.

> McDonald's in America has an implicit contract with its customers: it provides clean, inexpensive food; they eat it and leave promptly. That, after all, is the meaning of fast food.   In East Asia, this contract had to be modified because customers *linger*.   Two groups especially do this: housewives relaxing in the restaurant after shopping or other errands and school children before going home. (Berger 2002:10)

The ideas of the center-peripheral and the homogenization theories are problematic if we try to apply them to explain the diffusion of pop culture in the world. In an attempt to apply the theories to the case of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, two questions are raised – *Is Japan a center of pop culture? Have Japanese cultural products permeated everywhere in the world?*

Localization and Hybridity

When a global culture or a culture of Country B is imported to a Country A, the imported culture is sometimes modified in Country A so that it will be accepted easily by the local consumers. This modification to suit local environment is called 'localization,' which we have just seen the example in the case of McDonald's in the East Asia. The term is often used in the discourses of import and export cultural products from one country to another. For instance, when Japanese video games are exported to the United States, the contents of the games will be localized to American culture, which means not only the language translation but also the cultural aspects in the game scenarios will be modified. The discussions on localization of cultural products are found not only in the academic literature on intercultural issues but also in the business and marketing issues for importing and exporting of consumer products.

> Localization shades over into another response, best described by the term "hybridization." This is the deliberate effort to synthesize foreign and native cultural traits. Japan, ever since the Meiji Restoration, has been a most successful pioneer of this response, but there are many other examples. (Berger 2002:10)

The term 'hybridization' is often used by the scholars of Cultural Studies and other disciplines to refer to the synthesis of foreign and local cultures. The homogenization theory was based on the assumption that there was a 'global culture' which would permeate in the world but the scholars in the advanced discussion of globalization started to think about the complex process of globalization which focused on the relations of influx and local cultures. When a same cultural product is imported to Country A and Country B, hybridization occurs in each country and the accepted cultural products of each country may differ. According to scholars and disciplines, terms such as localization, hybridization, indigenization, acculturation, culture change, creolization and glocalization (Befu 2003:5) are used to discuss the process of modifying an imported culture to suit the local environment. In the previous studies, how cultural products are imported, reproduced, interpreted, hybridized and indigenized is discussed in the case studies of different countries.

> Japan's response to globalization is producing less a straightforward exclusive national identity than a curiously inclusive imagining of its culture or civilization in the global cultural flow; the construction of a Japanese affirmative hybridism by which the putative Japanese national essence is imagined in terms of its exceptional capacity for cultural absorption of the foreign. (Iwabuchi 2006:23)

Tsunoyama used a metaphor that Japan's being a substation in Asia to transform the high-voltage electricity generated by the power plants in Europe. (1995:99-102) In the substation (Japan), the high-voltage electricity (expensive consumer product) is transformed to lower-voltage electricity (inexpensive consumer product) before it will be distributed in Asia. In other words, Japan is said to Asianize popular culture of the West and spread it in Asia. Iwabuchi also pointed out Japan's

role in Asia as a translator or mediator between 'Asia' and 'the West', by emphasizing the Japan's ability to absorb the foreign. (Iwabuchi 2006:24)   Such discourses in the previous studies are based on the presupposition that the Japanese cultural products, which permeate in Asia today, have their origins in the West and Japan has been the cultural mediator that Asianize the cultural products from the West for the Asian markets. (see Befu 2003:10-11)

Decentralization and Recentralization

In the early version of globalization theories, the center of cultural flows was the West, especially America, which emitted pop culture to the rest of the world.   As the discussions of cultural power of Japan have become popular among scholars as well as journalists in the last few decades, some however started to rethink the meanings of the center of globalization.   *Has America lost its power as a center of popular culture? Who takes the role of the center of the cultural flows and who are the peripheries?* Some scholars argue that the cultural power of Japan has been raised relatively when the cultural power of America declined.   This discourse is based on the idea that the world is homogenized by globalization, which has made American pop culture less conspicuous in the world.   In other words, the homogenization of pop culture in the world has made the center of pop culture obscure, decentralizing the centers of the cultural powers in the post-colonial period.

> As centers multiply, peripheries of a center might move to become
> peripheries of a new center, and one center's periphery today may be
> another center tomorrow, as Japan emerges as a center challenging
> the West. (Befu 2001:19)

Other scholars argue that there are multiple centers of cultural flows in the age of globalization and each center has its peripheries. Explaining the emergence of Japan as a new center of pop culture in the world, Befu analyzed that centers move and they can be peripheries of other centers. Unlike the discourse of American dominance as an absolute center of the world pop culture, the idea of multiple centers and changing center-peripheries relations is an attempt to capture the dynamic cultural flows in globalization. Iwabuchi's *Recentering globalization* is also in the line of such attempts to locate the position of Japan and to redefine the center-peripheries relations in the context of the regions and the world. (Iwabuchi 2002)

Transnationalism

> *Globalization* refers to global economic integration of many formerly national economies into one global economy, by free trade, especially by free capital mobility, and also, as a distant but increasingly important third, by easy or uncontrolled migration. *Globalization is the effective erasure of national boundaries for economic purposes.* (Daly 2007:194)

The growth of globalization in the last few decades has made the meaning of national boundaries less extant, not only in the economic spheres but also in the cultural and the political implications. Thus, there are many discourses found that enquire nationalism and the meaning of boundaries in the contemporary world. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson discusses "nationalism" by analyzing a nation as an imagined community. He points out that "nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind." (Anderson 1991:4) In *Modernity at Large*, Appadurai proposes five

dimensions of global cultural flows – *ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes,* and *ideoscapes* – as an elementary framework for analyzing the disjunctures between economy, culture, and politics, in relation to the complexity of the global economy, and he discusses the changing meanings of nations in what he calls "imagined worlds." (Appadurai 1996:33)

Some scholars prefer to use the term "transnational" rather than globalization or internationalization.   Hannerz criticizes the prodigious use of the term globalization to describe almost any process or relationships cross state boundaries while, in many cases, the process and relationships do not extend across the world. (Hannerz 1996:6) Iwabuchi explains one of the merits of transnational, as opposed to international or global, that "actors are not confined to the nation-state or to nationally institutionalized organizations; they may range from individuals to various (non) profitable, transitionally connected organizations and groups, and the conception of culture implied is not limited to a 'national' framework." (Iwabuchi 2002:16)

Although transnationalism often connotes the boundaries between nations do not prevent the cultural flows, it does not mean that the borders have been erased nor nation has been abolished. (Jackson 2003:34)   For the scholars of cultural flows, however, the term "transnational" should arouse the image of cultural products crossing boundaries between nations.   In the discourse of diffusion of pop culture in the world, the traffic of people, business, information, and industrial products is important as well as the influx of culture; which require the scholars to pay more attention to the activities at the boundaries.   Thus, many of the scholars in the discourses of cultural flows prefer to use the term "transnational" because the term "transnational" seems more suitable as it focuses on nations, boundaries and regions.

Cultural Proximity (Similarity)

Cultural proximity is the term used in Media and Cultural Studies to refer to the similarity and closeness that audience identifies with in the cultures and lifestyles shown in the programs imported from other cultures.   Ang gives an example to explain the cultural proximity in an audience study that, England and Australia have cultural proximity, which derives from the historical relationships of the two countries, and the television programs produced in Australia are widely accepted in England and vice versa.   On the other hand, Ang points out that the so-called "trendy dramas" of Japan in the 1990s have not been broadcast in Australia although they have been widely broadcast in Asian countries.   Ang used these examples of cultural proximity to conclude that the global world is not a homogeneous world but there are various and overlapping regions, that share the cultural proximity and similarity, generated in the world. (Ang 2003:290; see also Straubbaar 1991; Iwabuchi 2002)

> Why are creolized versions of Japanese-style manga, anime, television dramas, variety programs and talent shows so popular in East Asia – much more so than elsewhere?   The readiest answer is probably to attribute this eager embrace of Japanese popular culture to the cultural similarity between Japan and neighboring Asian cultures.   Cultural similarity – similarity of the cultural assumptions and background – undeniably makes it easier for some Asian countries to understand and empathize with performances and characters. (Befu 2003:7)

The notion of cultural proximity is commonly used in the discourses of audience studies in Media and Cultural Studies and the popularity of Japanese television programs in East Asia can be readily explained with the notion.   The countries in East Asia are considered to have cultural proximity.   Because of the geographical distance

and the historical relations between the countries in the region, some of the cultural values may be shared among the countries in the region.   For instance, throughout its history, Japan has received cultural influences from China and Korea.   When Japan imported Kanji in the fifth and sixth centuries, philosophy, religion, technology and knowledge of the Chinese continent were also introduced to the Japanese.   Because of the geographical location, Japan received cultural influences from China and Korea through the diplomats and the monks, who went abroad, and *toraijins* (immigrants from the continent), who were artisans and technicians settled in Japan between the fourth and sixth centuries. (Hirano 1993)   Although we find differences in the cultures of the countries in East Asia today, the relationships of these countries in the past laid the background to have cultural similarities, which is the basis of the cultural proximity of today.

The applicability of cultural proximity should not be limited in the discourses of media products but it should be extended to the analyses of other cultural products. In seeking the mechanism of consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, the notion of cultural proximity may be useful in finding the underlying factors that make Thai people sense existence of cultural similarities with Japan.

Mukokuseki and Cultural "Odorlessness"

> A particular programme rooted in one culture, and thus attractive in that environment, will have a diminished appeal elsewhere as viewers find it difficult to identify with the style, values, beliefs, institutions and behavioural patterns of the material in question. (Hoskins & Mirus 1988:500)

In the discussions on the international trade of television programs, the term 'cultural discount' is used to express reduction in appreciation of the value of the television program in the recipient country.   When a foreign program is broadcast, the value of the program is diminished and fewer viewers will watch the program than a domestic program of the same type and quality. (Hoskins & Mirus 1988:500)   In the notion of cultural discount, how much viewers can identify with the culture in the content of programming is important.   The notion of cultural discount is often used in Media Studies to discuss values of media contents.   But the notion may be valuable when we analyze transnational flows of cultural products.   For instance, Hoskins and Mirus point out that US viewers are insular and intolerant of foreign programming (Hoskins & Mirus 1988:509), which means they have a high cultural discount and the value of an imported television program is diminished considerably.   If we apply the notion to cultural products, we may hypothesize that US consumers do not appreciate foreign cultural products because they have a high cultural discount.

Hoskins and Mirus also point out that Japan has been successful in exporting VCRs to the American market but Japan has not succeeded to export television programs to the American market.   Hoskins and Mirus explain that "a VCR is culturally neutral, an American or German is indifferent to the country of origin of a

VCR unit because this does not affect the way it works and the satisfaction he obtains from usage." (Hoskins & Mirus 1988:503)   This implies that foreign products which are culturally neutral are easily accepted.

In the discussions of consumption of Japanese cultural products in the world, there are some scholars who claim that the characteristics of Japanese cultural products as 'mukokuseki' (nation-less) which makes Japanese cultural products popular outside Japan.   In the discourse that Japan's role as a mediator of American pop culture for Asia, Tsunoyama points out that Japan erases American flavors from American pop culture so that the pop culture can be accepted universally. (Tsunoyama 1995:191)

Iwabuchi argues that the notion of "cultural discount" does not explain a consumer's cultural preference and the notion of "cultural neutrality" is misleading. (Iwabuchi 2002:27)   Therefore, Iwabuchi uses the term "cultural odor" to mean the symbolic image of the country of origin for the cultural products and he finds the "cultural odorlessness" in Japanese videogames and anime in explaining the reason for their world popularity.   Contrary to the notion of cultural proximity, the concepts of "mukokuseki" and cultural "odorlessness" deny "Japaneseness" as the reason for popularity of Japanese cultural products in the world.   Thus, in analyzing the mechanism of consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, we need to observe the phenomena carefully with the contradicting concepts in mind to seek real reasons for consumption.

Sojourns

In the age of globalization, transnational mobility of people, goods, money and information has become very active. While the discussions of the economic dimension of globalization mainly focus on the goods and money, the scholars of cultural globalization and Cultural Studies are attentive to the mobility of people. In *Globalizing Japan*, Befu points out that human dispersal as an important factor in analyzing Japan's globalization and he classifies it into long-term (or permanent) and short-time (or non-permanent) categories. (Befu 2001:5-10) As Figure 2.1 shows, the number of Japanese residents outside Japan has been increasing every year during the last few decades and the number should be growing as the world will become more interconnected with each other.

Some scholars, in disciplines such as sociology, history and other social sciences as well as in the field of Cultural Studies, use the term 'diaspora' to mean the migration and scattering of a people from the home countries to other countries. Diaspora originally means "the dispersal of an ethnic population from an original homeland into foreign areas, often in a forced manner or under traumatic circumstances." (Giddens 2001) But today, the term is also used in the discourses of transnational movement in light of globalization and the growth of nation-less solidarities in the contemporary world. (Robertson 1992; Appadurai 1996:27-47)

Today, migration and mobility are prominent phenomena that the economic globalization has brought about in the world and the presence of Japanese sojourners in foreign countries is no exception. As the Figure 2.1 shows, the number of Japanese nationals residing overseas is increasing every year, which makes the presence of Japanese in foreign countries conspicuous. In analyzing consumption of cultural

products in this study, therefore, the term may suggest an important perspective to understand the role of Japanese sojourners in Thailand in the transnational cultural flows.

Number of Japanese Nationals Overseas

■ Long-Stay (Non-Permanent) ▦ Permanent

Year	Long-Stay (Non-Permanent)	Permanent
1990	374,044	246,130
1991	412,207	250,842
1992	425,131	254,248
1993	432,703	254,876
1994	428,342	261,553
1995	460,522	267,746
1996	492,942	271,035
1997	507,749	274,819
1998	510,915	278,619
1999	515,295	280,557
2000	526,685	285,027
2001	544,434	293,310
2002	586,836	284,915
2003	619,269	291,793
2004	659,003	302,304
2005	701,969	310,578
2006	735,378	328,317
2007	745,897	339,774
2008	755,724	361,269

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2009) *Annual Report of Statistics on Japanese Nationals Overseas 2008 -- (as of October 1, 2008)*

Figure 2.1   Number of Japanese Nationals Overseas

Emergence of the New Middle Class in Asia

> The term 'new rich' is a starting point for examination, and by no
> means a precise analytical tool.   It is used as a broad brushstroke to
> encompass those new wealthy social groups that have emerged from
> industrial change in Asia, particularly during the past two decades.
> (Robison & Goodman 1996:5)

In the past few decades, many scholars have expressed their interests in the issues of the
middle class emerging in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia, which is also called 'the
new middle class', and sometimes the bourgeoisie or the owner of capital in societies is
called 'the new rich' in the discourses of new class formation in Asia. (e.g. Robison &
Goodman 1996; Schmidt et al. 1997; Young 1999; Embong 2002; King 2008)
Theoretical analyses on class have been discussed in sociology for a long time and there
have been many studies published on class in Western societies.   As the economy of
the Southeast Asian countries advanced, then, more scholars have become interested in
the emergence of class, sometimes in relation with industrialization and modernization,
to illustrate the social change in the region.   Thailand is no exception.   There are
some studies on the emerging middle class in Thailand. (e.g. Hewison 1996; Siriprachai
1997; Ockey 1999; Funatsu & Kagoya 2002, 2003; Shiraishi 2006)

Although definitions and formations of "class" in each country differ according
to the studies, many of the scholars seem to agree that the 'new' middle class has
emerged in Southeast Asia during the last few decades but some scholars point out that
"the increase in income and opportunities for rising consumption have not been
uniformly distributed among individuals and households within the middle classes.
(Schmidt et al. 1997:218)   They claim that the 'new' middle class is consisted of

different social groups that have different positions in economic life, both in production and reproduction spheres. The dynamics of political and economic situation of the societies make it difficult to define class and formation of the stratification in the society.

In the previous studies on consumption of Japanese pop culture in Asia, few studies paid attention to the issue of the middle class because most of the previous studies focused on media such as television dramas, anime and manga which do not require consumers to spend much money to consume. As long as one has a television set at home, Japanese television dramas and anime can be seen without any fees except electricity charge, which means almost anybody, of all kinds of social groups and classes, can consume them. Many of the Japanese cultural products in this study such as food and fashion, however, require consumers to spend some money at each time of consumption and their prices are comparatively expensive than Thai products, which suggests that there may be a relationship between the social groups and consumption of Japanese cultural products. For the purpose of this study, we borrow Funatsu's definition of the Thai urban middle class "as an affluent class consisting of homogeneous urban-based elites, as distinct from farmers and other people on the lower rungs of society's ladder" (Funatsu 2000) and we pay attention to the lifestyle and the culture of the new middle class throughout the ethnographic studies on consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand.

Soft Power

As we have seen in Chapter 1, the term "soft power" was coined by Joseph Nye as the antonym of "hard power" which means political and military power in the discussions of national security and politics of the United States. (Nye 1990a)   Nye explains that power is relative and a decline in American power in the bilateral U.S.-Japan relationship caused Japan's rise in power. (Nye 1990b)   Separated from the discussion on the issues of national security, the term "soft power" has become popular and scholars as well as the mass media started to use it in the discourses of the diffusion of Japanese pop culture in Asia and the world.   Consequently, the cultural influence from Japan in Asia is often referred to as "Japan's soft power" in many writings.

Despite the popularity and the catchiness of the term, it is too ambiguous to be used in the theoretical analyses; the term is often used to attract readers and to make the writings fashionable in mass media.   In this study, the use of the term is limited, therefore, in the discourses of mass media reports and the cultural policies of Japan in which policy makers and bureaucrats often use the term.

Chapter Three

Questionnaire Study of Thai High School Students

Japanese Cultural Products and Thai Youth

Siam Square, located next to *Chulalongkorn University* in Bangkok, is one of the most popular shopping areas for young Thais. Hundreds of small boutiques, shops, restaurants and some huge shopping malls in the area attract young Thais. On weekday afternoons, many young Thai women in their high school and university uniforms are walking on the streets in Siam Square. They usually come to the area with their friends for shopping, eating sweets at cafes or just spending time with their friends. Siam Square is not only for shopping and dining but for entertainment as there are movie theaters and bowling alleys in huge shopping malls in the area. Thousands of high school and university students go to the area after school.

On weekends and at night, a bit older Thai women come to the area for shopping, dining and entertainment. Some of them wear Japanese fashion clothes which they have bought at the boutiques in Siam Square. Some of them go to the Japanese CD shops to buy newly released CDs of their favorite J-Pop idols. By observing the behaviors of Thai youth in the area, I realized that Siam Square is the center of Japanese cultural products as well as the center of youth culture in Thailand. In order to see how Thai secondary school students consume Japanese cultural products in everyday life, therefore, I designed a questionnaire research to high school students in

2005.

In this chapter, I would like to discuss the Japanese cultural products in Thailand ethnographically along with empirical data. Although some people may claim that the popularity of Japanese cultural products in Thailand is obvious, previous studies took the Japanese cultural products as the popular culture in media globalization and most discussions are focused on the media producers or global-local discourses (Ogawa 2001; Ishii 2001; Iwabuchi 2002, 2004; Nakano 2002; Lee 2004; Zuberi 2005) while not focusing on the people who consume them. This chapter tries to take a different approach to the issue, therefore, by focusing on the behaviors and the factors that may cause the preference of the people for the Japanese cultural products by making use of empirical data including collected questionnaires from secondary school students and the field notes, to delineate the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand.

Empirical Data

In this chapter, I will use two kinds of empirical data; one is questionnaire results and the other is field notes. In January and February 2005, I distributed questionnaire forms to seven secondary schools in 5 regions of Thailand and collected the answered forms from 677 secondary school students. In this research, the variable "school" is sometimes used as "region" for the statistical analyses as these schools are located in the major provincial cities of Thailand. It is also important to note that "677" is the total number of questionnaires returned from the teachers of the secondary schools but the valid number for each question varies because students sometimes skipped questions or

the answers were invalid. The questionnaire contains 45 questions. The aim of the questionnaire was not a quantitative study but it was an attempt to learn about the consumption of Japanese cultural products in everyday life and the lifestyle of Thai youth. Although I cannot review all the question results in this paper, I will present results of some of the questions in discussing consumption of Japanese cultural products.

The seven secondary schools are the participating schools in *The Development and Promotion of Science and Technology Talents Project (DPST)* which is jointly administered by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, and *the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST)*. The DPST project is a special program for talented students in science and technology but the seven schools are not only for talented students. The DPST secondary schools are public schools in provincial and metropolitan cities that can provide special mathematics and science classes for the talented students in cooperation with the participant universities in the same region. The majority of the students are ordinary students.

In Thailand, the enrollment ratio of upper secondary (general) school is 32.3% in 2005. (Office of the Educational Council 2008) Upper secondary schools usually have 2 tracks of study; the science major and the non-science major. When a school has a Japanese language class, it is usually in the non-science major track. But in rare cases, both science and non-science major tracks have Japanese language classes. For this research, the samples were not randomly selected. The teacher of the DPST program at each school selected classes to receive the questionnaires. I have distributed 100-200 questionnaire forms to the seven secondary schools through the

DPST coordinator at IPST. I asked the teachers of the secondary schools to choose at least 2 classes of the 11th grade; one science major class and one non-science major class. When I designed the questionnaire research, I wanted to have the 12th grade students answer the questionnaire as I assumed they would be very active in consuming cultural products but since some of the 12th grade students would be very busy for preparing for the university entrance examinations, I chose the 11th grade students as the respondents for this research.

If there were too many Japanese major students in the samples of my research, the results may be biased toward a favorable attitude to Japanese cultural products. Table 3.1 shows the number of students by school, sex, and major. By looking at Table 3.1, I could see that most teachers followed my instruction to have variations in students' major except one school which only contains science major students. As seen in Table 3.2, 68% of the students are in the science major and only 2.4% are in the Japanese major.

The 677-sample in this research may not represent all 11th grade students in Thailand but it should represent the non-Japanese major secondary school students in Thailand to a certain extent. The results of the questionnaires should be understood as a guide to understand the trends among, and the lifestyles of, the Thai youth today and not to be generalized as tendencies that are scientifically drawn from random sampling methods.

Table 3.1: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [Secondary School Major * [School]				Secondary School Major			Total
School				Japanese	NS-NJ	Science	Total
Prapathom Wittayalai (East)	Sex	Male	Count		28	23	51
			% of Total		31.5%	25.8%	57.3%
		Female	Count		19	19	38
			% of Total		21.3%	21.3%	42.7%
	Total		Count		47	42	89
			% of Total		52.8%	47.2%	100.0%
Yuparaj Wittayalai (North)	Sex	Male	Count	0	19	33	52
			% of Total	0.0%	20.2%	35.1%	55.3%
		Female	Count	6	20	16	42
			% of Total	6.4%	21.3%	17.0%	44.7%
	Total		Count	6	39	49	94
			% of Total	6.4%	41.5%	52.1%	100.0%
Sriboonyanon (Central)	Sex	Male	Count		7	16	23
			% of Total		7.4%	17.0%	24.5%
		Female	Count		20	51	71
			% of Total		21.3%	54.3%	75.5%
	Total		Count		27	67	94
			% of Total		28.7%	71.3%	100.0%
Samsen Wittayalai (Central)	Sex	Male	Count		9	40	49
			% of Total		7.0%	31.3%	38.3%
		Female	Count		19	60	79
			% of Total		14.8%	46.9%	61.7%
	Total		Count		28	100	128
			% of Total		21.9%	78.1%	100.0%
Kaennakorn Wittayalai (Northeast)	Sex	Male	Count			46	46
			% of Total			47.9%	47.9%
		Female	Count			50	50
			% of Total			52.1%	52.1%
	Total		Count			96	96
			% of Total			100.0%	100.0%
Bodindecha (Central)	Sex	Male	Count	1	3	14	18
			% of Total	1.4%	4.1%	19.2%	24.7%
		Female	Count	9	16	30	55
			% of Total	12.3%	21.9%	41.1%	75.3%
	Total		Count	10	19	44	73
			% of Total	13.7%	26.0%	60.3%	100.0%
Hat Yai Wittayalai (South)	Sex	Male	Count		13	26	39
			% of Total		15.1%	30.2%	45.3%
		Female	Count		22	25	47
			% of Total		25.6%	29.1%	54.7%
	Total		Count		35	51	86
			% of Total		40.7%	59.3%	100.0%

Total N = 677 Missing = 17 Valid N = 660

NS = Non-Science

NJ = Non-Japanese

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 3.2: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [Secondary School Major]						
			Secondary School Major			Total
			Japanese	NS-NJ	Science	
Sex	Male	Count	1	79	198	278
		% of Total	0.2%	12.0%	30.0%	42.1%
	Female	Count	15	116	251	382
		% of Total	2.3%	17.6%	38.0%	57.9%
Total		Count	16	195	449	660
		% of Total	2.4%	29.5%	68.0%	100.0%

Total N = 677 Missing = 17 Valid N = 660

NS = Non-Science

NJ = Non-Japanese

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Indices

When I was reviewing each returned form of the questionnaire, I became interested in knowing two important factors about each student in the research; (1) the socio-economic status of student's family and (2) the degree of fondness toward Japan. To prepare for the analysis, therefore, I devised the following two indices by accumulating the results of certain questions in the questionnaire.

SES Index

In analyzing consumption of Japanese cultural products in this research, it is important to know the SES, that is, the socio-economic status of the students.   In a society which respects traditional values and virtues, however, it is difficult for a private foreign researcher to ask questions such as family income in the questionnaire.   To solve this, therefore, I embedded some questions that might help measure the SES of the students; (1) "Do you have your own PC at home?"   (2) "Do you have a mobile phone?"   (3) "Have you ever traveled abroad?"   (4) "Do you have any video games?"   (5) "Do you

go to a cram school?"

These five variables are combined to make an index of SES. "Yes" to each question is counted as "1." They are added up to be in the range 0 (Low) and 5 (Very Wealthy). It is important to note that each original question is designed to examine the consumption behavior of the family and the combined SES index does not reflect the financial wealth of the family directly. To understand some of the results that are obtained from this questionnaire research, however, the index may give us some clues to unveil the underlying factors. Additionally, a monthly allowance is also used to measure SES of each student.

JFP (Japanese Fondness Point) Index

At the end of the questionnaire, I put the question "Do you like Japan?" Students can answer by choosing one of the four choices: "No – I don't like it at all," "No – I don't like it very much," "Yes – I like it a little bit," and "Yes – I like it very much." This can be an index to measure the degree of fondness of the student but it is too dangerous to rely on only one question because some students may mark the favorable answers just to be polite to the Japanese researcher. So I added five other variables to measure the fondness of the students toward Japan: (1) "Do you want to go to Japan?" (2) "Do you want to study in Japan?" (3) "Do you want to live in Japan?" (4) "Do you want to study Japanese?" and (5) "Have you ever studied Japanese?"

The five dichotomous questions are combined with the 4-choice question to make the JFP Index, that is, the Japan Fondness Point Index. In the dichotomous questions, "Yes" is counted as 1. From the 4-choice question, from 0 to 3 points is added to the index. The variables that make up the JFP index can be updated /

modified in future studies but it is devised as this for this research. The possible JFP values can range from 0 to 9 with the value 9 being the highest in terms of fondness toward Japan. If any of the 5 variables is not answered in the questionnaire, the case is not included in the JFP index.

Japanese Cultural Products

In the questionnaire, the students are asked if they like Japanese (1) fashion, (2) food, (3) animation, (4) TV drama, (5) other TV programs, (6) manga, (7) novels, and (8) music. In the following discussion, I will examine these factors with empirical data.

J-Fashion (Japanese Fashion)

It is likely that a person will not want to wear J-Fashion if they don't like Japan. Clothes and accessories put on the body are part of identity and a person would not adorn themselves with something they don't like. When I first saw many young Thai women walking on the streets in J-Fashion, I was happy to know that they liked Japanese fashion. But generally, fashion for young Japanese women tend to expose the body more and they even try to show underwear intentionally as part of fashion. For instance, in contemporary Japanese fashion, camisoles are not underwear and they are considered as tops. But seeing camisoles worn by young Thai women gave me a somewhat strange feeling, probably because I did not think of camisoles as globally accepted fashion.

Table 3.3 shows the result of the question "Do you like Japanese Fashion?" which is cross-tabulated by sex. In total (both male and female), 64.7% of the students

say they like J-Fashion.   But looking at the difference by sex, we can see 73.9% of female students like J-Fashion while 52.0% of male students like it.   The result indicates that female students tend to be more interested in J-Fashion than male students. Although this paper does not present firm evidence, this may be explained by a general tendency, not only in Thailand but also in most Western and Asian countries, that women tend to be more interested in fashion compared to men and that more fashionable clothes are supplied for women.   As shown in Figure 3.1, in all schools, female students who said "Yes" exceed female students who said "No."   But in the case of male students, at *Sriboonyanon* secondary school and *Bodindecha* secondary school, male students who said "No" exceed those who said "Yes."

			Do you like J-Fashion?		Total
			No	Yes	
Sex	Male	Count	133	144	277
		% within Sex	48.0%	52.0%	100.0%
	Female	Count	100	283	383
		% within Sex	26.1%	73.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	233	427	660
		% within Sex	35.3%	64.7%	100.0%

Table 3.3: Cross Tabulation –
[Sex] * [Do you like J-Fashion?]

Total N = 677   Missing = 17   Valid N = 660

Question: Do you like Japanese Fashion?

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

55

Figure 3.1: Do you like J-Fashion?

	Prapath om (M)	Prapath om (F)	Yuparaj (M)	Yuparaj (F)	Sriboon yanon (M)	Sriboon yanon (F)	Samsen (M)	Samsen (F)	Kaennak orn (M)	Kaennak orn (F)	Bodinde cha (M)	Bodinde cha (F)	Hat Yai (M)	Hat Yai (F)
Do you like J-Fashion? Yes	60.8%	86.8%	53.8%	83.3%	43.5%	70.4%	51.0%	67.5%	54.3%	70.0%	22.2%	80.0%	55.3%	68.1%
Do you like J-Fashion? No	39.2%	13.2%	46.2%	16.7%	56.5%	29.6%	49.0%	32.5%	45.7%	30.0%	77.8%	20.0%	44.7%	31.9%

Percent
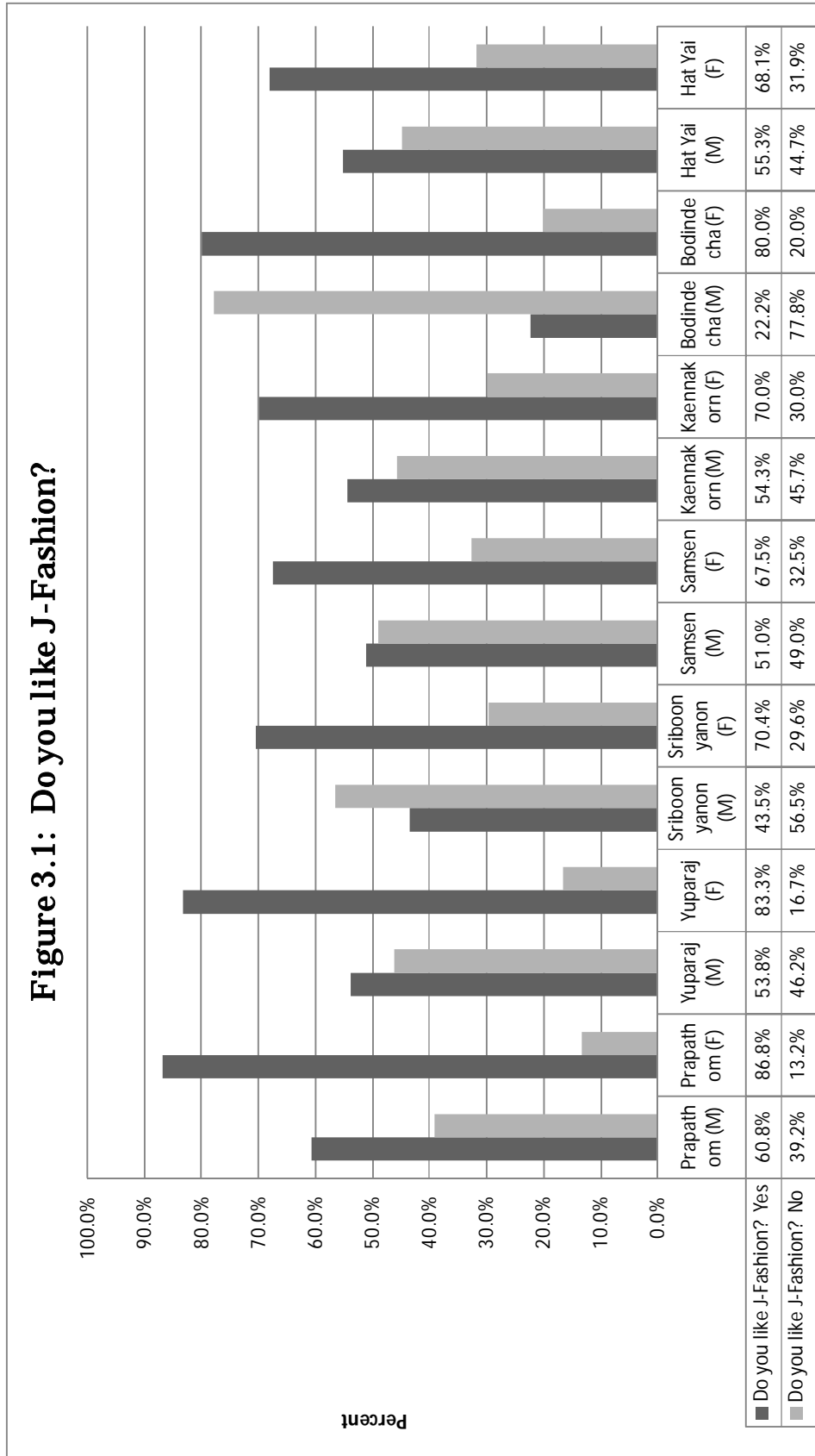
Table 3.4: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [Do you wear J-Fashion?]							
			Do you wear J-Fashion?				
			No	Some times	Often	Always	Total
Sex	Male	Count	180	95	3	1	279
		% within Sex	64.5%	34.1%	1.1%	0.4%	100.0%
		% within Do you wear J-Fashion?	48.6%	34.4%	30.0%	50.0%	42.4%
	Female	Count	190	181	7	1	379
		% within Sex	50.1%	47.8%	1.8%	0.3%	100.0%
		% within Do you wear J-Fashion?	51.4%	65.6%	70.0%	50.0%	57.6%
Total		Count	370	276	10	2	658
		% within Sex	56.2%	41.9%	1.5%	0.3%	100.0%
		% within Do you wear J-Fashion?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total N = 677 Missing = 19 Valid N = 658							
Question: Do you wear Japanese Fashion?							
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.							

Table 3.4 presents the results of the question "Do you wear Japanese fashion?" Although 64.7% of the total students like J-Fashion, 56.2% indicated they do not wear Japanese Fashion at all.   It is interesting to note that although they show considerable interest in and fondness for Japanese Fashion, students who actually wear it often or always is less than 2%.   I suspected two reasons for this.   The first hypothesis is that not many students have enough money to buy J-Fashion clothes.   To test this hypothesis, I calculated Pearson correlation between SES and fondness of J-Fashion which showed no significant correlation ($r=0.056$, $p=0.146$) but SES and wearing J-Fashion has a considerable correlation ($r=0.100$, $p=0.01$).

The second hypothesis is that their parents do not allow them to wear J-Fashion. Although this hypothesis cannot be tested in this paper, the students' image about J-Fashion seems to give us some insights to understand this.   In the free space to

answer the questions, "What is a good point of Japan?" and "What is a bad point of Japan?" in the questionnaire, many students wrote about Japanese fashion. Some claimed that Japan is a fashion leader and admired J-Fashion but other students claimed that Japanese fashion is "too sexy" and not appropriate for Thais to wear. As these comments suggest, since Japanese fashion for women expose the body "too much," it is considered as inappropriate style of dress by the traditional values of Thai society. Because of its sexiness, therefore, many young Thai women may hesitate to wear J-Fashion in spite of longing for it.

J-Food

Today, Japanese food is very popular in Thailand. In regional cities as well as in Bangkok, Japanese foods and snacks are sold at supermarkets such as *Big C*, *Lotus*, *Tops*, and others and you can find Japanese restaurants at shopping malls and department stores. In Bangkok, there are many Japanese restaurants and you can get *sushi, sashimi, tempura* or *teriyaki* at unpretentious small canteens or expensive Japanese restaurants. To meet the demands of the Japanese businessmen in Bangkok, some *Sushi* restaurants serve fresh raw fish that are brought from Japan. Sometimes a private carrier is hired to buy fresh fish at *Tsukiji* Fish Market (Tokyo) in the morning and to take a flight to Bangkok before noon so that the fish can be served for dinner the same day.

Instead of dining at such expensive Japanese restaurants, most Thai people enjoy inexpensive Japanese cuisines at Japanese restaurant chains. There are two big Japanese restaurant chain groups in Thailand; *Fuji Restaurant* and *Oishi Group.* Fuji Restaurant started its business in 1983 and it currently has 39 branches: 29 branches in

Bangkok and 10 branches in regional cities (Personal communication 2005, December 6).   Oishi Group, which has become a big brand of green tea drink that is sold at convenience stores nationwide in Thailand today, has started a buffet restaurant in 1999. The buffet restaurant chain now has three branches but the group expanded the business in many directions and has several Japanese restaurant brands such as Oishi Japanese Buffet Restaurant, Oishi Express, Oishi Grand, Oishi Sushi bar, Oishi Ramen, OK-Suki and B-B-Q, and so forth. (Oishi Group 2009)   The group also has bakery shops and catering services and the gross revenue of the group for 2008 was 5.98 billion Baht (approx. US$ 17.95 millions).   In addition to the restaurants which are run by the Thai capitals, a Japanese Ramen chain, *Hachiban Ramen,* has formed a joint venture with a small Thai company in 1991 and the joint venture has opened 82 *Hachiban Ramen* restaurants in various regions of Thailand by September 2009 (Goto 2008), which has made Japanese food available for many people in Thailand.

Besides the big restaurant chains, there are many kinds of shops and restaurants of Japanese food and you can even find small *sushi* shops on the streets and at *BTS Skytrain* stations in Bangkok.   It is important to note, however, that even though "inexpensive Japanese food" is now available in big cities in Thailand, the price of Japanese food is considerably expensive when it is compared with Thai food and it is not something that all Thai people have very often.

Table 3.5: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [Do you like J-Food?]

			Do you like J-Food?		Total
			No	Yes	
Sex	Male	Count	102	177	279
		% within Sex	36.6%	63.4%	100.0%
		% within Do you like J-Food?	46.2%	40.1%	42.1%
	Female	Count	119	264	383
		% within Sex	31.1%	68.9%	100.0%
		% within Do you like J-Food?	53.8%	59.9%	57.9%
Total		Count	221	441	662
		% within Sex	33.4%	66.6%	100.0%
		% within Do you like J-Food?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Total N = 677   Missing = 15   Valid N = 662

Question: Do you like Japanese food?

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

As Table 3.5 shows, 66.6% of all students answered "Yes" to the question "Do you like Japanese food?"   The percentage of the female students is 5.5 point higher than male students but the difference is not significant.   Figure 3.2 is a graph created from the cross tabulation of the results and region.   The total percentage of male and female, which is not shown in the graph, shows that more than 80% of the students at *Samsen Wittayalai* secondary school (82.9%) and *Bodindecha* secondary school (89%) say they like Japanese food.   These two schools are located in the central part of Thailand and the availability of Japanese food is considered to be much higher than other regions.   The problem of this hypothesis is that it cannot explain the reason for the low percentage found at *Sriboonyanon* secondary school which is also located in the central region of the country.   The former two secondary schools are located in the central area of Bangkok and the latter is located at the outskirts of the city and it can be hypothesized that the difference of the living environment of the students caused the

difference in the accessibility to Japanese food, which needs to be tested in future research.   Table 3.6 also shows a slight correlation between the fondness of Japanese food and the region.

When we discuss J-Fashion, a person can say whether he/she likes it or not by looking at the fashion without spending any money.   But in the case of food, one cannot say whether he/she likes it or not until he/she actually tastes it.   If he/she cannot afford to eat Japanese food, therefore, the student may have never tasted it. Unfortunately in the questionnaire, I did not provide a choice "I have never had Japanese food" and this may lead people who have never had Japanese food to mark "I don't like Japanese food."   But I can easily hypothesize that SES and eating Japanese food has a significant correlation, which I will discuss in a later section.

Furthermore, although it is after this questionnaire was conducted, some Japanese fast food chains started to enter the market of Thailand since the mid-2000s and the availability of Japanese food has been increased rapidly.   A Japanese fast food chain, *Ootoya* has formed a joint venture, *Betagro Ootoya Co. Ltd.*, with the *Betagro Group* which is a major agro-business conglomerate and exporter in Thailand, and the joint venture has already opened 16 *Gohan restaurants* by May 2009. (Pongvuttham 2006, February 2006; The Nation 2009, May 21)   In April 2007, *Mos Burger* has opened its first branch in Central World Plaza, Bangkok, and opened its sixth *Mos burger* outlet in March 2009. (Vichitsorasatra 2006, April 24; The Nation 2009, February 17)   There are more Japanese fast food chains have entered or are planning to enter the market of Thailand, which means there are more chances for secondary students to eat Japanese food today.

Figure 3.2: Do you like J-Food?

	Prapath om (M)	Prapath om (F)	Yuparaj (M)	Yuparaj (F)	Sriboon yanon (M)	Sriboon yanon (F)	Samsen (M)	Samsen (F)	Kaenna korn (M)	Kaenna korn (F)	Bodind echa (M)	Bodind echa(F)	Hat Yai (M)	Hat Yai (F)
Do you like J-Food? Yes	80.4%	63.2%	48.1%	59.5%	60.9%	62.0%	77.6%	86.3%	42.6%	52.0%	88.9%	89.1%	59.0%	57.4%
Do you like J-Food? No	19.6%	36.8%	51.9%	40.5%	39.1%	38.0%	22.4%	13.8%	57.4%	48.0%	11.1%	10.9%	41.0%	42.6%
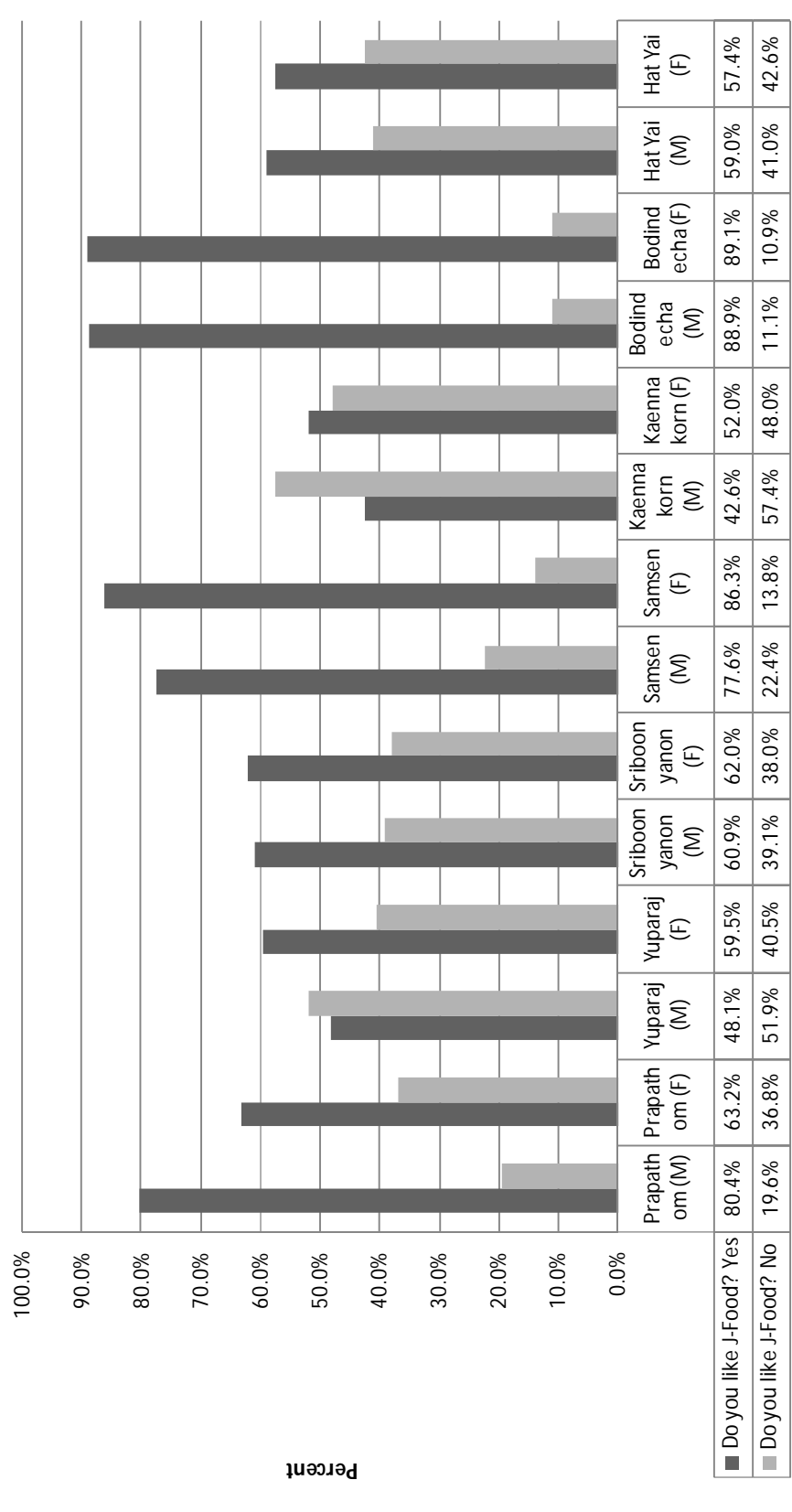
Table 3.6: Correlation – [How often J-Food] * [School]		How often J-Food?	School
How often J-Food?	Pearson Correlation	1	0.098(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.013
	N	647	647
Region (School)	Pearson Correlation	0.098(*)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.013	
	N	647	677
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			
NB: School also means "region" in this research.			
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.			

Manga and Animation

When I was working at IPST in Bangkok, my supervisor was an energetic Thai woman with a doctorate degree from a US university. When I first met her in 2003, she was a person with a good sense of humor and she tried to give me the nickname *Nobita*. *Nobita* is the name of the character in the manga & anime story *Doraemon*. *Doraemon* is "Fujiko F. Fujio's comical story of a robot cat who lives with a bumbling young elementary school boy." (Schodt 1996) That bumbling boy's name is *Nobita*.

Since my first name also starts with "Nob," she might have thought it would be a good idea to give me a nickname which was easy to remember. About a week later, she apologized to me for calling me *Nobita* because somebody had told her that in the story *Nobita* is a coward and dull boy and that it might be insulting to call me *Nobita*. In the story of *Doraemon*, the super cat robot *Doraemon* always helps *Nobita* to get over crises. But *Nobita* is actually an ordinary 10-year-old boy that you can probably find anywhere in the world and I did not mind the nickname at all. What impressed me about in this incident was discovering that *Doraemon* had already penetrated Thailand so deeply as to let a high-ranking government official with a doctorate degree, like my supervisor, know the names of the characters in *Doraemon*.

Figure 3.3 is a graph created from the results of the question "Do you like Japanese comic books?" cross tabulated with school (region). In total (not shown in the graph), 67.5% of the students answered "Yes" to the question. In 4 schools, it exceeds 70%; the 3 schools are in the central region and one is in the south region. This difference among regions may be explained by the availability of Japanese comic books to the students. Until the early 1990s, most Japanese manga in Thailand were pirated editions. But currently, Thai publishers purchase licenses from Japanese publishers and they translate Japanese manga into the Thai language. The Thai-version Japanese manga are sold at bookstores throughout the nation, however, the accessibility to bookstores that sell Japanese manga books probably differs according to the region in which the students live.

Figure 3.3: Do you like Manga?

	Prapath om (M)	Prapath om (F)	Yuparaj (M)	Yuparaj (F)	Sriboon yanon (M)	Sriboon yanon (F)	Samsen (M)	Samsen (F)	Kaennak orn (M)	Kaennak orn (F)	Bodinde cha (M)	Bodinde cha (F)	Hat Yai (M)	Hat Yai (F)
Comics Yes	54.9%	55.3%	55.8%	69.0%	87.0%	67.6%	69.4%	78.8%	59.6%	68.0%	61.1%	76.4%	69.2%	74.5%
Comics No	33.3%	36.8%	32.7%	26.2%	4.3%	28.2%	22.4%	12.5%	23.4%	28.0%	33.3%	16.4%	20.5%	14.9%
Comics Never Read	11.8%	7.9%	11.5%	4.8%	8.7%	4.2%	8.2%	8.8%	17.0%	4.0%	5.6%	7.3%	10.3%	10.6%

Percent
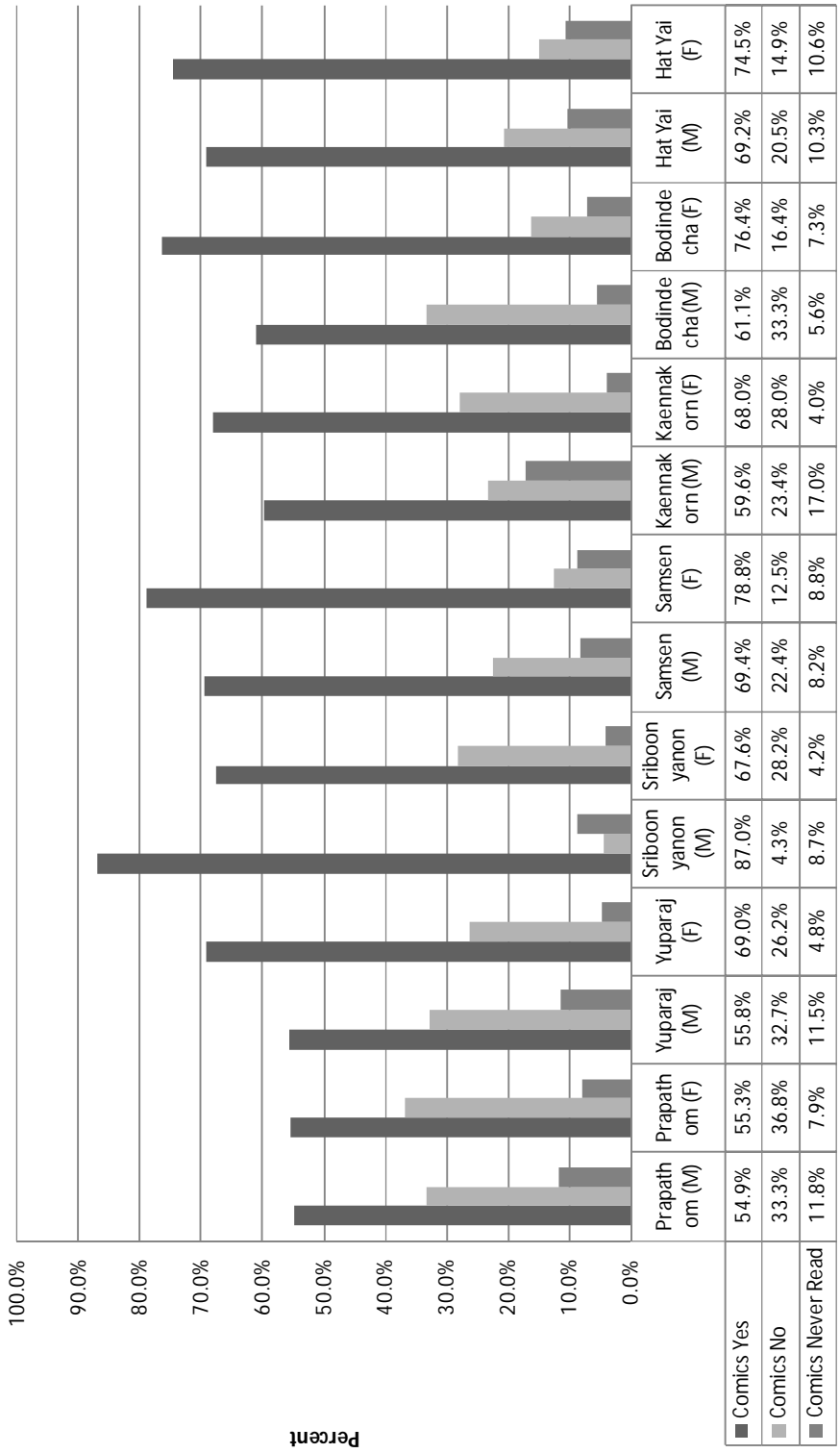
Compared to the results on manga, a slightly different result is found in Figure 3.4 where more than 75% of the students in all seven schools answered "Yes" to the question "Do you like Japanese animation?" In total, 87.7% of all students like Japanese animation. (Table 3.7) The popularity of the Japanese animation, with little difference in percentage by region, may be derived from the accessibility to the media through television. The popularity of animation, moreover, is not limited to TV; character merchandizing such as making stationery, clothes, and toys with animation characters also make these characters popular in, thus creating the cycle of popularity. For example, if children like *Doraemon*, the character goods with *Doraemon* are supplied in the market. If you often see the character goods of *Doraemon* around you, you will get to know *Doraemon* and you may be interested in watching the animation. Many of the character goods do not have appropriate licenses from the copyright holders; they are pirated versions of the items. Piracy of copyright in Thailand is a serious legal and economic issue but the abundance of J-animation character goods has been brought about by piracy.

Figure 3.4: Do you like J-Animation?

	Prapathom (M)	Prapathom (F)	Yuparaj (M)	Yuparaj (F)	Sriboonyanon (M)	Sriboonyanon (F)	Samsen (M)	Samsen (F)	Kaennakorn (M)	Kaennakorn (F)	Bodindecha (M)	Bodindecha (F)	Hat Yai (M)	Hat Yai (F)
TV animation Yes	92.2%	89.5%	84.6%	90.5%	95.7%	85.7%	91.8%	91.3%	89.4%	88.0%	77.8%	81.5%	76.9%	88.9%
TV animation No	7.8%	10.5%	13.5%	7.1%	4.3%	12.9%	6.1%	7.5%	10.6%	8.0%	16.7%	11.1%	17.9%	6.7%
TV animation Never Seen	0	0	1.9%	2.4%	0.0%	1.4%	2.0%	1.3%	0.0%	4.0%	5.6%	7.4%	5.1%	4.4%

Percent
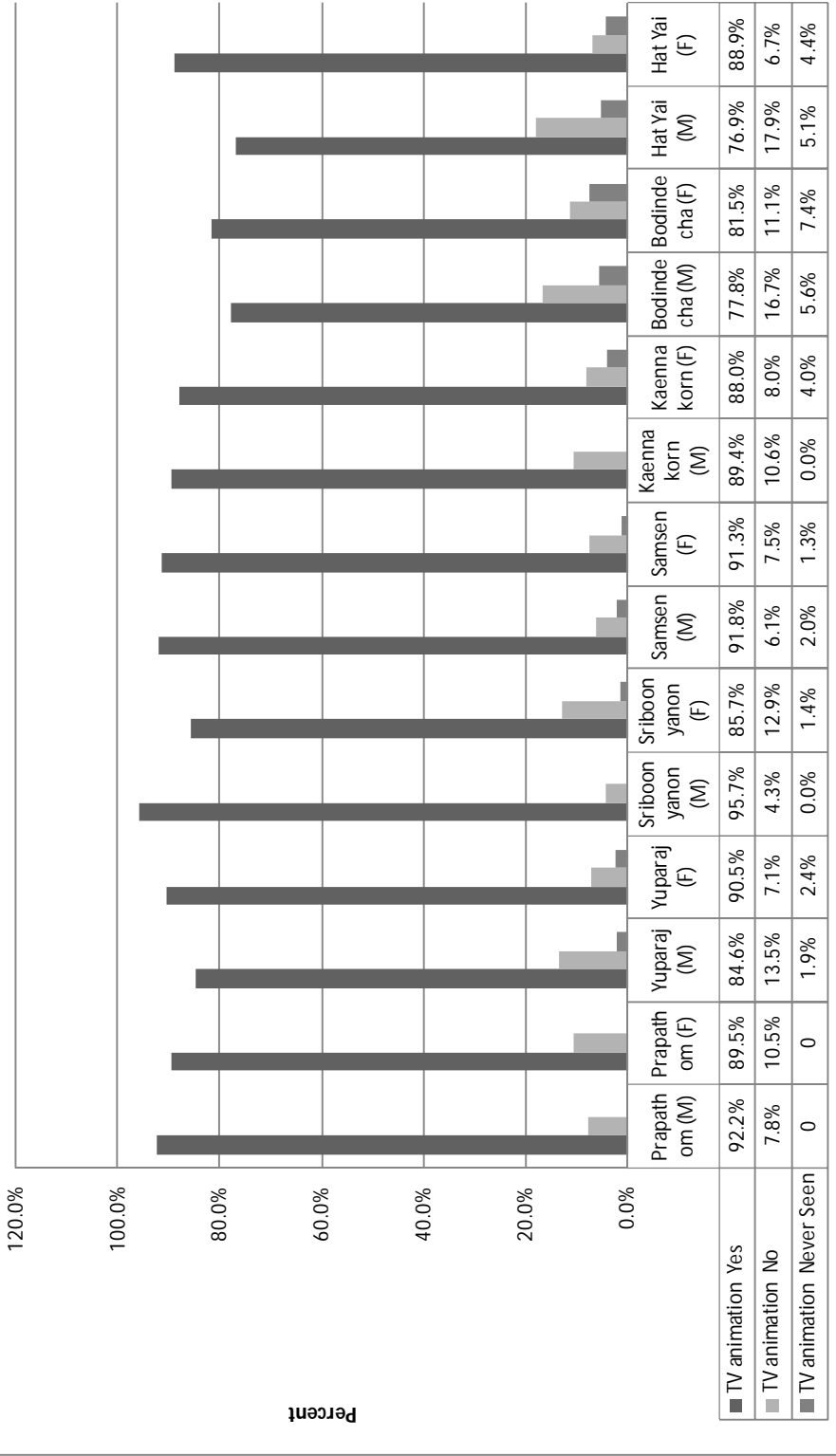
Table 3.7: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [TV animation]						
			TV animation			Total
			No	Yes	Never Seen	
Sex	Male	Count	30	244	5	279
		% within Sex	10.8%	87.5%	1.8%	100.0%
		% within TV animation	46.2%	42.3%	31.3%	42.4%
	Female	Count	35	333	11	379
		% within Sex	9.2%	87.9%	2.9%	100.0%
		% within TV animation	53.8%	57.7%	68.8%	57.6%
Total		Count	65	577	16	658
		% within Sex	9.9%	87.7%	2.4%	100.0%
		% within TV animation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Total N = 677   Missing = 19   Valid N = 658

Question: Do you like Japanese animation?

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

J-POP (J-Music)

There are several J-POP shops in the Siam Square area and one of the oldest and most established is *Tateshina* (pseudonym). Inside the shop, many CDs, cassette tapes, DVDs, and idol books are displayed. In the showcases, small character goods of Japanese pop idols are displayed and on the wall, posters, photos and calendars of J-POP stars are displayed.   At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon on weekdays, you can find secondary school female students in school uniforms browsing various kinds of character goods of Japanese pop idols in the shop.   On weekends, the shop is filled with teenage women and sometimes they become friends by meeting at the shop and creating fan communities.

In Thailand, a regular album CD is sold for 499 baht and a single CD is 299 baht. Lately, some album CD titles are manufactured in South East Asia under a license of the Japanese music publisher.   The local publishers, then, duplicate the CDs

in the manufacturing facilities in South East Asian and they are sold in Thailand for 499 bahts as the other Thai CDs. But at *Tateshina*, they can also buy imported CDs of J-POP idols but the price is considerably high for Thai secondary school students. For example, if it is an album CD of list price 3,000 Yen, (approx. 1,000 Baht) in Japan, the CD will be sold for 1,800 Baht in Siam Square. Although the price is much more expensive, some claim that the imported ones are better in terms of the quality of printing the booklets, the case and the packaging.

Figure 3.5: Japanese CD Shop in Siam Square.
February 25, 2006. Photo by author.

Figure 3.6: The CD Shelf in the Japanese CD Shop.
February 25, 2006. Photo by author.

Most of the fans of J-POP music are also fans of J-POP idols. Especially, male idol groups from the talent agency, *Johnny & Associates,* such as *Johnny's Junior*, *Arashi*, *Kat-Tun*, and *Tackey & Tsubasa* are very popular in Thailand and young Thais are organizing "fan clubs" in Thailand to exchange information and organize fan club activities. (Lersakvanitchakul 2003, October 14)

Table 3.8 shows that 36.2% of all female students answered "Yes" to the question "Do you like J-POP music?" while 17.6% of male students said "Yes." In total, 28.3% of the students say they like J-POP but 58.6% say they don't like it. Compared to manga and animation, these numbers show that J-POP is not very popular among Thai students and has not become part of the Thai pop culture, rather, it is a subculture.

Table 3.8: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [J-Music]						
			J-Music			Total
			No	Yes	Never Listened	
Sex	Male	Count	190	49	40	279
		% within Sex	68.1%	17.6%	14.3%	100.0%
	Female	Count	197	138	46	381
		% within Sex	51.7%	36.2%	12.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	387	187	86	660
		% within Sex	58.6%	28.3%	13.0%	100.0%
Total N = 677 Missing = 17 Valid N = 660						
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.						

To see the details of the spread of J-POP music, Figure 3.7 shows a graph of the cross-tabulation of the result with sex and school. As shown in the graph, fondness toward J-POP varies considerably according to school (region). In the figure, the percentage for female students of *Bodindecha* secondary school is noteworthy. Despite the total average of 28.3%, 61.8% of the female students say they like J-POP

music.   The result of the questionnaire cannot provide an explanation for this but since the school is located near Siam Square, the students of *Bodindecha* are assumed to have very good access to J-POP music shops.   It may be possible, therefore, if some students start listening to J-POP music and if other students become interested in it, they can easily explore J-POP music shops to find out more about it.

In the questionnaire, I also asked "Do you know w-inds.?"   Unlike Johnny's idol groups, "w-inds." has never come to Thailand and their exposure in the media is limited in Thailand.   Even in Japan, we don't have much chance to see "w-inds." on TV; consequently, I did not expect the students to know "w-inds."   Nevertheless, 33% of female and 14.8% of male students said they know "w-inds."   In total, 25.3 %, that is one out of four students, know "w-inds.," which is surprising.   From the result, I could assume that, in the everyday life of secondary school students, ordinary Thai students also have chances to see J-POP idols in the media which feature Japanese idols.

Figure 3.7: Do you like J-Music?

	Prapath om (M)	Prapath om (F)	Yuparaj (M)	Yuparaj (F)	Sriboon yanon (M)	Sriboon yanon (F)	Samsen (M)	Samsen (F)	Kaennak orn (M)	Kaennak orn (F)	Bodinde cha (M)	Bodinde cha (F)	Hat Yai (M)	Hat Yai (F)
J-Music Yes	15.7%	40.5%	19.2%	50.0%	8.7%	17.1%	24.5%	32.5%	14.9%	28.0%	22.2%	61.8%	15.4%	34.0%
J-Music No	68.6%	48.6%	69.2%	40.5%	78.3%	70.0%	61.2%	51.3%	66.0%	60.0%	66.7%	32.7%	71.8%	51.1%
J-Music Never Listened	15.7%	10.8%	11.5%	9.5%	13.0%	12.9%	14.3%	16.3%	19.1%	12.0%	11.1%	5.5%	12.8%	14.9%

Percent

73

J-TV Programs (Japanese TV Programs)

One day in 2002, when I was staying in Bangkok, I wanted to exchange yen to Thai baht so I went to a bank window at a *BTS Skytrain* station with one of my old friends who used to study in Japan.   When my turn came at the window, the female clerk of the bank asked my friend in Thai if I am Japanese as she was processing my request for money exchange.   According to my friend's translation, the bank clerk said, "I always watch *TV champion*!   I really love that program very much."

TV champion is a title of a variety show which has been broadcast by TV Tokyo in Japan.   Each week, there was a theme and the program tried to find the best expert in a certain genre and several contestants to show their expertise in the genre. For instance, if the theme of the week was the instant noodle, the contestants were asked to identify the brand of the instant noodles during a blind tasting.   Although I knew the title of the program, in fact, I had never watched the program before.   But later on, I have found that the program was one of the most popular Japanese TV programs in Thailand.

Figure 3.8: Do you like J-Drama?

	Prapath om (M)	Prapath om (F)	Yuparaj (M)	Yuparaj (F)	Sriboon yanon (M)	Sriboon yanon (F)	Samsen (M)	Samsen (F)	Kaennak orn (M)	Kaennak orn (F)	Bodinde cha (M)	Bodinde cha (F)	Hat Yai (M)	Hat Yai (F)
TV drama Yes	60.8%	81.6%	57.7%	81.0%	43.5%	60.0%	42.9%	66.3%	48.9%	78.0%	33.3%	67.3%	41.0%	67.4%
TV drama No	29.4%	13.2%	36.5%	16.7%	39.1%	32.9%	42.9%	26.3%	44.7%	22.0%	44.4%	18.2%	48.7%	26.1%
TV drama Never Seen	9.8%	5.3%	5.8%	2.4%	17.4%	7.1%	14.3%	7.5%	6.4%	0.0%	22.2%	14.5%	10.3%	6.5%

75
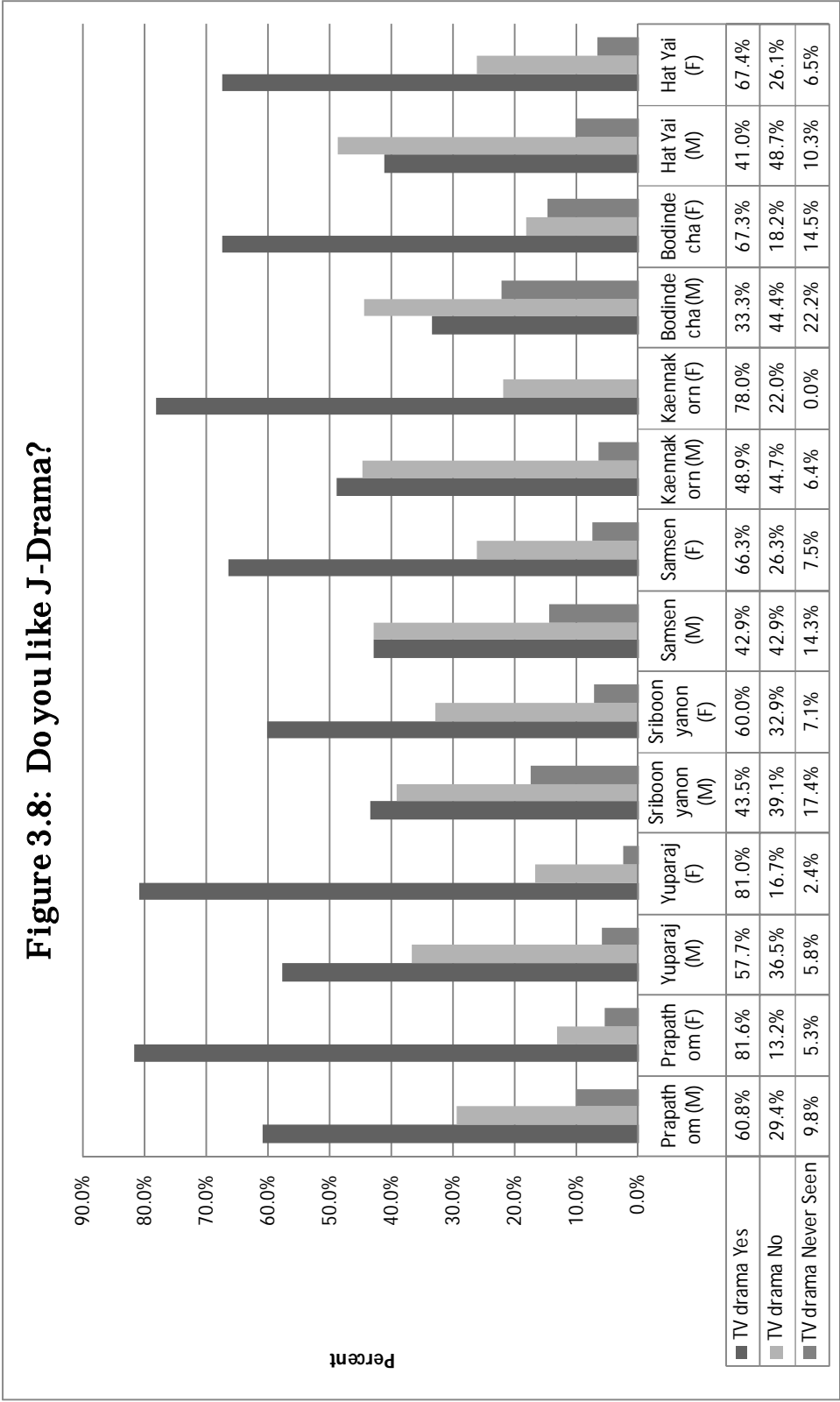
Table 3.9: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [TV drama]						
			TV drama			Total
			No	Yes	Never Seen	
Sex	Male	Count	112	137	30	279
		% within Sex	40.1%	49.1%	10.8%	100.0%
	Female	Count	89	267	25	381
		% within Sex	23.4%	70.1%	6.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	201	404	55	660
		% within Sex	30.5%	61.2%	8.3%	100.0%
Total N = 677 Missing = 17 Valid N = 660						
Question: Do you like Japanese TV drama?						
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.						

In the questionnaire research, I asked 2 questions about TV programs.   Figure 3.9 and Table 3.9 present the results of the question "Do you like Japanese TV drama?" The fondness for Japanese TV drama is 61.2% in total; the highest is 81.6% among the female students of *Prapathom Wittayalai*.   On the other hand, 48.7% of the male students at *Hat Yai Wittayalai* say "No" to a liking of Japanese drama.   In all seven schools, the percentages of female students who say "Yes" are higher than those of male students.   The difference between male and female is 21 points, which is a considerably significant tendency.

Figure 3.9: Do you like Other J-TV Program?

	Prapath om (M)	Prapath om (F)	Yuparaj (M)	Yuparaj (F)	Sriboon yanon (M)	Sriboon yanon (F)	Samsen (M)	Samsen (F)	Kaenna korn (M)	Kaenna korn (F)	Bodind echa (M)	Bodind echa (F)	Hat Yai (M)	Hat Yai (F)
Other TV programs Yes	58.8%	68.4%	57.7%	81.0%	39.1%	49.3%	61.2%	73.8%	57.4%	78.0%	55.6%	81.5%	60.5%	74.5%
Other TV programs No	31.4%	23.7%	28.8%	9.5%	52.2%	35.2%	22.4%	12.5%	25.5%	12.0%	27.8%	7.4%	28.9%	14.9%
Other TV programs Never Seen	9.8%	7.9%	13.5%	9.5%	8.7%	15.5%	16.3%	13.8%	17.0%	10.0%	16.7%	11.1%	10.5%	10.6%

Percent

Table 3.10: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [Other TV programs]						
			Other TV programs			Total
			No	Yes	Never Seen	
Sex	Male	Count	82	159	37	278
		% within Sex	29.5%	57.2%	13.3%	100.0%
	Female	Count	65	272	45	382
		% within Sex	17.0%	71.2%	11.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	147	431	82	660
		% within Sex	22.3%	65.3%	12.4%	100.0%

Total N = 677   Missing = 17   Valid N = 660

Question: Do you like Japanese TV pgormas [Except animations and dramas]?

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Another type of TV program is called "variety" genre in Japan.   In Figure 3.9 and Table 3.10, the results to the question "Do you like Japanese TV programs? (Except animation and drama)" are shown.   In total, 65.3% of the students say "Yes" which is slightly higher than the percentage for drama.   The difference in percentages between male and female students is 14.0 points.   Although this number is smaller than that of drama, the tendency that female students show higher percentages persists.

In the 1980s, some television companies in Japan started to promote exportation of TV programs to foreign countries but the purpose was to promote the cultural exchange and to provide programs as services for the Japanese people who lived in foreign countries.   In the early 1990s, however, Japanese television companies have started to seek new ways to boost their sales by selling programs to foreign countries, especially in Asia, after the collapse of the Japanese bubble economy.   In case of TV Asahi, for example, it was 1998 when TV Asahi started to provide programs in earnest to stations such as UBC (Cable TV), Channel 7 and ITV.   Thailand is the second biggest market of TV programs for TV Asahi. (Personal communication 2005, October 2)

The students who participated in my research should have watched more Japanese TV programs in their adolescence than their parents' did a few decades ago. By watching Japanese programs, such as dramas, game shows, animations and variety programs, they have seen many aspects of the Japanese culture through the media, which stimulates their curiosity to learn more about the country. The more they know about Japan, therefore, the more they consume Japanese cultural products.

Discussions

Correlations between Variables

Reviewing each Japanese cultural product with some empirical data, we can see how they are received by young Thai people with some background information about the social environment. To see the overall image of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, however, it is better to see the correlations between the cultural products. For this purpose, I have calculated the correlations between the variables, which include the SES (socio-economic status) and JFP (Japan Fondness Point) indices that I devised for this analysis. It is not my intention to make this chapter a quantitative analysis but the correlation table may give us some interesting insights for understanding the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand.

In Table 3.11, we can immediately notice that SES and JFP have a correlation (Pearson Correlation = 0.122). Although the correlation of the variables is not very strong, "liking Japan" and the economic situations of the students correlate. This suggests that the middle and upper classes of the Thai society are more interested in Japanese cultural products than the lower class and the cultural products may be more

likely to be consumed by the middle and upper classes. But if we look at the correlations of SES with other variables, SES has significant correlations with Japanese fashion (wearing J-Fashion) and Japanese food but not with manga, animation, TV programs and music. An exception is that SES does not have a significant correlation with "liking J-Fashion" as it does not require money to "like J-Fashion." As we have already seen in the previous section, 64.7% of the students (73.9% of female students) said they like J-Fashion but only 1.8% of the students said they wear J-Fashion always or often. This may mean that there are many students who like J-Fashion but they cannot afford to buy J-Fashion clothes or they don't have chances to wear them.

The table also shows that JFP has significant correlations with J-Fashion and J-Food. No exceptions can be found in the case of JFP. This means the students who like J-Fashion or J-Food tend to like Japan while the students who like manga, animation, TV programs and music do not necessarily like Japan.

By looking at the table more closely, we can see that the variables of the cultural products can be divided into two groups; Group 1 – fashion and food, Group 2 – manga, animation, TV programs and music. It is very interesting to note that the correlations between variables in a group are considerably significant while the variables between different groups do not have significant correlations. Furthermore, if we compare the two groups, we can see some differences between the groups.

Table 3.11: Correlations

		SES Point	Japan Fondness Point	Do you like J-Fashion?	Do you wear J-Fashion?	Do you like J-Food?	How often J-Food?	TV animation	Manga	TV drama	Other TV programs	J-Music
SES Point	Pearson Correlation	1	0.122**	0.056	0.100**	0.205**	0.293**	0.040	-0.059	0.046	0.045	-0.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.032	0.146	0.010	0.000	0.000	0.297	0.129	0.240	0.245	0.727
	N	669	310	668	665	669	639	665	669	667	667	667
Japan Fondness Point	Pearson Correlation	0.122**	1	0.386**	0.244**	0.131*	0.252**	-0.024	-0.085	0.010	0.023	-0.019
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.032		0.000	0.000	0.021	0.000	0.676	0.134	0.857	0.687	0.733
	N	310	312	311	311	312	299	310	312	311	311	310
Do you like J-Fashion?	Pearson Correlation	0.056	0.386**	1	0.353**	0.160**	0.200**	-0.057	-0.046	-0.010	0.065	-0.012
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.146	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.138	0.235	0.794	0.090	0.748
	N	668	311	675	671	675	645	671	675	673	673	673
Do you wear J-Fashion?	Pearson Correlation	0.100**	0.244**	0.353**	1	0.206**	0.306**	-0.028	-0.094*	-0.011	-0.046	-0.013
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.010	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.476	0.015	0.781	0.236	0.734
	N	665	311	671	673	673	644	669	673	671	671	671
Do you like J-Food?	Pearson Correlation	0.205**	0.131*	0.160**	0.206**	1	0.461**	-0.083*	0.011	0.048	-0.014	-0.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.021	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.032	0.774	0.211	0.725	0.786
	N	669	312	675	673	677	647	673	677	675	675	675
How often J-Food?	Pearson Correlation	0.293**	0.252**	0.200**	0.306**	0.461**	1	-0.014	-0.052	0.045	-0.028	-0.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.729	0.190	0.252	0.483	0.550
	N	639	299	645	644	647	647	643	647	645	645	645
TV animation	Pearson Correlation	0.040	-0.024	-0.057	-0.028	-0.083*	-0.014	1	0.081*	0.226**	0.054	0.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.297	0.676	0.138	0.476	0.032	0.729		0.036	0.002	0.164	0.570
	N	665	310	671	669	673	643	673	673	673	671	671
Manga	Pearson Correlation	-0.059	-0.085	-0.046	-0.094*	0.011	-0.052	0.081*	1	0.116**	0.105**	0.144**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.129	0.134	0.235	0.015	0.774	0.190	0.036		0.002	0.006	0.000
	N	669	312	675	673	677	647	673	677	675	675	675
TV drama	Pearson Correlation	0.046	0.010	-0.010	-0.011	0.048	0.045	0.226**	0.116**	1	0.180**	0.238**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.240	0.857	0.794	0.781	0.211	0.252	0.000	0.002		0.000	0.000
	N	667	311	673	671	675	645	673	675	675	673	673
Other TV programs	Pearson Correlation	0.045	0.023	0.065	-0.046	-0.014	-0.028	0.054	0.105**	0.180**	1	0.163**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.245	0.687	0.090	0.236	0.725	0.483	0.164	0.006	0.000		0.000
	N	667	311	673	671	675	645	671	675	673	675	673
J-Music	Pearson Correlation	-0.014	-0.019	-0.012	-0.013	-0.010	-0.024	0.022	0.144**	0.238**	0.163**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.727	0.733	0.748	0.734	0.786	0.550	0.570	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	667	310	673	671	675	645	671	675	673	673	675

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

As we have already seen, Group 1 has correlation with SES and JFP and the prices of these Japanese cultural products are higher than the counterparts in Thai products. It is also interesting to note that the cultural products of Group 1 are usually consumed outside of home and can be seen as part of modern urban lifestyle. (Figure 3.10) For secondary school students, the cultural products of Group 1 are the products that they consume with their parents and not students alone. As it is a part of modern lifestyle, these cultural products are consumed by a unit of family when the students are in the adolescence.

On the other hand, the cultural products that consists Group 2 are so called "entertainment contents" which are usually distributed by media, such as books, television or CDs. These cultural products are not correlated with SES and JFP and the prices of them are no different from the counterparts in Thai products. They are considered as a part of mass culture and mostly consumed at home. I assume that the students consume these entertainment contents because it is fun to consume the contents, and not because they came from Japan. Since they are consumed at home and the prices are not expensive even for the allowances of secondary school students, the students are free to consume them according to the individual interests.

In the discussion of the popularity of Japanese TV Programs and J-POP in Asia and globalization, Iwabuchi points out the "odorlessness" of Japanese cultural products. (Iwabuchi 1998, 2002) Professor Surichai Wun'geo of *Chulalongkorn University* also said "my generation (of Thais) cannot eat *Sashimi* but all college students today know *Sashimi*. They know *Sailor Moon* and *Keroppi on the Lily Pad* very well. But these do not relate to understanding the language and country of Japan." (Wun'geo 1998) (n.b. *Sailor Moon* "Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon" is one of the most popular manga stories

for girls created by Naoko Takeuchi and *Keroppi* is a character created by Sanrio Co. Ltd. which also produced characters such as *Hello Kitty* and *Badtz-Maru*.) Although Japanese cultural products naturally reflect Japanese culture and they may not be "odorless" in reality, the audience does not necessarily find the "Japanese-ness" embedded in the Japanese entertainment content which may appear culturally neutral.
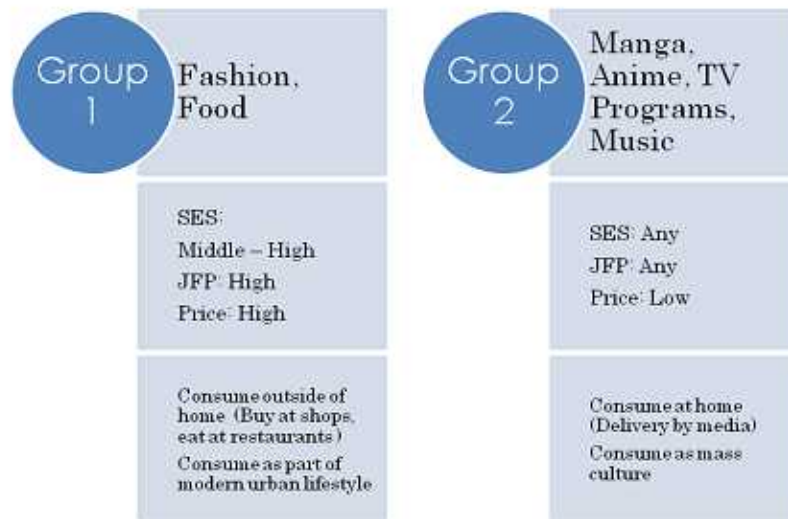
Figure 3.10: Two Types of Japanese Cultural Products

Scholars in media and cultural studies focus on the cultural products of Group 2 and they tend to overlook Group 1. From the table, it can be said that the students like Japanese fashion or food, that is, Group 1 items, because they came from Japan. With this correlation table alone, we cannot determine whether "liking Japan" is an independent variable or a dependent variable in the correlation. But the table shows that Japanese cultural products can be grouped by the attitudes of the young Thai people

toward the groups or cultural products and the meaning of each cultural product differs.

Attraction of Japanese Cultural Products

There are four factors, in my observation, that intrigue the young Thai people into the consumption of Japanese cultural products. First, "cultural similarity" plays an important role to make Thai people comfortable when they consume Japanese cultural products. In media studies, the notion of "cultural proximity" is used to explain the behavior where an audience prefers media which has cultural similarity with them. For instance, the people in Hong Kong prefer TV programs of Taiwan and China over Japanese because they use the same language and they are the same ethnic group. In case of the relation between Thailand and Japan, language is very different and Thailand is a multi-ethnic country and yet the cultural similarity can be found in the social values and virtues. Some of my Thai informants told me that Buddhism, politeness, kindness, and respect for elderly people are cultural values that Thailand and Japan have in common. Although these images may be stereotypical, many Thai people believe that Thailand and Japan have "cultural similarity."

The second factor is the influence of media. As we have seen in manga, animation and TV programs, various kinds of media bring the image of Japan to Thailand. Manga and animation tend to give outdated or futuristic images of Japan and they may differ from the real life of most Japanese. For instance, the lifestyle which is delineated in *Doraemon* might be that of a few decades ago and we still don't have a cat robot that can help us overcome crises. On the other hand, in dramas, the modern lifestyle of young people in Tokyo is often delineated, which is also the lifestyle that young Japanese are longing for. By receiving all kinds of images from the media,

young Thai people create their own image of Japan and they feel closeness to Japanese lifestyle, which may lead them to consume Japanese cultural products.

The third factor is the traffic of the Japanese people. Today, many Japanese manufacturers have factories and offices in Thailand and hundreds of Japanese are working at these places. These factories are usually built outside of the metropolitan area and many Thais are working at Japanese companies including at the offices in Bangkok. By working together with Japanese, they will learn the characteristics of the Japanese. Moreover, today, the number of Japanese tourists who visit Thailand is more than one million every year while tourists from the USA are less than half in number. (Thailand Stats 2004) The Japanese tourists visit provincial cities as well as major tourism sites so the people in provincial areas also have a chance to meet with Japanese. Harumi Befu points out that human dispersal as one of the factors in the discussion of Japan's globalization and he discusses the importance of the presence of Japanese people as "sojourners" in other countries. (Befu 2001)

The fourth factor is Japanese industrial products. For example, television sets, CD players, video decks, DVD players, refrigerators, motorcycles, cars, and trucks; many of these industrial products carry logos of Japanese manufacturers and the young Thai people have been familiar with them since they were born. With these products in everyday life, they think Japan is a country of advanced technology and Japanese people are industrious.

In suggesting that the above four factors play significant roles, I rest my case on three contemporary environmental influences. First, the development of the Internet helped young Thai people to obtain information about Japan instantly. For instance, if a new CD of J-POP music is released today in Japan, they will know it and

they are listening to the music through the Internet. No one can control the traffic of information through the Internet. In 1994, there were about 23,000 Internet users in Thailand but in 2004, the number increased to 6,970,000. (NECTEC 2004) At secondary schools, the student to computer ratio (number of students per 1 PC) is 24 (NECTEC 2005) and it may be difficult for the students to use school computers to get information on entertainment. But these days, there are many Internet cafes on the streets and many of them spend hours of time playing Internet games and browsing web sites at cafes. It is an era when people who live in a city which is 4,600 km away from Tokyo can know about a new shop in Tokyo. By clicking a mouse, they can get the latest information on electronic products, fashion, idols, and more from Japan. Internet technology changed the standard of information accessibility and it will stimulate young people for more consumption of cultural products.

Second, media companies of both Japan and Thailand played important roles in promoting Japanese cultural products. During the decade of the 1990s, the Japanese media has boosted overseas sales. In addition to TV media, manga has been released legally during the past decade and Thai publishers have also enthusiastically promoted manga to Thai consumers. Unfortunately, I could not cover the issue of video games in this paper but I consider video games as, in a sense, a mixed medium of manga and animation and it is interesting to note that the game boom also started in the early 1990s. In 1994, Sony Computer Entertainment released the video game "PlayStation" and in the twinkling of an eye, it has spread all over the world, including to Thailand. In Thailand, each manga publisher organizes events around manga, animation or J-ROCK, *kosupure* and many young fans participate in such events. *Kosupure* ("cosplay") literally means "costume play." Enthusiasts of manga, animation, or games, who are

often referred to as *otaku*, participate in the events of manga, animation or J-ROCK in the costumes of the characters of manga, animation or games. They enjoy playing their favorite characters at events. Some of these activities, such as *kosupure* and *doujinshi* (privately published magazine "fanzine" of manga and novels sold at otaku events or by limited distribution), are not considered to be part of popular culture but they are subcultures of Japan that young Thai people have already started to consume.

Third, the rapid growth of the Thai economy from the 1990s created a middle class in the society. The personal income of the people in Thailand in 1990 doubled by 2000 and the disposable income has also increased drastically during the past few decades. (cf. Figure 3.11) The more they have disposable income, the more they consume products in the market. The rise of the middle class in Thailand is, therefore, related to the increased consumption of Japanese cultural products. In the discussion of Indonesia's importation of Japanese animation and its popularity, Shiraishi points out "In other Asian countries, as in Indonesia, economic growth has given birth to a consumer class living modern, urban lifestyles that increasingly resemble those portrayed in Japanese manga and animation. Many prevalent themes, including children's empowerment and technological optimism, find rich soil in Asia's developing countries as well." (Shiraishi 2000) The social and economic development of Asia, including Thailand, is the key factor in the rapid increase in consumption of Japanese cultural products.

Figure 3.11: Personal Income and Its Disposition

Source: National Income of Thailand 1980-2008
National Economic and Social Development Board (2009)
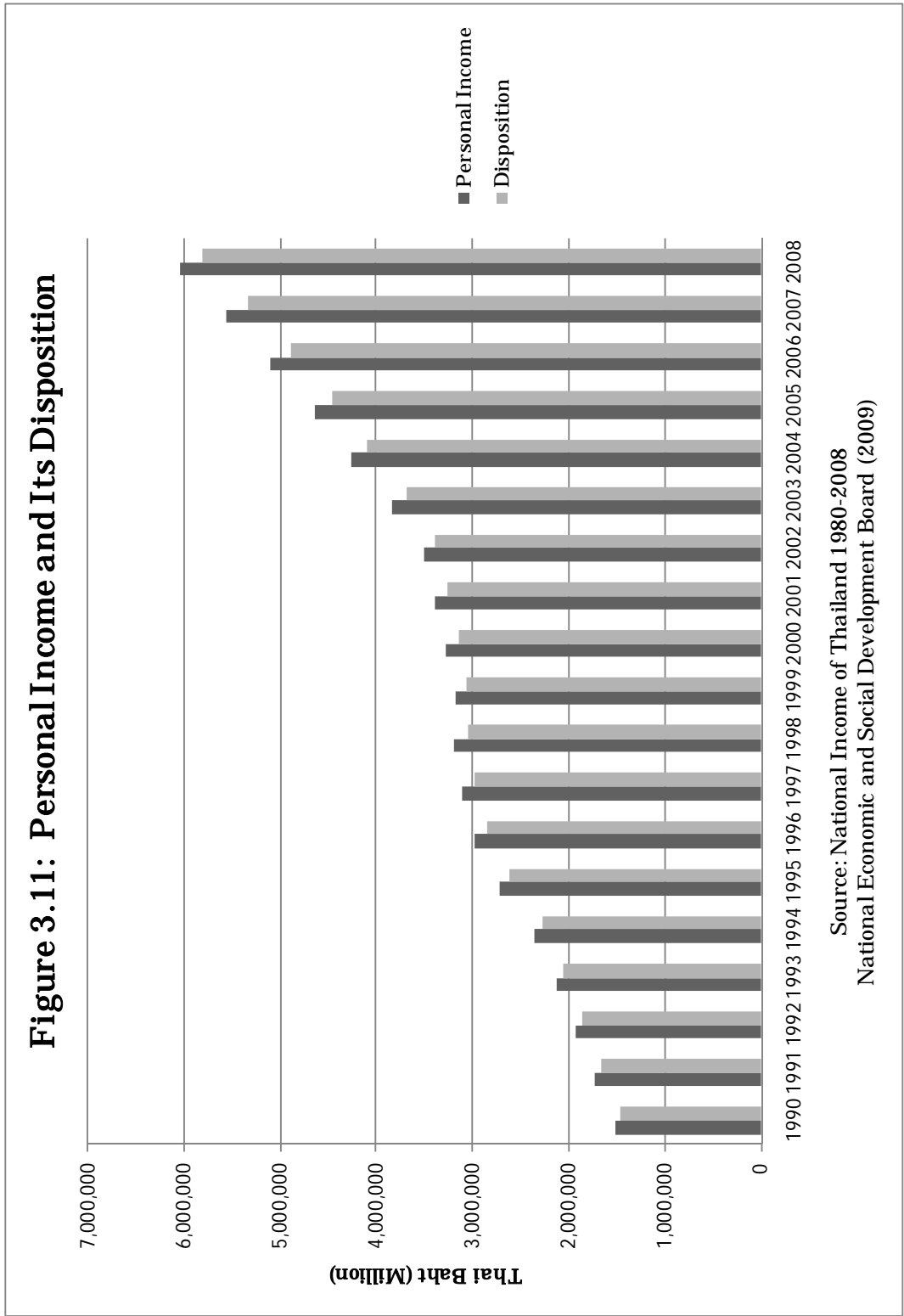
Concluding Remarks

By examining each Japanese cultural product, it seems too hasty to put all the Japanese cultural products into one category called "Japanese Pop Culture" to be explained by the globalization theory. In addition to the globalization theory, each cultural product seems to have different factors that enhance and promote its popularity and two or more cultural products relate and stimulate each other to attract the young Thai people. The Japanese pop culture is not solid like a monolith but it is a mosaic or stained glass window in which each fragment is sparkling with a different color to catch the eyes of the people. Each fragment is being developed differently but they appear to synchronize to create a wave of Japanese culture spreading across Asia.

In this chapter, we have seen the Japanese cultural products that intrigue the Thai youth and we have discussed some underlying bases and the environment of Thai society that support consumption of the cultural products. Since the ratio of the Japanese major students in the respondents was only 2.4% (cf., Table 3.2), the respondents were not considered to have any predisposition to favor Japanese products. It is important to note, therefore, the results of the questionnaire showed considerable interests in consuming various kinds of Japanese cultural products, which have proved the popularity of the Japanese cultural products among the Thai youth.

Another finding that the questionnaire research has revealed about the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand was that female secondary students tend to consume more Japanese cultural products than male students. Although there are many male student consumers in various Japanese cultural products, the percentages of female students exceed in most cases. The reasons for the gender difference in consumption behaviors could not be sought in this research but it

suggested that the young female is playing the leading part in consumption of Japanese

cultural products in Thailand, which is hoped to be analyzed in the future studies.

Chapter Four

Ethnography – J-Pop Fan Club in Bangkok

Consumption of Japanese Cultural Products by J-Pop Fans

Many scholars of cultural studies and media studies (Shiraishi 1997; Iwabuchi 1998, 2002; Shiraishi 2000; Ishii 2001) have discussed the prevalence of Japanese popular culture in Asian countries.   The majority of these studies are based on the observations of media distributors such as manga, animation, TV programs and popular music icons, which encompass the whole of the East or Southeast Asia region.   There are some case studies about the consumption of Japanese popular culture in East Asian countries, such as Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the PRC (Ishii 2001; Kohari 2001; Ogawa 2001; Nakano 2002; Sakai 2004) but J-Pop (Japanese popular music) is one of the topics studied by few scholars as a barometer of Japanese popular culture abroad. (Aoyagi, 2000)

In Thailand, J-Pop is one of the Japanese cultural products which is popular among young Thai people.   The popularity of J-Pop is widespread, as we can see that J-Pop CDs are sold in local CD shops; however, the activities of J-Pop fans are less obvious in terms of the ways the cultural product is consumed.   In this study, I present a case study of the ethnographies of a J-Pop idol group fan club.   Through the ethnographies and analyses of their activities, the consumption of Japanese cultural products such as anime, manga, pop music, and food, among others by Thai youth is

discussed. Rather than taking popular culture as a whole, I have made an effort to observe each cultural product through the eyes of young Thai people who are J-Pop idol fans. These analyses of the inter-relationships between the cultural products will delineate a clearer image of Japanese popular culture in Thailand.

The rest of this chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, the presence of J-Pop idols in Thailand is discussed, with additional information about the status of J-Pop idols in Japan added as a reference. The history and the activities of the J-Pop fan club are summarized in order to understand the purpose of the fan club and to discover the meanings behind the activities they engage in. In section two, the ethnographies of the particular event which was held in April 2007 and events held on other dates are presented as an example of the events of the J-Pop fan club. In the April 2007 event, I videotaped the scene for two hours in order to record the activities and organization of the fan club event. In section three, the content and the result of the questionnaires that I collected from the members of the fan club at the event on April 7, 2007, are briefly explained. Lastly, in section four, some of the issues that emerged from the ethnography and the descriptive findings from the questionnaire are discussed.

Presence of Japanese Pop Idols in Thailand

Johnny's Office vs. Others

Japanese pop idols are relatively well-known among Thai youth. The pop idols of Korea and Taiwan have also become popular in recent years. In the questionnaire research handed to 677 Thai high school students, which I conducted in 2005 to analyze

the popularity of Japanese popular culture among Thai youth, I was surprised to learn that various types of Japanese idols such as J-Pop singers, actors, actresses, models, et cetera, are known by Thai high school students. (Toyoshima 2008)   The idols of "Johnny's Office" (Johnny's Office Co., Ltd.), which is one of the most famous management agents in the Japanese show business, were especially popular among female Thai high school students.   The idols of Johnny's Office often appear in magazines for teenage women in Japan and these magazines are also available in Thailand.   *Morning Musume*, one of the most famous female idol groups in Japan, *Fukada Kyoko* (a prominent young actress), *Hamasaki Ayumi* (a female music artist), and others are also known by both female and male high school students in Thailand. (Tables 4.1 and 4.2)

In Japan, Johnny's Office is particularly well known since it specializes in producing young male idols.   Johnny's Office recruits boys in their early teens from various parts of the country and houses them in its company dormitory to give them special training to become idols.   This successful method of producing male idols resulted in its great presence and success in Japanese show business.   It also exercises strong influence in general over the mass media so that its idols have a greater chance of being seen on various kinds of media than other young male idols who belong to other agents.   *w-inds.*, a Japanese male idol group which many fans in this study support, does not belong to Johnny's Office but to another agent, *Vision Factory,* and the exposure of this group to the mass media is limited in comparison to the exposure to the idols from Johnny's Office.

Favorite Japanese (Individuals)		
Rank	Name	genre/group (agent)
1	Fukada Kyoko	actress
2	Takizawa Hideaki	actor/singer, Tackey & Tsubasa (Johnnys)
3	Koshinaka Makoto	Lucifer
4	Utada Hikaru	female singer
5	Kaneshiro Takeshi	actor
6	Nagase Tomoya	TOKIO (Johnnys)
7	Yamashita Tomohisa	News (Johnnys)
8	Kimura Takuya	SMAP (Johnnys)
9	Akanishi Jin	KAT-TUN (Johnnys)
10	Kamenashi Kazuya	KAT-TUN (Johnnys)
11	Imai Tsubasa	actor/singer, Tackey & Tsubasa (Johnnys)
12	Matsumoto Jun	Arashi (Johnnys)
13	Boa	female singer (Avex)
14	Hyde	L'arc en ciel
15	Tachibana Keita	w-inds
16	Hamasaki Ayumi	singer (Avex)
17	Horie Yui	voice actoress
18	Sorimachi Takashi	actor
19	Ninomiya Kazunari	Arashi (Johnnys)
20	Hide	X-Japan

Source: Compiled from the questionnare research that I conducted with 700 Thai high school

Table 4.1: Favorite Japanese Individuals -- Thai High School Students

Favorite Japanese Groups		
Rank	Name	Genre/Agent (Date)
1	X-Japan	Rock band (1989 X, 1992-1997 X-Japan)
2	Johnnys' Junior	Johnnys
3	w-inds	Dance & vocal group (2001-)
4	Lucifer (Λucifer)	Rock band (1999-2003)
5	KAT-TUN	Johnnys
6	Lead	
7	L'arc en ciel	Rock band (1991-)
8	Arashi	Johnnys
9	Morning Musume	Hello Project
10	News	Johnnys
11	Ya-Ya- ah	Johnnys TV Program
12	Dir en grey	Rock band (1997-)
13	Tackey & Tsubasa	Johnnys
14	Hello Project	*1
15	Miyabi	Female band
16	Chemistry	singer duo
17	Utchan Nanchan	Comedy Duo
18	Kanjani 8	Johnnys

*1 -- The name of the management agent and the brand name of young female groups and talents

Source: Compiled from the questionnare research that I conducted with 700 Thai high school

Table 4.2: Favorite Japanese Groups -- Thai High School Students

Unofficial Fan Clubs of Japanese Idols

It is interesting to note that Johnny's Office seems to have friendly and cordial relations with the Thai show business industry.   In recent years, some of the idols from Johnny's Office visited Thailand to participate in the International Music Festivals that were held in Bangkok and Pattaya.   The Thai news media broadcast these events, which increased the notoriety of Japanese idols in Thailand. (Lersakvanitchakul 2003, October 14) *Tackey & Tsubasa*, *KAT-TUN*, and *Arashi*, are no strangers to Thai female high school students these days.   Furthermore, Yamashita Tomohisa, the leader of the idol group *News*, and two Thai idols, GOLF and Mike, joined together for a limited time in 2006 to make a mixed Thai-Japanese group.

Before I started this study in 2003, I knew that J-Pop idols were popular in

Thailand and I assumed that there would be "unofficial" fan clubs of Johnny's idols in Thailand. When I interviewed Thai university and high school students, I discovered that there are many groups who try to share information about Japanese idols, especially in the form of homepages or BBSs on the Internet. They call themselves "unofficial" fan clubs. It was much later, towards the end of 2005, that I found out about the existence of some "official" fan clubs for Johnny's idol groups in Thailand, which are managed by a major record company there. According to a newspaper article, there are about 300 members in "Johnny's Junior Fan Club Thailand" which is the "official" fan club of the idol group "Johnny's Junior." (Lersakvanitchakul 2003, October 14)

History of the w-inds. Fan Club in Thailand

The unofficial *w-inds.* fan club in Thailand started from a small homepage that was created by a Thai woman, Meaw (pseudonym). Meaw used to be a big fan of the Japanese rock band, *X Japan*. The band was founded with the name "*X*" in the late 1980s. However it became very popular, not only in Japan but also in other countries, after it changed its name to *X Japan* in 1992. The music style of *X Japan* ranged from heavy metal to ballads to symphonic rock music, and it is known that the former Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro was also a big fan of the band. Meaw especially admired the guitarist, Hide, but the band officially broke up in September 1997, with Hide committing suicide the following year. Meaw told me that, after the death of Hide, she felt empty and subsequently lost interest in Japanese music, so much so that she did not listen to it for a few years.

One day, she went to a CD shop with her friend and came across a VCD of J-Pop music that had been made in Hong Kong. It was a compilation disc of music

promotional videos and Meaw discovered music in which a boy with a more feminine touch was singing in a beautiful soprano voice.   She thought the voice was like a girl's and she loved the music very much.   It was the voice of Tachibana Keita, the lead singer of *w-inds.* (the group name "w-inds." contains a period at the end), and it was the first encounter with *w-inds.* for Meaw (she was 23 years old at the time).   Meaw wanted to know more about *w-inds.,* but she could find little information about the group.   As she started to collect information, she decided to make a homepage about *w-inds.* and so she started her homepage "*Feel to w-inds.*" on January 31, 2002. (Figure 4.1 and Table 4.3)

The homepage *Feel to w-inds.* was displayed both in Thai and English, and soon a lot of young Thai women started to visit it.   Thus, Meaw decided to found a fan club for *w-inds.* and two of her friends joined her in starting it.   In April 2003, her unofficial fan club, *Vivid w-inds.*, started up.   The annual membership fee is 250 Baht (US$7.50).   Members receive a membership card, a birthday card, the password to enter the members' area of the homepage, and four fan club newsletters per year.

During the first year of operation, the number of members grew to 150.   In 2005, when the number reached 500, Meaw decided to stop accepting new members because she thought it was impossible for her to handle more than 500 members.   One of the founding members is able to understand Japanese, so they have been receiving news and information about *w-inds.* through some channels from Japan and translating the information into Thai.   With the advancement and speed of the Internet, they can receive information without much lag time from the *w-inds.* fans in Japan.

Figure 4.1: Web Site of *"Feel to w-inds."*

Date	w-inds (Japan)	FC in Thailand
November 2000	w-inds started the street performances in Shibuya and Yoyogi park area, Tokyo.	
March 2001	w-inds debuted in Japan	
	w-inds won the new artist of the year prize of the Japan Record Award 2001.	
January 31, 2002		"Feel to w-inds" -- the homepage about w-inds was started by Meaw.
December 31, 2002	w-inds won the gold prize of the Japan Record Award 2002.	
April 5, 2003		The 1st meeting of the w-inds fans in Thailand was held at Chester's Grill, Siam Square.
April 9, 2003		"Vivid w-inds" -- the unofficial w-inds fan club in Thailand was founded after the event on April 5.
December 31, 2003	w-inds appeared on NHK's Kohaku Utagassen (Red & White Year-end Song Festival) for first time.	
December 31, 2003	w-inds won the gold prize of the Japan Record Award 2003.	
April 2004		The 2nd annual meeting of the FC was held at First Hotel, Bangkok
October 23, 2004		FC event was held at First Hotel
December 18, 2004		FC event was held at Siam Theater. 700 fans paticipated.
April 9, 2005		The 3rd annual meeting of the FC was held at Frist Hotel
		The FC stopped to accept new members.
June 25, 2005		w-inds video concert at Siam Discovery was planned and held by a J-POP CD shop.
December 31, 2005	w-inds won the gold prize of the Japan Record Award 2005.	
April 8, 2006		The 4th annual meeting of the FC was held at First Hotel
November 18, 2006		w-inds video concert at Style by Toyota
December 23, 2006		w-inds video concert at Style by Toyota
30 Dcember 2006	w-inds won the gold prize of the Japan Record Award 2006.	
April 7, 2007		The 5th annual meeting of the FC was held at First Hotel

Table 4.3: The Chronological History of the Unofficial w-inds Fan Club in Thailand

Ethnographies

A Gathering of Fans

Fans of idols, especially pop / rock music fans, often become members of the fan club in order to receive more information about the idol in question. Major record companies and agents for these idols set up fan club offices and provide membership services to their members. These fan clubs are the "official" fan clubs that are operated for marketing and promotional purposes, and fans have to pay membership fees in order to receive member privileges.

The following is the ethnography of a fan club event organized by an unofficial fan club for a J-Pop idol group. An unofficial fan club means that the fan club is not run and operated by the idols' management agent or the record company; it means that the fan club has been founded by fans themselves. The J-Pop idol group neither has an official fan club in Thailand, nor has it even visited the country to see its fans. The record company and the agent of the idol group in Japan have little interest in marketing the group in Thailand, so the exposure of the idol group in the Thai mass media is very limited. Yet the fans in Thailand have established a fan club and they have fan club meetings in Bangkok despite the absence of the idol group at site.

Why do they gather for fan club meetings? What is the meaning behind the existence of the fan club? These are the questions I had been pondering since I accidentally found out about the existence of such fan clubs in Thailand.

Annual Meeting in 2007

Around 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 7, 2007, I arrived at the banquet room of a hotel in downtown Bangkok. As I entered the banquet room, I found several young Thai

women wearing identical T-shirts, working busily.   In the center of the banquet room, unlike a typical scene in a banquet room where tables and chairs are neatly arranged in the center of the room, there was nothing but empty space.   On one side, a video projector screen was set up and a few chairs with a table were arranged beside the screen.   A few young women were working around the table, using a notebook PC, checking the video equipment to ensure that the movies and sound could be played properly.   Near the entrance of the room, a few tables and chairs were set up as a registration desk and there was a stall where some stacks of books and T-shirts were laid out on a table.   Four or five young women were working around the tables.

On another wall, there were three large posters.   Each poster was a larger-than-life photograph of a different young Asian man.   There were a few other young women who were also working diligently, running around decorating the room, and talking with hotel staff; they were all preparing for the event which was about to start.   In front of the banquet room, some young women were sitting on sofas, waiting for registration to begin.

The title of the event was "Meeting w-inds. 2007 [Life is Journey]."   The event was the annual conference of the unofficial *w-inds.* fan club in Thailand. "*w-inds.*" is a Japanese male vocal and dance group, which debuted in March 2001. Tachibana Keita is the lead singer of the group while Chiba Ryohei and Ogata Ryuichi take on the roles of the chorus, rapping and dancing.   They were 15 and 16 years old when they debuted; the fashionable good-looking boys attracted many young women with their youthful masculinity.   Their unofficial fan club has been organized by the *w-inds.* fans in Thailand since 2003.   The annual conference is held in April of each year and it is organized by the fan club leaders who are amateurs in terms of the music

entertainment business.   Besides the annual conference, the fan club holds one or two more events each year.   These other events are planned ad hoc, while the annual conference is always scheduled in April, as it is the main event for the fan club members.

At about 11:40 a.m., registration began.   The young women who were waiting in front of the entrance started entering the banquet room.   At the registration desk, their names were checked off on the pre-registration list and they had to pay the event fee which was 160 Baht (US$4.80) per person.   After they had completed registration, some of them started to buy T-shirts and books; others were taking photos of themselves beside the large photos of Keita, Ryohei or Ryuichi. (Figure 4.2)   The number of young women in the banquet room gradually increased.

Figure 4.2: Taking Photos with *w-inds.* Posters.   Photo by author.

By a little past noon, a crowd of over a hundred young Thai women had gathered in the banquet room.   Most of them seemed to be in their teens and early twenties.   They dressed in the same style as many other young women whom who can be seen in any of the shopping malls in Bangkok.   None of them were dressed up; nor did any of them were costumes like the "cosplayers" that we can observe at comic book events.   They looked like any other young Thai women and they had nothing to identify themselves as fans of a Japanese idol group.

The young women were sitting on the floor of the banquet room.   There were no chairs or cushions for comfort.   They sat on the carpeted floor, facing the video projection screen.   Then, one of the leaders of the fan club stepped up on the stage with a microphone and started the event.   After she declared the opening of the annual meeting of the fan club, a few entertaining and amusing video clips that were produced by the leaders were shown on the screen, and a short portion of a *w-inds* music clip was shown.   It was the start of the annual meeting of the fan club.

Organization of the Event

The event lasted for more than four hours and I witnessed all of it.   Since a detailed log would be too extensive, instead I will summarize below the activities contained in the event so as to understand better the functions and role of the fan club.   Basically, the event consisted of four kinds of activities or programs: (1) *w-inds.* video viewing, (2) quiz and games, (3) auction, and (4) copy-dance performance.   The activities were planned and prepared by the leaders of the fan club, who were amateurs in the event management business, but who had developed such programs for past events.

103

Figure 4.3: Viewing Video Clips Together.   Photo by author.

Figure 4.4: J-Pop CD Shop in Siam Square on February 26, 2006.
Photo by author.

Video Viewing

The first part of the event was the viewing of *w-inds* video clips. (Figure 4.3)   In Thailand, the licensed Asian versions of '*w-inds.*' music CDs are available at many music CD shops, and '*w-inds.*' imported music CDs and DVDs are also available at the J-POP CD shops in Siam Square. (Figure 4.4)   Thus, some members may have DVD discs at home and they may have already seen the video clips elsewhere in the past. However, it seems that viewing the video clips of *w-inds.* together with other fans is an important component of their gathering.   At the other three events I observed, video viewing was also inserted at a few intervals of each event.   Through screaming and cheering for *w-inds.* while viewing the videos, they seemed to enjoy sharing the experience of the excitement of supporting *w-inds.* with other members of the fan club. Most of the fans have memorized the lyrics of the songs in Japanese and often they sing songs together in Japanese while they watch the video clips.

Quiz and Games

A few games were played during the event.   First, the participants were divided into four groups, and after a short game, one person was selected from each group.   These four people went onto the stage and, for about five minutes, practiced gestures to cheer *w-inds*.   The scene was amusing and all the other members burst out laughing.   The four young women received a poster of *w-inds.* as a reward for entertaining the other members, even if the gestures weren't performed very well, and they then went back to their places to sit down.   Following that, the hundred-plus young women practiced the gestures to cheer *w-inds.* together. (Figure 4.5)

Figure 4.5: Practicing Gestures to Cheer *w-inds.*   Photo by author.

At various points during the event, there was quiz time.   During registration, each participant had received a ticket stub with a number printed on it.   The MC of the event drew a ticket from a box and the number was called out.   That person was requested to come to the stage and asked a question about *w-inds*.   Usually, the questions were about *w-inds,* members of *w-inds.,* or the titles of *w-inds.* songs, which means they had to know the titles in Japanese or they needed to have some knowledge about Japan.   Japanese proficiency gave them an advantage in providing the right answers to the questions.   If the answer was correct, the fan received a poster of *w-inds.* as a prize.   If the answer was incorrect, another number was called.   During the event, the "Game and Prize" or "Quiz and Prize" part was inserted at multiple points and this activity seemed to greatly entertain the participants.

Auction

Although there are a few J-Pop CD shops in Bangkok and some other shops that sell goods and photos of Japanese pop idols in Bangkok, there are some rare goods and posters that are available only to the members of the official fan club in Japan. Through a network of friends, the leaders of the fan club had obtained some posters of *w-inds.* which were not available in the shops in Bangkok. These posters and the larger-than-life posters on the wall were sold in the auction. The MC became an auctioneer and she called the highest bid every time somebody shouted a new price. Sometimes a few young women were competing over a poster and others were amazed that some young woman were willing to pay more than 1,000 Baht (approximately US$30) for a poster.

Copy-dance Performances

Flame and *Lead* are similar vocal and dance groups that are managed by the same Japanese agent which manages *w-inds.* These groups have some fans in Thailand and, of these, many have formed dance groups called "copy-dance groups." They formed such groups and practiced the dances of *Flame*, *Lead* and *w-inds.* by watching videos and DVDs, the reason being that they are fond of that kind of dance. *Flame* and *Lead* are considered to be the "younger brothers" of *w-inds.* and the fans of all these groups are friendly to each other. In the *w-inds.* fan club events in Thailand, I often saw these copy-dance groups demonstrating their copy *w-inds.*-dance performances. At the 2007 annual meeting, two copy-dance groups performed, and the participants of the event were able to enjoy the dance and the music of *w-inds.* through their performances. (Figure 4.6)

Figure 4.6: Copy-dance Group Performance.   Photo by author.

During the four-hour and thirty-minute event, the four kinds of activities (i.e., video viewing, quiz and games, auction, & copy-dance performances) were scheduled by the leaders of the fan club and the participating members seemed to enjoy their time. At about 4:30 p.m., the meeting came to an end the young women went home in twos and threes.   After observing the event, however, one question occurred to me.   Why did they gather at a hotel instead of watching DVDs at home?   *w-inds.* had never visited Thailand, and obviously the group did not come to the banquet room of the hotel to meet their fans in Thailand on this day.   What was the meaning of holding the event at a hotel?   What reason compelled them to get together?

Message to w-inds. from Thailand

At every event that the fan club holds, the leaders of the fan club videotaped the activities and scenes. The videotape may serve as a record of their activities, but it has another important purpose. The video footage is edited and some comments are superimposed on it by the organizers to send to *w-inds* in Tokyo. The edited video is their message to the three members of *w-inds.,* in which they show that they are supporting *w-inds.* from Thailand. Also, at the annual meeting in this particular year, they wrote messages to the group on a large sheet of cloth. (Figure 4.7) At certain events, the fans bring cards and gifts and hand them to the leaders; at other events, they create various messages or presents for *w-inds.* and all of these items are sent to *w-inds.* in Tokyo, along with the edited video as heart-felt messages from the group's fans in Thailand. They do all of this even though they are not sure if the members of *w-inds.* have ever received their messages.

Figure 4.7: Writing Messages to *w-inds.* Photo by author.

Fan Club Events

The unofficial fan club of *w-inds* in Thailand, *Vivid w-inds.*, holds events for its members a few times each year.   From the date of its foundation until April 2007, *Vivid w-inds.* themselves held nine events. (Table 4.4)   There was one more event for *w-inds.* fans in Thailand, but Meaw, the leader of *Vivid w-inds.,* claims that the event on June 25, 2005 (which is indicated as "6 (S)" in Table 4.4) was not their event but the event of a J-Pop CD shop which the event despite the objection of the fan club.   Although the leaders of the fan club eventually helped organize the event, Meaw does not count it as a fan club event.

Since 2003, I have observed four of the events, including the most successful event on December 18, 2004, and the event on June 25, 2005.   In addition to the most recent event that I have already reported above, three more events that I have observed will be explained in brief.

	Date	Place	Fee (THB)	No of Participants
1	05 April 2003	Chester's Grill 2nd Fl., Soi 3 Siam Square	85	100
2	06 April 2004	First Hotel	150	150
3	23 October 2004	First Hotel	200	250
4	18 December 2004	Siam Theater	250	700
5	09 April 2005	First Hotel	150	150
6 (S)	25 June 2005	Siam Discovery	150	150
7	08 April 2006	First Hotel	150	150
8	18 November 2006	Style by Toyota	Free	200
9	23 December 2006	Style by Toyota	Free	200
10	07 April 2007	First Hotel	150	150

* The event on 25 June 2005 was planned and held by a J-Pop CD shop.

** I have videotaped and observed events of 4, 6, 8 and 10.

*** Numbers of participants are according to the official announcents from the fan club.

Table 4.4: The Events of Vivid w-inds (chronological order)

[Siam Theatre on December 18, 2004]

The first event that I observed was the one held at Siam Theatre on December 18, 2004. Siam Theatre is a movie theater in Siam Square. It was the fourth event for the fan club and was open to fan club members as well as the general public. Unlike the previous events that had been managed by the leaders of the fan club and university student volunteers, the fourth event was supported by the J-POP shop and the promoting company of *w-inds.* music in Thailand. The program of the events did not include games because of the fixed seating arrangement in the movie theater. Thus, video viewing and some quizzes and speeches by the leaders of the fan club were the primary activities in the event. There were about 700 young women in the movie theater; some of them wore *yukata* (traditional Japanese clothes). This event was the biggest in the history of the fan club and it was my first observation of the fan club activity of *Vivid w-inds.*

[Siam Discovery on June 25, 2005]

Siam Discovery is also a movie theater which is located near *Siam Square*. This event was planned and managed by the J-Pop CD shop in *Siam Square*. Because the event at Siam Theatre was successful, the CD shop owner believed that this event would be successful as well. However, Meaw had some misgivings about the event. She knew that the video clips that were planned to be shown at the event had already been seen by many members of *Vivid w-inds.* via the Internet. Since the event at a movie theater was going to focus mainly watching videos, Meaw thought that only a few people would attend. Her misgivings were justified, since although the CD shop owner expected more than 250 people to come, in the end they had only 150 participants.

Different from the other three events I have observed, this one seemed to be the most commercial to me. There was a campaign corner for a soft drink company where a few girls were handing out new products for free and there was a game sponsored by the company. As Meaw pointed out, this event was very different in terms of the management style and the event program.

[Style by Toyota on November 18, 2006]

Style by Toyota is a building in *Siam Square* which has a showroom of Toyota automobiles on the ground floor and a multi-purpose event hall on the upper floor. At this gathering, video viewing, copy-dance performances and some games were observed.

At this event, approximately 200 young women got together and had an enjoyable fun time together. As an observer, I could not see any particular featured points to note; they just seemed to be watching videos and performing copy-dancing. Some time later, however, Meaw told me that she prefers this kind of event to the other commercialized events she has experienced. The meeting at *Style by Toyota* seemed more casual and relaxed than other events, and that may be the reason why Meaw preferred the atmosphere.

Reasons to Come to the Events

Although commercial people were involved in certain events, the content was organized and managed by the fan club leaders.   Video viewing, quiz and games, and so on were included in the programs of the events to entertain the participants.   It is very difficult to uncover the real reasons for them to gather at these events, but by cheering while watching *w-inds.* videos and by laughing during the course of the games, the participants really seemed to enjoy themselves.

w-inds. has never visited to Thailand.   After observing the four events, I came to think that the absence of *w-inds.* themselves in Thailand might be an important factor for them holding events.   If there were an official fan club of *w-inds.* in Thailand and if *w-inds.* were to visit Thailand often, *w-inds.* fans might not have to hold events themselves.   They could consume the products and services provided by the official fan club and they would not need to organize or produce anything.   Without the official fan club and pop stars in Thailand, the unofficial fan club members developed their own ways to entertain themselves.

The Role of the Fan Club Leaders

As the founder of *Vivid w-inds.* was roginally a J-Rock fan, some of the other leaders were her old friends, who were also J-Rock fans.   By observing the activities of the events of *Vivid w-inds.*, I realized that the leaders were taking over the role of the absent stars, the members of the group *w-inds.*   If the fans were able to go to a *w-inds* concert or event, the members of *w-inds.* would be the MCs and the audience could enjoy talks and performances by *w-inds.*   As shown in Table 4.5, however, since *w-inds* does not attend the fan club events, the factors that would be satisfied by *w-inds.* at a live concert

have to be fulfilled by the activities that were organized by the fan club leaders.   The videos are a substitute for a *w-inds.* performance.   The copy-dance performance is a substitute for a *w-inds.* performance.   The speeches by the leaders of the fan club are a substitute for a *w-inds.* presentation.   Although *w-inds.* has never come to Thailand, the fan club is taking on the role of *w-inds.* to entertain the fans.   For every event, the leaders program the event in great detail so that the fans can enjoy their time together. Regardless of the intention of the leaders of the fan club, they function as a substitute for the absent "star(s)."

	w-inds Live Concert	Events in Bangkok
Song/Music	w-inds	video
Dance	w-inds	video / copy-dance performance
Presentations	w-inds	MC *
Games	N/A	MC *
Communication	Can be at the same place at the same time. Audience and Idol relationship. (No personal communication)	Send messages and video to w-inds (one way communication).
* MC is the leaders of the fan club.		

Table 4.5: Factors of Events - Substitutions for the Absence of the Star

Some findings from questionnaires

The Respondents

At the event on April 7, 2007, I distributed questionnaires to the participants during the game time. The leaders of the fan club permitted me to hand a questionnaire to each participant in a game. I handed out 110 questionnaire sheets and collected 104 back at the end of the event. Although this study is based primarily upon the ethnography of the fan club activities, I was interested in the individual characteristics of each participant. Thus, I compiled a short questionnaire to delineate the image of "a fan of *w-inds.* in Thailand."

The questions were designed to find out if becoming a *w-inds.* fan influenced a person's attitude towards and preferences for Japanese cultural products and Japan.

Example
Japanese Language Study
1. I started to study Japanese **before** I became a *w-inds.* fan.
2. I started to study Japanese **after** I became a *w-inds.* fan.
3. I **want** to study it in the near future.
4. I am **not interested** in studying Japanese.
5. I **don't like** the Japanese language.

Some of the questions use this multiple-choice approach to ask if something is "before" or "after" becoming a *w-inds.* fan. As the tables in this section show, I asked about Japanese cultural products and factors such as language study, food, fashion, pop music, TV drama series, TV programs (except TV drama series), animation, manga, and novels. The questions that use a different format are indicated in the tables.

Before I start to discuss the results of these questions regarding Japanese cultural products, I would like to start from the last two questions of the questionnaire,

"sex" and "age." (Table 4.6) The result shows that 99% of the respondents were female and 1% did not respond regarding their gender. From my observation, 100% of the respondents were female, and Meaw's statement that all of the members of the fan club are female confirms this. At other gatherings that were bigger and open to the public, such as the one at *Siam Theatre*, I saw some young men in the audience. On the other hand, this event was the annual meeting of the fan club, so 100% of the attendees were female. The average age was 19.4 years. Figure 4.8 shows the frequency distribution by age. Figure 4.8 and Table 4.6 show that 54.5% of the participants fell into the age range 17 to 20 years. The youngest participant was 13 years old and the oldest was 29 years old.

Since there would not be much time for them to answer questions during the event, I designed the questionnaire to be short and easily answered. Consequently, the questionnaire results reveal something significant, but it is difficult to determine the underlying reasons for this. In this section, I pay attention to some details in the results and have tried to add some information to complement later discussions and further future research.

Sex		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	103	99.0	100.0
Missing	No Answer	1	1.0	
Total		104	100.0	

Age		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	1	1.0	1.0
	15	10	9.6	10.9
	16	4	3.8	14.9
	17	17	16.3	31.7
	18	13	12.5	44.6
	19	11	10.6	55.4
	20	14	13.5	69.3
	21	7	6.7	76.2
	22	8	7.7	84.2
	23	4	3.8	88.1
	24	4	3.8	92.1
	25	3	2.9	95.0
	26	1	1.0	96.0
	27	1	1.0	97.0
	28	2	1.9	99.0
	29	1	1.0	100.0
	Total	101	97.1	
Missing	No Answer	3	2.9	
Total		104	100.0	

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 4.6: Sex & Age
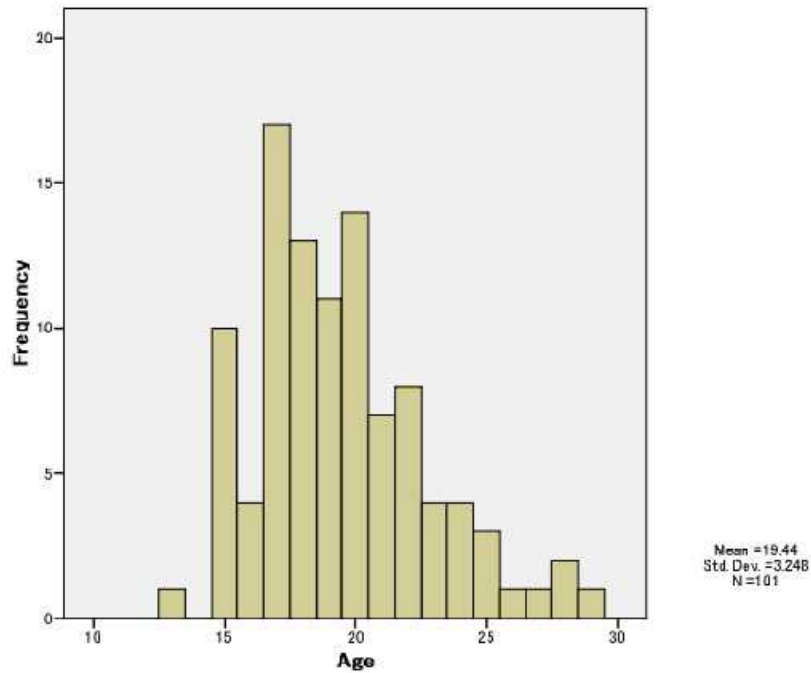
Figure 4.8: Frequency Distribution (Age)

Animation and Manga

In Table 4.7, it is notable that in "Japanese Animation" and "Manga," more than 90% of the respondents said they started to watch/read manga before they became a *w-inds.* fan. Thus, most respondents had been exposed to Japanese animation series and manga before they started to like *w-inds.* This is not surprising, as anyone familiar with everyday life in Thailand knows that we can see the characters *Doraemon, Pokemon, Dragon Ball*, among others, on T-shirts, clothes for children, stationery, bags, et cetera that are sold in supermarkets and shops on the streets in Thailand. From children to adults, Thai people are familiar with the characters of famous Japanese animations.

Japanese Animation			
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	94	90.4	90.4
	After	8	7.7	98.1
	Want	2	1.9	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	

Manga (Japanese Comics)			
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	100	96.2	96.2
	After	1	1.0	97.1
	Want	2	1.9	99.0
	No Interest	1	1.0	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 4.7: Animation & Manga

According to a report from the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Japanese animation such as *Hikaru No Go, Cyborg 009, Astro Boy, Hamtaro, Pokemon, Doraemon, Slam Dunk, Digimon, Kame Ninja, Dragon Ball,* and *Naruto* have been broadcast on television in Thailand (standard non-digital television broadcasting) between July 1, 2005 and June 20, 2006. (JETRO, 2007: 47-50)   Japanese animation series are also sold on VCD and DVD on the streets and Thai children watch them as they grow up.

From the 1980s until the early 1990s, pirated manga flooded the market in Thailand and translated versions of manga became very popular among Thai people. After the mid-1990s, though major publishers of comics in Thailand started obtaining licenses from Japanese publishers and began publishing licensed and Thai-translated manga for about 40 Baht (US$1.20).   Weekly and monthly comic magazines of Japan are also translated and published in Thailand including *Shonen Magazine, Young Magazine, Afternoon, Nakayoshi, Shojo Comic, Shonen Sunday, Shonen Jump,* and

Pretty Cure. (JETRO 2007:50)   The reasons for the popularity of Japanese animation and manga are not only the quantity that is available in Thailand but the *quality*.   When I spoke with a group of people that started a manga and "cosplay" event in Thailand, *Comic Season*, they said that they felt that the stories are better than those of Thai comics.

TV Drama Series and Food

In addition to animation and manga, Japanese TV drama series and Japanese food are popular among the respondents. (Table 4.8)   Of the respondents, 72.1% said they started to watch Japanese TV drama before they became a *w-inds.* fan and 69.2% of the respondents indicated that they liked Japanese food before they became a *w-inds.* fan.

According to the JETRO report (JETRO 2007: 35-36), one of the TV broadcasting channels in Thailand, ITV, has broadcast 55 Japanese drama series including *With Love, GTO, Precious Time (Kamisama Mousukoshidake), Ring Saishusho, Power Office Girls 1 & 2 (Shomuni 1 & 2), Love Generation, Long Vacation, Love Revolution, Power of Love (Koi No Chikara), Good Luck!, Crying Out Love at Center of the World, Dragon Sakura,* and *Nobuta Wo Produce*.   According to Nakai Motoko who is the manager at *TV Asahi* and in charge of overseas sales, Japanese TV companies started to sell programs in the world market seriously after the bubble economy of Japan burst. (Personal communication 2005, November 2; 2005, November 4)   Therefore, during the decade from the mid-1990s, many Japanese TV drama series were sold to Thai TV channels and these dramas were broadcast in Thai.   Although Korean TV drama series have recently become popular in Thailand, Japanese TV dramas are still being broadcast in Thailand because of their popularity.

Japanese Food			
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	72	69.2	69.2
	After	27	26.0	95.2
	Want	1	1.0	96.2
	No Interest	1	1.0	97.1
	Don't Like	3	2.9	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	

Japanese TV Drama			
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	75	72.1	72.1
	After	26	25.0	97.1
	Want	2	1.9	99.0
	No Interest	1	1.0	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 4.8: Food & TV Drama

Japanese food is also popular in Thailand. There are several Japanese restaurant chains and they keep expanding businesses by opening new restaurants at large supermarkets and shopping malls all over the country. (Phoosuphanusorn and Treerapongpichit 2000) *Fuji* and *Oishi* are the two major Japanese restaurant chains in Thailand, and the prices are less expensive than the Japanese restaurants that target Japanese residents in Thailand, so groups of young people, as well as families, can enjoy Japanese cuisine. In addition to its wide availability, Thai people have become more conscious about health and diet, and since Japanese food is considered to be very healthy, they frequent these restaurants.

Chapter 4

Japanese Language Study

Before I go on to the discussions of the cultural products that the fan club members seem to become more interested in after they became a *w-inds.* fan, it is very important to note that 52.9% of the respondents said that they started to study Japanese after they became a *w-inds.* fan. (Table 4.9)   The question simply asked about the time when they started to study Japanese, and the question cannot, of course, fully explain the causal relationship between *w-inds.* and Japanese language study.   It is sometimes observed, however, that fans start learning a second language that is the mother tongue of a foreign star they like.   In recent years, we have seen housewives in Japan, who are fans of male Korean stars, attend Korean language lessons because they want to communicate with the stars, to write fan letters in Korean, and to understand Korean culture better. (Asahi Shimbun 2004, April 30; Tohnishi, 2004)

Japanese Language Study				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	26	25.0	25.2
	After	55	52.9	78.6
	Want	19	18.3	97.1
	No Interest	3	2.9	100.0
	Total	103	99.0	
Missing	No Answer	1	1.0	
Total		104	100.0	

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 4.9: Japanese Language Study

As shown in Table 4.10, the number of students who study Japanese has been increasing over the years.   According to the Thai Ministry of Education, in 2003, the figure for student enrollment in higher education is 1,462,400; in primary and secondary education it is 10,196,000. (Office of the Educational Council, 2004)   By calculating the total number of students in formal education and the number of students in Japanese language education, we can see that in 2003, 1.7% of students in higher education and 1.5% students in primary and secondary education were studying Japanese in Thailand. Compared to these percentages, the questionnaire results show that 53.4% of the respondents started to study Japanese after they became a *w-inds.* fan, a difference that is considerably significant.

	Primary & Secondary Education	Higher Education	Non-Academic Education	Grand Total
1993	4,247	10,853	7,052	22,152
1998	7,694	24,218	7,910	39,822
2003	17,516	22,273	15,095	54,884

Source: Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 1993, 1998, 2003 (The Japan Foundation)

Table 4.10: Number of Students in Japanese Language Education (Thailand)

It is unlikely that 52.9% of the respondents started to study Japanese by mere coincidence, so it is assumed that becoming a *w-inds.* fan induced their language study. It may be important for them to have the ability to understand the language of the idol when they see video interviews with the idols, and when they write fan letters to the idols, and when they try to memorize lyrics of *w-inds.* songs.   78.6% of the respondents have studied Japanese, and 18.4% said they want to study it, which means 97.1% of them have an interest in Japanese language study.

Influence of w-inds.

After the respondents became *w-inds.* fans, 49.0% of them started listening to J-Pop music, 33.7% started watching Japanese TV programs, 30.8% started wearing Japanese fashion clothes, 28.8% started reading Japanese novels (Table 4.11), 26.0% started enjoying Japanese food, and 25.0% started watching Japanese TV drama. (Table 4.8) Although we know that there may be multiple reasons for a person to begin doing something, these percentages suggest that respondents are influenced by becoming *w-inds.* fans.

By contrast, in animation and manga, the percentages that said they started consuming them after becoming *w-inds.* fans are 7.7% and 1.0% respectively. (Table 4.7) These percentages, however, are not necessarily small because more than 90% of the respondents have been consuming Japanese animation and manga since before they became a *w-inds.* fans. Japanese animation and manga are not simply popular cultural products that came from Japan, but they have already become an integrated part of the pop culture of Thai youth.

J-POP Music

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	50	48.1	48.1
	After	51	49.0	97.1
	Want	1	1.0	98.1
	Don't Like	2	1.9	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	

Japanese TV Program

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	67	64.4	64.4
	After	35	33.7	98.1
	Want	2	1.9	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	

Japanese Fashion

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	28	26.9	26.9
	After	32	30.8	57.7
	Want	40	38.5	96.2
	No Interest	4	3.8	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	

Japanese Novels

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Before	52	50.0	50.0
	After	30	28.8	78.8
	Want	13	12.5	91.3
	No Interest	8	7.7	99.0
	Don't Like	1	1.0	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 4.11: Music, TV, Fashion & Novel

Bivariate Correlations

Having reviewed the questionnaire results, I noticed that some of the cultural products seemed to correlate. To aid in understanding the scope of the influence of *w-inds.* on the respondents, therefore, bivariate correlations are presented in Table 4.12. The correlations that can be found in the table lead to some descriptive findings. They can neither identify independent, dependent, nor intervening variables in the correlations, and the causal relations in the correlations need to be delineated in future studies.

These descriptive findings may be bases of hypotheses for future studies as they give us insights into understanding the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand. (Figure 4.9) The descriptive findings that can be read from the correlation table are as follows: first, the group of respondents who study Japanese and like to watch Japanese TV programs (both drama series and others); second, the group of respondents who like to watch Japanese drama, read Japanese novels and manga, and watch other Japanese TV programs; third, the group of respondents who like to eat Japanese food, watch Japanese drama, and read Japanese novels (Japanese stories); fourth, the group of respondents who like to listen to J-Pop, watch Japanese drama, and read Japanese novels (Japanese stories);–fifth, the consumption of animation has little correlation with the consumption of other Japanese cultural products, except manga; and finally sixth, the consumption of Japanese fashion has little correlation with the consumption of other Japanese cultural products (fashion is independent of other cultural products).

Bivariate Correlations

	Language	Food	Fashion	J-POP	TV Drama	Animation	TV Prog	Comics	Novels	Japan	J-POP Fan
Language	1	0.095	.229(*)	0.159	.333(**)	0.143	.410(**)	0.002	0.129	.242(*)	0.124
Food	0.095	1	-0.033	0.104	.274(**)	-0.002	.237(*)	.219(*)	.350(**)	.609(**)	0.104
Fashion	.229(*)	-0.033	1	-0.136	0.032	-0.155	0.031	0.039	0.087	-0.028	0.157
J-POP	0.159	0.104	-0.136	1	.236(*)	.291(**)	.213(*)	0.111	.273(**)	.248(*)	.496(**)
TV Drama	.333(**)	.274(**)	0.032	.236(*)	1	0.192	.448(**)	.314(**)	.214(*)	.428(**)	.205(*)
Animation	0.143	-0.002	-0.155	.291(**)	0.192	1	0.172	.381(**)	0.086	0.129	0.091
TV Prog	.410(**)	.237(*)	0.031	.213(*)	.448(**)	0.172	1	0.180	.232(*)	.309(**)	.218(*)
Comics	0.002	.219(*)	0.039	0.111	.314(**)	.381(**)	0.180	1	.203(*)	.207(*)	0.113
Novels	0.129	.350(**)	0.087	.273(**)	.214(*)	0.086	.232(*)	.203(*)	1	.453(**)	0.017
Japan	.242(*)	.609(**)	-0.028	.248(**)	.428(**)	0.129	.309(**)	.207(*)	.453(**)	1	0.130
J-POP Fan	0.124	0.104	0.157	.496(**)	.205(*)	0.091	.218(*)	0.113	0.017	0.130	1

N=100-104

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01

Table 4.12: Bivariate correlations

127
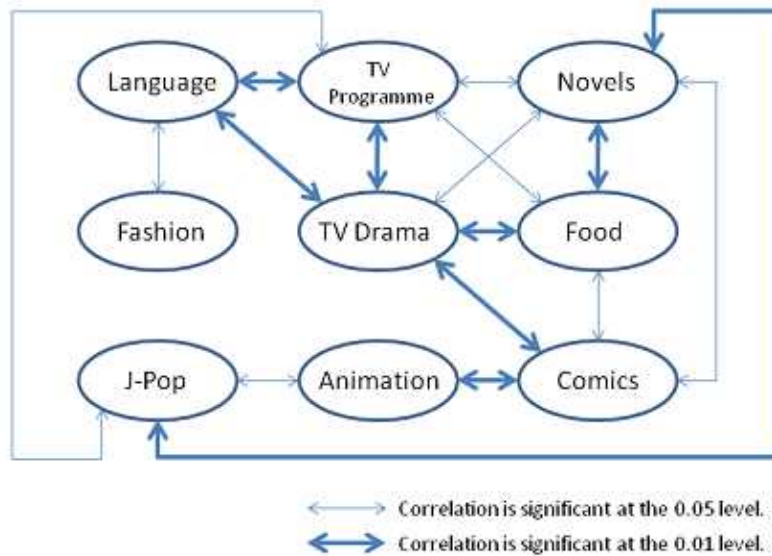
Figure 4.9: Bivariate Correlations

In the questionnaire research given to 677 Thai high school students, which I already mentioned earlier, I have analyzed the bivariate correlations of the popularity of Japanese cultural products among them to find out that Japanese cultural products can be divided into two groups: Group One "fashion and food" and Group Two "manga, animation, TV programs and music." (Toyoshima 2008)   When I carefully looked at the cultural products of Group Two, I also discovered that these are entertainment contents which are distributed by media such as books, television or CDs; thus, these can be called "media contents."   On the other hand, the cultural products in Group One, Japanese fashion and food, are not distributed by media.   People may receive information about these cultural products through the media, which help them to choose what to consume, but the products themselves are distributed by altogether different means.
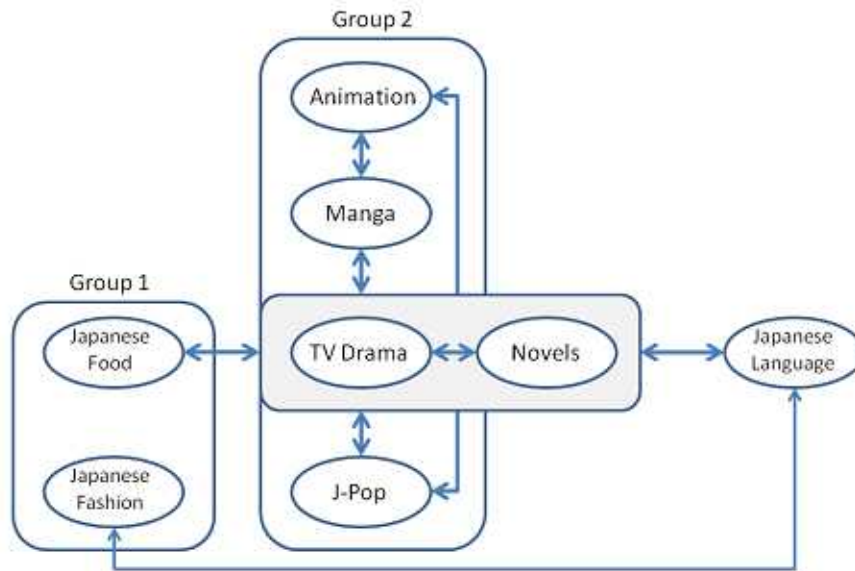
Figure 4.10: The Relationship of the Cultural Products illustrated from

Bivariate Correlations

In Figure 4.10, I illustrate the bivariate correlations between the cultural products that have been discussed in this section. Although I had no intention of examining the notion of Group One and Group Two of Japanese cultural products in my previous study, Figure 4.10 coincidentally display the relationship of the two groups, Groups One and Two, and it gives us clearer image of the consumption of Japanese cultural products by Thai youth. It can be summarized as follows.

First, the circular link of "animation – manga – TV drama & novels – J-pop – animation" in Figure 4.10 suggests that Group Two comprises of these cultural products which are "media contents." The virtuous cycle of the consumption of media contents, that is, an interest in one cultural product may eventually cause an interest in another cultural product. This process seems to occur on an individual level, which continuously creates a new consumption of Japanese media contents.

Second, the bivariate correlation shows that Group One comprises of food and fashion. Unlike the relationship of the cultural products of Group Two, however, the cultural products in Group One seem to be independent in terms of influence to other cultural products. Fashion, in particular, shows no significant correlation with other Japanese cultural products, except Japanese language learning.

Third, it is important to note that significant correlations between (1) Japanese language learning and TV (drama and other programs), and (2) Japanese language learning and novels are observed. Since the correlations do not indicate the causal relations between the variables, we cannot be sure, for example, if the respondents watch Japanese TV to study the Japanese language or if have they become interested in learning the language after they watched Japanese TV. But when we think of the fact that Japanese TV programs in Thailand are usually broadcast in Thai after being dubbed by Thai voice actors, it can be hypothesized that the Thais' fondness for Japanese TV programs has lead them to start studying the Japanese language. Furthermore, after observing the correlations, Japanese language learning seems to play an important role as an incentive to consume more Japanese cultural products.

Why w-inds.? Why J-Pop?

In the questionnaire, I asked "Why do you like *w-inds.*?" and the respondents were asked to choose an answer from the choices of music, singing, appearance, dancing or other. The purpose of the question was to reveal what attracts them to the J-Pop idol group. As shown in Table 4.13, however, more than 70% of them chose "Other," and most of them wrote that they like "Everything about *w-inds.*" on the questionnaire sheet.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Music	3	2.9
	Singing	15	14.4
	Appearance	2	1.9
	Dancing	7	6.7
	Other	76	73.1
	Total	103	99.0
Missing	No Answer	1	1.0
Total		104	100.0

Table 4.13: Why do you like w-inds?

The question was not able to reveal their motivations clearly. Likes and dislikes oftentimes cannot be explained by logic. Even if there are various reasons, we may not be conscious about our own preferences. Having lived in Thailand, I feel that the Thai people have a favorable impression towards the Japanese people in general. Despite the image of Japan in Asia during the Second World War and the anti-Japan movement of university students in the early 1970s in Bangkok, these unfortunate memories of the past seemed to have already faded in the Thai youth. On the contrary, they have nurtured positive images toward Japan from high quality industrial products, from information in mass media reports, from encounters with Japanese tourists, from Japanese companies that have established factories in the country, and so forth. (Toyoshima 2008)

In addition to the favorable impression towards Japan, the resemblance of the appearance of the people of the two countries and Japan's role as a model of modern lifestyle for the emerging middle class in Asia seem to make them feel an affinity towards Japan. I assume that the Japanese idols are not very different from the idols in Thailand, but they may be considered a little bit more stylish and modern.

Discussion

In participatory culture such as fan clubs, sometimes it can be developed beyond the imagination of the producers of the original content. Henry Jenkins introduced the case of fan writing by female fans of Star Trek who transformed the story of Star Trek into a story of feminist romance and said: "Consumption becomes production; reading becomes writing; spectator culture becomes participatory culture." (Jenkins 2006a) In the case of the J-Pop fan club, because it is an unofficial organization and the media companies do not provide much information about *w-inds.* in the local language, the fans have more freedom to produce events, publications, fan club goods, and so forth. Planning events is not mere consumption of the cultural product, but it leads them to produce more things to consume by themselves.

Jenkins also points out "the flow of content across multiple media platforms" in participatory culture, such as fan club activities, and used the term "convergence culture" by defining:

> "Convergence does not depend on any specific delivery mechanism. Rather, convergence represents a paradigm shift – a move from medium-specific content toward content that flows across multiple media channels, toward multiple ways of accessing media content, and toward ever more complex relations between top-down corporate media and bottom-up participatory culture." (Jenkins 2006b:243)

The leaders and members of the fan club try to obtain information about *w-inds.* through several channels of media such as magazines, Japanese fan club journals, the Internet, friends in Japan, the idols' official web sites, and so forth, which is clearly

convergence culture. The leaders and the members of the fan club are engaging in both participatory and convergence culture.

In section three, the results of the questionnaire research collected at the fan club event were shown and the results suggest that becoming a J-Pop fan may influence the attitudes and patterns of behavior of the individuals in their consumption of other Japanese cultural products. One of the most important points that we should be aware of is that becoming a J-Pop fan may have steered the respondents toward learning Japanese. In studies regarding SLA (second language acquisition), the importance of motivation in learning a second language is widely recognized, and it is said that the learner's motivation can change over time and is influenced by external factors. (Ellis 1994)

It is also interesting to note that the questionnaire results showed that animation and manga are already accepted by Thai people, and they are not necessarily seen as being foreign any more. Japanese animation and manga are translated into Thai and are available anywhere in Thailand. In addition to their availability, the worlds that are created in Japanese animation and manga are not necessarily "Japan," but virtual worlds created by the authors. In the two dimensional virtual worlds of animation and manga, the consumers do not have to feel any "Japaneseness" when they consume the stories. The worlds are different from the real culture and belong to no particular country; as Iwabuchi pointed out, Japanese animation and games are "culturally odorless." (Iwabuchi 1998, 2002) Consequently, Japanese animation and manga are already "assimilated cultural products," and are a part of the popular culture of Thai youth.

These cultural products are consumed as if they were industrial products such as automobiles and electronic appliances, in the sense that the consumers simply enjoy

consuming the products from Japan because the quality of the products is good and they do not have to be conscious of their origin, at least in the beginning. But once they have realized the quality of the products, they become more interested in cultural products from Japan. Although these cultural products may appear to be "culturally odorless" at first and are assimilated into the local cultures, an awareness of the good quality of Japanese cultural products will lead them to consume more of these products.

> "Soft power is not merely the same as influence. After all, influence can also rest on the hard power of threats or payments. And soft power is more than just persuasion or the ability to move people by argument, though that is an important part of it. It is also the ability to attract, and attraction often leads to acquiescence. Simply put, in behavioral terms soft power is attractive power. In terms of resources, soft-power resources are the assets that produce such attraction." (Nye 2004)

> "Yet Japan is reinventing superpower again. Instead of collapsing beneath its political and economic misfortunes, Japan's global cultural influence has only grown. In fact, from pop music to consumer electronics, architecture to fashion, and food to art, Japan has far greater cultural influence now than it did in the 1980s, when it was an economic superpower." (McGray 2002)

In recent years, scholars and the media outside Japan have been discussing J-Pop as an emerging soft power in the age of globalization, and the presence of Japanese popular culture in the world has been discussed among scholars and the mass media. (Shiraishi 1997; Igarashi 1998; Craig 2000; Ishii 2001; Leheny 2006; Nakamura and Onouchi 2006; Hoffman 2007) Many books and articles on the subject are published, and the mass media reports on Japanese animation and manga events in other

countries.   As Nakamura points out, the popularity of Japanese pop culture has been discovered in other countries, and the J-Pop boom (that is, the active discussion of Japan's being soft power) is imported to Japan. (Nakamura 2006)

In the case of Thailand, however, it is not only due to the J-Pop boom but also due to the social context of a country that can easily welcome cultural products from Japan.   As discussed in section three, Thailand's favorable impression of Japan, nurtured by high quality industrial products ('Japan' brands), encounters with Japanese people residing in Thailand (sojourners), Japanese companies operating in Thailand, information obtained through mass media reports, and so forth, are the basis for an environment in which Japanese cultural products are easily received and can thrive. Especially, the presence of Japanese people in Thailand seems to play an important role. Harumi Befu explains the role of "permanent" and "nonpermanent" sojourners in his discussion of the presence of Japan in the world and discusses the dispersal of Japanese people throughout the world, resulting from Japan's economic globalization. (Befu 2001)   Professor Surichai Wun'geo of *Chulalongkorn University* also points out that the growing number of Japanese residents in Thailand, since the early 1990s, and the increase of interpersonal relations with these Japanese people has encouraged the Thai people to understand the Japanese and Japan. (Wun'geo 1998)

Furthermore, manga, animation, TV dramas and games have become a very popular pastime for the Thai youth over the past decade, and the Internet has become the tool for obtaining up-to-date information about Japanese cultural products, especially the participatory culture, products which are barely covered in the mass media in Thailand. According to the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC) of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Thailand, the number of

Internet users in 1998 was approximately 0.7 million, and, by 2004, the number had rapidly grown to 7.0 million. Among the Internet users, 52% of them fall in the age group 15-24 years, and the International Internet bandwidth has been increased from 37 Mbps in 1998 to 2,398 Mbps in 2004. (NECTEC 2005)

The friendly environment toward Japanese cultural products has exposed more young Thai people to new cultural products from Japan and the increasing popularity of Japanese cultural products reinforces the favorable image of Japan, which is the virtuous cycle of the "Cool Japan" image in Thailand.

In this study, I delineated the presence of Japanese cultural products in Thailand through the observation of and questionnaire responses from J-Pop idol fans. As we analyze the activities and consumption of J-Pop fans, we could see that each cultural product has correlations with other cultural products and that these relationships are interwoven in a complex manner. To untangle these cultural threads, it is important to observe the phenomena from the perspectives of the consumers themselves in their own country. By understanding the various patterns of behavior and values of the consumers, we will obtain clearer insight with which to unravel the culture of their society and of our own.

Chapter Five

Ethnography – Cosplayers in Bangkok

Socialization in the Community and Exposure to Japanese Cultural Products

> Manga and anime are an increasingly important part of the global culture industry. These pop cultural exports, along with Japanese fashion, pop music, and TV dramas, are now avidly consumed not only throughout much of Asia, but also in Europe and North America. (MacWilliams 2008:13)

Otaku Subcultures from Japan

Manga (Japanese comics), *anime* (Japanese animations) and Japanese video games have become popular among youth in many countries. (Allison 2006)   The presence of fans of Japanese cultural products in America, Europe and Asia has been apparent as we often see the scenes of their conventions and expositions that are reported in mass media.   Although manga, anime and video games have already been a part of youth culture in many countries, the degree of the popularity differs and, in most countries, these cultural products are categorized as a "subculture" which is considered a hobby for the limited number of people.   These people are often called "otaku" in Japanese which means a "hardcore aficionado" (Schodt 1996:43), a "geek" or an "obsessive fan" in English (Kelts 2006:14-15) and they are differentiated from the ordinary people who enjoy consuming "popular culture" which is understood and accepted as common activities or habits in the culture by the majority of the people in the society.

In Thailand, children start watching anime on television in early childhood. (Pravalpruk 1990:18) In a JETRO report on the contents market of the Southeastern Asian countries, a list of animation programs which has been prepared by AGB Nielsen Media Research is quoted. The list shows all the animation programs, which have been broadcast in Thailand between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006, and the list contains many Japanese animations series including *Hikaru no Go, Hamtaro, Astro Boy, Kyoro Chan, Slam Dunk, Ultraman Series, Pokemon Series, Doraemon Series, Gundum Series.* (JETRO 2007: 47-49) Thai publishers have officially imported manga from Japan to Thailand since the early 1990s. Today there are several major manga publishers in Thailand. It is said that some of these publishers started business as a publisher of pirated manga but today most of manga publishers in Thailand make Thai versions of manga titles under the licenses from Japanese publishers. Manga titles from Japanese weekly manga magazines are also translated and published in Thai weekly comic magazines. For example, manga from the Japanese weekly magazine called "Shûkan Shounen Jump" is published in Thai comic magazines, *Boom* and *C-Kids,* and manga of "Shûkan Shounen Magazine" are published in *KC Weekly.* (JETRO 2007: 50) Thai children start reading manga as soon as they learn to read Thai.

According to the questionnaire research to Thai high school students that I conducted in 2005, 67.5% of the high school students said they like manga and 87.7% said they like anime. (Toyoshima 2008) Children in Thailand are exposed to the Japanese cultural products of manga and anime since early childhood and by the time they are high school students, manga and anime become a part of their everyday life.
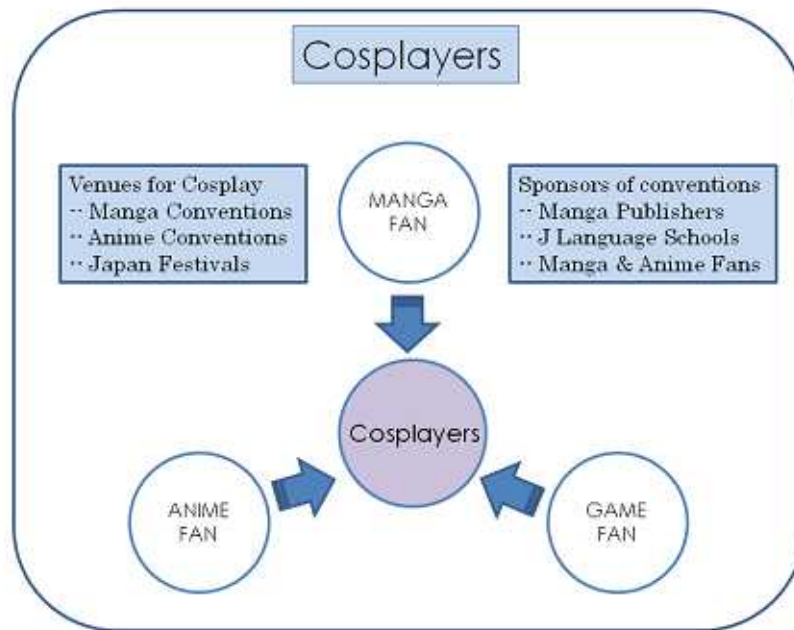
Figure 5.1: Who / Where are Cosplayers?

This chapter focuses on "cosplay" or *kosupure* in Japanese, which is a compound of "costume" and "play." Cosplay is an activity that we often see at the conventions and expositions of manga, anime and video game fans. Fans of the otaku subcultures of manga, anime or video games, create costumes and props of their favorite characters and wear them at the venues of these conventions and expositions. (Figure 5.1) In Thailand, especially in Bangkok, there are many otaku conventions that are held on weekends at public places such as shopping malls, convention halls and so forth. (Figure 5.2) There are also many "Japan Festival" type of exhibitions or conventions held in Bangkok in which Japanese cultural products are introduced and many cosplayers participate. During school holiday seasons, especially, on almost every weekend, some cosplay or otaku convention or Japan festival is held in Bangkok and Thai cosplayers gather at such conventions and exhibitions.

139

The aim of this chapter is to know what and how these cosplayers consume Japanese cultural products in Thailand. It is inevitable to seek the identity and the purpose of the cosplayers but it is also important to know how these otaku people consume other Japanese cultural products besides subcultures.

Figure 5.2: Cosplayers at *Comic Season #3*, on August 20, 2005.
Photo by author.

Research Method

In this chapter, three kinds of research data are presented to analyze the cosplay activity in Thailand. First, the ethnographies of cosplayers at otaku conventions in Thailand have been conducted. Between November 2004 and August 2009, I have visited and observed several otaku conventions and expos such as *Vibulkij Comics Party Ranger* (October 30, 2004), *Comic Season* (formerly known as "Comic Market" in Thailand, held on August 20, 2005; November 12, 2006)*, Boom Japanese Festival* (June 25, 2005), *Comic Party* (May 28, 2006; October 4 & 5, 2008), *Japan Festa 2009* (August 30, 2009), *Capusule Event* (August 30, 2009) and other small conventions that have been held in Bangkok. I have visited the venues and observed the activities of them as a non-participant observer. For the better understanding of the convention and the activities in Thailand, I have also visited and observed the biggest *doujinshi* (or written as "*dojinshi*" which means "fanzines" or fan publications) market (convention) in Japan, *Comic Market*, in 2005 and 2009. (Figure 5.3) Although the aim of this chapter is not to compare the cosplayers between Thailand and Japan, the comparative observations help us understand the cosplay activity in Thailand.

Second, I have interviewed with several cosplayers and have conducted an informal questionnaire research to complement interviews. Although I have been at the venues of cosplay as an ethnographer, it was difficult to interview them at site because it would disturb their cosplay activities. Therefore, I tried to find Thai cosplayers through the internet, to which I found a few cosplayers who have become key informants for the research and I tried to interview their friends on casual occasions.

Additionally, at a manga convention which was held in Central World Plaza, Bangkok, on October 5, 2008, called *Comic Party #12* (Figure 5.3), one of my

informants made an arrangement that a group of her cosplay friends to gather at a pizza restaurant after the convention.   Instead of conducting a long interview with each of 26 cosplayers who came to the restaurant, I prepared questionnaire sheets on which interview questions were written in Thai and the cosplayers wrote their answers in the spaces provided on the sheets, which were designed as a substitute method for a vis-à-vis interview.   The answers to some questions in the questionnaire could be analyzed statistically and some opinions could be grouped to see their common characteristics and tendencies in the analyses.

Figure 5.3: *Comic Party #12* at Central World Plaza, Bangkok,
on October 4, 2008.   Photo by author.

Table 5.1 shows the age distribution of the 26 cosplayers.   The youngest is 14 years old and the oldest is 29 years old.   The average age is 22.23.   7.7% of them are male and 57.7% is female.   Since the personal information was asked at the end of the questionnaire sheet, many of them left some of the questions as blank and 34.6% did not indicate their sexual identity.   But in my observation, more than 70% of them are female.

Third, to supplement ethnography and vis-à-vis interviews, I sought the information on conventions, expos and other cosplayers through the Internet.   The information on the conventions and exhibitions for manga, anime and video game fans in Thailand can hardly be found on conventional mass media such as local newspapers or non-manga magazines in Thailand but most of the information is provided by Web sites on the Internet such as *Props & Ops*.   Also, many of the cosplayers have their own blog pages on blog services such as *hi5.com, Exteen.com* and *Multiplay.com* and show their cosplay photos to share with their friends.   By communicating with cosplayers through such Internet services, I could find the up-to-date information about cosplay activities in Thailand as well as recruiting cosplayers as the informants for the research.

Table 5.1: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [Age]									
		Sex						Total	
		Male		Female		No Answer			
Age	14	0	0.0%	1	3.8%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
	17	0	0.0%	1	3.8%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
	19	0	0.0%	3	11.5%	1	3.8%	4	15.4%
	20	0	0.0%	1	3.8%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
	21	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	7.7%	2	7.7%
	22	0	0.0%	1	3.8%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
	23	0	0.0%	3	11.5%	3	11.5%	6	23.1%
	24	1	3.8%	3	11.5%	2	7.7%	6	23.1%
	25	0	0.0%	1	3.8%	1	3.8%	2	7.7%
	26	1	3.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
	29	0	0.0%	1	3.8%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
Total		2	7.7%	15	57.7%	9	34.6%	26	100.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

What is Cosplay?

Origin of Cosplay

Cosplay is a costuming and performing activity that some fans of manga, anime and video games involve in when they participate at conventions and expos of such subcultures. The word "cosplay" is said to have its origin in the biggest and the most famous convention in Japan, the so called "Comic Market." Comic Market, shortened as "Comiket" (pronounced as *komike* or *komiketto* in Japanese), is the market place for doujinshis, which has been held since 1975 and is Japan's largest indoor public gathering operated by a single private non-governmental group. (Comic Market Preparations Committee 2008) At every Comic Market, hundreds of groups and circles of subculture fans come to the venue to sell doujinshis which are their creative work inspired from their favorite manga, anime or video games. (Figure 5.4) In such conventions, both sellers and buyers of doujinshis are fans of manga, anime and video games and some of them enjoy wearing costumes and accessories of characters in their favorite manga, anime or video games and they reenact scenes of the characters as performance. (Figure 5.5)

It is said that, in the beginning of the 20th century, "costume play" was started at Science-Fiction conventions in the USA and it came to the Science-Fiction conventions in Japan at the end of 1960s. The current style of cosplay at conventions and festivals for manga, anime and video games fans was started in the 1980s when the sellers and exhibitors of Comic Market dressed like characters in their doujinshi for promotional purposes. The costume play was called *manga kasou* (comic masquerade) in the beginning, and around 1985, the organizers of Comic Market, Comic Market Preparation Committee, coined it *kosupure* and today its English spelling

"cosplay" is widely known among the fans of Japanese subcultures in the world. (Comic Market Preparations Committee n.d.)

Unlike the western countries which have masquerades in traditions and cultures such as Halloween and masquerades at traditional festivals, ordinary people in Japan have never experienced masquerades in their lives because Japanese tradition and culture do not have such elements and it makes the cosplay of such subculture conventions outstanding in Japanese society today. Although the population of cosplayers is limited in Japan, their activities call attention of Japanese mass media and it has become a symbolic activity that fans of manga, anime and video games do at these conventions.

The first cosplay event in Thailand is said to be held in 1982 by the TV broadcasting company *Channel 9*. According to Props & Ops which is the most popular web site for cosplay fans in Thailand, Channel 9 held an exhibition for cartoon fans in 1982 and a costume contest was held at the event. (Props & Ops Cosplay Wiki, n.d.) It is said that many children participated in the contest and it was simply a "costume contest."

The first event, which started the cosplay of the present style, was held on March 15, 1998, by a group of manga and anime fans called "ACHO." (Shun 2007, January 18) At that time, "ACHO" had more than 200 members and the activities of the group contained making doujinshi by drawing and writing stories. Many of the fan activities of manga and anime are assumed to have been imported from Japan by that time and it was the third meeting of the group when another activity, that is "cosplay," was imported from Japan.

Figure 5.4: Circles (shops) that sell *Doujinshis* at the Doujinshi Market *Capsule #6*,
on August 30, 2009.   Photo by author.

Figure 5.5: A Sales Person of a Costume Shop, at *Capsule #6*,
on August 30, 2009.   Photo by author.

Studies on Manga and Anime

Since the 1990s, the presence of Japanese popular culture among youth in the world has become prominent and scholars, especially in cultural and media studies, discuss the issue from the viewpoint of media consumption.　As the Japanese bubble economy collapsed in the beginning of the1990s, Japanese manga publishers and broadcasting companies which produced anime have started to seek a way to increase the sales of the media and tried to find the customers outside of Japan who would buy the licenses of their manga and anime for localization in other countries.

　　　Based on such economic environments, Japanese manga and anime have been exported abroad and the popularity of such media has become so apparent that some scholars, especially in the media and Japanese studies, have focused on the phenomena as Japan's soft power. (Newitz 1995; Kinsella 1998; Allison 2000a, 2000b, 2006; Craig 2000; Shiraishi 2000)　As the increasing popularity is so eminent, some scholar says "the manga industry is one of postwar Japan's mammoth culture industries." (Kinsella 1999)　Another scholar attempts to analyze the contents of manga and anime and discuss the linguistic, cultural, social and political differences between Japan and the recipient country, that need to be solved when manga would go across the borders. (Shiraishi 1998)

Studies on Cosplay

Although manga and anime have succeeded to draw attentions of scholars of media and Japanese studies and many academic articles on the topics can be found today, "cosplay" does not seem to be a very popular theme for scholars to discuss and not many in-depth discussions can be found.　Kelts compares cosplay in conventions

between Japan and the United States and reports cosplay scenes that can be observed in Akihabara, Tokyo, to illustrate cosplay activity in everyday scenes in modern Japan. (Kelts 2006:147-154)   Napier introduces cosplay in *From Impressionism to Anime* and explains the origin of cosplay and reports how American cosplayers enjoy the activity. (Napier 2007:159-167)   Winge also explains the origin and the elements of cosplay in her article about cosplay, and she also attempts to discuss the complexities and dynamics of such cosplay with the concept of Robert Merton's "social structures," that are interactions, environments, and experiences. (Winge 2006)

Although there are some reports or books that mention the phenomenon of cosplay and manga conventions, cosplay has not been a main theme of academic researches.   The difficulty of studying on cosplay, I assume, lies in two problems that need to be solved.   First, the lack of static data about cosplay prevents us understanding the size and the magnitude of the phenomenon.   For instance, it is possible to find out the number of manga books sold in Thailand if manga publishers are willing to give us the sales figures.   We will know how many hours of anime are broadcast this month in Thailand if we can obtain the broadcasting program schedules from TV broadcasting companies.   But we have no concrete tools to figure out the number of cosplayers in Thailand.   Since we have no statistical data to calculate the size and magnitude of the cosplay market in Thailand, we can only estimate the number of cosplayers in Thailand but the reliability of the estimate is not very high.

Second, the resistance of cosplayers to the "curious" outsiders is a barrier that we have to overcome.   I have a few friends who are cosplayers in Japan.   Basically, they don't want to talk about their hobby to other people who are not cosplayers nor otaku.   In general, cosplayers and otaku people do not disclose their world to outsiders.

This means that cosplayers want to show their cosplay to other cosplayers or the fans of manga, anime or games. The outsiders of their world are not very welcome by the cosplayers. Interviews by academic researchers do not please cosplayers. To overcome the barrier, therefore, it is important to approach to them slowly and become friends before we actually conduct research on them.

The aim of this chapter is to see the roles and the activities of cosplayers in light of consumption of Japanese cultural products. To achieve the aim, the size of the cosplay market does not have priority but the thoughts and ideas of the Thai cosplayers are very important. Unlike the approach of the cultural studies, which is based on the continuous development of discussions and arguments on an issue, the ethnographic approach mainly focuses on the observations of actual activities and people. By observing their activities and listening to their thoughts and ideas, I will try to understand the cosplayers in the framework of Japanese cultural products consumption.

Discussion

Cosplay in Thailand (Ethnography)

In Thailand, the venues of cosplay are usually at manga (doujinshi) conventions, manga publishers' conventions and Japanese language school's conventions. Most of these conventions are held by (1) fan groups, (2) major manga publishers, (3) small manga publishers, or (4) Japanese language schools. In Japan, there are hundreds of small conventions organized and held by fan groups and it is assumed that manga and anime fans in Thailand are also interested in producing such conventions because creating and managing a convention is also one of the activities for manga and anime fans.

Besides fans themselves, some companies hold conventions for commercial purposes. There are six major manga publishers in Thailand (Table 5.2) and some of them have conventions to promote their manga magazines. A few small manga publishers also organize conventions of doujinshi market style to vitalize the manga and anime market. It is interesting to note that major Japanese language schools have "Japanese Festival" types of conventions which include many kinds of activities which introduce Japanese cultural products such as karaoke, J-Pop, J-Rock, manga, anime, and cosplay. Especially, one of the biggest Japanese language schools, *Mainichi Academic Group*, holds such conventions almost every month to promote Japanese "culture" to recruit language school students. (Figure 5.6)

Figure 5.6: Cosplayers at *Japan Festa 2009* by Mainichi Academy Group at
Siam Paragon, Bangkok, on August 29, 2009.   Photo by author.

The role and meaning of cosplay in a convention differs from one convention to another. At some conventions, "cosplay contest" is a major element and important event of the convention and cosplayers spend time and money in preparation of the cosplay and they need to register for the contest in advance. At other conventions, however, there is no special event for "cosplayers" so they walk around in the venue of the convention to show their costumes to other participants of the convention. In any cases, at such conventions, cosplayers try to show their costumes to others and others try to take photographs of cosplayers everywhere in the venue.

Most conventions and Japan festivals that I observed started between 10:30 am and 11:00 am. At the start time of the day, the organizers and the merchants that sell products gather at the venue but not many cosplayers or spectators are at the venue. At big conventions, scheduled events are prepared and depending on the schedule, the numbers of participants and observers at the venue vary. Even if there is a cosplay contest in the schedule, however, it is usually scheduled in the afternoon since it will be one of the main events in the convention. Thus, the peak time for cosplayers is in the afternoon.

In my observation, cosplayers come to the venue around noon and start preparing cosplay. Cosplay consists of costume, make-up, hair-style, props and performance. Most of them come to the venue with their plain everyday clothes and bring everything they need for cosplay with them. When they arrive at the venue, they change their clothes to the costumes at lavatories near the venue. Then, they put on make-up and set their hair-style at lavatories or somewhere around the venue. For a few times, I have observed cosplayers were sitting on the floor of a shopping mall, which was the venue for cosplay, and their friends were helping set a hair-style. I have

also noticed that some people who happened to come to the shopping mall were surprised to see cosplayers as well as they were putting on special make-ups around the venue.

Cosplayers, then, walk around the venue with props in hand, looking for friends, spectators and photographers. Spectators and amateur photographers also walk around the venue. At some conventions, a back screen for photo taking is prepared, but in most conventions, people will take photographs whenever cosplayers and photographers meet. (Figure 5.7) As a manner, photographers have to ask cosplayers for permission to take photographs. Then, cosplayers give permission and pose. This manner is started in Japan. Cosplayers usually want others to see their cosplay and it is difficult imagine that cosplayers say "no" to photographers when they are asked for pose. The reason for this manner is that it will allow cosplayer to prepare for best shot and pose the favorite character. Cosplay is a kind of art performance for them and posing is also important part of it. This manner, therefore, started in Japan and it seems Thai cosplayers and photographers follow.

Thai cosplayers walk around the venue in costumes until the time they decide to leave the shopping mall or the building of the convention halls. Until then, they meet with friends and take photographs each other. They will go to restaurants or shops in costumes and enjoy the time of cosplay. When they decide to leave the venue, they take off the make-up and set hair-style for normal and change their clothes to everyday clothes. Then, many of the cosplayers go to restaurants or coffee places with friends and enjoys talking with friends, exchange information and plan new cosplay for next convention.

Figure 5.7: Cosplayers and Amateur Photographers at *Comic Season*
on November 12, 2006.   Photo by author.

In Japan, the host organizations of manga conventions today try to isolate the venue from other "ordinary" people.   Especially, many of the manga conventions have strict rules for cosplayers to obey.   For instance, in Comiket, cosplayers have to register and pay some fee to use special locker rooms for cosplayers.   They have to change clothes at the locker rooms and they can only go to the designated area, called "kosupure hiroba" ("costume-play public square") for cosplay where cosplayers show their costumes and performance and photographers gather there to take photographs of such cosplay. (Comic Market Preparations Committee 2009:18-21)   In Comiket, cosplayers cannot even go to the area of the doujinshi market because it may disturb other people's activities and traffic of the people or it may cause other troubles if people try to take photographs of the cosplayer.

It seems that the host organizations of conventions and Japan festivals in Thailand are lenient in terms of cosplay activities at the venue.   As most of the cosplay

venues in Thailand are located in shopping malls or convention halls in the central city area, however, it is inevitable that the people on the street encounter with cosplayers and they are allowed to do cosplay in such place.   It means that the landlord of the venue and the merchants around the venue are also lenient for such activities.   Thai cosplayers are walking around the shopping malls and they have lunch at restaurants in their costumes.   In Thai society, people are expected to observe proper decorum and dress code at work place or formal occasion is rather strict.   But so far, it seems that the Thai society allows "cosplay" at manga conventions and Japan festivals.

The differences between Thailand and Japan in terms of the strictness in rules may lie in the size of the conventions.   Today, manga conventions in Japan have become rather big in size.   At Comiket, the number of attendees in Summer 2006 hit 550,000 and it is required to have strict rules and formats to organize such big conventions.   In conventions and festivals in Thailand, attendees range several hundreds to a few thousands.   When the number of attendees grows to be tens and hundreds of thousands, they may have to have very strict rule and formats to organize the conventions and festivals.

Table 5.2: Six Major Manga Publishers in Thailand
Siam Inter Multimedia Co., Ltd.
Vibulkij Publishing Group Co., Ltd.
Nation Egmont Edutaiment Co., Ltd.
Burapat Comic Ltd. Part
Bongkoch Publishing Co., Ltd.
Tomorrow Comix Co., Ltd.

Source: JETRO Report (JETRO 2007: 42)

Close Examination of Questionnaire Results

Why Cosplay?

Answers that the cosplayers have written on the questionnaire sheets will help us understand the cosplay activity. Before I start a close examination of the answers written on the questionnaire sheets, however, I have to explain a few points, which should help us understand the answers to the questions. First, many of the questions are open-ended and the cosplayers were allowed to write their opinions and thoughts freely on the sheets. As a result of this, to a certain question, one could write many thoughts and opinions and another could leave the space blank and express no opinion. Although the number of cosplayers who responded to the questionnaire is 26, therefore, the total number N in some tables that are shown in this study often counts more than 26.

Second, to some questions, some of the cosplayers wrote answers which might not respond to the questions directly. It is assumed that sometimes they misread the intention of the researcher in the question and other times they could not think of good answers to the question and they wrote something indirectly related to the question instead. Unlike a vis-à-vis interview, this is paper-based interview and the researcher could not paraphrase the questions when the respondents had difficulty in understanding the intention of the researcher. It is important to note, however, that because this study tries to approach the issue by the qualitative method, not by the quantitative one, any thoughts and opinions written on the questionnaire are important data to understand the cosplayers.

Among the questions in the questionnaire, I have been particularly interested in asking Thai cosplayers "What was a start to do cosplay?" and "Why do you cosplay?

Why are you fascinated by cosplay?" The answers have been written freely but I could find some similar comments among them and Table 5.3 and 5.4 show their typical answers to these questions. Many of the cosplayers took the former question as a question to ask the reason for cosplay and wrote reasons to start cosplay although the question was intended to find out the first opportunity to do cosplay. Then, to the latter question, many of them wrote how they were enjoying cosplay activities.

As shown in Table 5.3, many of them wrote that they started to cosplay because they liked Japanese cultural products (indicated "CP" in the table) – manga (22.5%), anime (12.5%), games (7.5%) and J-Rock bands (5.0%) – which sums up to 47.5% of the responses. 17.5% of the responses indicate that the cosplayers have favorite characters (indicated "CH" in the table) and they wanted to express their love to them or they wanted to understand the character by cosplay. Among other answers (indicated "OT" in the table), 15.0% indicated that the cosplayers started cosplay because their friends asked them to try and 10% of them started because it looked interesting. Some cosplayers might have started cosplay because they liked cosplay itself and they might have developed more interests in manga, anime and games after they become cosplayers. The answers to this question did not provide the detailed process of becoming cosplayers but the result suggests that cosplay has a growing popularity and some Thai youth may have become manga, anime or game fans through cosplay activity.

The responses of the cosplayers to the questions "Why do you cosplay?" and "Why are you fascinated by cosplay?" are shown in Table 5.4. The result reveals how the cosplayers enjoy cosplay at these conventions and why they come to the cosplay venue repeatedly. It is very important to note that 26.3% of the responses indicate that the purpose of cosplay is "to meet with people of the same hobby" and that 7.9% were

"to make friends." This result suggests that participating in cosplay activities at manga, anime or game conventions means meeting and making friends of the same hobby. The venues of cosplay are considered as a meeting place of fans of manga, anime and games.

The responses that can be categorized as "interest in" and "enjoyment of" playing favorite characters (indicated "CH" in the Table 5.4) are summed up to 50.0%. In any venues of conventions or festivals that allow cosplay activities, I have observed the cosplayers enjoying playing characters. They walk around the venue to show their costumes and props. They strike poses for photographs. They take photographs of friends who are also cosplayers. This questionnaire result proves that one of the main purposes of cosplay is to experience the role-playing characters and it is the important part of the hobby.

Table 5.3: A Start to do Cosplay					
		Responses			Case
		N	Percent	Category	Percent
I like manga	CP	9	22.5%		34.6%
I like anime	CP	5	12.5%	47.5%	19.2%
I like games	CP	3	7.5%		11.5%
I like J-Rock bands	CP	2	5.0%		7.7%
I have favorite characters	CH	3	7.5%		11.5%
I wanted to play my favorite characters	CH	2	5.0%	17.5%	7.7%
I wanted to know more about my favorite characters	CH	1	2.5%		3.8%
I wanted to realize my favorite characters	CH	1	2.5%		3.8%
A friend asked me if I wanted to try	OT	6	15.0%		23.1%
It looked interesting when I saw it	OT	4	10.0%		15.4%
I wanted to meet with people of the same hobby	OT	2	5.0%	35.0%	7.7%
I like fashion	OT	1	2.5%		3.8%
I wanted to express my love for manga	OT	1	2.5%		3.8%
Total		40	100.0%	100.0%	153.8%
CP=Cultural Products, CH=Character, OT=Others					
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.					

Table 5.4: Reason for Cosplay					
		Number of			Case
		N	Percent	Category	Percent
To enjoy playing characters that I like	CH	7	18.4%		26.9%
To play favorite characters -Identify with characters	CH	5	13.2%		19.2%
To understand my favorite characters	CH	3	7.9%	50.0%	11.5%
To express my love for the characters	CH	1	2.6%		3.8%
To experience the unreal world	CH	2	5.3%		7.7%
To enjoy becoming others	CH	1	2.6%		3.8%
To enjoy making costumes and options	FA	3	7.9%	10.5%	11.5%
To enjoy hairstyles	FA	1	2.6%		3.8%
To meet with people of the same hobby	FR	10	26.3%	34.2%	38.5%
To make friends	FR	3	7.9%		11.5%
To have more confidence in oneself	OT	1	2.6%	5.3%	3.8%
To enjoy doing something new	OT	1	2.6%		3.8%
Total		38	100.0%	100.0%	146.2%
CH=Character, FA=Fashion, FR=Friends, OT=Other					
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.					

Cosplay as a Creative Activity

The expressiveness of the cosplayer involves in realization of his/her favorite character at the convention venue by costumes, props, makeup, hair-style**s** and performance. Cosplayers show off their costumes and props which are often handmade by themselves and the most important audience is other cosplayers who are the friends of the same hobby. At big conventions, they are likely to find other cosplayers who choose to cosplay the same characters and it means the same character cosplayers are contesting in front of the audience who will naturally evaluate the expressiveness of the same character cosplays.

As shown in Table 5.5, self-made (22.2%) and tailor-made (36.1%) occupy more than 50% of the costume making and buying ready-made costumes at shops is only 11.1%. In general, the cosplayers try to make costumes partially or totally. I assume there are two reasons for self-made costumes. First, it will reduce the cost of the costumes. In the questionnaire result, the budget for a costume ranges from 600 Baht (approx. US$20) to 1,500 Baht (approx. US$50) and the average is 1058.33 Baht (approx. US$35). The cosplayers prefer to make new costumes for each convention they attend because the audience is their friends and they need to show off their new costumes. Second, for a cosplayer, making costumes is important part of cosplay activity and it is the creative part of it. Many cosplayers whom I talked to in Japan also said that as a good cosplayer, one should make costumes by oneself if one wants to be a true cosplayer.

Table 5.5: How to prepare costumes			
	Responses		Case
	N	Percentile	Percentile
Tailor Made	13	36.1%	50.0%
Self Made	8	22.2%	30.8%
Buy materials, make patterns by oneself, and ask tailors to make	5	13.9%	19.2%
Buy at shops	4	11.1%	15.4%
Partially Self Made	4	11.1%	15.4%
Borrow from Friends	2	5.6%	7.7%
Total	36	100.0%	138.5%
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.			

What's Good about Cosplay?

Every month, there are several conventions of manga, anime or games held in Bangkok and cosplayers screen which ones to participate.   They usually attend such conventions repeatedly, for instance monthly or biweekly, and in most cases, cosplayers do not participate in conventions alone.   In my observations, some of them come to the convention venue by a group and others come to the venue individually but most of them are interacting with other cosplayers of a group to which they belong.   After observing several conventions, I realized that they come to the venue to cosplay but they also come to meet with friends.   A careful observation of their cosplay activities has lead me think that it is unlikely to happen that a first time cosplayer comes to the venue alone without knowing anybody else in the convention.

Table 5.6 shows the answers that the respondents wrote to the question "What is good about cosplay?"   Not many respondents wrote answers to this question but if we look at the answers to the next question "Has cosplay changed your life?" (Table 5.7), many of them pointed out that they made many friends through cosplay activity

and their life has been changed by the hobby.

In Japan and probably in other countries, too, people who are not familiar with Japanese subcultures tend to have prejudices that fans of Japanese subcultures are too obsessed with manga, anime and games and they usually do not go out of their home and reading manga, watching anime and playing game**s** in their room alone. The observations of cosplayers and the questionnaire results point out, however, that cosplayers are enjoying interaction with other cosplayers, spectators, and photographers through their activity and they are making friends through it.

Table 5.6: What's good about Cosplay (Ranking)				
		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	I can do what I want to do	4	36.4%	50.0%
2	Can spend time with the friends of the same hobby	2	18.2%	25.0%
3	Made a lot of friends	2	18.2%	25.0%
4	Cost a lot of money	2	18.2%	25.0%
5	Become good at time management	1	9.1%	12.5%
	Total	11	100.0%	137.5%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 5.7: Influence of Cosplay on Life (Ranking)				
		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	Made many friends	16	53.3%	61.5%
2	Changed	5	16.7%	19.2%
3	Have more chances to go out	4	13.3%	15.4%
4	Become more self-confident	4	13.3%	15.4%
5	I don't know	1	3.3%	3.8%
	Total	30	100.0%	115.4%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 5.8: Start Age				
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percentile	Cumulative Percentile
Valid	12	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	13	2	7.7	7.7	11.5
	14	1	3.8	3.8	15.4
	15	4	15.4	15.4	30.8
	16	3	11.5	11.5	42.3
	17	6	23.1	23.1	65.4
	18	3	11.5	11.5	76.9
	20	2	7.7	7.7	84.6
	21	1	3.8	3.8	88.5
	22	1	3.8	3.8	92.3
	24	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 5.8 shows that 76.9% of the respondents started to cosplay when they were in the secondary school age (between 12-18 years old).   In the secondary school age, our social activity is usually limited in schools or home and social interactions are also limited to school friends, teachers or family members.   But the cosplayers who started to participate in conventions had opportunities to meet with the people of different social backgrounds, of different age groups, from different regions and so on and they could become friends beyond such differences.

When we look at cosplay activities, we tend to look at the surface of the phenomenon; fancy costumes, makeup, hairstyles, and so on.   However, if we look at the issue from the viewpoint of the adolescent development, it is a socialization process that the hobby can provide outside of schools and home.   Although this chapter does not aim to include the social psychological and educational meanings of cosplay activity, the questionnaire results suggest that cosplay activities may have a considerable influence on the development of the adolescent cosplayers.

In terms of the exposure to the Japanese cultural products, socialization in the environment that various types of Japanophiles get together should have influence on the individual's consumption of other Japanese cultural products.   By interacting with other cosplayers and friends of the same hobby, they should be exposed to other Japanese cultural products that they haven't been before.   This chapter, therefore, tries to seek the process of the exposure to Japanese cultural products through cosplay activity.

Manga vs. Thai comics

If Thai youth prefers to read manga to Thai comics, there should be some reasons underlying which are the differences between Thai and Japanese comics.   In the questionnaire, therefore, I asked "What is the difference between Thai and Japanese comics?"   Table 5.9 is the answers of the respondents to the question.   As we can see from the table, many of the respondents point out that the stories of manga are better and interesting and manga has more variations of the themes.   Others point out that manga has a longer history than Thai comics and its creative skills and techniques are considered to be better.

In addition to the better stories and techniques of manga, it is important to note that three said "in Thailand, comics are considered for children."   This comment reminded me that, in August 2005, when I met and interviewed with the manga fan group that started the manga convention called "Comic Season" in Thailand, I asked them why they preferred manga to Thai comics.   Som (pseudonym), the leader of the group, told me that in Thailand, comics are for children and there are no Thai comics for

youth and adults. (Personal communication 2005, August 28)   Some of the Western writers and scholars also point out the quality of the story development of manga is the key to understand the popularity of manga in the world today.   In *Dreamland Japan*, for instance, Schodt points out that "the real hallmark of manga is storytelling and character development" and "many American artists have been heavily influenced by Japanese manga in recent years." (Schodt 1996: 25)   In the forward to the third edition of *Anime from Akira to Howl's moving castle*, Napier also emphasizes that "anime is definitely not only for children." (Napier 2005)

As an answer to the question of Table 5.9, two have commented that "the values of elder Thai people prevent the development of Thai comics."   The values of elder Thai people are not explained in the comment, however, when we read the criticisms on manga, we can see how the elder Thai people perceive manga that are sometimes "comics for adults."

> From many studies done in Thailand, educators and new**s**paper columnists criticize these manga as trash.   The quality of artwork is low.   The humor often belongs to the category of dirty jokes. Violence abounds, with torture causing pain, while eroticism adding a further twist.   (Pravalpruk 1990:18)

Under such social environments toward "comics for adults," it may be difficult for Thai artists to create comics for adults in the Thai society.   In the case of Hong Kong in the 1970s, the social pressure made a new law to control comic books because comics were considered "harmful" and Japanese comics disappeared from the local market of Hong Kong. (Lai and Wah Wong 2001:115-116)   But in Thailand, although certain genres are prohibited, manga has been imported from Japan to satisfy the desires of Thai youth to

read a variety of stories as the entertainment for adults.

	Table 5.9: Compare Manga - Thai and Japanese	Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	Story development, contents, graphics are different	6	15.8%	23.1%
2	Thai comics are copies of Japanese	4	10.5%	15.4%
3	Experience and technique	3	7.9%	11.5%
4	Japanese manga has variety	3	7.9%	11.5%
5	Thai comics have no variety	3	7.9%	11.5%
6	In Thailand, comics are considered for children	3	7.9%	11.5%
7	New ideas in the contents	2	5.3%	7.7%
8	The values of the elder Thai people prevent the development of Thai manga	2	5.3%	7.7%
9	-I don't read Thai comics	2	5.3%	7.7%
10	-I have not read Manga before	1	2.6%	3.8%
11	Color, images and sound are different	1	2.6%	3.8%
12	Culture	1	2.6%	3.8%
13	Stories of Japanese manga are deep	1	2.6%	3.8%
14	Japanese manga is used for educational purposes	1	2.6%	3.8%
15	Japanese manga stories are interesting	1	2.6%	3.8%
16	Motivation is different	1	2.6%	3.8%
17	Thai manga has less kinds	1	2.6%	3.8%
18	Thai manga is based on old stories -folklores	1	2.6%	3.8%
19	Thai manga lacks technique	1	2.6%	3.8%
	Total	38	100.0%	146.2%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Differences and Similarities

There are other questions in the questionnaire to see how the Thai cosplayers think about differences and similarities between Thailand and other countries. In Table 5.10, the answers to the question "What are the differences in cosplay between Thailand and Japan?" are listed. Since cosplay is imported from Japan and the styles and organizations of the conventions for manga, anime and games are also imported from Japan, they should find more similarities in cosplay activities between Thailand and Japan. Some have pointed out that the differences reflect the differences of the social and economic environment of the two countries. Basically, the styles of cosplay between the two countries are similar as Japan is being the model for Thai cosplay.

Table 5.11 shows the comments to the question "What are the differences between Japanese games and Korean / Other games?" In Thailand, with the advancement of the Internet environment, especially in the metropolitan area, there are many Internet cafes that provide the environment to play online multiplayer games, which are developed by Korean companies. By reviewing the table, it seems that Thai youth play Japanese games, which are the so-called "package game," and they play Korean online games.

Japanese game titles are often published as manga and/or anime. Sometimes a manga book is released first and anime and game will be published later. Other times, a game is released first and anime and/or manga will follow it, e.g. Pokemon. The advantage of Japanese manga, anime and games is the multimedia development that one title is distributed in manga, anime and game media. Cosplay, therefore, has close relationship with manga, anime and games.

Table 5.10: Differences of Cosplay between Thailand and Japan			
Differences between TH and JP	Responses		Case
	N	Percentile	Percentile
1	same -no difference	11	32.4%	44.0%
2	CosPlay is more popular in Japan	4	11.8%	16.0%
3	Costume making method is different	3	8.8%	12.0%
4	Japanese society acknowledges CosPlay	2	5.9%	8.0%
5	Japanese Cosplays are better because the characters are Japanese	2	5.9%	8.0%
6	Society and culture is different	2	5.9%	8.0%
7	Japanese CosPlayers are better in making costumes	1	2.9%	4.0%
8	Japan has more variety	1	2.9%	4.0%
9	Posture for photography is better in Japan	1	2.9%	4.0%
10	Materials for costumes are different	1	2.9%	4.0%
11	The quality of the costumes are better in Japan	1	2.9%	4.0%
12	The climate is different -it is hot to CosPlay in Thailand	1	2.9%	4.0%
13	Japanese make costumes by themselves, Thais have them tailored	1	2.9%	4.0%
14	It is originated in Japan and Thailand copied it from Japan	1	2.9%	4.0%
15	More people are making costumes by themselves in Thailand	1	2.9%	4.0%
16	Options are different	1	2.9%	4.0%
	Total	34	100.0%	136.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

170

Table 5.11: Compare Games (Japan, Korea and Others)		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	-I only play Japanese games	4	12.9%	16.0%
2	Korean games are only online	4	12.9%	16.0%
3	Same -Not different	4	12.9%	16.0%
4	Language reflects on story -Social & Cultural Diff	3	9.7%	12.0%
5	-I don't know	3	9.7%	12.0%
6	-I do not play games	2	6.5%	8.0%
7	Character design	2	6.5%	8.0%
8	Japanese games have targeted the whole world	1	3.2%	4.0%
9	Can enjoy as if seeing Japanese manga or anime	1	3.2%	4.0%
10	J game makes me feel like I am the character in the game	1	3.2%	4.0%
11	Depth of the story	1	3.2%	4.0%
12	Korean games are targeted to a limited market	1	3.2%	4.0%
13	Korean games are a copy of Japanese games	1	3.2%	4.0%
14	Korean characters are more beautiful	1	3.2%	4.0%
15	Korean games have no variety	1	3.2%	4.0%
16	Korean games are complex	1	3.2%	4.0%
	Total	31	100.0%	124.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Favorite Characters

Tables 5.12, 5.13 and 5.14 show the favorite characters of manga, anime and games. I do not analyze the contents of each title nor do I compare the popularity of them with Japan because it is not the intention of this chapter. As we can see in the lists, however, many titles are published in both manga and anime such that *The Prince of Tennis, Neon Genesis Evangelion, Gundam, Higurashi no Naku Koroni, Macross and Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon* while game titles are rather independent from the lists of manga and anime except *Harukanaru Tokino nakade*.

These characters are also popular among Japanese manga and anime fans as they are sometimes chosen to be independent genre in the catalog of Comiket. (Comic Market Preparations Committee 2009:32-33) The tables of the favorite characters are included in this chapter as a reference for further studies in the future.

Table 5.12: Favorite Manga			
	Responses		Case
	N	Percentile	Percentile
1 The Prince of Tennis	5	15.2%	20.0%
2 Katekyo Hitman Reborn	3	9.1%	12.0%
3 Too many to list	3	9.1%	12.0%
4 Dragonball	2	6.1%	8.0%
5 Eye Shield 21	2	6.1%	8.0%
6 Neon Genesis Evangelion	2	6.1%	8.0%
7 Berserk	1	3.0%	4.0%
8 BLEACH	1	3.0%	4.0%
9 Cardcaptor Sakura	1	3.0%	4.0%
10 CIPHER	1	3.0%	4.0%
11 Manga Artist Group "CLAMP" works	1	3.0%	4.0%
12 God Child	1	3.0%	4.0%
13 Gundam	1	3.0%	4.0%
14 Harukanaru Toki no Naka de	1	3.0%	4.0%
15 Higurashi no Naku Koro ni	1	3.0%	4.0%
16 JoJo's Bizzare Adventure	1	3.0%	4.0%
17 Lucky Star	1	3.0%	4.0%
18 Macross	1	3.0%	4.0%
19 Naruto	1	3.0%	4.0%
20 Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon	1	3.0%	4.0%
21 Skip Beat	1	3.0%	4.0%
22 Unreadable	1	3.0%	4.0%
Total	33	100.0%	132.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 5.13: Favorite Anime		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	Code Geass	6	18.2%	23.1%
2	Gundam	3	9.1%	11.5%
3	The Prince of Tennis	3	9.1%	11.5%
4	Higurashi no Naku Koro ni	2	6.1%	7.7%
5	Macross	2	6.1%	7.7%
6	Neon Genesis Evangelion	2	6.1%	7.7%
7	Spirited Away	2	6.1%	7.7%
8	Aria	1	3.0%	3.8%
9	Chibi Maruko-chan	1	3.0%	3.8%
10	Crayon Shinchan	1	3.0%	3.8%
11	Ghibli Anime	1	3.0%	3.8%
12	Ghost in the Shell	1	3.0%	3.8%
13	Kuroshitsuji	1	3.0%	3.8%
14	Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon	1	3.0%	3.8%
15	Princess Mononoke	1	3.0%	3.8%
16	Yu Yu Hakusho	1	3.0%	3.8%
17	Yu-Gi-Oh	1	3.0%	3.8%
18	One Piece	1	3.0%	3.8%
19	Hunter Hunter	1	3.0%	3.8%
20	Too many to list	1	3.0%	3.8%
	Total	33	100.0%	126.9%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	Final Fantasy	8	25.0%	30.8%
2	Fatal Frame	3	9.4%	11.5%
3	Persona	2	6.3%	7.7%
4	Tokimeki Memorial Girl's Side	2	6.3%	7.7%
5	Dot Hack	1	3.1%	3.8%
6	Bishi Bashi	1	3.1%	3.8%
7	Castlevania Dungeon	1	3.1%	3.8%
8	Dokapon Kingdom	1	3.1%	3.8%
9	Genji	1	3.1%	3.8%
10	Harukanaru Toki no Naka de	1	3.1%	3.8%
11	Kingdom Hearts	1	3.1%	3.8%
12	Mario games	1	3.1%	3.8%
13	Okami	1	3.1%	3.8%
14	Sonic Games	1	3.1%	3.8%
15	Super Robot Wars	1	3.1%	3.8%
16	Togainu no Chi	1	3.1%	3.8%
17	Yu-Gi-Oh	1	3.1%	3.8%
18	RPG	1	3.1%	3.8%
19	Too many to list	1	3.1%	3.8%
20	-I don't play games	1	3.1%	3.8%
21	No Answer	1	3.1%	3.8%
	Total	32	100.0%	123.1%

Table 5.14: Favorite Game

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Source of Information

As stated earlier in this chapter, cosplayers use Internet heavily and very often. As we can see in the Table 5.15, twenty cosplayers say their source of information is the Internet. Moreover, they communicate with friends through the Internet very often and observe other cosplayers' photos on Blog services. It is no doubt that the Internet is the main source of Information for cosplayers and the network with friends are very important for them.

Dependency on Internet communication and the importance of the friend network is also true in Japan. In Japan, a few cosplay magazines are published regularly and other ad hoc publications on cosplay can be found in bookstores but the latest information on conventions and other cosplayers are usually provided on web sites and the Japanese cosplayers are also heavy users of the Internet.

In fact, Thai cosplayers also browse Japanese web sites to get the most up-to-date information about manga, anime, games and cosplay activities. As we can see in the Table 5.16, six cosplayers say their favorite web site is cure.livedoor.com, which is in Japanese.

Table 5.15: Information Sources				
		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	Internet	20	57.1%	76.9%
2	Friends	12	34.3%	46.2%
3	Observing others	1	2.9%	3.8%
4	Anime Events	1	2.9%	3.8%
5	Magazines	1	2.9%	3.8%
	Total	35	100.0%	134.6%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

In addition to the Internet and friends, Thai cosplayers get information from cosplay magazines. *Cosmode* and *Dengeki Layers* are cosplay magazines that are published in Japan. (Table 5.17) Although these magazines are relatively expensive, these are available at the Japanese bookstores such that *Kinokuniya* and *Tokyodo* bookstores.

		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	cure.livedoor.com (now it redirects to: ja.curecos.com)	6	23.1%	25.0%
2	CCATH	5	19.2%	20.8%
3	Propops.com	5	19.2%	20.8%
4	Cosplay.com	3	11.5%	12.5%
5	None in Particular	3	11.5%	12.5%
6	Multiply.com (SNS)	2	7.7%	8.3%
7	Kiri Kyousuke - (No Longer exists)	1	3.8%	4.2%
8	Exteen.com	1	3.8%	4.2%
	Total	26	100.0%	108.3%

Table 5.16: Favorite Web Site

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	-I don't read magazines	10	52.6%	58.8%
2	Cosmode	5	26.3%	29.4%
3	Dengeki Layer	2	10.5%	11.8%
4	Otaku Magazine	1	5.3%	5.9%
5	J-Spy	1	5.3%	5.9%
	Total	19	100.0%	111.8%

Table 5.17: Favorite Magazines

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Other Japanese Cultural Products

What kind of hobbies are cosplayers interested in except cosplay? I expected that manga, anime and games would be the top three on the list, but as Table 5.18 shows, "reading books" is the most favorite hobby among the cosplayers in this research. Among manga, anime and games, games are the first that appear on the list; manga is 7th and anime is 8th in the ranking.

"Writing fan fictions and doujinshi" (5th) and "drawing pictures" (6th) are a part of fan activity that manga, anime and game fans involve in conventions and group events; "photography" (10th) and "fashion & accessory making" (13th) can be considered as a part of cosplay activities. It is interesting to note that two cosplayers indicated that they are "seiyu" (9th) fans. "Seiyu" literally means a voice actor in Japanese. Today, since seiyus of anime attract so many fans that many of them release music / narration CDs and they sometimes have concert events for fans.

Reviewing the hobbies that the cosplayers wrote in the questionnaire, most of their hobbies are related to cosplay or manga, anime and games and their pastime is enlightened by the Japanese subcultures.

Table 5.18: Hobbies				
		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	Reading Books	9	18.8%	36.0%
2	Games	8	16.7%	32.0%
3	Music	5	10.4%	20.0%
4	Internet -Net Surfing	5	10.4%	20.0%
5	Writing Fan Fictions & Doujinshi	4	8.3%	16.0%
6	Drawing pictures	3	6.3%	12.0%
7	Comic Books	3	6.3%	12.0%
8	TV Animations	3	6.3%	12.0%
9	Seiyu	2	4.2%	8.0%
10	Photography	2	4.2%	8.0%
11	Karaoke	2	4.2%	8.0%
12	Watch movies	1	2.1%	4.0%
13	Fashion & Accessory making	1	2.1%	4.0%
	Total	48	100.0%	192.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

The names of Japanese artists and performers that the Thai cosplayers wrote in the questionnaire as their favorite idols are shown in Table 5.19. Eleven out of the eighteen names are music artists that are indicated as P (Pop singers, pop idols or pop idol group) or R (Rock band or rock vocalist). The result indicates that J-Pop and J-Rock are relatively popular among the cosplayers while actors and actresses who often appear on Japanese TV drama are less popular among the Thai cosplayers.

Although the list shows seventeen names of Japanese idols, many of them have only one person who wrote the name in the questionnaire. The total count in N is relatively small and I can assume the J-Pop and J-Rock fans in the Thai cosplayers are limited in number.

Table 5.19: Favorite Idol			Responses		Case
			N	Percentile	Percentile
1	Hirano Aya	S	3	13.6%	15.0%
2	Morning Musume	P	2	9.1%	10.0%
3	Nakagawa Shoko	P	2	9.1%	10.0%
4	Dir En Grey	R	1	4.5%	5.0%
5	LArc-en-Ciel	R	1	4.5%	5.0%
6	Baba Toru	S	1	4.5%	5.0%
7	Fukada Kyoko	A	1	4.5%	5.0%
8	Hamasaki Ayumi	P	1	4.5%	5.0%
9	Hyde (Vocalist of Larc-en-Ciel)	R	1	4.5%	5.0%
10	Imai Tsubasa -Tackey & Tsubasa	P	1	4.5%	5.0%
11	Koike Teppei -Wat	P	1	4.5%	5.0%
12	Koshinaka Makoto -ex-Lucifer	R	1	4.5%	5.0%
13	Mao -Sid	P	1	4.5%	5.0%
14	Matsumoto Rica -Rika	S	1	4.5%	5.0%
15	Nakagauchi Masataka	A	1	4.5%	5.0%
16	Takizawa Hideaki -Tackey & Tsubasa	P	1	4.5%	5.0%
17	Toda Erika	A	1	4.5%	5.0%
18	No favorite Japanese idol		1	4.5%	5.0%
	Total		22	100.0%	110.0%

S=	Seiyu (Voice Actor/Actress)
P=	Pop Singer / Pop Idol / Pop Idol Group
R=	Rock Band / Rock Vocalist
A=	Actor / Actress

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Japanese Language Study

Language is an important factor when individuals consume media products such as manga, anime and games. Although many manga titles are translated into Thai and anime are shown with subtitles or dubbed into Thai, some Japanese language ability will help fans of these types of Japanese subculture to obtain the most up-to-date information and also to consume those titles that are not yet translated into Thai. Many of the informants for my research on Japanese cultural products in Thailand have had experience studying Japanese, and I assumed that fans of manga, anime and games would be no exception. To test this assumption, I asked Thai cosplayers about their experience of studying Japanese.

As shown in Table 5.20, 42.3% of the Thai cosplayers have studied Japanese and 23.1% of them are currently studying Japanese. The result that the two thirds of the cosplayers have studied Japanese seems a considerably high ratio. I also asked them the reasons for studying Japanese.

Table 5.20: Cross Tabulation – [Sex] * [Japanese Language Study]									
		JP-Lang						Total	
		Never studied Japanese -NO		Now studying Japanese -YES		I have studied Japanese -YES			
Sex	Male	2	7.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	7.7%
	Female	6	23.1%	4	15.4%	5	19.2%	15	57.7%
	No Answer	1	3.8%	2	7.7%	6	23.1%	9	34.6%
Total		9	34.6%	6	23.1%	11	42.3%	26	100.0%
N=26									
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.									

As you see in Table 5.21, most of them have studied Japanese in order to read manga in Japanese, to watch anime in Japanese and to play games in Japanese. Other reasons such as "to watch Japanese TV drama," "to read the blogs of Japanese idols," or "to understand the lyrics of J-Pop songs" also inspired them to study Japanese. It is interesting to note that only two have mentioned "business" as the purpose for their Japanese language study. Most of them studied Japanese to enjoy the Japanese cultural products.

	Table 5.21: Reasons to study Japanese			
		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	For game, manga and business	2	15.4%	16.7%
2	Want to understand Japanese drama, movies and anime	2	15.4%	16.7%
3	I like the Japanese language	1	7.7%	8.3%
4	Want to play games in Japanese	1	7.7%	8.3%
5	Want to read the blogs of Japanese talents	1	7.7%	8.3%
6	Want to read manga in Japanese	1	7.7%	8.3%
7	Want to study Anime in Japan	1	7.7%	8.3%
8	Want to talk with the authors of manga	1	7.7%	8.3%
9	Wanted to understand Japanese	1	7.7%	8.3%
10	Wanted to understand the lyrics of songs	1	7.7%	8.3%
11	Wanted to go to Japan	1	7.7%	8.3%
	Total	13	100.0%	108.3%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

In general, it is considered that about 60-80% of cosplayers at the conventions are female and that most of the Japanese language major students at universities in Thailand are also female.   If we apply this general tendency to the case of cosplayers, therefore, we could assume that more female cosplayers study Japanese than male cosplayers.   Although the number of male cosplayers in this questionnaire study is limited and we have to understand that the result is also limited in scope, the figures in Table 5.20 should suggest close relationships between "gender and Japanese language study" and "gender and Japanese cultural products."

Impression of the Japanese

In addition to the questions that relate to Japanese subcultures, I asked the cosplayers about the impression of the Japanese people.   I expected that some of them may have creative and artistic impressions towards the Japanese because their favorite manga, anime and games have been born in Japan.   Despite the expectation, however, as shown in Table 5.22, the impressions of the Japanese that the Thai cosplayers have had were "punctual," "good manner," "serious," "diligent," and so forth which are stereotypical image of the Japanese.   The stereotypical image may have been created by the Japanese businessmen living in Thailand.   In 2004, there are 1,207 companies registered as members of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok (Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok 2005), and today the Thai youth are exposed to the Japanese in Thailand.

Table 5.22: Impressions about Japanese People			
		Responses		Case
		N	Percentile	Percentile
1	Punctual	6	13.3%	26.1%
2	Have good manners	5	11.1%	21.7%
3	Serious	3	6.7%	13.0%
4	Diligent	3	6.7%	13.0%
5	Too serious	3	6.7%	13.0%
6	Too stressed-out	3	6.7%	13.0%
7	Enthusiastic	2	4.4%	8.7%
8	Polite	2	4.4%	8.7%
9	Too strict	2	4.4%	8.7%
10	Too reserved	2	4.4%	8.7%
11	Perseveres	1	2.2%	4.3%
12	Hospitality	1	2.2%	4.3%
13	Loyalty	1	2.2%	4.3%
14	Patriotic	1	2.2%	4.3%
15	Value traditions	1	2.2%	4.3%
16	Talk real intentions	1	2.2%	4.3%
17	Cultural differences exist	1	2.2%	4.3%
18	Cold-hearted	1	2.2%	4.3%
19	Smoke cigarettes	1	2.2%	4.3%
20	Too enthusiastic to understand others	1	2.2%	4.3%
21	Difficult to communicate with	1	2.2%	4.3%
22	Difficult to understand	1	2.2%	4.3%
23	Does not show the real intention	1	2.2%	4.3%
24	Inconsiderate	1	2.2%	4.3%
	Total	45	100.0%	195.7%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Conclusion

As a conclusion of this chapter, I would like to emphasize on three points that we could see in the observations of the cosplayers in Thailand in relation to consumption of Japanese cultural products. First, cosplay has a close relationship with manga, anime and games, but there are important differences from them that cosplay needs a venue in a public place and an audience who can appreciate cosplay of characters from manga, anime and games. Although the people on the street can also see the cosplayers because the venues are usually at public places, how well have the cosplayers copied the characters cannot be evaluated by people who don't know about manga, anime or games. Therefore, they need to have the appropriate audience who has the same hobby and who attends otaku conventions to meet with others.

Because of this, the cosplayers often meet other cosplayers at otaku conventions and they become friends at the venue. They constitute a community and each cosplayer identifies as a member of the community. A community, in this case, is not a geographical area of common living but what Victor Turner called "communitas" or "anti-structure" which is "a bond uniting … people over and above any formal social bonds." (Turner 1974:45) Within the community, there are many small groups that exist. As the respondents to the questionnaire, cosplay friends often get together before and after otaku conventions to exchange information about conventions and they exchange other information. Through communication with other cosplayers, they also may have opportunities to get knowledge about other Japanese cultural products. With the process of friend making, cosplayers are sometimes lead to other Japanese cultural products to consume.

Second, manga, anime and game fans in Thailand think that Japanese

subcultures are excellent in story development and Japanese titles are made not only for children but also for adults. Products for adults don't mean that they include violence and eroticism but the story and the knowledge that the titles contain are for matured people. For instance, the theme of a recently popular Japanese manga title called *"Kami no shizuku"* is wine. The main character in this manga works for a liquor company and he is working in the wine division of the company. The stories of this manga are filled up with knowledge about wine and wine business, which children can never understand nor enjoy. The drawings of manga may not be as detailed as American or European comics but the stories are detailed and the main characters look "cool" or "kawaii (cute)."

In comparison of Hollywood SFX and Japanese "tokusatsu" (special effects) in the film making industries, Okada pointed out that Hollywood SFX sought the reality and tried to visualize images as real as possible while Japanese tokusatsu were attached to the coolness and the beauty of appearance rather than the detail of the image. (Okada 2008:134-165) Probably, this tradition of attachment to the coolness and the beauty has been inherited by manga, anime and game industries in Japan. In observations of cosplay in Thailand, many cosplayers are attracted by the coolness or the cuteness ("kawaii" in Japanese) of the characters of manga, anime and games and probably these are the fascinations that Japanese cultural products hold.

Third, as we have seen earlier, two thirds of the cosplayers in the questionnaire study have studied Japanese. This suggests that the encounters with manga, anime and games have led them study Japanese. Despite the fact that major manga and anime titles are translated into Thai and easily available in Thailand, many of them start studying the language. While studying Japanese, then, they are exposed to other

Japanese cultural products.   I assume that studying Japanese is a gate to the world of Japanese cultural products.   Once they start to study, their world of Japanese cultural products will be expanded.

Cosplay is an activity that Japanese manga and anime culture gave birth to but now it is growing rapidly in Thailand as a part of youth subculture.   From this research, I realized that cosplay is not just about the costume and makeup but it is an activity of socialization for Thai youth.   With doujinshi making / selling activities at otaku conventions (Figure 5.8), cosplay is not only to consume something like reading manga or watching TV anime but cosplay is the place to make new friends and to be familiar with Japanese cultural products.

Figure 5.8: Cosplay Accessories and Items sold at the Doujinshi Convention *Capsule #6*, on December 9, 2007.   Photo by author.

Chapter Six

Japanese Language Learning

Language Learning and Consumption of Japanese Cultural Products

Language and Cultural Products

In Japan, the Korean drama "Winter Sonata," which was broadcast by NHK in 2003, started the so-called "Korean wave" in Japan which lasted for a few years.   During the Korean wave period, NHK has broadcast the drama series four times in response to avid requests from viewers (Hayashi & Lee 2007), and the Japanese media reported the image of middle-aged Japanese women seeking romance stories, cheering for good-looking Korean actors, traveling to the scenes of the dramas in Korea, and starting to learn Korean language.   In an interview by a newspaper reporter, a 70 year-old woman who was studying Korean at a language classroom in Osaka said, "My goal is to write a fan letter in Korean." (Nihon Keizai Shimbun 2004, August 3)   Since most Korean dramas were dubbed into Japanese when they were broadcast in Japan, the fans of Korean dramas did not need to study Korean to watch them.   Nevertheless, many of them wanted to learn Korean because they wanted to communicate in Korean with their favorite "stars."

Japanese language is not necessary to consume Japanese cultural products, since most of them are translated and/or localized for consumption in each country and region of the world.   In Thailand, manga is translated into Thai, and anime is subtitled

or dubbed into Thai by Thai voice actors. Some Japanese fashion magazines are published in Thai, and readers can obtain up-to-date information about Japanese clothes, fashion, cosmetics, and accessories in their first language. Besides, most of these products are sold at shops in Thailand, and they are readily available in Bangkok. Therefore, it is not necessary for the consumers of Japanese cultural products to be able to understand the second language, Japanese.

Although having Japanese language ability is not absolutely necessary, it is an advantage for the consumers of Japanese cultural products if they want to consume them enthusiastically. In Chapter 4, we have seen that 52.9% of the respondents in the questionnaire research of a J-Pop fan club started studying the Japanese language after they became fans of the idol group, *w-inds.* In the study, 25.0% of the respondents had started learning Japanese before they became fans, and 18.3% said they wanted to learn Japanese, which means 97.1% of the fans have experienced Japanese or have been interested in studying it. They use their language ability to read the lyrics of the songs, listen to the interview videos of the idol group, write fan letters, read idol magazines, read information on the Internet, and so on.

In the case of cosplayers in Chapter 5, 42.3% of the respondents for the questionnaire research said they have studied Japanese before, and 23.1% of them said they now are studying Japanese. Most cosplayers are fans of Japanese cultural products, such as manga, anime or video games. A few of these Japanese cultural products are translated into Thai for consumers, but there are many more that have not been translated yet. If they want to consume such untranslated products, they may choose to study Japanese.

The two ethnographic researches in previous chapters revealed that the

consumption of Japanese cultural products is closely related to language learning. Based on the research results and the interviews I have conducted in Thailand for the past several years, I realized that there is a relationship between the consumption of Japanese cultural products and language learning; these surmises can be summarized as the following hypotheses.

First, exposure to Japanese cultural products induces Japanese language learning. When one starts liking a Japanese cultural product and wants to consume it more seriously or deeply, he/she may start wanting to learn Japanese language. Second, Japanese language learning induces consumption of other Japanese cultural products. When one studies Japanese, he/she may be exposed to other Japanese cultural products, especially through interactions with other Japanese learners who are consumers of other Japanese cultural products, and he/she may develop interests in new Japanese cultural products. Third, each Japanese cultural product's power to induce study of Japanese language differs. Some Japanese cultural products have stronger influence over Japanese language learning while others are considerably less influential.
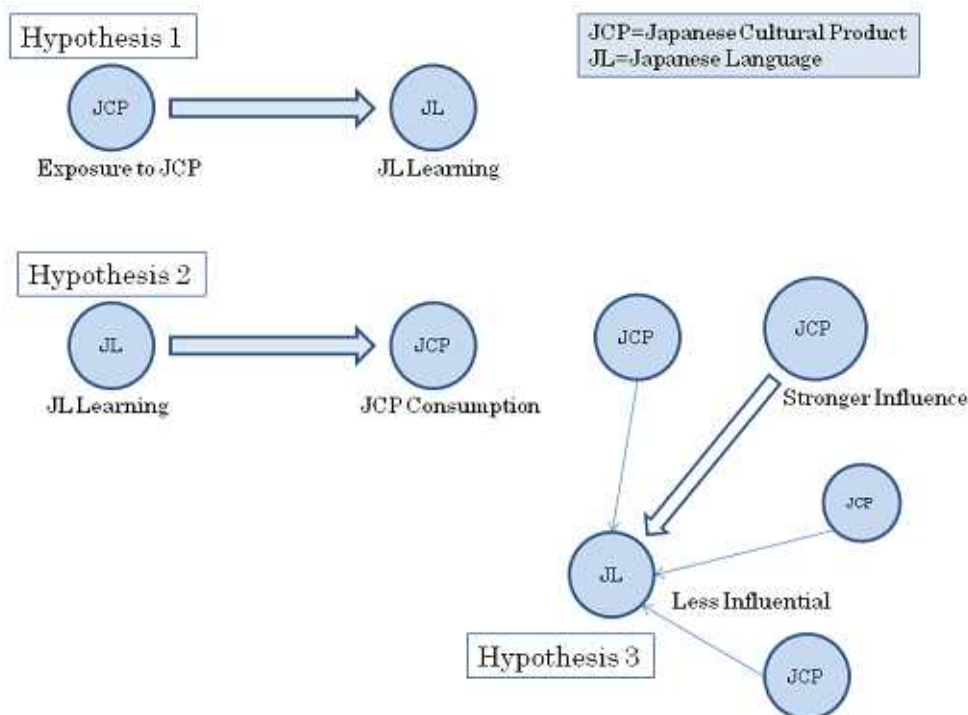
Figure 6.1: Three Hypotheses

The three hypotheses, which are derived from the previous studies and my fieldwork experiences, will be tested and discussed in this chapter. Before we proceed to the discussions, however, the education system and learning environment of Japanese language in Thailand are presented. In order to clarify the virtuous cycle of language learning and consumption of Japanese cultural products, an overview of Japanese language education in Thailand is presented that reveals the backgrounds and the increasing number of Japanese language learners in Thailand. It is also important to know the popularity of Japanese among the foreign language studies that are taught in Thai schools, as it may indicate the interests of and the cultural trend of the society toward foreign countries.

Additionally, the comments and opinions of Japanese major students at a Thai

university are presented and included in the discussions. These views and statements were collected by distributing questionnaire forms to university students in Bangkok. The questionnaire was designed to substitute for a vis-à-vis interview with each student, and many questions were open-ended. To answer the questions, students could write their opinions in the provided space. Because of the nature of such questions, most of the responses hardly could be analyzed statistically, but the opinions of university students are valuable data as they represent the voice of the Thai youth. The questionnaire also included "Yes/No" type or "fill-in the number" type questions, which could be analyzed statistically. All of the questionnaire results will be presented in later discussions.

In this chapter, which contains an overview of the Japanese language education system in Thailand and the questionnaire results, the three hypotheses will be examined. Through discussing and testing these hypotheses, I hope to illuminate the interests, thoughts, and motivations of Japanese language learners so as demonstrate the contoured relationship between language learning and the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand.

Japanese Language Education in Thailand

According to *Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006*, approximately 2.98 million students were studying Japanese in 133 countries except Japan. (Japan Foundation 2008a)   Thailand is one of the 133 countries that have Japanese language education.   As shown in Table 6.1, the number of Japanese language learners in Thailand is the seventh largest among the 133 countries.   The *Japan Foundation* conducts the survey on Japanese language education abroad every three years, and Table 6.1 is based on the result its 2006 survey, which indicates the number of learners in primary and secondary education in Thailand has increased 80.9 % in 2006 compared to the number in 2003.

Table 6.1: Change in Number of Learners (2003 – 2006)									
	Country (Region)	Primary & Secondary Education			Higher Education			Non-Formal Education		
		2006	2003	% of Increase	2006	2003	% of Increase	2006	2003	% of Increase
1	Korea	769,034	780,573	▲ 1.5	58,727	83,514	▲ 29.7	83,196	30,044	176.9
2	China	76,020	79,661	▲ 4.6	407,603	205,481	98.4	200,743	102,782	95.3
3	Australia	352,629	369,157	▲ 4.5	9,395	8,269	13.6	4,141	4,528	▲ 8.5
4	Indonesia	244,304	61,723	295.8	17,777	13,881	28.1	10,638	9,617	10.6
5	Taiwan	58,198	36,597	59.0	118,541	75,242	57.5	14,628	16,802	▲ 12.9
6	USA	58,181	87,949	▲ 33.8	45,263	42,018	7.7	14,525	10,233	41.9
7	Thailand	31,679	17,516	80.9	21,634	22,273	▲ 2.9	17,770	15,095	17.7
8	Hong Kong	3,614	1,612	124.2	4,971	3,872	28.4	24,374	12,800	90.4
9	Vietnam	1,888	0		10,446	5,988	74.4	17,648	12,041	46.6
10	New Zealand	27,369	26,012	5.2	2,230	2,293	▲ 2.7	305	12	2441.7
11	Canada	11,043	9,471	16.6	8,508	7,092	20.0	4,283	3,894	10.0
12	Malaysia	8,984	5,562	61.5	7,804	6,472	20.6	6,132	5,372	14.1
13	Brazil	3,538	3,154	12.2	1,560	1,549	0.7	16,533	15,041	9.9
14	Phillipines	2,251	1,621	38.9	9,398	6,179	52.1	6,550	3,459	89.4
15	France	3,940	3,710	6.2	8,451	7,580	11.5	3,143	3,155	▲ 0.4
16	UK	8,510	9,700	▲ 12.3	3,630	3,636	▲ 0.2	2,788	2,987	▲ 6.7
17	Mongol	5,339	3,601	48.3	5,368	4,243	26.5	1,913	1,236	54.8
18	Singapore	1,755	1,660	5.7	5,708	5,478	4.2	4,613	4,862	▲ 5.1
19	Germany	1,986	2,008	▲ 1.1	5,797	6,783	▲ 14.5	4,162	3,864	7.7
20	India	1,001	446	124.4	1,444	653	121.1	8,566	4,347	97.1

"% of Increase" indicates the change in percent, calculated from the numbers of Japanese language learners in 2003 & 2006.   indicates negative numbers.

Source: Kaigai no nihongo kyouiku no genjou 2006 (Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006) 2008

	Country (Region)	Population per one Japanese learner	Population (million)	Learners
1	Korea	52	47.8	910,957
2	Australia	55	20.2	366,165
3	<Taiwan>	119	22.8	191,367
4	New Zealand	134	4.0	29,904
5	<Guam>	179	0.2	1,120
6	<New Caledonia>	202	0.2	989
7	Mongol	206	2.6	12,620
8	<Hong Kong>	209	6.9	32,959
9	Singapore	356	4.3	12,076
10	Tonga	380	0.1	263
11	Macau	401	0.5	1,246
12	Vanuatu	447	0.2	447
13	Marshall Islands	488	0.1	205
14	<Northern Mariana Islands>	495	0.1	202
15	Indonesia	817	222.8	272,719
16	Thailand	903	64.2	71,083
17	Malaysia	1,104	25.3	22,920
18	Brunei	1,146	0.4	349
19	Canada	1,355	32.3	23,834
20	China	1,923	1,315.8	684,366
21	Paraguay	1,931	6.2	3,211
22	Sri Lanka	2,267	20.7	9,133
23	Ireland	2,287	4.1	1,793
24	Finland	2,414	5.2	2,154
25	USA	2,528	298.2	117,969
26	Cambodia	2,596	14.1	5,431
27	Kiribati	2,632	0.1	38
28	Vietnam	2,808	84.2	29,982
29	Fiji	3,252	0.8	246
30	France	3,895	60.5	15,534

Table 6.2: Ratio of Japanese Learner in Population

Source: Kaigai no nihongo kyouiku no genjou 2006 (Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006) 2008, p.19.

Although the number of learners in each country tells us the magnitude of Japanese language education in the country, we cannot simply compare the figures of the countries to see the popularity of the language learning, because these figures are

not adjusted according to population.   To fathom the popularity of the language, in the survey of the *Japan Foundation*, there is a list of countries which indicate the number of people (population) per one Japanese language learner.   As shown in Table 6.2, Japanese language education is most popular in Korea because there is one Japanese language learner in every 52 people in Korea.   As we can see in this table, in Thailand, there is one Japanese language learner in every 903 people in the population.   This figure is ranked 16th in the top 30 list, which should mean Japanese language education is considerably popular in Thailand among the 133 countries.   In ASEAN countries, however, Japanese language education seems to be more popular in Singapore and Indonesia than Thailand, which means Thailand does not particularly stand out in the survey.

Japanese Language Education in Secondary Education in Thailand

In 1980, Japanese was adopted as one of the foreign languages that could be taught in secondary education in Thailand. (Matsui et al. 1999:61)   *The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008)* prescribes basic learning content for English but "for other foreign languages, e.g., French, German, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Pali and languages of neighboring countries, it is left to the discretion of educational institutions to prepare courses and provide learning management as appropriate." (Ministry of Education 2008)   In reality, foreign languages other than English are taught in upper secondary schools (Figure 6.2) in Thailand, and these languages are French, German, Spanish, Italian, Hindi, Pali, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Malay and Arabic. (Ebihara 2004)

In her report on the contents of Japanese language education in upper

secondary schools in Thailand, Shiratori Fumiko wrote that, in 2001, there were about 2,400 public secondary schools in Thailand, and about 120 of them were teaching Japanese language in Thailand. According to the report, although the guideline for Japanese language instruction was issued by the Ministry of Education in Thailand, the content that was taught at schools was not standardized and each teacher chose what to teach in classrooms. (Shiratori 2001)

When I visited the Ministry of Education in Thailand for an interview in 2007, Chantra Tantipong, who was an officer at the Bureau of Academic Affairs and Educational Standards, told me that the Japanese Language curriculum education for upper secondary school was developed and maintained by cooperation of the *Japan Foundation.* (Personal Communication 2007, December 14) At the time of the interview, the *Basic Education Curriculum B.E. 2544 (A.D. 2001)* was in effect, but it also let each school decide what to teach and how to teach foreign languages besides English. (Ministry of Education 2001) The ministry, therefore, did not have any statistical data and information on Japanese language education in Thailand, and I realized that the *Japan Foundation* was the agency that was developing the Japanese language education curriculum for secondary schools.

Figure 6.2: School System in Thailand			
Age	Grade	Level of Education	
3		Pre-Primary Education	
4			
5			
6	1	Primary Education	
7	2		
8	3		
9	4		
10	5		
11	6		
12	7	Secondary Education	Lower Secondary
13	8		
14	9		
15	10		Upper Secondary
16	11		
17	12		
18	13	Higher Education	Bachelor's Program
19	14		
20	15		
21	16		
22	17		Graduate Level
23	18		

Source: Compiled from the figure in "Education in Thailand 2004", Office of Educational Council, Ministry of Education. 2004.

In Thailand, the *Japan Foundation* in Bangkok is the center of Japanese education.   It has many projects that contribute to Japanese education, such as holding seminars and training courses for teachers, providing teaching materials, dispatching Japanese education experts to educational institutions, executing the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), and so on.   In an interview, Hirano Kazutoshi, the head of the Japanese Language Department of the *Japan Foundation* in Bangkok, explained the purpose of the *Japan Foundation* in regard to Japanese language education. (Personal communication 2008, April 2)   Having heard his detailed explanations on the projects,

I could understand that the activities of the *Japan Foundation* greatly support the teachers and secondary schools in terms of Japanese language education. Furthermore, I also realized that the *Japan Foundation* is playing an important role as a center for teacher networks. As Tantipong of the Ministry of Education suggested, Japanese language education in upper secondary education in Thailand depends on the activities and services of the *Japan Foundation*, and consequently it has contributed to building teacher networks. Additionally, the *Japan Foundation* utilizes these networks to know the needs of the teachers and the classrooms to support Japanese language education in Thailand. The data of the survey that I previously mentioned was collected through the same teacher networks that the *Japan Foundation* has built.

Table 6.3 shows the number of learners by type of education in ASEAN countries. In Thailand, 45% of Japanese language learners are in primary and secondary education. As the table suggests, the ratio of learners among the types of education differ in each country, which suggests that each country has different Japanese education environment. For example, in Indonesia, 90% of the learners are in primary and secondary education, while learners in higher education and non-academic education are 7% and 4% respectively. On the other hand, in Singapore and the Philippines, there are more learners in higher education than in primary and secondary education; more than one third of the learners are in non-academic education. I assume that the social and economic environment and the history of Japanese education in each country reflect on these figures in the table. The numbers in the table are not for simple comparison, but they are clues that suggest the existence of differences in backgrounds among the countries.

For secondary students in Thailand, there may be another incentive to study

Japanese.   Since 1998, Japanese language has become one of the topics on the standardized university entrance examination system in Thailand.   The upper secondary school students who want to enter non-science major programs (departments) at the university are usually required to take four subject examinations: namely Thai, social studies, English, and an elective.   In the entrance examination, there are five foreign languages: French, German, Pali, Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese.   Many non-science major students take a foreign language examination as an elective; in the entrance examination of 2004, there were 2,558 students who chose Japanese as an elective. (Ebihara 2005)

Table 6.3: Number of Learners in ASEAN countries (by type of education)

		Brunei	Cambodia	Indonesia	Laos	Malaysia	Myanmar	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand	Viet Nam
Primary and Secondary	No.	0	817	244,304	40	8,984	0	2,251	1,755	31,679	1,888
	%	0%	15%	90%	9%	39%	0%	12%	15%	45%	8%
Higher Education	No.	99	759	17,777	47	7,804	1,382	9,398	5,708	21,634	10,446
	%	28%	14%	7%	11%	34%	20%	52%	47%	30%	42%
Non Academic Education	No.	250	3,855	10,638	350	6,132	5,594	6,550	4,613	17,770	12,334
	%	72%	71%	4%	80%	27%	80%	36%	38%	25%	50%
Total Number		349	5,431	272,719	437	22,920	6,976	18,199	12,076	71,083	24,668

Source: Calculated from the data in Kaigai no nihongo kyouiku no genjou 2006 (Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006) 2008.

Japanese Language Education in Higher Education

The role of Japanese language education in Thailand before the Second World War is unclear, but it is reported that Japanese had already been taught at Bornpitpimuk School in 1934. (Chirasombutti 2008)   After the War, in 1947, Bornpitpimuk started teaching Japanese at the upper secondary school level, but it was discontinued early on.   There were a few other schools that taught Japanese, but information was fragmented and unclear. (Matsui et al. 1999:46)

As we can see in Table 6.4, *Old Japan Students' Association, Thailand* (OJSAT) started a Japanese language school in 1964, which seems to be the beginning of earnest Japanese language education in the post-war period.   The Japanese government donated a Japanese language course to *Thammasat University* in 1965 and to *Chulalornkon University* in 1966.   Around that time, in response to the requests of Asian countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan donated Japanese language courses to eight universities in six Asian countries and one region, namely Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, India, and Hong Kong.   The Japanese government dispatched professors of Japanese studies and Japanese language and donated books and teaching materials to these universities. (Yoshikawa 2008)

In 1973, *Chulalornkon University* was the first university that started the Japanese language undergraduate major program in Thailand, but it was not until the 1980s that many other universities started offering Japanese language major programs. Today, Japanese language is taught at 89 universities; Japanese major programs are available at 16 national universities and 5 private universities. (Japan Foundation 2009a)

Table 6.4: Chronology of Japanese Language Education in Thailand	
1947	Bornpitpimuk (National Junior College / High School)
1964	Japanese Language School of Old Japan Students' Association, Thailand (OJSAT)
1965	Thammasat University (Japanese government donated the Japanese language course.)
1966	Chulalornkon University (Japanese government donated the Japanese language course.)
1969	Japan Information Center of Japanese Embassy in Thailand opened the Japanese Language School
	Siam Commercial High School, Ramkhamhaeng Univesrity
1972	Technology Promotion Association (TPA) opened the Japanese Language School
1973	Chulalornkon University
1974	Kasetsart University, Chaingmai University
1977	Songkhla University, Khon Kaen University, King Monkut's Institute of Technology
1979	University of the Thai Chamber of Commerece
1980	Selected as a foreign language subject in secondary school.
1981	High School attached to Kasetsart University
1982	Thammasat University
1983	Silpakorn University, Kasetsart University
1984	Srinakharinwirot University, Naresuan University
1985	Teachers' colleges in Ayuthaya and Chiang Mai
1986	University of the Thai Chamber of Commerece ■, Payap University (P)
1987	Chiang Mai University ■, National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA)
1988	Assumption University (ABAC)
1989	Rangsit University
1995	Naresuan University
1996	Burapha University ■, Prince of Songkla University
1997	King Monkut's Institute of Technology ■, Silpakorn University Rangsit University
	Japanese Studies Master Program at Thammasat University Started
1998	Japanese language at University Entrance Examination started.
1999	Japanese Literature & Japanese Master's Program at Chulalonkorn University started.
2002	Srinakharinwirot University
2004	Japanese Education Department at Khon Kaen University started.
	Textbook "Akiko to Tomodachi" was published for secondary education.
2007	Japanese as a Foreign Language Program at Chulalonkorn University started.

■=Undergraduate Japanese Major Program started.

Source: Matsu, Kitamura & Chirasombutti 1999, Japan Foundation 2009

201

The higher education curriculum is prepared by each institution. Teaching materials and methods are also developed by each individual university. Although the Ministry of Education requires that each university revises the curriculum every five years and that the new curriculum has to go through an authorization process to be approved by the ministry, the current curriculum is not evaluated systematically to reflect on the new curriculum. (Ek-Ariyasiri 2008) Before the mandated curriculum revisions, therefore, some university professors try to evaluate their own curriculum, by comparing it and the results of their Japanese Language Proficiency Tests (JLPT) with other universities.

As we have seen in Table 6.3, 30% of Japanese language learners in Thailand are at higher institutions. This number should include the students who major in Japanese language as well as the students who take Japanese as an elective course. As university curricula vary, it is not easy to grasp the overall image of Japanese language education in higher education of Thailand. When university professors evaluate their curriculum, they sometimes use JLPT as an index to see the level of instruction. In next section, therefore, I will review the results of the JLPT from the past few decades so as to uncover the trend of Japanese language learning in Thailand.

The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test

The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) is held by the *Japan Foundation* every year to evaluate Japanese language aptitude among non-native speakers. There are four levels of the JLPT, from Level 4 (Basic Level) to Level 1 (the highest proficiency). After the test, all examinees will receive their score reports, and only successful examinees can receive *Certificates of Proficiency* of the level. In 2008, 449,810 examinees (total of all levels) sat for the test in 144 cities in 51 countries and regions. In Thailand, there were four test sites: Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Songkla and Khon Kaen; 15,846 examinees (total of all levels) sat for the test. (Japan Foundation 2009b) The *Japan Foundation* publishes the number of applicants and examinees for each level by country every year, but the number of successful examinees from each country is not announced. For the purpose of this chapter, I use the number of total examinees of all levels in Thailand from the published data.

Table 6.5 shows the number of JLPT examinees (and applications) in ASEAN countries from 1984 to 2008. For the table, I calculated the rate of increase that compares the numbers with previous years in percentile. The cells that indicate a rate of increase of more than 115% are shaded gray. Looking at the table, we can see that the rate of increase remains high (as shown by the shaded cells in the table) when JLPT is first introduced in a country. Several years after the introduction of JLPT, the number of examinees increases rapidly. As each country started JLPT in a different year, the countries cannot compared in the table. Despite this fact, it still can tell us that each country has different patterns of increasing numbers, which may be caused by indigenous reasons of the country.

In order to see the trend of popularity of Japanese language learning, I

calculated the number of JLPT examinees per one million people in ASEAN countries (except Cambodia, Brunei and Laos) and plotted this data on the semilog graph (Figure 6.2) for every five years.   If we look at the JLPT examinees adjusted by the population, Japanese language learning was most popular in Singapore among ASEAN countries, as the graph shows there were 877.2 Japanese language learners in one million people, while Thailand was in second place with 156.7 Japanese language learners per one million people in 2005.

As we saw in Table 6.5, Thailand has kept the rate of increase at a "high" percentage since the mid-1990s, which suggests that Japanese language learning has been popular since then.   Figure 6.3 also suggests that the number of JLPT examinees increased in the 1990s in Thailand.   As we have discussed in previous chapters, manga started being published under the license of Japanese publishers from the early 1990s (Chapter 5); the importing of Japanese TV programs and animation increased after the corruption of the bubble economy in Japan (Chapter 5); and in the 1990s, J-Rock and J-Pop became popular in Thailand as well as in other Asian countries (Chapter 4).   The increasing growth of Japanese language learning during the 1990s coincides with the influx of cultural products from Japan, which suggests that many Thai people were exposed to Japanese cultural products during the decade, and many of them have started learning Japanese.   Furthermore, Figure 6.3 indicates that the increasing influence of Japanese language upon of Thailand becomes more precipitous after the year 2000.

Table 6.5: Numbers of Examinees of Japanese Proficiency Test in ASEAN countries

	Indonesia		Cambodia		Singapore		Thailand		Phillipines		Brunei		Vietnam		Malaysia		Myanmar		Laos	
	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase	Examinee	Rate of Increase
1984	386				690		384		30						122					
1985	650	168%			1,386	201%	740	193%	48	160%					311	254.9%				
1986	873	134%			1,466	106%	743	100%	29	60%					675	217.0%				
1987	1,117	128%			1,635	112%	668	90%	96	331%					777	115.1%				
1988	1,402	126%			1,860	114%	691	103%	139	145%					981	126.3%				
1989	1,687	120%			2,429	131%	782	113%	116	83%					1,253	127.7%				
1990	2,015	119%			2,311	95%	895	114%	157	135%					1,479	118.0%				
1991	2,540	126%			2,711	117%	1,382	154%	150	96%					1,682	113.7%				
1992	2,552	100%			2,763	102%	1,390	101%	190	127%					1,718	102.1%				
1993	3,040	119%			2,749	99%	1,321	95%	306	161%					1,938	112.8%				
1994	3,094	102%			2,255	82%	1,441	109%	254	83%					1,874	96.7%				
1995	3,033	98%			2,112	94%	1,679	117%	238	94%					2,031	108.4%				
1996	2,973	98%			1,977	94%	1,578	94%	194	82%					1,939	95.5%				
1997	2,830	95%			2,007	102%	2,057	130%	227	117%			377		1,570	81.0%				
1998	3,251	115%			2,121	106%	2,464	120%	271	119%			424	112%	1,645	104.8%				
1999	3,733	115%			2,337	110%	3,075	125%	343	127%			518	122%	1,863	113.3%	712			
2000	4,068	109%			2,704	116%	3,641	118%	499	145%			1,958	378%	2,223	119.3%	775	108.8%		
2001	5,019	123%			3,284	121%	4,403	121%	552	111%			2,056	105%	2,911	130.9%	1,013	130.7%		
2002	5,505	110%			3,768	115%	5,684	129%	734	133%			2,222	108%	2,941	101.0%	1,092	107.8%		
2003	5,855	106%			3,905	104%	7,273	128%	966	132%			2,721	122%	2,913	99.0%	1,798	164.7%		
2004	5,960	102%			3,518	90%	8,018	110%	1,149	119%			3,564	131%	2,798	96.1%	1,928	107.2%		
2005	6,411	108%			3,743	106%	10,333	129%	2,249	196%			5,248	147%	2,476	88.5%	1,764	91.5%		
2006	7,108	111%	629		3,712	99%	11,861	115%	2,550	113%			8,045	153%	2,835	114.5%	2,664	151.0%		
2007	7,688	108%	721	115%	4,166	112%	13,295	112%	2,711	106%			11,433	142%	3,106	109.6%	2,545	95.5%	139	
2008	8,397	109%	799	111%	4,994	120%	15,845	119%	2,723	100%	51		13,854	121%	3,697	119.0%	2,422	95.2%	121	87.1%

Shaded Cells = Rate of Increase >= 115%

Source: Compiled from Nihongo nouryoku shiken kekka no gaiyou (The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Summary Result) 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009b

Figure6.3: Number of JLPT Examinees / one million population (ASEAN countries)

Semilog. Graph

Populations to be used in calculation are retrieved from "World Population Prospects: 2008 Revision Population Database,"
United Nations Population Division. http://esa.un.org/unpp/index.asp (Retrieved on October 20, 2009)
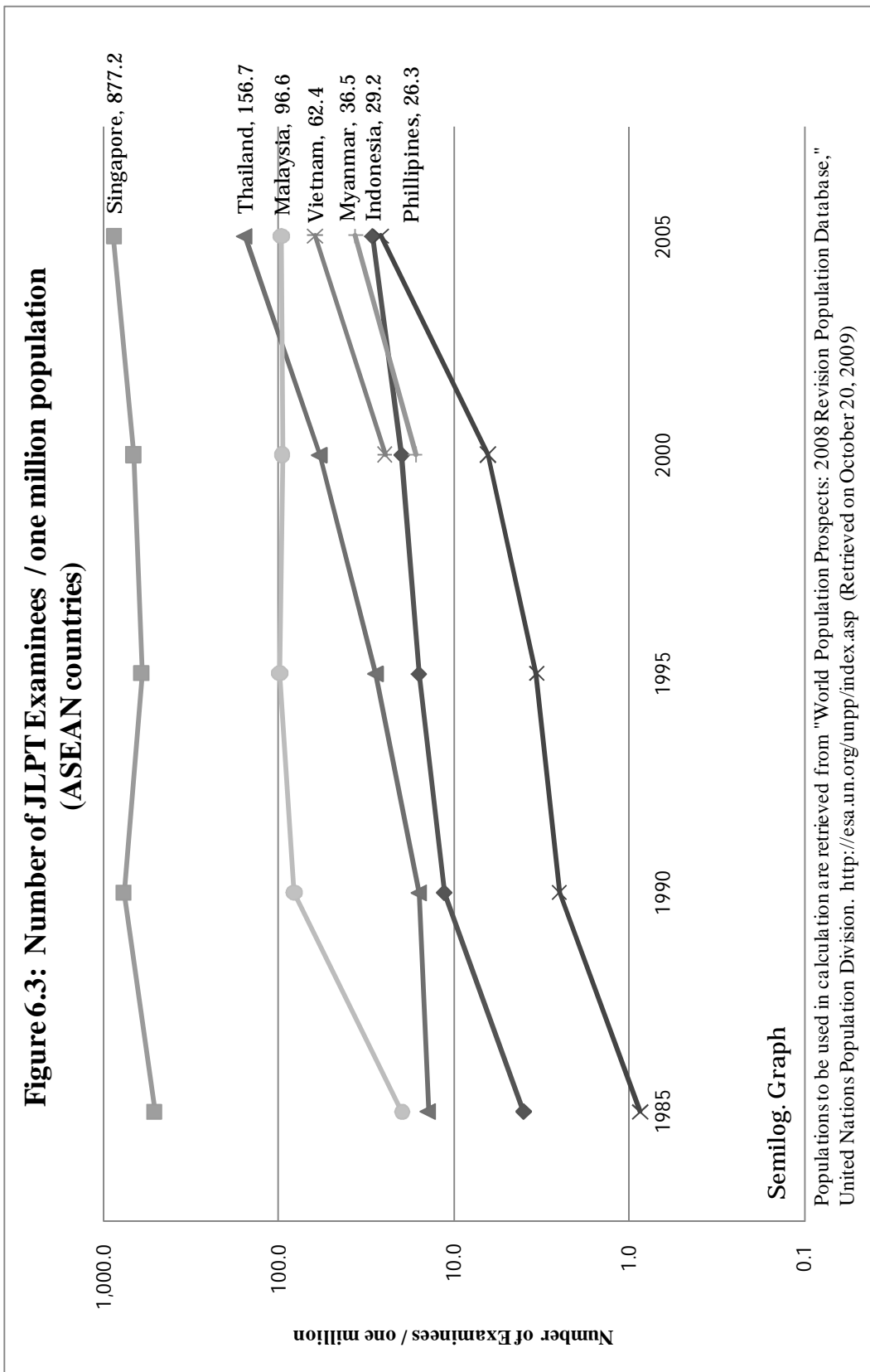
Questionnaire Research – Voice of University Students –

The *Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006* and the result of JLPT examinees suggested the existence of a relationship between Japanese language learning and consumption of Japanese cultural products. In order to confirm this relation and to clarify it in depth, I wanted to conduct an interview with Thai university students. To organize an interview in some Thai universities, however, researchers need to go through protracted authorization procedures; it is also difficult to make arrangements for interviews with individual students. Instead of hearing opinions in vis-à-vis interviews with students, therefore, I designed the questionnaire to assess Thai students' thoughts about Japan and its cultural products.

In October and December of 2008, I administered the questionnaire to 78 Japanese major students in *Chulalongkorn University.* (cf. Table 6.6) The questionnaire forms were distributed in classrooms through a professor of the Japanese Language Department. Most of the respondents were in their third or fourth year of study at the university, but there were a few first and second year students among the respondents. Many questions in the questionnaire were open-ended, and the students were free to write in the provided space. The open-ended comments on the questionnaires cannot be analyzed statistically since they are not easily categorized, nor should they be stereotyped by fixed labels. Although the same kinds of opinions and patterned comments will be important to see the trend among the Thai youth, differences among these comments are valuable to find the real voice of the people, which is often concealed behind stereotypical images. In addition to the open-ended questions, the questionnaire also included "Yes/No" type or "fill-in number" type questions which could be analyzed statistically. The reason why I embedded such

questions in the questionnaire was that these types of questions are simple and easy for them to answer instinctively, and I sometimes use this method to make some kind of index to measure the respondents' attitude to a certain topic.

Table 6.6: Questionnaire Respondents' Age & Sex				
		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	No Answer	
Age	17	0	0	1	1
	19	0	25	1	26
	20	3	14	2	19
	21	0	6	0	6
	22	4	3	0	7
	23	0	1	0	1
Total		7	49	4	60
*Only 60 respondents filled in Age.					
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.					

A few respondents left some answer spaces blank and did not provide their personal information such as age, sex, and grade.   The missing values and information are troublesome for statistical analyses, but since the purpose of the questionnaire is not statistical analyses, I have used all the information that has been provided by the respondents on the questionnaire.   It is important to note that although the statistical results from the questionnaire are also contained in this chapter, they are presented as a reference.   What is important for this research to show is each opinion and comment from the respondents that cannot be categorized.

Research Findings

In this section, I will briefly review the results of the questionnaire to demonstrate the relation of Japanese language learning with Japanese cultural products. First, let us start with Table 6.7, which shows the starting age of Japanese language learning. As we can see, 15 years old is the mode, and the students between 15 and 16 who started to learn Japanese occupy 68% of the respondents, which suggests that they started learning Japanese as they entered the upper secondary school. Most of them started to learn Japanese before they entered university, and the average duration of Japanese language learning was 5.26 years (N=78) by the time of the questionnaire date.

Table 6.7: J-Language Study Start-Age Distribution			
Start Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
7	1	1.3	1.3
9	1	1.3	2.6
11	3	3.8	6.4
13	1	1.3	7.7
14	13	16.7	24.4
15	30	38.5	62.8
16	23	29.5	92.3
17	5	6.4	98.7
19	1	1.3	100.0
Total	78	100.0	
N=78			
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.			

Start to Learn Japanese Language" – Motivation to start learning –

The question I was most interested in asking to them was "What caused you to want to learn Japanese language?"   The question was intended to show the students' motivation to start learning the Japanese language.   I wanted to know the real reasons that made them want to acquire the language.   Since the questionnaires were distributed and collected in classrooms by a professor, I was concerned that the students might hesitate to write the truth.   For the purpose of this research, it was very important for them to describe their answers to this question truthfully.   Thus, to encourage them to write down their real incentives to learn the Japanese language, I added "Please write the true start such as 'I liked *Morning Musume* (a female idol group)."'

Some students wrote down multiple reasons that stimulated them to start learning Japanese.   As we can see in Table 6.8, there were 37 elements in their answers to the question, and I tried to group them briefly into the following seven types.   (1) "Japanese cultural product (JCP)" means that they started learning Japanese because they liked Japanese cultural products (mainly media products, such as manga, anime, game, movies or music).   (2) "Language (LNG)" means that they liked learning the language itself.   (3) "People (PPL)" means that they liked the Japanese people or they wanted to learn the language for the Japanese.   (4) "Business (BSI)" means that they learned Japanese for a future career.   (5) "Japanese Food (JFD)" means that they started learning Japanese because they liked Japanese food.   (6) "Travel experience to Japan (TRV)" means that their experiences traveling in Japan encouraged them to start learning Japanese or they learned the language because they wanted to visit Japan. Lastly, (7) "Other (TR)" is the category for everything else, which includes various comments such as "I like Japanese culture" and "I was born in Japan."

The results show that 68.1% of the comments indicated that they started learning Japanese because they liked Japanese cultural products.   From *Doraemon* to *Utada Hikaru*, I have often heard the names of Japanese manga characters and idols when I asked the research informants and assistants what enticed them to learn the Japanese language.   I had assumed that Japanese cultural products motivated Thai youth to start learning the Japanese language, and the questionnaire results supported this assumption.   It is important to note that the question was designed in order to discover their reasons for starting to learn Japanese, but it was not intended to reveal their current motivations for learning it.

		Category	Responses		Category Total	Percent
	Table 6.8: What was a start for learning Japanese?		N	Percent		
1	I like manga	JCP	23	20.4%	77	68.1%
2	I like J-Pop music and idols	JCP	12	10.6%		
3	I like games	JCP	10	8.8%		
4	I like anime	JCP	7	6.2%		
5	I like Japanese TV drama	JCP	7	6.2%		
6	I like Johnny's idols	JCP	5	4.4%		
7	I like Doraemon	JCP	2	1.8%		
8	I like J-Rock music	JCP	2	1.8%		
9	I like w-inds	JCP	2	1.8%		
10	I like Japanese novels	JCP	2	1.8%		
11	I like Pokemon	JCP	1	0.9%		
12	I like Utada Hikaru [J-Pop idol]	JCP	1	0.9%		
13	I like Crayon Shinchan [Manga Anime]	JCP	1	0.9%		
14	I like Japanese radio program (music program)	JCP	1	0.9%		
15	I like Japanese movies	JCP	1	0.9%		
16	The Japanese language is kawaii [cute lovely]	LNG	7	6.2%	14	12.4%
17	A family members or a friend was studying Japanese	LNG	2	1.8%		
18	I wanted to learn a foreign language besides English	LNG	1	0.9%		
19	I like Kanji	LNG	1	0.9%		
20	I like the Japanese language	LNG	1	0.9%		
21	Learning Japanese looked "cool"	LNG	1	0.9%		
22	I like Japanese letters	LNG	1	0.9%		
23	I have a friend or a relatives living in Japan	PPL	2	1.8%	5	4.4%
24	I had a Japanese friend and wanted to speak in Japanese	PPL	1	0.9%		
25	A friend asked me to study together	PPL	1	0.9%		
26	I had Japanese friends	PPL	1	0.9%		
27	I want to work at a Japanese company in the future	BSI	2	1.8%	4	3.5%
28	The Japanese language will be useful in international business	BSI	2	1.8%		
29	I like Japanese food	JFD	2	1.8%	2	1.8%
30	I went to study in Japan and I liked the country	TRV	1	0.9%	2	1.8%
31	When I was small, I went to Japan	TRV	1	0.9%		
32	I like Japanese culture	OTR	3	2.7%	9	8.0%
33	I did not like math and science subjects when I was in high school	OTR	2	1.8%		
34	I wanted to speak Japanese because I look like Japanese	OTR	1	0.9%		
35	I wanted to know the Japanese way of thinking	OTR	1	0.9%		
36	I like Japanese fashion	OTR	1	0.9%		
37	I was born in Japan	OTR	1	0.9%		
	Total		113	100.0%	113	100.0%

JCP=Japanese cultural products, LNG=Language, PPL=People, BSI=Business,

JFD=Japanese Food, TRV=Travel Experience to Japan, OTR=Other

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Regarding the objective of Japanese language learning, the *Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006* of the *Japan Foundation* contains responses from various Japanese language institutions to the survey questionnaire. In Table 6.9, the objective of Japanese language learning in Thailand is compiled from the survey. This objective is organized into fifteen categories: (1) to obtain the knowledge about Japanese culture, which includes art, literature, history, lifestyle and customs, popular culture, and so on; (2) to obtain the political, economic or social knowledge about Japan; (3) to obtain the scientific and technological knowledge from Japan; (4) to prepare for examinations, such as entrance examinations to universities or for certificates or licenses; (5) to study in Japan; (6) Japanese is required at one's current workplace; (7) for future job hunting; (8) to travel to Japan for sightseeing; (9) to participate in cultural exchange with Japan; (10) to be able to communicate in Japanese; (11) to maintain the mother tongue of oneself or that of one's parent(s)'; (12) interests in the Japanese language itself; (13) International understanding, or intercultural understanding; (14) to satisfy a parents' hope; and (15) others.

Unlike the author's questionnaire research, the survey of the *Japan Foundation* was the result of responses from language institutions. To see the differences among the types of Japanese language education, I have marked the first and the second largest percentages in the objectives by shadowing the cells. As we can see, (1) "cultural knowledge about Japan" and (10) "communication in Japanese" were the outstanding objectives of Japanese language learning in total and in primary and secondary school. In higher education, future job hunting" and "communication in Japanese" were the two biggest motivations to learn Japanese. It is also interesting to note that "future job hunting" and "prepare for examinations" were the two primary objectives in

non-academic education, which may suggest that, in non-academic education, students tend to study the language for practical reasons.

Table 6.9: Objective of Japanese Language Learning (Institutions)								
	Primary and Secondary		Higher Education		Non-Academic Education		Total	
	Institution	Percent	Institution	Percent	Institution	Percent	Institution	Percent
(1) Cultural Knowledge about Japan	120	18.0%	45	15.5%	13	12.6%	178	16.8%
(2) Political, Economic and Social Knowledge about Japan	13	2.0%	7	2.4%	1	1.0%	21	2.0%
(3) Scientific and Technological Knowledge of Japan	12	1.8%	4	1.4%	0	0.0%	16	1.5%
(4) Prepare for Examinations	89	13.4%	7	2.4%	16	15.5%	112	10.6%
(5) Study Abroad	30	4.5%	12	4.1%	14	13.6%	56	5.3%
(6) Current Work	12	1.8%	17	5.9%	13	12.6%	42	4.0%
(7) Future Job Hunting	82	12.3%	54	18.6%	15	14.6%	151	14.3%
(8) Sightseeing Travel to Japan	10	1.5%	5	1.7%	5	4.9%	20	1.9%
(9) Cultural Exchange	19	2.9%	11	3.8%	3	2.9%	33	3.1%
(10) Communication in Japanese	114	17.1%	52	17.9%	11	10.7%	177	16.7%
(11) Inheriting Language	4	0.6%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	5	0.5%
(12) Interest in Japanese language	97	14.6%	42	14.5%	7	6.8%	146	13.8%
(13) Intercultural Understanding	42	6.3%	23	7.9%	2	1.9%	67	6.3%
(14) Parents' Hope	12	1.8%	4	1.4%	0	0.0%	16	1.5%
(15) Others	10	1.5%	6	2.1%	3	2.9%	19	1.8%
Total	666	100.0%	290	100.0%	103	100.0%	1,059	100.0%

Source: Compiled from the tables in Japan Foundation (2008), "Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006"

"Good Experience with Japanese Language"

The purpose of the next question in the questionnaire was to ask about good experiences that were brought about by Japanese language ability.   "Do you have any experiences that made you think Japanese language ability is an advantage or has benefits?   If you do, will you tell me about the incident?"   I wanted to know when and how they think Japanese language is beneficial for their life.   I had already asked them about their motivations to start learning the language, and I wanted to know what they are thinking about learning Japanese.   Therefore, I expected the replies to this question to be stories about incidents in which they felt good for being able to speak Japanese.   But slightly different from my expectation, as shown in Table 6.10, many respondents wrote their thoughts which can also be their motivations to study the language.   By grouping their answers, I found that 23.7% of the answers to the question fell into the category of "communication ability (COM)," which means that the ability to communicate in Japanese itself was "good experience" for them.   The fact that they could communicate with Japanese people in Japanese seems to have been an important experience for them.

Unexpectedly, 20.4% answers fell into the category of "Japanese cultural product consumption (JCP)," such as "I can read Japanese in manga and games," "I can understand the lyrics of J-Pop songs," and so on.   At first, I was a little bit surprised to see this type of response because being able to read Japanese is too obvious, and I expected to be informed about personal incidents that related to the individuals.   I also thought that the respondents who wrote other answers might have felt confident enough to be able to read Japanese manga or texts in games, since for 68.1% of them, consumption of Japanese cultural products was their motivation to start learning the language.   Consequently, I assume that the respondents who wrote answers in JCP

category could not think of any incident that would fulfill the question.

Another category, which I did not expect but found interesting, was "desire to help the Japanese (HLP)." This category is closer to the first category (COM) in terms of communication with the Japanese. However, the category (HLP) focuses on the altruist attitude of the respondents, while the category (COM) focuses on communication itself. When I read such answers as "I can help Japanese tourists and give them directions in Japanese" and "Japanese people are not good at English so I can help them if I can speak in Japanese," I remembered that *Chulalongkorn University* is located right next to Siam Square, which is the center of shopping and dining in Bangkok. Because there are many Japanese tourists who visit the area every day, assumed that the students have had experience helping Japanese tourists on the streets and these encounters have become an important undertaking for them.

There were other kinds of answers which fell into the categories of "travel to Japan (TRV)," "advantage for work (BSI)," and "language (LNG)"; and in summary, I realized that many of their answers were their motivation to continue learning the Japanese language. The category (JCP) may be the initial incentive to begin learning the language for the majority of the students, but as they continued learning, they accumulated new experiences related to the language and some of them discovered additional motivations to learn it.

		Category	Response		Category Total	Percent
	Table 6.10: Good to be able to speak Japanese					
			N	Percent		
1	I can understand the language when I see the Japanese movies	JCP	7	7.5%	19	20.4%
2	I can read Japanese in manga and games	JCP	6	6.5%		
3	I can understand lyrics of J-Pop songs	JCP	3	3.2%		
4	I can read information about Japan on the Internet (Idol blogs, etc.)	JCP	1	1.1%		
5	I can read manga which has not been translated into Thai	JCP	1	1.1%		
6	I can understand the radio program [Radio station in Bangkok]	JCP	1	1.1%		
7	I can talk with Japanese	COM	16	17.2%	22	23.7%
8	I can speak with Japanese when I'm lost in Japan	COM	2	2.2%		
9	I could speak with the people when I visited Japan	COM	2	2.2%		
10	I can talk to Japanese and become friends	COM	1	1.1%		
11	I could speak with the host family in Japan	COM	1	1.1%		
12	I can help Japanese tourists and give them directions in Japanese	HLP	11	11.8%	15	16.1%
13	Japanese people are not good at English so I can help them if I can speak in Japanese	HLP	4	4.3%		
14	I went to Japan	TRV	10	10.8%	11	11.8%
15	I could go to study in Japan	TRV	1	1.1%		
16	I can get a part-time work which requires Japanese language ability	BSI	2	2.2%	4	4.3%
17	Japanese people have creativity and I can learn it from them	BSI	1	1.1%		
18	The Japanese language ability is an advantage in finding a part-time job	BSI	1	1.1%		
19	The Japanese is kawaii [cute lovely] to hear	LNG	1	1.1%	4	4.3%
20	I am happy when I hear Japanese	LNG	1	1.1%		
21	I can get information from Japanese sources	LNG	1	1.1%		
22	When I can translate between English and Japanese	LNG	1	1.1%		
23	I can order easily at Japanese restaurants	OTR	1	1.1%	5	5.4%
24	I could get in university because my grade of Japanese was good	OTR	1	1.1%		
25	I can read the signs in Japanese on the street	OTR	1	1.1%		
26	I can read instructions of Japanese products [imported from Japan directly]	OTR	1	1.1%		
27	I spoke in Japanese when I didn't want other people know	OTR	1	1.1%		
28	None		9	9.7%	13	14.0%
29	None in Particular		3	3.2%		
30	No Answer		1	1.1%		
			93	100.0%		

JCP=Japanese cultural products, COM=desire to communicate with the Japanese,

HLP=desire to help the Japanese, TRV=Visited Japan, BSI=advantages for work,

LNG=language, OTR=Others

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

"Learning Another Foreign Language?"

In the next question, I asked if the respondents were learning other foreign languages besides Japanese. The question inquired about the foreign language that they were learning at the time of the questionnaire. So if they were too busy with learning Japanese, for instance, their answers might be "none" or they might have left the space blank. In Table 6.11, the results show that English (44.7%) was the most popular foreign language. The second most popular foreign language was Korean (14.9%) and the third was Chinese (13.8%). There were other foreign languages found in their answers but most languages had only few learners. Also, a few students who liked to study foreign languages replied that they were studying more than two foreign languages besides Japanese, which added languages such as Arabic, Burmese, and so on.

Table 6.11: Other Foreign Language			
		Response	
		N	Percent
1	English	42	44.7%
2	Korean	14	14.9%
3	Chinese	13	13.8%
4	Spanish	2	2.1%
5	German	2	2.1%
6	Italian	2	2.1%
7	French	1	1.1%
8	Malay	1	1.1%
9	Portugese	1	1.1%
10	Burmese	1	1.1%
11	Arabic	1	1.1%
	None	12	12.8%
	Not in Particular	2	2.1%
		94	100.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 6.12: Reasons to study the Foreign Language	Responses	
	N	Percent
For [future] work	15	20.5%
Useful	10	13.7%
To communicate with foreigners	7	9.6%
As a basic education	5	6.8%
I want to learn many foreign languages	4	5.5%
I like K-Pop music	4	5.5%
Required subject at school	3	4.1%
Ethnic background [Chinese Thai]	3	4.1%
To improve my language skill	3	4.1%
I just want to study	3	4.1%
It is necessary	3	4.1%
Just for fun	2	2.7%
Required to take another foreign language at school	2	2.7%
I like the culture of the country	1	1.4%
The grammar of Korean is close to Japanese	1	1.4%
I want to study more about Kanji	1	1.4%
My major in high school	1	1.4%
To work at international organizations in the future	1	1.4%
My major at university	1	1.4%
None in Particular	1	1.4%
None	2	2.7%
	73	100.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

To demonstrate the attitudes of the respondents toward foreign language studies, I also asked their reasons for studying foreign languages and compiled the results in Table 6.12. The reasons listed in Table 6.12 were for all the languages of Table 6.11. As I reviewed the answers, I noticed that many students who were studying English wrote reasons such as "for future work," "to communicate with foreigners," "as basic education," and "useful." In Thailand, English language education starts from the first grade in primary school as "preparatory English" class

and it continues throughout one's basic education. (Ministry of Education 2008)   In higher education, required subjects vary according to the curriculum of each department of each institution, but many students realize the importance of English as a *lingua franca* and continue learning it.

The answer "I like K-Pop music" is obviously a reason to study Korean.   As Korean idols have become popular in Thailand in recent years, Korean language also attracts those people who like to consume Korean cultural products.   On the contrary, those who were questioned learned Chinese "for future work," because it is "useful," and because they "want to learn many foreign languages," which are reasons that are not related to the cultural products of China.

"Is Your Life Changed After You Started to Learn Japanese?"

Table 6.13 contains a list of answers to the question "Is your life changed after you started to learn Japanese?"   With this question, I aimed to discover if their lives have been changed in terms of consumption of Japanese cultural products and in their relationships with Japan and Japanese people.   The answers were grouped into six categories: (1) relationships with Japanese people (JPN), (2) Japanese cultural products (JCP), (3) business related changes (BSI), (4) knowledge about Japan (KNW), (5) language ability (LNG) and (6) lifestyle change (LSC).

As we can see, 30.3% of the answers were in the JPN category.   They thought their relationships with Japanese people changed after they started learning Japanese. In fact, 24 respondents answered that they made Japanese friends, and one student said she made a Japanese boyfriend, which shows that Japanese people have become familiar for them after they learned Japanese language.

Another popular answer was "I can understand the language when I see Japanese movies," which belongs to JCP category.   As we have already seen, 68.1% of the answers in Table 6.8 indicated that the respondents started learning Japanese language because they liked consuming Japanese cultural products.   But before they started learning the language, they consumed Japanese cultural products in their native Thai language.   For the students, therefore, being able to watch Japanese movies in Japanese is an achievement that they attained and should be regarded as an important change.

The answers in the BSI category, such as "I can find a part-time job with good salary," indicate the advantage of Japanese language ability.   The importance of Japanese language ability in searching for jobs should be recognized by most of the respondents, since most graduates having a Japanese language major will work in Japanese companies.   According to the surveys that have been conducted at *Thammasat University*, among 500 graduates having a Japanese language major between 1986 and 2000, 81.6% obtained jobs at Japanese companies; in 2007, 91.18 % of the graduates entered Japanese companies as translators, interpreters, secretaries and so on. (Chawengkijwanich 2008)   Even before they graduate from universities, Japanese major students in Thailand know that Japanese language proficiency will be an advantage to obtain good jobs and receive good remunerations.

The answers in the categories "knowledge about Japan" and "language ability" are also important points in terms of consumption of Japanese cultural products. Through the process of reading information about Japan in Japanese and accumulating knowledge about Japan with their Japanese language ability, the students will form better understandings about Japan and her people, which should develop new interests

in other Japanese cultural products and venues.

Table 6.13: Changes in Life after Japanese Language Study					
			Responses		Category	Category
			N	Percent	Total	Percent
1	I made Japanese friends	JPN	24	22.0%		
2	I can talk with Japanese people in Japanese	JPN	4	3.7%		
3	I can communicate with the Japanese well	JPN	3	2.8%	33	30.3%
4	I can help Japanese people when they are lost in Bangkok	JPN	1	0.9%		
5	I have a Japanese boyfirend	JPN	1	0.9%		
6	I can understand the language when I see Japanese moveie	JCP	11	10.1%		
7	I can understand the lyrics of J Pop songs	JCP	5	4.6%		
8	I can read manga	JCP	4	3.7%	25	22.9%
9	I can play game	JCP	3	2.8%		
10	I got addicted to Japanese media	JCP	1	0.9%		
11	I often go to see the Japanese movies	JCP	1	0.9%		
12	I can find a part-time job with good salary	BSI	9	8.3%		
13	Now I want to get a job which uses the Japanese language ability	BSI	1	0.9%	11	10.1%
14	I got a job as a tutor of the Japanese language	BSI	1	0.9%		
15	I could learn Japanese customs and culture	KNW	3	2.8%		
16	I can understand the Japanese way of thinking	KNW	1	0.9%	5	4.6%
17	I can get information about Japan	KNW	1	0.9%		
18	I can read Japanese	LNG	2	1.8%		
19	I can go to Japan by myself	LNG	1	0.9%		
20	I can read information on Japanese web sites	LNG	1	0.9%	5	4.6%
21	When I went to Japan, I did not have much difficulty to live	LNG	1	0.9%		
22	I could enter the university with the Japanese language ability	LSC	2	1.8%		
23	I become fond of Japanese culture	LSC	2	1.8%		
24	I made Thai friends who are studying Japanese	LSC	1	0.9%	8	7.3%
25	I often go to Kinokuniya bookstore	LSC	1	0.9%		
26	I prefer to use Japanese products	LSC	1	0.9%		
27	I read more Japanese books than Thai books	LSC	1	0.9%		
28	I went to Japan	TRV	2	1.8%	4	3.7%
29	I went to study in Japan	TRV	2	1.8%		
30	None		12	11.0%	18	16.5%
31	None in Particular		6	5.5%		
	Total		109	100.0%	109	100.0%

JPN=relation with Japanese people, JCP=Japanese cultural products, BSI=Work related changes,

KNW=knowledge about Japan, LNG=Language abitility, LSC=life style change

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Japanese Cultural Products and Japanese Language

In the next question, I have listed ten Japanese cultural products, that are (1) manga, (2) anime, (3) Japanese TV drama, (4) Japanese TV variety programs, (5) J-Pop music, (6) Japanese idols, (7) Japanese games, (8) cosplay, (9) Japanese food, and (10) Japanese fashion, and asked if they liked it "before" or "after" they started learning the Japanese language.   The respondents could mark "never" if they have never tried it and "don't like" if they don't like it at all.   The results are compiled in Table 6.14.

Evidently, "before" was marked the most often in regard to Japanese cultural products except "cosplay," which only 12% of the respondents stated that they liked before they started learning Japanese.   Even if we include the people who marked "after," only 29% of the respondents liked cosplay, which means it was the least popular Japanese cultural product among the ten products.   A possible reason for the low percentage for cosplay is that it is a part of subculture and it has not yet gained the popularity.   Unlike other cultural products, cosplay is a participatory culture, and they have to participate in manga and anime conventions.   As it is not something that they can consume at home, the results seem to show the real popularity of cosplay.

In regard to manga and anime, we can see that many of the respondents liked them before they started learning Japanese.   For manga, 82.1% answered they liked "before" and only 6.4% answered they liked "after"; for anime, 69.2% said "before" and only 9.0% said "after," which means that 88.5% of the respondents liked manga and 78.2% liked anime.   Also, we have already seen that 92.3% of the respondents started learning Japanese before they became 17 years old (Table 6.7), and the results from Table 6.14 suggested that manga and anime were already popular among the respondents when they were attending secondary schools.

The results for Japanese games appear to be similar to those for manga and anime, although it was not as popular. 62.8% of the respondents replied that they liked games before they started learning Japanese and 9.0% started liking Japanese games after they started learning Japanese. A possible reason for Japanese games being less popular among secondary school students compared to manga and anime is the cost of game machines and software. While manga books are sold for about 40 Baht on the streets and you can watch Japanese anime on television for free, game machines such as "Playstation 3" and "Wii" cost from several thousand Baht to more than ten thousand Baht (approximately US$250 to $400). Furthermore, to play games, it is necessary to connect game machines to television sets, and there may be times when parents do not allow their children to play games at home. In addition, the table shows that 15.4% of the respondents answered that they "don't like" games, which may simply mean games are less popular among Thai youth.

In Table 6.14, it is also important to note that percentages of "after" as a response on the questionnaire for J-TV drama and J-TV variety programs were 38.5 and 39.7 respectively. The percentages show that many respondents started liking Japanese television programs after they started learning Japanese. Because more than 40% of the respondents liked Japanese TV drama and variety programs before they started learning Japanese, they could watch them without knowledge of the Japanese language. From these results, I assume that learning Japanese language has made them become interested in Japan. Many of the respondents started watching Japanese television programs to see scenes of contemporary Japan and modern lifestyles in dramas, and to know the latest information about Japanese society and culture in variety programs.

Table 6.14: Consumption of JCP & Japanese Language Learning

		Before	After	Never	Don't Like	Total
Manga	Number	64	5	4	5	78
	Percent	82.1%	6.4%	5.1%	6.4%	100.0%
Anime	Number	54	7	9	8	78
	Percent	69.2%	9.0%	11.5%	10.3%	100.0%
J-TV Drama	Number	37	30	6	5	78
	Percent	47.4%	38.5%	7.7%	6.4%	100.0%
J-TV Variety	Number	32	31	10	5	78
	Percent	41.0%	39.7%	12.8%	6.4%	100.0%
J-Pop Music	Number	43	14	5	16	78
	Percent	55.1%	17.9%	6.4%	20.5%	100.0%
J-Idol	Number	31	10	15	22	78
	Percent	39.7%	12.8%	19.2%	28.2%	100.0%
J-Game	Number	49	7	10	12	78
	Percent	62.8%	9.0%	12.8%	15.4%	100.0%
Cosplay	Number	9	13	20	36	78
	Percent	12%	17%	26%	46%	100%
J-Food	Number	67	9	1	1	78
	Percent	85.9%	11.5%	1.3%	1.3%	100.0%
J-Fashion	Number	35	17	16	10	78
	Percent	44.9%	21.8%	20.5%	12.8%	100.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

J-Pop music and J-idols are closely related. When we say "J-Idols," the category includes J-Pop music idols as well as young actors and actresses. On the other hand, when we say "J-Pop music," the category includes the music artists who are not called "idols" as well as young singers who are the "J-Pop idols." When it comes to J-Pop music, 55.1% of the respondents answered that they liked it before they started learning Japanese and 17.9% said they liked after they started learning Japanese. In regard to J-Idols, 39.7% said they liked them before they started learning Japanese, and 12.8% said they liked them after they started learning the language. These results suggest that the 17.9% in J-Pop music and the 12.8% in J-Idol may be exposed to cultural products after they started learning the language and may be influenced by

other Japanese learners to like them.

Of the respondents, 85.9% appreciated Japanese food before they started learning Japanese and 11.5% liked it after Japanese language learning, which means that 97.4% of the respondents liked Japanese food.   Just as in the case of manga, Japanese food has already been accepted by the majority of Thai people, as evidenced by the many Japanese restaurants in Bangkok and the many supermarkets that carry Japanese foods on the shelves to be served at the dinner tables of Thai families.   The results indicate that most secondary schools students in Thailand liked Japanese food before they began learning Japanese.

Table 6.14 also reveals that Japanese fashion is less popular among secondary school students.   Among the respondents, 44.9% answered that they liked it before they started learning Japanese, while 21.8% said they liked it after they started learning Japanese.   The respondents who liked "Japanese TV drama," Japanese TV variety programs," "J-Pop music," and "J-Idols" before they started learning Japanese might have been exposed to Japanese fashion before Japanese language learning.   For the most part, Japanese fashions are sold at boutiques and stores in big cities, limiting their availability in small towns and villages and reducing one's exposure to them.   The students of *Chulalongkorn University*, on the other hand, may have chances to see Japanese fashion clothes everyday because people who wear such clothes often can be found in Siam Square, a shopping area located next to the university.

"Favorite Japanese Cultural Product After Starting the Language Learning"

As a supplement to the previous question, I asked the respondents if there is any Japanese cultural product that they became very interested in after they began learning Japanese language.　The result is shown in Table 6.15.　Some respondents wrote more than two answers to the question.　The most frequent answer was "music."　When we remember the Japanese cultural products with high percentages in the "after" column of Table 6.14, we could expect "TV drama," "TV variety program," "fashion," and "music" to be higher in Table 6.15.　The result shows that "music" is the highest in percentage but the other three cultural products have also become favorites after they started to learn Japanese.

Table 6.15: More interested after JPL Study		
	Responses	
	N	Percent
1 Music	18	16.8%
2 TV Variety Program	15	14.0%
3 Anime	13	12.1%
4 TV Drama	7	6.5%
5 Manga	6	5.6%
6 Fashion	5	4.7%
7 Game	4	3.7%
8 Food	4	3.7%
9 Cosplay	3	2.8%
10 No Difference [before after]	3	2.8%
11 Idol	2	1.9%
12 Movies	2	1.9%
13 Everday life of the Japanese	1	0.9%
14 Seiyu	1	0.9%
15 Novels	1	0.9%
16 Nothing	12	11.2%
17 No Answer	10	9.3%
	107	100.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Japanese Idol

In Japan, idols are usually young singers, actors, actresses, or celebrities of some kind who attract people of the same generation as well as those of other generations. Japanese idols are the objects of adulation, a fact that requires them to be *kawaii* or cute in appearance to be successful in their role. (Aoyagi 2000) Throughout my research on Japanese cultural products, I treat Japanese idols as a kind of Japanese cultural product, since many related products such as CDs, DVDs, stationeries, general goods, and so on are produced based on the economic power of these icons. From previous fieldworks in Thailand, I realized that many young Thai people who are learning Japanese language know the names of many Japanese idols. In this questionnaire, therefore, I added a few questions about Japanese idols to see how university students perceive Japanese idols in comparison to their counterparts in Thailand and other countries.

First, I asked the question "Do you like Japanese idols?" and the respondents were asked to choose from "yes," "no," or "neither." The results are 34 (43.6%) for "yes," 13 (16.7%) for "no," and 31 (39.7%) for "neither." The questionnaire result clarified that knowing the names of Japanese idols does not mean that they like the idols. 39.7% of the respondents answered "neither," which demonstrates that they don't have any particular interest in Japanese idols, although they may know the names of many Japanese idols.

In the next question, I asked them to compare the idols of Japan and Thailand. Table 6.16 lists the comments of the respondents. There are various kinds of opinions; some respondents wrote about the detailed differences, whereas others just answered "different" or "same" without telling the details. Reviewing the comments, it is

apparent that many respondents pointed out that Thai idols have copied their styles and characteristics from Japanese (and Korean or American) idols.   Because of Thai idols are copies of the Japanese ones, some respondents say there is no difference between Thai and Japanese idols, while others say Japanese idols are better in performance and character.   This research is not to confirm the validity of such comments, but to grasp the image of Japanese idols among Thai youth.   The comments in the table clearly show that many respondents believe that Thai idols are influenced by Japanese idols.

Table 6.17 lists the comments to the question comparing the idols of Japan with those of other countries such as Korea and Taiwan.   35.9% of the responses say there is "no difference" among the idols of Japan and other countries.   On the contrary, the opinions of those who disagree may have been influenced by their favorite idols such that if one has a favorite idol in Japan, he/she may have the tendency to think that Japanese idols are better.   By contrast, if one likes a Korean idol, he/she may prefer Korean idols and might have made favorable comments about Korean idols.   The majority of the comments and opinions of the respondents in Table 6.16 and Table 6.17 are, therefore, the reflection of their personal idol preferences.   Although many respondents think that Japanese idols have been influential to the idols of other Asian countries, the result of the questionnaire revealed that Korean idols gained power in recent years.   Furthermore, Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese idols are often considered nearly identical in appearance and performance in Thailand.

		Responses	
		N	Per Cent
1	Japanese idols have their own unique characteristics but Thai idols are copies from Japan, Korea or America	8	9.8%
2	Thai idols have become idols by the appearance or the family fame Japanese idols have made efforts to become idols	4	4.9%
3	Styles are different	4	4.9%
4	Japanese idols dance better Thai idols cannot dance well	3	3.7%
5	Many Thai idols are following Japanese friends [idols] so there is not much difference	3	3.7%
6	Slightly different but Thai idols are now copying Japanese idols	3	3.7%
7	Japanese idols are cute and sexy	3	3.7%
8	Japanese idols are cool	3	3.7%
9	Very different Thai idols are not interesting	2	2.4%
10	Japanese idol is a big business	1	1.2%
11	Japanese idols have influence on the people	1	1.2%
12	Japanese show business is big	1	1.2%
13	There are more younger idols in Japan	1	1.2%
14	Sexy photos are allowed in Japan	1	1.2%
15	Thai idols are considerably different	1	1.2%
16	Japanese idols releases single CDs first Thai idols try to release an album CD first	1	1.2%
17	Japanese idols are high quality	1	1.2%
18	Japanese idols are professional and have a sense of responsibility	1	1.2%
19	Some Japanese idols have influence on Thai idols	1	1.2%
20	Appearance and music are entirely diffeernt	1	1.2%
21	Japanese idols are serious while Thai idols are easy going	1	1.2%
22	Thai idols emphasize appearance and Japanese idols emphasize voice, dance and appearance	1	1.2%
23	Japanese idols are more talented and work in various places	1	1.2%
24	Japanese idols are more entertaining	1	1.2%
25	The characteristics of the people are different	1	1.2%
26	Japanese idols are more popular	1	1.2%
27	The characteristics and the expressions are different	1	1.2%
28	Fashion and age are different	1	1.2%
29	Japanese idols are younger	1	1.2%
30	No Difference [before after]	11	13.4%
31	I don't know	14	17.1%
32	No Answer	4	4.9%
	Total	82	100.0%

Table 6.16: Difference - Thai and Japanese idols

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 6.17: Difference - Idols of Japan and other countries

		Responses	
		N	Percent
1	Styles are different	5	6.4%
2	Korean idols are all look alike	2	2.6%
3	Thai idols try to look like Japanese idols	1	1.3%
4	Only language and appearance are different	1	1.3%
5	Japanese songs are more beautiful than Korean songs	1	1.3%
6	Japnese idols are prettier	1	1.3%
7	Group idols look similar	1	1.3%
8	Taiwan and Korean idols are similar to Japanese idols	1	1.3%
9	Japanese idols have their own styles but Taiwan and Korean are more similar to Thai idols	1	1.3%
10	Korean idols are more popular in Thailand	1	1.3%
11	Japanese idols emphasize on appearance	1	1.3%
12	They are different but cannot explain the difference	1	1.3%
13	Korean idols are more talented than Japanese and Taiwan idols	1	1.3%
14	Japanese idols have influenced Korean and Taiwan idols but Korean and Taiwan idols are friendly and easy to talk	1	1.3%
15	Korean idols are careful in keeping their good image	1	1.3%
16	The characteristics of the peoeple are different	1	1.3%
17	Korean idols are cute	1	1.3%
18	Japanese idols are unique	1	1.3%
19	Japanese idols are the real idols They are the real image of the idol	1	1.3%
20	I only know Japanese idols	1	1.3%
21	There is no counterpart of Japanese idols in Korea and Taiwan	1	1.3%
22	The behaviours of Japanese idols are childish while Korean are quiet and no over action	1	1.3%
23	Japanese idols are the "coolest"	1	1.3%
24	Japanese idols don't seem to be sporty They are too skinny Korean and Taiwanese idols seems to be stronger	1	1.3%
25	No difference	28	35.9%
26	I don't know	18	23.1%
27	No Answer	3	3.8%
		78	100.0%

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Japanese Speakers in One's Family

If someone in one's family has knowledge about Japanese language and Japan, it is likely that the person has been exposed to its language and culture. In order to see the role of Japanese learning in a family environment, I asked the question "Is there anybody who can speak Japanese in your family besides you? If so, who is it?" The results are shown in Table 6.18. In the questionnaire research, 17 respondents had family members who could speak Japanese. One of the respondents has lived in Japan with family and answered that all of her family could speak Japanese. Since none of the respondents mentioned family members in Table 6.8 when they told me about their desire to start learning Japanese, it might not be a direct motivation for them to start learning the language.

Table 6.18: Japanese Speaker in Family			
		Responses	
		N	Percent
1	Mother	3	16.7%
2	Younger Sister	3	16.7%
3	Cousin	3	16.7%
4	Elder Sister	2	11.1%
5	Younger Brother	2	11.1%
6	Aunt	2	11.1%
7	Elder Brother	1	5.6%
8	Uncle	1	5.6%
9	All of my family	1	5.6%
		18	100.0%

*One of the respondents has two Japanese speakers (mother and younger sister) in family. Out of 78 students, 17 students have Japanese speakers in family.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Japanese Food (Dishes)

As we have already seen in previous questions, Japanese food was popular among the respondents even before they started learning the Japanese language.   In order to see how much they consume in everyday life as a university student, I asked the question "How often do you eat Japanese dishes per month?"   As shown in Figure 6.4, the minimum is 0.5 time per month and the maximum is 20 times per month.   The mode of the frequency distribution is 3 times per month, which fifteen respondents answered, and the average frequency is 3.934 times per month, which means that they eat Japanese dishes approximately once a week.

Figure 6.4: How often do you eat Japanese Dish? /Month
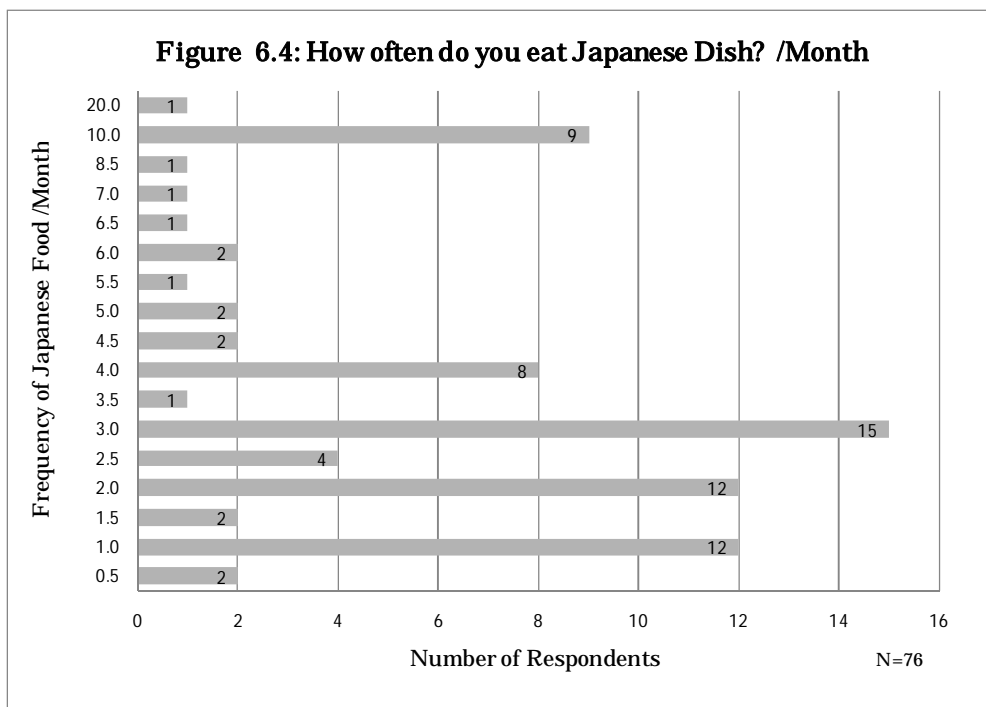
As a reference, I asked the respondents which Japanese dish is their favorite, which is shown in Table 6.19.   Starting from sushi and sashimi, there is a variety of Japanese dishes represented in the list, which suggests that various kinds of Japanese dishes are popular in Thailand today.

Table 6.19: Favorite Japanese Dish		
	Response	
	N	Percent
Sushi	18	19.4%
Sashimi	11	11.8%
Ramen	10	10.8%
Curry and Rice	8	8.6%
Tempura	8	8.6%
Almost everything	5	5.4%
Salmon Sashimi	4	4.3%
Takoyaki	4	4.3%
Udon	4	4.3%
Tonkatsu	2	2.2%
Sukiyaki	2	2.2%
Okashi Snacks	2	2.2%
Shishamo	1	1.1%
Salmon	1	1.1%
Eel	1	1.1%
Gyoza	1	1.1%
Nabe	1	1.1%
Zaru soba	1	1.1%
Tempura Don	1	1.1%
Miso Soup	1	1.1%
Tamagoyaki	1	1.1%
Teppan yaki	1	1.1%
Grilled Fish	1	1.1%
Okonomiyaki	1	1.1%
Too many to list	2	2.2%
No Favorite	1	1.1%
	93	100.0%

* Some respondents listed more than 2 dishes as their favorite.
Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Favorite Manga, Anime, Game & Idol

In the questionnaire, I asked about their favorite manga, anime, game and idol as a reference for future studies. Since the aim of the current research is to discover the relationship between consumption of Japanese cultural products and Japanese language learning, the respondents' favorite manga, anime, game and idols are not of direct concern at the present time. Information about their favorite Japanese cultural products, however, can be used for other studies of Japanese cultural products from different perspectives. For instance, when we expand this discussion to include other countries in Asia, this information can be used to develop further comparative studies of Japanese cultural products.

In Table 6.20, the favorite manga titles are listed. *Doraemon, Crayon Shinchan,* and *Detective Conan* were outstanding in terms of popularity. These three manga titles are also found in the top of Table 6.21, which is the list of the favorite anime. According to Asatsu-DK Inc., which manages the broadcasting rights of *Doraemon* in the international market, *Doraemon* was first broadcast in 1982 and 572 episodes have been broadcast repeatedly in Thailand. (Personal communication 2006, January 18) The respondents in the questionnaire research are assumed to have watched this anime since their early childhood.

In her study of the popularity of *Doraemon* in Indonesia and in Asia, Shiraishi points out the affinity of *Doraemon* to Asian countries.

> In other Asian countries, as in Indonesia, economic growth has given birth to a consumer class living modern, urban lifestyles that increasingly resemble those portrayed in Japanese manga and animation. Many prevalent themes, including children's empowerment and technological optimism, find rich soil in Asia's developing countries as well…. In

235

such a setting, manga's dream of a high-tech society built by the young
generation finds strong resonance and support.   (Shiraishi 2000:302)

The resemblance of the lifestyles portrayed in *Doraemon* and the urban lifestyles in developing Asian countries may be important when we try to understand the success of *Doraemon*.   The reasons for the success for each manga and anime, however, should be different according to the titles and the recipient regions.   These lists of favorite manga and anime in Thailand will hopefully serve as a reference in future studies.

Table 6.22 contains a list of the favorite games of the research respondents. Generally, anime titles are based on manga titles.   The development of manga begins with a serial publication in magazines; comic books of each manga title will be published if it becomes popular.   When several comic books have been published for a title, production of a television anime of the title will start.   Games, on the other hand, are produced more independently.   As we can see, there are no overlapping titles in the game table with the titles in manga and anime, except Pokémon, which originally started from a game and the story has been developed for manga and television anime.

Table 6.23 contains a list of the respondents' favorite idols.   Reviewing the names of the idols, it is evident that most of them are J-Pop and J-Rock idols and we can find only a few actors in the list.   Most female idols are solo singers, and no actresses included in the list.   Since most of the respondents are female university students, male idols are more popular than female ones.

Table 6.20: Favorite Manga		
	Response	
	N	Percent
Doraemon	14	18.7%
Crayon Shinchan	8	10.7%
Detective Conan	8	10.7%
One Piece	3	4.0%
Nana	3	4.0%
The Prince of Tennis	2	2.7%
Rurouni Kenshin	2	2.7%
Pokemon	1	1.3%
Good Morning Call	1	1.3%
Houshin Enki	1	1.3%
Genso Maden Sayuki	1	1.3%
Gundam	1	1.3%
Atashinchi	1	1.3%
Sora wa akaikawa no hotori	1	1.3%
Kiniro no koruda [La corda d'oro]	1	1.3%
Monster	1	1.3%
Dr Slump Arale chan	1	1.3%
Slamdunk	1	1.3%
Manga Artist Yazawa Ai Works	1	1.3%
Manga Artist Saito Chiho Works	1	1.3%
Gakuen Alice	1	1.3%
Yu Gi Oh!	1	1.3%
Angel Sanctuary	1	1.3%
Zone 00	1	1.3%
Koucha Ouji	1	1.3%
Sailormoon	1	1.3%
Yaoi [Boys' Love] Genre	1	1.3%
Saint Seiya	1	1.3%
The Lost Canvas	1	1.3%
Soul Eater	1	1.3%
Aria The Origination	1	1.3%
Gintama	1	1.3%
Spiral	1	1.3%
Kindaichi Shonen no Jikenbo	1	1.3%
D. Gray_man	1	1.3%
<Manga for girls> Genre	1	1.3%
Ouran High School	1	1.3%
Cardcaptor Sakura	1	1.3%
Whistle	1	1.3%
Bleach	1	1.3%
Mekakushi no kuni [by Tsukuba Sakura]	1	1.3%
Dr Rin	1	1.3%
	75	100.0%

* Some respondents listed more than 2 manga titles as their favorite. Answers such as "I don't like manga", "Too many to list" or no answers have been excluded from the list.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 6.21: Favorite Anime		
	Response	
	N	Percent
Doraemon	8	12.1%
Crayon Shinchan	2	3.0%
Detective Conan	4	6.1%
Slamdunk	1	1.5%
Pokemon	1	1.5%
Houshin Enki	1	1.5%
One Piece	2	3.0%
My Neighbor Totoro	6	9.1%
Gurren Lagann	1	1.5%
Zetsubou Sensei	2	3.0%
Howl's Moving Castle	1	1.5%
Chronicles of the Wings	1	1.5%
Rurouni Kenshin [Samurai X]	3	4.5%
Fruits Basket	1	1.5%
Digimon	1	1.5%
Spirited Away	3	4.5%
Ouran High School	3	4.5%
Kin iro no koruda [La corda d'oro]	1	1.5%
Code Geass	1	1.5%
Studio Ghibli Anime	2	3.0%
Mikan Enikki	1	1.5%
Samurai Champloo	1	1.5%
Gundam Series	5	7.6%
Katekyo Hitman Reborn	1	1.5%
Princess Mononoke	2	3.0%
Ookiku Furikabutte	2	3.0%
Kino no tabi	1	1.5%
XXXHolic	1	1.5%
Rakisuta [Lucky Star]	1	1.5%
Ranma 1 2	1	1.5%
Asuki Chan	1	1.5%
Bleach	1	1.5%
Kumono Mukou Yakusokuno basho [Makoto Shinkai]	1	1.5%
Sailormoon	2	3.0%
	66	100.0%

* Some respondents listed more than 2 anime titles as their favorite. Answers such as "I don't like", "No Favorite" or no answers have been excluded from the list.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 6.22: Favorite Game		
	Response	
	N	Percent
Final Fantasy Series	12	22.6%
Pokemon	4	7.5%
Tales of Series	4	7.5%
Mario Series	3	5.7%
Wii Games	2	3.8%
Nintendo DS Games	2	3.8%
Musou Series [Sengoku Musou, etc]	2	3.8%
Harvest Moon	2	3.8%
Persona 4	2	3.8%
PSP Games	1	1.9%
Street Fighter	1	1.9%
Tokimeki Series	1	1.9%
Bishi Bashi	1	1.9%
King of Fighter	1	1.9%
Bio Hazard	1	1.9%
Kin-iro no koruda [La corda d'oro]	1	1.9%
Harukanaru tokino nakade	1	1.9%
Cooking Mama	1	1.9%
Rayman	1	1.9%
Winning Eleven	1	1.9%
Sengoku Basara	1	1.9%
Locco Rocco	1	1.9%
Metal Gear Series	1	1.9%
Wild Arms 2	1	1.9%
Okami	1	1.9%
Bomberman	1	1.9%
Genso Suikoden	1	1.9%
Samurai Spirit	1	1.9%
Zero Series	1	1.9%
	53	100.0%

* Some respondents listed more than 2 game titles as their favorite. Answers such as "I don't know", "No Favorite" or no answers have been excluded from the list.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 6.23: Favorite Idol			
		Response	
		N	Percent
Arashi [Group]	Male	4	8.0%
Yamashita Tomohisa <News>	Male	4	8.0%
Amuro Namie [Singer]	Female	3	6.0%
Nakashima Mika [Singer]	Female	3	6.0%
Koike Teppei [Singer]	Male	2	4.0%
Kamenashi Kazuya <KAT-TUN>	Male	2	4.0%
Johnny's Jr. [Group]	Male	2	4.0%
Hirai Ken [Singer]	Male	2	4.0%
Hamasaki Ayumi [Singer]	Female	2	4.0%
Koda Kumi [Singer]	Female	2	4.0%
KAT-TUN [Group]	Male	1	2.0%
Hyde <L'Arc-en-Ciel>	Male	1	2.0%
Hiroko <mihimaru GT>	Female	1	2.0%
Tachibana Keita <w-inds.>	Male	1	2.0%
Takizawa Hideaki <Tacky & Tsubasa>	Male	1	2.0%
Dir en grey [Group]	Male	1	2.0%
Camui Gackt [Singer]	Male	1	2.0%
X-Japan [Group]	Male	1	2.0%
Utada Hikaru [Singer]	Female	1	2.0%
Kamakari Kenta [Actor]	Male	1	2.0%
Yamada Ryousuke <Hey!Say!Jump!>	Male	1	2.0%
Kimura Takuya <SMAP>	Male	1	2.0%
Johnny's Idols	Male	1	2.0%
Akanishi Jin <KAT-TUN>	Male	1	2.0%
Nakamaru Yuichi <KAT-TUN>	Male	1	2.0%
w-inds. [Group]	Male	1	2.0%
Hard Gay	Male	1	2.0%
Kuraki Mai [Singer]	Female	1	2.0%
Exile [Group]	Male	1	2.0%
Benny K [Singer]	Female	1	2.0%
Doumoto Tsuyoshi <Kinki Kids>	Male	1	2.0%
Amano Tsukiko [Singer]	Female	1	2.0%
Ono Lisa [Singer]	Female	1	2.0%
Mizushima Hiro [Actor]	Male	1	2.0%
		50	100.0%

* <name> indicates the name of the group that the person belongs to.

* Some respondents listed more than 2 idol names as their favorite. Answers such as "I don't know", "No Favorite" or no answers have been excluded from the list.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Source of Information

In the previous chapters (see Chapters 4 & 5), I have discovered that Thai youth uses the Internet to obtain the most updated information about the cultural products of their interests from Japan. In this research, therefore, I also asked the respondents about their source of information, especially their favorite Japanese magazines and web sites. In Table 6.24, the favorite web sites are listed. In the list, there were various kinds of web sites, including educational publishing companies, companies that the respondents may work for after they graduate, idol fan clubs, fashion magazine sites, SNS (social networking services), blog services, manga and anime fan sites, and so on.

In Table 6.25, the favorite magazines are listed. The favorite magazines can be roughly grouped into four categories, (1) Fashion, (2) Manga & Anime, (3) Music & Idol, and (4) Cosplay. Many magazines in the list are published in Japan and imported to Thailand by bookstores such as *Kinokuniya Bookstore*. Among the magazines, fashion magazines are particularly popular among the respondents because most of the respondents were female. Some Japanese fashion magazines for young women, such as *S-Cawaii* and *Ray,* are translated into Thai and available in local bookstores or newsstands near bus terminals or BTS stations. They are licensed to a Thai publisher and sold for 80 Baht (approx. US$2.40) per copy.

Table 6.24: Favorite Web Site		
	Response	
	N	Percent
ALC Press Inc. (www.alc.co.jp)	7	8.3%
NHK	3	3.6%
Yahoo!Japan	3	3.6%
Online Dictionary	3	3.6%
Street Fashion, Street Snapshots	2	2.4%
Nico Nico Douga	2	2.4%
Illustration Sites	2	2.4%
Google Japan (google.co.jp)	2	2.4%
Fan Art Site	2	2.4%
WAT <Idol Group> Fan Club (www.watfc.com)	1	1.2%
Wikipedia in Japanese	1	1.2%
Web Sites of Celbrities	1	1.2%
Web sites about translation	1	1.2%
Web Sites about manga	1	1.2%
Seventeen	1	1.2%
San-x Co. Ltd. (www.san-x.co.jp)	1	1.2%
Popteen	1	1.2%
Oricon (www.oricon.co.jp)	1	1.2%
Novel Sites	1	1.2%
mixi	1	1.2%
Manga Web sites	1	1.2%
Magazine Web Sites	1	1.2%
Kadokawa Group Publishing Co., Ltd. (www.kadokawa.co.jp)	1	1.2%
JAL	1	1.2%
www.choco-recipe.jp	1	1.2%
www.j-doramanga.com	1	1.2%
www.japankiku.com	1	1.2%
www.excite.co.jp	1	1.2%
Goo (goo.ne.jp)	1	1.2%
Game Sites	1	1.2%
Fan Blog	1	1.2%
cure.livedoor.com	1	1.2%
Anime Official Site	1	1.2%
ameblo jp [blog site]	1	1.2%
	84	100.0%

* Answers such as "I don't know", "No Favorite" or no answers have been excluded.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Table 6.25: Favorite Magazine		
	Response	
	N	Percent
Cawaii / S-Cawaii	9	13.0%
Ray	9	13.0%
Seventeen	4	5.8%
Shonen Jump	3	4.3%
Popteen	3	4.3%
wink-up	3	4.3%
LaLa	3	4.3%
DACO [Thai Version]	2	2.9%
ViVi	2	2.9%
Popolo	2	2.9%
Hana to Yume	2	2.9%
Potato	2	2.9%
New Type	2	2.9%
Myojo	2	2.9%
J-Spy	1	1.4%
Manga magazines	1	1.4%
JJ	1	1.4%
Entertainment Magazines	1	1.4%
duet	1	1.4%
Travel Magazines	1	1.4%
Arena 37	1	1.4%
With	1	1.4%
More	1	1.4%
World Soccer	1	1.4%
CoroCoro Comic	1	1.4%
Cure Japanese Rock	1	1.4%
Shoxx	1	1.4%
Foolsmate	1	1.4%
Animate	1	1.4%
Layers	1	1.4%
Cast-prix	1	1.4%
Pinky	1	1.4%
Nonno	1	1.4%
Junon	1	1.4%
Monthly Asuka	1	1.4%
	69	100.0%

* Answers such as "No Favorite" or no answers have been excluded.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Impressions of the Japanese

The next question "How do you feel about the Japanese people? What are the good and bad points about them?" elicited the respondents' impressions of the Japanese people. (Table 6.26)   The question was added so as to unravel the stereotypical image of the Japanese people among Thai youth.   The results may not show a direct influence on Japanese language learning and consumption of Japanese cultural products, but stereotypes about Japan may be the basis of their attitudes toward Japan.   In order to understand how Japan is perceived by the people in Thailand, therefore, I asked the question in the questionnaire.

Comments such as "punctual," "diligent," "polite," "tidy," "good manners," "hardworking," "responsibility" and "creativity" found in the table represent the positive side of the stereotypes about Japan and her people, while "stressed," "too strict," "too serious," and so forth represent the negative side of it.   The points that the respondents made in the questionnaire reminded me of the characteristics of Japanese workers which have been discussed in writings on the characteristics of Japanese people by the Japanese thinking elites in the 1980s.   Besides such a stereotypical impression of the Japanese, I found numerous comments that seemed to be based on the personal experience of the respondent or that of someone close to the respondent.   This suggests that many of them have interactions with Japanese who are probably working in Thailand, and the respondents construct an image of the Japanese by accumulating experiences of their interaction with the Japanese.

Table 6.26: Impression of the Japanese (1/2)

		Response	
		N	Percent
1	Punctual	27	12.6%
2	Diligent	26	12.1%
3	They are under pressure [stressed]	13	6.1%
4	Too strict	11	5.1%
5	Polite	9	4.2%
6	Strict	9	4.2%
7	Tidy	8	3.7%
8	Good manners	7	3.3%
9	Hardworking	6	2.8%
10	Responsibility	6	2.8%
11	Sometimes they don't talk directly	5	2.3%
12	Creativity	5	2.3%
13	Too serious	5	2.3%
14	They sometimes don't tell the truth	5	2.3%
15	The society oppresses women	4	1.9%
16	I don't know what they are thinking behind the smiley face	4	1.9%
17	Patient	3	1.4%
18	I like them. They are similar to Thai people	3	1.4%
19	Handsome	3	1.4%
20	Self-Disciplined	3	1.4%
21	Friendly	3	1.4%
22	Some people are too extreme	2	0.9%
23	Smart	2	0.9%
24	Kind	2	0.9%
25	Patriotic	2	0.9%
26	Honest	2	0.9%
27	Women are fashionable and cute	2	0.9%
28	Insincere	2	0.9%
29	Too shy	2	0.9%
30	They cannot see other things when they concentrate on something	2	0.9%

		Response	
		N	Percent
	Table 6.26: Impression of the Japanese (2/2)		
31	Japanese men are bawdy	2	0.9%
32	It seems that they don't trust foreigners and make them feel like outsiders	1	0.5%
33	Vertical relations	1	0.5%
34	Neat	1	0.5%
35	Stingy	1	0.5%
36	Too patriotic	1	0.5%
37	They like cute things	1	0.5%
38	Cute	1	0.5%
39	Interpersonal relations are not good	1	0.5%
40	Too much porno in society	1	0.5%
41	Sometimes their behaviors are weird Too much violence in society	1	0.5%
42	Men are cold-hearted	1	0.5%
43	Low morality	1	0.5%
44	Complex interpersonal relations	1	0.5%
45	Excellent	1	0.5%
46	Difficult to understand their way of thinking	1	0.5%
47	Sometimes too polite	1	0.5%
48	Obedient	1	0.5%
49	Patriachy	1	0.5%
50	Advanced technology	1	0.5%
51	Formalism	1	0.5%
52	Quiet	1	0.5%
53	Vague personality	1	0.5%
54	Positive	1	0.5%
55	Smoking too much	1	0.5%
56	Honne & Tatemae	1	0.5%
57	Most Japanese are good people but men are not gentlemen	1	0.5%
58	Competitive Society	1	0.5%
59	Industrious	1	0.5%
60	They have good and bad points	1	0.5%
	Total	214	100.0%

* Some respondents wrote more than two points about the Japanese.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Attitudes toward Japan

The last question of the questionnaire inquired if the respondents could agree to nine statements written on the sheet. The statements were: (1) "I want to study in Japan," (2) "I want to work in Japan," (3) "I want to live in Japan," (4) "I want to work in Japanese companies in Thailand," (5) "I want to have a job which is related to Japan," (6) "I love Japan," (7) "I want to make Japanese friends," (8) "I want to marry a Japanese person," and (9) "I am not interested in Japan." The respondents marked a circle if they agreed with the statements.

Table 6.27 shows the results of the question and I shaded the cells that exceeded 60%. Clearly, 85.9% of the respondents wanted to study in Japan. But only 55.1% wanted to work in Japan, and only 46.2% wanted to live in Japan. Regarding their employment after graduation, many of the respondents preferred to work in Thailand, either in Japanese companies in Thailand or work that is related to Japan. 94.9% of the respondents said they loved Japan, and 79.5% wanted to have Japanese friends. But there were only 14.1% of the respondents who wanted to marry a Japanese person.

Table 6.27: Attitudes toward Japan							
	Yes		No		No Answer		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Want to study in Japan	67	85.9%	9	11.5%	2	2.6%	78
Want to work in Japan	43	55.1%	33	42.3%	2	2.6%	78
Want to live in Japan	36	46.2%	40	51.3%	2	2.6%	78
Want to work in Japanese company in Thailand	49	62.8%	27	34.6%	2	2.6%	78
Want to have a job which is related to Japan	61	78.2%	15	19.2%	2	2.6%	78
I love Japan	74	94.9%	2	2.6%	2	2.6%	78
Want to make Japanese friends	62	79.5%	14	17.9%	2	2.6%	78
Want to get married with Japanese	11	14.1%	65	83.3%	2	2.6%	78
Not interested in Japan	3	3.8%	73	93.6%	2	2.6%	78

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire result.

Discussion

Motivation for Japanese Language Learning

In the studies of second language motivation, researchers in social psychology and education have been discussing the importance of the motivation for second language acquisition for several decades. (e.g., Gardner & Lambert 1972; Gardner 1985; Gardner & Clément 1990; Gardner et al. 2004)   Most of these discussions, however, focused on the reasons to continue learning the second language in classrooms while my interest mainly focuses on the motivation to begin learning Japanese language.

In self-determination theory in second language motivation studies, motivations are divided into two types; one is *intrinsic motivation* and the other is *extrinsic motivation.*   *Intrinsic motivation* in second language acquisition means that a learner is enjoying learning itself or thinks it is satisfying to learn the language, while *extrinsic motivation* means a learner is learning to earn reward or avoid a punishment. Gardner referred the total complex of three components, which are integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, and motivation, as *integrative motivation.*   The integratively motivated student has an openness to identification with the second language community and has favorable attitudes toward the learning situation. (Masgoret & Gardner 2003)   This formulation inspired much research in second language motivation studies in the past few decades and four orientations, which are (1) travel, (2) friendship, (3) knowledge, and (4) the instrumental orientations, proved to be common motivations for second language learners. (Noels et al. 2000)

In Table 6.8, we have seen that 68.1% of the answers were in the JCP category, which proved that interests in Japanese cultural products have caused many of the respondents to start learning the Japanese language.   Their interest in Japanese cultural

products and many of the other reasons that the respondents claimed to be the cause of their learning the Japanese language were, however, seemed difficult to be analyzed by the theories of second language motivation because the reasons existed outside of the classrooms and they were influenced by various social milieu. For instance, how can we analyze a case of a student who started learning the Japanese language because he/she wanted to read manga *Doraemon* in Japanese? Is being able to read *Doraemon* a reward in terms of instrumental orientation? Or is it a friendship that he/she has toward *Doraemon*? Because consumption of Japanese cultural products often involves the emotional ends of an individual, it is difficult to apply the theories which are focused on classroom settings, although these theories seem pertinent to understanding the orientations of other reasons to learn the language.

It is important to note that the respondents of this research were elites in terms of Japanese language learning, since *Chulalongkorn University* is the first ranking university in Thailand and the department of Japanese Language admits only 35 students to enter the class every year. (cf., Table 6.28) In other words, they were successful in learning Japanese language. If motivation is as important in second language acquisition as Gardner (1985) stressed, the Japanese cultural products that induced the respondents to learn the Japanese language must be effective motivations if they have repeatedly prompted them to continue the learning process. It is hoped that future research may continue to attempt to prove such assumptions and assess the power of Japanese cultural products as a motivation to be a successful learner of the Japanese language.

Table 6.28: Number of Graduates - Chulalongkorn University, Faculty of Art

B.E (Thai Buddha Era)	C.E	Thai	English	History	Geography	Librarianship	Philosophy	Art	Pali	Chinese	Japanese	French	German	Spanish	Italian
2517	1974	16	92	27	5	9	2	7	0	0	3	41	3	0	0
2518	1975	11	98	46	4	3	5	8	0	0	7	25	6	0	0
2519	1976	23	90	34	7	9	2	5	2	0	7	35	10	0	0
2520	1977	13	86	27	2	17	3	10	0	0	20	29	1	5	0
2521	1978	18	104	23	3	9	1	5	1	0	13	33	10	3	0
2522	1979	8	104	14	4	18	2	5	1	0	27	26	8	1	0
2523	1980	18	95	17	7	11	1	10	1	0	18	35	11	4	0
2524	1981	7	98	17	8	5	1	5	0	0	29	37	13	3	0
2525	1982	5	126	21	3	7	1	7	0	0	28	18	15	4	0
2526	1983	7	129	8	8	9	1	2	1	0	31	19	10	6	0
2527	1984	5	150	4	3	2	1	4	0	8	23	10	13	3	1
2528	1985	7	152	5	6	1	1	6	0	2	22	12	9	7	0
2529	1986	2	161	6	3	2	0	4	0	5	19	12	7	1	2
2530	1987	4	143	0	10	2	0	4	0	3	23	20	8	1	2
2531	1988	0	140	5	14	3	0	10	0	5	14	15	8	4	2
2532	1989	4	130	1	11	1	2	13	0	11	24	15	11	3	0
2533	1990	1	122	0	9	5	1	12	0	17	17	24	6	7	2
2534	1991	1	108	6	17	1	1	4	1	4	29	25	19	6	2
2535	1992	3	102	0	10	1	0	5	0	7	24	34	11	12	6
2536	1993	12	103	6	17	2	1	10	0	7	34	22	9	4	5
2537	1994	9	115	3	16	1	0	6	0	2	28	17	8	8	6
2538	1995	16	103	9	18	5	2	13	0	10	20	18	18	6	13
2539	1996	16	67	5	17	5	1	11	0	14	37	31	6	25	24
2540	1997	22	65	12	23	12	2	10	1	28	21	40	14	20	10
2541	1998	17	76	11	19	25		17	1	26	23	19	17	16	14
2542	1999	18	70	7	18	27	2	4		23	47	30	13	9	7
2543	2000	27	86	11	13	19	1	13	1	40	38	19	9	22	10
2544	2001	17	77	4	20	19		9	1	32	27	20	11	26	13
2545	2002	15	69	6	17	10	1	16		30	20	20	5	31	9
2546	2003	9	73	8	16	12		22	1	29	22	19	8	25	27
2547	2004	8	68	8	12	16	2	20	1	42	25	30	9	12	12
2548	2005	5	93	18	17	15		15		32	16	20	9	14	11
2549	2006	16	72	9	13	24	4	14		24	24	21	18	21	14
2550	2007	21	71	17	21	20	2	1	0	38	31	25	12	28	12
2551	2008	23	68	8	17	25	5	9		33	27	14	22	37	13

Source: The Information has been provided by Chulalongkorn University, the Office of Faculty of Art. (2009)

Have the Questionnaires Tested the Hypotheses?

In the beginning of this chapter, I posed the three hypotheses in order to reveal the relationship between consumption of Japanese cultural products and Japanese language learning: (1) exposure to Japanese cultural products induces Japanese language learning, (2) Japanese language learning induces consumption of other Japanese cultural products, and (3) each Japanese cultural product's power to induce Japanese language learning differs. The first hypothesis has been tested, as we have already discussed at some points in this chapter, and the results of Table 6.8 proved that 68.1% of the respondents started learning the Japanese language because of Japanese cultural products.

Tables 6.14 and 6.15 have suggested Japanese language learning may cause consumption of Japanese cultural products, implying an explanation underlying the second hypothesis. We have seen that all the Japanese cultural products listed in Table 6.14 have some respondents who started liking them "after" Japanese language learning. Among the Japanese cultural products, TV Dramas and TV Variety particularly gained a considerable number of new fans after Japanese language learning, while J-Pop Music, J-Idol, Cosplay, J-Food, and J-Fashion attracted some new consumers from the respondents. If we look at Table 6.15 closely, then, the respondents tended to become more interested in Music, TV Variety, and Anime after Japanese language learning. The result, I assume, suggests that Japanese language learning reinforced the interests in Japanese cultural products that the respondents liked before Japanese language learning, and that became for them a stronger motivation to learn the language.

Some findings in this research support the third hypothesis. As we saw in Table 6.14, the amount of exposure to each Japanese cultural product by each respondent before Japanese language learning differs, and each respondent had a

different reason to start learning the Japanese language.   The JCP category in Table 6.8

has been divided into subcategories of Japanese cultural products and is presented in

Figure 6.5.   As shown in the figure, "manga and anime" and "music and idol" are the

two major cultural product groups that motivated the respondents to start learning

Japanese.   Since the amount of exposure to each Japanese cultural product differs, the

strength of the influence of each cultural product cannot be compared in the data we

obtained in this research.   However, the amount of exposure is the result of the power

of each cultural product to attract Thai youth, and the strength of the attraction of the

cultural product may affect their motivation in regard to Japanese language learning.
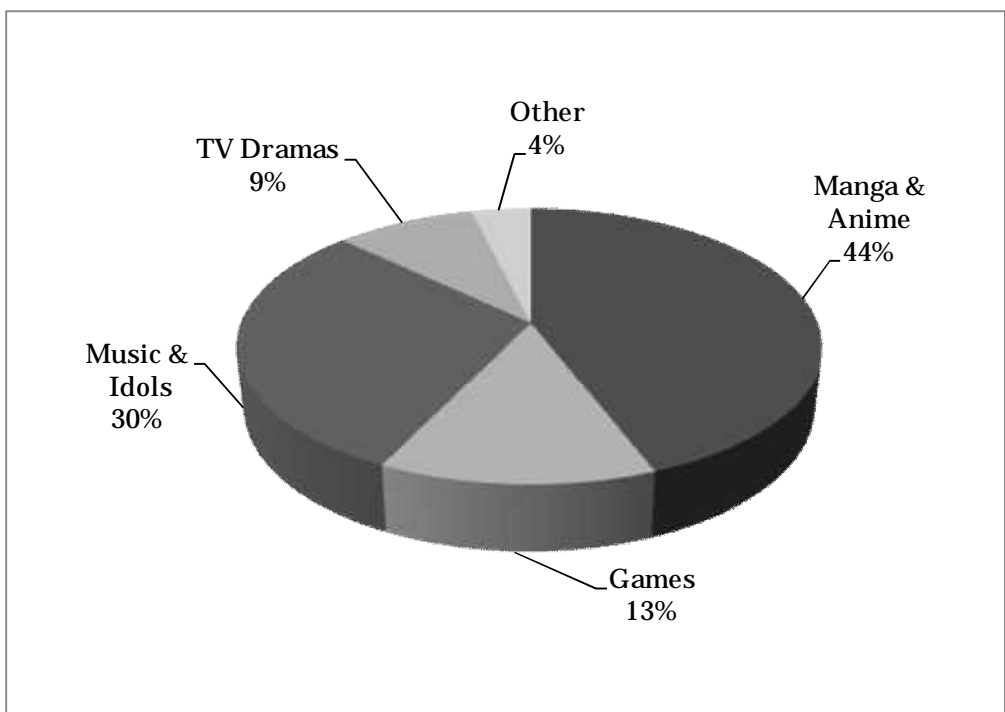
Figure 6.5: Motivation to start Learning Japanese Language
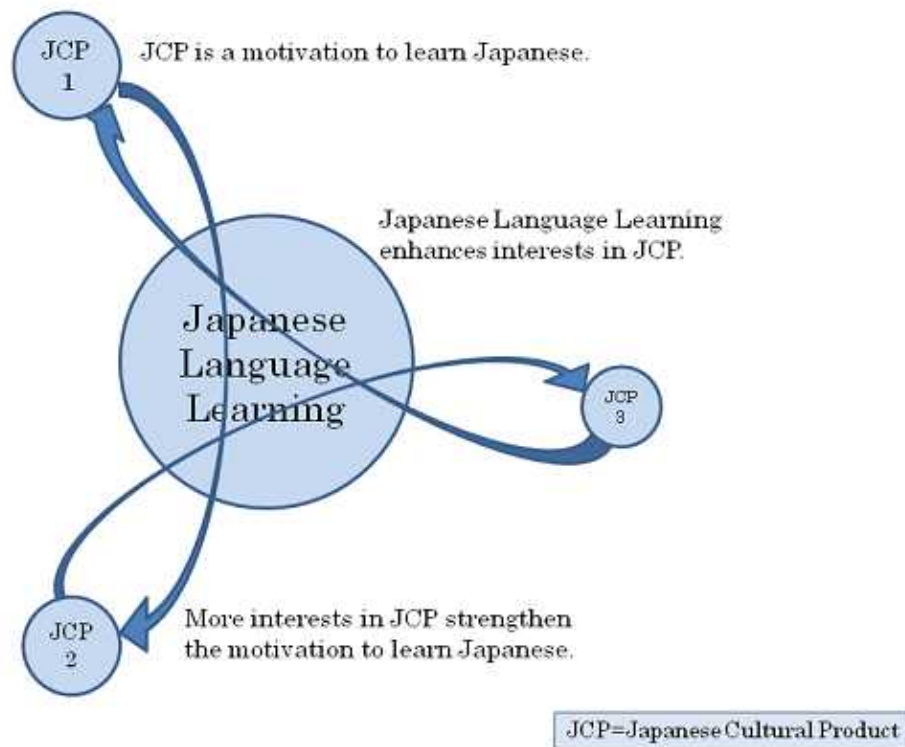
Figure 6.6: The relationship between JCP and Japanese Language Learning.

As we have seen so far, this research proved the first hypothesis to be valid in the case of the students of *Chulalongkorn University*. The causal relationship between their interest in Japanese cultural products and their motivation to start learning Japanese language was found in 68.1% of the respondents, showing that the correlation between the two variables is significant. The second and the third hypotheses are not tested directly in this research. Although the results suggested their validity at least partially, future research will be necessary in order to test the full validity of the hypotheses.

From this research, I discovered that an interest in Japanese cultural products induces Japanese language learning, and that Japanese language learning enhances

interests in Japanese cultural products, further strengthening a desire to learn Japanese. This virtuous cycle (Figure 6.6) is the model of Thai youth's experiences in consuming Japanese cultural products and learning Japanese. It is important to note, however, that the sample in this research is a group of elite university students who are successful learners of Japanese language. The respondents of this research may be the leaders in consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, and it is hoped that the cultural consumption model for other consumers of Japanese cultural products will be constructed in the future studies.

Concluding Remarks

Akiko to tomodachi

In the beginning of this chapter, we noticed a considerable increase in the number of learners in primary and secondary education in Thailand, which increased by 80.9% between 2003 and 2006. (cf., Table 6.1) There may be multiple reasons underlying this increase in the number of learners in secondary education during that period in Thailand, but I would like to point out one of the factors that may be a milestone in Japanese language education in Thailand.

In 2004, a new textbook to teach Japanese at secondary school was published by the *Japan Foundation*. The title of the textbook is *Akiko to tomodachi* (Banchongmanee 2004), which has been written and edited by the collaboration of teachers at university, secondary schools, experts in Japanese language education, and the *Japan Foundation*. As we have seen in this chapter, the number of Japanese learners in Thailand has increased, especially since the 1990s, and the demand for teachers to teach Japanese language has also become very high. Since 1998, the university entrance examinations of Thailand adopted Japanese language as one of the test topics, which has also boosted the number of learners in secondary schools. Thai secondary schools, therefore, sent teachers of other subjects to training courses at the *Japan Foundation* to be Japanese teachers. Unfortunately, the scratch teachers had difficulty in teaching with the Japanese textbooks that were published in Japan, since the explanations and instructions were all written in Japanese. In order to provide good Japanese language textbooks for secondary schools, therefore, a special textbook writing project was started at the *Japan Foundation* in February 2000. (Banchongmanee et al. 2005)

The Japanese textbook *Akiko to tomodachi* consists of six textbooks (volume 1-6: one for each semester at upper secondary school), three workbooks (volume1-3: one for each grade), guidebooks for teachers (volume 1-6: one for each semester) and an audio CD (volume 1-6: contained each textbook). The volumes 1, 3 and 5 were published in March 2004, and the volumes 2, 4, and 6 were published in October 2004. By March 2005, about 120 secondary schools started using the textbook. (Banchongmanee et al. 2005) Since the textbooks contains explanations and instructions in Thai language, especially in the introductory level volumes, Thai students and teachers can fully understand each step before they proceed to next level. Although many of the informants in my research have told me that they were learning Japanese with *Akiko to tomodachi* at secondary schools, I was not aware that the textbook was published for Japanese language education in Thailand until I saw it at Kinokuniya Bookstore in Bangkok in 2005. After I realized the importance of Japanese language in consumption of Japanese cultural products, I reevaluated the importance of the publication of the textbook, which might have made the sharp increase of the number of learners from 2003 to 2006 possible.

Language & Culture

> Thought development is determined by language, i.e., by the linguistic tools of thought and by the sociocultural experience of the child. Essentially, the development of inner speech depends on outside factors; the development of logic in the child, as Piaget's studies have shown, is a direct function of his socialized speech. The child's intellectual growth is contingent on his mastering the social means of thought, that is, language. (Vygotsky 1986:94)

Lev Vygotsky's notion of first language acquisition and the development of logic in a child can be applied to the discussion of second language acquisition, revealing a new layer of understanding about the culture of second language and consumption of cultural products. In fact, if we replace the word "thought" with "understanding of another culture" in Vygotsky's discussion, the above statement can point out the importance of language in understanding other cultures. Before beginning to acquire a second language, as it is same as in the case of the first language, language acquisition and understanding of the other culture are entirely different processes. But after one begins learning a second language, at some point in the process of learning the language, language and thought will start interacting. Through these interactions, then, language learning helps develop an understanding of the culture, and the cultural understanding enhances learning of the second language. In successful language learning, it appears that a synergistic effect of the interactions occurs.

> A speech act may therefore be culturally defined as a complaint, a compliment, an apology, or a refusal, and competent native speakers will have little difficulty in identifying them as such. A given speech act or event is, as Hymes points out, conditioned by rules of conduct and

interpretation, and the ability to use these rules appropriately is a critical part of the communicative competence of the native speaker.   (Wolfson 1989:7)

In explanation of the *speech act* in sociolinguistics theory, Nessa Wolfson also points out that the cultural definitions of speech that are conditioned by the rules of the society that the speaker belongs to are necessary to interpret the meaning of the speech. In other words, the interpretation of cultural definitions is *communicative competence* in the language.   In concluding this chapter, the discussions throughout this research have made me believe that the hundreds of Thai youth who participated in my research have developed interests in Japanese culture and cultural products as they started learning the Japanese language, and this learning has enhanced their consumption of Japanese culture and cultural products.

Chapter Seven

Japanese Food in Modern Lifestyle of Thailand

Is it the Flavor of Japanese Culture?

On April 2, 1992, a Japanese *ramen* noodle restaurant opened at *Silom Complex*, a building and shopping center located in the business district of central Bangkok. *Ramen* is a Japanese dish of noodles in broth, which is one of the most popular fast foods in Japan. (Figure 7.1)   The name of the noodle restaurant was *Hachiban Ramen*. Started from the first branch in *Silom Complex*, the *Hachiban Ramen* has grown to have 88 outlets at the shopping malls in Thailand (by the end of 2009) and almost all young Thais in Bangkok knows the name.   After school time on weekdays, we can find many secondary school students in school uniforms in *Hachiban Ramen* outlets.   Their favorite dishes are ramen, *gyoza* dumpling and cola. (Figure 7.2)   Sometimes they go to *Hachiban Ramen* with a group of friends; other times, they go there with parents and family.   As *Hachiban Ramen* is a fast food chain and not an orthodox Japanese restaurant, anybody can go there with casual clothes and the prices are not expensive. (Figure 7.3)

Figure 7.1: *Tonkotsu-Tantanmen* at *Hachiban Ramen*.
Photo by author.

When I first heard the name *Hachiban Ramen* from secondary school students who were informants for my research around 2001, I was not sure if *Hachiban Ramen* has come from Japan or it has started in Thailand and the business might be owned by only Thais.   As most of secondary and university students that I met knew the ramen restaurant and I could find the outlets in many shopping malls in Bangkok, it was obvious that Hachiban Ramen has been a successful business in Thailand.   But since I have never heard the name in Tokyo and vicinity areas where I have been living for a few decades, I had to assume that the business should be in Thailand only, which was wrong.   Later date since then, I have found out that *Hachiban Ramen* is a franchise ramen restaurant which has been started in Ishikawa prefecture, Japan, and expanded its business in Hokuriku and Chubu areas and have more than 160 outlets in Japan. (Goto 2008)

Figure 7.2: Gyoza-set in the menu of *Hachiban Ramen*.
Courtesy of Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd., Japan.

Hachiban Ramen in Thailand is managed by Thai Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd., a joint venture of Hachi-Ban Trading Co., Ltd. (a subsidiary of Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd.) and a Thai local company. The annual sales volume of Thai Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd. in 2006 was more than two billion yen and there were more than 7,700,000 customers. (Goto 2007) According to Goto Shiro, the president of Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd., *Hachiban Ramen* does not have to make any efforts to find a new place to open their outlets because the developers of shopping malls in Thailand will draw the restaurant space for *Hachiban Ramen* on blueprints when they design the shopping malls and make an offer to open a restaurant in a new shopping mall. *Hachiban Ramen* only assesses the sales at the location and decides whether they will open a new outlet or not. (Goto 2007) And this is the reason that we find *Hachiban Ramen* at many shopping malls in Bangkok.

Figure 7.3: The Menu of Hachiban Ramen in Thailand
Courtesy of *Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd.*, Japan.

But why has *Hachiban Ramen* been so successful? What has made Thai people, especially young people, to go to *Hachiban Ramen*? In this chapter, I would like to overview the Japanese food available in Thailand and discuss its popularity. With the empirical data that I obtained from the previous researches and the field notes, I would also like to discuss the relation of Japanese food with other Japanese cultural products in Thailand.

Japanese Food in Bangkok

Today, we can find many kinds of Japanese restaurants in Thailand, especially in Bangkok, such as *sushi bar*, authentic Japanese cuisines restaurants, *yakiniku* (Japanese barbecue) restaurants, *udon* and *soba* noodle shops, *ramen* noodle shops, *teppanyaki* (grilled Japanese steak) houses and so on.   When we look at the management and the ownership of these businesses, they can be grouped into three types; (1) Japanese Ownership Type – Restaurants started and owned by only Japanese who migrated to Thailand, (2) Thai Ownership Type – Restaurants started and owned by only Thais, and (3) Mixed Ownership Type – Restaurants started and owned by partnership of Japanese and Thai.

One of the oldest Japanese restaurants in Bangkok is *Hanaya*, which started its business before the World War II.   Although the restaurant was closed when the World War II ended and all Japanese residents had to leave the country, *Hanaya* is said to have reopened the restaurant soon after the two countries resumed the friendly diplomatic relations. (Bangkok Shuho 2001, January 26)   Like the case of *Hanaya*, the Japanese Ownership Type restaurants have been founded by the Japanese who have migrated to Thailand.   These restaurants are mainly for the Japanese people who reside in Bangkok. Since the targeted customers of these restaurants are Japanese, the dishes of Japanese Ownership Type restaurants are usually authentic Japanese.   *Hanaya* is still in business and there are many other restaurants which   that mainly aim Japanese.   Probably due to the limit of the number of Japanese residence in Bangkok, this type of restaurants tends to have only a few branches or no branch restaurant and the prices of dishes are rather expensive.   Therefore, although the middle and higher class Thais may also be their important customers, the growth of the business seems to be limited as it is not in

the mass market.

As the presence of Japan increased in Bangkok in terms of the Japanese people and the cultural products, Thai entrepreneurs started Japanese food business. The target customers of Thai Ownership Type restaurants are, therefore, the Thais in the mass market and the Japanese fare at these restaurants are Thai-style Japanese, which are sometimes deviant from the authentic Japanese. The management of the Thai Ownership Type restaurants sagaciously uses the ambience of Japanese culture in their advertisements and the interior designs of the restaurants to attract the Thai youth who have been interested in Japanese cultural products and who are keen to the cultural trends in Japan.

The Mixed Ownership Type restaurants are often a brand of a franchise food chain from Japan. *Hachiban Ramen* is the most successful case for this type and many other Japanese franchise food chains have launched business in Thailand in recent years such as *Ootoya*, *Coco Ichibanya, Saboten* and so on. In this type, an existing brand of Japanese food business is already established in Japan or elsewhere and the brand launches the business in Thailand with a local partner company.

Presence of the Japanese in Thailand

Even before the World War II, many Japanese trading companies, which are called "shousha" in Japanese, had offices in Thailand and many Japanese businessmen were working in Bangkok. In 1942, there were about 40 shoushas and about 3,500 Japanese were living in Thailand when the World War II ended. (Kawabe 2005) The Japanese restaurants in early days were opened around this time to serve Japanese dishes to those Japanese who missed the flavor and the taste of Japanese dishes when they were

assigned to work in Thailand. (Bankoku Shuho 2001, January 26)

At Japan's defeat of the World War II in 1945, the Japanese residents and the restaurants had disappeared once from the scenery of Bangkok as the Japanese were sent back to Japan.   But around 1950, Thailand and Japan resumed the economic relations and many shoushas opened the branch offices in Bangkok and they, shoushas and Japanese banks, sent employees to work in Bangkok again.   As the number of Japanese residents in Thailand increased, in 1953, the Japanese Association in Thailand has been founded and 63 Japanese residents attended the ceremony of the inauguration. Then, in 1954, Japanese Chamber of Commerce was founded with the initial members of 32 companies and the number of Japanese residents further increased thereafter. (Kawabe 2005)

As the number of Japanese residents increased, the demands for good Japanese food became prominent and more Japanese restaurants opened in Bangkok.   Today, in addition to *Hanaya*, there are many Japanese restaurants which were targeted to Japanese residents in Thailand, such as *Aoi*, *Shin Daikoku, Nippontei* and so on.   These restaurants were founded and run by Japanese who were also living in Thailand.   In these restaurants, therefore, Japanese chefs are working to maintain the authentic taste and flavor of the Japanese dishes.   Also, there are high class Japanese restaurants in some hotels in Bangkok and the middle class and higher class Thais as well as Japanese residents visit such restaurants to taste the authentic Japanese cuisines.

Japanese Dishes for the Middle Class

The Japan's investment boom toward Thailand from the late 1960s caused the economic friction between the two countries and the anti-Japan movements in the early 1970s.

As the Japanese industrial products have flown into the Thai market, the import from Japan exceeded the export to Japan.   Despite the economic situation in Thailand, after 16 years of operation in Bangkok, *Thai Daimaru Department Store* decided to move to a new building, after 16 years of operation in Bangkok, and opened one of the biggest department stores in Bangkok on October 9, 1972, and the 60% of the merchandises of the store were made in Japan. (Asahi Shimbun 1972, October 10)   Considering the situation, *Daimaru* was planning to reduce the products from Japan in the store but the economic presence of Japan had become so prominent that Thai critics and economists expressed their concerns about Japan's economic monopoly in Thailand.   The economic concern induced university students' anti-Japan and anti-Japanese products movements in Bangkok and *Daimaru* has become a target of the severe anti-Japanese products movement of Thailand. (Asahi Shimbun 1972, November 21)

Although the presence of Japan in Thai society has caused some problems in the 1970s and the 1980s, the advancement of the economic relations between the two countries has also brought Japanese culture as well as the Japanese people to Thailand. And as the economic development in Thailand has been advanced, the disposable income of the Thai people was also increased.   In the 1980s, many department stores, supermarkets and shopping malls were opened in Bangkok to meet the demands of the consumers of the middle class and some department stores in Japan were interested in the market.   On October 4, 1980, *Daimaru* opened the second store in Bangkok (Asahi Shimbun 1980, September 20) and on December 1, 1984, *Sogo Department Store* launched a business in Bangkok.   Furthermore, *Tokyu Department Store* and *Jusco supermarket* also came to Bangkok in the following year to participate the competition to grasp the Thai consumers. (Asahi Shimbun 1984, November 29)

The department stores and supermarkets from Japan also brought Japanese food to Thailand. Many of the Japanese department stores had Japanese restaurants in the same building so the Thai consumers could taste Japanese dishes after they enjoyed shopping. Also, the Japanese supermarkets in the department stores and independent supermarkets like Jusco sold Japanese food to the Thai people, which had brought Japanese food to the dinner tables of Thai homes. The exposure to the flood of Japanese products, foods and people in the 1980s had attracted more Thais to eat Japanese food.

In 1983, *Fuji Restaurant* started its business in Bangkok and it has expanded its business with the development of the Thai economy. Unlike the luxurious restaurants for the Japanese residents, *Fuji* has served Japanese dishes for the Thais at reasonable price so that majority of the customers are Thais. (Personal communication 2005, December 8) Another Japanese restaurant chain which is well known by the Thai consumers is *Oishi Group*. The group has several brands of restaurant outlets but the first brand was *Oishi Buffet* which was launched in 1999. The introduction of the buffet style Japanese food had lowered the price of Japanese food in Thailand. The "all-you-can-eat" style Japanese food increased the availability of the Japanese food as some hotel restaurants started to offer reasonably-priced menus. (Wattanasukchai 2002, July 12)

Today, the outlets of *Fuji* and *Oishi* can be found in many shopping malls and department stores in Bangkok and many regions of Thailand. Since these restaurants serve Japanese dishes at reasonable price and since many Thai people consider that Japanese dishes are healthy food (The Nation 2009, June 3; Goto 2007), the middle class Thai started to eat more Japanese dishes, which has made more entrepreneurs,

both in Thailand and Japan, enter the market and open new Japanese restaurants in Thailand.

Young Consumers of Japanese Food

> When asked what their favorite fare was when dining out, Thai consumers voted local cuisine as their first choice (57 per cent), while Japanese cuisine came in second (26 per cent), thanks to an increase in the number of local Japanese restaurants and a burgeoning health-conscious group of consumers.
> (The Nation 2009, June 3)

Today Japanese food is the most favorite foreign fare for the Thais. The popularity of Japanese food is not limited to Thailand and it is accepted widely in throughout the world. Behind the boom of the Japanese food, there is an image of the Japanese food as healthy cuisine and the start of the image is said to be created from a medical report of 1977 in the United States, which pointed out that heart diseases and cancers were caused by eating too much meat in diet. (Asahi Shimbun 2008, January 5) Since then, Japanese food is believed to be healthy food in many countries and a typical Japanese meal, which is consisted of rice, *miso* (soy-bean paste) soup and a grilled fish, is considered to be low calorie and healthy meal.

The Japanese food boom in the world is driven by the health consciousness of the people in modern life. The trend to eat less fat, less calorie and less meat has drawn the people's attention to the Japanese food. Thailand was no exception to be conscious about the food and Thai adults go to Japanese restaurants for healthy food.

In the result of the questionnaire research of the previous chapter (cf. Figure 6.4 of Chapter 6), 15 out of 76 *Chulalongkorn University* students ate Japanese 3 times per month (the mode) and the average frequency to have Japanese food was 3.93 times per month.   This suggested that many of the university students in city areas have Japanese food every 7 to 10 days.

When I have meals in Japanese restaurants in Bangkok, I always try to observe other customers and check the taste of the food and the price.   In some restaurants, most customers are young Thai people; in other restaurants, there are only few Thai customers.   In most cases, Japanese restaurant chains found in big shopping malls are very popular among the Thai youth and the popularity was the key to succeed in expanding the business of the restaurant chains.   In the following, I would like to overview the Japanese restaurant chains which have been quite successful in the market. By reviewing these restaurants, I would like to seek the underlying reasons for the success of the business.   Furthermore, I would also like to review the newcomers in the Japanese food market in Thailand, the Japanese fast food restaurants, which have launched business in recent years.   By finding the similarities and the differences of these restaurants, I would like to seek the important factors as the successful Japanese restaurants in Thailand.

Japanese Restaurant Chains   [1980s – 1990s]

[Fuji Group]

Founded 1983, *Fuji Restaurant* is one of the oldest Japanese restaurant chains in Thailand.   Since 70% of the company stocks are held by the Japanese founder, Tanaka Kenji, and his family, some Thai media seems to be confused that *Fuji Restaurant* is the

brand that has come from Japan. Although *Fuji Group* has expanded its business to operate Thai restaurant *Bangkok Kitchen*, a French restaurant and a hotel in Tokyo, their business has been started from a sushi restaurant *Sushi Tsukiji* which was launched in 1970. After the success of *Sushi Tsukiji*, Tanaka launched two luxurious Japanese restaurant *Shin Daikoku* before *Fuji Restaurant* was started.

Some members in the management team have Thai first names while their family name is Tanaka. *Fuji Group* is, therefore, run by the mixed ownership of Thai and Japanese in the management level but the company is a Thai local company. In addition to the restaurant business, *Fuji Group* has a variety of businesses including food productions, IT solution, multimedia design, and entertainment business. As the entertainment business, the group operates the night clubs *Marcopolo Member's Club* and *Moulin Rouge Club* which are well known among the Japanese businessmen living in Bangkok.

Fuji Restaurant offers various kinds of set menus for the consumers, which is just like the eating places in Japan. A typical set menu is consisted of a bowl of rice, a bowl of soup, some pickles, and an *okazu* which is a dish of meat, fish, or something to eat with rice. This style of Japanese meal, which is the basis for a set menu in Fuji Restaurant as well as in many eating places in Japan, is called "central rice meal", in which rice is the centerpiece. (Ashkenazi and Jacob 2000: 76-77) In *Fuji Restaurant, Salmon Tartar Sauce Set, Seafood Steak Set, Katsu Toji Set*, other set menus are served as "central rice meal" style. In many cases, therefore, customers can point at one menu item and he/she can get a complete meal. Besides the set menus, *Fuji Restaurant* also offers other types of Japanese dishes such as *Sushi, Udon* noodles, *Spaghetti Mentai Sauce* and even desserts.

The abundance of the Japanese dishes and the reasonable price at *Fuji Restaurant* make it easier for the group of friends and families to visit there and dine together. On weekends, we can find many groups of young Thais in *Fuji Restaurant*. Over the past several years, I have had meals at *Fuji Restaurant* with my research informants who were secondary and university students in Bangkok and I have observed how they eat the meals there. Someone orders one dish from à la carte and a rice bowl while others order a big set menu and share it with friends. Most of my informants were female students who liked Japanese cultural products and they seemed to enjoy talking with friends who were also Japanophiles during the time spent at Fuji Restaurant. In my observation, Fuji Restaurant is a casual meeting place for young Thais who like Japan and Japanese cultural products as well as eating place of Japanese fare. (Figure 7.4)

Figure 7.4: *Fuji Restaurant* at Siam Paragon. (August 29, 2009)
Photo by author.

[Hachiban Ramen]

Hachiban Ramen is a fast food chain in Japan and it has opened its first ramen restaurant in Thailand with a Thai partner on April 2, 1992.   When the Thai partner offered Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd. a joint venture to launch the business in Thailand, *Hachiban Ramen* was developing a fast food franchise business in Hokuriku region of Honshu, the main island of Japan.   According to Goto Shiro, the president of Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd., *Hachiban Ramen* had failed to expand its business in Tokyo for two times and it was expanding its business to the Chubu region, the central part of Honshu, which was less competitive for them to launch the business.   *Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd.* was seeking new markets when the Thai partner offered to come to Thai market. (Goto 2008)

As shown in the Figure 7.5, *Hachiban Ramen* in Thailand has started to grow its business in the late 1990s and it had rapidly increased the number of outlets in Thailand in the 2000s.   The mid-1990s in Thailand was the period that many Japanese TV dramas broadcast in Thailand and it was when the Thai youth became interested in Japanese popular culture.

> Today, the young people in Bangkok are longing for Japan and they are interested in Japanese music, fashion, living styles and movies. Regarding eating style, they want to have the restaurants from Ginza, Harajuku and Roppongi directly from Japan.   Therefore, we brought the product which was very close to the Hokuriku ramen of Japan.   The first restaurant in Bangkok had the tables, the floor, the ceiling and the kitchen, which were same as our restaurant in Japan, in a bigger place.
> (Goto 2008, translated by author)

Figure 7.5: Hachiban Ramen in Thailand 1992-2009

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
■ Outlets	1	1	1	3	4	5	6	9	18	23	31	43	48	60	71	82	87	88
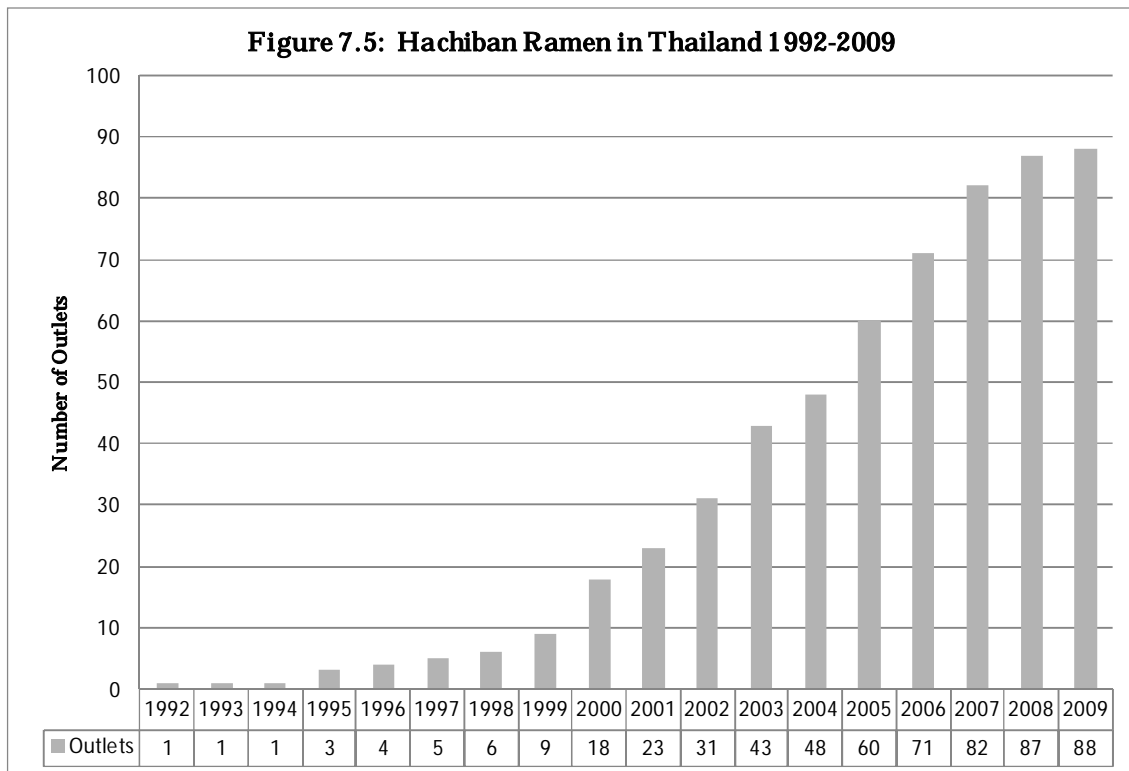
Source: Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd. (n.d.), Personal communication 2009, November 9.

It is interesting to note in Figure 7.5 that the number of *Hachiban Ramen* outlets was increased drastically after 2000. This means *Hachiban Ramen* has been more successful in the 2000s rather than the 1990s and the table may suggest that the Japanese food boom has been started around 2000. A milestone in the Japanese food restaurant business in Thailand around this time was the introduction of buffet style Japanese food by *Oishi Group* in 1999. The coincidence of the introduction of *Buffet* style Japanese food and the acceleration point of Table 7.1 may suggest that *Oishi Buffet Style* might have been a tractor of the Japanese food boom in Thailand, which should be verified with the detailed figures of other Japanese restaurant business in Thailand in future studies.

[Oishi Group]

The first *Oishi* (buffet) restaurant was opened on September 9, 1999 on Sukhumvit Soi 55 in Bangkok. Before the *Oishi* restaurant, Tan Passakornnatee, the director and president of *Oishi Group Public Company Ltd.,* had opened a coffee shop and a sukiyaki outlet in *Chon Buri* but he had lost 200 million Baht in the real estate business. It was then Passakornnatee went to the United States to see restaurant outlets and he saw restaurant outlets which offered Japanese and Chinese buffets at attractive prices. (Puangkanok 2001, December 28) Passakornnatee, after he got the idea of the buffet style, started the *Oishi* buffet restaurant, under the concept of "all you can eat," for 499 Baht per person during lunch and dinner time (399 Baht in the hours 14:00 – 16:30). The price was rather expensive when we compared it with the prices at eating places of Thai food on the street where several people could have meals for the same amount of money. But the buffet style of Japanese cuisine attracted many people and long queues were seen in front of *Oishi Buffet* restaurants.

Following the success of the *Oishi buffet*, the *Oishi Group* opened various food brands in Thailand; *Oishi Ramen* and *IN & OUT The Bakery Café* in 2001, *Shabushi, Oishi Sushi Bar* and Log Home in 2002, *OK Suki and BBG* in 2003, and *Oishi Grand* in 2004. Among the buffet style brands of *Oishi Group*, *Shabushi* is the most popular restaurant that has 19 outlets in Thailand (as of December 31, 2008). *Shabushi* is a combined name of two Japanese dishes "Shabu Shabu" and "Sushi" but it is neither of the Japanese dishes (Figure 7.6). There is a Thai cuisine called "Thai Suki" which is a Thai style of hot pot dish. In Thai Suki, seafood, meats and vegetables are boiled in a big pot of broth and when they are cooked, a diner pick up them and dip into a spicy sauce to eat. *Shabushi* is, in my observation, a personalized Thai Suki in a "conveyer

belt sushi" style.   Just like the conveyer belt Sushi restaurant of Japan, a stream of

seafood, meats, vegetables and desserts are moving in front of each diner and he/she can

pick up saucers of the foods to be boiled in the pot. (Figure 7.7)   Although the

conveyer belt system was an invention of Japanese, *Shabushi* was an invention of *Oishi*

Group, which has become very popular among the Thai youth today.

Figure 7.6: *Shabushi* Advertisement.   Photo by author.

Figure 7.7: *Shabushi* Hot Pot & Conveyer Belt.   Photo by author.

In addition to the restaurant business, *Oishi Group* launched *Oishi Green Tea* in 2003, which has boosted the green tea boom in Thailand.   With the series of funny television commercials, the *Oishi Green Tea* brand had also gained the popularity in the beverage market of Thailand and many young Thai started to drink the sweetened green tea which was sold in convenience stores, supermarkets and canteens in Thailand. With the success of the food and beverage businesses, the *Oishi Group* listed stocks on the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) in 2004 (Oishi Group 2009) and it has been a leading company in the Japanese food boom in Thailand.

[Other Restaurant Chains]

According to the Kasikorn Research Centre, there were more than 700 Japanese restaurant outlets in 2008, Thailand. (Rungfapaisarn 2008, February 5) Besides *Fuji Group, Hachiban Ramen* and *Oishi Group* restaurants, there are Japanese restaurant chains in Thailand such as *Yayoi, Zen, Sukishi, Kobune* and so on. Some of these restaurants are subsidiaries of Thai companies that operate in other domains of food business in Thailand. For instance, *Yayoi Restaurant* is a subsidiary of *MK Group* which has succeeded as a Thai Suki restaurant chain in Thailand. *MK Group* has obtained the local franchise rights of *Yayoi Restaurant* from a Japanese company *Plenus Co., Ltd* for 10 years and it has been expanding the business rapidly. (The Nation 2009, February 20)

The growing Japanese food business in Thailand, which has been cultivated and nurtured by these companies, has attracted Japanese fast food chain companies and the Thai companies that have lead the market have been interested in expanding their business by venturing business with Japanese companies. The mutual interests of both Thai and Japanese companies have brought many Japanese fast food brands to Thailand in the 2000s. In the next section, I would like to review some of the Japanese fast food chains that have already launched business in Thailand.

Newcomers from Japan   [2000s -]

[Ootoya Gohan Restaurant]

In 1958, a small eating place called "50 yen shokudo (eating place)" started its business in Ikebukuro, Tokyo, which was the origin of *Ootoya Co., Ltd.* founded in 1983. In Japan, *Ootoya Gohan Dokoro* (restaurant) is not a luxury restaurant but a casual eating place that have served the home style meals. The menu is consisted of the dishes that are often eaten at home and many young people visit *Ootoya* to eat the homestyle meals. In *Ootoya* in Japan, a diner has to order the meals and pay at the entrance before seating. The menu lists many kinds of set meals as well as à la carte dishes and the diner can order the amount of rice as they like. If the diner orders a small rice, *Ootoya* deducts 20 yen from the regular set meal price. With the accommodating order system and the casualness of the place, *Ootoya* gained the popularity of young students as well as business people who are busily working and walking in the city areas of Japan.

In 2005, the *Betagro Group*, the major agro-business conglomerate and exporter, has become interested in the Japanese restaurant business and formed a joint venture, *Betagro Ootoya Co., Ltd.*, with *Ootoya Co., Ltd.* and launched the Japanese food business in Thailand. (Pongvutitham 2006, February 13) When the first restaurant was opened in January 2005, I was living in Bangkok and my office was in about 10 minute-drive by car from *Ootoya* restaurant. When it was first launched, *Ootoya* seemed a luxury bar restaurant for the Japanese residents in Bangkok. But in July 2005, *Betagro Ootoya* has reopened it as *Gohan Restaurant* which was similar to the *Ootoya Gohan Restaurants* in Japan. (Figure 7.8)

There are 17 *Ootoya Gohan Restaurant* outlets in Bangkok (as of December 1, 2009). Ootoya also operates the *Ootoya Kitchen*, a quick-meal service at Siam

Paragon (the high-end shopping complex in Bangkok), and the Ootoya Deli, a take-home outlet in Isetan, a Japanese department store in Bangkok. (Ootoya Co., Ltd. 2009, November 29)   *Ootoya Gohan Restaurant* outlets are located in shopping malls, department stores or a hospital which is popular among the Japanese residents as well as the Thai middle class.

Figure 7.8: *Ootoya Gohan Restaurant* in Bangkok.
Photo by author.

Figure 7.9: Menu Display at the restaurant front of Ootoya.
Photo by author.

At the front of *Gohan Restaurant*, there is a show window which displays various food samples. (Figure 7.9)   Food samples, which are dummy models of cuisines made of vinyl, plastic or wax, are commonly displayed at show windows of eating places and small restaurants in Japan.   These samples serve for two purposes; to attract passer-by by the appearance of the food and to give them better image of the meals that will be served.   Ootoya has brought the atmosphere of *shokudo* (eating place) to Thailand as well as the Japanese home style meals.

[Mos Burger]

Mos Burger is a Japanese hamburger chain brand which was founded in 1972 in Tokyo. *Mos* is a acronym for Mountain, Ocean and Sun, and the company and the name reflects its commitment to use fresh ingredients to make their products. Although it is a kind of fast food hamburger restaurant, hamburgers, fries and other foods are prepared after a customer placed an order at the cashier. Then, the meals are prepared and served at the customer's table. Unlike other hamburger chains which prepare hamburgers in advance and keep them warm until customers buy, the freshly made hamburgers of *Mos Burger* seems healthy and tastes better, which has attracted many consumers in Japan.

MOS FOOD SERVICES, INC. has founded a joint venture, *MOS Foods (Thailand) Co., Ltd.*, in December 2006, with a local company in Thailand (MOS FOOD SERVICES, INC. 2007, January 29). In the beginning of April 2007, the first *Mos Burger* outlet was opened on the third floor of the *Central World Plaza*, a huge shopping complex in the central Bangkok which is located next to the Japanese department store, *Isetan.* (Figure 7.10) Mos Burger did not advertise for opening of the outlet but soon after it opened, queues were formed in front of the outlet. (Vichitsorasatra 2007, April 24)

Figure 7.10: A long queue in front of *Mos Burger* at Central World Plaza.
(April 14, 2007)   Photo by author.

There are seven *Mos Burger* outlets in Thailand (as of December 1, 2009), including the Siam Paragon outlet which was recorded as the best performer of all *Mos Burger* branches in Asia with the monthly revenue of 6 million Baht. (Asawanipont 2008, March 8)   In addition to the freshly made hamburger, *Mos Burger* has an open kitchen area which is one of the trends we can observe in Japanese restaurant business. The customers can see their orders being prepared in the open kitchen while waiting and it may be another factor to attract the Thai consumers to the Japanese Hamburger chain restaurant.

[CoCo ICHIBANYA]

CoCoICHIBANYA is a fast food curry restaurant chain in Japan, which has formed a joint venture, *ICHIBANYA MIDWEST ASIA CO., LTD.*, with *Fuji Group.* (Figures 7.11 & 7.12)   The first branch of *CoCoICHIBANYA* in Thailand was opened on April 15, 2008, on the ground floor of the *Esplanade Ratchada* shopping mall in the north of Bangkok.   *Fuji Group* holds 51% stake in the joint venture; *Ichibanya Co., Ltd.* has 37%; House Foods Corporation has 5% and two other food suppliers in Japan holds the rest of the share.

Figure 7.11: *CoCoICHIBANYA* in Siam Paragon. (August 29, 2009)
Photo by author.

Figure 7.12: Food Samples of CoCoICHIBANYA, Siam Paragon Branch.
Photo by author.

Tanaka Daisaku, the managing director of *Fuji Group*, said in the newspaper interview that "the target customers are university students and working people, as well as Japanese food lovers who spend time in downtown Bangkok." (The Nation 2008, August 16) *Fuji Group* has already had Japanese restaurant brands, *Fuji Japanese Restaurant* (for the middle class and young Thais), *Shin Daikoku* and *Sushi Tsukiji (*for the Japanese residents and the upper middle class and higher Thais), and *CoCoICHIBANYA* is a new Japanese restaurant brand to attract the young elite Thais who spend most of their time in the city area.

Japanese Flavors in Convenience Stores and Supermarkets

[Green Tea]

Today, presence of Japanese food in Thailand is not limited in Japanese restaurants but it can be found in convenience stores and supermarkets. There are many kinds of Japanese Food or quasi Japanese products found in the convenience stores of Thailand and one of the most prominent products is the ready-to-drink iced green tea. In many Japanese restaurants in Thailand, green tea is served as a part of the meal unless the customer orders other kind of drink. The customer can choose from either hot or iced green tea and most young Thais order iced green tea as the climate of Thailand is usually hot. The green tea served at Japanese restaurants is usually unsweetened and not very strong so that it goes well with Japanese meals.

In September 2001, *Uni-President (Thailand) Co., Ltd.*, a subsidiary of Taiwan's *Uni-President Enterprise Corporation*, started to sell the bottled and canned green tea under the *Unif* brand (Figure 7.13) for the first time in Thailand and the sales of the first year reached almost 26 million Baht. (Asawanipont 2004, April 17) One year later, *Oishi Group*, which had succeeded in Japanese restaurant business and was planning an initial public offering (IPO) in 2004, expanded its company business from a restaurant operation to a food firm to boost sales before the IPO and started to sell *Oishi Green Tea* (Figure 7.14) in September 2003. (Srimalee 2002, September 6)

Figure 7.13: *Unif Green Tea* in Brick Packs on pile at a Supermarket.
Photo by author.

A few months after *Oishi Group* entered the market, *Tipco Food Co., Ltd.*, a leading fruit-juice manufacturer, launched *Tipco Ice Green Tea*. In a newspaper interview, Viwat Limsakdakul, the vice president for food business at *Tipco Group*, mentioned that an AC Neilson survey reported "that fruit juice, green tea and energy drinks showed double-digit growth in the first half of the year" (Srimalee 2002, November 5), which might have also affected *Oishi Group* to move to the ready-to-drink green tea beverages in 2002.

Figure 7.14: *Oishi Green Tea* in Brick Pack.
Photo by author.

In the beginning, the three green tea brands, namely *Unif, Oishi* and *Tipco*, competed for share in the new beverage market. To grasp the market share, Unif put television commercials on the air and it became a topic of the conversation of the Thais. In September 2004, the television commercial for *Unif Green Tea* called "Worm" and the advertising agency that produced the commercial won awards at the first annual Adman Awards. (The Nation 2004, September 24) In the commercial, a worm father and a worm boy is climbing up the tea tree to eat the leaves at the top. But when they are about to reach the top, a farmer picks the top leaves with fingers. The gazes of the

287

worm boy and the farmer meet and the worm boy tries to hypnotize the farmer by saying "shinme choudai" in Japanese which means "Give me the top tea leaves." (Figure 7.15)   This television commercial has become very popular in Thailand and many Thai people learned the Japanese phrase "shinme choudai" without knowing its meaning.   Furthermore, the Japanese phrase has become so popular that Ajareeya Bussaba, a *luukthung* (the Thai *isaan* music) singer, released a song "shinme choudai."

In 2005, Oishi increased its sales with the "One Million Baht" campaign.   The campaign promised 1 million Baht as an award if a consumer found a word "Bt1 million" under a bottle cap of *Oishi Green Tea*.   The campaign attracted many people to buy *Oishi Green Tea* and the news that a hard-working, low-salary woman found a winning bottle cap in a discarded *Oishi Green Tea* (The Nation 2005, March 9) and other anecdotes about the 1 million bottle cap pushed the sales of Oishi Green Tea tremendously.   With the success of the campaign, *Oishi Green Tea* took 50% of the ready-to-drink green tea market in 2006 and 70 percent-share in 2007. (The Nation 2008, February 13; The Nation 2008, February 27)   Today, *Oishi Group* exports green tea to the US market and even to Japan. (Rungfapaisarn 2006, July 6; The Nation 2009, November 4)

Give me the top tea leaves

Figure 7.15: Award Winning *Unif Green Tea* Commercial.

Oishi Group is aggressively expanding its business ranges and boosting the sales in every domain of their businesses that has made it a leading company in the ready-to-drink green tea market.   Although the large portion of the market share has been taken by *Oishi,* however, there are many manufacturers that sell ready-to-drink green tea in Thailand including Japanese bottled green tea brands such as *Siam Kirin Beverage' s Namacha* and *Ajinomoto's Sencha*.   Each brand launched several different flavors of green tea products so that if you go to the beverage refrigerator of a convenience store in Bangkok, you can find many brands of bottled green teas on the shelves.

The green tea boom in Thailand was started by a Taiwan company, *Uni-President,* and was nurtured by a Thai company, *Oishi Group.*   The sweetened green tea will not be a favorite drink of Japanese but, in Thailand, the ready-to-drink

green tea market has grown because of the companies' promotion, the Japanese food boom and the health-consciousness of the Thais. The green tea boom in Thailand has been created by the factors of the products as well as the atmosphere of the Thai society in the decade of the 2000s that aggressively consume Japanese cultural products.

[*Okashi* - Snacks]

The Japanese word "Okashi" means snacks that include variety of foods we eat between regular meals. Candies, cookies, chocolates, biscuits, rice cookies, nuts and many other foods are categorized into okashi and they are usually available at convenience stores and supermarkets. Okashi is often referred to these snacks that are sold at shops and that we eat at home. Okashi is popular food in many countries and we often import and export okashi with other countries.

In Thailand, we see many kinds of snacks sold at convenience stores and supermarkets that have Japanese print on the packages (see Figures 7.16 & 7.17). These snacks look as if they were imported from Japan or they were marketed to the Japanese residents in Thailand. However, most of them were manufactured in Thailand by Thai companies and marketed for Thai people. In some packages, the Japanese words printed on the packages are not correct Japanese or do not make sense as Japanese but since they are only decorations of the packages, the manufacturers do not care the errors. (Figure 7.18 & 7.19)

Figure 7.16: Snacks sold at a Convenience Store in Bangkok.
Photo by author.

Figure 7.17: Snacks sold at a Supermarket in Bangkok.
Photo by author.

Figure 7.18: Wrong Japanese on the Snack Package.
Photo by author.

Figure 7.19: A Package of a Snack with Japanese Images
(Cherry Blossoms and Mt. Fuji)   Photo by author

Although there are many fake Japanese snacks exist in Thailand, real Japanese brands are also available.   One of the most popular Japanese snack brands in Thailand is *Glico*.   In 1970, *Ezaki Glico Co., Ltd.* in Japan established *Thai Glico Co., Ltd.* in Thailand as its first overseas subsidiary.   *Thai Glico Co., Ltd.* manufactures Glico brands snacks (Figure 7.20) in Thailand and the company exports the products to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other markets in the region. (Ezaki Glico Co., Ltd. n.d.)   Thai Glico sells the snacks that have been successful in the Japanese market and put the television commercials of the products which use Japanese narrations on the air.   The products are manufactured in Thailand but they must have brought the flavor of the Japanese culture to the Thai youth.

Figure 7.20: The Products of *Thai Glico Co., Ltd*.
(Screen captured from the Web Site of the company.)

[Shelves of Supermarkets]

Japanese foods are not limited in the Japanese restaurants and the convenience stores but they can be found at the dinner tables of Thai families.   Today, if you go to a big supermarket in Thailand, you may find Japanese foods and Japanese spices on the shelves.   In Bangkok, there are a few Japanese supermarkets, such as *JUSCO*, *Fuji Super* and *Isetan*, which specialize on imported Japanese foods and products, which have been opened for the Japanese residents in Bangkok.   Today, however, some Thai supermarkets, such as *TOPS supermarket*, carry Japanese foods and sometimes a few of their shelves are filled with Japanese foods, spices and snacks. (Figure 7.21)

The Japanese residents in Bangkok go to the local supermarket as well as Japanese supermarkets, which might have made the local supermarkets to sell various Japanese foods and products.   Because Japanese supermarkets are located in the central part of Bangkok and the prices are relatively expensive, Japanese residents go to local supermarkets to buy fresh foods while they go to Japanese supermarkets to buy imported Japanese foods.   To meet the demand of such Japanese customers, local supermarkets started to sell Japanese foods, spices and okashi.

On the other hand, the popularity of Japanese restaurants in Thailand has made the Japanese cuisine familiar for the Thais.   The familiarity and the availability of Japanese foods have brought Japanese foods to the dinner tables of Thai families and they can even cook Sushi at home.

Figure 7.21: Japanese Foods on the Shelves of a Thai Supermarket,
TOPS Supermarket in Bangkok.   Photo by author.

Japanese Food in Thailand

Popularization Process of Japanese Food

Today, Japanese food has become popular in America and Europe as well as in Asia. The Japanese food is considered to be healthy food among the health conscious people in the world and there are Japanese restaurants in major cities of America, Europe and Asia. Thailand is no exception in today's Japanese food boom in the global trend but the popularity of Japanese food in Thailand seems to stand out. Tan Passakornnatee, the president of Oishi Group, said in a newspaper interview:

> "Our growth is being driven by strong demand from consumers who are concerned about health and well-being."
> "I believe Japanese food and beverages will continue to be popular among Thai people because more and more people are health-conscious." (Chinmaneevong 2009, May 19)

Oishi Group is not the only company that uses the image of "healthiness" of Japanese food to promote its products in Thailand. Other companies, both restaurants operators and manufacturers of ready-to-drink green tea, claim that the Japanese foods are healthy in their advertisements and promote their products. In the case of Thailand, however, the image of "healthiness" is not the only reason for the Japanese food boom. Observing the consumers and the market in Thailand, I have found out that there was a series of circumstances that has boosted the popularity of Japanese foods.

As shown in Table 7.1 and previous sections of this chapter, the Japanese restaurants before 1983 were mainly for the Japanese residents. But it was the preparatory period of the Japanese food for the mass market of Thailand. In the discussion of the history of the popularization of Japanese cuisine in California, USA,

Katarzyna J. Cwiertka emphasizes the presence of a Japanese community in California as an important factor in the birth of Japanese food trend. Cwiertka points out that "the Japanese community was indispensable in the initial transfer of skills and knowledge of sushi making." (Cwiertka 2006: 183) The Japanese restaurants for the Japanese community hired the local employees and the skills and the knowledge of Japanese foods were transferred to them.

> The proliferation of Japanese cuisine in Thailand also has to do with the Thai chefs who have learned how to cook Japanese dishes. These young men, many of them from Isaan, started out as kitchen hands in real Japanese restaurants. After a few years, they moved up the ladder and began handling the knives and cooking the dishes. Those who've worked for seven to 10 years will know how to cook basic Japanese food and will have memorized the Japanese names. (Redux 2007, January 10)

Panya Pawasena, the general manager of Mr Sushi kiosks, told a newspaper reporter that his brother has worked as a chef at major Japanese restaurants such as Fuji and Shin Daikoku for almost 20 years before he joined his brother to launch Mr Sushi kiosks. In Thailand, many Thai chefs have been trained in the Japanese restaurants for the Japanese community and they have contributed to the Japanese food boom in the later years.

After 1983, Fuji Restaurant, an inexpensive Japanese restaurant chain, launched and the popularization of the Japanese food in Thailand began. Then, in the 1990s, when Japanese television programs, especially dramas, had flown into Thailand and J-Pop music gained some popularity among the Thai youth, the fast food Japanese food business Hachiban Ramen was also launched. In the decade of the 1990s, the

youth and the middle class Thai people were exposed to the Japanese foods shown in Japanese televisions and animations. Watching the scenes of dining in the dramas and the animations, they accumulated the knowledge about Japanese cuisines. The popularity of Japanese cultural products and the launch of fast food Japanese restaurants simultaneously happened in the decade to attract the youth and the middle class Thais to dine in Japanese restaurants. Consequently, more Thai people were given chances to experience Japanese foods.

Just before the next decade started, the buffet style of Japanese food was launched in 1999 by Oishi Group and it has boosted the popularity of Japanese food more in Thailand. The foods that Oishi restaurants provide were not necessarily authentic Japanese cuisines but the "all-you-can-eat" system was an amusement so that many young Thais go to Japanese restaurants even if they were not particularly interested in Japanese culture. The ready-to-drink green tea market, which was started by Unif Green Tea and was grown by Oishi Green Tea, has also made Japanese food prominent to the Thai people with the series of entertaining television commercials of the green tea products. Many restaurants in Bangkok hotels started to provide the buffet style dining which served Japanese foods, which has become a popular dining style in Bangkok today.

Launch Year	Name of the Restaurant	Type of Food / Restaurant	Operator or JV company in Thailand	Franchiser or the brand holder in Japan
Table 7.1: Launch Year of Major Japanese Restaurant Chains in Thailand				
before 1983	Japanese restaurants were for the Japanese residents in Bangkok. Thai people were not familiar with Japanese food and the prices were expensive.			
1983	Fuji Restaurant	The first Japanese restaurant targeted to the Thai consumers.	Fuji Group	N/A
1992	Hachiban Ramen	The first franchise and the first Japanese fast food chain in Thailand.	Thai Hachi-ban Co., Ltd. (JV with a Thai company)	Hachi-ban Co., Ltd.
1999	Oishi Buffet Restaurant	The first buffet "all-you-can-eat" Japanese restaurant in Thailand.	Oishi Group Public Company	N/A
2005	Ootoya Gohan Restaurant	Japanese Franchise Restaurant	Betagro Ootoya Co., Ltd. (JV with Betagro Group)	Ootoya Co., Ltd.
2006	Mos Burger	Japanese Hamberger Restaurant	Mos Foods (Thailand) Co., Ltd. (JV with a Thai company)	Mos Food Services, Inc.
2006	Yamagoya Ramen	Japanese Franchise Ramen Restaurant	Yamagoya (Thailand) Co., Ltd. (JV with Gastronome and Santi Bhirombhakdi [president of Signha Corp])	YS Food
2006	Yayoiken	Japanese Franchise Restaurant	MK Interfood Co., Ltd. (MK Restaurant Co., Ltd.)	Plenus Co., Ltd.
2007	Pepper Lunch Restaurant	Japanese Franchise Rice and Steak Restaurant	Central Restaurants Group	Pepper Food Service
2007	Shibuya Restaurant	Japanese Restaurant	Nature Best Foods	N/A
2008	CoCoICHIBANYA	Japanese Franchise Curry & Rice Restaurant	Ichibanya Midwest Asia Co., Ltd. (JV with Fuji Group)	Ichibanya Co., Ltd.
2008	Bankara Ramen	Japanese Franchise Ramen Restaurant	Siam Win-Thara	Hanaken
2008	Tonkatsu Saboten	Japanese Franchise Tonkatsu (Deep-Fried Pork Cutlet) Restaurant	President Green House Foods Co., Ltd.	Green House Co., Ltd.
2008	Maido Ookini Shokudo	Japanese Franchise Restaurant	Oishi Group Public Company	Fujio Food System
2009	Kazokutei	Japanese Franchise Soba & Udon Noodle Restaurant	Oishi Group Public Company	Kazokutei
2010	Chabuton	Japanese Francise Ramen Restaurant	Central Restaurant Group	Globeat Japan Inc.
2010	Rainbow Roll Sushi	American Style Sushi Cuisine Franchise Restaurant	Eat At Siam Co., Ltd.	WDI Corporation

* Most launch dates are compiled from the newspaper articles of The Nation, the English newspaper in Thailand.

* The restaurant chains are excluded from this table if the launch dates cannot be found in the newspaper articles or the company web sites.

Since the mid 2000s, Bangkok has been in the rush of Japanese fast food business. In 2005, Ootoya Gohan Restaurant opened its first outlet in Bangkok and many other Japanese fast food brands launched their outlets in Bangkok in the following years. In many cases, the Japanese fast food brands have formulated joint ventures with Thai local companies and in other cases they have become franchisees of the Japanese fast food business. In the 2000s, Japanese food is no longer luxury or rare things to consume. For the youth and the middle class Thais, it has already become part of their lifestyle and they just want to have new things for cheaper prices. To meet the demands of the consumers, many Thai companies brought Japanese fast food brands to Thailand.

Flavor of Japanese Culture

In *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, Cwiertka points out the endeavors made by the management of the pioneering establishments serving Japanese cuisine in Europe and the United States to recreate a 'Japanese' ambiance in their restaurants. (Cwiertka 2006: 191) In the discussion, the 'Japanese' ambiance is consisted of Japanese background music, waiters dressed in kimonos, interiors, red lanterns, and bonsai plants; all of which reflect the image of traditional Japanese culture. The 'Japanese' ambiance still persists in luxury restaurants and we sometimes see in today's restaurants in Japan. But the Japanese restaurants in Thailand, especially the newcomers that have launched in recent years, seem to have 'other' type of ambiance to attract the Thai youth.

Today, most popular Japanese restaurants in Bangkok have a 'modern' Japanese ambiance in their restaurants instead of the 'traditional' Japanese ambiance. In fact, most Japanese fast food restaurants in Bangkok have almost same interiors and

ambiance as their outlets in Japan. Besides the ambiance, the restaurants try to recreate the same taste of the foods with the local resources. Goto Shiro, the president of Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd. in Japan, said in a seminar presentation:

> Because the local customers come to eat Japanese food, which is a part of Japanese culture, we have to provide the real Japanese taste. One of the factors of the Japanese food boom is healthiness and longevity but another important thing is modern Japanese culture. The advanced information technology, automobiles, fashion, music and so on are yearned after by the youth of foreign countries. – 'We want the modern Japan that we can see in the magazines, movies and on television.' – The Japanese culture that the local customers demand means the atmosphere of the restaurants in Ginza or Shinjuku today, including the ambience of the restaurants, interiors, designs, services, and presentations of foods. Therefore, hanging lanterns and curtains at entrance or displaying a picture of Mt. Fuji on the wall as an interior is absolutely wrong. (Goto 2007, translated by author)

The Japanese restaurants in Thailand use the healthiness of Japanese food in their advertisements to call attentions of the Thai people. But as Goto pointed out, many customers visit Japanese restaurants to taste the Japanese culture as well as the foods. Therefore, these Japanese fast food restaurants have brought the ambiance of the outlet in Ginza to Bangkok and the customers experience the culture which they have seen on Japanese television dramas.

Localized Japanese Food

It is also important to note that the foods should be the real taste of the Japanese food as Goto pointed out. In the discussion of hybridization of Japanese food in foreign

countries, Ng and Goda reported the localization of Sushi in Singapore by pointing out that Sushi in Singapore has been localized in terms of the taste and the resources. In the discussion, they listed three reasons for the localization, (1) the difficulties to obtain the resources of real Japanese cuisine, (2) the local chefs, and (3) the preferred tastes of local consumers. Ng and Goda concluded that these factors foster the localization of Japanese foods in Singapore. (Ng & Goda 2001)

In Thailand, there are also some localized Japanese foods or quasi-Japanese foods but the demand for the real Japanese foods supports the restaurants to serve the real Japanese foods. For instance, Japanese restaurants operated by Thai companies without Japanese partners tend to provide localized Japanese foods. It is not the result of the lack of the Japanese food resources, however, that these restaurants provide localized Japanese foods. The fact that they do not have Japanese in the management as well as in the kitchen seems to have made them simply discard the authenticity of the cuisine.

It is inevitable to import some of the food resources from Japan but japonica rice is now grown in the northern part of Thailand and is supplied locally. Indica rice which has been grown widely in Thailand is not suitable for Japanese cuisine, especially for sushi, and japonica rice is necessary for the Japanese foods. Thus, the local supply of japonica rice is an advantage for the Japanese restaurants in Thailand. Many Japanese fast food chains that launched business in recent years claim that they procure resources locally and provide the same taste of foods as in Japan. Observing the statements made by the managements of each Japanese restaurant chain, therefore, the taste of the food seems to be determined by the management of the restaurant, not by the availability of the resources.

As Goto said, there are many customers who want to experience the Japanese culture in Japanese restaurants.   In Thailand, especially in Bangkok, there are various types of Japanese restaurants – traditional and modern, fast food and slow food, luxury and casual, authentic and localized – and the customers can choose one from the variations depending on appetites, budgets, occasions and purposes.

Japanese Food as Cultural Product

In Thailand, there are two perspectives to view the consumption of Japanese food. First, Japanese food is a part of urban lifestyle for the middle class Thais who are health conscious and can afford the prices.   Second, Japanese food is a fashionable trend for the Thai youth who are also interested in Japanese cultural products and trend.   The driving force to consume more Japanese foods in Thailand demands Japanese fast foods to launch outlets in Thailand.   In addition to the Japanese fast food restaurant chains that I have explained in previous sections, there are more fast food brands launched business in recent years such as *Yamagoya Ramen, Pepper Lunch Restaurant, Bangkara Ramen, Tonkatsu Saboten, Maido Ookini Shokudo,* and *Kazokutei.*   The Japanese food business in Thailand is still growing rapidly and the Thai consumers have adopted the food as part of their diet.

As we have seen in this chapter, the Japanese food boom in Thailand is not caused by one big wave motion but it is fostered by a synchronization of small waves of health consciousness, entertainment factors of some restaurants, yearning for Japanese culture.   To put it differently, the Japanese food boom seems very big on the appearance but close observations reveal that various kinds of Japanese foods, from localized Japanese to authentic Japanese, are synchronized by the image of "Japanese"

to consist the Japanese food business in Thailand.   Thai consumers consume Japanese cultures in the Japanese food boom.   In addition to the health consciousness and the taste of the foods, Japanese restaurants are the place to consume the cute, cool and fashionable Japanese cultures.

Chapter Eight

Kawaii Fashion

Consumption of Cuteness from Japan

Japanese fashion is one of the cultural products from Japan that is consumed a most favorable way in Thailand. Young Thai women, particularly teenagers and those in their twenties, purchase and use Japanese brands of clothing and cosmetics favorably, and the consumption phenomenon is conspicuous in daily life. Having said that, the phenomenon is conspicuous; however, academic discussions around fashion or fashion studies are difficult raise. One of the reasons for the difficulty derives from the intangibility of fashion. We often use the terms "fashion" and "clothing" synonymously. But "while fashion conveys a number of different social meanings, clothing is the generic raw materials of what a person wears." (Kawamura 2005:3) Because fashion is something tangible in our mind, what we can observe in the phenomenon are the fashion values which are reflected in clothing, cosmetics and fashion magazines. There are also problems in considering "fashion" a social phenomenon in academic discussions. Historically, fashion has long been treated as "futile, because it is linked with outward appearance and women. Fashion is conceived as irrational because it changes constantly, has no content, works as an external decoration, and carries no intellectual elements." (Kawamura 2005:9)

> Fashion plays a more conspicuous *rôle* in modern times, because the differences in our standards of life have become so much more strongly accentuated, for the more numerous and the more sharply drawn these differences are, the greater the opportunities for emphasizing them at every turn. (Simmel 1957:541)

Despite the burdens and challenges that the topic possesses, I would like to observe the different consumption phenomena of Japanese fashion in Thailand carefully, mainly for the following three reasons. First, it would be too conspicuous to ignore fashion when trying to discuss the over-all consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand. As I am going to show in this chapter, we can find Japanese fashion in the everyday life of Thai people, and it attracts the attention of many young Thai women today. Second, as shown in previous chapters, the main consumers of Japanese cultural products in Thailand are young females, and many of them have shown an interest in Japanese fashion in the questionnaire studies, which suggests that the groups that consume other Japanese cultural products and the group that consumes Japanese fashion is like to overlap to a certain extent. Third, clothing is an important artifact, as we need to dress something when we go out and it is "a form of communication and it can be viewed as a system of signs that derives meaning from its context while enabling us to carry on our activities." (Joseph 1986:1) Erving Goffman points out that "when an individual appears before others he will have many motives for trying to control the impression they receive of the situation." (Goffman 1959:15) Based on this notion, I assume that the clothing people choose to wear in public is likely to influence the outward impression of the individual in question, and that fashion may be considered a reflection of the individual's attitudes toward a particular country and culture, as well as the individual's belief system and the desire to portray one's appearance in a certain

way to the others. In that sense, clothing including fashion, is a social artifact which is a clue to understand people's attitude towards Japan and Japanese culture. This chapter, therefore, attempts to show the various phenomena of consuming Japanese fashion in Thailand in the light of the consumption of Japanese cultural products.

Kawaii Fashion

On March 28, 2009, a beauty contest was held at Central World Plaza in Bangkok. The contest was called *Kawaii Festa* and was co-organized by the Japanese Embassy in Thailand, the *Japan Foundation* and *Cawaii! Magazine*, a girls' Japanese fashion magazine. (Figure 8.1) What was special about the beauty contest was the theme, which could be detected in the title *Kawaii Festa*. The Japanese word "kawaii" is often translated as "cute" or "lovely" in English, but it can also be a counterpart for the English words "sweet," "pretty" or "tiny," depending on the context. The word is an adjective which expresses that something is "adorable" or "lovable." Today, "kawaii" is not a mere word, but it is also a value which young Japanese women adore. They are always looking for and seeking out "kawaii" items, and almost every item is valued according to whether it is "kawaii" (cute) or "kawaikunai" (not cute). For them, "kawaii" is one of the most important factors when they are deciding what to wear in their daily lives. (Kinsella 1995:228-230; Mead 2002:109; Kawamura 2006:795; see also Koh 1999, November 8; Drake 2001, June 18; Bremner 2002, June 25; Lee 2005 September 1; Kageyama 2006, June 14)

Figure 8.1: The Poster of the First *Kawaii Festa* in Bangkok.

In the *Kawaii Festa* in Bangkok, unlike other beauty contests which select winners based their physical appearance, the contestants were also evaluated in terms of the fashion concept of the Japanese "kawaii." Wearing their favorite clothes and accessories, therefore, the contestants tried to show their ability at coordinating a good sense of Japanese fashion, in addition to the cuteness of their physical appearance. On the streets of *Siam Square*, a shopping area in central Bangkok, we can see many young Thai women wearing fashion clothes which are very similar to the clothes worn by models in Japanese fashion magazines. For the Thai youth, *Siam Square* is the center of youth culture in Thailand, and we can find many boutiques and apparel retailers (Figures 8.2 & 8.3) that sell clothes for those young Thai women who like to read Japanese fashion magazines.

In this chapter, I will discuss "Japanese fashion," which is an important cultural product and which is vigorously consumed in Thailand. The broader sense of the term "Japanese fashion" includes various kinds of fashion, from the traditional Japanese *kimono* to the maid costumes in *otaku* subculture, from baby clothing to elite designers' high fashion, and there are gender-differentiated fashions for female and male as well as unisex fashion styles. But, as the research work for this paper was designed to be conducted in the context of Japanese cultural product consumption, I will discuss casual fashion for young females, or "kawaii fashion," which was originally produced by the boutiques and the apparel manufacturers on the streets of Tokyo such as in *Harajuku* and *Shibuya*, Japan.

Figure 8.2: A Signboard of a Japanese Fashion Shop in *Siam Square*.
(April 8, 2007)   Photo by author.

Figure 8.3: A Store Front of a Japanese Fashion Boutique in *Siam Square*.
(April 8, 2007)   Photo by author.

In Thailand, the main consumers of *kawaii* fashion from Japan are young women.   It is important to note that young Thai women are also the main consumers of other Japanese cultural products which we have already seen in the previous chapters; and they are the conspicuous consumers of Japanese fashion.   The reason for excluding traditional fashion, high fashion and men's fashion of Japan from the discussions in this chapter is that these fashions are latent/not so visible in street scenes in Thailand, although they may be consumed by some middle and upper class Thai people.   The high fashion clothes made by Japanese elite fashion designers such as *Kenzo, Issey Miyake* and *Junko Koshino,* or the fashion for male consumers, may be consumed in Thailand, but they are not meaningfully visible in the everyday life of the Thai people.   Therefore, it is difficult to collect empirical data about them.

This chapter also focuses on the consumers themselves and some of the surrounding groups connected to the fashion system.   In the fashion system, various kinds of people and institutions are involved, such as fashion colleges, students, designers, design houses, patternmakers, tailors, seamstresses, as well as fashion magazine editors, models, photographers, distributors, retailers, buyers, shops and consumers.   But our aim is to delineate the *kawaii* fashion consumed by young Thai women, and it is not meant to incorporate the whole Thai fashion system.

The flux of *kawaii fashion* from Japan into Thailand was already observed from the late 1990s onwards.   For instance, *atuzokogutsu* or thick-soled shoes, which are also called platform shoes, became very popular among Japanese young women in the late 1990s.   But *atsuzokogutsu* raised the feet more than 10 cm off the ground, and it was not easy for young women to walk when they were wearing that type of shoes. Despite the difficulties associated with of walking in those shoes, *atsuzokogutsu* turned

into a big boom in Japan, and there were many accidents which were caused by women stumbling as a result of walking in *atsuzokogutsu.* These turned into social issues during that time. (Nakata 1995, July 20; Asahi Shimbun 1999, June 11; Asahi Shimbun 1999, September 2; Sims 1999, November 26) The *atsuzokogutsu* boom was quick to spread in East Asian countries, and it also entered the youth culture of Thailand. In 2000, Uehara Masashi of *Nikkei Shimbun* reported that *atuzokogutsu* were very popular among young Thai women who were walking in *Siam Square*. In Japan, there is a famous fashion center in Tokyo, called Harajuku, and, in the report, Uehara said that *Siam Square* is the "Harajuku of Thailand," and that Japanese youth culture would propagate to Thailand very quickly, as well as to Hong Kong and Taiwan. (Uehara 2000, May 1)

In previous chapters, the questionnaire results have revealed that young Thai women like Japanese fashion. In the questionnaire results of Thai high school students (Chapter 3), 64.7 % of all respondents, both male and female students, answered that they like Japanese fashion and 73.9 % of female students said they like it. In the study of a J-Pop fan club (Chapter 4), we found that 57.7 % of the members of the fan club wear Japanese fashion clothes. In the case of university students majoring in Japanese (Chapter 6), 66.7% answered that they wear Japanese fashion. Although we know that Japanese fashion is popular among young Thai women, however, the actual consumption of Japanese fashion in Thailand cannot be quantified easily and pertinent statistical data is not available. In this chapter, therefore, I will discuss *kawaii* fashion by observing the various phenomena which relate to the consumption of Japanese fashion and other cultural products.

Fashion Studies

> Fashion is a concept that separates itself from other words which are often used as synonyms of fashion, such as clothing, garments and apparel. Those words refer to tangible objects while fashion is an intangible object. Trying to define a particular item of clothing as fashion is futile because fashion is not a material product but a symbolic product which has no content substance by/in itself. (Kawamura 2005:2)

Kawamura differentiates "fashion" from "clothing" by pointing out that clothing is the raw material, while fashion is the value added to clothing. Clothing, garments and apparel refer to tangible objects, while fashion is an intangible object, which can exist only in people's imagination and belief system. "Fashion is not visual clothing but is the invisible elements included in clothing." (Kawamura 2005:1-4) In that sense, when we talk about *kawaii* fashion, we are not concerned with clothes or attire as the raw materials of clothing that somebody might buy at a shop in *Siam Square,* but we are interested in the coordination of the clothes bought in *Siam Square* which has a taste of *kawaii* fashion from Tokyo. Each item of the outfit may have been made in different countries; for example, the skirt and blouse may have been made in Thailand, and the shoes may have been made in Korea. But the fashion is that all of these items coordinated together can be *kawaii* fashion, the fashion sense of Japanese youth culture.

Much of the early writings on fashion and clothing were from purely descriptive, over-simplified socio-historical or feminist viewpoints. (Wilson 1985:10; Brydon & Nissen 1998:ix) The reason for the devaluation of fashion as a social phenomenon to be studied, is due to the fact that fashion is linked with outward appearance and women. Early theorists of fashion related the concept of fashion to the

social position of women (Kawamura 2005:9), which has made the issue look as if it is part of a gender issue.   Contemporary feminists are sometimes still wedded to the perspective of fashion or beauty "that fashion emerges out of the desire to be beautiful, the norm for which is created by men in a male-dominated society." (Kawamura 2005:11)   Today, to the contrary, there are also perspectives which focus on fashion and beauty as a source of power for women.   Having understood the ongoing debate between fashion and feminism, I am herewith detaching the discussions of this chapter from any feminist discourses.   The aim of this chapter is to observe and analyze the consumption of Japanese fashion as a cultural product in Thailand.   I will leave the debate resolution to be expounded in other research studies.

Japanese Fashion in Thailand

Siam Square – "Harajuku" in Bangkok

The birth of *Siam Square* dates back to 1965, when *Chulalongkorn University*, which owned this land, started to lease sections of the land to local shop owners and investors; as a result, the first large buildings were constructed on *Siam Square.*   The three popular movie theaters in Siam Square today, namely the Siam Theatre (1967), the Lido Theatre (1968) and the Scala (1970), were built in that decade, and in 1970 *Chulalongkorn University*'s Property Management Office began developing the area of 63 *rai* (1 rai = 1,600 square meters) as a large shopping area. (Siam-Square.com n.d.) Today, there are 610 three-storey commercial buildings, the three movie theaters, a hotel and numerous parking spaces in the area. (ThaiAsiaToday.com n.d.)   Having the advantage of a prime location in the center of downtown Bangkok, the tenants in the

commercial buildings, such as shops, restaurants, tutor schools and banks, have attracted many consumers from within Bangkok, especially young people.

After school hours on weekdays, there are many high school and university students walking around *Siam Square*; on weekends, the many young people who work on weekdays come to the area to enjoy shopping and dining with their friends. Today, shopping and entertainment facilities have been constructed in the areas surrounding *Siam Square,* and many tourists also visit the area to experience both shopping and entertainment. Since there are many small boutiques and clothing apparel shops in the area (Figure 8.4), and since we can observe many young women walking on the street dressed in fashionable clothing, many Japanese who visit *Siam Square* find similarities between the scenes of *Siam Square* and those of *Harajuku* in Tokyo.

For young women in Bangkok, *Siam Square* is not a mere shopping area, but it is also a venue where many scouts of the entertainment business search for future idols. Therefore, when those young women who wish to be discovered by scouts walk around the streets of *Siam Square*, they wear fashionable clothing, fashionable hair styles and also cosmetics which are readily available in the shops of *Siam Square.* Furthermore, their appearance, wearing Japanese fashion, probably encouraged other young women to come to Siam Square for shopping, and consequently Japanese fashion has become a trend in the area.

Figure 8.4: A *Kawaii* Fashion Shop in *Siam Square*,
displaying Japanese fashion magazine pages on the store Front.
(September 1, 2009)   Photo by author.

Japanese Fashion Magazines

Presently, two Japanese fashion magazines are published in Thailand, namely *S-Cawaii!* and *Ray*, both play an important role in popularizing Japanese fashion in Thailand. *S-Cawaii!* and *Ray* are magazine brands which were originally published by Shufunotomo, Co., Ltd. in Japan.   In fact, these magazines are not strictly categorized as "fashion magazines" by the Japanese publishing industry, since the category focuses on high fashion (cf. Moeran 2004:37-38), while *S-Cawaii!* and *Ray* contain information about casual fashion and cosmetics for young women.   In other words, the former focuses on elite fashion and the latter focuses on *kawaii* fashion.

In 2004, Inspire Entertainment Co., Ltd. in Thailand started to publish the Thai version of *Cawaii!* (Figure 8.5), a monthly fashion magazine for young women under

20, which was the first Japanese magazine published in Thai. (May 2004 Issue, published on April 15, 2004)   The magazine pages in the Thai version consisted of pages translated from the original Japanese version and original articles created in the editorial office in Thailand.   When I browsed through the first issue, judging from the photographs used in the pages, more than half of the pages in the issue seemed to be articles translated from the Japanese version.   But, since Thai readers wanted to obtain up-to-date information about Japanese fashion, the translated articles are needed to entertain the readers.   Although *Cawaii!* has been a popular fashion magazine in some Asian countries and local versions have been published in China and Taiwan, due to the decrease in the number of copies bought in Japan, Shufunotomo Col., Ltd. discontinued the publication of *Cawaii!* in 2009 (the last issue was published in June 2009), and Inspire Entertainment Co., Ltd. switched the magazine name to *S-Cawaii!* (Figure 8.6) from the August 2009 issue (Issue No. 64) onwards.

Figure 8.5: The First Issue of the Fashion Magazine *Cawaii!* (May 2004 Issue),
published by Inspire Entertainment Co., Ltd. (Thailand)
Courtesy of Shufunotomo Co., Ltd. (Japan)

Figure 8.6: The Cover of *S-Cawaii!* Fashion Magazine (Aug 2009 Issue),
published by Inspire Entertainment Co., Ltd. (Thailand)
Courtesy of Shufunotomo Co., Ltd. (Japan)

Figure 8.7: The First Issue of the Fashion Magazine *Ray* (Sept 2006 Issue),
published by Inspire Entertainment Co., Ltd. (Thailand)
Courtesy of Shufunotomo Co., Ltd. (Japan)

Ray (Figure 8.7) is another fashion magazine that Shufunotomo Co., Ltd. is publishing in Japan. In addition to *Cawaii!*, whose target group was the under 20 audience, Inspire Entertainment started to publish *Ray*, which is for a readership audience of young people in their 20s, from the September 2006 Issue (published on August 25, 2006) onwards. *Ray* is categorized as an *akamojikei* (which literally means "red letters type," as they tended to use red lettersets for the magazine titles on the cover) magazine in the Japanese magazine industry, which targets college students and female office workers in their 20s. The fashion style in *Ray* is described as "serebu kajuaru" (the literal translation of which is "celebrity casual"), and the articles in the magazine are not only about fashion and cosmetics, but they also cover topics that interest and concern the age group it targets. The Thai version *Ray* is sold at a price of 80 Baht (US$2.40) and the circulation is 120,000; the Thai version of *S-Cawaii!* is sold at 80 Baht (US$2.40) and the circulation is 120,000. These fashion magazines have surely been playing an important role in diffusing *kawaii* fashion in Thailand, as they are not just magazines, but they also introduced the system of amateur models to Thailand.

> As intermediaries between producer and consuming public, fashion magazines exist to teach the lay public why fashion should be important in their lives, what the latest trends may be, who are the names that drive them and where the clothes themselves may be purchased. In other words, they legitimate fashion and the fashion world in cultural terms. (Moeran 2006:737-738)

As Moeran points out, fashion magazines act as 'mediators" between producers and consumers, which serve the important function of developing fashion in society. Both producers and consumers of fashion communicate through fashion magazines.

(Moeran 2006:737-738)   In that regard, the birth of Japanese fashion magazines in Thailand was a milestone in the development of Japanese fashion in Thailand.   But in the case of Japanese fashion magazines, they are not just mediators, but they also seem to play a role in moderating the communication.   In order to help explain the function of fashion magazines, therefore, I will explain briefly the role of Japanese fashion magazines in Japan, which has made Japanese young women participate in the production of *kawaii* fashion.

In Japan, *kawaii* fashion is diffused and spread through the mass media, especially through fashion magazines, and by models and actresses who appear on magazines and on television.   Since the 1990s, Japanese fashion magazines for young women started to use amateur models on their pages, amateur models who were discovered walking along the streets of *Harajuku* or *Shibuya* (with well-coordinated fashionable clothing) when their photographs were taken.   These amateur models are called "dokumo" (abbreviated form of "dokusha moderu") which literally means "(magazine) reader model."   Although there was no remuneration for dokumos in the beginning, some of them have become very popular with the readers of the magazines and have started to work as professional models.   Among those professional models, some of them have stepped into work as actresses.   The success story of an ordinary girl becoming a dokumo and starting a career as an actress has attracted many young women in Japan.   Today, famous fashion magazines regularly hold auditions for dokumo; even fashion magazines for children have auditions, and hundreds of primary school girls apply for an audition.   One of the important factors to pass an audition to become a dokumo is the applicant's fashion sense, because the applicant will have photographs taken while wearing her own clothes and accessories at the audition venue.

The system of using dokumo in fashion magazines and its popularity among magazine readers, a system which raises the amateur model to a fashion leader, has driven the *kawaii* fashion as a trend for Japanese young women.   With the "dokumo" system of fashion magazines, *kawaii* fashion is now produced by the same young Japanese women who are consumers of clothes and accessories; they are also the producers of the fashion trend.   Unlike high fashion, which is created and supplied by elite designers and large fashion brand names, *kawaii* fashion has been created by the dokumos who are chosen from the magazine readers based on their fashion sense and their physical appearance; subsequently, the dokumos became the fashion leaders.

When the idea of the publication of Japanese fashion magazines was imported into Thailand, the editorial office in Thailand adopted the dokumo system.   It should have been a mechanism for encouraging the readers of the magazines to become models by improving their sense of Japanese fashion.   Although there are many ways to become models and actresses in Thailand, such as beauty contests, talent contests, modeling contests, and some other types of contests sponsored by cosmetic or fashion product companies, the Japanese dokumo system has opened up yet another way to enter the world of show business, which can be tried simply by sending the appropriate application form to the editorial offices. (Figure 8.8)   Also, these magazines sometimes hold beauty contests such as "Cawaii Girls Contest" in *Siam Square,* and, according to the report of the Nation, an English-language newspaper in Thailand, the venue of the event temporarily becomes "Little Japan." (The Nation 2005, May 29)

The dokumo system and the beauty contests are important, not because they recruit new fashion models, but because their activities raise awareness about *kawaii* fashion among the magazine readers.   In Bangkok, many imported Japanese fashion

magazines are available in Japanese outlet bookstores such as *Kinokuniya* and *Tokyodo* but the prices of the magazines are more expensive and they are not available outside Bangkok. Moreover, although young Thai women cannot apply to be dokumos for Japanese magazines, they have the chances to become dokumos in the magazines published in Thailand. The publication of Japanese fashion magazines in Thailand and starting to recruit magazine models, or dokumos for the magazines should have contributed in making young Thai women more interested in kawaii fashion and more conscious about their own clothing and cosmetics.

Figure 8.8: Model Application Forms in the Fashion Magazines,
S-Cawaii! (left) and *Ray* (right).

Japanese Fashion through Other Forms of Media

In addition to the fashion magazines from Japan, young Thai women are exposed to *kawaii* fashion through other kinds of media such as television programs and J-Pop music. Since the 1990s, many Japanese television dramas have been broadcast in Thailand. For example, as shown in the Table 8.1, more than 50 Japanese dramas have been broadcast by *ITV PCL (Public Company Ltd.)* from the 1990s through to March 2006. All of the dramas were contemporary; the lifestyles of contemporary Japan and the new fashion at the time were shown within the stories. While watching these dramas, Thai audiences have been exposed to Japanese fashion and cosmetics through the lifestyles of the heroines. This is thought to have stimulated consumers to be interested in Japanese fashion clothing.

> … the popular music and fashion industries are regarded as sharing a close relationship: popular music is taken to play a powerful role in 'shop-windowing' and selling clothes (with certain rock and pop stars regarded as 'fashion leaders') and, in return, clothing has been viewed as a central part of how popular music signifies. (McLaughlin 2000:264)

The influx of music from Japan has also introduced fashion styles which are related to the music. In the 1990s, some of Japanese rock bands such as *Lucifer*, *X-Japan* and *Luna Sea*, have become popular among some music fans in Thailand and the fans of these bands were exposed to rock fashion. Rock fashion has not become popular in Thailand, however, as the number of the Japanese rock music fans was limited, and the related leather fashion clothes were not suitable to be worn in the warm Thai climate. In the late 1990s, when *Morning Musume* and other female idols became popular in Japan, both their music and their *kawaii* fashion were imported to

Thailand, and many young Thai women were exposed to such fashion through the idols.

It is difficult to establish a direct causal relationship between exposure to Japanese fashion through the consumption of television and music media and the actual consumption of *kawaii* fashion, as many other Japanese cultural products are intermingled with the above factors to make the young Thai women interested in *kawaii* fashion. In this chapter, however, it is important to note that many Thai women are exposed to Japanese fashion over and over when they watch television programs and when they see Japanese idols and actresses wearing Japanese fashion. The repeated exposure to Japanese fashion when they are enjoying television programs and watching Japanese music idols can be explained by the mere exposure theory of social psychology which I will discuss in a later chapter. (Chapter 9) But even without the theory, it is not difficult to assume that many young women have a desire to wear the same kind of fashion clothing that their favorite idols and actresses wear in the media.

Table 8.1: Japanese Drama broadcast by ITV (- June 2006)

Drama Titles (English)	Drama Titles (Japanese)	
With Love	With Love	Fuji
Beach Boys		Fuji
Love 2000		Fuji
Over Time	Over Time	Fuji
Precious ime		Fuji
GTO	GTO	Fuji
Ring Saishusho		Fuji
Anchor Woman		Fuji
Ice World		Fuji
Power Office Girls 1		Fuji
Sweet Daddy		Fuji
Power Office Girls 2		Fuji
Beach Boys Special		Fuji
GTO Special	GTO	Fuji
Love Generation	Love Generation	Fuji
Long Vacation	Long Vacation	Fuji
Imagine		Fuji
The Sun Shines Forever		Fuji
Love Complex		Fuji
Give Me Your Love		Fuji
Brand		Fuji
Fighting Girl		Fuji
Shotgun Marriage		Fuji
Antique		Fuji
Love Revolution		Fuji
Yamatonadeshiko		Fuji
Power Office Girls Final		Fuji
My Husband		Fuji
The Queen of Lunchtime Cuisine		Fuji
Artificial Beauty		Fuji
Power of Love		Fuji
Hero	Hero	Fuji
The Beauty or the Beast		Fuji
Always the Two of Us		Fuji
Searching for my polestar		Fuji
Long Love Letter		Fuji
Double Score		Fuji
Be Nice to People		Fuji
My Husband 2003	2003	Fuji
Animal Doctor		TV Asahi
Daddy		TBS
Good Luck!		TBS
Golden Bowl		NTV
Remote		NTV
Orange Days		TBS
My Madonna		Fuji
Water Boys 2		Fuji
Crying Out Love at Center of the World		TBS

327

Japanese Women in Thailand

The presence of Japanese residents in Thailand is also an influential factor in diffusing Japanese fashion in the country.   According to the Embassy of Japan in Thailand, there are 45,805 (30,334 male and 15,471 female) registered Japanese nationals living in Thailand, as of October 1, 2009. (Embassy of Japan 2010)   As shown in Table 8.2, more than 70 % of Japanese nationals live in Bangkok.   This number cited is the statistic for those registered Japanese nationals who have official visas from the Thai government and who have submitted registration form to the Embassy of Japan to report that they will live in Thailand for more than three months.   It is said, however, that the actual number of Japanese nationals who live in Thailand is about three times the officially registered number.   Most unregistered Japanese residents in Thailand are staying in the country with tourist visas, which they repeatedly renew at Thai embassies in neighboring countries when their visas expire.

	Number	Percent
Bangkok	33,152	72.4%
Chonburi	3,264	7.1%
Chiang Mai	2,442	5.3%
Pathumtani	998	2.2%
Ayutthaya	860	1.9%
Samut Prakan	662	1.4%
Phuket	584	1.3%
Nonthaburi	466	1.0%
Nakhon Ratchasima	401	0.9%
Prachinburi	375	0.8%
Rayong	362	0.8%
Chiang Rai	327	0.7%
Nakhon Pathom	174	0.4%
Khon Kaen	145	0.3%
Phayao	107	0.2%
Others	1,486	3.2%
Total	45,805	100.0%
As of October 1, 2009		
Source: Embassy of Japan in Thailand. (2010) *Kaigai zairyû houjinsû toukei.*		

Table 8.2: Japanese Nationals in Thailand (by area of residence)

In addition to the Japanese residents, there are many Japanese tourists in Thailand. In 2007, statistics showed that 1,277,638 Japanese nationals visited Thailand as tourists. (Tourism Authority of Thailand n.d.) Compared to those Japanese nationals who have been living in Thailand for many years, we can assume that tourists who come to Thailand directly from Japan wear Japanese fashion, since most of the spare clothes in their luggage would have been bought in Japan, which is a part of Japanese fashion. Wearing Japanese fashion clothing, these tourists usually visit major sightseeing places in Thailand such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Phuket, and Samui but some of them also visit small towns and villages on the outskirt of those big cities, so the people in the countryside also have a chance to see Japanese tourists wearing

Japanese fashion.

There is an anecdote that I remember when we discuss the relationship between the presence of Japanese nationals in Thailand and the popularity of Japanese fashion. I recently received e-mail from one of my Japanese friends, who married a Thai man in 2008 and who currently lives in Chonburi.   In the e-mail, she told me that she went to see the first *Sriracha Nihon Matsuri* (Japan Festival in Sriracha), which was held on November 28, 2009 and was sponsored by *Chonburi Rayong Japanese Association in Thailand* (CRJA).   Sriracha is a town, located in Chonburi province, which is about 120 km southeast of Bangkok.   As of April 2009, the Japanese Association had members, comprising of 191 companies and 44 individuals (CRJA 2009), because there are many factories belonging to Japanese companies and Japan-Thai joint venture companies in the area.   As we have seen in Table 8.2, more than 3,000 registered Japanese nationals are living in Chonburi Province.

According to this friend, one of the most lively and bustling places in *Sriracha Nihon Matsuri* was a bazaar which was organized by the wives of the Japanese Association.   At the bazaar, there were utensils, clothes, foodstuffs and so on that the Japanese families of the Japanese Association had brought from Japan.   When my friend tried to buy Japanese food products at the bazaar, she found Thai women crowding around Japanese clothes and she realized how popular Japanese fashion was among Thai women. (Personal communication 2010, January 28; 2010, January 29)

Harumi Befu discusses the dispersal of Japanese citizens around the world which has resulted from Japan's economic globalization through analyzing the Japanese "diaspora" with the terms "non-permanent" and "permanent" sojourners (Befu 2001:5-9), which suggests the importance of Japanese sojourners' presence in other

countries in understanding the global context of Japan outside Japan. The phenomena that we can observe in the everyday life of the Thai people suggest that the presence of Japanese nationals has had a positive influence on the attitude of the Thai people toward Japanese fashion and other Japanese cultural products. However, the data to support such observations cannot be easily found in official government statistics or in any previous research. For the purpose of this chapter, therefore, I have attempted to accumulate observations of the phenomena to illustrate the presence of Japanese fashion in Thailand in order to analyze the popularity of Japanese cultural products among Thai people.

Japanese Fashion in Pratunaam Market

Pratunaam is an area in central Bangkok, where hundreds of wholesale and retail shops selling apparel and accessories stand, side by side, in the building complexes. The whole area is also known as "Pratunaam Market." (Figure 8.9) It is not far from *Siam* shopping area and the *Central World Plaza,* yet it is difficult to find one's favorite fashion products in short time because there are so many shops in the building complexes in the area. Therefore, many shops in Siam Square, as well as other small apparel shops on the street and in shopping malls in Bangkok, screen the genre of the products and stock clothing and accessory products from *Pratunaam Market*. The shops in *Pratunaam Market* are sometimes outlet stores of the apparel and accessory manufacturing factories; others import clothing products from China.

Figure 8.9: Platinum Fashion Mall in Pratunaam, Bangkok.
December 8, 2007.   Photo by author.

In 2004, when I lived in Bangkok, I met a Japanese man who had owned a number of boutiques in Osaka.   Almost every 3 months, he visited factory outlets in *Pratunaam* to place orders for women's clothes.   He brought designs and patterns from Japan, and his Japanese friend living in Bangkok inspected the products before shipping them to Japan.   In the everyday trading businesses between Japan and Thailand, the *kawaii* fashion designs have been brought to the apparel industry in Thailand, which can also be an influencing factor in the fashion products made in Thailand.   As in this case, if Japanese individual shop owners have direct dealings with shops in *Pratunaam*, the amounts of such transactions are unlikely to be included in government statistics. However, the more businesses globalized, the more Japanese fashion diffused through Thailand via such informal routes.

Japanese Fashion School

Young Thai women are not only consuming *kawaii* fashion from Japan, but they have already started to learn how to make Japanese fashion clothing themselves. In 2005, a Japanese fashion school was opened on Silom Road, the major business district in central Bangkok. The school name is *Bunka Fashion Academy* which is a chain school of *Bunka Fashion College* in Japan. *Bunka Fashion College* (Tokyo) was founded in 1919 as a sewing school for female and children's clothing, and many graduates of the school have become famous designers and leading specialists in the fashion industry such as *Kenzo Takada*, *Yohji Yamamoto, Hiroko Koshino* and *Tsumori Chisato*, furthermore it is the one of the best vocational schools for fashion in Japan. (Bunka Fashion College n.d.) *Bunka Fashion Academy* (Bangkok) is not, however, run by *Bunka Fashion College* (Tokyo) but it is a chain school or a sister school that was founded by the *Saha Group*, one of the biggest corporate groups in Thailand. Kamata Katsuji, the educational advisor of the *Bunka Fashion Academy* (Bangkok), told me the story of the founding the school in an interview. One time Boonsithi Chokwatana, Chairman of the *Saha Group*, went to meet with Onuma Satoshi, Chairman of *Bunka Fashion College* and asked for cooperation to establish a fashion school in Thailand. The reason for this was that Chokwatana had a strong desire to contribute to Thai society after all the business successes he had achieved in his life. Onuma was decidedly impressed with Chokwatana's enthusiasm and agreed to help him to found a school in Thailand. (Personal Communication 2009, September 1)

There are some conditions which had to be met by the *Bunka Fashion Academy* if it was to be approved as "a chain school" of *Bunka Fashion College*. One of the conditions is around the teaching staff. A chain school has to have a Principal

who is a graduate of B*unka Fashion College* or it has to have more than 3 teachers who are graduates of *Bunka Fashion College*. Another important condition is the curriculum. A chain school has to have the same curriculum as the school in Tokyo. Kamata told me that having the same curriculum is very important, because such a system permits the students in Thailand to go and study in the school in Tokyo for the second year if they wish to do so. He always tells the students to go to Japan, or any other countries that have winter seasons as it is necessary for a world-class fashion designer to have experience living in cold winters.

Figure 8.10: Torsos in a Classroom of *Bunka Fashion Academy*, Bangkok.
September 1, 2009. Photo by author.

Figure 8.11: CAD Classroom in *Bunka Fashion Academy*, Bangkok.
September 1, 2009.   Photo by author.

Figure 8.12: Materials for Clothes Making at *Bunka Fashion Academy*.
September 1, 2009.   Photo by author.

In Japan, the fashion creation course at *Bunka Fashion College* is a 2 year curriculum, however, in Thailand the course is divided into 2 courses; Fashion Creation and Fashion Professional, because the Ministry of Education in Thailand only allows a 1-year course at vocational schools.   The *Bunka Fashion Academy* has about 30 to 35 students joining every year, and teachers who are graduates of the *Bunka Fashion Academy* teach them designing, patterning, the fashion business and so on. (Figures 8.10, 8.11 & 8.12)   The tuition fee is 70,000 Baht (US$ 2,100) per year, which is more expensive than university tuition fees, as most university tuition fees are in the range of 30,000 (US$ 900) and 50,000 (US$ 1,500) Baht.   According to Kamata, however, the tuition fees at the *Bunka Fashion Academy* are cheaper than the fees at fashion schools that teach European fashion, such as *Raffles International College* and the *Accademia Italiana*.

The *Bunka Fashion Academy* is supported by some Japanese companies as well as the *Saha Group* of companies.   For instance, most of the raw materials, such as clothes, ribbons, threads and so on, which are used in making clothes, are provided by textile companies in the *Saha Group* so that the students can use them for free or at a very low cost.   Also, a Japanese company which produces CAD software, *Toray Advanced Computer Solution Inc.*, provides the software and instructors to the school, so that students can learn about the CAD system with the most advanced CAD software for making clothes.   Furthermore, since the school has sister schools in Japan, it often invites teachers from the sister schools in Japan to come and visit, and the students can learn the most up-to-date techniques and fashion skills at special seminars.

According to Kamata, most of the graduates of the school try to start their own businesses in Thailand, and a few of the graduates have already been successful, as the

clothes they have designed are being produced on the mass production line. Today, the interests of the Thai youth and the interests of both Thai and Japanese companies intersect to create such a school, where young Thais who have developed great passion for Japanese fashion can actually learn how to make it. In the case of the *Bunka Fashion Academy*, the *Saha Group* is playing an important role in accelerating the education of Japanese fashion in Thailand, but it is also important to note that there is the desire among young Thais to make Japanese fashion clothes by themselves.

Sailor Uniforms from Anime

In the formal educational system in Thailand, students are required to wear school uniforms specified by each school. For example, female university students usually wear white short-sleeved blouses, black mini-skirts and sandals, while female secondary school students usually wear short-sleeved blouses (various colors), dark blue or black skirts, white socks and black shoes. Male university students wear white long-sleeved shirts, black trousers, white socks and black shoes, while male secondary school students wear short-sleeved shirts (various colors), black or brown short trousers, white socks and shoes. The colors and designs vary at each school, but the simple combination of top and bottom wear is the basic school uniform in Thailand.

Since the early 2000s in Bangkok, however, we have sometimes been seeing female students in "sailor-style" uniforms, which seem similar to the school uniforms in Japanese secondary schools. These students are the students of private vocational schools in Thailand, as some schools started to change the uniform design in order to attract students by offering *kawaii* uniforms. A news article on the Internet in 2005 reported that there were about 400 vocational schools in Thailand, and about 90 of those

vocational schools have changed the style of their school uniforms, while 30 more schools were planning to change the uniform style in the course of the following year. (Thaiokoku.com 2005, August 2)   The article pointed out that some of the private vocational schools in Thailand were suffering a decrease in number of students, and they felt they were forced to take such measures to try and increase numbers of students.

In 2002, *Varatip Business College* (Figure 8.13) changed its uniform design to the Japanese style "sailor uniform," and it is said to have been the first school to adopt it in Thailand.   When I visited *Varatip Business College* in September 2009, Wilairath Meelomsakda, the School Principal, told me that the design of the former uniform was no different from the design of the uniform at other vocational schools, and the school decided to create a new uniform design, so that the students would be proud of their uniforms. (Personal communication 2009, September 3)   Since the daughter of the owner of the school liked the Japanese style uniform very much, she designed the sailor style uniform by discussing the idea and design with the teachers at the school.   They tried to design a uniform which would make the students look cute, fresh and active.

Figure 8.13: *Varatip Business College*, Bangkok, the first school to adopt Japanese style
uniform in Thailand.   (Sept. 3, 2009)   Photo by author.

Figure 8.14: Female Students Wearing Sailor Uniforms at *Varatip Business College*
in Bangkok.   (Sept. 3, 2009)   Photo by author.

Varatip Business College is categorized as a vocational school in Thailand, but it actually has two different courses in the school, namely "por wor chor" and "por wor sor," the former course is a high school course (Grades 10 to 12) and the latter is a two year college course.   There are about 600 students in the school studying computer, accounting and marketing.   In *Varatip Business College*, there are about 100 male students who wear ordinary Thai school uniforms, but the design of the female students was changed from 2002 onwards; suddenly, the number of students increased by 70% within one year.   The new uniform (Figure 8.14), the set of a shirt, a ribbon and a skirt, costs about 1,200 Baht (US$36), while the former uniform set cost only about 600 Baht (US$18).   Meelomsakda told me that the parents, as well as students themselves, like the design of the uniform very much.   However, when I visited the school, it was in the process of designing a slightly modified version of the uniform for senior students, because the current sailor uniform would appear too childish and too cute at times when students have to go to do internships at company offices. (Personal communication 2009, September 3)

The sailor uniform is a symbol of female secondary school students in Japan, but the origin of the sailor style uniform derives from the uniform designed for the UK Navy in 1857.   The design was adopted by UK naval schools, and it thereafter quickly spread to many secondary schools in Europe.   The sailor style uniforms were worn in European schools from the end of the 19th Century until World War II. (Sano n.d.) Opinion was divided on the first introduction of the sailor uniform to Japan but the oldest record regarding this is in 1920, when *Heian Jogakuin* (St. Agnes' School) in Kyoto changed its uniform from the "hakama" (Japanese kimono style, currently worn by female university students at graduation ceremonies) to the western "sailor style"

uniform. (Sano n.d.; Heian Jogakuin n.d.)   *Eiwa Jogakko* (*Fukuoka Jogakuin*) adopted the sailor style uniform in 1921 and the sailor style uniform design was also adopted by other Christian and women's schools such as *Ferris Waei Jogakko* (Ferris University) and *Kinjo Gakuin*.   Today, more than 50% of female students attending junior high schools and more than 20 % of female students attending senior high schools in Japan wear the sailor style uniforms. (Sano n.d.)

It is very important to note that the sailor style uniforms appear in some of the popular manga and anime, where the story relates to lives at school.   The genre of anime and manga called "nichijou-kei" (which literally means "everyday life" or "ordinary life" and which is often called the "slice of life" by English-speaking manga/anime fans) has a tendency to adopt the theme of school life, since it is easier for the authors to write episodes based on the experiences that most Japanese people have had at schools.   For example, among the manga and anime titles quoted as being favorites by questionnaire respondents in Chapter 5 (Tables 5.12 & 5.13) and Chapter 6 (Tables 6.20 & 6.21), some of the titles, namely *The Prince of Tennis, Cardcaptor Sakura, Higurashi no Naku Koroni, Lucky Star and Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon, Yu Yu Hakusho, Persona, Zone 00, Aria, Dr. Rin, Sayonara Zetsubou Sensei, Fruits Basket* and *Kumono Mukou Yakusokuno Basho,* have heroines who wear sailor style uniform.   In addition to these titles, in many anime and manga, the heroes and heroines wear school uniforms and many of the heroines wear sailor style uniforms, although many female high school students wear blazer-coat style uniforms these days.   In my observation, during the past two decades, the value of the sailor uniform as *kawaii* fashion has been elevated considerably.   Before the collapse of the economic bubble in Japan at the beginning of the 1990s, sailor style uniforms were considered non-stylish and

unfashionable, as a result, many schools changed their uniform from "sailor style" to "blazer-coat style" because female students strongly disliked wearing the sailor style uniforms.   In the 1990s, after the collapse of the economic bubble in Japan, female high school students started to wear sailor style uniforms by making the skirts look shorter and by coordinating uniforms with vests, sweaters, mufflers and so on, so that they could look cute and active.   Although most secondary schools in Japan had regulations stipulating the lengths of the skirts (and other restrictions regarding students' clothing), female high school students changed their appearance to try to look cute by rolling up their skirts to look like mini-skirts when they were outside the scope of the supervision of their teachers.   Today, the sailor style uniform is the pride of female high school students in Japan, and the fashion style is a common symbol of female students in manga and anime.

> "The uniform influences wearers themselves; everyone with whom they interact is an other who proffers the same mirror.   Since no other statuses, nor any touch of individuality, are recognized in the uniformed individual by others, wearers are encouraged to act primarily as occupants of their uniformed status."   (Joseph 1986:74)

In Japan, the status of female high school students has changed over time.   In the past, the status that the sailor style uniform afforded a high school student implied that she was immature and childish, requiring them to obey the adults' orders and instructions.   However, in the last few decades, the status of the female high school students has been raised to that of a trend leader and 'the concept "a high-school girl" had itself become a kind of unofficial brand label' (Kinsella 2002:229), especially in fashion, and items that become popular among them will turn into big business.

Female high school students know that many of the companies producing apparel, cosmetics, accessories and so on pay attention to the activities of female high school students, and the students thus become proud of wearing the sailor style uniform, the symbol of a female high school student (see also Larimer 1999).

The designs of Japanese style sailor uniforms in Thai vocational schools do not seem to be copied directly from Japanese *kawaii* fashion, as they look more similar to the designs of the costumes of the heroines depicted in anime and manga, which are more elaborate and exaggerated, compared to the real sailor style uniforms in real schools in Japan.   Nevertheless, the parents and the teachers, as well as the students, accept the Japanese style design as the school uniform.   The positive attitudes of the students and parents in Thailand towards adopting the uniform are probably supported by their longing for *kawaii* fashion and other cultural products from Japan.   The need for vocational schools to attract more students, together with the popularity of the Japanese cultural products, such as manga, anime and fashion, have all combined to bring the sailor style uniform to the scenes of everyday life in Thailand.

Kawaii Fashion for the Thai Women (Concluding Remarks)

Similarities and Differences

The fashion that I have discussed in this chapter has its origin in America and Europe; Japan also adopted it more than 100 years ago. Over the years of familiarizing with non-traditional clothing brought to Japan, consumers as well as fashion designers in Japan have learned to customize and make clothing with the same innovational skills and passions that Japan has shown its talent for in producing industrial products. Miller points out that "Japanese fashion innovations are not the surface emulation of any specific foreign trend, but are based on a selection of items from different eras, places, and cultures." (Miller 2003:83) Young Japanese women seem to be good at creating and putting together an ensemble by borrowing fashion items from various cultures and various eras - the result is Japanese *kawaii* fashion. During the last few decades, when the consumption of fashion products by young women started to become very active in Japan and the fashion product companies have alongside with them, fashion has turned into big business and it started to be disseminated throughout other Asian countries, especially East Asia.

Having observing the popularity of Japanese fashion in Thailand for several years, I found that one of the most important reasons for young Thai women to prefer Japanese fashion is that there are similarities in physical appearance between Japanese and Thai people. Japanese and Thai people, being Asian in origin, share some similar physical features such as skin shading, colors of eyes and hair, body size, skeletal structure and also facial characteristics, which is often explained as their being "culturally proximate" in Cultural Studies discourses. (Iwabuchi 2002:147-157) For example, when a Thai woman looks at the page of a European fashion magazine,

344

fashion that a European model wears may look good in the magazine. However, when a Thai woman wears the same fashion as a European model in the magazine, she may look very different from the fashion image that she saw in the fashion magazine due to the difference in physical features. Thus, I hypothesize that young Thai women choose Japanese fashion because it looks good on Thai women due to the similarities in physical appearance.

Although this hypothesis has not been tested by formal research methods, which I hope to do in the future, many of my informants who are young Thai women agreed to this point. Furthermore, when I talked about my hypothesis during the interview with Kamata of the *Bunka Fashion Academy*, he agreed with my point by saying "that's what our students also say about Japanese fashion." (Personal communication 2009, September 1) In 2003, *Asahi Shimbun* reported rapid increase in the export of cosmetics from Japan to Asian countries, and the Yokohama Customs department deduced that the reason for the increase was the underlying popularity of Japanese fashion in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and the similarities of facial features as "Orientals" would make it easier for women in other Asian countries to imitate Japanese women. (Asahi Shimbun 2003, January 17) Befu also points out that physical and biological similarity between Japanese and neighboring Asians as one of the reasons for the popularity of Japanese cosmetics and of Japanese-designed clothes in Asian countries. (Befu 2003:7)

Japanese *kawaii* fashion has become popular among young Thai women, but it does not mean that everything about Japanese fashion has been accepted by the Thai people. When I conducted the questionnaire research to the 677 secondary students from all over Thailand (Chapter 3), some of the students wrote negative comments

about Japanese fashion in the free space on the questionnaire sheets, such as "Japanese fashion is too much for the Thais" and "Japanese fashion exposes women's bodies too much." One of the informants for my research in Thailand, who is a student of *Chulalongkorn University*, also wrote in her e-mail that Japanese fashion is sometimes "too much" for the Thai people. (Personal communication 2010, January 30) These comments may also reflect the opinion of the elder Thai people, which can be found in mss media, on Japanese fashion. For example, a well known Thai teacher *"Archan May,"* who used to be a professor at *Chulalongkorn University* and who is now a President of Rattanabundit University, exhorted the deviance of the Japanese sailor style uniform from traditional Thai culture, by pointing out the short skirts and blouses which fits too tightly are unseemly and show the bodyline of a student. (Thaiokoku.com 2005, August 2)

Abundance of Japanese Fashion

As we have seen in this chapter, there are many factors that promote consumption and the dissemination of Japanese fashion in Thailand. Various kinds of events, conventions and exhibitions are held in Thailand to promote Japanese fashion and culture by the Japanese government as well as commercial enterprises. In February 2010, "Nihon Kawaii Fair" was held in *Central World Plaza* and *Isetan Department Store* in Bangkok, which was operated by the *Small and Medium Enterprise Agency* and sponsored by the *Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry* (METI) of Japan, to promote Japanese cute products, accessories and so on. (Newsclip.be 2010; METI 2009) As we have already seen, the first *Kawaii Festa* in March 2009 was sponsored by the Embassy of Japan and the *Japan Foundation* which also organized a talk show by JUNKO

KOSHINO, a leading Japanese fashion designer, in Bangkok, in August 2009. (Japan

Foundation n.d.; see Figure 8.15)

Figure 8.15: The Poster of JUNKO KOSHINO's Talk Show,
organized by the Japan Foundation on August 25, 2009.

For the Thai people, especially young Thai women, exposure to Japanese fashion is abundant in Thailand, as we have seen that the mass media, such as fashion magazines, television programs, and movies, are playing a showcase role, and Japanese residents and travelers in Thailand are the walking fashion models of Japanese fashion. (Figure 8.16)   Today, as many clothing products of Japanese fashion design are made in Thailand, consumers can buy clothes at reasonable prices in *Siam Square* and other places while the middle and upper classes travel to Japan to visit *Harajuku* and *Shibuya* to buy famous *kawaii* fashion brands, such as *CECIL McBEE* (http://www.cecilmcbee.jp/), *LIZ LISA* (http://lizlisa.com/), *LITIRA* (http://litira.jp) and so on.   Also, some online shops on the Internet import Japanese brands of clothes to sell to the consumers in Thailand, and this made it possible for a person living in the countryside to buy trendy Japanese fashion from home.
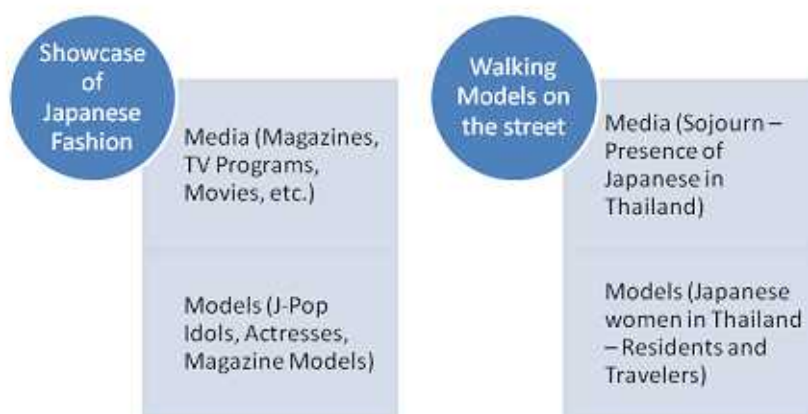
Figure 8.16: Exposure to Japanese Fashion in Thailand

Selective Consumption

Although Japanese fashion is popular in Thailand, Thai people choose clothing to wear from the large influx of Japanese fashion, based on natural and social criteria.   First, the climate of Thailand rules out winter clothes as the country has no cold season.   In fact, high-class department stores carry some winter clothes, such as down jackets, winter coats and other items for people who travel abroad, but these items are not consumed for the use in the country.   For example, in Japanese fashion, long leather boots and trench coats are fashionable and trendy in the winter months but these items are unlikely to ever be popular items in *Siam Square*.   In my observation, most of the *kawaii* fashion clothes sold in *Siam Square* are spring and summer dresses.   It is also important to note that Thai people don't have color images for specific seasons because of the absence of autumn and winter.   They prefer to wear clothes with warm, pastel or vivid colors, which are colors, often used for spring and summer clothing in Japan.   On the other hand, Thai people tend not to select brown, dark brown or black clothes, even though they may be *kawaii* fashion in Japan.

> The ubiquitous nature of dress would seem to point to the fact that dress or adornment is one of the means by which bodies are made social and given meaning and identity.   The individual and very personal act of getting dressed is an act of preparing the body for the social world, making it appropriate, acceptable, indeed respectable and possibly even desirable also. (Entwistle 2000:7)

> No one finds difficulty in assenting to the commonplace that the greater part of the expenditure incurred by all classes for apparel is incurred for the sake of a respectable appearance rather than for the protection of the person. (Veblen 1994:103)

Second, social pressure restricts what kind of clothes young Thai women can wear in public places.   Craik notes that clothes are an index of codes and display, restraint, self-control, and affect-transformation." (Craik 1994:10)   The inappropriateness of Japanese fashion clothing, which was pointed out by some of the respondents in the high school questionnaire research, are likely to reflect the opinion of their parents' generation about Japanese fashion.   Although the majority of female high school students expressed a positive attitude toward Japanese fashion, the older generation in society warned them to select carefully what to wear.   Also, criticisms of the sailor style uniform by some of the Thai older generation pose the question "What clothing is appropriate as a Thai?"

Woodhouse wrote that 'we expect men to dress to "look like" men and women to "look like" women' (Woodhouse 1989:ix) although in contemporary societies around the world, some men dress like women and some women dress like men, while some people dress in uni-sex clothing.   According to the norms and values of each culture of the time, what is appropriate as far as clothing is concerned is constantly changing.   Kawamura points out that "dress attempts to balance two contradictory aims: it focuses our attractions and at the same time protects our modesty." (Kawamura 2005:5-6)   Regarding Japanese fashion, the young Thai women tend to choose clothing based on the attractions of *kawaii* fashion, and the older generations brake the drive; the fine balance of the two powers which are at play lead young Thai women select items of clothing from Japanese fashion that are acceptable in Thailand.

Japanese fashion which is actually worn by Thai women is filtered by "natural" and "social" selection processes. (Figure 8.17)   It is important to note that

Thai women choose which clothing to wear based on these two criteria, namely the natural environment and social norms, before they actually wear it.
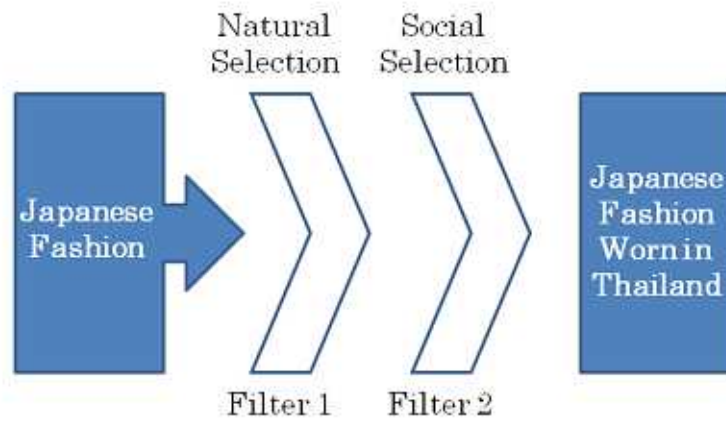
Figure 8.17: The Process of Selective Consumption of Japanese fashion.

Figure 8.18: "Lolita fashion" sold at "Akiba Kiss" – A café and shop of Japanese
kawaii fashion and goods at CenterPoint, Central World Plaza, Bangkok.
September 4, 2009.   Photo by author.

The positive attitude of Thai women towards Japanese *kawaii* fashion (Figure 8.18) has been a result of the combined influence from the various factors that I discussed in this chapter, including Japanese fashion magazines, Japanese drama, J-Pop idols, merchants in *Siam Square* and the presence of Japanese people in Thailand. In addition to these factors which are directly related to fashion, the rigorous consumption of other Japanese cultural products expose the Thai youth to Japanese cultural products and commodities, and the trend of consuming Japanese cultural products at the same time drives the consumption of Japanese fashion in Thailand. Yet we know that fashion trend is ambivalent and constantly changing, we also do not know how long the popularity of Japanese fashion will last. In the near future, when more Thai designers start producing their own apparel brands, a Thai version of *kawaii* fashion may even overwhelm the Japanese fashion and may be exported to Japan and become a factor which influences Japanese *kawaii* fashion.

Chapter Nine

Reasons for Consumption

Why do Thai people like Japanese Cultural Products?

Global and Local Factors

In this research, the analyses of Japanese cultural products using ethnographies and empirical data have revealed that the driving factors for the popularity of Japanese cultural products in Thailand are twofold; one is *global* or *external factors,* which is the influence of globalization, and the other is *local,* or *internal, factors,* which are reasons surfaced from local circumstances.   Usually, there are both global and local factors for each cultural product becoming popular in Thai society.   For example, as we have seen in Chapter 7, the popularity of Japanese food in Thailand has soared thanks to the worldwide trend of health-conscious diet (global factor) as well as the efforts of business development by the local food industry (local factor).   Furthermore, both the interests of Japanese fast food chain companies in expanding their businesses abroad (global factor) and the Japanese culture boom among Thai youth (local factor) have accelerated the expansion of the market for Japanese food in Thailand.   In addition, with the rise of the Thai economy in this age of globalization, a large sector of urban middle classes emerged in the society and more Thai people can afford to eat at Japanese restaurants in major cities in Thailand now.   It is important to note, however, that the global and local factors cannot be totally separated - they are closely related to

353

the increase in popularity of Japanese cultural products. (Figure 9.1)   The interests of the fast food chain companies in Japan to venture abroad and those of the Thai food industry to expand its business with the 'Japan' brand have come together to increase the sector of the Japanese food business in Thailand.
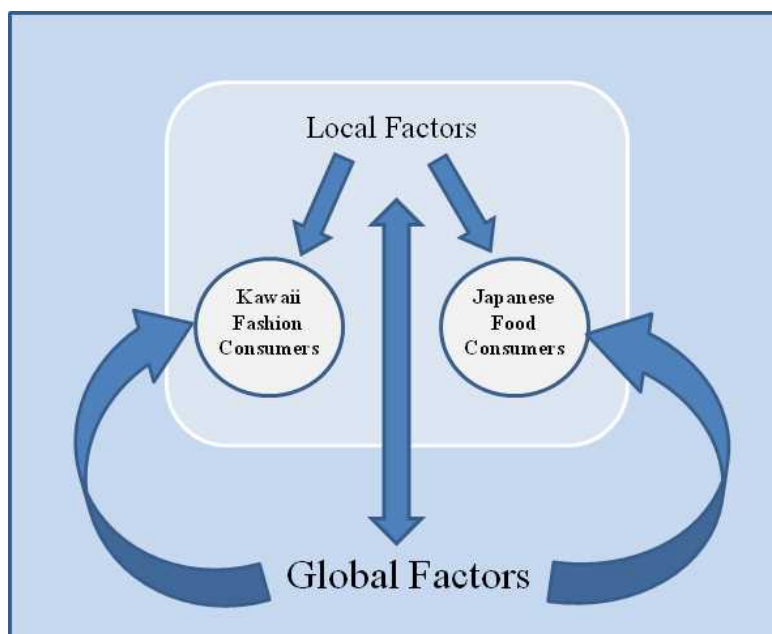
Figure 9.1: Global and Local Factors

Taking another example, we have seen that the popularity of *kawaii* fashion among Thai women also has global and local factors, some of which have been influenced by the popularity of other Japanese cultural products such as television dramas and J-Pop music idols (see Chapter 8).   The influx of images of Japanese women in contemporary Japan, through media such as television dramas, movies and magazines, has exposed Thai women to Japanese *kawaii* fashion.   After the collapse of the Japanese 'bubble' economy in the early 1990s, Japanese TV broadcasting companies started to export their programs overseas enthusiastically to increase revenues, which

has contributed to increase the exposure of the younger generations in Asia to Japanese youth culture. When young Thai women saw Japanese actresses wearing Japanese fashion clothing, they became interested in Japanese *kawaii* fashion as a result.

Simultaneously, the availability of Japanese fashion in Thailand has been an influencing factor in Thai women wearing Japanese fashion. For instance, a Japanese manufacturer of underwear and fashion clothes for women, *Wacoal Holding Corporation (Wacoal Group),* founded a joint venture company "Thai Wacoal Public Co., Ltd." with *Saha Group Co., Ltd.*, one of the biggest corporate groups, in 1970. (Wacoal Holding Corporation 2009, Saha Pathana Inter-Holding PCL 2008) *Thai Wacoal PCL* manufactures underwear and fashion items under the brand name *Wacoal*. The products are exported to other countries but some of them are also consumed locally, which makes Japanese fashion available in Thailand at a reasonable price. Also, there are small companies in the Japanese fashion industry that place orders with small factories in Thailand to make Japanese fashion clothes and accessories with Japanese designs. These products are usually made for sale in Japan, but the Japanese design influences Thai factories to make similarly-designed products for the local market; these Japanese-designed products will be made available for young Thai women to purchase and wear.

In addition to the exposure to *kawaii* fashion through the media and the availability of such fashion products, Japanese residents and travelers (sojourners) in Thailand influence Thai women as they are practically walking-advertisements for Japanese fashion. The more Thai women see Japanese women wearing *kawaii fashion* clothing on the streets of Thailand, the more they become fond of such fashion; consequently, the demand for *kawaii* fashion has grown. These days, demand has

become so high that the *Saha Group* invited a Japanese fashion school to open its sister school in Thailand (Bunka Academy in Chapter 8) and the graduates of the school have already started to produce their own brands in Bangkok which diffuse Japanese style fashion in Thailand. Having analyzed the consumption of Japanese cultural products by Thai youth, we understand that each cultural product has multiple factors (both global and local factors) as reasons for popularity, and, in many cases, different cultural products influence each other to raise the popularity of the "Japan" brand in Thailand.

Presence of 'Japan' in Thailand

To cite globalization as the sole reason for the popularity of Japanese cultural products in Thailand would be a gross over-simplification, as it would lack the analyses of local factors and individual preference for consumption. However, various characteristics of globalization, such as mobility of people, goods and finance between countries, do unquestionably affect both the consumer markets and the lifestyles in each country of the global world. The social environment of each country is influenced by factors of globalization in economic and political spheres, both of which further induce changes in the cultural sphere of the society. In the case of the discussion of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, globalization has also played an important role in exposing Thai people to Japanese cultural products for consumption. As it is one of the most important results that globalization has brought on, therefore, I intend to focus on the 'presence of Japan' in Thailand. In the broader sense, 'presence of Japan' can mean existence of anything related to Japan/Japanese. For the purpose of this study, however, I will limit the discussion of 'presence of Japan' to the presence of Japanese

companies, Japanese nationals and Japanophiles in Thailand.

Japanese Companies

Over the past few decades, Japan's presence in Thailand has been prominent in terms of direct foreign investment. Since 1988, probably because of the current after the Plaza Accord of 1985, the Japanese business world has drastically increased direct investment to Thailand. (Suehiro 2005:82) As shown in Figure 9.2, Japan has been one of the biggest investors for Thailand; Japan's direct investment to Thailand in 2008 was 101,528.75 million Baht (approx. US$ 3,046 millions) while EU was 37,721.56 million Baht (approx. US$ 1,132 millions) and Singapore was 35,446.89 million Baht (approx. US$ 1,063 millions). Table 9.1 shows the number of applications to the *Thailand Board of Investment (BOI)*, which was created by the Thai government to promote business investment from foreign countries in Thailand. The total investment of the approved applications from Japan was occupied 58,905 million Baht (approx. US$ 1,767 millions), which is 41.5% of the total of all approved applications.

As a result of the rigorous investment from Japan, there are many Japanese companies in Thailand. In 2004, the *Japanese Chamber of Commerce (JCC), Bangkok* listed 1,207 companies as its members. (Japanese Chamber of Commerce Bangkok 2005) The industries that the member companies belong to include manufacturing (629), commerce and trading (186), civil engineering (70), financial institutions (42), transportation (73) and so on; some of which were subsidiaries or branch offices of Japanese companies and others were local companies.

Figure 9.2: Net Flow of Foreign Equity Investment

UNIT: Million Baht
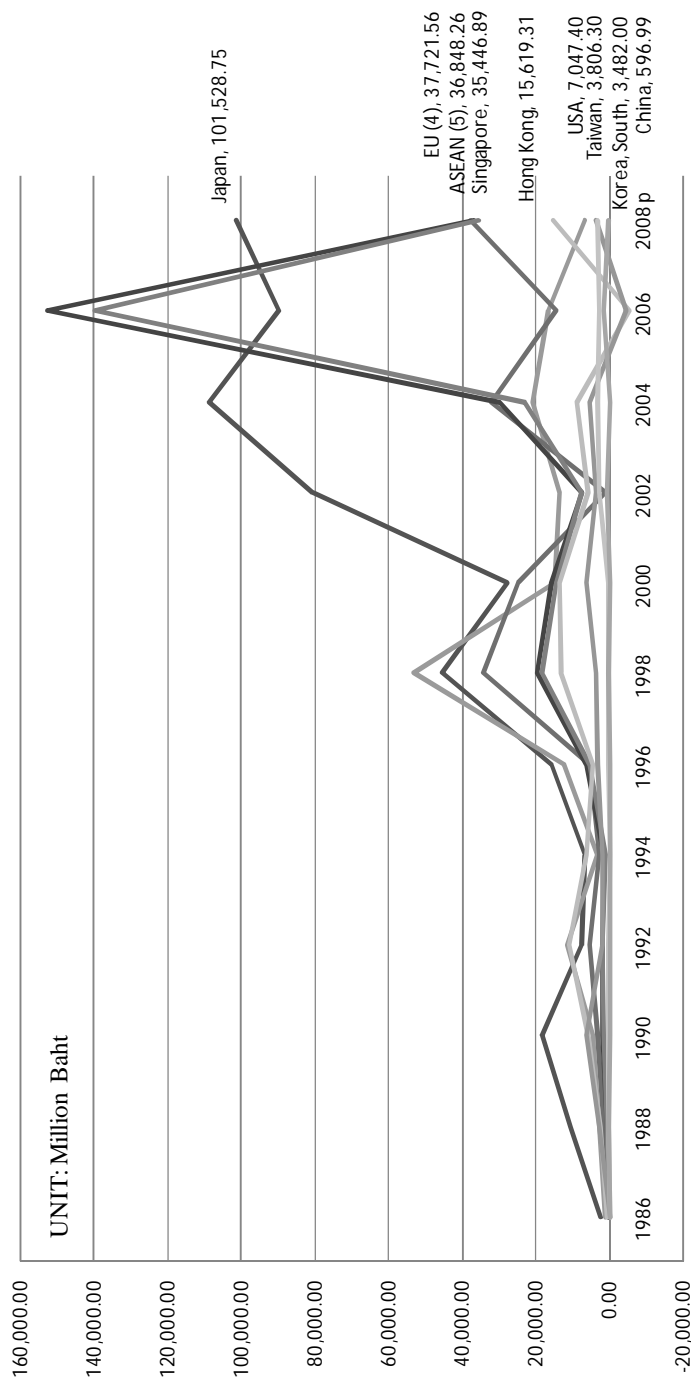
Source: Bank of Thailand (2009) *Economic and Financial Statistics Quarterly*.

Note:
(1) The figures cover investment in non-bank sector only. (2) From April 2004 onwards inputs for private financial flow data are obtained through data sets electronically. (3) 'Reinvested earnings' has been recorded as part of direct investment since 2001.
(4) Prior to May 2004, EU comprises 15 countries : Austria, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, United Kingdom, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden. Since May 2004, EU comprises 25 countries, including also Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia, Poland and Slovenia. Since Jan 2007, EU comprises 27 countries, including also Bulgaria and Romania.
(5) Prior to 1999, ASEAN comprises 5 countries : Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore. Since 1999, ASEAN comprises 9 countries, including also Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

Foreign Investment from Major Countries (2009)						
Country	NET APPLICATIONS			APPLICATIONS APPROVED		
	No.	Total Invest.		No	Total Invest.	
Total Foreign Investment	788	350,754	100.0%	614	142,077	100.0%
100% Foreign Investment	438	202,824		361	87,736	
Japan	266	77,380	22.1%	243	58,905	41.5%
ANIEs						
Taiwan	73	20,267	5.8%	32	5,341	3.8%
Hong Kong	20	13,817	3.9%	14	1,001	0.7%
Korea, South	36	8,257	2.4%	31	6,278	4.4%
ASEAN	114	41,656	11.9%	78	18,227	12.8%
-Singapore"	70	34,264	9.8%	49	14,699	10.3%
-Malaysia	37	10,343	2.9%	25	6,389	4.5%
-Indonesia	5	1,240	0.4%	3	1,331	0.9%
-Philippines	2	3	0.0%	2	3	0.0%
-Myanmar	1	2	0.0%	-	-	
PRC	25	43,189	12.3%	15	7,009	4.9%
India	15	4,660	1.3%	17	3,680	2.6%
North America						
U.S.A.	56	34,631	9.9%	37	25,591	18.0%
Canada	9	1,707	0.5%	7	667	0.5%
Australia						
Australia	16	4,458	1.3%	13	676	0.5%
New Zealand	-			-	-	
European Union	153	80,305	22.9%	121	13,433	9.5%
All Europe	171	93,926	26.8%	135	16,210	11.4%
-UK	25	3,690	1.1%	21	1,943	1.4%
-Germany	29	20,289	5.8%	21	1,071	0.8%
-Switzerland	14	13,259	3.8%	11	2,748	1.9%
-France	15	660	0.2%	17	772	0.5%
-Belgium	6	322	0.1%	7	405	0.3%
-Italy	8	2,334	0.7%	4	2,070	1.5%
-Denmark	11	3,657	1.0%	9	866	0.6%
-Sweden	9	664	0.2%	10	850	0.6%
-Netherlands	30	21,409	6.1%	22	3,751	2.6%
Others of which:						
Cayman Island	4	1,945	0.6%	1	79	0.1%
United Arab Emirates	4	597	0.2%	3	376	0.3%
Samoa	1	100	0.0%	-	-	
British Virgin Island	14	7,540	2.1%	11	5,350	3.8%
Mauritius	10	3,609	1.0%	6	1,824	1.3%
					UNIT: Million Baht	

Source: Foreign investment from major countries. (Thailand Board of Investment 2010)

Table 9.1: Foreign Investment to Thailand from Major Countries.

Number of Members - JCC Bangkok
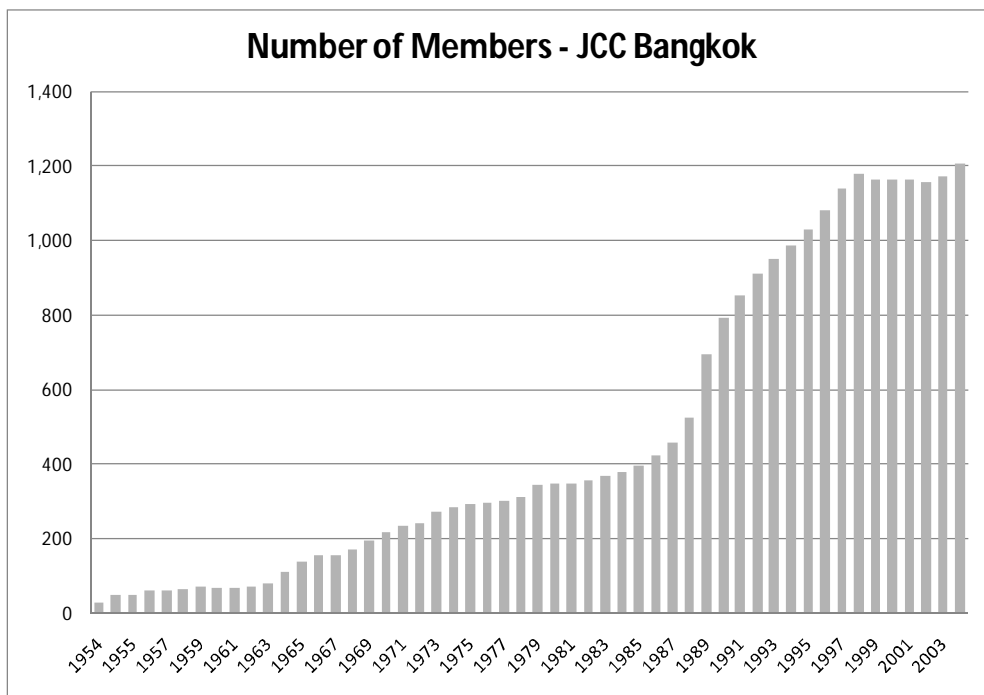
Figure 9.3: Number of Member Companies at Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok. Graph created by author from the data from JCC Bangkok. (Japanese Chamber of Commerce Bangkok 2005)

As the graph in Figure 9.3 shows, the number of member companies increased drastically at the end of the 1980s, and the number has continued to grow in the 1990s. The JCC Bangkok is considered to be the biggest Japanese Chamber of Commerce in the world today (Kawabe 2005:315), which has consequently created Japanese communities or a "Japanese diaspora" in Bangkok and around the areas of the factories of the Japanese manufacturers all over the country. Many Japanese manufacturers, big and small, including famous brands such as Toyota, Fujitsu and Nikon, have factories in Thailand, and Thai employees of these factories have the chance to meet and interact with Japanese supervisors/bosses. The presence of these Japanese factories influences the attitudes of the Thai people because, not only do they produce Japanese brand products which have been made available in the Thai local market, but also they provide

opportunities for Thai people to get acquainted with Japanese people. Through interactions with the Japanese supervisors/bosses and their families, some Thai people can see the lifestyles of the Japanese people at first hand.

Japanese Sojourners

> The most prominent in the category of nonpermanent sojourners no doubt are business expatriates and their families. Japan's economic expansion abroad has necessarily been accompanied by movement of people. As multinational corporations are established all over the world, corporate soldiers are sent abroad to set up beach heads….
> (Befu 2001:5)

As shown in Figure 9.4, there were 44,114 Japanese nationals who registered at the Japanese Embassy in Thailand as *zairyû houjin* (Japanese residents) as of October 1, 2008. However, the figures in the statistics of *zairyû houjin* issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs only show the numbers of Japanese residents who have voluntarily registered at Japanese Embassy in Thailand, as they already have adequate visas from the Thai government and plan to stay in Thailand for more than three months. The number therefore excludes those people who do not register at the Embassy and who do not have an adequate visa to live in Thailand. In Thailand, there are many foreign nationals who continue to stay in the country by renewing their tourist visas at Thai Embassies in neighboring countries. Japanese citizens are no exception, and there are many Japanese who are not included in the official statistics. Although a tourist visa does not permit the person to engage in employment in the country, it does permit the person to stay in the country, as long as he/she has a valid visa.

Figure 9.4: Number of Japanese Nationals in ASEAN Countries

Thailand, 44114
Singapore, 23583
Philippines, 16850
Indonesia, 11453
Malaysia, 9223
Vietnam, 7036

Cambodia, 827
Myanmar, 561
Laos, 461

Brunei, 140

1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008

Semilog Graph
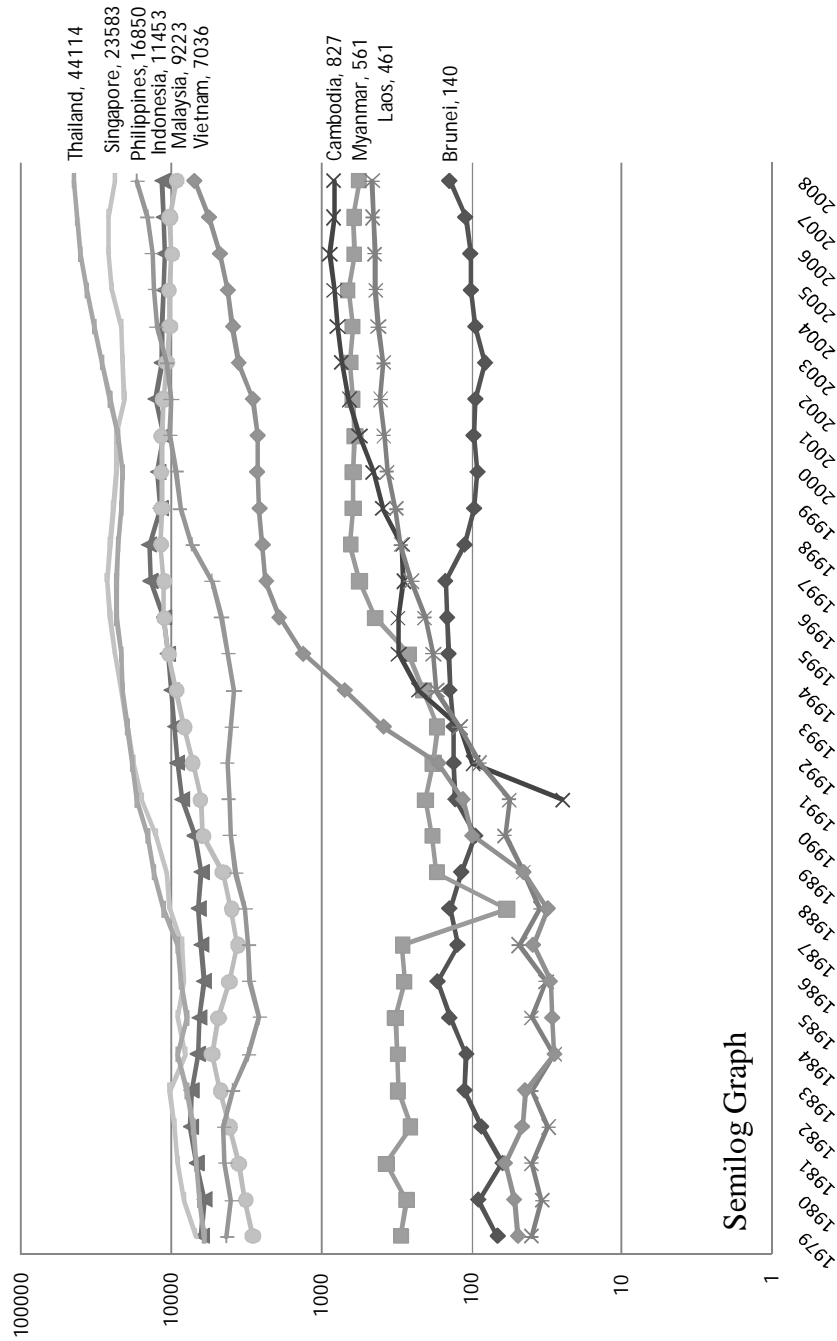
Source: *Kaigai zairyuu houjin suu toukei* (*Number of Japanese nationals overseas*). (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010)

Country	Embassy/ Consulate	Primary School		Lower Secondary School	
		Japanese School	Supplementary School	Japanese School	Supplementary School
Indonesia		586	0	168	0
	Jakarta	538	0	152	0
	Surabaya	48	0	16	0
Singapore		1288	222	408	37
Thailand		2029	70	576	19
	Bangkok	2029	27	576	7
	Chiang Mai	0	43	0	12
Philippines		301	75	82	24
	Manila	301	0	82	0
	Cebu	0	75	0	24
Vietnam		370	81	96	14
	Hanoi	187	0	60	0
	Ho Chi Minh	183	81	36	14
Malaysia		700	15	224	2
	Kuala Lumpur	519	0	175	0
	Johor Bahru	84	0	19	0
	Kota Kinabalu	5	0	0	0
	Penang	92	15	30	2
Myanmar		38	0	2	0
Laos		0	20	0	3

Note: The data are as of April 15, 2009.

Source: *Kaigai zairyuu houjin shijosuu toukei.* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010c)

Table 9.2: Numbers of Children at *Nihonjin Gakkous* Abroad.

The employees of Japanese companies who have been transferred to offices and factories in Thailand often bring their families with them. In Bangkok, there is a primary and lower secondary school for Japanese children, called the "Thai Japanese Association School," which is the second largest *nihonjin gakkou* (Japanese school) in the world. *Nihonjin gakkous* provide primary and secondary education using the Japanese curriculum for Japanese children living outside Japan as much as the local governments permit. *Nihonjin gakkous* have been approved and supported by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (Japan) to maintain a certain

level of education for Japanese children. According to the statistics of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there were 2,029 primary and 576 lower secondary students who were receiving education in *nihonjin gakkou* in Thailand. (Table 9.2) A *hoshû jugyoukou* (a supplementary school, or also known as a 'Saturday School') is a school for those Japanese students who go to international or local schools on weekdays. The Japanese students in international or local schools study school subjects in English or in the local language on weekdays, but they go to the supplementary school on Saturdays (or after school hours) to maintain their Japanese language skills and to prepare for Japanese schools to which they will go after return to Japan.

As we have seen, the presence of Japanese residents is considerable in Thailand because of the direct investment in the business sectors from Japan, but there is another reason for Japanese citizens to visit Thailand - tourism. As shown in Table 9.3, there were only three countries from which more than one million tourists visited Thailand in 2007, namely Malaysia, Japan and Korea. Although the number of Malaysian tourists (1,540,080) is the biggest in the table, more than 65% of them visited Thailand by land as Thailand and Malaysia abut on and the border can be easily crossed in everyday life. In addition to the Japanese residents, 1,277,638 Japanese tourists visited Thailand in 2007. Tourists do not usually stay in hotel rooms during the daytime and they travel around many places in Thailand, which creates even more opportunities for Thai people to interact with Japanese people in many parts of the country.

Table 9.3: International Tourist Arrivals to Thailand							
Country of Nationality	2007		2006		%Change 07/06	Air	Land	Sea
	Number	% Share	Number	% Share				
East Asia	**7,611,931**	**52.63**	**7,622,244**	**55.15**	**- 0.14**	**5,525,455**	**1,934,819**	**151,657**
ASEAN	*3,520,051*	*24.34*	*3,389,342*	*24.52*	*+ 3.86*	*1,573,134*	*1,821,778*	*125,139*
Brunei	8,987	0.06	9,418	0.07	- 4.58	8,324	558	105
Combodia	99,945	0.69	117,100	0.85	- 14.65	31,717	64,695	3,533
Indonesia	237,592	1.64	219,783	1.59	+ 8.10	155,174	69,763	12,655
Laos	513,701	3.55	276,207	2.00	+ 85.98	14,667	484,677	14,357
Malaysia	1,540,080	10.65	1,591,328	11.51	- 3.22	490,529	1,010,213	39,338
Myanmar	72,205	0.50	62,769	0.45	+ 15.03	71,166	763	276
Philippines	205,266	1.42	198,443	1.44	+ 3.44	159,470	36,759	9,037
Singapore	604,603	4.18	687,160	4.97	- 12.01	538,737	39,698	26,168
Vietnam	237,672	1.64	227,134	1.64	+ 4.64	103,350	114,652	19,670
China	907,117	6.27	949,117	6.87	- 4.43	877,902	19,168	10,047
Hong Kong	367,862	2.54	376,636	2.72	- 2.33	364,449	2,207	1,206
Japan	1,277,638	8.83	1,311,987	9.49	- 2.62	1,237,318	29,253	11,067
Korea	1,083,652	7.49	1,092,783	7.91	- 0.84	1,022,303	58,752	2,597
Taiwan	427,474	2.96	475,117	3.44	- 10.03	423,119	2,866	1,489
Others	28,137	0.19	27,262	0.20	+ 3.21	27,230	795	112
Europe	**3,905,271**	**27.00**	**3,490,779**	**25.26**	**+ 11.87**	**3,667,257**	**175,176**	**62,838**
Austria	81,391	0.56	76,106	0.55	+ 6.94	77,583	2,598	1,210
Belgium	72,018	0.50	68,617	0.50	+ 4.96	66,163	4,278	1,577
Denmark	141,110	0.98	128,037	0.93	+ 10.21	135,436	4,341	1,333
Finland	143,266	0.99	110,502	0.80	+ 29.65	138,563	3,705	998
France	373,090	2.58	321,278	2.32	+ 16.13	336,024	29,066	8,000
Germany	544,495	3.76	516,659	3.74	+ 5.39	511,782	22,587	10,126
Ireland	73,734	0.51	68,198	0.49	+ 8.12	67,454	5,168	1,112
Italy	171,328	1.18	150,420	1.09	+ 13.90	161,561	6,900	2,867
Netherlands	194,434	1.34	180,830	1.31	+ 7.52	175,797	13,711	4,926
Norway	108,941	0.75	106,314	0.77	+ 2.47	103,535	4,151	1,255
Russian	277,503	1.92	187,658	1.36	+ 47.88	271,727	4,795	981
Spain	82,111	0.57	69,658	0.50	+ 17.88	78,980	2,234	897
Sweden	378,387	2.62	306,085	2.21	+ 23.62	360,511	12,413	5,463
Switzerland	146,511	1.01	140,741	1.02	+ 4.10	136,849	7,352	2,310
United Kingdom	859,010	5.94	850,685	6.15	+ 0.98	798,154	43,530	17,326
East Europe	148,302	1.03	110,113	0.80	+ 34.68	141,276	5,353	1,673
Others	109,640	0.76	98,878	0.72	+ 10.88	105,862	2,994	784
The Americas	**920,366**	**6.36**	**923,382**	**6.68**	**- 0.33**	**849,629**	**49,176**	**21,561**
Argentina	6,704	0.05	4,327	0.03	+ 54.93	6,051	448	205
Brazil	15,056	0.10	11,841	0.09	+ 27.15	14,462	429	165
Canada	183,440	1.27	183,094	1.32	+ 0.19	164,964	13,168	5,308
U.S.A.	681,972	4.71	694,258	5.02	- 1.77	632,862	33,737	15,373
Others	33,194	0.23	29,862	0.22	+ 11.16	31,290	1,394	510
South Asia	**709,811**	**4.91**	**631,208**	**4.57**	**+ 12.45**	**680,622**	**9,941**	**19,248**
Bangladesh	44,789	0.31	40,281	0.29	+ 11.19	44,441	320	28
India	536,356	3.71	459,795	3.33	+ 16.65	509,309	8,608	18,439
Nepal	19,546	0.14	21,180	0.15	- 7.71	19,278	152	116
Pakistan	46,656	0.32	46,367	0.34	+ 0.62	45,704	570	382
Sri Lanka	44,327	0.31	46,557	0.34	- 4.79	43,848	201	278
Others	18,137	0.13	17,028	0.12	+ 6.51	18,042	90	5
Oceania	**764,072**	**5.28**	**651,262**	**4.71**	**+ 17.32**	**715,976**	**27,524**	**20,572**
Australia	658,148	4.55	549,547	3.98	+ 19.76	617,046	22,656	18,446
New Zealand	104,195	0.72	98,786	0.71	+ 5.48	97,236	4,844	2,115
Others	1,729	0.01	2,929	0.02	- 40.97	1,694	24	11
Middle East	**436,100**	**3.02**	**392,416**	**2.84**	**+ 11.13**	**426,958**	**7,017**	**2,125**
Egypt	13,037	0.09	11,882	0.09	+ 9.72	12,797	99	141
Israel	128,674	0.89	121,508	0.88	+ 5.90	123,118	4,857	699
Kuwait	31,910	0.22	33,934	0.25	- 5.96	31,413	378	119
Saudi Arabia	22,483	0.16	20,804	0.15	+ 8.07	22,125	237	121
U.A.E.	74,957	0.52	69,509	0.50	+ 7.84	74,708	145	104
Others	165,039	1.14	134,779	0.98	+ 22.45	162,797	1,301	941
Africa	**116,677**	**0.81**	**110,511**	**0.80**	**+ 5.58**	**109,595**	**5,036**	**2,046**
S. Africa	52,788	0.36	47,228	0.34	+ 11.77	50,472	1,110	1,206
Others	63,889	0.44	63,283	0.46	+ 0.96	59,123	3,926	840
Grand Total	**14,464,228**	**100.00**	**13,821,802**	**100.00**	**+ 4.65**	**11,975,492**	**2,208,689**	**280,047**

Data : Immigration Bureau, Police Department

Note : Tourist arrivals excluded overseas Thai.

Source: *International Tourist Arrivals to Thailand by Nationality and Mode of Transport* (Tourism Authority of Thailand 2010a)

Japanophiles in Thailand

These days, there are many Japanophiles in Thailand. Although there is no statistics

for the number of Japanophiles in Thailand and no concrete definitions for the term, the

increasing popularity of Japanese cultural products among Thai youth suggests that the

number of Thai people who have favorable attitudes toward Japan is also growing. An

increasing number of Thai tourists to Japan is one of the phenomena that demonstrates

that more Thai people have become interested in Japan over recent years. Table 9.4

shows the top 10 destination countries that Thai tourists visited in 2007, and Japan is

ranked fifth. If we exclude the neighboring countries of Thailand, namely Malaysia,

Laos, and Singapore, Japan is at the second, after China. For Thai people, Japan has

been strict in terms of visa issuance, but, as the graph in Figure 9.5 shows, the number

of Thai tourists visiting Japan has been increasing over the last decade.

	Destination Country	Outgoing Thai Nationals	VISA Required/Exempt
1	Malaysia	1,135,336	Exempt
2	Laos	600,044	Exempt
3	China	410,623	Required
4	Singapore	267,695	Exempt
5	Japan	234,137	Required
6	Hong Kong	222,383	Exempt
7	Taiwan	121,727	Required
8	Korea	105,742	Exempt
9	Vietnam	102,674	Required
10	Australia	76,890	Required

Source: *Outgoing Thai Nationals by Country of Destination* (Tourism Authority of Thailand 2010b). Information about VISA is added by author.

Table 9.4: The Top 10 Destination Countries for Thai Tourists.

Figure 9.5: Outgoing Thai Nationals

China, 410,623

Japan, 234,137
Hong Kong, 222,383

Taiwan, 121,727
Korea, 105,742
Australia, 76,890
UK, 74,602
Germany, 67,965
USA, 58,817
France, 31,772

450,000
400,000
350,000
300,000
250,000
200,000
150,000
100,000
50,000
0

1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007

Source: Outgoing Thai Nationals by Country of Destination (Tourism Authority of Thailand 2010b)

Figure 9.6: Number of ASEAN Nationals to enter Japan

Thailand, 211,481
Philippines, 180,161
Singapore, 169,644
Malaysia, 107,892
Indonesia, 68,821
Vietnam, 42,117
Myanmar, 6,079
Cambodia, 3,447
Laos, 2,681
Brunei, 1,152
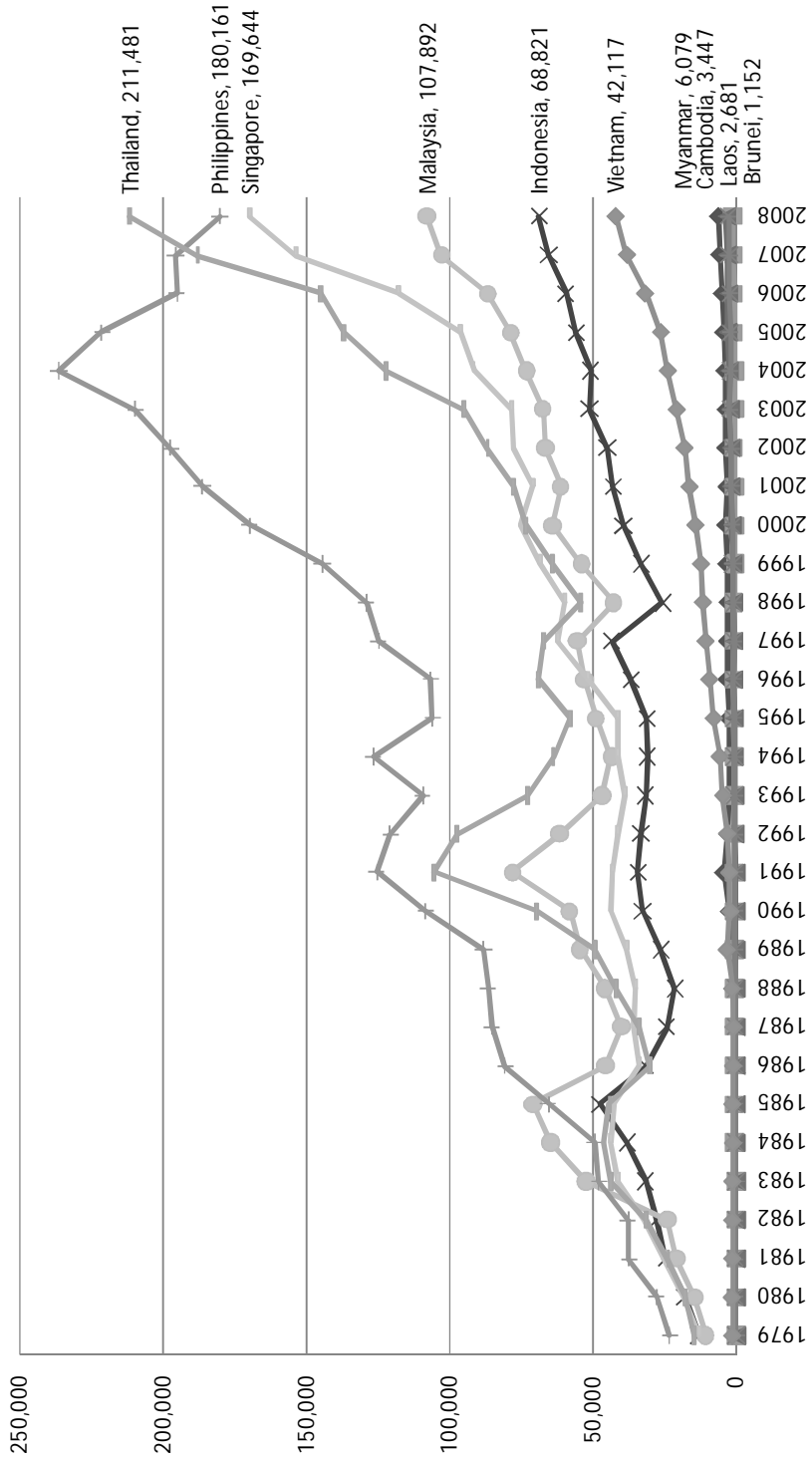
Source: Created by author from the statistics *Kokusekibetsu nyuukoku gaikokujin.* **(Ministry of Justice 2010)**

The statistics of the Ministry of Justice (Japan) also show evidence that the number of Thai people visiting Japan has been increasing. (Ministry of Justice 2010) Especially during the decade from 1999 through 2008, the number of Thai people visiting Japan has increased sharply, and it ranked first among ASEAN countries in 2008. (Figure 9.6)   In addition to the total number of Thai visitors to Japan, I noticed a sharp increase in the number of Thai students in Japan.   As shown in the Figure 9.7, the number of student visas issued to Thai nationals has grown in the last decade.   The sharp increase in the late 2000s indicates that Thai youth has become more interested in Japan, not only as a producer of cultural products, but also as a place to receive education for their future careers.

Figure 9.7: Student VISA Issued to Thai Nationals

* Since 2007, there are two types of Student VISA, "shuugaku" and "ryuugaku", and the numbers in the graph include both types of VISA.
Source: *Sashou hakkyuu toukei.* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010b)
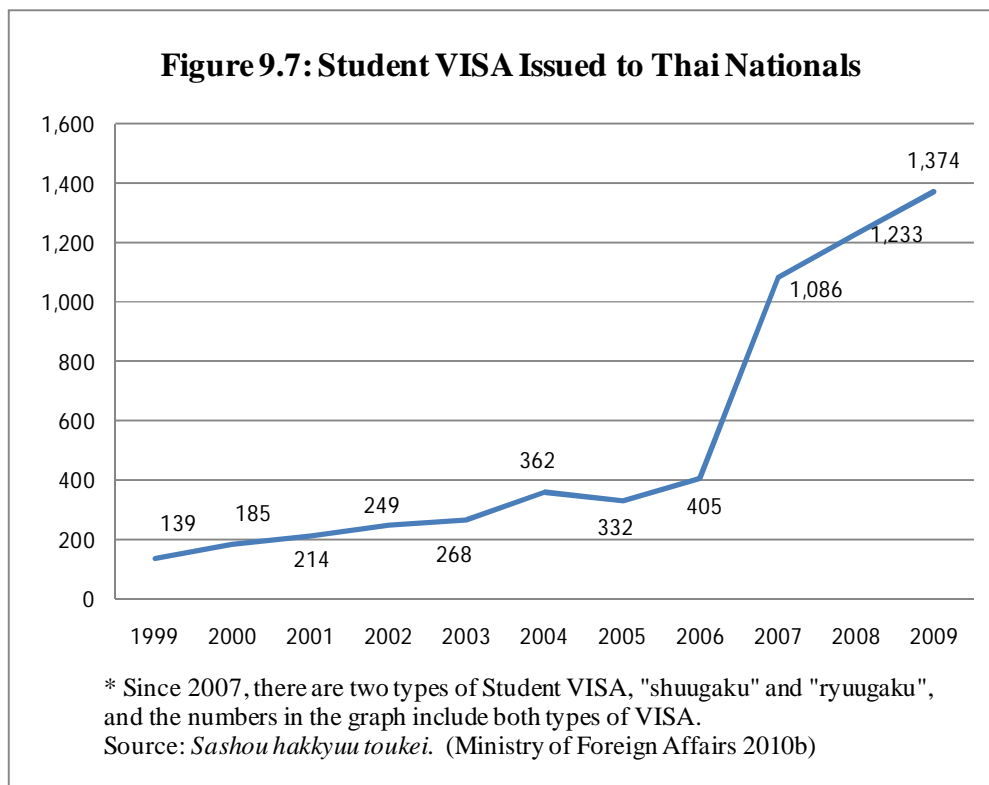
Company Name	Type of Business	Established
Lion Corporation (Thailand) Ltd.	Manufacturer for household products; fabric care, home care, personal care, oral care and baby care	1967
Champ Ace Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer of garment & leather goods	1969
Thai Wacoal Public Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer of Ladies' underwear, outer wear and children wear	1970
Raja Uchino Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer & Exporter of towels, bath robes, slippers, mats and kitchen textiles.	1973
Thai Itokin Co., Ltd.	Fashion & Uniform Apparel	1982
Thai Arusu Co., Ltd.	Store evolution, design and decoration	1984
Thai Takeda Lace Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer of fabric lace	1984
Thaisecom Pitakkij Co., Ltd.	Security Service	1987
Thai Shikibo Co., Ltd.	Spinning: weaving and knitting yarn	1988
Thai Staflex Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer and distributor of woven and non-woven fusible interlining	1988
Molten (Thailand) Co., Ltd.	Manufacturing athletic balls	1989
Thai Fujiya Co., Ltd.	Production of cake, bakery and chocolate	1990
Thai Gunze Co., Ltd.	Textile / Garment (Innerwear)	1990
Thai Takaya Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer of Jeans and casual wear	1990
Thai Nanasai Co., Ltd.	Planning, development, design, manufacture, exports and imports	1991
Kewpie (Thailand) Co., Ltd.	Food Manufacturing	1994
Nissin Foods (Thailand) Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer of Instant Noodles	1994
Saha Seiren Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer of fabric for automotive and airbags	1994
Belle Maison (Thailand) Co., Ltd.	Mail Order Catalog	1997
UCC Ueshima Coffee (Thailand) Co., Ltd.	Management of coffee shops, wholesale of coffee	1997
Sompo Japan Insurance (Thailand) Co., Ltd.	Insurance Company	1997
Siam Zokei Co., Ltd.	Real Estate	2001
Waseda Education (Thailand) Co., Ltd.	Japanese Language Education & Counseling services for Japan Education	2002
Thai Sakae Lace Co., Ltd.	Manufacturer of Lace (Leaver and raschel lace)	2002
Thai Asahi Kasei Spandex Co., Ltd.	Production and sales of polyurethane elastic yarn (Spandex)	2003
Shiseido Professional (Thailand) Co., Ltd.	Salon & Spa Business, Import & Export	2004
Thai Bunka Fashion Co., Ltd.	Fashion Education	2005

Source: *Cool the world - 12th Saha group export & trade exhibition- "Saha Group Fair 2008".* (Saha Pathana Inter-Holding PCL. 2008)

Table 9.5: Joint Venture / Japan Affiliated Companies in *Saha Group.*

In addition to the young Japanophiles who try to absorb Japanese culture by travelling to Japan on their own, there are also Japanophiles in the senior generation of Thai society. For example, as we have seen in Chapter 8, when Boonsithi Chokwatana,

Chairman of *Saha Group,* wanted to start a fashion school for Thai youth, he chose to visit *Bunka Fashion College* (Tokyo) and asked Onuma Satoshi, Chairman of *Bunka Fashion College,* for cooperation. It is not by accident that Chokwatana chose the Japanese school for cooperation. Chokwatana and the *Saha Group* have been Japanophiles for many years as the *Saha Group* has founded many joint ventures with Japanese companies while expanding its business. (Saha Pathana Inter-Holding PCL. 2008; Table 9.5) Thailand and Japan have nurtured friendships, in both interpersonal and business relations, especially in the last few decades, and these have been good basis for good relations between the two countries.

Exposure to Japanese Culture

The increased number of Japanese companies in Thailand has made the workplace a location to become familiarized with 'Japanese.' Japanese tourists, as well as Japanese residents, are casual fashion models of *kawaii* clothes on the streets of Thailand. The Thai students who have studied in Japan and returned to Thailand will bring back Japanese culture and ways of thinking to Thailand, and will diffuse them in Thai society as evangelists of Japanese culture. Needless to say, Japanese product brands, such as television sets, cameras, computers, automobiles, video games, cosmetics and foods, have been abundant in the lives of the Thai people for a long time, and now the Thai people are exposed to Japanese culture through interactions with Japanese people and Japanophiles in Thailand. Consequently, Japan has become the most conspicuous foreign country in today's Thailand.

Familiarity (Mere Exposure Effect)

The familiarity with Japan and the Japanese people, which has been caused by the overflowing exposure to "Japanese" in Thailand, makes Thai people have a positive attitude toward them. In 1968, the social psychologist Robert B. Zajonc published an article on "mere exposure effect"; the general hypothesis of the effect is that "mere repeated exposure of the individual to a stimulus is a sufficient condition for the enhancement of his attitude toward it." (Zajonc 1968:1) The hypothesis presented by Zajonc has been tested by many social psychologists for a long time and the theory has been applied in business as well as academic discussions. For instance, the advertising industry utilizes the effect by exposing product name and company logo to the consumers to create a positive image toward the product or the company.

> The mere-exposure effect, when viewed as classical conditioning with the US consisting of the absence of aversive consequences, is a very simple yet effective process for acquiring behavioral tendencies of adaptive value. There mere-exposure effect provides a flexible means of forming selective attachments and affective dispositions, with remarkably minimal investment of energy, even when exposures are not accessible to awareness. (Zajonc 2001:227)

Zajonc points out that the "mere-exposure effects are clearer and stronger when the exposures are subliminal than when subjects are aware of them." (Zajonc 2001:227; Hansen & Wanke 2009) When we observe the exposure of the Thai people to 'Japanese' in Thailand, the exposures are embedded in the everyday life of the Thai people. Each actors of the presence of 'Japan' has a different historical background and reasons for existence in Thailand and it is a coincidence that many different

elements have been united to create the image of 'Japan' in Thailand today. Having reviewed the mere-exposure effect hypothesis, the positive attitudes of the Thai people toward Japan and Japanese people can be explained by the presence of 'Japan' in every aspect of Thai life. And the popularity of Japanese cultural products today increases the abundance of 'Japanese' things in Thailand, which should further enhances the positive attitudes toward Japan. It is important to note, however, that each cultural product in this research has taken a different route to become popular in Thailand. Even though the positive attitudes toward Japan has been underlying in Thai society, it is not the only factor that has secured the popularity of Japanese cultural products in Thailand.

As shown in Table 9.6, the impressions of Japan that Thai high school students wrote about in the questionnaire in Chapter 3 include many perceived characteristics of the Japanese people, such as patriotism, diligence, discipline, responsibleness, and courteousness, in addition to the image of a country of advanced technology and the latest fashion. These perceptions and the image of Japan have been created from exposures to Japanese people and culture through the various channels that they experience them in everyday life. Although the popularity of Japanese cultural products in Thailand is conspicuous in the mass media, the result of the questionnaire shows that the high school students are not mere consumers of Japanese cultural and industrial products who read manga, watch anime and play games, but they are observers of Japan, who watch Japan and Japanese people carefully and who have some understanding about their characteristics, which influences their attitudes toward Japan.

Table 9.6: Impressions of Japan (High School Students)			
Ranking	Impressions of Japan	Number	Percent
1	Advanced Technology, High Technology	187	21.1%
2	The Newest Fashion	98	11.1%
3	The Latest	80	9.0%
4	Good looking, Kawaii	46	5.2%
5	A civilized country, Development, Prosperity	28	3.2%
6	Good	22	2.5%
7	Patriotism, Nationalism	21	2.4%
8	Beauty	20	2.3%
9	Wise	18	2.0%
10	Manufacturing Industry	18	2.0%
11	Modernized	17	1.9%
12	Livable	15	1.7%
13	Beautiful Country	15	1.7%
14	Diligence	14	1.6%
15	Eat Sashimi	12	1.4%
16	Developed Country, Economic Giant	12	1.4%
17	Long Lasting Culture	11	1.2%
18	Discipline	10	1.1%
19	Culture	10	1.1%
20	Electric Appliances	10	1.1%
21	Mt. Fuji	9	1.0%
22	Clean, Neat	9	1.0%
23	Nature and Beautiful Environment	9	1.0%
24	Free	8	0.9%
25	The Leader of Electronics	8	0.9%
26	Responsibleness	8	0.9%
27	Courteousness, Politeness	7	0.8%
28	Creative	7	0.8%
29	White (skin color), Fair-complexioned	7	0.8%
30	Lead the Time	7	0.8%
	Other	142	16.0%
		885	100.0%

N=626

Note: Each respondent wrote 1 to 4 point(s) as the impressions of Japan.

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire results of Chapter 3.

Similarity (Cultural Proximity)

In the discourse on transnational consumption of television dramas, Ang points to the important role of cultural proximity between the countries, rather than arbitrary consumption by its audience. (Ang 2003:290)   Ang points out the cultural proximity which exists between Australia and the UK as a reason for the popularity of television dramas in both countries.   In the global world, culture is not diffused homogeneously but unevenly - sometimes overlapping, creating certain regions of transnational cultural proximity and similarity ("transnational cultural zones") in the world. (Ang 2003:290, 2004:305)

As we have seen in Chapter 8, Japanese *kawaii fashion* has been very popular in Thailand and in other Asian countries.   The *kawaii fashion* style is a creation and invention of ordinary Japanese young women who wanted to adorn and render themselves *kawaii* (cute).   Despite the fact that *kawaii fashion* has not been accepted in America or in other Western countries (with a few exceptions of the somewhat extreme groups who like cosplay and *Lolita* fashion), the *kawaii fashion* has been accepted and embraced enthusiastically by young women in Thailand.   During the course of my research, some of my interviewees and informants noted that Japanese *kawaii fashion* looks good on Thai women because there are similarities in physical characteristics between Japanese and Thai women, such as body size, facial features, color of hair, skin and eyes.   And the popularity of *kawaii fashion*, not only in Thailand but also in other countries in Asia, may imply that Asia has become a region of cultural proximity - or what Ang called a "transnational cultural zone" - in the case of the consumption of *kawaii fashion*.

In the case of cultural products such as fashion and television dramas, the

cultural proximity is an important factor in the judgment of whether one will consume it. But it does not mean that Thai women accept all fashion items flowing from Japan simply because of cultural proximity. Incoming Japanese fashion clothes are screened by filters of the environment such as climate and virtues of the society, and Thai women therefore selectively wear Japanese fashion clothing which is accepted by Thai society standards. As we have seen in the questionnaire results of high school students (Chapter 3), there were students who liked Japanese fashion but did not wear it. The criticism of sailor uniforms for high school that we have seen in Chapter 8 is another example of social influence (local circumstance) for the consumption of *kawaii fashion.* The choices to wear *kawaii fashion* are made by individuals who are under the influence of morals and virtues shared with families, friends, and social groups. Consequently, local circumstances sometimes supersede the cultural proximity of the region or global influence, in determining the acceptability of cultural products in the society in question.

Cultural Affordance

Taste

> Taste is an acquired disposition to 'differentiate' and 'appreciate', as Kant says – in other words, to establish and mark differences by a process of distinction which is not (or not necessarily) a distinct knowledge, in Leibniz's sense, since it ensures recognition (in the ordinary sense) of the object without implying knowledge of the distinctive features which define it. (Bourdieu 1984:466)

The process of determining 'whether one likes Cultural Product A or not' starts from

finding differences in attributes of the cultural products in the same or in a related category. For example, Thai youth distinguishes manga (Japanese comics) and Thai comics and/or American comics by comparing the attributes. The distinction or the differences, which are found in the attributes of different comics, are the basis of one's taste and they become reasons why young Thais choose manga over other comics. Which one of the attributes in the cultural product is more important in the judgment process and how each attribute is accounted for differs according to individuals, but a cultural product passes through three layers of cultural influence, namely global influence, regional similarity and local circumstances, before the consumer chooses which one to consume. (Figure 9.8)

Figure 9.8: Layers of Cultural Influence
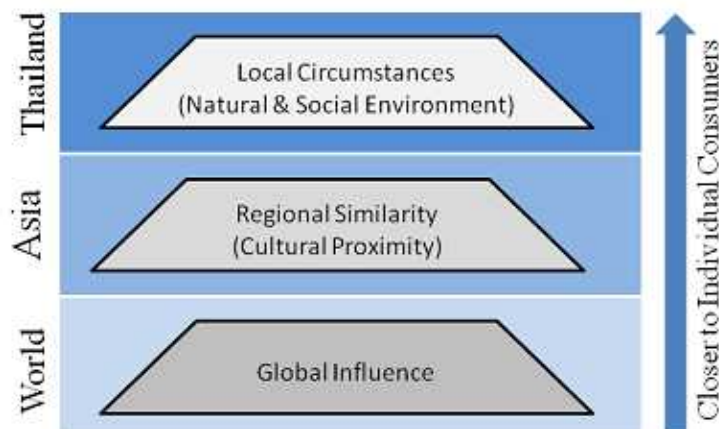
Having explained the three layers of cultural influence and the process of finding differences among cultural products in determining preference, *taste* seems to be judged intuitively rather being a conscious rationalization when one chooses a cultural

product to consume.   By observing hundreds of young Thais in this research, I found

that the people who already like one or more Japanese cultural product(s) can quickly

determine if they accept a new Japanese cultural product.   It seems the more Japanese

cultural products they like, the easier it is for them to decide if they like the new cultural

product from Japan.   When a Japanophile encounters a new Japanese cultural product,

he/she seems to evaluate it intuitively.   There may be some cases that he/she does not

like the new Japanese cultural product but it is judged rather instantly and does not take

a long time to establish if it fits the taste of the person.   The reasons underlying the

preference for the cultural product may be rationally explained after he/she consciously

analyzes the attributes of the cultural product.   But Japanophiles seem to know their

own preference or *taste* by intuition.

Affordance

> If a terrestrial surface is nearly horizontal (instead of slanted), nearly
> flat (instead of convex or concave), and sufficiently extended
> (relative to the size of the animal) and if its substance is rigid
> (relative to the weight of the animal), then the surface *affords
> support*.   It is a surface of support, and we call it a substratum,
> ground, or floor.   It is stand-on-able, permitting an upright posture
> for quadrupeds and bipeds.   It is therefore walk-on-able and
> run-over-able.   It is not sink-into-able like a surface of water or a
> swamp, that is, not for heavy terrestrial animals.   Support for water
> bugs is different.   (Gibson 1979:127)

The term *affordance* was created by James J. Gibson, an ecological psychologist, and it

has been an important concept in the discourses of human cognitions.   In the

affordance theory, things and environment have *affordances* and we perceive them or

we learn to perceive them. (Gibson 2004:340)   The term *affordance* refers to the perceived and actual properties of the thing, primarily those fundamental properties that determine just how the thing could possibly be used.   A chair affords ("is for") support and, therefore, affords sitting. (Norman 2002:9)   For example, in Figure 9.9, when Person-A looks at Chair-S, the person can perceive that he/she can sit on the chair.   In this case, we can say that the chair has *affordance* that the person sits on.   In the case of Person-B and Chair-S, the person perceives that the chair cannot support him/her if he/she sits on it.   Chair-S does not afford that Person-B sits on it and Person-B perceives the *affordance*.
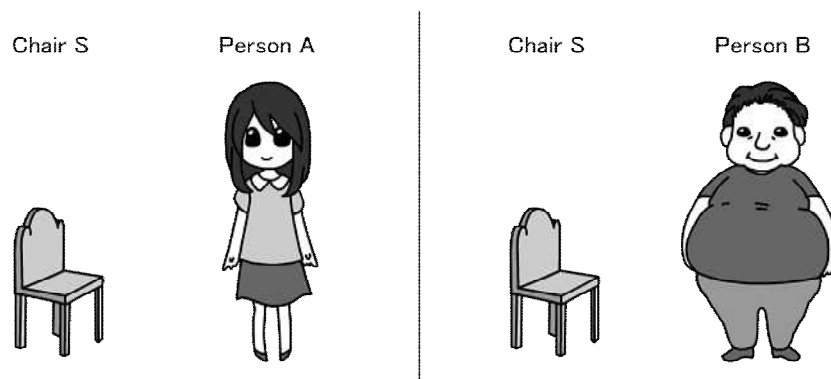
Figure 9.9: The *Affordance* Theory.

The *affordance* theory is used in the analyses of the cognition of animals toward things and the environment, and the idea is applied in designing products that require interactions with humans.   But the idea of *affordance* seems useful in explaining the process of distinguishing a cultural product.   For example, when a person encounters a Japanese cultural product for the first time, the person needs to examine it closely to determine if he/she likes it because he/she has not yet learned to perceive the *affordances* of the Japanese cultural products.   But if one has some

experiences in consuming Japanese cultural products, he/she has learned to perceive the *affordances* of cultural products (see Figure 9.10). If a person is surrounded by many Japanese cultural products, which are consumed by oneself, friends or family, the person accumulates the experiences to perceive the *affordances* of Japanese cultural products. In that sense, the copious exposure to 'Japan' and 'Japanese' in Thailand provides opportunities for young Thai people to learn the ability to perceive the *affordances* of Japanese cultural products, which makes Thai youth feel that Japanese cultural products are familiar and easily consumed.
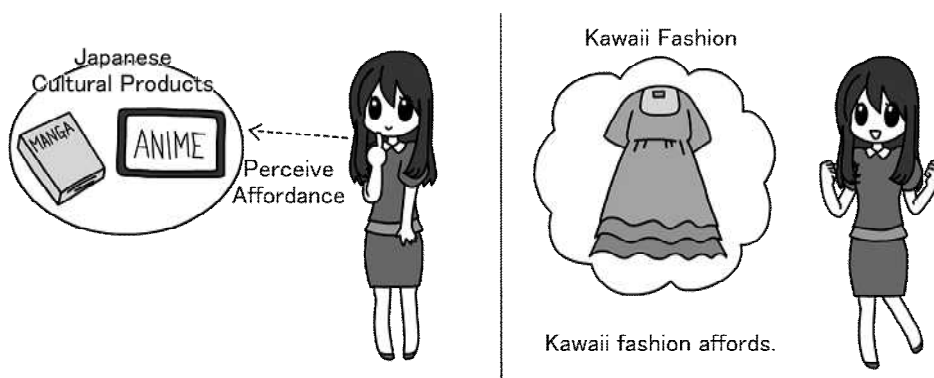
Figure 9.10: The *cultural affordance*.

Mukokuseki and Cultural "Odorlessness"

The notion of the cultural discount in Media Studies suggests that, when a foreign program is broadcasted, the value of the program is diminished and fewer viewers will watch the program compared with a domestic program of the same type and quality (Hoskins & Mirus 1988:500). In Thailand, however, manga and anime have become very popular, and we have found that 67.5% of the Thai high school students in Chapter 3 liked manga and 87.7% of the all students liked anime (see Table 3.7; Chapter 3).

The values of manga and anime are not diminished in Thailand; rather, they are celebrated widely by Thai youth. The idea of cultural discount does not seem to work in the case of manga and anime in Thailand, probably because there are no comparable quality comic books and animations in either domestic or other foreign products. The responses in the questionnaire by the *cosplayers* in Chapter 5 (Table 5.9) also point out that the quality of manga is better than Thai or other foreign comics. In the case of manga and anime, values seem to be elevated and the quality of the imported Japanese media products is appreciated by Thai youth, instead of depreciation which was expected in the cultural discount theory. (Figure 9.11) Furthermore, since most Thai people start reading manga and watching anime on TV in their early childhood, manga and anime may not be perceived as foreign. One time, I asked one of my informants (a university student), "Do Thai children have opportunities to see and get to know Japanese culture through manga and anime?" by referring to scenes in anime, for example, where people take off their shoes at the entrance of houses and *tatami* mats are laid on the floors of the rooms. She replied, "Yes, I think they do. But they may not be conscious that they are seeing Japanese culture." (Personal communication 2010, March 10) This suggests that Thai youth is exposed to Japanese culture unconsciously and they learn Japanese culture without realizing it.

Figure 9.11: Cultural Discount & Appreciation
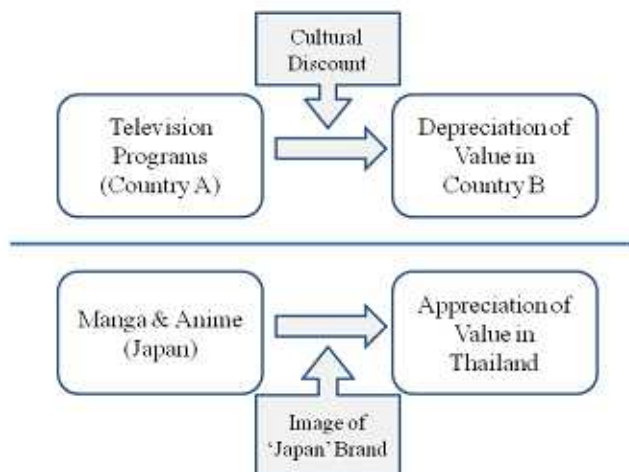
Thai children may start to consume manga and anime because they are the most available comics and animations in Thailand. But as Som, an organizer of a comic event in Thailand pointed out differences in quality between manga and Thai comics (see Chapter 5), Thai children learn to distinguish manga and Thai comics as they grow; Thai comics are only for children and many manga stories are enjoyable for youth and adults. Thai youth continues to consume manga and anime because they perceive the quality of Japanese manga and anime is good. Thai women wear *kawaii* fashion because it looks cute on them. Thai people eat Japanese food because it is healthy. The Japanese cultural products have become popular in Thailand because the values of them are perceived higher than those cultural products from other countries.

Table 9.7: The World of Manga Ttitles		
Ttitle	World	Chapter
Angel Sanctuary	Japan/Fantasy	J
Aria The Origination	Fantasy/Mars	J
Atashinchi	Japan	J
Berserk	Fantasy	C
BLEACH	Japan	J,C
Cardcaptor Sakura	Japan	J,C
CIPHER	New York	C
Crayon Shinchan	Japan	J
D. Gray_man	Fantasy	J
Detective Conan	Japan	J
Doraemon	Japan	J
Dr Rin	Japan	J
Dr Slump Arale chan	Fantasy	J
Dragonball	Fantasy	C
Eye Shield 21	Japan	C
Gakuen Alice	Japan	J
Genso Maden Sayuki	Fantasy/China	J
Gintama	Japan/Fantasy	J
God Child	London	C
Good Morning Call	Japan	J
Gundam	Fantasy	J,C
Harukanaru Toki no Naka de	Japan	C
Higurashi no Naku Koro ni	Japan	C
Houshin Enki	Fantasy/China	J
JoJo's Bizzare Adventure	*1	C
Katekyo Hitman Reborn	Japan	C
Kindaichi Shonen no Jikenbo	Japan	J
Kiniro no koruda [La corda d'oro]	Japan	J
Koucha Ouji	Japan	J
Lucky Star	Japan	C
Macross	Fantasy	C
Mekakushi no kuni [by Tsukuba Sakura]	Japan	J
Monster	Germany	J
Nana	Japan	J
Naruto	Japan/Fantasy	C
Neon Genesis Evangelion	Japan	C
One Piece	Fantasy	J
Ouran High School	Japan	J
Pokemon	Fantasy	J
Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon	Japan	J,C
Rurouni Kenshin	Japan	J
Saint Seiya	Japan	J
Skip Beat	Japan	C
Slamdunk	Japan	J
Sora wa akaikawa no hotori	Japan/Fantasy	J
Soul Eater	Fantasy	J
Spiral	Japan	J
The Lost Canvas	Japan	J
The Prince of Tennis	Japan	J,C
Whistle	Japan	J
Yu Gi Oh!	Japan	J
Zone 00	Japan	J

World = The world that the story is based on.

*1 JoJo includes many horror adventure stories of different time. The world of the stories are the mixture of the real cities in the world and the fantasy.

Chapter: The title appeared in the 'Favorite' list of the chapter. J=J-Pop Fan Club

Source: Created by author, based on the compiled data in chapters 4 & 5.

Table 9.8: The World of Anime Titles		
Title	World	Chapter
Aria	Fantasy	C
Asuki Chan	Japan	J
Bleach	Japan	J
Chibi Maruko-chan	Japan	C
Chronicles of the Wings	Fantasy	J
Code Geass	Japan	C,J
Crayon Shinchan	Japan	C,J
Detective Conan	Japan	J
Digimon	Japan	J
Doraemon	Japan	J
Fruits Basket	Japan	J
Ghost in the Shell	Japan	C
Gundam	Mukokuseki/ Fantasy	C,J
Gurren Lagann	Fantasy	J
Higurashi no Naku Koro ni	Japan	C
Houshin Enki	Mukokuseki	J
Howl's Moving Castle	Fantasy	J
Hunter Hunter	Fantasy	C
Katekyo Hitman Reborn	Japan	J
Kin iro no koruda [La corda d'oro]	Japan	J
Kino no tabi	Fantasy	J
Kumono Mukou Yakusokuno basho [Makoto Shinkai]	Fantasy/Japan	J
Kuroshitsuji	Mukokuseki	C
Macross	Fantasy	C
Mikan Enikki	Japan	J
My Neighbor Totoro	Japan	J
Neon Genesis Evangelion	Japan	C
One Piece	Fantasy	C,J
Ookiku Furikabutte	Japan	J
Ouran High School	Japan	J
Pokemon	Fantasy	J
Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon	Japan	C
Princess Mononoke	Fantasy	C,J
Rakisuta [Lucky Star]	Japan	J
Ranma 1/2	Japan	J
Rurouni Kenshin [Samurai X]	Japan	J
Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon	Japan	J
Samurai Champloo	Japan	J
Slamdunk	Japan	J
Spirited Away	Japan/Fantasy	C,J
The Prince of Tennis	Japan	C
XXXHolic	Japan	J
Yu Yu Hakusho	Japan	C
Yu-Gi-Oh	Japan	C
Zetsubou Sensei	Japan	J
World = The world that the story is based on.		
Chapter: The title appeared in the 'Favorite' list of the chapter. J=J-Pop Fan Club (Chapter 4), C=Cosplay (Chapter 5)		
Source: Created by author, based on the compiled data in chapters 4 & 5.		

Table 9.9: The World of Game Titles		
Title	World	Chapter
Bio Hazard	Mukokuseki	J
Bishi Bashi	UN	C,J
Bomberman	UN	J
Castlevania Dungeon	Fantasy	C
Cooking Mama	UN	J
Dokapon Kingdom	Fantasy	C
Dot Hack	Fantasy	C
Fatal Frame	Japan	C
Final Fantasy	Fantasy	C,J
Genji	Fantasy	C
Genso Suikoden	Fantasy	J
Harukanaru Toki no Naka de	Japan/Fantasy	C,J
Harvest Moon	UN	J
King of Fighter	Mukokuseki	J
Kingdom Hearts	Fantasy	C
Kin-iro no koruda [La corda d'oro]	Japan	J
Locco Rocco	Fantasy	J
Mario games	Fantasy	C,J
Metal Gear Series	Mukokuseki	J
Musou Series [Sengoku Musou, etc]	Japan/Mukokuseki	J
Okami	Japan/Fantasy	C,J
Persona	Japan/Fantasy	C,J
Pokemon	Fantasy	J
Samurai Spirit	Fantasy/Mukokuseki	J
Sengoku Basara	Japan	J
Sonic Games	Fantasy	C
Street Fighter	Mukokuseki	J
Super Robot Wars	Mukokuseki	C
Tales of Series	Fantasy	J
Togainu no Chi	Mukokuseki	C
Tokimeki Memorial Series	Japan	C,J
Wild Arms 2	Fantasy	J
Winning Eleven	UN	J
Yu-Gi-Oh	Japan	C
Zero Series	Fantasy	J
World = The world that the story is based on.		
Chapter: The title appeared in the 'Favorite' list of the chapter. J=J-Pop Fan Club		
Source: Created by author, based on the compiled data in chapters 4 & 5.		

Having reviewed the ethnographies of consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, then, the argument that the 'mukokuseki' (nation-less) nature of Japanese cultural products is the characteristic which attracts consumers outside Japan (Tsunoyama 1995) seems indistinct. Although the 'Japaneseness' may not be the direct reason for Thai people consuming the Japanese cultural products, various cultural factors, which don't seem to be 'mukokuseki,' are inherently contained in them. Also, the argument that the major cultural products which Japan exports are characterized as

385

'culturally odorless' (Iwabuchi 2002:94) seems imprecise when we examine the consumption of manga, anime and games in Thailand more closely. Tables 9.7, 9.8 and 9.9 have been created in order to find 'Japaneseness' in the favorite titles of manga, anime and games which have been compiled using the questionnaires in Chapters 4 and 5.

In the three tables, the shaded titles are based on the stories in Japan. In Table 9.7 (manga), 34 out of 52 titles (65%) are based around Japan. In Table 9.8 (anime), 32 out of 45 (71.1%) are based around Japan. In Table 9.9 (game), 9 out of 35 titles (25.7%) are based around Japan. Iwabuchi argued that it was imperative to suppress Japanese cultural odor in order to sell Japanese cultural products in international markets (2002:94), but as the tables show, manga and anime contain considerable 'Japaneseness' in their contents, while games contain relatively low 'Japaneseness.' Therefore, in this research, the argument of 'cultural odorlessness' (the suppression of any Japanese cultural odor) is supported only in games and it is imprecise to say that 'major Japanese cultural products are culturally odorless.'

Through the ethnographies of Thai consumers, however, I found an 'insensibility to Japanese odor' among Thai youth. As we have seen, young people do not seem to perceive Japanese cultural products as being foreign, and they do not seem to sense "Japaneseness" in manga and anime. The 'Japaneseness' in these cultural products is not based on traditional Japanese culture, but it is based on the imagery of contemporary Japan that young people in Thailand have been exposed to through the mass media and their own experiences. Also, it is important to note that Japan and Thailand are in the same transnational cultural zone, which means that a cultural proximity between the two countries exists. Because of the cultural proximity and

exposure to an abundance of Japanese presence in Thailand, young Thais do not have refined sensitivity to finding 'foreignness' in the Japanese cultural products; on the contrary, a certain amount of Japanese odor in the cultural products may be a good flavor to attract Thai youth and increase more consumption.

The Mechanism of Consumption

Each Cultural Product is Different

As shown in Chapter 3 (Figure 3.10), Japanese cultural products which have been consumed by Thai youth can be divided into two groups, Group 1 and Group 2. Group 1 includes fashion and food which are consumed by middle and upper classes as these cultural products are more expensive than local products. Although these products, clothes and food, are essential for life (as we eat something every day and we wear clothes to go out), consumers can choose what to eat and what to wear from local products that are available at reasonable cost, in addition to the Japanese style products. On the other hand, Group 2 includes manga, anime, game, TV programs and music, which are 'media products', delivered by media such as broadcasting or DVD discs. Although these cultural products are for leisure and are not necessary for living, Thai youth consumes them as they are available at reasonable prices considering the quality of the products.

In previous studies, scholars in Media and Cultural Studies focused on the cultural products in Group 2, and they made generalizations regarding the consumption of Japanese cultural products abroad without examining other cultural products. Closer observations in this research revealed that each cultural product is consumed

differently and in various ways, and it is too hasty to generalize in terms of media products only. Taking Japanese fashion as an example, Japanese fashion clothes are bought in Japan or imported to Thailand for consumption, but Japanese fashion also influences Thai fashion designers to create new clothes with Japanese flavor, which creates a fusion of cultural products. Closer observations of ethnographies also illustrate that, in Thailand, the cultural products of Group 2 are not mere foreign cultural products which are imported from Japan. Although Thai people know these cultural products are from Japan, they do not seem to perceive them as foreign. The cultural products in Group 2 are assimilated in Thai society and they have already become a part of the youth culture in Thailand.

Virtuous Cycles of Cultural Consumption

The positive attitudes of Thai people toward Japan is supported by several factors, as I discussed earlier in this chapter. The cultural carriers, such as sojourners from Japan and Japanophiles in Thailand, increase the presence of Japan in Thailand and make Thai people familiar with Japan. The cultural proximity, including the physical features and the imagery of Japan from the mass media, also makes them think that Japan and Thailand have similarities in culture. And the influx of Japanese culture through various channels such as media, products or people, reinforces the positive attitudes toward Japan. The more Japanese cultural products become popular in Thailand, the more Thai people learn to perceive the *cultural affordances* of the products. Consequently, a new cultural product from Japan can often easily be accepted in Thailand. This is the virtuous cycle of consumption of Japanese cultural products at social level (see Figure 9.12).
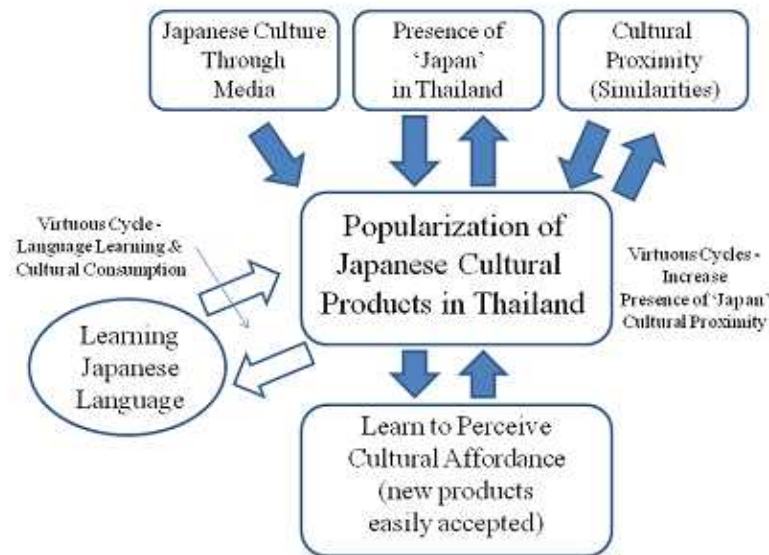
Figure 9.12: Virtuous Cycles of Japanese Cultural Products

In addition to the existing social environment of positive attitude toward Japan, Japanese language education is playing an important role in promoting Japanese cultural products in Thailand. In Japanese language education, students have more opportunity to be exposed to Japanese cultural products than students who don't learn Japanese. In classrooms, language teachers (including Japanese teachers) try to introduce Japanese cultural products as supplementary materials for language lessons. Outside classrooms, some classmates, who are Japanophiles, spread information about Japanese cultural products. In this research, I have met with many university students in Thailand whose major is Japanese, who were informants, assistants or interviewees, and I know many of them started to learn Japanese because of manga and anime such as *Doraemon*. In their childhood, they watched anime as most Thai children do. As they became older, they started to read manga as most other children do. The difference between them and other children is that they became so interested in manga that they wanted to read

manga in Japanese.   Then, some of them started to learn Japanese in secondary schools while others started to learn it at university.   After they started to learn Japanese, they were exposed to more Japanese cultural products.   Consequently, they started to consume other Japanese cultural products.   Becoming a fan of one Japanese cultural product often inspire interest in other Japanese cultural products.   As we have seen in Chapter 6 (Figure 6.6.), this is the virtuous cycle of Japanese cultural products at individual level.

Attractiveness of Japanese Cultural Products

Kawaii Culture

In this research, we found that many Japanese cultural products have been consumed with an appreciation of the *kawaii culture* of Japan.   As explained in Chapter 8, the Japanese term *kawaii* can be translated as adjectives such as "cute," "lovely," "sweet," "pretty," "tiny" or "adorable" in English.   It is important to note, however, that the term is not just an adjective but it is the basis of value judgment for young Japanese women to determine whether one likes something or not.   In manga and anime, there are many characters such as *Doraemon, Pokemon, Shin-chan*, and *Hello Kitty* which have been admired as *kawaii* by young Thai people.   Needless to say, Japanese fashion clothes and items are also evaluated as *kawaii* and Japanese idols, young actors and actresses are perceived as *kawaii* people in Thailand.   All of these Japanese cultural products are the icons of *kawaii culture* for Thai youth and the *kawaii*-ness of Japanese culture seems to attract Thai youth.

Table 9.10: The Image of *"Kawaii"*		
	Kawaii	Cool
Shape	Round	Square
	Deformed	Pointed
	Unsharp	Sharp
Color	Warm Colors	Cold Colors
	Pastel Colors	Gray
	White	Black
Feel of Material	Soft	Hard
	Smooth	Tough
	Fluffy	
Maturity	Immature	Mature
	Baby, Child	Adult
	Young	Old
Size	Small	Big
	Flabby	Sturdy
Strength	Weak	Strong
	Powerless	Powerful
Gender Image	Feminine	Masculine
	Neutral (children, animals)	

Source: Created by author.

Behind the discourses around "*Cool Japan*" by the mass media in recent years, the Japanese term *kawaii* is now used by many young people in the world, especially in Europe, and the popularity of *kawaii fashion* in Japanese subculture and popular culture has been reported by some Japanese researchers. (Yomota 2006:10-13; Sakurai 2009; Koga 2009:178-199)   In order to understand the concept of *kawaii*, I have tried to summarize the connotations that the term *kawaii* has, in comparison to those of *"cool,"* as it is used in the discourses of *"Cool Japan."* (Table 9.10)   Although the attributes in the table have been listed according to my understanding of the terms, a questionnaire research which was conducted at a Japanese university shows that young Japanese women (university students) have images of *kawaii* as "round, bright, soft, warm, small, weak, and smooth" (Koga 2009:12), which seems to support the image of *kawaii* in the

table (See also Miyadai et al. 1993:26-49 for the discussions of *kawaii* in Media Studies).

The counterpart term for *kawaii* in the Thai language is *naarak* (น่ารัก). During my fieldwork in Thailand, I often heard the word spoken by the informants and the assistants of my research who were female students. Although I am not very fluent in Thai, the usage sounded almost the same as that of *kawaii* in Japanese. On one occasion, when I asked a university student about the term *naarak*, she told me that the usage of the term have changed over recent years.

> "Today, we use the term 'naarak' just like the Japanese people use *kawaii*. Thai adults may not use the term for things but young people often use it. I myself use the term for clothes, automobiles and mobile phones." (Personal communication 2010, May 11)

This comment suggests that the influence of *kawaii* culture from Japan may have expanded the use of the term *naarak* in Thai but I leave this hypothesis to be tested in future studies. Socio-linguistic analyses of the influence of Japanese culture on Thai language usage by Thai youth may reveal a relationship between Japanese cultural products and a local language.

It is important to note that *kawaii* is widely appreciated by consumers of Japanese cultural products in Thailand and that the term *kawaii* connotes immaturity, softness, powerlessness and the attributes that are considered belonging to the symbolic images of children and young women. In this study, we have found that *kawaii*-ness in some Japanese cultural products is also playing an important role in attracting Thai youth, especially young women, in addition to the image of "Cool Japan" that has been reported by the mass media in the world.

Figure 9.13: "Kawa-ii" – a snack produced by *Thai Glico Co. Ltd.*
(Screen shot image of the company web site.)

Cultural Products for Children or Adults?

According to the stereotype of "adults" in most developed countries, comics and animations have been perceived as entertainment for children and they are not considered to be made for consumption by mature adults. In many countries, it has been considered that "sensible mature adults" would read good literature, such as novels or classical literature, and that they would not read comic books once they had become adult. Likewise, animation is a children's pastime and adults should watch Hollywood movies. Thus, "mature adults" in the societies have had difficulty understanding the phenomena that young adults today consume manga and anime, something has been perceived as a children's pastime. However, the difficulties reside in the stereotypes which are propagated about manga and anime that "sensible adults" have had for many years.

In the interviews and the questionnaires of this study, many young Thais have taught me that manga and anime (from Japan) are not just for children.   They claimed that Thai comics and animations are not interesting, because the stories are for children, while manga and anime are very interesting because of their sophisticated and well-developed stories (see Chapter 5).   Even in Japan, some adults still perceive manga and anime as a children's pastime, but the efforts that have been made by the Japanese artists of manga and anime over the past few decades have raised the quality of the media to a level which is acceptable to young adults all over the world.   Many titles of manga and anime today are at the level where they can be consumed by adults.

The same phenomena can be observed in *kawaii fashion*.   Many designs of *kawaii fashion,* which have been produced in Harajuku and Shibuya (Tokyo), may be perceived as designs for children's clothes by sensible adults.   For instance, the design of dresses in *kawaii fashion*, which resemble clothes worn by princesses in picture books, may be worn by children, but mature adults should not wear such dresses in everyday life.   However, in reality, there are many grown-ups in the world who want to wear such clothes, and *kawaii fashion* satisfies such a desire.   Yamaguchi Yûko, the designer of *Hello Kitty* products at *Sanrio Co., Ltd.*, said that a letter from a high school girl, which she received around 1986, made her create new designs of *Hello Kitty* for adult consumers.

> "… I love Kitty-chan very much.   But my parents and friends say 'Kitty-chan is for children, so you should outgrow it.'   They may well be right.   But I want to keep my Kitty-chan products forever. So please create products with the Kitty-chan design for high school girls."   (Mori 2009:156)

Subsequently, Yamaguchi designed "Monotone Kitty" and produced bags with the character, which had become very popular among high school girls. (Mori 2009:157-158)   Since then, *Hello Kitty* has been loved by adult women as well as children in Japan, and it has become an icon of *kawaii culture* of Japan over the last few decades.

In this study, we have observed that some Japanese cultural products became very popular in Thailand despite the stereotype that certain products are meant only for children.   The consumers of Japanese cultural products such as manga, anime, *kawaii fashion,* character goods, and games know that these products are made to be consumed not only by children but also adults.   Furthermore, the quality of the Japanese cultural products that meets the demand of young adults creates the power for consumers to dissolve those stereotypes.   It is one of the important factors in the attractiveness of Japanese cultural products as well.

Prosperity of Japanese Cultural Products in Thailand

Nurturing Imagery of 'Japan' in the 1990s

As we have seen in this study, the 1990s was the decade when Japanese cultural products experienced a growth spurt in Thailand.   As we have already discussed, there were a series of incidents that had influenced Japan and the world order generally.   The world had entered the post-Cold War period when the leaders of the world superpowers, George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev, declared an end to the Cold War on December 3, 1989. (BBC n.d.)   Some claimed that the end of the Cold War weakened the presence of the USA in the world as the center of popular culture, and that Japan's relative

presence as a center of popular culture was raised.   In Japan, it was at the peak of the bubble economy in 1989 and at the time that the bubble burst at the beginning of the 1990s.   The recession in Japan forced Japanese companies and investors to seek markets abroad; direct investment in Thailand increased and cultural industries, such as broadcasting companies, started to sell cultural products enthusiastically abroad.

In Thailand, as well as in other Southeast Asian countries, the urban middle classes emerged in the 1990s as a force of economic growth in the country. (Funatsu & Kagoya 2002, 2003; Hattori & Funatsu 2003)   Shiraishi pointed out that a long period of economic development from the late 1950s to the late 1990s led to the emergence and expansion of the middle classes in Thailand. (Shiraishi 2006:249)   Thus, in the 1990s, Japanese cultural products such as Japanese restaurants, Japanese cosmetics and J-Pop music were added to the shopping lists of the affluent middle classes in Thailand, in addition to Japanese industrial products such as electric appliances and automobiles that have also been widely consumed.

During that decade, the presence of Japan increased as I have discussed in this chapter, and the numbers of Japanese food restaurants in Thailand increased due to global and local factors.   Also, in the beginning of the 1990s, the publishers of manga in Thailand, which used to sell pirated manga books, started to obtain licenses for manga titles from publishers in Japan.   Since then, many manga books have been sold legally in Thailand.   All of these incidents, which occurred throughout the world, in Japan and in Thailand from the end of the 1980s through the 1990s, caused an increased demand for Japanese cultural products in the 1990s.   During that decade, the positive image of Japan was nurtured in Thailand through the prosperity of Japanese cultural products and the presence of 'Japanese' in Thailand.

Longing for Japan

In the 2000s, the Japanese cultural products boom from the previous decade was further developed, and the image of Japan as a producer of cultural products has been steady, although the popularity of some Japanese cultural products has been on the decline.   In the mid-2000s, for instance, cultural products from Korea, such as TV dramas, competed with Japanese cultural products in Thailand because Korean TV dramas were less expensive and it was easy to process the copyright and the licenses of the actors. (JETRO 2007:31-32)   Taking another example, those J-Pop fans, whom I met in my fieldwork, often complained that Japanese idols and music artists do not visit Thailand to hold concerts.   When I asked about the possibility of a concert tour for *w-inds.* (Japanese male idol group which appeared in Chapter 4) in Thailand, Watanabe Tamio of *Pony Canyon Inc.*, the record company which produces and markets *w-inds.* CDs, told me that such concert tours could be planned only if a certain amount of profit was expected. (Personal communication 2005, July 20)   In recent years, some Japanese record companies have started to market their products in Asia, especially in China, but Southeast Asian countries, including Thailand, seem to be still out of the range of their marketing.   Therefore, very few Japanese idols and music artists visit Thailand for concerts.

Although the number of Japanese TV dramas which have been broadcast in Thailand decreased and Japanese idols do not visit Thailand, some of the Japanese TV dramas are ranked first in the ranking of viewing rates (JETRO 2007:31) and some Japan related events are held almost every weekend in Bangkok, which suggests that the popularity of Japanese cultural products is maintained.   The increase in the number of Thai tourists and Thai students in Japan in the 2000s have also shown strong interest in

Japan and Japanese culture persists among Thai youth.   For young Thais today, most Japanese cultural products are not foreign, but they are part of their youth culture.   The phenomena have come about by the syntheses of various factors between the two countries, and the attractiveness of the cultural products has created the imagery of Japan, which makes them long for Japan.

Chapter Ten

Epilogue

Notes for Future Research

The Limitations of This Study

During this study on the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, I sought factors and also the mechanism of the popularization of Japanese cultural products through ethnographies and empirical data. In this thesis, I have presented several important findings in terms of the study regarding the popularity of Japanese cultural products abroad. Through extensive observation of the youth culture in Thailand, I have revealed that each Japanese cultural product has various and multiple factors that have influenced the product becoming popular in Thailand. Each factor is analyzed to be based on either global or local circumstances. Furthermore, I have delineated that the Japanese cultural products, which have become popular among the youth of Thailand, influence other products. Thus, they create a large virtuous cycle of the consumption, which is the mechanism of the consumption of Japanese cultural products and is the drive to increase popularity. Furthermore, I have found that Japanese language study plays an important role in enhancing and expanding the consumption of the Japanese cultural products among Thai youth. Learning Japanese exposes students to new Japanese cultural products in classrooms (and through friends) and language study becomes the gateway to the large virtuous cycle of product

consumption.   Besides the analyses of the factors and the mechanism of the consumption, I also found two characteristics of Japanese cultural products, namely; "kawaii culture" and "product/content designs for adults," to be important factors in terms of attractiveness of Japanese cultural products.

Despite the findings that I was able to present in this study, however, it is apparent that this research has been limited in many ways.   For instance, the Japanese cultural products that I presented in this study, namely J-Pop, cosplay, fashion, food, and also their related cultural products such as manga, anime and games, are just some of the Japanese cultural products that can be found in Thailand.   I was not able to include all the cultural products that Japan exports abroad, due to the limited resources which could be disbursed for this study.   The cultural products in this study were coincidentally selected through my various interactions with the informants during my fieldwork.   Acquaintances with young Thai people through the Internet led me to those Japanese cultural products which they consumed, and these various interpersonal connections were the starting various points for my ethnographic research.   Although the number of cultural products in this study is limited, the different cultural products have contributed to this study by showing new perspectives on the issue, which research methods of previous studies were not able to achieve.   Focusing on the individual consumers of cultural products has also been an advantage of this study.   While most previous studies focused on the cultural and media industries, and while most of the research discourses have relied on perspectives from media distributors, this study focused on the activities of young Thai people who consume various Japanese cultural products simultaneously.   By observing the activities of the individuals, therefore, the relationship between cultural products and the role of Japanese language learning has

been analyzed to illustrate the virtuous cycle of cultural consumption in Thailand.

Limiting the field of study to Thailand exclusively, using the micro-ethnographic approach and not including all cultural products available, this study could not cover many important issues that also require attentions. Knowing the limitations of this study, I deliberately refrained from any in-depth discussions on some issues, as such discussions which might have attenuated the ethnographical findings; also, they may not fit into the ethnographic analyses, and/or they may be beyond my capacity to include in this study for some other reason. In this concluding chapter, however, I would like to point out three issues, namely *gender, the middle classes* and *public diplomacy*, which seemed to have important roles in the context of consumption of Japanese cultural products. I am briefly summarizing them herewith as notes for future studies.

The Gender Issue

In this study, 867 young Thais participated in the 4 questionnaire researches. 63.3% of the participants were female. (Table 10.1) Since the questionnaire researches were not designed to analyze gender issues, not much information in this regard is detectable in the results, which might explain the higher ratio of female participants in the research in the context of Japanese cultural products. However, the result of each individual questionnaire research led me to decipher some findings in terms of gender and consumption in regards to Japanese cultural products.

	Table 10.1: Number of Respondents in Questionnaire Reseach (By gender)							
		Male		Female		No Answer		Total
Chapter	Participants	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
3	High School Students	278	41.1%	382	56.4%	17	2.5%	677
4	J-Pop Fans	0	0.0%	103	99.0%	1	1.0%	104
5	Cosplayers	2	7.7%	15	57.7%	9	34.6%	26
6	Japanese Major Students	7	11.7%	49	81.7%	4	6.7%	60
		287	33.1%	549	63.3%	31	3.6%	867

Source: Compiled from the result of Questionnaire.

In Chapter 3, the questionnaire research revealed that female high school students have greater interests in Japanese cultural products, such as fashion, food, manga, J-music and J-drama than male high school students. Anime was the only exception where both male and female students showed an almost identical amount of strong interests. The results suggested that the majority of the consumers of Japanese cultural products are female. In Chapter 4, the fans of a male J-Pop group *w-inds.* were exclusively female. As it is not possible to obtain ratios in regards to the number of females belonging to other Japanese idol fan clubs in Thailand, it is impossible to ascertain any clear gender differences in the consumption of J-Pop in Thailand. However, every time I visited Japanese CD shops in *Siam Square* during my fieldwork, I found only female customers (mostly secondary school and university students) in the shops. Moreover, as the questionnaire research for high school students (Chapter 3) suggested that female students like J-Music more than male students, it can safely be assumed that the majority of J-Pop fans would also be female.

In case of *cosplayers* (Chapter 5), there is no data regarding the number of *cosplayers* in Thailand, therefore the ratio of female *cosplayers* remains unknown. At *cosplay* event venues, female *cosplayers* tend to be conspicuous, as they are dressed in fancy and *kawaii* clothes, which gives us the overwhelming impression that there are

more female *cosplayers* than male. On the other hand, close observation at the venues revealed that many male *cosplayers* were also present, wearing the costumes of games and anime heroes. However, at the venues of *cosplay* events that I attended, female *cosplayers* seemed more active in showing off their costumes than male *cosplayers,* who seemed to spend more time photographing other *cosplayers*. Since many of the costumes in *cosplay* are influenced by *kawaii fashion* in manga and anime, it is hypothesized that there are more female *cosplayers* who want to wear such costumes than male *cosplayers*. However, their actual activities remain undisclosed, as the topic 'cosplay' has not merited enough attention among scholars for analysis; closer studies on the topic are required in order to analyze the meaning of gender in the context of *cosplay*.

In Chapter 6, we have seen that the majority of the Japanese major students attending *Chulalongkorn University,* who were the respondents to the questionnaire research, were female. This could be because it is a general characteristic and tendency is for there to be a greater number of female students in a classroom in the foreign language departments in universities in Thailand. Table 10.2 shows the numbers of students in the foreign language departments in *Thammasat University*. As we can see in the table, more than 80% of the students in all the language departments are female. The tendency for there to be more female students in language classes may not be limited to Thailand; it may be a universal propensity. Yet, if we remember the finding in Chapter 6 (cf. Table 6.8) that 68.1% of the students started learning Japanese because they wanted to consume Japanese cultural products such as manga, J-Pop, anime and games, questions about the motivation around studying a language arose. *What are the various motivations for other students who major in languages for*

studying the language? Do students who major in German study German because they like German popular culture? The relationship between gender, motivation to study a foreign language and the consumption of foreign cultural products needs to be the focus of more studies in order for the meanings of gender and cultural products in language learning to be analyzed.

In addition to the above, *kawaii fashion* is rigorously consumed in Thailand. We also know that the majority of consumers is female. In this study, most types of Japanese cultural products seemed to attract more female consumers than male consumers, with a few exceptions, such as anime. The findings in this study suggest that one of the important factors in the appeal of Japanese cultural products is the concept of *kawaii*, a concept which may have attracted more female consumers. It can be assumed that there was not much difference in gender in the field of anime because anime titles have been produced with the intent to market to both female and male consumers respectively and each individual can selectively consume them. However, in general, female consumers seem to be more apparent in the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand than male consumers.

In this study, gender differences in the consumption of Japanese cultural products have been found in many sections, and future studies on the relationship between gender and Japanese cultural products may reveal more factors underlying the popularity of Japanese cultural products.

Table 10.2: Gender Ratios in Language Departments (Thammasat University)

Department	Second Year				Third Year				Fourth Year				Total			
	Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Japanese	45	84.9%	8	15.1%	50	90.9%	5	9.1%	40	90.9%	4	9.1%	135	88.8%	17	11.2%
English	42	82.4%	9	17.6%	51	77.3%	15	22.7%	61	91.0%	6	9.0%	154	83.7%	30	16.3%
Thai	22	71.0%	9	29.0%	26	89.7%	3	10.3%	21	87.5%	3	12.5%	69	82.1%	15	17.9%
French	22	78.6%	6	21.4%	19	82.6%	4	17.4%	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	87.7%	10	12.3%
German	14	93.3%	1	6.7%	12	70.6%	5	29.4%	12	100.0%	0	0.0%	38	86.4%	6	13.6%
Chinese	33	89.2%	4	10.8%	37	92.5%	3	7.5%	38	92.7%	3	7.3%	108	91.5%	10	8.5%
Russian	20	87.0%	3	13.0%	19	79.2%	5	20.8%	13	76.5%	4	23.5%	52	81.3%	12	18.8%

Note: First year students are not included as they have not selected their courses (major). Data is as of July 1, 2010.

Source: Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University. (Personal Communication, July 1, 2010)

The Urban Middle Classes

> Developing Asia's middle class ($2-$20) has grown dramatically relative to other world regions in the last couple decades.... Which countries are driving this clear and burgeoning middle-class growth? The five countries with the largest middle class by population shares are Azerbaijan, Malaysia, *Thailand* [italics added], Kazakhstan, and Georgia. (Asian Development Bank 2010:6)

In the 1990s, during the time when the popularity of Japanese cultural products in Thailand and in other Asian countries became apparent, the urban middle classes were also emerging in Asian countries. (Shiraishi 2000) As we have seen in Chapter 3 (Figure 3.11), disposable income in Thailand increased in that decade, and the so-called 'urban middle classes' emerged in the respective metropolitan areas. (Funatsu & Kagoya 2002, 2003) The widespread expansion of Japanese restaurant chains in the 1990s was unlikely to have been mere coincidence, yet the emergence of the urban middle classes surely played a factor in driving the increased consumption of Japanese food in Thailand. Although we may safely assume that there is a close relationship between the emergence of the middle classes and the increasing popularity of Japanese cultural products in Thailand, I was not able to include questions inquiring about the income and socio-economic status of the families of the respondents in the questionnaire researches, as it may well have been inappropriate for an individual foreign researcher to ask such delicate and private questions.

Through the interviews and questionnaires, I assume that Japanese lifestyle has been the model of the lifestyle of the urban middle classes in Thailand. Thai people have been exposed to elements of Japanese lifestyle through various forms of media,

such as television dramas, other television programs, magazines and the Internet, which makes them long for a Japanese lifestyle and a desire to consume Japanese cultural products. These assumptions, though, need to be tested scientifically by some public or educational institutions in Thailand. The statistical analyses should illustrate the relationship between the consumption of Japanese cultural products and the urban middle classes in any future studies.

Public Diplomacy (Cultural Diplomacy)

A great deal of literatures around the current worldwide popularity of Japan's pop culture discusses Japan's soft power and "Cool Japan" issues. The discourses around the concept of "soft power" by Joseph S. Nye (1990, 2002, 2004) and the concept of "Cool Japan" by Douglas McGray (2002) have drawn the attention of scholars as well as journalists both in Japan and around the world. Another important keyword that Japan's popular culture has disseminated is "kawaii," the concept of cuteness in Japanese cultural products. Since the end of the 1990s, the worldwide renowned English language magazines, such as *Newweek* (Koh 1999, November 8), *Time* (McCarthy 1999, May 3-May 10; Drake 2001, June 18) and *BusinessWeek* (Bremner 2002, June 25), contain articles or features on '*kawaii*-ness,' or cuteness, in Japanese popular culture; the attention of the world mass media on Japanese cultural products has made Japanese people themselves realize the power that Japanese popular culture may have. Subsequently, policy makers in Japan became interested in utilizing Japanese popular culture as a resource of Japan's soft power.

After acknowledging the importance of "soft power" in the national interest, in

August 2004, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) founded Public Diplomacy Department "to build a system which focuses on maximizing Japan's soft power" (Kondo 2008:200), and MOFA has been active in seeking ways to utilize Japanese popular culture as resources for Japan's soft power.   In April 2006, MOFA introduced the International Manga Award for young manga creators throughout the world. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007; Nakano 2008:121)   On March 19, 2008, MOFA appointed the manga and anime character '*Doraemon*' as the Anime Ambassador of Japan. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008)   The Anime Ambassador *Doraemon* made a trip to Thailand in July 2008 and visited the homes of underprivileged children. (Bunnag 2008, July 7)   In February 2009, MOFA appointed three young Japanese women to positions of "Trend Communicators" or "Kawaii Ambassadors." (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2009; Asahi Shimbun 2009, July 27)   One of the three ambassadors, Fujioka Shizuka, visited Bangkok in April 2009 (which was her first mission as the Kawaii Ambassador) to participate in the fashion event, *Kawaii Festa*, which I described in Chapter 8 (see also Chanarat 2009, April 17).

In recent years, the issues surrounding the use of Japanese cultural products as soft power for Japan in cultural diplomacy have been discussed among policy makers as well as critics and researchers.   Moreover, discourses on China as a new soft power in Asia (e.g. Lam 2007; Heng 2010) lead preemptive critics to jump to hasty conclusions. Although most policy makers and specialists in diplomacy seem discreet in the rigorous use of the cultural products as resources of soft power (e.g. Ogoura 2006, 2009, July 14; Monji 2009), some attempt has been made to strongly encourage Japanese people to support the cultural diplomacy of anime, manga and fashion (e.g. Sakurai 2009). Since linking culture to the state carries a high risk of impeding, rather than promoting,

the spread of cultural activities around the world (Ogoura 2009, July 14) and rigorous cultural diplomacy may cause a censure of cultural imperialism, comprehensive analyses are needed to assess the power of Japanese cultural products and the role of the government in promoting them.

Before MOFA started an active diplomacy around pop culture, the *Japan Foundation*, which was established in 1972 and is now an independent administrative institution, specializes in promoting an international cultural exchange between Japan and foreign countries, and organizes many cultural and art programs in foreign countries to promote 'Japan.' During the course of this study, I noticed that the activities of the *Japan Foundation* to support Japanese language education in Thailand, especially the publication of textbooks for introductory courses in the Thai language, have contributed to the amelioration of language education in the country as a whole, which has subsequently contributed to the dissemination of Japanese cultural products and the "Cool" and "*Kawaii*" imagery of Japan in Thailand. As the finding in cognitive psychology pointed out that the "mere-exposure effects are clearer and stronger when the exposures are subliminal than when subjects are aware of them" (Zajonc 2001:227), the government efforts to promote Japanese cultural products in other countries may be more effective if it is inconspicuous. The role of the Japanese government may not be on stage in the forefront, but it may be backstage, behind the scenes. Instead of direct promotions by the Japanese government throughout the world, support from the government to non-governmental organizations, including commercial companies and individuals, may be more effective in promoting Japanese cultural products.

Japan is about to concede the position of Asia's economic leader to China. With the decline in the strength of Japanese industrial products, the Japanese

government is seeking new items for export and Japanese cultural products attract the attentions of the Japanese people.   However, as we have seen in this study, each Japanese cultural product has a different background and there are different reasons which have stimulated the consumption in Thailand.   Simultaneously, the presence of 'Japan' in Thailand, including Japanese industrial products, has created a positive attitude towards Japan, which has amplified the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand.   To maintain the popularity of Japanese cultural products abroad, therefore, we need to maintain the attractiveness and appeal of the country, which includes the high quality of industrial products, and improving the quality of the cultural products.   The driving force deriving from the sentiment of 'a longing for Japan' can be maintained, as long as Japan is playing its role as a model for modern lifestyle.   However, if any other country in Asia takes over the position as leading role model for modern lifestyle, the Asian gaze towards the Japanese cultural products as a longing for modernity is likely to be lost and Japanese cultural products are likely to suffer devaluation and depreciation throughout the world.

The popularity of Japanese cultural products throughout the world was not the result of any particular reason or effort, rather, it is the result of series of circumstances which happened in local countries, in regions and in the global world.   To maintain and develop the popularity of these products, the state would need to work cautiously backstage, providing, behind the scenes, all kinds of supports to the actors in the stages of production, distribution and consumption of the Japanese cultural products.

Postscript

In March 2000, I visited Bangkok for the first time in my life. The images of Thailand that I had glimpsed before I actually visited were the beautiful sceneries that I saw in the advertisements of sightseeing tour companies, such as the Golden Buddha, elephant-ride trekking and traditional dances with gorgeous costumes. The real scenes that I saw in Bangkok were, however, entirely different. The skyscrapers of high-rise buildings and business people, clad in suits/jackets, walking on the streets debunked my stereotypical images about Thailand. On my first day in Bangkok, I was surprised to see many young Thai women in *Siam Square* with dyed blonde hair. They were wearing camisoles, mini skirts and *atsuzokogutsu* (platform shoes), just like young Japanese women in *Shibuya* or *Harajuku*. When I carefully observed the people, the streets and the shops in Bangkok, they seemed to be flooded with Japanese cultural products and Japanese characters such as *Doraemon, Kero Kero Keroppi* and *Hello Kitty*. I was amazed to find that current Japanese trends and fashions had reached Bangkok so quickly and that they were being vigorously consumed.

Then, a question arose. *Why are Japanese cultural products being so vigorously consumed in a country which is 4,700 km away from Tokyo?* The phenomena that Japanese cultural products were popular in East Asia could be explained due to geographical proximity and the large amount of traffic of people between the nations. However, I was not able to find any good reason to explain the immense popularity of Japanese cultural products in Thailand which I found during my first visit to Bangkok.

This study started from this question that I had on my first trip to Bangkok.

The two aims of the study have been resulted from that question.   The first aim was to observe and understand how Thai people consume Japanese cultural products.   Using ethnographies and other empirical data, I tried to illustrate the consumption of Japanese cultural products by Thai youth.   The second aim was to find the mechanism of the consumption.   By seeking the underlying reasons for the popularity of Japanese cultural products, I tried to show the mechanism that young Thai people have a positive attitude toward Japanese cultural products and 'Japan'.   Understanding the limitations and the inexhaustibility of this study, I hope this study will contribute to further study on the popularity of Japanese cultural products and to a closer mutual understanding of the people of the two countries, Thailand and Japan.

Figure Postscript-1: Fujimoto Miki at *Japan Festa 2009*, Bangkok.
(August 30, 2009)   Photo by author.

On August 30, 2009, Fujimoto Miki, a Japanese idol and former member of the idol group *'Morning Musume,'* stood on the stage of the *Japan Festa 2009* in Bangkok and spoke to the audience:

> "I arrived at Bangkok airport around 5 am in the morning. Although it was very early in the morning, a group of people wearing pink T-shirts were waiting to meet me and I was very glad to see them…. This is my first visit to Thailand and I don't know much about the country, but I am very surprised to see that such a big audience was waiting for me and cheered for me." (Fujimoto Miki, at *Japan Festa 2009* on August 30, 2009. Translated by author.)

As Fujimoto confessed, most Japanese idols – and probably most Japanese people - do not imagine that there are so many fans of Japanese cultural products in Thailand and in other countries. Although the cultural diplomacy that Japanese policy makers plan may partly contribute to promoting 'Japan' in foreign countries, cultural exchanges between the young people of Japan and other countries should have immediate and strong effect on promoting 'Japan.' To respond to the gaze of the young people in other countries, young Japanese people also need to have an interest in cultures and people in other countries, which should surely contribute to better understanding of Japan by the youth of the world.

Appendices

Appendix A:

Questionnaire Form used in Chapter 3

Questionnaire Research on
Consumption of Japanese Cultural Products by Thai High School Students.
(The original questionnaire form was written in Thai language)

Dear Students in Thailand,

I am a Ph.D. Student of a Japanese University, conducting the research on the consumption of Japanese Popular Culture in Thailand. As a Japanese, I find a lot of influences of Japanese Popular Culture in everyday life in Thailand. I am trying to seek the clues to understand the popularity of the Japanese Popular Culture as well as the lifestyle of the young generations in Thailand. This questionnaire is designed to delineate the actual situation of Japanese Popular Culture among the young generations of Thailand. The questionnaire with your answers will be kept by me or will be disposed of after the data analyses. The data will never be given to any third party. I would appreciate it very much if you can spare time to answer the questions in this questionnaire.

Noboru Toyoshima
Ph.D. Program in International Studies
The Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

When you answer the questions, please mark (draw circles on numbers) or write letters & numbers clearly. When you write words or sentences, you can write in Thai but it would be appreciated if you could write in English.

<SES>

[01] Do you have a personal computer at home?

      1. NO.

      2. YES.

[02] Do you have a mobile phone?

      1. NO.

      2. YES.

[03] Have you ever traveled abroad?

      1. NO.

      2. YES. (Country names:_____)

[04] Do you own any video game systems? (e.g. PlayStation, GameBoy, etc.)

      1. NO.

      2. YES. (System name:_____)

[05] Do you go to cram school after regular school?

      1. NO.

      2. YES. (Subjects you study:_____)

[06] Do you go to an Internet cafe?

      1. NO.

      2. YES,   Approximately (_____) Times / Week

[07] During the last 3 months, how many times did you go to the movie theater?

      (_____) times

<How to spend free time>

[08] How many hours do you study outside (after) school? (Total hours / week)

Approximately (　　　　　) Hours / week

[09] How many hours do you watch TV per week?

Approximately (　　　　　) Hours / week

[10] How many hours do you use Internet weekly?

Approximately (　　　　　) Hours / week

<Interpersonal Relations>

[11] How many Japanese friends do you have with whom you have ever met and whom you have never met (such as getting to know through Internet)?

(＿＿＿＿) Japanese Friends (I have met them.)

(＿＿＿＿) Japanese Friends (I have never met)

[12] How many foreign (non-Japanese) friends do you have with whom you have ever met and whom you have never met (such as getting to know through Internet)?

(＿＿＿＿) Foreign Friends (I have met them.)

(＿＿＿＿) Foreign Friends (I have never met)

[13] During the last 3 months, how many times did you meet (or go out) with Japanese friends?

(＿＿＿＿) times

<Fashion>

[14] Do you like Japanese fashion?

1. NO.
2. YES.

[15] Do you wear Japanese fashion clothes?

       1. No, I don't.

       2. Yes, I sometimes wear them.

       3. Yes, I often wear them.

       4. Yes, I always wear them.

<Food>

[16] Do you like Japanese dishes (food)?

       1. NO.

       2. YES.

[17] How often do you go to Japanese restaurants?

       (_____) times / month

<Electric Appliances>

[18] Please write the brand names (manufacturing company names) of the following items at your home. If you don't have the item, please leave it blank. If you have more than 2 for the item, please choose the one you like the most and write the brand name.

ITEM	Brand Names (Names of the Manufacturer)
TV Set	
Video Player	
DVD Player	
CD Stereo Combo	
Mobile Phone	
Personal Computer	
Digital Camera	
Car	

\<TV Animation\>

[19] Do you like Japanese TV animation?

      1. NO.

      2. YES.

      99. I have never seen them.

\<TV Drama\>

[20] Do you like Japanese TV drama?

      1. NO.

      2. YES.

      99. I have never seen them.

[21] Who is your favorite Japanese actor / actress / celebrity?

      I have no favorites.

      My favorite is : (_____)

\<Other Japanese TV\>

[22] Do you like Japanese TV programs (Except animations and dramas) ?

      1. NO.

      2. YES.

      99. I have never seen them.

\<Comic books\>

[23] Do you like Japanese comic books? (in Thai Translation)

      1. NO.

      2. YES.   (Favorite comics are:_____)

      99. I have never read them.

[24] How many Japanese comic books do you have at home?

      (_____) novels

<Books / Novels>

[25] Have you read Japanese novels? (in Thai Translation)

     1. NO.

     2. YES. (Favorite novel is:_____)

     99. I have never read.

[26] How many Japanese novels do you have at home?

     (_____) books

<J-Music>

[27] Do you like Japanese music?

     1. NO.

     2. YES. (My favorite artist is_____)

     99. I have never listened to it.

[28] Do you know "w-inds"?

     1. NO.

     2. YES.

[29] How many Japanese music CDs do you have at home?

     (_____) CDs

<Info Sources>

[30] Do you read magazines to get information about Japanese trends in music, fashion, and/or pop culture?

     1. NO.

     2. YES.

     99. I have never read them.

[31] Have you visited any web sites which feature Japanese pop culture? (including music, comics, animations, etc.)

     1. NO.

     2. YES.

     99. I have never used Internet.

[32] How many web sites do you know, which feature Japanese pop culture? (i.e. music, comics, animations, etc.)

(_____) web sites

My favorite site's URL   (http://   )

<Travel>

[33] Do you want to go to Japan?

1. NO.
2. YES.

[34] Do you want to study in Japan?

1. NO.
2. YES.

[35] Do you want to live in Japan in the future?

1. NO.
2. YES.

<Foreign Language>

[36] In high school, which foreign language(s) do you study except English?

(_____)

[37] Have you ever studied the Japanese language?

1. NO.
2. YES.

[38] What language do you want to study the most except English?

(_____)

\<Preference\>

[39] When you buy electric appliances, do you prefer to buy Japanese products?

      1. NO.

      2. YES.

[40] What is your image about Japan?　Please write one adjective which describes the image of the country well.

      (_____)

[41] What are a good point and a bad point of the Japanese people?　Please write one adjective each which symbolizes the characteristic of the Japanese.

      Good Point (_____)

      Bad Point　(_____)

[42] How much money do you receive from your parents as your monthly allowance? (If you don't receive money as a monthly allowance, please write approximate amount of money you will spend every month to buy your own things except books and stationeries for study.)

      (_____) Bahts

[43] When a Japanese person is walking on a street in your town, how do you know that the person is Japanese?　What are the points that differentiate them from Korean and Chinese?　Please describe briefly.

      (_____)

[44] Do you like Japan?

      1. No - I don't like it at all.

      2. No - I don't like it very much.

      3. Yes - I like it a little bit.

      4. Yes - I like it very much.

[45] Are there any Japanese people in your family or relatives?

      1. NO.

      2. YES.　(Who?_____)

424

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer the questions.

Please leave your comments or write about any special interests about Japan or Japanese culture in the space below.

Appendix B:
Questionnaire Form used in Chapter 4

Questionnaire
J-Pop Fan Club
(The original questionnaire form was written in Thai language)

This is a questionnaire which asks about you and Japanese popular culture.
Please circle one number for each question.

Q-1. Japanese Language Study
    1. I started to study Japanese before I became a w-inds fan.
    2. I started to study it after I became a w-inds fan.
    3. I want to study it in the near future.
    4. I am not interested in studying Japanese.
    5. I don't like the Japanese language.

Q-2. Japanese Food
    1. I liked Japanese food already before I became a w-inds fan.
    2. I started to like Japanese food after I became a w-inds fan.
    3. I haven't tried Japanese food but I want to try it.
    4. I am not interested in Japanese Food.
    5. I don't like Japanese Food.

Q-3. Japanese Fashion
    1. I started to wear Japanese fashion clothing before I became w-inds fan.
    2. I started to wear Japanese fashion clothing after I became w-inds fan.
    3. I don't have any Japanese fashion clothing but I want to try them in the future.
    4. I am not interested in Japanese Fashion.
    5. I don't like Japanese Fashion.

Q-4. J-POP music

    1. I started to listen to J-POP before I became a w-inds fan.

    2. I started to listen to J-POP after I became a w-inds fan.

    3. I don't listen to other J-POP but I want to.

    4. I am not interested in other J-POP music.

    5. I don't like J-POP music except w-inds.

Q-5. Japanese TV drama

    1. I started to watch Japanese TV drama before I became a w-inds fan.

    2. I started to watch Japanese TV drama after I became a w-inds fan.

    3. I don't watch Japanese TV drama but I want to.

    4. I am not interested in Japanese TV drama.

    5. I don't like Japanese TV drama.

Q-6. Japanese Animation

    1. I started to watch Japanese animation before I became a w-inds fan.

    2. I started to watch Japanese animation after I became a w-inds fan.

    3. I don't watch Japanese animation but I want to.

    4. I am not interested in Japanese animation.

    5. I don't like Japanese animation.

Q-7. Japanese TV Programs (such as TV champion, Kokoriko, etc.)

    1. I started to watch Japanese TV programs before I became a w-inds fan.

    2. I started to watch Japanese TV programs after I became a w-inds fan.

    3. I don't watch Japanese TV programs but I want to.

    4. I am not interested in Japanese TV programs.

    5. I don't like Japanese TV programs.

Q-8. Japanese Comics (Manga)

    1. I started to read Japanese comics before I became a w-inds fan.

    2. I started to read Japanese comics after I became a w-inds fan.

    3. I don't read Japanese comics but I want to.

    4. I am not interested in Japanese comics.

    5. I don't like Japanese comics.

Q-9. Japanese Novels

    1. I started to read Japanese novels before I became a w-inds fan.

    2. I started to read Japanese novels after I became a w-inds fan.

    3. I don't read Japanese novels but I want to.

    4. I am not interested in Japanese novels.

    5. I don't like Japanese novels.

Q-10. Why do you like w-inds?

    1. Good music

    2. Good singing

    3. Good looking (Kawaii, kakkoii, etc.)

    4. Good dancing

    5. Other (Please specify_____)

Q-11. Japan

    1. I started to like Japan before I became a w-inds fan.

    2. I started to like Japan after I became a w-inds fan.

    3. I don't know much about Japan but I want to know more.

    4. I am not interested in Japan.

    5. I don't like Japan.

Q-12. Do you like other J-POP artists besides w-inds?

    1. Yes   (If yes, who?_____)

    2. No

Q-13. Do you like Korean POP music?

    1. Yes   (Who is your favorite?_____)

    2. No

Q-14. Do you like Thai POP music?

    1. Yes   (Who is your favorite?_____)

    2. No

Q-15. Were you a J-POP fan before you became a w-inds fan?

    1. Yes   (If yes, whose fan?_____)

    2. No

428

Q-16. How many years have you been a w-inds fan?

(_____ years / or since _____)

Q-17. Sex

    1. Male

    2. Female

Q-18. Age

(_____ years old)

Thank you for your time.

(April 7, 2007)

Appendix C:

Questionnaire Form used in Chapter 5

Questionnaire Research on Cosplay
(The original questionnaire form was written in Thai language)

I am a graduate student of Waseda University in Japan. The result of this questionnaire will be used in the study for my dissertation. The responses in the questionnaire will be kept anonymous and identity of each respondent will be kept confidential.

Thank you very much for sparing your precious time to fill out this questionnaire.

I would appreciate if you could write your responses in English as much as possible. But if it is difficult to write in English, please write in Thai. When you don't have much to write, short answers will do. If you need more space, please use the back of the questionnaire sheets. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

1. How old were you when you cosplayed for the first time?
   About_____years old.
   (How many years have you "cosplayed"?_____Years)

2. What was the reason to start cosplaying?

3. Why do you cosplay? What attracts you to cosplay?

4. Is there any difference in cosplay between Thailand and Japan?
   If yes, please write the difference.

5. Who makes the costumes for cosplay? Do you buy them?

6. If you buy costumes, where do you buy them?
   Approximately how much do you spend for one event?

7. What do your parents think about your cosplay activities?

8. Please write your hobbies you have besides cosplay.

9. Please write mark ✔ in the following table to describe yourself appropriately.

   Before – I liked it since the time **before** I started cosplay.
   After – I liked it **after** I started cosplay.
   Never – I don't know. (I haven't tried.)
   D/L – I don't like it.

	Before	After	Never	D/L
Japanese comics (manga)				
Japanese animation (anime)				
Japanese TV dramas				
Other TV programs				
J-POP music				
Japanese Idol				
Japanese Games				
Japanese Lanugage Study				
Japanese Food				
Japanese Fashion				

9.B   If you started to like any of these items very much after you started cosplaying, please specify the item and write the reason.

10. How (Where) do you get information about cosplay?

11. Can you think of any good points that you started cosplaying?

12. Do you like Japanese idols? (Please circle one)
    Yes   No   Neither

13. What is the difference between "Thai comics" and Japanese manga?

14. What is the difference between other foreign games (eg. Korean games) and Japanese games?

15. Are you studying Japanese?   What was your reason to study Japanese?

16. Has your life been changed after you started cosplaying?
    (e.g. "I have more friends." "I go out more often.")

17. How many times do you participate in cosplay events a year?
    About＿＿＿＿＿times / year

18. How many times per month do you eat Japanese food?
    About　　　　　times / month

19. What is your favorite manga title?

20. What is your favorite anime title?

21. What is your favorite Japanese game title?

22. Who is your favorite Japanese idol?

23. What is your favorite Japanese food?

24. Which cosplay web site do you often browse?

25. What magazine do you read to get information about cosplay?

26. What are the good point and the bad point about the Japanese?

27. Please mark a circle in the following table if you agree with the following statements.

Appendix C

Please mark in the right if you agree to the statement.	
I want to work in a manga-related business.	
I want to work in the game industry.	
I want to work in the fashion industry.	
I want to study in Japan.	
I want to work in Japan.	
I want to live in Japan.	
I want to work for a Japanese company in Thailand.	
I want to have a job which is related to Japan.	
I like Japan.	
I want to marry to a Japanese person.	
I have no interests in Japan.	

Thank you very much for your cooperation

432

Appendix D:

Questionnaire Form used in Chapter 6

Questionnaire
on Japanese Language Learning
and Consumption of Japanese Cultural Products

I am a graduate student of Waseda University in Japan. The result of this questionnaire will be used in the study for my dissertation. The responses in the questionnaire will be kept anonymous and identity of each respondent will be kept confidential.

Thank you very much for sparing your precious time to fill out this questionnaire.

I would appreciate if you could write your responses in English as much as possible. But if it is difficult to write in English, please write in Thai. When you don't have much to write, short answers will do. If you need more space, please use the back of the questionnaire sheets. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

1. How old were you when you started learning Japanese?
   About_____years old.
   (How many years have you studied?_____Years)

2. What was your reason to start learning Japanese?
   (Please write the real reason. e.g. "Because I like 'Morning Musume'")

3. Have you had any experiences that you were glad to be able to speak Japanese? If so, please write about the incidents you had.

4. Are you learning any other foreign language besides Japanese?
   What is your reason for learning the language?

5. Has your life changed after you started to learn Japanese?
   (e.g. "I made Japanese friends," "I got a part time job that requires the language ability," etc.)

6. Please write mark ✔ in the following table to describe yourself appropriately.

   Before – I liked it since the time **before** I started learning the language.
   After – I liked it **after** I started learning the language.
   Never – I don't know. (I haven't tried.)
   D/L – I don't like it.

	Before	After	Never	D/L
Manga				
Anime				
Japanese TV Drama				
Other TV Programs				
J-POP Music				
Japanese Idols				
Japanese Games				
Cosplay				
Japanese Food				
Japanese Fashion				

7. Among the cultural products (manga, anime, television, music, idols, games, cosplay, food and fashion), if you are more interested in any of them after you started learning Japanese, please specify the items and write the reasons.

8. Do you like Japanese idols?
   Yes   No   Neither

9. What are the differences between Thai idols and Japanese idols?

10. What are the difference between Korean / Taiwan idols and Japanese idols?

11. Is there anyone in your family who can speak Japanese?   Who?

12. How often a month you eat Japanese food?

   About_____times / month

13. What is your favorite manga?

14. What is your favorite anime?

15. What is your favorite Japanese game?

16. Who is your favorite Japanese idol?

17. What is your favorite Japanese dish?

18. Which Japanese web site do you often visit?

19. What is your favorite Japanese magazine?

20. What do you think about the Japanese?   What are the good points and the bad points of the Japanese?

21. Please mark a circle in the following table if you agree with the following statements.

Please mark in the right if you agree to the statement.	
I want to study in Japan.	
I want to work in Japan.	
I want to live in Japan.	
I want to work for a Japanese company in Thailand.	
I want to have a job which is related to Japan.	
I like Japan.	
I want to make Japanese friends.	
I want to marry to a Japanese person.	
I have no interest in Japan.	

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Reference

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Allison, Anne. (2000)   Sailor Moon: Japanese superheroes for global girls.   In Craig, Timothy J. (ed.) *Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.* Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.

----------. (2006a)   The Japan fad in global youth culture and millennial capitalism.   In Lunning, Frenchy. (ed.) *Mechademia: an annual forum for anime, manga, and fan arts.*   Vol. 1.

----------. (2006b)   *Millenial monsters: Japanese toys and the global imagination.* California: University of California Press.

Asahi Shimbun. (1985, February 7)   "Ajia no uta" wo umidasou (Let's make "Asian songs").   *Asahi Shimbun.*   P.5.

----------. (1988, April 11)   Yawarakai taishûshakai – tagenbunka no tabi 1 (Soft popular culture – Journey of multi-culture).   *Asahi Shimbun.*   (Evening) P.7.

----------. (1995, January 1)   Asobi nihon hatsu, kokkyou koe ajia shinnjidai (Entertainments from Japan, crossing borders, the new age for Asia).   *Asahi Shimbun.*   P.62.

----------. (2001, March 24)   Zasshi, dorama… ajia ga tanoshimu nihon no wakamono taishû bunka (Magazines and drama – Asia enjoys Japanese youth popular culture).   *Asahi Shimbun.*   (Evening)   P.5.

Befu, Harumi. (1993)   Nationalism and nihonjinron.   In Befu, Harumi (ed.), *Cultural nationalism in East Asia: representation and identity.*   Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California, Berkeley.   Pp. 107-135.

Befu, Harumi & Guichard-Anguis, Sylvie (eds.) (2001)   *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia, Europe, and America.*   New York: Routledge.

Craig, Timothy J. (ed.) (2000)   *Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.*   Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.

Darlin, Damon. (1987, July 21)   Grown men in Japan still read comics and have fantasies – sex and violence are very big in art form called manga, but so are fried eggs.   *Wall Street Journal.* (Eastern edition)   New York, NY.

Fung, Anthony. (2007)   Intra-Asian cultural flow: cultural homologies in Hong Kong and Japanese television soap operas.   *Journal of broadcasting & electronic*

media.   51(2).   Pp.265-286.

Igarashi, Akio (ed.) (2001)   *Henyou suru ajia to nihon—ajia shakai ni shintou suru nihon no popyurâ karuchâ (Changing Japan and Asia – The penetration of Japanese pop culture in Asian societies).*   Yokohama: Seori Shobo.

Ishii, Kenichi (ed.) (2001)   *Higashi ajia no nihon taishûbunka (Japanese popular culture in East Asia).*   Tokyo: Sososha.

Iwabuchi, Koichi. (2002)   *Recentering globalization: popular culture and Japanese transnationalism.*   Durham: Duke University Press.

Iwabuchi, Koichi. (ed.) (2004)   *Feeling Asian modernities: transnational consumption of Japanese TV dramas.*   Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press.

King, Anthony D. (1997)   Introduction: spaces of culture, spaces of knowledge.   In King, Anthony D. (eds.)   *Culture, globalization and the world-system: contemporary conditions for the representation of identity.*   Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.   Pp.1-18.

Kinsella, Sharon. (1998)   Japanese subculture in the 1990s: otaku and the amateur manga movement.   *Journal of Japanese Studies.*   24(2).   Pp.289-316.

Koh, Barbara. (1999, November 8)   Society & the arts: cute power!   *Newsweek.*   Pp. 40-45.

LaMarre, Thomas. (2006)   Otaku movement.   In Yoda, Tomiko & Harootunian, Harry. (eds.)   *Japan after Japan.*   Durham: Duke University Press.   Pp.359-394.

MacWilliams, Mark W. (ed.) (2008)   *Japanese visual culture: explorations in the world of manga and anime.*   Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharp, Inc.

McCarthy, Terry.   (1999)   Export machine.   *Time.*   May-3-May10, 1999.   Pp. 32-36.

McGray, Douglas. (2002)   Japan's gross national product of coolness.   *Foreign policy.*   May-June 2002.   Pp.44-54.

McVeigh, Brian J. (2000)   How Hello Kitty commodifies the cute, cool and camp: 'consumption' versus 'control' in Japan.   *Journal of material culture.*   5(2), Pp.225-245.

Merton, Robert K. (1967)   *On theoretical sociology: five essays, old and new.*   New York: The Free Press.

Nakamura, Ichiya & Onouchi, Megumi. (2006)   *Nihon no poppu pawâ (Japan's pop power).*   Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha.

Nikkei Business. (2001, January 15)   Daitoua atsuzoko kyoueiken – 21 seiki ajia wa kon-nani chikai (The Great East Asia Co-prosperity – In 21st century, Asian countries are close).   *Nikkei Business.*   Pp. 27-46.

Nye, Joseph S., Jr. (1990a)   Soft power.   *Foreign policy.*   Fall 1990.   Issue 80. Pp.153-172.

----------. (1990b)   The misleading metaphor of decline.   *The Atlantic monthly.* (March 1990)   Pp. 86-94.

----------. (1990c)   The changing nature of world power.   *Political science quarterly.* Summer 1990.   105 (2).   Pp. 177-192.

----------. (2002)   The American national interest and global public goods. *International affairs.*   78(2).   Pp. 233-244.

----------. (2004a)   The decline of America's soft power.   *Foreign affairs.*   May-June 2004.   83(3).   P.16.

----------. (2004b)   S*oft power: the means to success in world politics.*   New York: Public Affairs.

Otmazgin, Nissim Kadosh. (2007)   Japanese popular culture in East and Southeast Asia: time for a regional paradigm?   *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia 8 (March 2007).*   Retrieved   on   March   2,   2010   from http://kyotoreviewsea.org/otmazgin.htm

----------. (2008)   Contesting soft power: Japanese popular culture in East and Southeast Asia.   *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific.*   8 (1):73-101.

Panritdam, Viparat. (2001)   *Foreign cultural influence on Thai adolescent identity: a case of Japanese music.*   Unpublished master's thesis,   Chulalongkorn University (Sociology and Anthropology), Bangkok, Thailand.

Pattanasuwan, Chayanute. (2008)   *Japanization of Thai youth: a case study of J-Pop fans.*   Unpublished master's thesis, Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Sakai, Tôru. (2004)   *Hârîzû – naze nihon ga suki nanoka (Harizu – why do they like Japan?).*   Tokyo: Koubunsha.

Segawa, Natsuko.   (2001, May 21)   A closer look – Japanese culture in Asia: Pop passions.   *The Nikkei Weekly.*   P.3.

Schodt, Frederik L. (1996)   *Dreamland Japan: writings on modern manga.*   Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press.

Sharrock, Wes & Anderson, Bob. (1986)   *The ethnomethodologists.*   Sussex, England: Ellis Horwood.

Shiraishi, Saya S. (1997)   Japan's soft power: Doraemon goes overseas.   In Katzenstein, Peter J. & Shiraishi, Takashi (eds.),   *Network power: Japan and Asia.*   Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

----------. (1998)   Manga anime no gurôbaraizeishon (The globalization of manga and

anime).   In Igarashi, Akio (ed.), *Henyou suru ajia to nihon—ajia shakai ni shintou suru nihon no popyurâ karuchâ (Changing Japan and Asia – The penetration of Japanese pop culture in Asian societies).*   Yokohama: Seori Shobo.

----------. (2000)   Doraemon goes abroad.   In Craig, Timothy J. (ed.) *Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.*   Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.

Singhal, Arvind & Udornpim, Kant. (1997)   Cultural shareability, archetypes and television soaps: 'Oshindrome' in Thailand.   *Gazette.*   59(3).   Pp.171-188.

Siriyuvasak, Ubonrat. (2004)   Popular culture and youth consumption: modernity, identity and social transformation.   In Iwabuchi, Koichi. (ed.) *Feeling Asian modernities: transnational consumption of Japanese TV dramas.*   Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press.

Siriyuvasak, Ubonrat & Shin, Hyunjoon. (2007)   Asianizing K-pop: production, consumption and identification patterns among Thai youth.   *Inter-Asia cultural studies.*   8(1).   Pp.109-136.

Skov, Lise & Moeran, Brian. (1995)   *Women, media and consumption in Japan.*   Honolulu, Hawai'i: Curzon Press.

Storey, John. (2009)   *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction (5th Edition)*   Essex, England: Longman (Pearson Education Ltd.)

Treat, John Whittier. (ed.) (1996)   *Contemporary Japan and popular culture.*   Honolulu, Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press.

Tobin, Joseph. (ed.) (2004)   *Pikachu's global adventure – the rise and fall of Pokémon.*   Durham: Duke University Press.

Ueno, Toshiya & Mouri, Yoshitaka. (2000)   *Karuchuraru sutadeizu nyûmon (Introduction to cultural studies).*   Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo.

Wai-ming, Ng. (2001)   The Hello Kitty craze in Singapore: a cultural and comparative analysis.   *Asian Profile.*   29(6)   (December 2001)   Pp.481-491.

----------. (2004)   The rise of J-Pop in Asia and its impact.   *Japan Spotlight.*   March/April 2004.   Pp.24-27.

Yoshimi, Shunya. (2001)   *Chi no kyoukasho: karuchuraru sutadeizu (The textbook of knowledge: cultural studies).*   Tokyo: Kodansha.

Chapter 2 – Key Factors

Anderson, Benedict. (1991)   *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism.* (Rev. and extended ed., 2nd ed.)   New York: Verso.

Ang, Ien. (2003)   Terebi dorama nimiru bunkateki shinwasei (The cultural proximity in television dramas.)   In Iwabuchi, Koichi (ed.), *Gurôbaru purizumu (Global prism).*   Tokyo: Heibonsha.

Appadurai, Arjun. (1996)   *Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization.*   Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Axford, Barrie. (1995)   *The global system: politics, economics and culture.*   New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Befu, Harumi. (2001)   The global context of Japan outside Japan.   In Befu, Harumi & Guichard-Auguis, Sylvie (eds.), *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia, Europe, and America.*   London: Routledge.

----------. (2003)   Globalization theory from the bottom up: Japan's contribution.   *Japanese studies.*   28(1).   Pp. 3-22.

Berger, Peter L. (2002)   Introduction: the cultural dynamics of globalization.   In Berger, Peter L. and Huntington, Samuel P. (eds.), *Many globalizations: cultural diversity in the contemporary world.*   Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bhagwati, Jagdish N. (2004)   *In defense of globalization.*   New York: Oxford University Press.

Daly, Herman E. (2007)   *Ecological economics and sustainable development, selected essays of Herman Daly.*   Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Croucher, Sheila L. (2004)   *Globalization and belonging: the politics of identity in a changing world.*   Oxford, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Embong, Abdul Rahman. (2002)   *State-led modernization and the new middle class in Malaysia.*   New York, NY: Palgrave.

Funatsu, Tsuruyo. (2000)   Tai ni okeru chûkansou-ron (Theories of the middle class in Thailand).   In Hattori, Tamio & Torii, Takashi & Funatsu, Tsuruyo (eds.), *Ajia shokoku ni okeru chûkansou ron no genzai (The present state of the theories of the middle class in Asian countries).*   Chiba, Japan: Institute of Developing Economies.

Funatsu, Tsuruyo & Kagoya, Kazuhiro. (2002)   Tai no chûkansou – toshi gakureki erîto to shakai ishiki (The middle class in Thailand: the rise of the urban

academic elite and their social consciousness).   In Hattori, Tamio & Funatsu, Tsuruyo & Torii, Takashi (eds.), *Ajia chûkansou no tokushitsu (The emergence and features of the Asian middle classes).*   Chiba, Japan: Kenkyû Sousha.

----------. (2003)   The middle classes in Thailand: the rise of the urban intellectual elite and their social consciousness.   *The developing economies.*   XLI-2 (June 2003).   Pp. 243-263.

Giddens, Anthony. (1990)   *The consequences of modernity.*   Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

----------. (2003 [1999, 2000])   *Runaway world: how globalization is reshaping our lives.*   NY, NY: Routledge.

Golding, Peter & Harris, Phil. (eds.) (1997)   *Beyond cultural imperialism: globalization, communication and the new international order.*   London: SAGE Publications.

Hannerz, Ulf. (1996)   *Transnational connections: culture, people, places.*   London: Routledge.

Hewison, Kevin. (1996)   Emerging social forces in Thailand: new political and economic roles.   In Robison, Richard & Goodman, David S. G. (eds.), *The new rich in Asia: mobile phones, McDonalds and middle-class revolution.*   London: Routledge.   Pp.137-160.

Hirano, Kunio. (1993)   *Kikajin to kodai kokka (Immigrants and the ancient nation).*   Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan.

Hoskins, Colin & Mirus, Rolf. (1988)   Reasons for the US dominance of the international trade in television programmes.   *Media, culture and society.*   Vol. 10.   Pp.499-515.

Igarashi, Akio. (ed.) (2001)   *Henyou suru ajia to nihon—ajia shakai ni shintou suru nihon no popyurâ karuchâ (Changing Japan and Asia – The penetration of Japanese pop culture in Asian societies).*   Yokohama: Seori Shobo.

Inda, Jonathan Xavier & Rosaldo, Renato. (2008)   Tracking global flows.   In Inda, Jonathan Xavier & Rosaldo, Renato (eds.), *The anthropology of globalization: a reader.*   Second edition.   Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Ishii, Kenichi (ed.) (2001)   *Higashi ajia no nihon taishûbunka (Japanese popular*

culture in East Asia).   Tokyo: Sososha.

Iwabuchi, Koichi. (2001)   *Toransu nashonaru japan (Transnational Japan).*   Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.

----------. (2002)   *Recentering globalization: popular culture and Japanese transnationalism.*   Durham: Duke University Press.

----------. (2006)   Japanese popular culture and postcolonial desire for 'Asia'.   In Allen, Matthew & Sakamoto, Rumi (eds.), *Popular culture, globalization and Japan.*   New York: Routledge.

Jackson, Peter A. (2003)   Space, theory, and hegemony: the dual crises of Asian area studies and cultural studies.   *Sojourn.*   18(1), pp. 1-41.

King, Victor T. (2008)   The middle class in Southeast Asia: diversities, identities, comparisons and the Vietnamese case.   *IJAPS (The international journal of Asia Pacific studies).*   4(2).   Pp.73-108.

Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary. (2010)   Retrieved on May 19, 2010 from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/

McGray, Douglas. (2002)   Japan's gross national product of coolness.   *Foreign policy.* May-June 2002.   Pp.44-54.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2009)   *Kaigai zairyû houjinsû chousa toukei 2008 – as of October 1. 2008 (Annual report of statistics on Japanese nationals overseas).* Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Nordenstreng, Kaarle & Schiller, Herbert I. (1979)   *National sovereignty and international communication.*   Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Nye, Joseph S., Jr. (1990a)   Soft power.   *Foreign policy.*   Fall 1990.   Issue 80. Pp.153-172.

----------. (1990b)   *Bound to lead: the changing nature of American power.*   NY, NY: Basic Books.

----------. (2000)   Asia's first globalize.   *The Washington Quarterly.* 23(4). Pp.119-124.

Ockey, Jim. (1999)   Creating the Thai middle class.   In Pinches, Michael (ed.),

Culture and privilege in capitalist Asia. (The new rich in Asia series.)
London: Routledge.   Pp. 230-249.

Robertson, Roland. (1992)   *Globalization: social theory and global culture.*   London:
SAGE Publications Ltd.

Robison, Richard & Goodman, David S. G. (1996)   The new rich in Asia.   In Robison,
Richard & Goodman, David S. G. (eds.), *The new rich in Asia: mobile phones,
McDonalds and middle-class revolution.*   London: Routledge.   Pp.1-16.

Schmidt, Johannes Dragsbaek & Hersh, Jacques & Fold, Niels. (1997)   Societal forces
and class constellations behind Southeast Asian capitalism.   In Schmidt,
Johannes Dragsbaek & Hersh, Jacques & Fold, Niels (eds.), *Social change in
Southeast Asia.*   Essex, UK: Addison Wesley Longman Limited.   Pp.
183-205.

Shiraishi, Takashi. (2006)   The third wave: Southeast Asia and middle-class formation
in the making of a region.   In Katzenstein, Peter J. & Shiraishi, Takashi (eds.),
Beyond Japan: the dynamics of east Asian regionalism.   Ithaca, New York:
Cornell University Press.

Siriprachai, Somboon. (1997)   Inconsistencies and inequities in Thai industrialization.
In Schmidt, Johannes Dragsbaek & Hersh, Jacques & Fold, Niels (eds.), *Social
change in Southeast Asia.*   Essex, UK: Addison Wesley Longman Limited.
Pp. 183-205.

Spybey, Tony. (1996)   *Globalization and world society.*   Cambridge, UK: Blackwell
Publishers Inc.

Straubhaar, Joe. (1991)   Beyond media imperialism: asymmetrical interdependence
and cultural proximity.   *Critical studies in mass communication.*   8(1) Pp.
39-59.

Tomlinson, John. (1991)   *Cultural imperialism: a critical introduction.*   Baltimore:
The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Tsunoyama, Sakae. (1995)   *Ajia runesansu – bokkou suru shintoshigata bunmei
(Asian Renaissance – the rise of new civilization).*   Tokyo: PHP.

Young, Ken. (1999)   Consumption, social differentiation and self-definition of the new
rich in industrializing Southeast Asia.   In Pinches, Michael (ed.), *Culture and*

privilege in capitalist Asia. (The new rich in Asia series.)　London: Routledge.
Pp. 56-85.

Chapter 3 – Thai High School Students

Befu, Harumi. (2001)　The global context of Japan outside Japan.　In Befu, H. &
Guichard-AnguisSylvie, S. (Eds.) *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the
Japanese presence in Asia, Europe, and America.*　London: Routledge.
Pp.3-22.

Goto, Shirou. (2008)　Hachiban Râmen no kaigai senryaku (Strategy of Hachiban
Ramen for overseas business).　*Kan-nihonkai keizai jânaru (Japan sea rim
economic journal).*　No.79.　Toyama, Japan: Kan Nihonkai Keizai Kouryuu
Sentâ.　Pp. 8-13.

Ishii, Kenichi. (2001)　Nippon taishuu bunka - sono ninki no hirogari (The Japanese
popular culture - the spread of its popularity).　In Ishii, K. (Ed.)　*Higashi ajia
no nihon taishuu bunka (The Japanese popular culture in the East Asia).*
Tokyo: Sososha.　Pp.15-31.

Iwabuchi, Koichi. (1998)　Bunkateki mushûsei soretomo ajian modanitii no houkou?
(Cultural odorlessness or the scent of Asian modernity?).　In Igarashi, A. (Ed.)
*Henyou suru ajia to nihon: ajia shakai ni shintou suru nihon no popyurâ
karuchâ (Changing Asia and Japan: the Japanese popular culture penetrates
Asian societies)*　Yokohama: Seori Shobo.　Pp. 41-79.

----------. (2002)　*Recentering globalization: popular culture and Japanese
transnationalism.*　Durham: Duke University Press.

Iwabuchi, Koichi. (ed.) (2004)　*Feeling Asian modernities: transnational consumption
of Japanese TV dramas.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Lersakvanitchakul, Kitchana. (2003, October 14)　Here comes Johnny.　*The Nation.*
Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Lee, Dong-Hoo. (2003)　Nihon no terebi dorama tono bunkateki sesshoku (Cultural
contacts with Japanese TV drama).　In Iwabuchi, K. (Ed.) *Guroubaru
purizumu - ajian doriimu toshiteno nihon no terebi dorama (Global prism - TV
drama as Asian dream).* Tokyo: Heibonsha.

Nakano, Yoshiko. (2002)   Who initiates a global flow? Japanese popular culture in
        Asia. *Visual Communication,* 1 (2), 229-253.

NECTEC. (2004)   *Internet users in Thailand.* Bangkok: National Electronics and
        Computer Technology Center (NECTEC).

----------. (2005)   *Thailand ICT indicators 2005.* Bangkok: National Electronics and
        Computer Technology Center (NECTEC).

Office of the Educational Council. (2008)   *Education in Thailand 2007.* Bangkok:
        Ministry of Education, Royal Thai Government.

Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board. (2009)   *National
        Income Thailand.*   Retrieved on November 10, 2009, from
        http://www.nesdb.go.th/Default.aspx?tabid=94

Ogawa, Masashi. (2001)   Japanese popular music in Hong Kong: analysis of
        global/local cultural relations.   In Befu, H. & Guichard-AnguisSylvie, S. ed.,
        *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia, Europe, and
        America.*   London: Routledge.   Pp. 121-130.

Oishi Group. (2009)   *Annual Report 2008.*   Retrieved on October 27, 2009, from
        http://www.oishigroup.com/

Pongvutitham, Achara. (2006, February 2006)   Japanese restaurant JV: Betagro joins
        the sushi revolution.   *The Nation.*   Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Schodt, Frederik L. (1996)   *Dreamland Japan: writings on modern manga.* Berkeley,
        CA: Stone Bridge Press.

Shiraishi, Saya. (2000)   Doraemon goes abroad.   In Craig, T. (Ed.) *Japan pop!: inside
        the world of Japanese popular culture.*   New York: M. E. Sharpe.   pp.
        287-308.

Thailand Stats. (2004, August)   Thailand stats.   Bangkok: The Brooker Group Plc.

The Nation. (2009, May 21)   Ootoya serves up more success.   *The Nation.*
        Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2009, February 17)   Japanese fast food: Mos burger chain to open more
        outlets.   *The Nation.*   Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Vichitsorasatra, Lisnaree. (2007, April 24)   Message in a burger.   *The Nation.*

Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Wun'geo, Surichai. (1998).   Amerika kara nihon ni koromogae suru tounan ajia
[Shifting Southeast Asia - from American to Japan].   In Igarashi, A. (Ed.)
Henyou suru ajia to nihon: ajia shakai ni shintou suru nihon no popyuraa
karuchaa (Changing Asia and Japan: the Japanese popular culture penetrates
Asian societies). Tokyo: Seori Shobo.   pp.25-39.

Zuberi, Nabeel. (2005).   Mixed blessings: globalization and culture as hybrid
discourses.   *Global media and communication,* 1 (1), 105-120.

Chapter 4—J Pop Fan Club

Aoyagi, Hiroshi. (2000)   Pop idols and the Asian identity.   In Timothy Craig. (Ed.)
Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.   N New York: M. E.
Sharpe, Inc. (An East Gate Book).   Pp. 309-326.

Asahi Shimbun. (2004, April 30)   Shuppankai nimo kankoku buumu - "Fuyusona"
ninki de gaidobon zokuzoku, gogakunetsu mo. (Korean boom in publishing
industry - The popularity of "Fuyusona" boosts publication of Korean
guidebooks and Korean language study.).   *Asahi Shimbun*   (Evening), p7.

Befu, Harumi. (2001)   The global context of Japan outside Japan.   In Harumi Befu
(Ed.) *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia, Europe*
and America.   London: Routledge.

Craig, Timothy. J., (ed.) (2000)   *Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular*
culture.   New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc. (An East Gate Book).

Ellis, Rod. (1994)   *The study of second language acquisition.* Oxford, Oxford
University Press.

Hoffman, Michael. (2007)   French seduced by Japanese pop culture.   *The Japan*
Times.   Tokyo.

Igarashi, Akio. (ed.) (1998)   *Hen'yo suru ajia to nihon: Ajia shakai ni shintou suru*
nihon no popyuraa karuchaa [Changing Asia and Japan: the Japanese popular
culture penetrates Asian societies].   Yokohama, Seori Shobo.

Ishii, Kenichi. (ed.) (2001)   *Higashi ajia no nihon taishuu bunka [Japanese popular*

culture in East Asia].   Tokyo, Sososha.

Ishii, Kenichi. (2001)   Nippon taishuu bunka - sono ninki no hirogari [Japanese popular culture - the spread of its popularity].   In Kenichi Ishii (ed.) *Higashi ajia no nihon taishuu bunka [The Japanese popular culture in the East Asia].* Tokyo: Sososha.   pp.15-31.

Iwabuchi, Koichi. (1998)   Bunkateki mushûsei soretomo ajian modanitii no houkou? [Cultural odorlessness or the scent of Asian modernity?].   In Igarashi, Akio (ed.), *Hen'yo suru ajia to nihon: Ajia shakai ni shintou suru nihon no popyurâ karuchâ [Changing Asia and Japan: Japanese popular culture penetrates Asian societies].* Yokohama: Seori Shobo.   pp.41-79.

----------. (2002)   *Recentering globalization : popular culture and Japanese transnationalism.* Durham, Duke University Press.

Jenkins, Henry. (2006a)   *Fans, bloggers, and gamers: exploring participatory culture.* New York: New York University Press.

----------. (2006b)   *Convergence culture: where old and new media collide.* New York: New York University Press.

JETRO (2007)   *Tonan ajia 3 kakoku ni okeru kontentsushijo no jittai - Tai, Singaporu, Mareisia   [The actual condition of the contents market in 3 South East Asian countries - Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia].* Tokyo: Japan External Trade Organization.   Pp.8-68.

Kohari, Susumu. (2001)   Kankoku ni okeru nihon taishuu bunka to sono kaihou sochi [Lifting the ban on Japanese popular culture in Korea].   In Ishii, Kenichi (ed.), *Higashi ajia ni okeru nihon taishuu bunka [Japanese popular culture in East Asia].*   Tokyo: Sososha.

Leheny, David. (2006)   A narrow place to cross swords: Soft power and the politics of Japanese popular culture in East Asia.   In P. J. Katzenstein and T. Shiraishi. (Eds)   *Beyond Japan: the dynamics of East Asian regionalism.*   Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.   Pp. 211-233.

Lersakvanitchakul, Kitchana. (2003, October 14)   Here comes Johnny.   *The Nation.* Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

McGray, Douglas. (2002)   Japan's gross national cool.   *Foreign policy.*

130(ABI/INFORM Global): 44-54.

Nakamura, Ichiya. (2006)   Poppu karucha seisaku [Pop culture policy].   In
    Nakamura, Ichiya & Onouchi, Megumi (eds.), *Nihon no poppu pawaa [Japan's
    pop power]*. Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha: 158-197.

Nakamura, Ichiya & Onouchi, Megumi (eds.) (2006)   *Nihon no poppu pawaa [Japan's
    pop power]*. Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbun.

Nakano, Yoshiko. (2002)   Who initiates a global flow? Japanese popular culture in
    Asia.   *Visual Communication* 1(2): 229-253.

NECTEC (2005)   *Thailand ICT indicators 2005*. Bangkok: National Electronics and
    Computer Technology Center: 80.

Nye, Joseph S. (2004)   *Soft power: the means to success in world politics.* New York:
    Perseus Books Group.

Office of the Educational Council. (2004)   *Education in Thailand 2004.* Bangkok:
    Ministry of Education, Royal Thai Government.

Ogawa, Masashi. (2001)   Japanese popular music in Hong Kong: analysis of
    global/local cultural relations. In Befu, Harumi & Guichard-Anguis, Sylvie
    (eds.), *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia,
    Europe, and America.* New York: Routledge: 121-130.

Phoosuphanusorn, Srisamorn & Treerapongpichit, Busrin. (2000)   Set-price menus are
    proving a hit with diners and restaurant chains are poised for expansion:
    Japanese restaurants see boom times.   *Bangkok Post.* Bangkok.

Sakai, Touru. (2004)   *Ha-ri-zu-.* Tokyo: Kobunsha.

Shiraishi, Saya. (1997)   Japan's soft power: Doraemon goes overseas. In P. J.
    Katzenstein and T. Shiraishi. (Eds.)   *Network power: Japan and Asia.* Ithaca,
    New York, Cornell University Press: 234-272.

----------. (2000)   Doraemon goes abroad.   In T. J. Craig. (Ed.)   *Japan pop!: inside
    the world of Japanese popular culture.* Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe: 302.

Tohnishi, Toshihiro. (2004)   Hanguru manabi rinkoku wo shiru - sinia kanryu hiroku
    fukaku, iju made shiyani (jukunen wo irodoru.   (Learning Korean to know the
    neighbor).   *Nihon keizai Shimbun*: 29.

Toyoshima, Noboru. (2008)   Longing for Japan: the consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand.   *Sojourn*, 23(2): 252-281.

Wun'geo, Surichai. (1998)   Amerika kara nihon ni koromogae suru tounan ajia [Shifting Southeast Asia - from American to Japan].   In Akio Igarashi. (Ed.) *Henyo suru ajia to nihon: Ajia shakai ni shintou suru nihon no popyuraa karuchaa [Changing Asia and Japan: the Japanese popular culture penetrates Asian societies].* Tokyo: Seori Shobo: 25-39.

Chapter 5 – Cosplayers in Thailand

Allison, Anne. (2000a)   Can popular culture go global?: how Japanese "scouts" and "rangers" fare in the US.   Douglas Slaymaker (Ed.)   *A century of popular culture in Japan.*   New York: The Edwin Mellen Press.   Pp. 127-153.

----------. (2000b)   Sailor moon: Japanese superheroes for global girls.   In Timothy J. Craig (Ed.)   *Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.*   New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.   pp. 259-278.

----------. (2006)   The Japan fad in global youth culture and millennial capitalism.   In Frenchy Lunning (Ed.) *Mechademia: emerging worlds of anime and manga.* Minnesota: Univ. of Minnesota Press.   pp. 11-21.

Comic Market Preparations Committee. (n.d.)   *Kosupurette nani?   [What is cosplay?]* Retrieved on August 10, 2009 from Web Site: http://www.comiket.co.jp/info-p/WhatIsCosPlay.html

----------. (2008, February)   *What is comic market?*   Retrieved on August 10, 2009 from Web Site: http://www.comiket.co.jp/info-a/WhatIsEng080528.pdf

----------. (2009)   *Comic Market Catalog 76.*   (2009 Summer)   Tokyo: Author.

Craig, Timothy J. (2000)   Introduction.   In Timothy J. Craig (Ed.)   *Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.*   New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc. pp. 3-23.

Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok. (2005)   *Tai keizai shakai no hanseiki totomoni: bankoku nihonjin shôkôkaigisho 50 nenshi. [With the half century of Thai economics history: 50 years of history of Japanese chamber of commerce, Bangkok.]*   Bangkok: Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok.

JETRO (2007). *Tonan ajia 3 kakoku ni okeru kontentsushijo no jittai - Tai, Singaporu, Mareisia [The actual condition of the contents market in 3 South East Asian countries - Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia].* Tokyo: Japan External Trade Organization**:** 8-68.

Kelts, Roland. (2006) *Japanamerica: how Japanese pop culture has invaded the U.S.* New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Kinsella, Sharon. (1998) Japanese subculture in the 1990s: otaku and the amateur manga movement. *Journal of Japanese Studies.* 24:2. Pp.289-316.

----------. (1999) Pro-establishment manga: pop-culture and the balance of power in Japan. *Media, culture and society.* Vol. 21: 567-572.

Lai, Cherry Sze-ling & Wah Wong, Dixon Heung. (2001) Japanese comics coming to Hong Kong. In Harumi Befu & Sylvie Guichard-Anguis (Eds.) *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia, Europe, and America.* New York: Routledge.

MacWilliams, Mark W. (2008) Introduction. In Mark W. MacWilliams (Ed.) *Japanese visual culture: exploration in the world of manga and anime.* New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc. pp. 3-25.

Napier, Susan Jolliffe. (2005) *Anime from Akira to Howl's moving castle: experiencing contemporary animation.* Updated ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

----------. (2007) *From Impressionism to anime: Japan as fantasy and fan cult in the mind of the West.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Newitz, Annalee. (1995) Magical girls and atomic bomb sperm: Japanese animation in America. *Film Quarterly.* (Autumn, 1995) 49(1) pp. 2-15.

Okada, Toshio. (2008) *Otakugaku nyûmon. [Introduction to Otaku studies.]* Tokyo: Shinchô Bunko.

Pravalpruk, Sor Wasna. (1990) Japanese comics and animations for children in Thailand. In Kunio Yoshihara (Ed.) *Japan in Thailand.* Kuala Lumpur: Falcon Press Sdn. Bhd. pp. 17-33.

Props & Ops Cosplay Wiki (n.d.) *Cosplay* (คอสเพลย์*).* Retrieved August 12, 2009 from Web site: http://propsops.com/cosplaywiki/Cosplay/ (In Thai)

Reference

Shun, Acho. (2007, January 18)   *First cosplay in Thailand* (คอสเพลย์ครั้งแรกในประเทศไทย).
Retrieved August 12, 2009, from Exteen Blog Web site:
http://shunacho.exteen.com/20070118/entry/   (In Thai)

Shiraishi, Saya. (1998)   Manga-anime no gurôbarizêshon. [Globalization of manga and
anime.]   In Akio Igarashi (Ed.)   *Henyôsuru ajia to nihon. [The changing Asia
and Japan.]*   Yokohama: Seori Shobo.   pp. 317-349.

----------. (2000)   Draemon goes abroad.   In Timothy J. Craig (Ed.)   *Japan pop!:
inside the world of Japanese popular culture.*   New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.
pp. 287-308.

Schodt, Frederik L. (1996)   *Dreamland Japan: writings on modern manga.*   Berkeley,
CA: Stone Bridge Press.

Turner, Victor. (1974)   *Dramas, fields, and metaphors: symbolic action in human
society.*   Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Toyoshima, Noboru (2008)   Longing for Japan: the consumption of Japanese cultural
products in Thailand. *Sojourn.* 23(2).

Winge, Theresa. (2006)   Costuming the imagination: origins of anime and manga
cosplay.   In Frenchy Lunning (Ed.)   *Mechademia 1: emerging worlds of
anime and manga.*   Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. Pp.
65-76.

Chapter 6 – Japanese Language Learning

Aoyagi, Hiroshi. (2000)   Pop idols and Asian identity.   In T. J. Craig (Ed.), *Japan
pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.*   New York: M. E. Sharp,
Inc.

Banchongmanee, Bussaba. (2004)   *Akiko to tomodachi: nihongo (Being friends with
Akiko: Japanese).*   Bangkok: Japan Foundation / Kinokuniya Bookstore.

Banchongmanee, Bussaba, Imaeda, Aki, & Sangthongsuk, Prapa. (2005)   Tai no
chûtoukyouikuyou nihongo kyoukasho sakusei purojekuto (The project of
Japanese Language textbook-making for Thai secondary education).   *Kokusai
kouryû kikin bankoku nihonbunka sentâ nihongo kyouiku kiyou (The journal of
Japan Foundation Bangkok Japanese language and culture center).*   No.2.

Bangkok: Kokusai kouryû kikin bankoku nihonbunka sentâ (The Japan Foundation, Bangkok Japanese Language and Culture Center).

Chawengkijwanich, Somkiat. (2008)   Tamasâto daigaku ni okeru nihongo kyouiku no genjou oyobi kongo no kadai (The present status of Japanese language education and future themes in Thammasat University).   *Nihongo, nihonbunka, tai-nichi shinpojiumu – kenkyusha, koudoshokunin jinzaiikusei ni okeru nihongo kyouiku no yakuwari (Japanese Language / Japanese Culture: Thai-Japan International Symposium – the role of Japanese language education in educating scholars and skilled craftsman).*   Osaka: Center for Japanese Language and Culture, Osaka University.

Chirasombutti, Voravdhi. (2008, March 15)   Tai ni okeru nihongo kyouiku to kenkyûkai no 20 nen (Japanese language education in Thailand and 20 years of the study group).   *Taikoku nihongo kyouiku kenkyûkai 20 shûnen seminâ (The 20th anniversary memorial seminar of the Japanese language education study group).*   Bangkok, Thailand.

Ebihara, Tomoharu. (2004)   Tai no gakkouseidogai kyouiku to nihongo kyouiku (The non-formal education in Thailand and Japanese language education).   *Bankoku nihon bunka sentâ nihongo kyouiku kiyou (Journal of Japanese Education of Bangkok Japanese culture center).*   Vol. 1.   Bangkok: The Japan Foundation.

----------. (2005)   2004nen no taidaigaku nyuushi to nihongo wo jukenkamokuni shiteishita daigakusenkou (The university entrance examination of 2004 and the university major programs that assigned Japanese language as a requirement).   *Bankoku nihon bunka sentâ nihongo kyouiku kiyou (Journal of Japanese Education of Bangkok Japanese culture center).*   Vol. 2.   Bangkok: The Japan Foundation.

Ek-Ariyasiri, Eknarint. (2008)   Tai koutou kyouiku kikan no nihongo senkou karikyuramu kaihatsu ni kansuru kenkyû – purinsu obu sonkurâ daigaku wo reini (The study on curriculum development of Japanese major at higher education in Thailand – a case study of Prince of Songkla University).   *Nihon gengo bunka kenkyûkai ronshû (Journal of Japanese language and culture).*   Vol. 4.   Urawa: The Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute.

Gardner, Robert C.   (1985)   *Social psychology and second language learning: the*

role of attitudes and motivation.　London: Arnold.

Gardner, Robert C. & Clément, Richard.　(1990)　Social psychological perspectives on second language acquisition.　In Giles, Howard & Robinson, W. Peter. (eds.) *Handbook of language and social psychology.*　Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Gardner, Richard C. & Lambert, Wallace E. (1972)　*Attitudes and motivation in second-language learning.*　Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Gardner, Richard C., Masgoret, Anne.-Marie., Tennant, Jeff & Mihic, Ljiljana. (2004) Integrative motivation: changes during a year-long intermediate-level language course.　*Language learning.*　54:1 (March 2004).　Pp. 1-34.

Hayashi, Kaori. & Lee, Eun-Jeung. (2007)　The potential of fandom and the limits of soft power: media representations on the popularity of a Korean melodrama in Japan.　*Social science Japan journal.*　10:197-216.

Japan Foundation. (1985)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1984 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1984).*　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1986)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1985 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1985).*　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1987)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1986 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1986).*　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1988)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1987 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1987).*　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1989)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1988 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1988).*　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1990)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1989 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1989).*　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1991)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1990 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1990).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1992)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1991 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1991).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1993)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1992 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1992).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1994)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1993 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1993).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1995)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1994 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1994).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1996)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1995 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1995).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1997)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1996 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1996).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1998)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1997 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1997).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (1999)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1998 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1998).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2000)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 1999 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 1999).*   Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2001)   *Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2000 (The Japanese*

language proficiency test summary of results 2000).　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2002)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2001 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 2001).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2003)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2002 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 2002).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2004)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2003 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 2003).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2005)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2004 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 2004).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2006)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2005 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 2005).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2007)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2006 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 2006).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2008a)　*Kaigai no nihongo kyouiku no genjou (Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2008b)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2007 (The Japanese-language proficiency test summary of the results 2007).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

----------. (2009a)　*Nihongo Kyouiku Kunibetsu Jouhou 2009 nendo tai. (Japanese Education Country Information 2009 Thailand).*　　Retrieved October 19, 2009. http://www.jpf.go.jp/j/japanese/survey/country/2009/thailand.html

----------. (2009b)　*Nihongo nouryoku shaken kekka no gaiyou 2008 (The Japanese language proficiency test summary of results 2008).*　　Tokyo: Japan Foundation.

Masgoret, Anne.-Marie. & Gardner, Robert C. (2003) Attitudes, motivation, and second language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and Associates. *Language Learning*, Supplement 1, 167-213.

Matsui, Yoshikazu & Kitamura, Takeshi & Chirasombutti, Voravdhi. (1999) *Tai ni okeru nihongo kyouiku – sono kiban to seisei to hatten (Japanese Language Education in Thailand – its background, situations and a history of its development –).* Tokyo: Kinseisha.

Ministry of Education. (2001) *Basic education curriculum B.E. 2544 (A.D. 2001).* Bangkok: Ministry of Education, Thailand.

----------. (2008) *The basic education core curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008).* Bangkok: Ministry of Education, Thailand.

Nihon Keizai Shimbun. (2004, August 3). Hanguru manabi rinkoku wo shiru – shinia "hanryû" hirokufukaku, ijûmade shiyani (jukunen wo irodoru). [Knowing the neighboring country by learning Korean – The Korean wave among seniors is broad and deep, even migration is envisioned.] *Nihon Keizai Shimbun. (Osaka Evening).* P.29.

Noels, Kimberly A., Pelletier, Luc G., Clément, Richard., & Vallerand, Robert J. (2000) Why are you learning a second language? Motivation orientations and self-determination theory. *Language learning.* 50:1 Pp.57-85.

Office of Educational Council. (2004) *Education in Thailand 2004.* Bangkok: Ministry of Education.

Shiraishi, Saya S. (2000) Doraemon goes abroad. In T. J. Craig (Ed.), *Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.* New York: M. E. Sharp, Inc.

Shiratori, Fumiko. (2001) Chûtoukyouikukatei kouki no sentaku jiyûkamoku ni okeru gakushû naiyou (Curriculum contents in elective subjects of upper secondary education). *Kokusai kouryû kikin Bankokku nihongo sentâ kiyou (Journal of the Japan Foundation Bangkok Japanese language center).* No. 5. Pp. 191-195.

Vygotsky, Lev. (1986) *Thought and language.* Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Wolfson, Nessa. (1989) *Perspectives: sociolinguistics and TESOL.* Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Reference

Yoshikawa, Takeji. (2008, March 15)   Tai nihongo kyouiku no gaikan – kokusai
        kouryuukikin no shokuin toshite (Overview of Japanese language education in
        Thailand – from a viewpoint of a staff in the Japan Foundation).   *Taikoku
        nihongo kyouiku kenkyûkai 20 shûnen seminâ (The 20th anniversary memorial
        seminar of the Japanese language education study group).*   Bangkok,
        Thailand.

Chapter 7 – Japanese Food

Asahi Shimbun. (1972, October 10)   Tai daimaru 3 bai ni kakuchou (Thai Daimaru
        expands for threefold).   *Asahi Shimbun.*   Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha.   P7.

----------. (1972, November 16)   Tai no Daimaru ne wo ageru – Gakusei ga fubai undou
        – Han-nichi fubai undou.   (Thai Daimaru gives up – Students' movement –
        Anti-Japanese products movement).   *Asahi Shimbun.*   Tokyo: Asahi
        Shimbunsha.   P23.

----------. (1980, September 20)   Damaru ga tai ni 2 gouten (Daimaru opens the second
        store in Thailand).   *Asahi Shimbun.*   Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha.   P8.

----------. (1984, November 29)   Ryûtsû sensou bankoku ni tobihi, nihon no hyakkaten
        zokuzoku – 150 man nin no kyaku ubaiau. (Competition of distribution
        industry leaped flames to Bangkok.   Japanese department stores flow into the
        market – compete over 1.5 million consumers).   *Asahi Shimbun.*   Tokyo:
        Asahi Shimbunsha.   P3.

----------. (2008, January 5)   Motomu!   Kûru na nihonshoku (Wanted! Cool Japanese
        food).   *Asahi Shimbun.*   Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha.   P3.

Asawanipont, Nitida. (2004, April 17)   Green tea: it's not just for sipping anymore.
        The Nation.   Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2008, March 8)   Mos to expand burger chain with seven new branches.
        The Nation.   Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Ashkenazi, Michael & Jacob, Jeanne. (2000)   *The essence of Japanese cuisine: an
        essay on food and culture.*   Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bangkok Shuho. (2001)   Nihon no kokoro wo imani hikitsugu – washoku no shinise
        Hanaya (Inheriting the heart of Japan to the present – Japanese restaurant

Hanaya). *Bangkok Shuho*. No.942. (January 26, 2001). Bangkok: Bangkok Shuho.

Chinmaneevong, Chadamas. (2009, May 19) Oishi on course to beat 20% growth target after robust Q1. *The Nation.* Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Cwiertka, Katarzyna J. (2006) *Modern Japanese cuisine: food, power and national identity.* London: Reaktion.

Ezaki Glico, Co., Ltd. (n.d.) *Overseas activities: Glico's business base in Southeast Asia in operation for over 30 years.* Retrieved December 7, 2009 from Ezaki Glico Co., Ltd. web site: http://www.glico.co.jp/en/corp/profile4.htm

Goto, Shiro. (2007) Hachiban râmen jigyou no kaigai tenkai nituite (About the overseas business of Hachiban ramen enterprise). *Êjekku repôto (AJEC Report).* Vol. 43. Kanazawa: Hokuriku AJEC (Around Japan sea Economic Exchange Conference in Hokuriku). Pp. 16-21.

----------. (2008) Hachiban râmen no kaigai senryaku (Strategy of Hachiban Ramen for overseas business). *Kan-nihonkai keizai jânaru (Japan sea rim economic journal).* No.79. Toyama, Japan: Kan Nihonkai Keizai Kouryuu Sentâ. Pp. 8-13.

Hachiban Co., Ltd. (n.d.) *Hachi-Ban ramen restaurant in Thailand.* Retrieved November 24, 2009 from Hachi-Ban Co., Ltd. Web site: http://www.hachiban.co.jp/english/countries/tailand_development/tailand_development.html

Kawabe, Junko. (2005) Bankoku nihonjin shoukou kaigisho 50nen no ayumi (The 50 years of Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok). *Tai keizai shakai no hanseiki to tomoni – Bankoku nihonjin shoukou kaigisho 50 nenshi (With the 50 years of Thai economic development – The history of 50 years of Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok).* Bangkok: Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok. Pp. 285-358.

Mos Food Services, Inc. (2007, January 29) *Press release: Tai bankoku e "Mosu Bâgâ" hatsu shutten (First "MOS Burger" opened in Bangkok, Thailand).* Ref.07-0129-041. Tokyo: MOS FOOD SERVICES, INC.

Ng, Wai-ming & Goda, Miho. (2001) The popularization of Sushi in Singapore: issues in globalization and localization. *Southeast Asian Studies.* Vol. 39, No. 2.

Reference

        (September 2001)　Pp. 258-274.

Oishi Group Public Company Ltd. (2009)　*Annual report 2008*.　Bangkok: Oishi
        Group.

Ootoya Co., Ltd. (2009, November 29)　Tenpo kensaku (Search for outlets).
        Retrieved on November 29, 2009, from http://www.ootoya.com/
        search/index.php

Pongvutitham, Achara. (2006, February 13)　Japanese restaurant JV: Betagro joins the
        sushi revolution.　*The Nation.*　Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Puangkanok, Naranart. (2001, December 28)　Dining on Oishi success.　*The Nation.*
        Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Redux, Cookman. (2007, January 10)　The sushi wars.　*The Nation.*　Bangkok: The
        Nation Multimedia.

Rungfapaisarn, Kwanchai. (2006, July 6)　Oishi green tea ready to steep into US
        market.　*The Nation.*　Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2008, February 5)　Jtepa paves way to fast expansion of Oishi.　*The Nation.*
        Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Srimalee, Somluck. (2002, September 6)　Oishi diversification: high hopes for green
        tea.　*The Nation.*　Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2002, November 5)　Tipco chases demand for green tea.　*The Nation*.
        Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

The Nation. (2004, September 24)　In brief: BBDO triumphs at first event organized
        by local industry group.　*The Nation.*　Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2005, March 9)　Plastic-bottle collector reaps Bt1 million windfall.　*The
        Nation.*　Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2008, February 13)　Oishi's net profit surges to Bt558m.　*The Nation.*
        Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2008, February 27)　Oishi in Bt600m marketing blitz.　*The Nation.*
        Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2008, August 16)　Fuji in Japanese curry-restaurant JV.　*The Nation.*

Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2009, February 20)   Expansion: MK to expand Yayoi chain here and abroad. *The Nation.*   Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2009, June 3)   Thais prefer Thai food, but Japanese fare rates second.   *The Nation.*   Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

----------. (2009, November 4)   Streetwise: eternally evolving Tan shares his thoughts. *The Nation.*   Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Vichitsorasatra, Lisnaree. (2007, April 24)   Message in a burger.   *The Nation.* Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Wattanasukchai, Sirinya. (2002, July 12)   Highlight: The noodle ninjas.   *The Nation.* Bangkok: The Nation Multimedia.

Chapter 8 – Kawaii Fashion

Asahi Shimbun. (1999, June 11)   "Atsuzoko sandaru" goyoujinwo: 2 wari ijou ga tentou keiken. Tandai kyouju ga chousa. [Be careful with "thick-soled sandals": Junior college professor research revealed more than 20% have experience of tumbling down].   *Asahi Shimbun.*   P.25.

----------. (1999, September 2)   Henshi: Atuzoko 10 cm sandaru deno tentou ga gen-in ka [Unnatural death: Stumbling by 10 cm thick-soled sandals?].   *Asahi Shimbun.*   P.1.

----------. (2003, January 17)   Memoto keshouhin no yushutsu zouka – nihon no oshare ajia de ninki (The export of the eye cosmetics increased – the popularity of Japanese fashion in Asia).   *Asahi Shimbun*.   P.35.

Befu, Harumi. (2001)   The global context of Japan outside Japan.   In Befu, Harumi & Guichard-Anguis, Silvie (eds.)   *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia, Europe, and America.*   London: Routledge.

----------. (2003)   Globalization theory from the bottom up: Japan's contribution. *Japanese studies.*   28(1).   Pp. 3-22.

Bremner, Brian. (2002, June 25)   In Japan, cute conquers all.   *Business Week.* Retrieved on January 12, 2010, from

Reference

       http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/jun2002/nf20020625_7574.ht
m

Bunka Fukusou Gakuin (Bunka Fashion College). (n.d.)   *Senpai no shigoto, senpai no kotoba (Works and words of the graduates).*   Retrieved on February 10, 2010, from http://www.bfc-review.jp/feature002/index.html

Bydon, Anne & Nissen, Sandra. (1998)   Introduction: adorning the body.   In Brydon, Anne & Nissen, Sandra (Eds.), *Consuming fashion: adorning the transnational body.*   Oxford: Berg.

Chonburi Rayong Japanese Association in Thailand (CRJA). (n.d.)   *Nihonjin kai no shoukai (Introduction of Japanese association).*   Retrieved on February 7, 2010, from http://www.crja.org/modules/introduction/

Craik, Jennifer. (1994)   *The face of fashion: cultural studies in fashion.*   London: Routledge.

Drake, Kate. (2001, June 25)   Kwest for kawaii.   *Time.*   Edition:Asia.   Vol.157, No.25.   Retrieved on January 12, 2010 from http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,131022,00.html

Embassy of Japan in Thailand. (2010)   *Kaigai zairyû houjinsû toukei (Annual statistics on Japanese nationals overseas).*   Retrieved on February 6, 2010 from the Embassy of Japan in Thailand Web site http://www.th.emb-japan.go.jp/jp/consular/zairyu09.htm

Entwistle, Joanne. (2000)   *The fashioned body: fashion, dress, and modern social theory.*   Cambridge: Polity Press.

Fukuoka Jogakuin. (n.d.)   History.   *Fukuoka Jogakuin Web Site*.   Retrieved on February 11, 2010 from http://www2.fukujo.ac.jp/university/english/history.html

Goffman, Erving. (1959)   *The presentation of self in everyday life*.   New York: Anchor Books.

Heian Jogakuin. (n.d.)   Seifuku no rekishi nit suite (About the history of the uniform).   *Heian Jogakuin Web Site*.   Retrieved on February 11, 2010 from http://www.heian.ac.jp/head/about/uniform.php

Iwabuchi, Koichi. (2002)   *Recentering globalization: popular culture and Japanese*

transnationalism.   Durham: Duke University Press.

Japan Foundation. (n.d.)   Art & Culture 2009: *"Mode et Construction" Special Talk and Film Show by JUNKO KOSHINO World-famous Japanese Fashion Designer.*   Retrieved on February 21, 2009 from http://www.jfbkk.or.th/2009/art_culture_20090813.php3

JETRO. (2007).   *Tonan ajia 3 kakoku ni okeru kontentsushijo no jittai - Tai, Singaporu, Mareisia   [The actual condition of the contents market in 3 South East Asian countries - Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia].*   Tokyo: Japan External Trade Organization**:** 8-68.

Joseph, Nathan. (1986)   *Uniforms and nonuniforms.*   Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc.

Kageyama, Yuri. (2006, June 14)   Cuteness a hot-selling commodity in Japan.   *Washington Post.*   June 14.

Kawamura, Yuniya. (2005)   *Fashion-ology: an introduction to fashion studies.*   Oxford: Berg.

----------. (2006)   Japanese teens as producers of street fashion.   *Current sociology.*   Vol.54(5).   Pp.784-801.

Kinsella, Sharon (1995)   'Cuties in Japan', in Skov, Lise & Moeran, Brian (eds.)   *Women, media, and consumption in Japan.*   Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.   Pp. 220-254.

----------. (2002)   What's behind the fetishism of Japanese school uniforms?   *Fashion Theory.*   Volume 6, Issue 2.   Pp.215-238.

Koh, Barbara. (1999, November 8)   Cute power!   *Newsweek.*   Pp.40-45.

Larimer, Tim. (1999)   She's a material girl.   *Time.*   May-3-May10, 1999.   Pp. 28-31.

Lee, Diana. (2005, September 1)   Inside look at Japanese cute culture.   *UNIORB.*   Retrieved on January 12, 2010, from http://uniorb.com/ATREND/Japanwatch/cute.htm

McLaughlin, Noel. (2000)   Rock, fashion and performativity.   In Bruzzi, Stella and

Gibson, Pamela Church (eds.), *Fashion cultures: theories, explorations and analysis.*   London: Routledge.

Mead, Rebecca. (2002)   Shopping rebellion: What the kids want.   *The New Yorker.* March 18.

METI (Ministry of Economic, Trade and Industry). (2009)   *Heisei 21 nendo chiiki sanpin no ajia chûtou shijou charenji shien jigyou (A subsidy program for making inroads to the Asia and the Middle East markets with local products - 2009).*   Retrieved on February 14, 2010 from http://www.chusho.meti.go.jp/keiei/shokibo/2009/090731ChiikiSanpinAsiaMid dleEastChallenge.htm

Miller, Laura. (2003)   Youth fashion and changing beautification practices.   In Mathews, Gordon and White, Bruce (eds.), *Japan's changing generations: Are young people creating a new society?*   London: Routledge Curzon.   Pp. 83-97.

Moeran, Brian. (2004)   A Japanese discourse of fashion and taste.   *Fashion theory.* Vol 8 (2).   Pp. 35-62.

----------. (2006)   More than just a fashion magazine.   *Current sociology.*   Vol 54 (4). Pp. 725-744.

Nakata, Keiko. (1995, July 20)   Atuzoko sandaru: kinou yorimo kakkoyosa (Thick-soled sandals: coolness rather than functions).   *Asahi Shimbun (Evening)*.   P.2.

Newsclip.be. (2010)   Bankoku de nihon kawaii feâ (Japan Kawaii fair in Bangkok). *Newsclip.be.*   Retrieved on February 14, 2010 from http://www.newsclip.be/news/2010212_026611.html

Sano, Katsuhiko. (n.d.)   Gakkou seifuku toshiteno sêrâ fuku (Sailor uniform as school uniform).   *Tombow Co., Ltd. Web Site.*   Retrieved on February 11, 2010 from http://www.tombow.gr.jp/uniform_museum/pocket/no003.html

Siam-Square.com. (n.d.)   Siam Square history and development.   *Siam-Square.com.* Retrieved on January 25, 2010 from http://www.siam-square.com/history.html

Simmel, Georg. (1957)   Fashion.   *The American journal of sociology.*   Vol LXII. No. 6.   Pp.541-558. (Reprinted from *International quarterly,* X [Oct. 1904], pp.

130-55.)

Sims, Calvin. (1999, November 26)   Tokyo Journal: Be tall and chic as you wobble to the orthopedist.   *New York Times International.*   P.A4.

Thaiokoku.com. (2005, August 2)   Nihonfû no seifukusaiyou de, tai no bunka houkai no kiki (Crisis of cultural collapse by adoption of Japanese style school uniform).   *Thaiokoku.com.*   Retrieved on February 10, 2010 from http://www.thaiokoku.com/news_topics/20050802/20050802.html

ThaiAsiaToday.com (n.d.)   Huge plans afoot for Siam Square.   *ThaiAsiaToday.com.*   Retrieved on January 25, 2010 from http://www.thaiasiatoday.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=486&Itemid=63

The Nation. (2005, May 29).   Teen cuties celebrate a first.   *The Nation.*   Bangkok: Nation Multimedia.

Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). (n.d.)   *International tourist arrivals to Thailand by nationality and mode of transport (2007 – January – December).*   Retrieved on February 6, 2010 from TAT Web site http://www2.tat.or.th/stat/web/static_index.php

Uehara, Masashi. (2000, May 1)   Tai no "harajuku"-atsuzokogutsu ["Harajuku" in Thailand – Thick-soled shoes].   *Nikkei Shimbun (Evening).*   P.3.

Veblen, Thorstein. (1994)   *The theory of the leisure class.*   New York: Dover Publications, Inc.

Wilson, Elizabeth. (1985)   *Adorned in dreams: fashion and modernity.*   Berkeley: University of California Press.

Woodhouse, Annie. (1989)   *Fantastic women: sex, gender and transvestism.*   London: Macmillan.

Chapter 9 – Reasons for Consumption

Ang, Ien. (2003)   Terebidorama ni miru bunkateki shinmitsusei (Cultural proximity in television dramas).   In Iwabuchi, Koichi (ed.), *Gurôbaru purizumu – ajian dorîmu toshiteno nihon no terebidorama (Global prism – Japanese TV drama*

as Asian dream).   Tokyo: Heibonsha.

----------. (2004)   The cultural intimacy of TV drama.   In Iwabuchi, Koichi (ed.), *Feeling Asian modernities: transnational consumption of Japanese TV dramas.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong University.   Pp. 303-309.

BBC. (n.d.)   1989: Malta summit ends Cold War. (December 3, 1989)   *On this day 1950-2005.*   Retrieved on June 28, 2010 from http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/december/3/newsid_4119000/4119950.stm

Befu, Harumi. (2001)   The global context of Japan outside Japan.   In Befu, Harumi & Guichard-Auguis, Sylvie (eds.), *Globalizing Japan: ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia, Europe, and America.*   London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, Pierre. (1984)   *Distinction: a social critique of the judgment of taste.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bank of Thailand. (2010)   Net flow of foreign equity investment classified by country. *Economic and financial statistics quarterly.* (2009 Quarter 4) Retrieved on June 5, 2010 from http://www.bot.or.th/English/Statistics/Publications/Pages/Bulletin.aspx

Funatsu, Tsuruyo & Kagoya, Kazuhiro. (2002)   Tai no chûkansou – toshi gakureki erîto no seisei to shakai ishiki (The middle classes in Thailand: the rise of the uraban academic elite and their social consciousness).   In Hattori, Tamio & Funatsu, Tsuruyo & Torii, Takashi (eds.), *Ajia chûkansou no seisei to tokushitsu (The emergence and features of the Asian middle classes).*   Chiba, Japan: The Institute of Developing Economies.   Pp.201-234.

----------. (2003)   The middle classes in Thailand: the rise of the urban intellectual elite and their social consciousness.   *The developing economies.*   XLI-2 (June). Pp.243-63.

Gibson, James J. (1979)   *The ecological approach to visual perception.*   Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

----------. (2004)   *Gibuson shinrigaku ronshû – chokusetsu chigakuron no konkyo (Reasons for realism – selected essays of James J. Gibson).*   Tokyo: Keisousha.   (Original work published in 1982)

Hansen, Jochim & Wanke, Michaela. (2009)   Liking what's familiar: the importance of unconscious familiarity in the mere-exposure effect.   *Social cognition.*   27(2) Pp.161-182.

Hattori, Tamio & Fnatsu, Tsuruyo. (2003)   The emergence of the Asian middle classes and their characteristics.   *The developing economies.*   XLI-2 (June). Pp.140-160.

Hoskins, Colin & Mirus, Rolf. (1988)   Reasons for the US dominance of the international trade in television programmes.   *Media, culture and society.* Vol. 10.   Pp.499-515.

Iwabuchi, Koichi. (2002)   *Recentering globalization: popular culture and Japanese transnationalism.*   Durham: Duke University Press.

Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok. (2005)   *Tai keizaishakai no hanseiki to tomoni – bankoku nihonjin shoukoukaigisho 50 nenshi (With the half century of Thai economic society – the 50 year history of Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok.*   Bangkok: Japanese Chamber of Commerce.

JETRO (2007).   *Tonan ajia 3 kakoku ni okeru kontentsushijo no jittai - Tai, Singaporu, Mareisia   [The actual condition of the contents market in 3 South East Asian countries - Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia].*   Tokyo: Japan External Trade Organization**:** 8-68.

Kawabe, Sumiko. (2005)   Bankoku nihonjin shoukou kaigisho 50 nen no ayumi (The 50 year history of Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok).   In Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok. (ed.)   *Tai keizaishakai no hanseiki to tomoni – bankoku nihonjin shoukoukaigisho 50 nenshi (With the half century of Thai economic society – the 50 year history of Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok.*   Pp.285-358. Bangkok: Japanese Chamber of Commerce.

Koga, Reiko. (2009)   *"Kawaii" no teikoku: môdo to media to onnanoko tachi ("Kawaii" empire: mode, media and girls).*   Tokyo: Seidosha.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2010a)   *Kaigai zairyû houjinsû toukei (Number of Japanese nationals abroad).*   Retrieved on June 3, 2010 from

http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/toko/tokei/hojin/index.html

----------. (2010b) *Sashou hakkyuu tokei (Statistics of VISA issue).*   Retrieved on June 3, 2010 from

http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/toko/tokei/hakkyu/index.html

----------. (2010c) *Kaigai zairyû houjin shijosû toukei – heisei 21 nen ban (Number of Japanese national children - 2009).*   Retrieve on June 6, 2010 from http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/toko/tokei/hojin_sj/index.html

Ministry of Justice. (2010) *Kokusekibetsu nyûkoku gaikokujin 1950-2005 (Entering foreign nationals by nationality).*   Retrieved on June 3, 2010 from http://www.moj.go.jp/housei/toukei/toukei_ichiran_nyukan.html

Miyadai, Shinji, Ishihara, Hideki & Otsuka Akiko. (1993) *Sabukaruchâ shinwa kaitai (Myth of subculture deconstructed).*   Tokyo: PARCO Shuppan.

Mori, Aya. (2009) *Kitei no namida (Tears of Kitty).*   Tokyo: Shûeisha.

Saha Pathana Inter-Holding PCL. (2008) *Cool the world (12th Saha group export & trade exhibition).*   [Brochure]   Bangkok: Saha Group.

Sakurai, Takamasa. (2009) *Sekai kawaii kakumei (World kawaii revolution).*   Tokyo: PHP Kenkyûjo.

Shiraishi, Takashi. (2006)   The third wave: Southeast Asia and middle-class formation in the making of region.   In Katzenstein, Peter J. and Shiraishi, Takashi (eds.), *Beyond Japan: the dynamics of East Asian regionalism.*   Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.   Pp. 237-271.

Suehiro, Akira. (2005)   Nihon tai kouryûshi – mono kane kara jinzai kouryû e (1973-2003) (The history of Japan-Thai exchange – from goods and money to human exchange).   In Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok (ed.), *Tai keizaishakai no hanseiki to tomoni – bankoku nihonjin shoukoukaigisho 50 nenshi (With the half century of Thai economic society – the 50 year history of Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok.*   Bangkok: Japanese Chamber of Commerce.   Pp.71-114.

Thailand Board of Investment. (2010) *Foreign investment from major countries.*   Retrieved on June 2, 2010 from

http://www.boi.go.th/english/download/boi_statistics/34/0912_app_en.pdf

Tourism Authority of Thailand. (2010a) *Tourism statistics: international tourist arrivals by nationality and mode of transport.* Retrieved on June 3, 2010 from http://www2.tat.or.th/stat/web/static_download.php?Rpt=nmt

----------. (2010b) *Tourism statistics: Outgoing Thai nationals by country of destination.* Retrieved on June 3, 2010 from http://www2.tat.or.th/stat/web/static_download.php?Rpt=otn

Tsunoyama, Sakae. (1995) *Ajia runesansu – bokkou suru shintoshigata bunmei (Asian Renaissance – the rise of new civilization).* Tokyo: PHP.

Wacoal Holding Corporation. (2009) *Company profile 2009.* Retrieved on May 31, 2010 from http://www.wacoalholdings.jp/profile_e/pdf/company2009e.pdf

Yomota, Inuhiko. (2006) *"Kawaii" ron ("Kawaii" Study).* Tokyo: Chikuma Shobou.

Zajonc, Robert B. (1968) Attitudinal effects of mere exposure. *Journal of personality and social psychology monograph supplement.* 9(2), Part 2. (June 1968) Pp.1-27.

----------. (2001) Mere exposure: a gateway to the subliminal. *Current directions in psychological science.* 10(6). (December 2001) Pp.224-228.

Chapter 10 – Epilogue

Asahi Shimbun. (2009, February 27) Kawaii taishi wo ninmei (Commissioned Kawaii Ambassadors). Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun. P.37.

Asian Development Bank. (2010, August) *Key indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2010 (Special chapter: the rise of Asia's middle class).* 41st Edition. Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank.

Bremner, Brian. (2002, June 25) In Japan, cute conquers all. *Business Week.* (June 25)

Bunnag, Sirikul. (2008, July 7) Meet the anime ambassador. *Bangkok Post.* P.1.

Chanarat, Oz. (2009, April 17) Embassy of culture: Japan's Kawaii Ambassadors. *Bangkok Post.* P.10-11.

Drake, Kate. (2001, June 25) Kwest for kawaii. *Time.* Edition:Asia. Vol.157,

No.25.   The article can be retrieved from
http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,131022,00.html

Funatsu, Tsuruyo & Kagoya, Kazuhiro. (2002)   Tai no chûkansou – toshi gakureki erîto no seisei to shakai ishiki (The middle classes in Thailand: the rise of the uraban academic elite and their social consciousness).   In Hattori, Tamio & Funatsu, Tsuruyo & Torii, Takashi (eds.), *Ajia chûkansou no seisei to tokushitsu (The emergence and features of the Asian middle classes).*   Chiba, Japan: The Institute of Developing Economies.   Pp.201-234.

Fnatsu, Tsuruyo & Kagoya, Kazuhiro. (2003)   The middle classes in Thailand: the rise of the urban intellectual elite and their social consciousness.   *The developing economies.*   XLI-2 (June).   Pp.243-63.

Heng, Yee-Kuan. (2010)   Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the softest of them all? Evaluating Japanese and Chinese strategies in the 'soft' power competition era.   *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific.*   Vol.10.   Pp.275-304.

Kaminishikawara, Jun. (2009, June 17)   'Cute ambassadors' roam globe to promote Japan's pop culture.   *The Japan Times.*

Koh, Barbara. (1999, November 8)   Society & the arts: cute power!   *Newsweek.*   Pp. 40-45.

Kondo, Seiichi. (2008)   Wielding soft power: the key stages of transmission and reception.   In Watanabe, Yasushi & McConnell, David L. (eds.), *Soft power superpowers: cultural and national assets of Japan and the United States.*   Armonk, New York: ME Sharpe.   Pp.191-206.

Lam, Peng Er. (2007)   Japan's quest for "soft power": attraction and limitation.   *East Asia.*   Vol.24.   Pp.349-363.

McCarthy, Terry.   (1999)   Export machine.   *Time.*   May-3-May10, 1999.   Pp. 32-36.

McGray, Douglas. (2002)   Japan's gross national product of coolness.   *Foreign policy.*   May-June 2002.   Pp.44-54.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2007)   *International Manga Award.*   Retrieved on 2010, June 30, from
http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/culture/exchange/pop/manga/index.html

----------. (2008)   *Inauguration ceremony of Anime Ambassador.*   Retrieved on 2010, June 12, from http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2008/3/0319-3.html

----------. (2009)   *Commission of trend communicator of Japanese pop culture in the field of fashion.*   Retrieved on 2010, June 12, from http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/event/2009/2/1188515_1152.html

Monji, Kenjiro. (2009)   Ôru japan de urikomu 'nihon' ('Japan' that the whole nation tries to sell).   *Gaiko forum.*   (July 2009)   Pp. 34-38..

Nakano, Yoshiko. (2008)   Shared memories: Japanese pop culture in China.   In Watanabe, Yasushi & McConnell, David L. (eds.), *Soft power superpowers: cultural and national assets of Japan and the United States.*   Armonk, New York: ME Sharpe.   Pp.111-127.

Nye, Joseph S., Jr. (1990)   Soft power.   *Foreign policy.*   Fall 1990.   Issue 80. Pp.153-172.

----------. (2002)   The American national interest and global public goods. *International affairs.*   78(2).   Pp. 233-244.

----------. (2004)   S*oft power: the means to success in world politics.*   New York: Public Affairs.

----------. (2005)   Soft power matters in Asia.   *The Japan Times.*   (December 5)

Ogoura, Kazuo. (2006)   The limits of soft power.   *Japan Echo.*   33(5). (October 2006)   Pp.60-65.

----------. (2009, July 14)   Why is Japan introverted?   *The Japan Times.*

Sakurai, Takamasa. (2009)   Anime wa chichioya ya hahaoya no youna sonzai desu – sekai ni hirogaru bunka gaiko tûru no kanousei (Anime is just like a father or a mother – the possibility of the cultural diplomacy in the world).   *Gaiko forum.* (July 2009)   Pp. 22-25.

Shiraishi, Saya.   (2000)   Doraemon goes abroad.   In Craig, T. (Ed.) *Japan pop!: inside the world of Japanese popular culture.*   New York: M. E. Sharpe.   pp. 287-308.