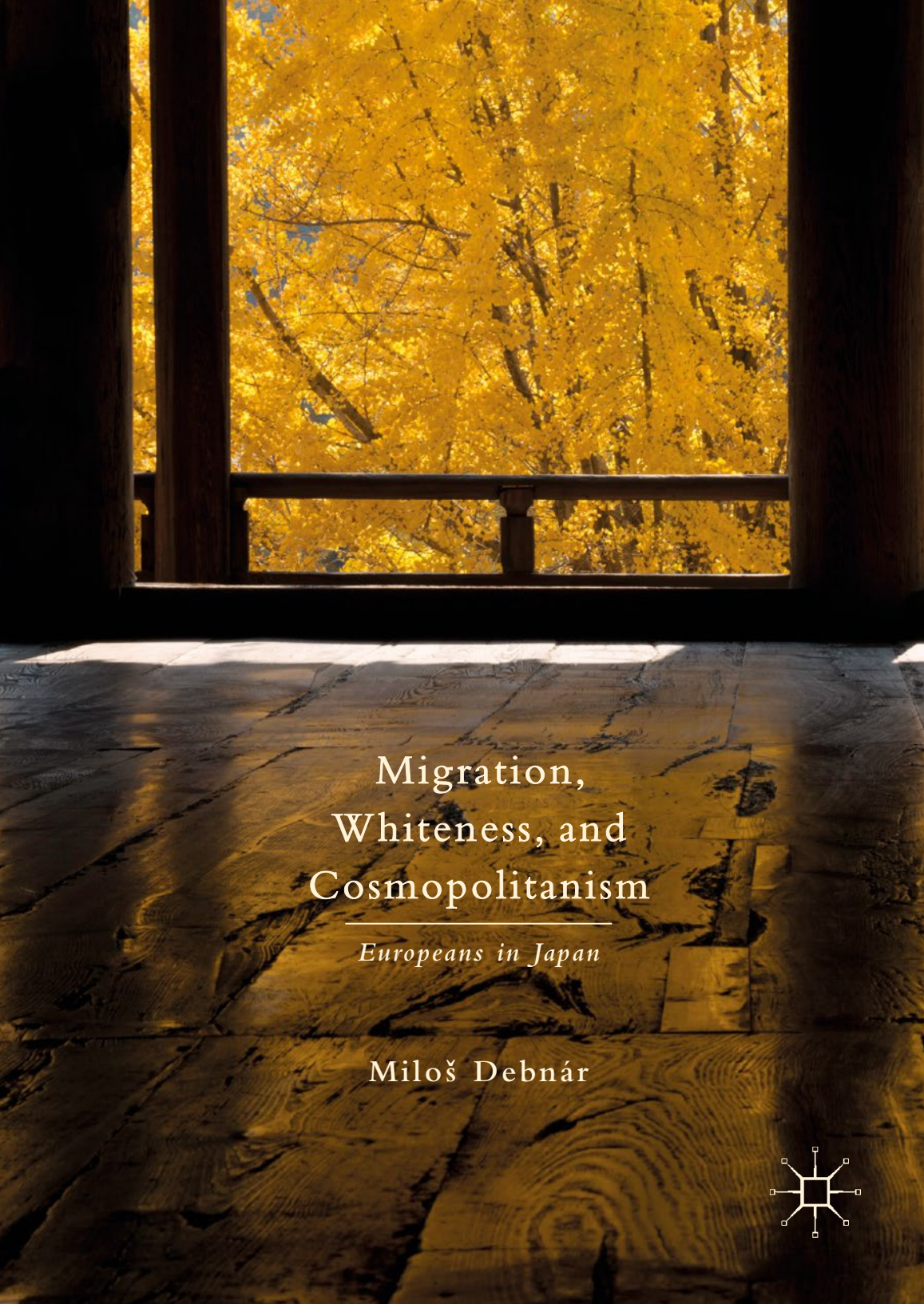

# Migration, Whiteness, and Cosmopolitanism

*Europeans in Japan*

Miloš Debnár

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## Europeans in Japan

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# Contents

# List of Figures

# List of Table

CHAPTER 1

# Introduction

Globalization deeply affects our everyday experiences and challenges our understandings of the contemporary world. Fluid and dynamic global flows in a multitude of 'scapes' move goods, people, ideas, and information around the world, so that we are increasingly confronted by more complexity and diversity in our everyday life (Appadurai 1996). Many of the major contemporary sociological theorists contend that the diversity and complexity brought about through the process of globalization—whatever this complex and disputed concept is seen as representing—play a significant role in structuring the life of increasingly greater numbers of people (Beck 2000; Bauman 1998; Giddens 1998; Ritzer 2007b; Robertson 1992).

A phenomenon that represents one of the main flows or 'scapes', as well as symbolizing advancing globalization itself, is migration. Migration is one of the most 'visible' trends of diversity and complexity in contemporary societies. Indeed, migration can be regarded as one of the typical traits of humans and, thus, any claim regarding contemporary migration should not be oriented toward its novelty per se. What is relatively new and typical for contemporary migration is its volume, increasing complexity, and the extent to which this process affects our societies. With an estimated growth of 58 million people between 1990 and 2010, international migration today concerns more than 200 million people (United Nations 2011) directly and a few billions indirectly, who come into contact with migrants or are left behind by them. Consequently, an increasing number of individuals in various parts of the world tends to be in direct,



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everyday contact with or are affected otherwise by migrants, and, at the same time, unprecedented numbers of people have the opportunity to become migrants themselves as well. This leads to a further 'diversification of diversity' (Hollinger 1995) or 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007a) brought about by migration and it concerns many aspects of the everyday lives of individuals, communities, or states.

Yet, arguably, the issue of 'super-diversity' concerns the phenomenon of migration itself as well. The destination, sending, and also, transit countries become interconnected by more significant human flows in extremely complex ways. In addition to diversifying directions, there is a trend of various patterns of migration becoming more prevalent these days. Besides the more traditional forms of migration, such as low-skilled labor migration or refugees, scholars have started increasingly focusing on less traditional forms of migration, such as high-skilled, marriage, student, or even what has been recently called 'white' migrations. Whereas these forms do not represent a completely new phenomenon, it is again their extent and thus their relative significance for everyday lives in contemporary societies that makes them worthy of our attention.

Nevertheless, these 'new' forms of migration still tend to be understudied and they are far from being able to identify even the most numerous and significant flows. In other words, we still need to identify and describe the various flows of people along the 'ethnoscapes' in order to map the degree of diversity and complexity in the age of globalization. Besides such an exploratory reason, the significance of focusing on such migrations lies in its potential to further develop our theoretical understanding of migration as well as post-migratory situations resulting from previously overlooked migration patterns.

One of the patterns that tended to be rather overlooked, yet poses the potential mentioned above and has gained some attention recently, is an increasing migration of individuals from the Global North, West, or of people of white race. This type of migration has been usually associated mainly with 'the glorious image of free-floating cosmopolitans' (Lan 2011, 1670) that has often been based on presumptions on the types of migration (i.e. mobile, high-skilled elites) or values (i.e. cosmopolitanism), rather than stemming from empirical inquiries into the particularities of such migrations. These migrants were frequently seen or discussed in a priori antithetical terms and, thus, the recent term 'white migrations' is an apparent oxymoron (Lundström 2014, 1). Nevertheless, the increasing diversity of such migrants of supposedly privileged origin or status

has started to be reflected in studies empirically analyzing such white or Western migrants from multiple perspectives—especially in Asia. This study aims to contribute to such recent attempts deconstructing the image of highly privileged migrants.

More particularly, this book focuses on this image as entailing assumptions on specific forms of migration, privilege—both in terms of migration and post-migratory situations—and sociability of migrants. I analyze these three aspects (i.e. migration, privilege, and sociability) in the case of first-generation European migrants in Japan. This case symbolizes the increasing diversity and complexity of contemporary migration in many respects, which, however, has been obscured by more traditional understandings of the migration phenomenon. European migration to Japan in the last two decades increased significantly and even outpaced the total growth of foreign population in Japan, yet it went largely overlooked. Who they are, why they come, and how they actually live in Japan have been strongly affected by assumptions relating the country of origin with the type of migration, white privilege, and cosmopolitanism of elites as opposed to ethnicity. Deconstructing these assumptions based on empirical research unveils who the migrants among developed countries are, their various motivations, and challenges the presumptions of the 'unproblematic' and privileged integration of such migrants, and shows the complex character of social relations that migrants create and sustain in receiving societies. In more general terms, such an inquiry further confronts our understanding of who and what a migrant is.

## Views on Migration and Its Limits

The questions of who a migrant is and what is migration have been—and, in many cases—still are mainly associated with what might be called a 'traditional' view. Among others, some of the main characteristics of this 'traditional' view are that migration is strongly associated with economic motivations of individuals or families, who move from the South to North, or the East to West; migrants are characterized by the importance of ethnicity in the process of integration and are presented as 'victims' of (neoliberal) globalization. Regarding economic motivations, simplistic push–pull theories have developed to include an increasingly broad range of factors, such as relative—rather than absolute—deprivation, family strategies complementing or shaping individual decisions, social networks and their effect on sustaining migration flows, multiple structural factors,

and various intermediating actors and their role in the migration process (Castles and Miller 2009; Massey et al. 1993). However, that international migration is driven by economic inequalities is presented as a fact, tacitly or bluntly, not only by many migration scholars but also by more general theorists as well.[1] In other words, while different factors and their contributions are widely appreciated, there is concord in the literature that the core motivations behind migration decisions are economic, as illustrated in a not-so-outdated statement by James F. Hollifield: 'The rise in immigration is a function of market forces (demand-pull and supply-push) and kinship networks, which reduce the transaction costs of moving from one society to another' (2004, 885). This traditional form of migration has been mostly associated with low-skilled labor migration, and other forms, such as permanent migration or family reunion (except that for refugees), are understood mainly as its derivatives or consequences. This naturally limits the focus of studies to particular directions in which migration flows: particularly from impoverished or underdeveloped regions of the Global South or East to developed parts of the Global North or West.

Furthermore, these migrants were usually associated with the formation of strong ethnic communities. Whereas the ethnic community has not been necessarily seen as the only outcome for migrants as, for example, the assimilation theories suggest, it has been seen as the primary form of social organization of migrants, at least for the first generation of migrants. As has been recently argued, migrants are still too often seen as inclined toward ethnic group formation based on supposedly 'natural' ethnic solidarity (Wimmer 2009). Although such an approach toward migrant groups has been challenged by many influential scholars (Wimmer 2009; Wimmer and Schiller Glick 2003; Glick-Schiller et al. 2006; Amelina and Faist 2012) and there are already attempts to contradict such views (Amelina and Faist 2012; Brubaker 2009), the reality is that a lot of work and representations of migrants remain to be informed by what Rogers Brubaker (2002) has called 'groupism', which envisages bounded and internally homogenous groups of migrants based on their ethnicity, nationality, or race (Brubaker 2009, 28).

Finally, studies of the 'poor' labor migrants from less-developed countries in 'rich' developed countries contribute to the perspective about them as victims—typically that of neoliberal globalization. The connections between migration, inequality, low skills, and victimhood, and other factors, such as continuing settlement and formation of ethnic communities, are further related to a widespread understanding of migration as a problem, not just in politics (Castles 2010), but in general as well.

Nevertheless, except attempts to deconstruct the ethnic understanding of migration in research on migrants' integration and more broadly defined transnational studies[2] that attempt to 'empower' migrants, we need to acknowledge that migration, in its most general terms, defined as the international movement of people that exceeds a certain period of time included—always—a diametrically different type of migrants as well. We can describe this type of migration by various adverbs but, in general, it can be argued that it was mainly perceived as the migration of people of privileged origin and/or gaining a privileged position through migration.

### *The 'Privileged' Migrants*

Indeed, while referring to this type of migration, many authors resort to using different terms—such as 'mobility'—when referring to the international movement of people from supposedly privileged locations because the negative connotations of the word 'migration' would make it an oxymoron (Lundström 2014, 1). Nevertheless, if we perceive migration in terms of movement itself, as suggested above, and do not focus on the meanings attached to this word, we can frame this type of international movement simply as migration.

This group of migrants was depicted as one consisting of 'elites' that was juxtaposed to the previous group in almost every respect. First of all, these so-called privileged migrants are often associated with high-skilled migration. Whereas, like the low-skilled migrants, they were perceived as mainly motivated by economic factors, these motivations were conceptualized in terms of career development, rather than existential problems related to the necessity of increasing personal or family income. In contrast to low-skilled migrants occupying often positions in labor markets that were avoided by local populations, such as the 3D jobs (dirty, dangerous, demanding) or sex work, high-skilled migrants represent 'transnational elites' (Hannerz 1996) fully utilizing the benefits of interconnected labor markets in the global economy. In particular, they are often associated with high-income managerial and professional occupations, often employed in transnational corporations (TNCs) that have power usually exceeding spheres defined by national boundaries, and tended to concentrate in specific spatialities, such as global cities.

Furthermore, their careers often involved multiple mobility experiences, and these have been seen as one of the factors contributing to their cosmopolitan lifestyles. In other words, in contrast to ethnicized views of

traditional migrants, the privileged migrants have been seen as not forming communities based on shared ethnic and/or national origin, but as forming social worlds including multiethnic actors, multicultural practices, and transcending national boundaries.

Eventually, these privileged migrants represent the ultimate 'winners' in the global migration arena. These associations with privileged class and occupational locations rendered them as a largely unproblematic group (cf. Findlay 1996) in terms of their desirability (i.e. brain gain), and consequent position in the labor market of the receiving society as well as in terms of nonproblematic (i.e. nonethnicized) integration in receiving countries. As I will argue in more detail later, this view of unproblematic and privileged migrants often also 'dictated' the origin of these migrants—namely, the West. Moreover, as the notion of West is often used as a synonym to the white race (Bonnett 2004a), spatial and class locations of privileged migrants were further associated (tacitly or implicitly) with whites symbolizing the racial character of the global power hierarchy.

## Super-Diversification and Deconstructing the Image of 'Privileged' Migrants

Many influential scholars suggest that one of the main tasks for migration studies today is accounting for the increasing diversity and complexity of contemporary migration (Vertovec 2007b; Portes 1997; Castles 2007). Nevertheless, as exemplifies the above-mentioned discussion, the diversification of migration in many studies still tends to be limited by what Russell King called 'traditional dyads' (King 2002). King identified some of the most important and often obsolete dichotomies, such as internal versus international, forced versus voluntary, temporary versus permanent, or legal and illegal migrations, and it can be argued that one of those traditional and obsolete dyads is that of 'victims' versus 'privileged', identified above. King further argued that the complexity of contemporary migration—especially emphasizing changing motivations—blurs the division between such dyads. Similarly, Steven Vertovec (2007b) proposed a concept of 'super-diversity' in order 'to underline a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything the country [the UK] has previously experienced' (2007b, 1024). Vertovec pointed out that the diversity of migrants and migration to the UK do not only entail more people coming from more countries, but are increasingly shaped by factors such as migration patterns, gender, religion, region of origin, or age. Although he admits that

both this diversity and interrelations between its different dimensions are not necessarily a new phenomenon, it is 'their scale, historical and policy-produced multiple configuration and mutual conditioning' (p. 1026) that makes them so significant.

Following this trend, there is an increasing scholarship that attempts to account for such a diversity and, in a way, contribute to blurring the 'victimized' migrants versus 'privileged' dichotomy. As already mentioned, there is a significant number of studies in transnational studies that empowers the former, and there is still a very limited, but growing, number of studies on movements from or within the Global North, including the emerging whiteness migration studies, which attempts to deconstruct—and thus, relativize—the image of the intrinsically privileged migrant group. The latter attempts considering the privileged migrants focused mainly on different class locations of such migrants, different forms of migration, or different motivations that are in sharp contrast with the relative homogeneity along such lines identified or implied by earlier accounts.

First of all, it is the origin in terms of class that has been considerably relativized. The picture of transnational elites is strongly associated with an upper-class position, or in terms of the labor market, on the opposite pole to that of low-skilled 'mainstream' migrants. Studies that emerged in recent years challenged such a bipolar understanding by focusing or emphasizing the role of middle-class migrants in contemporary flows (Findlay et al. 2006; e.g. Findlay et al. 2005; King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003 on student migration or Scott 2006 on skilled migration). Similarly, white migrants from Western countries have also been recently depicted as 'middling' (Lehmann 2014) in terms of their class origin—what used to be related to elites in previous accounts as well.

The second significant point made by the studies concerned with white or Western migrants is a shift from the perception of such supposedly privileged migrants as a homogenous group in terms of their migration patterns. Recent studies started to problematize such perception and consequently recognize and analyze various forms of migration in contemporary flows. In other words, it is not only the managerial and professional elites moving within the TNCs or the typical image of the expatriates that are being studied; there are more studies emerging that identify different movements, such as the international movement of students (Findlay et al. 2005, 2006), international marriages (Kofman 2004), retirement migrations (King et al. 2000), tourism as a form of 'mobility' (Urry 2000), lifestyle migrations (Benson and O'Reilly 2009), or a combination of these

(Favell 2008; King 2002). These diverse patterns of migration are then seen as entailing less elite-related occupations in the host society—such as, for example, English teachers in Asian countries (Lan 2011; see also, Farrer 2010; Lehmann 2014). Consequently, many emerging studies on privileged migrants attempt to depict this group of migrants as a heterogeneous group of individuals occupying different social positions rather than representing a homogenous 'elite' group in host societies.

This presents us with a picture of migrants less associated with elites, high skills, or 'pure' cosmopolitanism, yet still a group which often remains to be ultimately framed as an intrinsically privileged one. Arguably, while such studies deconstruct the glorious image of free-floating, high-skilled cosmopolitans to some extent and thus challenge and complement the simplistic dichotomy of 'victimized' versus 'privileged' migrants, at the same time, they eventually reproduce some of the dichotomies that can be seen as their limitations. These limitations outline the focus of this study.

### *Persisting Dyads and Limitations of Deconstructing Attempts*

First of all, while there are emerging studies discussing the pitfalls of categorizing migration patterns from the West as simply high-skilled or that of 'expats', it can be argued that, in many instances, these studies still fail to fully acknowledge the changing character of migration itself. One such an example is Pei-Chia Lan's (2011) study on Westerners in Taiwan, which made a significant contribution to deconstructing the free-floating cosmopolitan elite image. This study emphasizes the need to 'problematise the definition of "high skilled migration"' and unveil the stratified character of this group (Lan 2011, 1670). However, whereas Lan shows some of the inconsistencies of this category, she eventually resorts to framing her subjects who work as, for example, English teachers as high-skilled migrants. In this study, I argue that adoption of such classification eventually leads to reaffirming the privileged positions and reproduces the high-skilled–low-skilled dichotomy with its geographic connotations. Considering alternatives to such bipolarized conceptualizations is one of the issues that need to be focused on in an attempt to deconstruct the image of privileged migrants. Thus, I attempt to further develop on the insights of these studies and not only emphasize the heterogeneous character of the high-skilled migrants but also, further, explore the inconsistencies of lumping various forms of migration into a single category, and propose that we should reflect in the classification of

these migrants (at least) the character of their skills and the way in which these are exerted in the local labor market.

The second point can be framed rather as a limitation than a dichotomy and it concerns the prevalence of economically based explanations of migration not only in the emerging studies on the privileged migrants, but in migration studies in general as well. In general, whether it is the low-skilled or high-skilled migrant, the decision of migrants is analyzed as (or often presumed to) being based on conscious calculations of future income. On the contrary, as already suggested, studies on different forms of migration increasingly include factors other than economic (such as the individualization of societies) and exemplify the complex character of migration decisions and the possibility of including what Russel King (2002) called 'non-orthodox motivations' for migration. According to King, such motivations include a 'love factor' or more 'experiential goals' and thus it can be argued that they show the potential of relativizing such a view. For example, lifestyle migration is usually defined in terms of 'relatively affluent individuals moving (…) to places which, for various reasons, signify for the migrants something loosely defined as quality of life' (Benson and O'Reilly 2009, 621) and are clearly differentiated from the migrants—both high- and low-skilled—looking for economic opportunities (Torkington 2010). While it is still the conscious choice of something better, the economic core of such choices associated traditionally with migration in general is considerably shaken by such views. I attempt to further explore the potential of such views and explore the contingencies leading to migration that question the necessity of framing migration strictly within the means–end schemes of highly rational, conscious calculations.

Another dichotomy that still tends to be reproduced rather than seriously challenged is that of 'victims' versus 'privileged' subjects. Whereas, as already mentioned, some recent studies attempt to deconstruct the image of 'elites' or an intrinsically privileged group, it is usually their subject and/or focal point which reproduces such dichotomy. On the one hand, the focus on high-skilled migrants, 'expats', colonialism, or whiteness is useful for unveiling the different aspects of unequal outcomes for migrants, based on their origin. On the other hand, while this represents a task that can hardly be overlooked, it is actually these frames that ultimately and *a priori* emphasize the privileged positions.[3] In addition to previous discussion of further questioning of frames such as high-skilled migration, I focus on the whiteness that often represents the theoretical

bases for studies on 'privileged' migrants and critically analyze the character of privilege associated with it. Drawing on the case of the USA, where racial hierarchy and its reproduction has the longest history, contemporary significance, and most accumulated research on it, it has been claimed that one of the main tasks for the whiteness studies today should be 'navigating between the long-term staying power of white privilege and the multifarious manifestations of the experience of whiteness' (McDermott and Samson 2005, 256). One of the possible interpretations of this claim in the context of global migration is that besides focusing on the reproduction of white privilege upon migration, we need to consider and acknowledge the heterogeneity of its manifestations as well as its limits. By focusing on the case of migrants in Japan, I attempt to further develop this inquiry and emphasize the limits of white privilege by scrutinizing the social interactions and socioeconomic position of white migrants in the labor market and in a scenario that arguably presents a higher degree of potential capable of relativizing this privilege. While I do acknowledge the role of whiteness as a form of privileged origin bringing 'benefits' that can be capitalized on in the labor market, social interactions, or well-being, at the same time, I attempt to critically question the necessity or inevitability of defining or categorizing these aspects as a (white) privilege.

### *Privileged Migrations and the West*

Finally, privilege often conflates with origin in the West and this can be seen as one of the most limiting aspect of studies on these migrations. Whether it is the study of migrants from the Global North or studies on white migrants, these are almost unanimously limited to migrants from the West. As, for example, Lundström defines the field of white migration research, it 'refers broadly to migration from or within the Western world' (2014, 5). However, whereas such frames allow us to acknowledge the various aspects of reproduction of inequalities in the globalizing world, accounting for historical legacies or exposing the persistence of hegemonies, it is the frame of the West and consequent approach to the frame (e.g. critical whiteness or postcolonial studies) that 'disallows' us to address these migrations otherwise than as being privileged in terms of its form and outcomes.

Considering such an approach to migrations of white people and/or originating in the more developed parts of the world, there raises the question of how we can actually define the West in the face of changing

power relations of the contemporary world. Is it or should it be defined in terms of high economic development, particular historical legacies such as European colonialism or capitalism, geography, political alliances, representations, or particular national and racial origins? Besides the 'obvious' subjects, such as the North Americans or British, do—or can—we include the economically struggling European countries, such as Greece, Spain, Portugal, or Italy? At the same time, do we—or should we—include European countries that in the last two decades significantly developed economically, such as the Czech Republic, Slovenia, or Poland when we talk about Western migrants in, for instance, Asia? If we move beyond the methodological nationalism that would limit the notion of the West to particular countries, is it plausible to include in the discussion of Western migrants in Asia more affluent Russians or Latvian migrants?

Indeed, similar to the concept of whiteness, the West represents a dynamic and multidimensional, rather than static, concept having different meanings in particular time, social or geographic locations. Thus, in order to address the limitations based on the geographic and/or narrative specifications of the research subject to the West, rather than attempting to (re)define such a concept, I focus on the case of white Europeans as a broader and inclusive subject, representing migrants that can be conceived of as privileged in terms of their origin in more developed parts of the world, class, and/or race. In other words, it is primarily the whiteness of such subjects, as well as relatively high economic development in many of the areas in Europe that connotes the privileged migrant group.

## The Case: Contemporary European Migration to Japan

In attempting to account for the increasing diversity and complexity in the sphere of so-called privileged migration, in general, and that of flowing toward Japan, in particular, I focus on the case of contemporary migration of Europeans to Japan and their position in this society. Whereas Europe represents a variety of countries, regions, and peoples, it can be related to concepts of the Global North and whiteness that represent a widely overlooked subject in migration studies in general (Fechter and Walsh 2010; Fechter 2007; Findlay et al. 1996), and in Japan, particularly.

It can be argued that in order to account for the experience of 'Western', Global North, or white migrants in Japan, we should look for a subject that is more tangible in terms of numbers or historical legacies, such as,

for example, native English-speaking foreigners in Japan.[4] Nonetheless, as already suggested, such a definition can be limiting in terms of possible explanations, and obscure the diversity of such migration and its outcomes. It is the relative internal diversity of the concept of Europe that allows us to unveil the variety of migration patterns and (re)interpret the social and economic consequences of these migrations in a new light. Ultimately, by including subjects that might be questioned as representatives of the privileged migrants in some respects (e.g. national origin), I attempt to further blur the line dividing migrants into privileged and unprivileged or victimized ones.

At the same time, considering a relatively high degree of diversity hidden behind this concept, it is necessary to limit the possible subjects of this study in order to achieve at least some degree of consistency and agreement on the subject that can faithfully represent privileged migrants. As already suggested, rather than presuming any relationship between the privileged group and particular nationalities and defining the subject of this study in wider geographic terms, I limit it in terms of race and migration patterns. One of the characteristics that can be identified as a significant factor that renders some migrants as privileged—or at least, not *a priori* stigmatized—is the race, or more particularly, whiteness. Whiteness is an important—yet not uncontested—category in Japan and its historical legacies as well as contemporary connotations entail positive and normative meanings that contribute to a favorable perception of such migrants in general.

Another characteristic of migrants that should be regarded when attempting to frame them as privileged is their socioeconomic background and particular forms of migration. However, as already argued, this does not mean focusing on elites but, rather, on middle-class migrants and particular forms of migration. Thus, instead of attempting to achieve such consistency by presuming relative socioeconomic status and migration forms of the potential subjects by their nationality, I try to overcome such methodological nationalism by focusing on migrants of middle-class origin. Furthermore, I have limited my subject to those individuals whose migration is not obviously associated with more stigmatized migration forms, such as low-skilled migrants, sex workers, or 'mail order brides'. In particular, this means that I did not regard in my analysis of migration motivations or social position within the Japanese society the cases of Russian-speaking hostesses or 'mail-brides' settling in Japan,[5] which clearly represent a case of white European migration, but at the same time,

contradict the picture of privileged migrants in terms of migration pattern, and oftentimes, in terms of socioeconomic background as well.

### *Migration to Japan and Europeans in Japan*

Despite the relative lack of migration in Japan and it being seen as a rather 'negative' case (Bartram 2000) in this context, the increase and diversification of the foreign population (i.e. migrants) in Japan gained a lot of attention from the early 1990s. The combination of economic and demographic factors as well as Japan's effort to 'internationalize' in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in more profound transformations of immigration control and consequent growth of the foreign population since the 1990s. The most illustrative case of these changes was an influx of second- and third-generation *Nikkei*[6] South Americans (mainly Brazilians) (Higuchi and Tanno 2003; Kajita et al. 2005; Komai 2001; Tsuda 2003), but the growth of the foreign population in Japan was further fueled by the creation of other side doors for officially refused low-skilled labor (Akashi 2010; Kondō 2008; Surak 2008) and the systematic marriage migration of (mainly) Asian women (Kamoto 2008; Shukuya 1988). Although the growth of the foreign population has recorded a slight decrease due to the global recession and the triple disaster in the Tōhoku region, it has rebounded back to growth since 2013. Today, the number of foreign residents in Japan surpasses two million (Ministry of Justice 2015)—more than double the pre-1990s level.

Similarly, whereas the presence of Europeans[7] in Japan has a long history, the European population in Japan recorded significant growth only in recent decades. While the more than 60,000 Europeans living in Japan today still only represent around 2.8 percent of the total foreign population, their number has tripled since the end of the 1980s. This growth is illustrated in Fig. 1.1, which actually represents a faster growth rate than that of the total foreign population in Japan.[8]

At the same time, Fig. 1.1 indicates that the national composition of the European population in Japan has changed considerably as well. On the one hand, the majority of Europeans today still come from Western countries that have represented an absolute majority in the postwar years. However, while their number is still increasing, their share reduced by 20 percent between 1988 and 2010 and the number of increasingly mobile migrants from ex-communist European countries as well as other nationals from North and South Europe grew disproportionally faster.

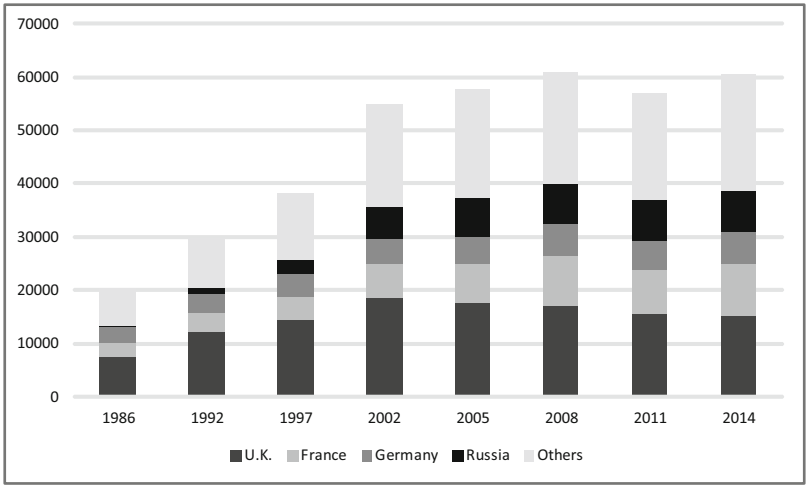


**Fig. 1.1** Number of registered Europeans living in Japan and the main countries of origin (1986–2014). *Source*: Based upon data from the Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan for years 1986–2014 (Ministry of Justice, Immigration Bureau)

Consequently, there are considerable numbers of non-Western European EU citizens (21 percent) as well as Russians (17 percent) living in Japan today. This case, thus, aptly illustrates not only the growth but also the changing character of contemporary migration in Japan, particularly its diversification along the lines of nationality or ethnicity.

Despite these changes, historical background, significance, and the fact that many such migrants prolong their stays and settle in Japan, European or white (and Western) migrants represent a heavily understudied group. At first glance, this might be justified by their relatively low numbers, especially when we consider the fact that they come from more than one country. Yet, while the population size seems to play a significant role in deciding the subject of migration studies and popular discourse (following the group threat theory), the claim that it should be the only criteria cannot be sustained either. Moreover, as the case of Americans in Japan clearly indicates, the numbers are definitely not the main factor that decides why scholars, media, politicians, or general public focus on particular migrants. Foreign residents from the USA actually form the sixth largest national group in Japan, yet one would find more studies on less numerous groups

such as the Vietnamese (e.g. Kawakami 2001; Ogino 2013) or Pakistanis (e.g. Fukuda 2012; Kudō 2008).[9] This suggests that in combination with 'significant' numbers of registered residents (however it is defined), it is the country (or region) of origin—that is linked to other characteristics such as race or expected socioeconomic status—or migration pattern that dictates the subject of migration studies inquiry.

Discussions regarding migration and ethnic minorities in Japan are, in reality, often limited to few nationals. When describing what Lee with colleagues called 'Japan's diversity dilemmas' (Lee et al. 2006)—that is, the increasing ethnic diversity of people residing in Japan that still tends to be understood as an ethnically highly homogenous country—many authors limit their discussion to a handful of national populations representing the 'victims' or 'empowered' victims, coming from (a relatively few) Global South countries.[10] This is related to the above-mentioned general view of migration as a problem and migrants as stigmatized groups or 'victims'. While Pakistanis or Vietnamese can be seen to correspond to such a group, Americans or Europeans representing the developed, affluent, and predominantly white 'others' do not easily fit these stereotypes and their cases are rarely being addressed. Although it is necessary to acknowledge that the situation of migrants from regions such as Europe or North America in Japan are sometimes addressed as well, besides being very few in number, these studies assume—rather than answer—questions of their migration or socioeconomic status in Japan, based on the dichotomist views of migration previously introduced. This indicates the need for further, empirically based inquiries that answer questions of how and why these people move to Japan as well as critically assess their position in Japan.

## Europe, Japan, and White Migrations

As the above-mentioned discussion suggests, besides this exploratory objective of this study aimed at unveiling the increasing diversity of migration to Japan, this study attempts to contribute to studies dealing with so-called privileged migrants and, particularly, white migrants in general. First of all, while there are emerging studies that, from various perspectives, deconstruct the 'glorious' image of white migrants, a more integrative perspective that would question the presumptions of such an image regarding migration patterns and its motivations, critically reconsider the intrinsic character of privilege associated with them, and describe their supposedly 'cosmopolitan' sociability is lacking. This study is an attempt

of such an account. At the same time, I realize that focusing on a more overall picture means also forsaking, in some places, a deeper and more profound analysis on all the aspects and dimensions of the subject for the sake of brevity. Nevertheless, I believe that such an integrative perspective can help us to simultaneously understand the various aspects of such migration and can serve as a starting point for more elaborate discussions. Unveiling various aspects of experiences and lives of white European migrants in Japan is especially important if we consider that even basic research on the supposedly privileged groups of migrants is lacking and this topic is highly understudied in the case of Japan (as well as other regions). As such, this book should provide a basis for further discussions of various forms of migration, experiences of whiteness, and social relationships of such migrants in Japan.

In other words, such a more holistic approach toward the subject of this study should outline various aspects of increasing diversity, or indeed, super-diversity of migration in Japan. As such, this book is also about Japan and the ways it copes with the increasing migration from a largely overlooked or ignored perspective. An understanding of Japan as the local context is crucial for the analysis of the migration-shaping factors or experiences of whiteness and, thus, this book provides some insights into questions of how Japan is adapting to advancing globalization, in general, or what the important historical legacies and contemporary meanings associated with whiteness and West are. Again, like the overall goal of this study, narrowing down the focus of a study was prioritized over providing insights on various aspects of white migrations. Nonetheless, the aim, in terms of dealing with Japan, was to provide the necessary background and fully acknowledge the role of the local context in shaping the white migrations rather than to write a book dedicated to Japan per se.

In this regard, it is important also to emphasize that this study aims to contribute to studies on white migrations by selection of its subject—both in terms of sending and receiving countries. As already suggested, few (if any) studies have attempted to step out of the frame of the West when considering privileged migrations of whites or people from certain developed countries located on the European continent, North America, and Oceania. Considering more inclusive subjects should allow us to unveil various migration patterns, bring us insights into the experience of whiteness and social lives of these migrants that might remain obscured if we focus only on a single country or particular regions such as the West. At the same time, such a broader definition of the research subject allows

us to account for migrants who would remain 'invisible' because of their low(er) numbers—what should be one of the concerns in environments that are characterized by the increasing diversity of nationalities and ethnicities represented in the receiving societies.

The subject of this study is specific as for the selection of the destination country as well. Increasingly more studies concerned with the movement of migrants from the West are focusing on the flows to non-Western countries. Nevertheless, within Asia, it is often China, Singapore, or Hong Kong which are depicted as the countries/cities of opportunities and the Western colonial legacy continues to shape the position of such migrants in these regions (Fechter and Walsh 2010). The case of Japan has not been addressed in this research, yet some of its peculiarities make it an intriguing subject for such discussion. Japan can still be considered as the most developed non-Western country, yet is over its peak and lacks some of the opportunity factor when compared, for example, to China. Moreover, it lacks a clear Western colonial legacy, and while proclaiming an open-door policy toward high-skilled migrants, their numbers remain relatively low, together with the general foreign population. These factors underscore the relevance of questions regarding migration motivation or explanation of growth in the migration of white or European subjects to Japan in the last two and half decades. In addition, as I will argue, the economic development of Japan, in combination with the strong myth of ethnic homogeneity and persistence and importance of 'othering' in contemporary Japan, represents a relativizing potential for questioning the extent to which the white privilege can be reproduced.

The picture of migration patterns, socioeconomic positions, and sociability of supposedly privileged migrants I attempt to describe in this study represents not only an attempt to deconstruct the preconceptions associated with these subjects, but through such deconstruction, I aim to further blur some of the 'traditional dyads' still seen in many migration studies. In particular, it is blurring of the confines of victimized or underprivileged migrants from 'poor' countries and privileged, often white migrants from the developed world that should further relativize the latter and empower the former. However, it needs to be emphasized that this is not an attempt to 'victimize' the subject of this study and imply that migration *always* brings negative outcomes. This study should be, rather, understood as an endeavor that highlights the increasing diversity and complexity of migration in the globalized world as well as one that further unveils the limits to the capability of accepting and coping with such diversity within

a particular nation-state. Thus, the contribution of this study is oriented toward the increasing (yet still understudied) scholarship on 'privileged'—or more particularly, white—migrations and, at the same time, toward scholarship on migration to Japan, where prior attempts to analyze this sort of migration and migrants has been very limited.

### *Outline of the Book*

The book is divided into three parts and seven chapters. The first part, which follows this introduction, deals with the migration of Europeans to Japan and consists of two chapters. Chapter 2 analyzes available statistical data and outlines a brief history of European migration to Japan from the nineteenth century that led to the first peak in the prewar years, through a period of slow growth after World War II. The rest of the chapter consists of an analysis of the rapid growth in European population in Japan since the late 1980s. The analysis of statistical data problematizes two aspects of popular presumptions about European migration to Japan: (1) explanatory power of the dichotomy of high-skilled professionals from the West and female entertainers (or brides) from some of the ex-Soviet republics or the East, (2) the category of what is deemed to represent high-skilled migration. It indicates the existence of various forms of migration shaping this growth, including marriage-related migration from various regions or student migration.

Chapter 3 further explores such a variety of migration patterns and attempts an explanation of this growth through an analysis of the empirical data collected for this study. Detailed analysis of three cases of migration from former Czechoslovakia to Japan in different periods illustrates the main factors discussed throughout the rest of the chapter. More general discussion of different forms of high-skilled migration, international marriages, and student migration then identifies the complex interplay of changing structural factors and social changes that has affected the increasing numbers of Europeans migrating to Japan. The chapter emphasizes the role of social changes, and that of individualization of societies in particular, in attempting to understand the meaning of migrants' narratives about choosing Japan despite a relative lack of opportunities, many constraints, and questionable outcomes.

The second part of the book, which consists of two chapters, deals with the integration and, particularly, with the extent and at the same time the limits of the white privilege in this process. Chapter 4 focuses on the

ways in which the white privilege is reproduced through migration and how this privilege, as a form of cultural capital, is converted into other forms of capital that eventually benefits its bearers in terms of their socio-economic position. This chapter accentuates the important role of English (and other forms of cultural capital) as a form of capital that is often reinvented upon migration and of significant symbolical meaning in the local context. At the same time, the inclusion of non-(typically) Western and non-English-speaking participants in this study reveals to us the extent to which English is associated with images of whiteness and the image of 'global'. However, the discussion of gender and the white privilege reveals the gendered outcomes of such privilege and implies the necessity of elaborating its limits as well as the local context and meanings of whiteness, race, and racial hierarchy in Japan.

Chapter 5 further explores these limits and meanings of whiteness. Analysis of the local context of whiteness in Japan emphasizes not only its hegemonic power but the 'relativizing' potential of this case as well. First of all, the limits of whiteness as an intrinsically privileging identity is demonstrated in the analysis of everyday experiences of differentiation. Furthermore, the chapter focuses on how such experiences are translated into limited job opportunities or other restrictions in the labor market. Limited labor market mobility is exemplified by various experiences of the interviewees who struggled to escape the niches based on the expectations of their (not necessarily high) skills. Consequently, the chapter argues that it is necessary not only to acknowledge the 'double-edged' character of the white privilege (Lan 2011) but focus on the contrasting outcomes of the whiteness in a more extensive way and attempt to overcome the confines of the 'racial grammar' (Bonilla-Silva 2011) depicting whiteness as intrinsically associated with the privilege.

The final part considers the various meanings and representations of the presumed cosmopolitanism of the privileged migrants in Chapter 6. Through an analysis of social networks, everyday practices, and discourses of belongings, this chapter attempts to deconstruct such an image of 'free-floating cosmopolitans' by referring to aspects of their sociability that can be ascribed to or be interpreted both as ethnic and cosmopolitan tendencies. The chapter focuses on the cosmopolitan orientations found among many Europeans as well as the meanings and roles of ethnicity in their everyday lives. Cosmopolitan tendencies of the Europeans in Japan are consequently depicted as a 'deformed', lived practice. Various cases and aspects of everyday lives illustrate how the social lives of European

migrants in Japan demonstrate tendencies toward shared humanity and ethnic identity at the same time. Thus, such cosmopolitan orientations are depicted as part of the integration process into the local society rather than (over)emphasizing integration into free-floating spaces of transnationals.

The book ends with a Conclusion that sums the main findings of this study and provides a discussion on the implications of addressing privileged migrants. As this chapter argues, the particular picture revealed in the previous chapters leads to further questions in the discussion on immigration and integration, in general, and in the case of Japan, in particular. Moreover, it urges us to reconsider the question of who should be understood as a migrant, what we should understand under the term 'migration', and what can we understand under the term (relatively) 'privileged migrants'.

## Data and Method

The primary source of data for this study consists mainly of in-depth life story interviews with 57 subjects that were conducted over two periods. The first round of interviews and related data collection were held between August 2008 and October 2009 and focused only on Czechs and Slovaks. These interviews served mainly as a pilot study for the identification and refinement of themes and methods. The main body of the data for this study was collected between July 2011 and May 2012. During this period, 46 subjects from all parts of Europe were interviewed. Interviews were conducted in English, Slovak, Czech, and Japanese. Transcriptions used in this book are author translations to English or English originals without corrections of non-standard grammar, slang, or dialects. In addition to interviews, I collected other data, primarily through informal meetings and interviews that were recorded in the form of field notes, as well as data from SNS sites, related movies, newspaper articles, blogs, and other discussions.

Interviewees for the study were selected by multinode snowball sampling that was exponential and discriminatory. In order to map the various ways and experiences of migration and integration, a relatively extensive and diverse sample was necessary. Thus, subjects were approached through multiple access points (or nodes) that, at the same time, allowed for controlling, to some extent, the bias in social networks often caused by regular snowball sampling. However, such an approach would entail a significant risk of creating 'a collection of anecdotes' that might have limited

explanatory power for such broad issues as migration flows and integration. In order to address this issue, connecting lines that would merge various 'anecdotes' into a more coherent account is necessary as well. For this purpose, during the course of data acquisition and their analysis, a theoretical sample used in grounded theory approaches in qualitative research (Glaser and Strauss 1967) was formulated in terms of higher geographical units, representing the countries of origin, residence status in terms of visas, and gender composition. Consequently, this resulted in an alteration of the basic snowball sampling method and potential interviewees were gradually selected (or discriminated). This approach allowed me to aim for a diverse group of migrants, and, at the same time, left me enough potential for discovering common patterns among them. Nevertheless, it should be noted that this approach does not imply introducing probability sampling and thus justifying claims about the general population.

The resulting sample from the second, main collection period consists of diverse individuals coming from 22 European countries and residing in various parts of Japan but mainly in Kansai region (40 cases). Most numerous were the nationals of the UK (five) with other five Western Europeans, followed by four Italians and four Ukrainians, but there were individuals from such countries as Bulgaria (two), Romania, Poland (three), Czech (three), Spain (three), Greece, Sweden, or Finland. They were engaged in various occupations, ranging from that of English teachers, graduate students, through housewives, to engineers, or university faculty. Men (25) were more represented than women (18) and their share corresponds to the actual composition of the European population in Japan (59 and 41 percent, respectively, in 2013). Since the study of integration and social networks in Japan is one of the main themes in this study, interviewees living in Japan for a longer time were preferred over those who recently arrived. Thus, although the length of stay ranged from a couple of months to more than two decades, there were only three cases staying in Japan shorter than three years and the majority of the interviewees had lived in Japan for more than five (32) or even ten (17) years. This is reflected in the average age of the interviewees, which was 37 years at the time of interview. As for their education, although it was not used as a sampling criterion, the sample consisted of highly educated migrants holding university or post-graduate degrees, with an exception of only two cases.

Finally, in terms of the particular method, all interviews (including in the first round) were transcribed and, with other data, further analyzed using computer assisted qualitative data analysis software, NVivo (version 9).

However, by the adoption of computer software in the process of qualitative data analysis, I do not imply the usage of quantitative or statistical methods or interpretation of results in such a way. The analysis of qualitative data in this study is based strictly on their contextual interpretations.

## Notes

1. For example, sociologist George Ritzer in his discussion on the relationship between globalization and increasing inequality argued that whereas the idea that globalization causes increasing inequality has been contested, there is a consensus regarding the effect of inequality on migration (Ritzer 2007a).
2. Against this 'traditional' view of 'victimized' migrants emerged so-called transnational studies that has been dealing with similar flows or subjects, yet attempted for an image of more 'empowered' migrants. Especially in terms of their integration and settlement, these studies have 'documented the everyday realm of sociability of impoverished and disempowered mobile people' (Schiller et al. 2011, 405) and discussed critical alternatives to strongly ethnicized views. Moreover, by focusing on issues such as how these migrants contribute to their countries of origin through financial remittances, circular migration, trade, or how they are involved in the societies through social influence and political activity (for an overview see, e.g. Vertovec 2009), in a way, the agenda of transnational studies actually empowers the 'victimized' subjects of migration.
3. As an exemption in this trend can be regarded the aspect emphasizing the role of gender in different outcomes for these migrants (e.g. Lan 2011; Lehmann 2014; Lundström 2014).
4. Indeed, this is an approach adopted by some of the very few studies on a similar subject in Japan (e.g. Komisarof 2012).
5. Their case has been, to some extent, discussed in the Japanese media as well as academia and is addressed in more detail in Chap. 1.
6. The word means 'people of Japanese origin' and is used for descendants of Japanese migrants abroad.
7. In terms of nationality, by 'Europe' or 'Europeans', I refer to people whose nationality is of countries on the European part of the Eurasian continent, including Russia. Similar classification is also used in the statistics on foreign residents in Japan by the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice. However, in contrast to these statistics that represent the official categorization of Europe in terms of migration to Japan, I do not consider here ex-Soviet republics lying on the Asian part of the Eurasian continent, such as Kyrgyzstan or Kazakhstan. It can be argued that these republics are still figuring in statistics as part of Europe only for the sake of data consistency and do not represent (to a similar degree) what is usually referred to as 'Europe'.

8. The total population of foreigners between the years 1988 and 2008 has increased by about 2.3 times and that of Europeans around 2.8 times.
9. There were 49,815 registered residents from the USA in Japan in 2012, compared to 44,690 Vietnamese or 10,849 Pakistanis.
10. This applies to the research concerned with the so-called newcomers or foreigners coming to Japan since the late 1980s/early 1990s. In terms of migration and related issues, there is also extensive research on the historical minorities that have been formed during Japan's expansion in World War II.

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PART I

# Migration

CHAPTER 2

# European Migration to Japan: Historical Roots and Recent Development

As already suggested in the introduction, there is debate about whether the apex of the global order, represented by the 'cosmopolitan elites' (or what Zygmunt Bauman (1998) just calls the 'global elites') is coherent and whether there are also 'disempowered' winners deconstructing their idealized picture. These are seen as migrants from certain spatialities (i.e. the West) and/or of certain race (i.e. white) and were strongly associated with an image of the 'elites' who were supposedly high-skilled migrants enjoying various privileges within the receiving societies and living in free-floating cosmopolitan social worlds.

Perspectives on global migration emphasizing its diversification indicate that the question of deconstructing such an image needs to be considered. As highlighted by Vertovec (2007b) and Castles and Miller (1993), acknowledgement of the (super-) diversity of migration and migrants should account for different populations in terms of their origin, directions, gender, or religion. Besides geographical location, the diversity of origin in terms of other locations, such as class or race, should be considered as well. Consequently, the question of diversity among the so-called elites, whose statuses were ascribed only on the basis of their origin in geographical (i.e. the Global North) and racial terms, represents the fundamental element of the inquiry of this study and, as such, an inquiry that can contribute to our understanding of the extent and dimensions of the diversity of global migration.



M. Debnár, *Migration, Whiteness, and Cosmopolitanism*,
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In the following section, I look deeper into the dimensions of the so-called privileged or white migrants regarding their migration. This chapter starts with an introduction of the case of Japan and how it has been affected by migration in recent decades, in general. Then, I focus on the particular case of this study and start with outlining the historical roots of the European presence in Japan before analyzing available statistical evidence on their growing presence in recent decades. I conclude with a classification of the contemporary growth patterns that are based on an analysis of statistical data. This classification is used as a point of departure for further discussion on the motivations and particularities of the migration patterns seen among my interviewees in the following chapter.

## Globalization, Migration, and Japan

The process of globalization in Japan (as well as in other countries) has been seen as bringing a significant number of 'newcomer foreigners'. Until the beginning of the 1990s, foreign nationals residing in Japan counted for less than one million, most of whom were Koreans[1] of first to third generations who remained and settled in Japan after World War II. Japan has often been presented as an exceptional case among the most developed countries, the majority of which chose to adopt open immigration policies in the second half of the twentieth century to support their economic growth (e.g. Bartram 2000). Japan represented—and in many respects, still does represent—a case that did not follow the path of many developed countries in allowing the entry of those who initially were considered immigrant guest workers in order to fuel the postwar economic development (e.g. Castles 1986). This was possible mainly because of a relatively late first demographic transition and mobilization of the workforce from the rural areas.

Yet, around the second half of the 1980s, the economic situation and various social changes in Japan caused an acute labor shortage, and migration started to be regarded as a possible solution to this (Kajita et al. 2005; Kajita 1994; Komai 2001). The relaxation of the immigration policy by the amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Control Act of 1990 has been reflected in an influx of foreign nationals that continued until 2008 and declined only slightly since. While, with a foreign population of less than 2 percent, Japan still has one of the smallest shares of migrants among the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (OECD 2011) and its immigration policy remains

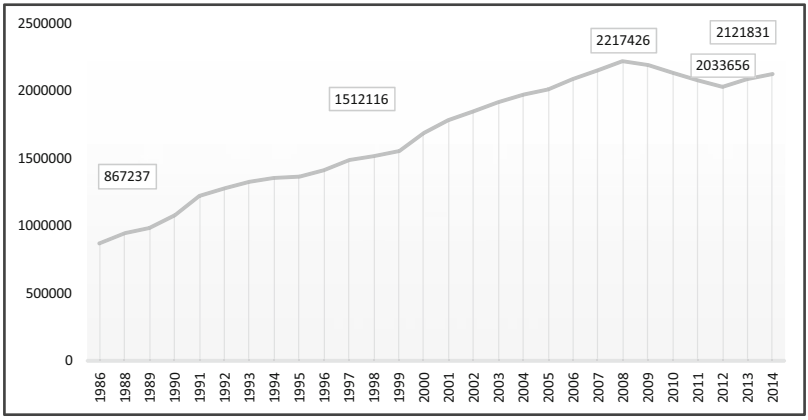


**Fig. 2.1** Number of foreign residents in Japan, 1986–2014. *Source*: Based upon data from Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan for years 1986–2014 (Ministry of Justice, Immigration Bureau)

relatively closed and selective (Akashi 2010; Kondō 2008; Ogawa 2011), the fact that the number of foreign nationals residing in Japan has more than doubled in about 20 years represents a drastic shift in Japanese demography and society. As Fig. 2.1 illustrates, except a few years after the onset of the global economic crisis in 2007, the number of registered foreigners in Japan has been constantly growing and reached 2.2 million in 2008.

One of the major factors contributing to this growth has been, controversially, a demand for officially denied low-skilled labor (Douglass and Roberts 2003; Kajita 1994; Iyotani 2001; Komai 1995). The legal framework enabling this increase is based on the above-mentioned amendment of 1990, which did not allow low-skilled labor immigration, but introduced many back doors for it (for an overview, see Akashi 2010; Kondō 2008; Surak 2008). Low-skilled migration is the main migratory type—arguably, both in numbers and in the amount of scholarly attention—in regard to both historic and more contemporary migration flows. This type is often referred to as labor migration (*rōdō imin*) and is one of the most commonly seen frameworks for conceptualizing contemporary migration to Japan.

A widely discussed case, which actually became one of the symbols of migration in the age of globalization in Japan, is that of *Nikkei* Brazilians, who were allowed to enter and stay in Japan without restrictions on their activities on the basis of their descent, but who are mostly engaging in

the so-called 3D jobs (dirty, dangerous, difficult) as low-skilled labor (e.g. Kajita 1994; Tsuda 2003). Theories explaining their migratory movement have developed considerably over recent decades, and are nested in mainstream migration theories (Fukuda 2012, 20–26; Kajita et al. 2005, 15).

Similar to general migration theories, previous studies on Japan focused on different factors shaping migration from Brazil (and other South American countries) to Japan and not only on simple push–pull factors. In terms of the dual labor theory, *Nikkei* Brazilians were seen as the source of labor for unwanted 3D jobs in a Japan that was suffering from labor shortages, especially in the 1980s (Kajita 1994). Such a necessary pull factor has been supplemented with the push force of the declining Brazilian economy with mounting external debt, hyperinflation, and high rates of unemployment. Although the *Nikkei* population in Brazil has been associated rather with the middle class and not as part of the most stricken by the worsening economic situation, it was relative deprivation that formed their migration decisions (e.g. JILPT 1995; Tsuda 2003).

Besides these basic push–pull factors, the role of the state, particularly of the immigration policy, is stressed in virtually every study on the topic. Authors—for example, Naoto Higuchi—focused further on the migration systems and highlighted, among other factors, the role of meso-level institutions in the migration process that have been crucial to sustain migratory flows (Higuchi and Tanno 2003; Kajita et al. 2005). The system of the transnational migration circle between Japan and Brazil involves social networks, but mainly consists of the developed system of labor broker companies that 'furnishes everything for work, residence, or other infrastructure related to life' in Japan (Miyajima and Kano 2002, 16).

This gives us a more complex and all-encompassing picture of the migration process, but the motivations for migration have been seen, and empirically proven to be mainly economic. At the same time, it is necessary to note that the specific nature of the *Nikkei*—that is, their ethnic background—led some authors to focus on 'more complicated sets of factors than simple economic drives' (Yamanaka 2003, 139). Keiko Yamanaka argued that contrary to the economically motivated mainstream, the second generation of the *Nikkei* Brazilians can be culturally motivated (i.e. a desire to see the ancestral homeland) and there are also other subtle differences in motivations along ethnicity, class, gender, and age lines (ibid., see also Tsuda 2003). Nevertheless, whereas these types of 'different' motivations tend to be mentioned, the main focus and fundamental analysis of the shaping factors remains essentially economic.

It can be argued that economic motivations are seen to be the dominant factors explaining migration to Japan in other studies as well. Like the Brazilians, Filipino women working in the so-called entertainment (read 'night-life') industry are also seen as *dekasegi*[2] (referred to also as *Japa-yuki*[3]) coming to realize their dreams in Japan (Yamatani 1992). Similar to the case of the *Nikkei*s, in addition to economic pull factors, Tsuzaki (2010) describes the process that led to the boom in the female entertainment business in 1990s Japan and stresses the role of immigration legislation, recruitment agencies, and the social networks of the Filipino women.

The fate of many of those women lead us to another significant source of migration to Japan that has also been identified in previous studies—namely, that of international marriages. Many of the (ex-)entertainers actually married Japanese men after coming to Japan and represent what can be called a 'migrate and met' type of international marriage. In this type of migration, the primary cause for migration still remains labor (Piper 2003). Nevertheless, there is a substantial number of migrants that migrate primarily because of marriage with a Japanese national.[4] As the majority of them come from Asia, the studies are usually concerned with the so-called Asian brides (Kamoto 2008; Piper 1997, 2003; Shukuya 1988). These are often seen as driven by hypergamy and their economic 'incentives' (i.e. push factors) are facilitated by Japan-related factors, such as a lack of brides in the depopulated rural areas of Japan (i.e. pull factors), increasing educational attainment of Japanese women, or a systematic network of brokers (Kamoto 2008). Interestingly enough, other forms of international marriages, especially between Western men and Japanese women, have been widely acknowledged as well, yet these types of marriages are not approached from the perspective of theories explaining the migration process (cf. e.g. Kamoto 2008; Piper 2003).

Other sources of low-skilled labor[5] have been identified among international students, or the Technical Intern Training Program (Akashi 2014; Komai 2001; Kuptsch and Oishi 1995; Liu-Farrer 2011a; Oishi 1995; Surak 2008), coming not only from South-East or East Asia but also from countries such as Iran (Morita 2003) and Pakistan (Kudō 2008). The emerging scholarship on student migration to Japan, who represent yet another symbol of globalizing Japan, also point to the need to account for this type of international mobility as a form of migration. Whereas they are sojourners who always count on the possibility of return, their stays are relatively long and many continue living in Japan after finishing

their studies, making them a more permanent[6] part of Japanese society as well (Tsubotani 2008, 2012). Moreover, although seen again as primarily economically motivated migrants, especially those from China—as Gracia Liu-Farrer advocates, for example (2009, 2011a, b)—they do not necessarily provide just a source of low-skilled labor, but also that of a more skilled labor.

High-skilled professionals are a type of migrants highly praised by the Japanese government, whose numbers, however, are considerably limited. A view of high-skilled migration as a type that encompasses just about everything that was not recognized to be low-skilled migration, including such varied categories as professionals, highly educated migrants, missionaries, and students (Koser and Salt 1997), renders it as a preferable type for the Japanese government, thereby denying low-skilled labor migration. Since the Second Basic Plan for Immigration Control from 2002, the Ministry of Justice clearly voiced the need to accept more foreign workers with high skills, and this has since become the priority of subsequent policy planning and recent immigration control amendments. As a result of these endeavors, Oishi recently argued that 'Japan could, in theory, attract highly skilled migrants under its current immigration scheme since it already includes those crucial factors, such as fast family reunification, permanent residency potential, and no labor market test' (Oishi 2012, 1081). Nevertheless, she points to the fact that despite having these crucial elements, Japan fails to attract sufficient numbers of high-skilled migrants, and that their numbers are still considerably low.[7] Oishi further explains some of the factors that are behind the reality of Japan as a rather unattractive destination for high-skilled, career-oriented professionals. She emphasizes a lack of demand by the Japanese corporations for such a labor force, as well as the unattractiveness of Japan for the supply side. She focuses on the explanations of the latter and based on qualitative research, she argues that the particularities of Japan's managerial style, promotion system, work ethics, education, and workplace and family integration difficulties deter many of the potential migrants from choosing (or staying longer) in Japan.

Albeit incomplete, the short review of how contemporary migration to Japan has been accounted for in previous studies shows that political and economic globalization has been seen to cause an increase in economically driven migration to Japan, and controversially to official policy, especially in the form of low-skilled labor migration. Other forms of migration—namely, international marriages, international students, and

to a lesser extent, high-skilled migrants—have been addressed as well, yet they have been predominately framed within the high-/low-skill dichotomy. This is related to the geography of migration research on Japan that deals almost exclusively with the flows from the Global South and thus economy-centric explanations using such dichotomies are easily presumed and justified.

However, how can we frame and explain the causes of increasing migration from regions where such presumptions and explanations are less easily rationalized such as the North or, more specifically, Europe? As has been already suggested, they have been tacitly or more openly associated with high-skilled migration, yet even basic empirical data supporting such views are often lacking. Thus, before exploring the possibilities of explaining this increase in terms of changing structural factors and individual motivations in the following chapter, I investigate available statistical data in order to identify the major migration patterns over recent decades and asses to what extent the reality of European migration reflects popular assumptions. Nevertheless, in order to understand the extent of the recent increase in this migration, it is necessary to briefly outline the historical roots of European presence in Japan as well.

## European Presence in Japan: A Historical Perspective

The purpose of this study is not to explain in detail a relatively long and rich history of the European presence in Japan. As already suggested, the main purpose of this book is to clarify the factors that have led to the contemporary growth of migration to Japan and discuss the position these migrants occupy in Japanese society. Nevertheless, as I draft later in this thesis some parallels with the historical role of early modern migrants to Japan in terms of their role in Japan as well as motivations, it is necessary to briefly outline this phenomenon.

The presence of Europeans in Japan is, without question, not a new phenomenon, but one with extensive historical roots. Since the landing of the first Portuguese on Tanegashima in 1543 and the times of Francisco Xavier, who landed on Kyushu in 1549, the history bridging Japan with Europe started to be written. The early period of these encounters was dominated by missionaries and merchants, some of whom became settled and very influential in Japan. One case, for example, is the famous story of the English sailor, William Adams, who became an advisor to Tokugawa

Ieyasu and eventually died in Japan in 1620 (e.g. Massarella 1990). Further encounters of Europeans with Japan were significantly limited during the *sakoku*[8] period (1639–1854), yet in the well-known outpost of Dejima in Nagasaki Bay, they continued.

What is particularly interesting in the history of Europeans in Japan in this period is the fact that these encounters are framed precisely as those between Japan and Europe as a whole, and not with particular countries in Europe. This approach is obvious from the titles of books dealing with this history; *Europe's encounters with Japan* (Massarella 1990), *European reports on Japan* (Cooper 1965), *The first Europeans in Japan* (Cooper 1971), or *The Japanese discovery of Europe* (Keene 2011). This approach is not only caused by the fact that the borders and thus subjects of the particular European states were different, and above all that the notion of the nation-state itself—that today is essential to our understanding of societies, their history, or migration between them—is of later date than these encounters. Such a framework for many studies of these encounters and their impact on Japan and Europe is based also on the simple fact that they actually encompassed individuals from all parts of Europe.

Even during the *sakoku* period, when contact with Europe in Japan (as well as with the rest of the world, excluding China) was limited to the Dutch outpost on Dejima, the European presence in Japan was not limited to the Dutch people. For example, the so-called *Dejima no sangakusha*, or the three scholars of Dejima, were all non-Dutch; Engelbert Kaempfer (residing in Japan during the years 1690–1692) and Phillip F. B. von Siebold (1823–1829) were German and Carl Peter Thunberg (1775–1776) was Swedish. Moreover, there are other documented encounters that happened outside the Dutch factory and included 'different Europeans' as well. One such example was a visit of the count Maurice Benyowsky from the Habsburg monarchy in the eighteenth century, who became stranded in Japan on his escape from prison in Kamchatka (Fiala 1992; Keene 2011). This encounter has gained considerable attention regarding connections between Japan and Europe (Keene 2011), yet what is even more intriguing is that his national or ethnic origin is claimed by at least three countries today—namely, Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary. In other words, it is hard to make claims to whether he was the first Slovak (or maybe, even Czechoslovak) or Hungarian to visit Japan, but it is safe to claim that he was one of the few Europeans who visited Japan during the *sakoku* period of more than 200 years of Japan's isolation.

### *The Meiji Period and the Early Twentieth Century—Oyatoi Gaikokujin and Others*

The opening of Japan in 1853 and the Meiji restoration brought many Europeans to Japan in consequent years. Indeed, many of them became an integral part of the modernization efforts Japan made after the *sakoku* period, mainly as the so-called *oyatoi gaikokujin*, or foreign professionals who were hired by the Japanese government as well as private corporations. Although a considerable number of these hired foreigners came from other countries as well (especially the USA), the majority of them came from European countries. According to the UNESCO Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, out of 2690 foreign hired professionals who came to Japan between the years 1868 and 1889, around three quarters were from Europe (UNESCO 1975).

It is widely agreed that the *oyatoi gaikokujin* helped found the basis of modern law, education, military, and other institutions of Japan's modern society and thus helped Japan's aspirations to become a 'first-class' nation. Many of their skills and knowledge were put to use in building a nation that very soon came to hold equal footing with the colonial superpowers of the day. In other words, to achieve such a status, the top priority of the Meiji regime was a 'rapid assimilation of Western scientific and technological civilization' (Muramatsu 1995, 17). Japan managed to renegotiate unequal treaties with colonial superpowers relatively early and gained the status of a colonial power itself by attaining Taiwan from China after the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895). Whereas this status was not fully recognized by the Western powers (Oguma 2002; Majima 2014a, b), the rising power of Japan has been acknowledged at least to some degree. For example, it has been shown that colonial powers granted Japanese citizens special rights and treatment in Indo-China (Makoto 2008) and, later, in South Africa (Yamamoto 2012).

The system of hiring foreign professionals reached a peak in the late nineteenth century, and by the early twentieth century, only a few Europeans (or other foreigners) were coming to or staying in Japan via this official route (Muramatsu 1995). Nevertheless, this system of official hiring by the government and companies, representing early ways of acquiring high-skilled foreign labor, was also accompanied by other flows. Many Europeans went to Japan independently under this scheme as professionals, merchants, or short-term travelers. One of the most well-known cases would probably be that of Lafcadio Hearn, who was sent to

Japan in 1890 as a newspaper correspondent from the USA, where he lived for about 20 years, but who was born and raised in Europe. There are plenty of other less or better known stories of Europeans who ventured to Japan during this period. One example, that illustrates how not only the national but also the European context shaped their path to Japan, as well as exemplifies the driving force for some of these independent 'migrants' is that of the Czech architect Ján Letzl (1880–1925).

Ján Letzl, the architect of the building today known as the Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima, was born in 1880 in a small town in central Bohemia (Czech Republic). He studied architecture in Prague and his early professional career led him to Egypt in 1905. His mentor in Prague introduced him to a Greek building company in Cairo. There, he also met the German architect Georg de Lalande, who offered him a job in his small construction company in Yokohama (Procházková 2008). Letzl decided to accept this offer, and after a year and a half spent in Egypt, he traveled to Japan. His life in Japan was full of ups and downs, but he stayed and worked there as an architect, merchant, and diplomat for most of his remaining life.

Nevertheless, what is interesting in Letzl's story and his choice of career in Japan is the fact that this choice was not a solely professional decision. For Letzl, Japan was actually 'a country he dreamed of, paradise, oasis, a dream' (Lipus 2011). His previous interest in Japan is also vividly documented in his collection of letters (Letzl 2000). This interest is rooted in the travel accounts of the early Czech travelers to Japan,[9] especially that of Josef Kořenský, whose works became popular among the Czech-speaking population and influenced many. One of the other Czechs influenced by these writings and who also fell in love with Japan was actually a high school classmate of Letzl's, Karel Ján Hora (1881–1970?[10]). Hora was already in Japan in 1905 and later founded a company with Letzl. Like Letzl, Hora also had dreamed of Japan since a young age and he had expressed his wish to travel to Japan already by the time they went to school together in the Czech Republic (Fiala 1992, 62). Besides popular travel accounts, roots of an interest in and admiration of Japan, as expressed in these two interrelated accounts, can be related to the general wave of interest in Japan that spread across Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, known as 'Japonism', as seen especially in the arts (see e.g. Weisberg 2011).

Letzl's case represents one of the other routes of early European migration to Japan that was greatly influenced by the emerging cultural flows between the two regions. Similar to *oyatoi gaikokujin*, many professionals

such as Letzl, who lived in the Meiji and early twentieth-century Japan, were highly valued for their professional knowledge and skills. Still, despite their role and prolonged stays, their position in Japan was expected to be kept to that of assistant or helper (Umetani 2007, 248) and they were never meant to fully settle in Japan. This stance is expressed in the official ideology of the Japanese government that adopted the ideal of *wakon yōsai*[11] in order to avoid a possible 'clash between practical and cultural elements' (Muramatsu 1995, 18). The cultural elements of the Europeans or Westerners were thought to be incompatible with the 'Japanese spirit' and, thus, their settlement in Japan would cause undesirable 'clashes'. At the same time, their knowledge was necessary for the development of the country and needed to be acquired by Japanese people. As a result, many of these professionals 'worked very hard, quickly making themselves unnecessary' (Muramatsu 1995, 24).

The characteristics of the position many Europeans had in the Meiji and early twentieth century as well as their migration patterns are undeniably more complicated than that indicated above. Nevertheless, since we are interested in their contemporary migration and position within Japanese society today, this brief outline should serve as a basis for understanding the necessary background of their presence in Japan and some of the peculiarities of their position. What is of primary interest for this chapter is the development of the size and structure of the European population residing in Japan nowadays.

## Newcomers: Growth Since the 1980s and the Situation Today

### *From the Oyatoi to the 1980s*

Although acquiring reliable and consistent data on the European population in Japan before the 1980s is a difficult task, the Population Census gives us a glimpse of this issue by providing data for the years 1920–1965 about some nationals. The first peak of the European population in Japan was recorded in the 1930s, with more than 11,000 residents. It was followed by a decline and very slow recovery after World War II.[12] Whereas the data on the European population residing in Japan after World War II are limited only to a few nationalities, the development among the three most populous nationals of that time reveals that it took at least 15–20 years to reach the prewar numbers again. For example, in the case

of German nationals, it took around 15 years after World War II ended to get to the prewar level of the 1930s. It took even longer in the case of the UK and France, but the tendency of slow, yet steady growth in the postwar years is clearly visible from the available data.

Similarly, there are no aggregate data available on the years 1966–1984. The Population Census for the years 1970–1985 provides even scarcer information on the foreign population than its postwar predecessors, with only some basic data on the three most populous nationalities.[13] Although Statistics on Foreign Residents in Japan started to be issued by the Immigration Bureau in 1959, the first four rounds until 1974 provided data again only on the three most populous nationals. Moreover, these statistics stopped being issued in the ten years following this. This illustrates how little attention was being paid to the foreign population in Japan during this period.

Still, we can presume that a growth similar to the postwar years continued until the 1980s. More precise Statistics on Foreign Residents in Japan that started to be reissued in 1984 suggest that by the mid-1980s, the European population had approximately doubled from the first peak in the 1930s.[14] By 1988, it had reached the mark of 22,000.

### *Growth since the 1990s*

Such relatively slow, yet steady growth of the European population in Japan prior to the 1980s was replaced by significantly faster growth, starting in the early 1990s. This trend is illustrated in Fig. 2.2. From about 20,000 Europeans living in Japan in the second half of the 1980s, their number tripled and reached a peak of around 60,000 residents in the years 2008 and 2009. This coincided with significant growth in the foreign population in Japan, in general, and the partial relaxation and revision of strict immigration control in the 1990s (Akashi 2010). The growth rate of the European population in this period was even faster than that of the total foreign population in Japan,[15] making it a statistically significant case.

Since the beginning of the period of notable growth in the early 1990s, we can identify four distinct periods. The first period of relatively steep growth starts in the begging of the 1990s and lasts until 2002. In this period, the annual growth rate was almost 7 percent, representing approximately twice as much as in the previous years.[16] The most significant increase was recorded in the year 2000, when the number of Europeans residing in Japan soared by almost 7000 or more than 14 percent on an

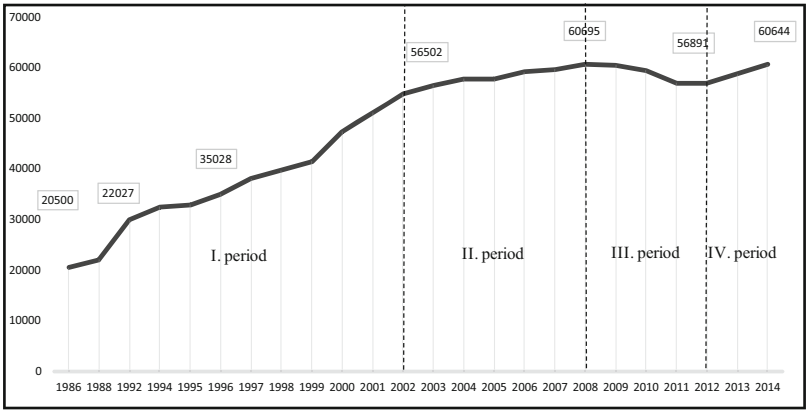


**Fig. 2.2** Number of European residents in Japan, 1986–2014. *Source*: Based upon data from Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan for years 1986–2014 (Ministry of Justice, Immigration Bureau)

annual basis. The following period, starting from 2003, is characterized by a rather stabilized number with a slow annual growth rate of 1.4 percent on average. Although the European population decreased in the year 2009, the decline was minimal (around 250 people or 0.4 percent). However, this year marked the end of the second period. A more significant decrease has been recorded in the following two years (2010 and 2011) and the decline in the European population in Japan for now has finished again with a slow decline in 2012. The most recent two years (2013 and 2014) represent the last period. The number of European residents started to increase relatively fast again, with growth rates that have been the highest since 2003. In 2014, there were 60,644 registered European residents in Japan, representing the second highest number ever and only a few dozen lower than in the record year, 2008.[17]

In order to reveal the main reasons for such a growth, we should start with a detailed description and analysis of the available statistical data. In the following section, I firstly examine the composition of the European population today and by the end of the 1980s by visa categories and nationality in order to identify the major groups of migrants contributing to this growth. Secondly, I describe the differences in the growth patterns between the different regions of Europe. Finally, based on such an analysis, I provide a typology of the major migration patterns. This should

assist us in the next chapter by providing a basis for a deeper analysis of the structural factors and individual motivations for moving to Japan and help us explain the growth of European migration since the 1990s.

### *Changes in the Major Visa Categories and National Composition*

Although significant changes have been made to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, especially in the 1990 amendment, Japan still does not officially allow low-skilled labor migration. This fact is reflected in the visa that can be granted to foreign nationals residing in Japan. The visa can be divided into three groups based on the kind of activities their holders can engage in. The first broad category covers visas allowing paid work, which are, however, bound to specific professions and skills such as that of 'Professor', 'Legal/accounting services', or 'Engineer'. The second category represents visas that, in general, do not allow paid work,[18] such as 'Family stay', 'College student', or 'Cultural activities'. The last category consists of visas that are based on the status of its holder and do not have limitations on economic activities. To this belong visas for spouses and biological children of Japanese nationals ('Spouse, etc. of a Japanese national'), 'Permanent resident' visa, as well as 'Special permanent resident' visa designed mainly for Korean residents and 'Long-term resident' visa for the descendants of Japanese nationals (e.g. *Nikkei* Brazilians).

Figure 2.3 shows the main visa categories for Europeans residing in Japan in 2014. As in the case of other, more populous groups of foreigners in Japan, almost half of the Europeans hold visas based on status. In particular, permanent residents and spouses or children of Japanese nationals represent the two most populous visa categories, with a combined share of 46 percent. One of the main differences between these two categories is in the validity of the visa; whereas permanent resident visas are not issued for a specific time (i.e. they do not have an expiration date), spousal visa are issued for six months to five years. Although marriage with a Japanese national is not a prerequisite for permanent residency,[19] it is plausible to argue that many of those married to Japanese would apply for the permanent residency and these categories are related in the long term.

Combined, visas for those who can engage in a specific type of profession represent around 25 percent. This is considerably higher than the average for all nationalities, which was only around 9 percent in 2011. However, whereas these visas represent, for policymakers and many

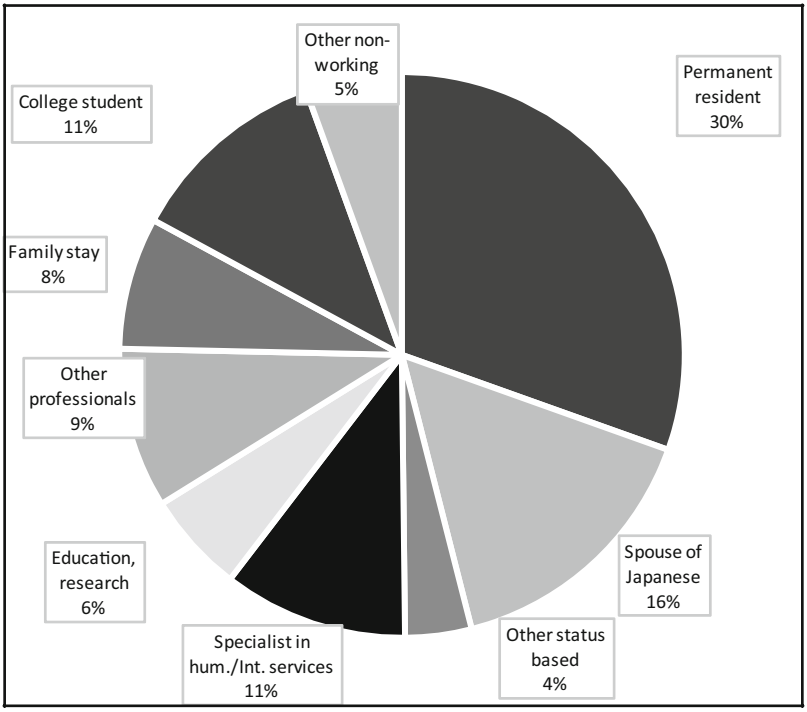


**Fig. 2.3** Major visa categories of European residents in Japan, 2014. *Source*: Based upon data from Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan, 2014 (Ministry of Justice, Immigration Bureau)

scholars, high-skilled workers in general (e.g. Oishi 2012), it has been argued that some of the categories lack sufficient requirements for such a classification (Liu-Farrer 2009; Tsukasaki 2008) and others serve as side doors to low-skilled labor (Akashi 2010; Liu-Farrer 2011b; Surak 2008). The single most frequent visa type for Europeans in this category is actually 'Specialist in humanities/International services', with almost 11 percent of the total population, but its classification as a sort of high-skilled labor has been particularly questioned on the basis of its requirements as well as the type of skills required for most of the jobs its holders engage in. For example, Tsukasaki (2008) and Liu-Farrer (2009, 2011b) have pointed out the importance of linguistic and cultural skills for many of the so-called high-skilled migrants in Japan, and particularly for holders

of this type of visa—a point somewhat at odds with a more general understanding of this category as of those holding specific scientific or technical skills. In other words, this category does not necessarily represent a group of high-skilled workers, and more in-depth analysis and careful consideration need to be conducted before such a label can be applied to this category.

Similar to the previous category, the one consisting of visas that in general do not allow paid work in Japan represent around 25 percent of the total. Here, the most common categories are 'Family stay' and 'College student' with around 8 percent and 12 percent of the total population, respectively. The former is designed for family members of other foreign residents holding different type of visas (working, non-working, or status-based). The latter category includes not only college or university students but also pre-college, mainly language school students who used to be classified separately and accounted for roughly one-fifth (around 1100) of this visa category in 2009.

After outlining the major visa categories of Europeans in Japan today, let us have a closer look at how the number and share of particular categories changed and thus contributed to the growth of their population over the last two decades. This tendency is illustrated in Fig. 2.4.

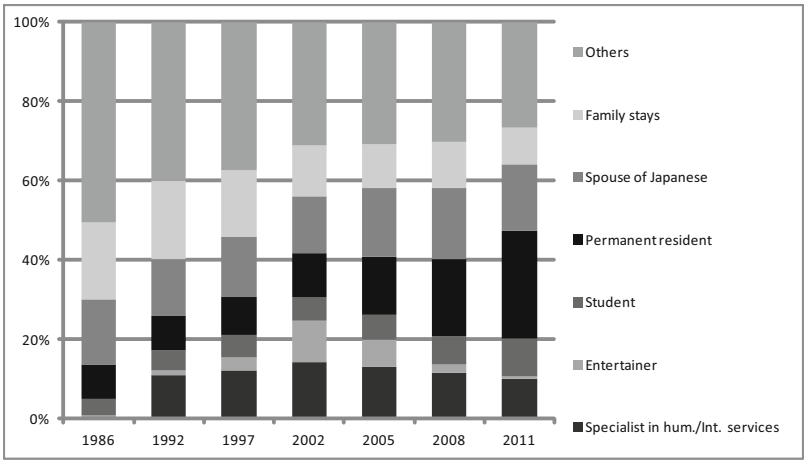


**Fig. 2.4** Change in the share of the major visa categories, 1986–2011. *Source*: Based upon data from Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan for years 1986–2011 (Ministry of Justice, Immigration Bureau)

By far, the fastest growing visa category was that of 'Permanent resident', which, since the mid-1980s, grew by almost nine times. While only less than one out of ten Europeans possessed permanent residency by the end of the 1980s, today, it is more than every fourth registered European who is allowed to stay in Japan without restriction on the type of economic activities and the length of stay. This suggests that the European population in Japan is not only growing but settling as well. In other words, a significant portion of the growth can be ascribed to extending stays and further settlement of the Europeans in Japan coming formerly on different types of visas.

One factor contributing to the growth of permanent residents can be identified in the increasing number of international marriages between Japanese and foreign nationals. The share of spousal visas of European residents remained more or less the same since the mid-1980s, which, at the same time, means that the number of its holders have almost tripled. Moreover, as already suggested, it is plausible to argue that many who are married to a Japanese national opt for permanent residency or naturalization later.[20] International marriages in Japan had been on the increase until 2006 and although this has been discussed mainly in the context of the 'Asian brides' (e.g. Kamoto 2008; Shukuya 1988)—a pattern of Asian females marrying Japanese men, particularly from the depopulated, rural areas of Japan—an increasing number of marriages between European and Japanese nationals has also been recorded. Itsuko Kamoto (2008), for example, clearly identifies a distinct pattern of marriage between Japanese women and Western white men, at least some of which are European. At the same time, however, an even more prominent pattern has been identified between Japanese men marrying female from some of the post-socialist European countries coming to Japan mainly as 'entertainers' (Kim Viktoriya 2011; Varvara 2011).

The case of the 'entertainers', especially those from the Philippines, has attracted a lot of public as well as scholarly attention. At the same time, this pattern represents another contributing factor to the growth of the European population in Japan as well. The system of using an 'Entertainer' type of visa for work in the night entertainment industry was established in the 1980s (Tsuzaki 2010). Although this initially represented a phenomenon almost exclusively associated with the Philippines, since the second half of the 1990s, a considerable number of European nationals also started to be part of such a system. As illustrated in Fig. 2.4, there were more than 6000 Europeans holding this type of visa in the peak

period of 2003, representing around 11 percent of the total population of Europeans registered in Japan. However, following the ordinances of the Ministry of Justice to amend the criteria for issuing 'Entertainer' visas from February 2005 and March 2006, the number of its holders started to rapidly decline. Today, they make up a minor visa category for Europeans as well as other foreign nationals. Nevertheless, as has been suggested by Kim Bumsoo (2011) and Varvara (2011), and similarly in regard to the Filipinos, a considerable number of these women married Japanese men or prolonged their stays in Japan in various ways and settled in Japan.

Furthermore, the above-mentioned holders of the 'Specialist in humanities/International services' type of visa represent another major category of European residents in Japan today. This category was established by an amendment to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1990 and was designed to cover those engaged in 'services, which require knowledge pertinent to jurisprudence, economics, sociology or other human science fields or [engaged] in services which require specific ways of thought or sensitivity based on experience with foreign culture'.[21] As already suggested, this often means using one's linguistic and cultural skills (such as foreign language teacher or interpreter[22]), rather than representing more conventional types of high-skilled labor.

As Fig. 2.4 demonstrates, their number increased significantly from the establishment of this category until the early 2000s. The number of European holders of this visa more than doubled in just 10 years and peaked in 2002, when almost 8000 (or more than 14 percent) of European nationals stayed in Japan on this type of visa. The later development strongly resembles that of the total European population as well; a period of stagnation and slight decrease between the years of 2003 and 2007 was followed by a faster decline and a bounce-back in recent years. After a drop to the 1990s level in 2011, this category today, with more than 6300 holders, represents a major visa category for European residents in Japan.

The last category that has recorded a significant growth and thus contributed to the increase of the European population in Japan is that of 'College students'. It actually makes up the second fastest growing category of visa after permanent residents; their number has increased around six times between the years 1986 and 2011. Moreover, contrary to the other major visa categories, an approximate 5 percent decrease has been recorded in 2011, and since then it surged by another 28 percent surpassing the highest recorded number.

On the contrary, a significant decline can be seen in the share of the 'Family stay' type of visa.[23] Although the total number of its holders has increased by approximately 30 percent, its share has dropped below 8 percent from almost 20 percent in 1986. In other words, although the number of Europeans bringing their families to where they stay in Japan is not declining, it has been growing only slightly, and increasingly more people seem to be coming alone and/or marrying Japanese nationals.

Finally, the change in the composition of the European population in Japan by nationality has been significant as well. As already suggested in the introduction, the growth of the European population has been driven to a higher degree by an influx of nationals from the post-socialist countries. Although the number of nationals from all parts of Europe has increased in the last two decades, the number of Central (around 4 times) and especially Eastern (31 times) and South-Eastern (15 times) Europeans grew disproportionately faster than the number of fellow European countries without communist history. Among those populations from states without such a history, the South-Western Europeans were growing fastest (4 times) and Northern Europeans slowest (1.5 times) in number. Finally, the number of Western Europeans, still making up the largest share of Europeans residing in Japan, has doubled in the examined period.

Consequently, the share of Western Europeans and, particularly, UK nationals has decreased significantly. Whereas Western Europeans represented an absolute majority of 80 percent and more than a third (36 percent) of Europeans living in Japan came from the UK in 1986, only every fourth European is from the UK (27 percent) and less than 60 percent from the Western countries today. On the contrary, every fourth (26 percent) European today is from a post-socialist country and every eighth (13 percent) from Russia. Such a difference in the growth rate and the previously mentioned particularities of certain regions (such as being a source for 'entertainers') call for a more detailed analysis of the differences in growth patterns between the different regions of Europe.

### *Regional Differences*

Next, I discuss the differences in the growth patterns in terms of the main visa categories, numbers, as well as current gender composition between the various regions of Europe. This should further help us to understand the different factors lying behind the increase of European residents in Japan, its complexity and, at the same time, provide us with a basis for

identifying the main patterns of contemporary migration from Europe to Japan. I will focus on the main characteristics of each region of Europe and some particular countries representing certain tendencies.

- *West Europe*

As already suggested, Western Europeans—with more than 35,000 residents—form the majority of Europeans living in Japan. Almost half of them, or more than 15,000, are from the UK, who alone form the 12th most populous national minority in Japan. Besides the high share of holders of the status-based visa (i.e. mainly 'Permanent resident' and 'Spouse or child of Japanese national'), their population has a high share of 'Specialist in humanities/International services' visa holders as well; with almost 17 percent, it represents the third most numerous visa category for UK nationals and its share is the highest among Europeans, significantly exceeding the average. Moreover, the number of its holders used to be even two times higher compared to levels from recent years in the early 2000s. Their number peaked in 2002, when approximately 28 percent (or more than 5200 individuals) of UK residents in Japan held this type of visa. It was also in this year that the total number of UK nationals reached its peak (more than 18,000), following which it has declined slowly. The decline in the number of holders of this type of visa is correlated with the increase in the number of permanent residents and, to a lesser degree, visas for spouses of the Japanese. This indicates that at least part of UK nationals coming to Japan formerly under the 'Specialist in humanities/International services' type of visa later settled and gained permanent residency and/or married a Japanese national.

Nevertheless, the increasing share of the above-mentioned top three visa categories suggests that there are other factors involved in the growth of the UK population in Japan.[24] Another category contributing to this are holders of visas related to education, namely, 'Education' (for teachers in the primary and secondary education institutions), 'Professor' (for university teachers), and 'Researcher' visas. Whereas the average for these three categories in the case of the whole of Europe is around 6 percent, it is almost double this in the case of the UK. In fact, as already suggested, holders of the 'Specialist in humanities/International services' visa are related to education, including foreign language education as well. The strong presence of UK nationals in the education sector can be confirmed by the results of the Population Census from 2010, which showed that

more than 50 percent of UK nationals residing in Japan work in this sector. In other words, as I explain in detail later, an increase in the opportunities for English native speakers in the education sector, especially in foreign language education, along with further settlement, can be seen as major factors behind the growth of the UK population in Japan.

In contrast with those from the UK, the next most numerous nationals from Western Europe in Japan—namely, the French and Germans—exhibit a different population composition. Both countries can be described as having a composition closer to the average European share in education-related visas, college students, and 'Specialist in humanities/International services' visa holders. Furthermore, in the case of these countries, higher shares of the other professional visas (above 15 percent as compared to 9 percent in the case of UK) and 'Family stay' (17 percent and 14 percent as compared to 7 percent in the case of UK) are combined with a relatively lower share of the status-based visa (37 percent and 38 percent as compared to 51 percent in the case of UK). In other words, the migration from these West European countries is driven more by the non-education-sector professionals coming with their families. This exemplifies the complexity of contemporary migration as it is visible among other regions of Europe as well.

In terms of gender, West European nationals, especially from the UK and France, are characterized by their considerably higher share of male (74.7 percent and 70.5 percent, respectively) residents over female. Among other factors, this partially reflects the marriage patterns of Western men and Japanese women identified in previous studies (Kelsky 2001; Kamoto 2008) and discussed in detail later.

- *Central Europe*

Central Europe is the smallest among the European regions, and with something less than 2300 residents in 2014 make up less than 4 percent of the European population in Japan, as well as having the least number of migrants to Japan. The most numerous in this group are the Poles, with more than 1100 registered residents, followed by the Hungarians and Czechs. Despite some differences between these countries, one common characteristic is a relatively high share of college students, which range from 15 percent (Poland) to 21 percent (Czech Republic).

Poland and Slovakia are part of the female 'entertainer legacy', although to a lesser extent than the cases of Romania or Russia, which are discussed later. Still, the share of the entertainer type of visa in 2002 reached 11 percent

in the case of Poland and even more than 40 percent in the case of Slovakia. This is also reflected in the relatively high shares of status visas (52 percent and 59 percent) and the slightly higher share of the female population (58 percent and 62 percent) in Japan today. Yet, patterns seen among other Central European nationals resemble more that of the French or Germans in terms of lower shares of status-based visa (28–43 percent) and higher shares of other professional visas (13 percent in the case of the Czech Republic). Moreover, these countries are characterized by a higher share of men (56–63 percent) although not to such an extent as the UK or France.

- *East Europe*

With slightly more than 10,000 registered residents in Japan, East Europe represents the second most numerous region. An absolute majority of around 7800 come from Russia, which makes up the third largest European minority after the UK and France. They are followed by approximately 1600 Ukrainians.

The dominant pattern in the case of both Russia and the Ukraine is that of female entertainers and their later settlement. This is strongly reflected in the high shares of women (69 percent and 78 percent) and status-based visas (64 percent and 76 percent). However, it is important to note that both these shares have been on the decline in recent years, indicating an increase in different forms of migration from these countries to Japan. At the same time, around 10 percent difference in these shares for both countries suggests that the extent to which the female entertainers affected the growth and composition of their population in Japan varies.

More particularly, Russia is a case in which entertainers have not been the only dominant factor forming its population in Japan. Whereas the share of the entertainer visa holders in the peak period of 2003 was more than 60 percent in the case of the Ukraine (similar to the case of Romania, described below), it was less than half of that (27 percent) in the case of Russia. As has been suggested in previous studies (Varvara 2011), the main sources of international marriages, especially that of Russian women and Japanese men, can be identified not only among those females coming to Japan as entertainers but also in the brokered marriages or so-called mail-order-brides typical of post-soviet Russia. Moreover, other patterns contributing to the growth of the Russian population can be identified in 'Specialist in humanities/International services' (8 percent in 2014), college students (9 percent), or, slightly more often, individuals accompanied by their families.[25] The shares of these (or other) visa categories are

considerably lower in the case of countries that were heavily influenced by the female 'entertainer legacy', such as the Ukraine or Romania.

While other East European countries, such as Belorussia or Moldova, show rather stronger traits of this 'entertainer type' of migration, the three ex-soviet Baltic countries were affected by this type of migration only to a very limited extent and exemplify different patterns of migration to Japan. This is characterized mainly by a high share of college students that varied from about 22 percent in the case of Lithuania to 34 percent in the case of Latvia.

- *South-West Europe*

Nationals of the South-Western European countries residing in Japan account for almost 6300 individuals. Most numerous are Italians (3267) and Spaniards (2309), and, as suggested previously, their growth since the second half of the 1980s has been faster than that of Western Europeans, for example. Nevertheless, as, for example, the case of Italy suggests, this growth cannot be easily explained by a single, dominant pattern.

In general, the shares of major visa categories in the case of South-Western European countries are very close to the average of the European whole, which reflects, to a certain degree, the diversity of the migration patterns. The share of the status-based visa is almost identical to the European average of 50 percent, except in the case of Portugal, where it is as high as 63 percent.[26] However, neither of these countries share in the female entertainer history, and especially, in the case of Portugal (as suggested by a female share of as much as 39 percent), the prevalence of the Western man–Japanese woman type of international marriage does not seem to be the major explaining factor either. The share of college students tends to be slightly higher in the case of Greece (13 percent), Portugal (13 percent), Spain (16 percent), and Italy (16 percent) and that of other professionals, in the case of Italy (13 percent) and Spain (14 percent). Nevertheless, unlike previously described cases, none of these are dominant, so the growth of South-Western European nationals residing in Japan seems to be caused by multiple factors.

- *South-East Europe*

The population of South-Eastern Europeans in Japan today counts for something less than 3000 people and only the number of East Europeans has been growing faster since the end of the 1980s. Similar to their case,

this has been caused mainly (although not solely) by the influx of female entertainers, namely, those from Romania.

Romania represents a case in which the population has been strongly affected by a single migration pattern. Contrary to the case of Russia, where this effect was weaker, the total population of the Romanian residents in Japan started to decline sharply with the introduction of more strict requirements for issuing the entertainer visa in 2003 and 2004. Entertainers in these years accounted for almost two-thirds of all Romanians residing legally in Japan. Although the decline in the total population was partially slowed down by an increase in the spousal visa and later permanent residents, the number of Romanians in Japan continues to shrink. Today, around 86 percent of Romanians in Japan reside on status-based visas and about the same percentage of them are women.

Again, as in the case of the other regions, there are other patterns visible among other countries as well. Despite many similarities with Romania in terms of economic, political, or social development, the case of Bulgaria is a radically different case in terms of migration to Japan. A lack of entertainer history and a relatively low share in the status-based visa (41 percent) is combined with a high share of students (23 percent) and slightly higher share of those on 'Specialist in humanities/International services' visas (11 percent). The share of men and women is, quite uniquely, balanced. Similar trends can be seen among other countries of this region as well.

- *North Europe*

The last region of Europe is in its Northern part and the nationals from these countries counted more than 3500 individuals in 2014. Approximately half of them come from Sweden, but there are considerable numbers (from about 400 to around 600) of Finish, Norwegians, and Danish living in Japan. Except for Denmark, these countries are typical of a high share of students (from 32 percent to 43 percent) and relatively low share of status-based visa holders (22 percent to 32 percent). Moreover, the population from these countries in Japan recorded only a relatively small decline after 2008 and continued to grow relatively fast in recent years.

Sweden exemplifies another particularity in migration patterns to Japan from these countries—namely, that of language school students. The number of 'College students' approximately doubled in 2010, when this category was combined with the visa category designated for pre-college

students. The national schemes supporting such study abroad (i.e. study of a foreign language) implemented in the Nordic countries can be seen as one of the factors driving this type of migration.

## Typology of Migration Patterns from Europe to Japan

The differences in the composition of populations among various regions of Europe and their development suggest that we can identify at least four distinct patterns. These patterns can be confirmed by cluster analysis, the results of which are described in the Table 2.1, together with the main characteristics of each pattern.

For the classification required for cluster analysis, I used shares of the three major visa categories in 2014—namely, the cumulative share of the status-based visa, 'College student', and 'Specialist in humanities/International services'—that, combined, accounted for approximately 72 percent of all registered European foreigners in Japan.[27] Moreover, I included the share of the 'Entertainer' type of visa in its peak (2003) as a major visa category in this period as well as the shares of the above-mentioned three categories in 2002, when the number of the 'Specialist in humanities/International services' peaked and shares of these categories in 1994 represented the early stage of growth in European migrants after all relevant visa categories has been established.[28] Finally, in order

**Table 2.1** Results of the *k*-means cluster analysis of the European migration patterns (final cluster centers)

| | *Cluster (%)* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1* | *2* | *3* | *4* |
| Specialist in humanities (2014) | 14.5 | 9.2 | 2.4 | 4.4 |
| Status-based visa (2014) | 44.5 | 41.7 | 86.1 | 62.6 |
| College student (2014) | 2.7 | 29.2 | 3.4 | 13.3 |
| Entertainers (2003) | 0.4 | 29.5 | 63.3 | 0.5 |
| Specialist in humanities (2002) | 27.9 | 1.6 | 0.9 | 3.0 |
| Status-based visa (2002) | 18.2 | 15.6 | 17.5 | 44.9 |
| College student (2002) | 1.3 | 23.4 | 3.7 | 8.5 |
| Specialist in humanities (1994) | 19.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.0 |
| Status-based visa (1994) | 13.9 | 0.0 | 17.2 | 60.8 |
| College student (1994) | 1.7 | 0.0 | 18.9 | 10.8 |

to control for the bias caused by countries with only a few residents in Japan, I only included countries with populations of 100 and above. In order to gain four clusters with descriptive statistics (i.e. means) for each, the *k*-means clustering method was adopted.[29] Results are summarized in Table 2.1.

- *Specialist in humanities and other professional migration*

The first pattern (cluster 1) is characterized by a high share of the 'Specialist in humanities/International services' type of visa or other professional visa, and apart from the UK, also by a relatively low share of the status-based visa. Seven West European countries belong to this cluster. The former type of visa is typical for Anglophone countries—namely, the UK and Ireland—and as already mentioned, these are also typical for both a relatively low share of student visas and high share of education-related visas. On the contrary, other countries included in this cluster, such as Germany, France, and the Netherlands, also have higher shares of other professional visas (14–17 percent, not including education-related ones, which are below average), and the shares of student visas (12–17 percent) and family stays are higher (14–17 percent). It can be argued (though admittedly, not very strongly) that this pattern most strongly resembles the image of high-skilled labor-driven (West) European migration.

- *Student-driven migration*

The second cluster (2) describes what can be called the 'student-driven' migration pattern, and actually represents the most numerous pattern with 11 countries. This cluster includes mainly a variety of post-socialist countries, ranging from Bulgaria to Estonia or Czech, and Nordic countries, such as Finland and Sweden. What is probably the most surprising result of this analysis, however, is the fact that Russia (as well as Slovakia) as a case strongly associated with the legacy of female entertainers is not included in the following cluster, but in the student one. As has been already argued, entertainers did not affect all countries to the same degree, and the recent growth in the number of students from Russia (almost a 40 percent increase in the last 3 years), together with other categories, classifies Russia rather as a not typical entertainer case.

The share of students in countries from this cluster tended to be already relatively high by the beginning of the previous decade, but has kept on

further increasing until today. This has been accompanied by an increase in the share of the status-based visa, which indicates a potential relationship between study in Japan and international marriages or further settlement, in general. Finally, most of the countries included in this cluster tend to have a more balanced population in terms of gender composition.

- *Migration of the female entertainers*

The third cluster describes a pattern that has been discussed in previous studies as well as attracts attention in the public realm. This pattern was typified until about a decade ago by a steep growth in the number and consequent high share of entertainer visa holders. Their sudden decrease after 2004/2005 has been followed by a decline in the total population of these nationals in Japan, as well as a rapid increase in the share and number of spousal visas and later permanent residents. It is almost needless to say that the residents from these countries are predominantly women. The most typical example of this pattern is Romania and there are three more countries included in this cluster.

- *Mixed migration type*

This category is typified by shares of respective visa categories that are rather close to the average for Europeans, in general. This suggests that the growth of the population of the countries included in this cluster was caused by a mixture of various migration patterns, rather than a single, dominant pattern. This cluster represents the second most common category, with seven countries from different parts of Europe, such as Austria, Greece, or Croatia.

## Summary

The statistical data and analysis above demonstrate that contemporary migration from Europe to Japan cannot only be understood in terms of high-skilled professionals and female entertainers, and neither do the patterns of migration accurately reflect other commonly used classifications, such as West versus East or capitalist against post-socialist. This is relevant to the primary objective of this study in two ways. First of all, these results indicate that the picture of high-skilled migration cannot be sustained and the group of high-skilled professional migrants who actually engage in

the work that they are praised for as high-skilled does not represent the European population as a whole. The case of 'Specialist in humanities/ International services' indicates that we must carefully consider the category of high-skilled migrants before jumping to conclusions about it. Combined with this point, the relatively low share of other professionals strongly undermines the assumption that the growing European (or even, only Western European) population in Japan is caused by increasing numbers of high-skilled professionals. Certainly, their number increases, but their representativeness of the European population in Japan in general needs to be further explored, even if we limit it to its Western region.

Moreover, these results also clearly demonstrate that this distortion of the high-skilled elitist view is not caused by the inclusion of other-than-Western Europeans into our analysis. Looking at migration outside of the national framework revealed different types of migration, which would be obscured if we focus on particular countries alone. On the one hand, existence of the influx of female entertainers from Eastern Europe and their influence on the growing European population in Japan cannot be denied. On the other hand, at the same time, the data reveals that the extent of this migration pattern varies among countries and points to the existence of considerably important alternative patterns previously unaccounted for. This is exemplified most aptly in the case of Russia, which has been associated most often with female entertainer migration, yet statistics suggest the existence of additional patterns. The analysis of statistical data indicates the existence of various forms of migration, such as marriage-related migration or student migration, and that the variety cannot be easily framed with the West–East dichotomy. While there are limitations to this analysis, especially in the data used, this analysis has revealed trends which cannot clearly support dichotomic categorizations of European migration to Japan according to skills and geography.

Finally, the high share of status-based visas indicates that we need to look further into the motivations and socioeconomic positions of these migrants. In other words, available statistical data on the composition of the European population in Japan indicates some tendencies, yet they cannot sufficiently account for migration patterns and occupations. Thus, building on these insights, in the following chapter, I focus predominantly (although not exclusively) on the gray zone between the high-skilled professionals praised by the government in Japan and the victimized female entertainers.

## Notes

1. Koreans represented around 80 percent of the total foreign population of Japan up to the mid-1980s.
2. *Dekasegi* in Japanese means literally to go out for work and this term was used mainly for seasonal workers. Today, it is also used to refer to labor migrants coming to Japan to earn money.
3. *Japa-yuki* is a compound word consisting of an abbreviation of Japan and Japanese word *yuki*, which means heading to or going to.
4. Although there are authors (e.g. Piper 2003), who argue that international marriage and international migration for labor should not be dealt with as separate issues, it still can be argued that in terms of conceiving of the process of migration, such a distinction is useful. Piper focused rather on the issues of citizenship, rights, and shifting roles within Japanese society and does not directly address the primary motivations for the movement.
5. Some authors prefer a different naming of this category of labor migration; for example, Oishi (Kuptsch and Oishi 1995; Oishi 1995) refers to the trainee program as a source of unskilled or semi-skilled labor. However, the idea that they are a source for labor that do not require specific skills (or at least, not their high command), represented most often by the 3D jobs, remains the same.
6. Tsubotani refers to the Chinese students in Japan as 'permanent sojourners' (Tsubotani 2008).
7. While the definition of the high-skilled migrants is problematic, Oishi adopts the view of the Japanese government that has estimated their number at 198,000 or 9 percent of the total foreign population (Oishi 2012, 1081).
8. Japanese word *sakoku* means closed or isolated country.
9. Early writings of Czech (as well as other European) travelers to Japan were mostly from the 'globetrotters' or around-the-world travelers, such as Alois Svojsik or Kořenský, whose work has been translated into Japanese as well. However, increasingly more accounts written by travelers and adventurers dedicated to Japan appeared later, such as Joe Hloucha or the first Czech woman to Japan, Barbora Markéta Eliášová (see Fiala 1992; Procházková 2008).
10. The exact date of his death is not known in the writings on early contact between Czech and Japan. However, Fiala (1992) claims that it was probably in the year 1970.
11. This term means 'Japanese spirit and Western knowledge' and symbolizes the ideal of adopting Western knowledge and technology since the Meiji period.
12. In 1940, the population census listed only 8276 European residents in Japan and the first postwar census from 1950 recorded only about one-third of the UK and German nationals as compared to the peak level from 1930.

13. Namely, Koreans, China, and the USA.
14. It is necessary to note that the data from the census (i.e. 1920–1965) and data from the Statistics on Foreign Residents cannot be compared directly due to the different methodology used. For example, the Population Census in 2005 provided data on only around 77 percent of foreigners that were residing in Japan in the same year, according to the Statistics on Foreign Residents.
15. According to the Statistics on Foreign Residents in Japan, the total population of foreigners increased about 2.3 times between the years 1988 and 2010, but it was around 2.8 times in the case of Europeans for the same period.
16. The annual growth rate between years 1986 and 1988 was 3.7 percent.
17. Moreover, this number does not include two significant groups in terms of migration from Europe to Japan for which there are no accurate statistical data available. The first group consists of those who acquired Japanese citizenship and the second represents children of European and Japanese citizen with double citizenship.
18. A limited work permit can be granted to some visas in this category. The limitations apply to the number of working hours, as in the case of 'College student' or 'Family stay' or on the length of employment at one employer, as in in the case of 'Designated activities'.
19. It makes, however, application for the permanent residency easier in terms of conditions for the necessary length of stay in Japan. It is necessary to reside in Japan for at least ten years in order to be eligible to apply for permanent residency, but in general, it is enough to reside in Japan for only one year for those married to Japanese nationals (or other permanent residents) on condition that they have been married for at least three years.
20. While the naturalization rate is relatively low in the case of foreigners in Japan, in general, there were cases of Europeans choosing Japanese citizenship in my study as well as among publicly known figures. In general, there have been between 10 to 15,000 naturalizations per year in the last ten years, with the majority of applicants from Korea (50 percent in 2013) and China (33 percent). At the same time, the share of applicants from other countries has been constantly increasing.
21. Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, Article 2-2, Appended Table 1. Quoted from the official English translation (up to the revisions of Act No. 30 of 2008), retrieved from http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/hourei/data/icrra.pdf (May 31, 2013).
22. These are two out of four examples listed by the Ministry of Justice as an example for this type of visa (http://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/visa/long/index.html, retrieved on May 31, 2013).

23. It is necessary to note that in the case of Japan, these visas can be granted only to the immediate family members (i.e. children and spouse) of the foreign national and are not a counterpart of a more broadly defined family type visa used for family reunion type of migration in other countries.
24. This growth has been continuing consistently over the analyzed period. Although these visa categories, combined, represented less than 40 percent in the early 1990s, it has gradually increased close to 70 percent in 2014.
25. The share of the 'Family stay' visa was almost 11 percent or 2 percent more than the European average in 2011.
26. I do not regard here the population of San Marino and Malta, which are too small.
27. The rest consist mainly of the other professional visas (including education-related ones). However, inclusion of this share did not alter the cluster composition and distribution of the countries among clusters, and thus for the sake of simplicity, it was not included in the final analysis.
28. Analysis with different combination of years and variables representing different visa categories has been done as well and resulted in very similar clusters.
29. Whereas *k*-means clustering is normally used mainly for large-scale data sets, this clustering method brought better results in our case. The standard hierarchical method based on Euclidian distance brought relatively small clusters when selecting four clusters that might be caused by the number of variables and relatively large differences among shares for different visa groups. The *k*-means clustering method resulted in clusters that are easier to interpret and important cases (e.g. UK, Romania, or Russia) were identified as belonging to same clusters by both methods.

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CHAPTER 3

# Between Entertainers and High-Skilled Elites: Skills, Study, and Marriage

As I have already suggested, the general, often tacitly assumed picture of Westerners or whites in Japan and their growth is associated with globalization and its acceleration. Europeans, as part of the category of *ōbeijin* or *seiyōjin*,[1] are seen as representatives of the 'global' for Japanese, and in parallel with the already mentioned nineteenth-century modernizers—*oyatoi gaikokujin*—their role is perceived as one of helping Japan become more global. There are many familiar stories of more (such as Carlos Ghosn, CEO of Nissan) or less (such as Michael Woodward, ex-Olympus CEO) successful highly skilled, highly mobile European managers, or few accounts, such as Komisarof's (2011, 2012), suggesting that it is indeed the group of high-skilled professionals—including, for example, academic elites or expatriates—who are representative of the *ōbeijin* or *seiyōjin*. It is also this group, together with the widely acknowledged, yet in migration studies virtually unaddressed group of English teachers that are seen to contribute to the growth of Western or European migration to Japan as a consequence of Japan's internationalization or globalization efforts in the last few decades. Moreover, whereas these discourses and accounts do not address their migration per se—that is, motivations and routes—they imply, *inter alia*, that these migrants are high-skilled *ex ante* to migration and as high-skilled, career-motivated professionals move to Japan and more or less successfully help Japan in its globalization efforts.

Nevertheless, the representativeness of these patterns is usually assumed and reflects the dyadic views of migration juxtaposing the victimized



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and privileged migrants on the most general level. The previous chapter suggested some limits to the image of such high-skilled elite migrants in terms of their migration patterns. Similarly, the extent of diversity in migration brought on by globalization has become one of the focal points of migration studies (Castles and Miller 1993; Vertovec 2007a) and concepts such as 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007b) have been proposed in order to account not only for 'more ethnicities'—that is, the increasing number of countries/regions involved in migration—but mainly to 'recogniz[e] multidimensional shifts in migration patterns' (Meissner and Vertovec 2015, 541). As Russell King has argued, the political and economic globalization in the post-1989 era is one of the main factors that brought new forms of migrations that 'blur the distinction between the [traditional] migratory dyads' (2002, 94). Arguably, the distinction between high- and low-skilled labor might be considered to be one category becoming increasingly blurry, yet it is the diversification of motives for migration, and the consequent need for finding new explanatory factors that King described and I focus on here. As already discussed, King has pointed out the emergence of 'unorthodox' factors and overlooked types of migrations as the 'libidinal factor' and 'love migrations', 'environmental preferences', or student migrations that started to attract increasing attention from scholars in recent years. Analysis of the statistical data in the previous chapter clearly indicates the importance of some of these 'unorthodox' migrations in the case of contemporary European migration to Japan.

Interestingly enough, such a shift from a (more) 'traditional' understanding of migration to more 'unorthodox' explanations can be clearly distinguished in the case of Japan's emigration, while economic-driven explanations tend to dominate the more voluminous accounts of its immigration. On the one hand, the emigration from Japan during its prewar modernization period has been perceived as a solution to the population problem and the motivating factors were clearly economic. On the other hand, contemporary emigration from Japan has been often conceptualized as 'cultural' (Fujita 2009), or 'lifestyle' (Satō 2001), and the complexity of underlying factors, such as persisting gender inequalities, lack of 'alternative' opportunities in Japanese society, or cultural longings for the West (Befu 2000; Kelsky 2001; Satō 2001), completely replaced the economic-driven migration discourse (Yamashita 2008). Moreover, more recent studies, such as Kumiko Kawashima's (2010) study of Japanese working holidaymakers in Australia, incorporate into their explanations

insights from social theories focusing on the individualization of societies and link migration with the middle class.

These are some of the important traits that these approaches share with conceptualizations of various 'unorthodox' migrations—often limited to a mobility within Europe—and I attempt to apply these in explanations of contemporary European migration to Japan and thus expose heavily understudied and often overlooked forms of Japan's immigration. Focusing on social changes such as individualization, incorporating in explanations forces of 'repel' and 'retain' in addition to dominant push and pull (Arango 2000), or focus on 'occidental longings' as a migration-propelling factor and their social construction (Kelsky 2001) arguably represents ways of addressing migration in the context of social in general. As has been recently repeatedly argued, 're-embedding' migration in social transformations represent a plausible way to deepen our understanding of the increasing 'complexity, diversity and contextuality of migratory processes' (Castles 2010, 1582, see also Van Hear 2010; Portes 2010), and migration theory can greatly contribute from building on insights from social theory (Morawska 2009; O'Reilly 2012).

Although to a limited extent, similar tendencies to incorporate more social theory in a shift from economic explanations of migration and its motivations can be discerned in some very recent accounts dealing with 'white migrations', such as Angela Lehman's (2014) account of Westerners in China's Xiamen or Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels' (2014) account of contemporary American migration to Europe. It is these directions and themes that I attempt to further develop in analyzing the motivations for choosing Japan and factors that shape them and thus further contribute to the increase in the number of European nationals residing in Japan. Ultimately, this allows us to overcome the 'traditional dyads' identified by King, and focusing primarily on the previously identified grayzone between the career-driven high-skilled workers and disparity-driven female entertainers represents a further step in the deconstruction of the glorious picture of elite migration associated with the white or Western migrants.

## Prologue: From the Iron Curtain to a Mobility Culture

One of the most significant changes that is characteristic of what is sometimes called the 'age of globalization' is the fall of the communist regimes in the Soviet Union and other European countries. These events are often

described as one of the important political factors that have contributed to the further intermingling of goods, ideas, people, and so on. The dismantling of the Iron Curtain has immensely increased the mobility of a large number of people living on the European continent. Their mobility, in general, has been shaped by different factors, and in the case of Europe, particularly, by European integration. The young Europeans traveling across the continent as students within the Socrates and Erasmus programs (*inter alia* Findlay et al. 2005; King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003) or by other means become what Adrian Favell (2008) called contemporary 'Eurostars'. These 'Eurostars' represent the mobility culture that encompasses 'Europeans'[2] and their mobility is seen by some authors as a characteristic trait of contemporary global societies (Urry 2000).

Although this change affects, to varying degrees,[3] all Europeans (as well as people in different parts of the world), one of the most dramatic ways to depict such an increase in mobility is to confront stories of those who previously lived in separate historical periods in communist countries. It can be argued that the increase in mobility for those nationals not affected by the socialist legacy was more gradual. This is reflected clearly in the tendencies of European migration to Japan described in the previous chapter as well; whereas the increase in the number of nationals from countries not affected by the socialist legacy was rather more gradual, the increase in nationals from the post-socialist countries abruptly accelerated at the beginning of the 1990s.

As a prologue or a pretext to a more extensive discussion on the structural changes shaping this increasing mobility in the age of globalization and the different motivations of Europeans coming to Japan, I analyze three different stories of Czechs and Slovaks who came to Japan at different times and took different paths. These particular stories aptly illustrate how conditions changed for migration as well as narratives addressing such experience. Moreover, they should serve us as a pretext for further discussion on the influence of social changes, and particularly individualization theories that have gained popularity in explanations of 'unorthodox' migrations, and help us focus on the shift in relationship between the individual and structures and beliefs about it.

## *'Unsearchable Ways of the God'*[4]

Štefan Foltín[5] was born in 1918 and became one of the five Slovak Silesian missionaries that moved to Japan and preached Christianity there since the early twentieth century. He was born in a small village to a family of

farmers and came to Japan in 1948.[6] However, his way to Japan was complicated and it illustrates how difficult it was in his times and for people of his background to travel, especially to such destinations as Japan.

After finishing his studies and being admitted to the holy orders, Foltín applied for a mission briefly after the end of World War II. He particularly expressed his wish to be placed in Japan where his teacher was already preaching. He was allowed to join the mission in Japan by the Silesian organization, yet the possibilities of travel from the already communist Czechoslovakia were highly restricted. He vividly narrated how difficult it was even to obtain a passport by recollecting stories he overheard from other priests and those he witnessed in the local office.

> So the officer came. … [He asked the first guy] What do you want? Passport. And where do you want to go. To France. Why? He says, my father worked in France and now he calls me to stay there in the future as well. … I see! So you want to run away! And who is going to work [here]? We need workers here as well. More than in France. You are going to work in Slovakia. Next! And so he went on. I was further [in the row]. Next, next, next. He didn't say to anybody than he will give them the passport. [original in Slovak, translated by author]

International mobility in postwar Europe was seriously hampered by various agreements and those 'eager to migrate had to undergo lengthy bureaucratic procedures' (Fauri 2015, 103). Moreover, as the abovementioned excerpt illustrates, other factors such as labor shortage, nationalism, as well as usurpation of power by the communist party in Czechoslovakia in the late 1940s and slow emergence and establishment of the Cold War system posed serious limitations to any legal form of emigration. Obviously, Foltín has managed to receive his passport despite these limitations and he did so very quickly—actually, on his first attempt and in an extraordinarily short period. He ascribes this 'miracle of The Virgin Mary' to two things. First of all, after he was admonished and before he applied for a passport in the local office, he prayed with children for the blessing of The Virgin Mary for nine days. The second decisive factor that, according to him, helped him to get the passport was an incident at the local office. According to his narrative, the very same administrator described above changed his view after Foltín was the only one who answered his repeated call to switch on the lights. Purportedly, the administrator saw this as a favor he needs to repay and agreed to issue his passport and even expedite the procedures.

His story illustrates not only the fact that the passport could be issued only under very limited conditions, but it also demonstrates that many other factors needed to be in the right constellation in order for such a migration to be realized. Without the support he got from his organization, it would have been next to impossible for someone of his standing to bear the expenses for a three-month-long trip to Japan in the first place. Moreover, the difficulties that can be expected in organizing one's own life and earning income in such a distant country as Japan without the necessary social and cultural capital would likely significantly work against the decision of leaving his country. Finally, it is necessary to note that becoming a missionary was one of the few legal ways to travel and live in early postwar Japan. It is plausible to argue that without the right combination of conditions, his life would be bound and his mobility highly limited by the traditional structures such as the nation (e.g. the bureaucracy in Czechoslovakia or the Japanese immigration control), class, or origin in terms of determining his economic, social, and cultural capital.

We cannot verify his claims about the story and the decisive character of this happening on his migration to Japan. Neither can one be assured by his claims that the blessing of The Mary Virgin and the 'unsearchable ways of the God', that he often invokes, led him to Japan. Nevertheless, it can be argued that his interpretation of the processes that led him to Japan reflects, to some extent, the situation in the country and interpretations that were associated with mobility, especially for people of non-elite descent and to such a culturally and geographically distant place as Japan. Whereas, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, there were considerable numbers of migrants in Japan from Europe—including those from Czechoslovakia—even before World War II, what distinguishes Foltín's story is his 'ordinariness' in terms of his origin (as compared to more 'cosmopolitan' and bourgeois individuals, such as Letzl or Hora mentioned in the previous chapter) juxtaposed with the 'extraordinariness' of his migratory experience. Indeed, it might be argued that many people of his times believed that only God and 'the depth of the riches of [his] wisdom and knowledge' (Romans, 11:33) can possibly explain such an extraordinary (but, similar to a miracle, still possible) event as the move of one Slovak from a rural farmer family to Japan.

### *Intermezzo: From an Exile to Japan*

After the Communist Party came to power in Czechoslovakia in 1948 and the Cold War system has been established, legal travel or migration

abroad, and notably to any part of the West-controlled sphere where Japan belonged, became extremely difficult. At the same time, illegal emigration to the West became a notable phenomenon in the history of communist countries, and according to estimates of the Nation's Memory Institute of Slovakia, as much as 150,000 Czechs and Slovaks fled from their country during the communist era (Jesenský 2009). Whereas Japan definitely did not figure among common destinations of Czech *émigrés,* led by Canada, Switzerland, Austria, and Germany, the story of Henrich illustrates the connection between such emigration and further mobility resulting in migration to Japan. At the same time, this story further reveals some of the continuities as well as disjunctions with the previous story in terms of the role of traditional structures in forming one's migratory path.

Henrich was born in the 1950s in Prague. He describes his mother as a housewife and father as a researcher, which suggests that their family was of a relatively good economic standing. Henrich's parents decided to emigrate in 1970 within the biggest emigration wave following the 'normalization' imposed by the military intervention and occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968. While Henrich was still in high school, his parents decided to leave for the USA under the veil of vacation in India.

In this way, Henrich's migration path was heavily influenced by the Czechoslovakian state and its control of various freedoms during the communist regime, as well as the social status of his family. One can focus on the particular cultural tastes of individuals that choose to emigrate in this period that followed the democratization movement in the 1968 and that are often associated with the intellectual elites, as, for example, in Milan Kundera's famous novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. Moreover, it can be argued that his father, as a researcher in a national institution, had better opportunities not only to obtain the necessary travel documents or financially cover their trip but had a better outlook in his destination as well. What is, however, of further interest here is the fact that Henrich's migration was determined by his family itself in the first place, and he still feels bitterness for that even today. Actually, Heinrich did not know until they were on board a plane headed to the USA that they were not coming back home. He had to continue his life and find a new home in a new country, which he struggled with, and eventually, did not manage to succeed in. He tried to escape from the place that his family had chosen for him as his new home and this started with his choice of university for post-graduate studies.

> My father wanted me to go to the best university that would accept me. I applied to ten universities. Those like Harvard didn't accept. There was a university in Chicago that was regarded as one of the top and they accepted me. But I didn't want to go there. I was so pissed off by America, I didn't want to live in that typical American environment anymore. So I waited until I got a response from somewhere else that would accept me and when I got a letter from a university in Hawaii. I just pulled all other letters into pieces and flushed into the toilet so my parents wouldn't know because they would not agree. [original in Czech, translated by author]

This represents his rebellion against the path that was chosen for him by his family and an (successful) attempt to (re)gain the individual agency or the possibility to choose the life by himself. In this way, he went to study in Hawaii, and because of unsuccessful fieldwork in Indonesia, he eventually decided to stay for a while in Tokyo where he was supposed to change his flight back to Hawaii. That period has already lasted for more than 30 years. Like his father, he became a professor and added one more passport to his collection.[7]

As in the previous story, we still can see a dominant role of structures—especially those of the state, family, and their social status—in shaping Henrich's path as well. Similarly, it is the particular event, or rather path-dependent sequence of such events that eventually lead to his migration to Japan. In addition to failed fieldwork in Indonesia, Henrich argued that because he had heard of the stories of easily achieved, high-income jobs and enjoyable lifestyle options for white men in Japan, he decided to travel to the next destination on his return from Indonesia, namely, Tokyo. This is symbolic of a twist toward more 'freedom' in shaping his further life that can be seen since his coming to the USA. However, the role of 'choice' of an individual in the migration process, as opposed to the determinative effect of the structures, is even clearly articulated in the final story.

### *Choosing a Lifestyle, Choosing the Destination*

When I interviewed other Czechs, Slovaks, or other Europeans that came to Japan more recently, their stories seemed to be far less dramatic compared to the previous two. However, as is exemplified in the following story, it cannot be argued that they lack complexity. The path of Lukas to Japan led him from the Czech Republic to South Africa, back again, journeying to the neighboring Austria, then venturing to New Zealand before finally going to and settling (at least, for now) in Japan.

Lukas is from Prague and was raised up in a middle-class family. After graduating from high school, specialized in information technologies, he started to work in this field. He had a clear vision of his future, which he followed for a while.

> My idea – idea of my parents – was to build up a career and build a house or buy a flat in Prague and live close to them. That's what I was roughly doing during those seven years – that is I had a concept, I was somehow advancing in the company and I bought land close to Prague to build something. [original in Czech, translated by author]

In this narrative, Lukas recollects the ideals he followed and are, to certain extent, typical for middle-class families in Czech or other post-socialist societies. Education and consequent employment in a promising field (i.e. Information Technology), and vision of professional advancement are the crucial agencies that would guarantee him access to the middle class, its symbols (i.e. own house or flat), and lifestyle. As has been argued, for example, in the case of Slovakia, the extended family in transition societies play an important role in supporting young families (Guráň et al. 2014; Guráň and Filadelfiová 1995) and, thus, settled life 'close to [parents]' was the other important piece in the puzzle of his goals and lifestyle choices.

Nevertheless, obviously, he became tired of such a lifestyle and started to question these values. It was during the time when the integration of the post-socialist countries into the structures of the European Union peaked, and 'a mobility culture' that has been identified as shaping the migration decision of young people in Western countries had been affecting young people from the 'Eastern-block' as well. The youth mobility culture is associated with young individuals that are 'motivated less by traditional economic migration factors (to find a job, better income) and more by experiential goals' (Findlay et al. 2005, 193), such as personal development, 'which fit with the notion of the "do-it-yourself" biography of young, postmodern individuals (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002)' (ibid.). Importantly, in addition to the reflexive character of the contemporary identities (Giddens 1991) that, as I elaborate in more detail later, plays an important role in shaping such culture (Benson and O'Reilly 2009; Kawashima 2010), this culture is associated with the middle class and its reproduction under conditions 'where traditional means of distinction (secondary and tertiary education) are losing their power' (Scott 2006, 1107).

Thus, in choosing a different path, it might still seem that Lukas actually did not divert profoundly from the direction his parents envisaged for him in terms of social class reproduction, but that he only chose a significantly different route. As he claims, his decision to do so by, first, studying English language abroad, was inspired by many young people from his social network who traveled abroad. Language study programs abroad were already very popular and highly commercialized, so all he had to do was to make a few decisions: to quit his job and to choose his destination.

He chose South Africa, and there he also met his future wife. Their relationship, however, did not turn into a love story until she traveled from Japan to Austria to study piano a few months later. However, as their relationship developed and her stay in Austria shortened, they started to seriously consider how and where they could live together. The most obvious alternatives were the Czech Republic or an Anglophone country and, indeed, Lukas chose to travel alone to New Zealand to explore the options they might have there. Although he could see possibilities of getting a job in his profession there, he presents New Zealand as a country that did not really impress him with its natural environment.

> I was looking for a job there, for contacts to get a job. [Of course] In information technologies, because it would pay most … But somehow I didn't like it very much there. Mainly because I like nature, hiking and things like that. And there, in New Zealand, if you want to go to nature *de facto* you have to go to some national park and usually you have to pay an entrance fee as well. The rest of the country is kind of fenced in, so you are limited by fences because they have plenty of sheep…. Besides that, the sunshine is very strong there, especially on the southern island, so if you go outside you have to daub yourself with sunscreen. So I said to myself that it's not my cup of tea and I went to see my wife in Japan. [original in Czech, translated by author]

We can discern a conflict between the 'old' values emphasizing career options and income that are strongly related to stability and family on the one hand, and the more experiential values of appealing environment or nature (and free access to it) on the other hand. Lukas leaned toward the second pole as he changed his plans completely, and went to Japan to see his girlfriend instead of job hunting in New Zealand or Czech. Short stayed prolonged, first to 'see all four seasons' and his (their) decision to stay in Japan 'for the time being' solidified when he found out about an old house her family owned.

> And one day my wife tells me, that they have … an old house … where nobody lives. That it is an old Japanese house. So we went there [to the house] and I felt for this place. Because of the mountains, hot springs, the house – it's really old. I mean, many Japanese probably don't see it that way, but maybe because we find it so exotic, I found that house absolutely amazing at first sight. So we started to consider - or I decided, that we could try to stay [and live] here. [original in Czech, translated by author]

It seems that the appealing lifestyle—beautiful and freely accessible nature, or 'exotic' house—finally took over the promising career proposals as an IT specialist since Lukas and his wife are still living in Japan—since 2007. They reconstructed the old house and started a guesthouse and English teaching business. Lukas presents his decision as a deliberate lifestyle choice, a choice in which he preferred a personally appealing environment, oriental images, family support,[8] and a possibility to start a not very profitable, unstable, though subjectively attractive small business over a more promising and financially attractive career in his profession.

When we juxtapose this story with the previous two, it reveals some of the main topics that can be explored and elaborated on further in order to understand the recent growth of European migration to Japan. First of all, by choosing an example of Europeans from a post-socialist country, the change in the mobility-limiting role of the state is plainly obvious. Lukas' narrative does not demonstrate any of the worries or troubles the previous two (or their families) experienced when trying to leave their country. Furthermore, although affected also by the religious background of the first story, we can identify in the above-mentioned narratives a shift in understanding of one's life from one heavily influenced by social structures, such as state, family, or class, toward one shaped by individual choices and decisions. This can be related to theories arguing that the character of modernity in contemporary developed societies is changing (Bauman 2000; Beck et al. 1994; Beck 1992; Giddens 1990), especially in terms of the changing role of such traditional structures and their consequences for individuals (Bauman 2001; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991). A shift from the settled life that Lukas ascribes to his parents to the more 'liquid' one he started to pursue is also symbolic of such a change. At the same time, Lukas' story reveals the socially constructed side of the decisions he made as well, as can be seen, for example, in the influence of the 'traveling culture' on his decision to move. Finally, there are other topics worth following, such as international marriage, the role of education or study abroad, lifestyle, and 'exotic' or 'oriental' images

in contemporary migration to Japan. I discuss and further develop these topics in the following analysis of the main migration patterns and motivations of my interviewees.

In sum, these stories should not be interpreted as an ode celebrating the increasing mobility, individual freedoms, or excessive disembedment from class, nation, family, or other social structures. These stories should illustrate how the conditions for migration have changed with advancing globalization and indicate where to look for answers to the question of why increasingly more Europeans choose Japan as their migration destination. They should also draw our attention from the paradigmatic economic focus to wider social changes and the role they have in shaping the individual's decisions on migration.

## Different Migrations and Motivations

In the following section, I provide an analysis of the motivations for migration and a description of the structural factors affecting particular migration patterns of contemporary Europeans coming to Japan. The analysis is organized according to the three main migratory types that were identified in the previous chapter and are covered by this study—namely, international marriages, student migration, and various types of professionals. At the same time, I focus on the topics unveiled in the prologue of this chapter and further develop the ideas and directions they point to.

### *Complexity of Migration Flows: The Case of International Marriages*

As already mentioned, international marriages between European and Japanese nationals compromise a significant portion of the European population in Japan. The claim that international marriages might be a considerable factor contributing to the soaring shares of permanent residents can be supported by empirical results of this study as well; almost all permanent residents (nine out of ten) in my sample are (or were) married to a Japanese national, which also preceded the acquisition of such status.

However, when considering international marriages from the perspective of migration, we need to distinguish between the marriage-caused migration and marriage caused by migration. In the words of Scott and Cartledge (2009), there is a 'met and migrate' and 'migrate and met' pattern and only the former is of interest in this section. Out of a total 31 who

are or were married to a Japanese national, there were 12 cases for whom marriage became a reason for moving to and settling in Japan. Although this is not a sample representative of the European population in Japan and these numbers cannot be interpreted as suggesting the proportions of met and migrate and migrate and met patterns, it can be argued that a significant number of Europeans marrying Japanese come initially to Japan for a different reason and only then meet and marry their Japanese partners. It is also important to note that this is being said without regard to female entertainers, for whom such a pattern is typical, but who were not represented in my sample.

Still, meeting a Japanese partner abroad, resulting in subsequent migration to Japan can be identified as one of the patterns of European migration to Japan. Their stories exemplify the complexity of migratory flows in the global age, which involve increasingly more countries, forms, women, directions (Castles and Miller 2009), and, as I will argue, these flows are interrelated. However, before analyzing the particular stories, let me outline the legal framework allowing this type of migration that is actually of a more recent date than might be thought.

An important legal base enabling the growth of international marriages, particularly that of the met and migrate type, and their settlement in Japan was laid down only in 1982. In this year, the spousal visa category was created as part of the newly established Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act. This made it possible to acquire a visa just on the basis of a marital relation with a Japanese national. Before its introduction, it was particularly difficult for foreign men to legally stay in Japan,[9] and this constrained the possibilities for such international families to start their lives in Japan.

Nils (Norway), who came to Japan for the first time in 1960 as a sailor, and his Japanese wife are an example of those whose life was seriously affected by this system. Although they met during his frequent stays in Japan already in the late 1960s, they decided to live in Norway and came back to Japan only in 1998, after Nils left his job with a disability pension. As he describes their decision to initially live in Norway, he argues that he would be 'not enough for Japanese' in the times they had to decide and many Japanese women marrying foreign men felt similar to Nils when compared to Japanese men (see AMF 1986). Japanese women marrying foreign nationals were further disadvantaged under the paternalistic Nationality Law, which did not recognize their children as Japanese nationals. The Nationality Law put them on equal footing with men in

1985, and also significantly improved the circumstances of foreign men marrying Japanese women and staying in Japan. Considering such developments in legal conditions during the first half of the 1980s, it is not surprising that the rest of the met and migrate cases in my sample moved to Japan after 1990 and problems with the acquisition of the residency status do not figure in their narratives anymore.

One of the characteristics of the migration experiences of my interviewees is that there was a significant tendency toward meeting in a country that was 'foreign' to both partners. In as many as half of the cases, partners met in a third country, such as Australia, the UK, RSA, or USA. This demonstrates how various forms of mobility intersect, intermingle, and transform into different forms of migration. It has been argued that previous mobility experiences can be seen as one of the factors that facilitate further international movement through acquisition of the mobility capital (Findlay et al. 2006; Scott and Cartledge 2009).[10] As Scot and Cartledge describe it, this term 'refers to the knowledge amassed through international mobility that increases one's potential ability to move abroad and to assimilate into national and transnational structures' and involves development of linguistic competencies, or more expansive social networks and identities (2009, 76).

All these elements can be identified in the narrative of numerous interviewees such as Nicklas from Sweden, who initially decided to go for graduate studies to Australia. Even this migration was preceded by the earlier mobility experience he got through backpacking after high school. In Australia, he got a chance to pick up his old interest in the Japanese language, and initially a small interest in Japanese language led Nicklas to a deeper one through interaction with Japanese people, for whom Australia is a popular destination (Kawashima 2010, 2012; Satō 2001). The new social networks he engaged in led him to meet his future wife, which further increased his interest in Japan. Finally, multiple mobility experiences and the experience of living abroad led to a development of 'mobile identity' and, as he claims, after living two years in Australia, 'going back to Sweden, it was not that interesting for me'. Combined with a newly discovered interest in Japan and the fact of being in a relationship with a Japanese woman decided his next destination—where he has lived from 2006 until 2014.

Similar to Nicklas' case, all other couples—except only two—in this category of 'met and migrate' are characterized by a previous migratory experience of the non-Japanese partners. Thus, acquisition of the mobility

capital through such experience does not involve only 'interest in Japan', but also—as, for example, Martha from Norway puts it—willingness to accept the challenge of 'really living here [in Japan]' on 'daily [bases]'. In more general terms, mobility capital works as a centripetal force that 'repels' individuals from their countries (Arango 2000) and its acquisition positively influences the decision to move (further) to Japan.

Furthermore, as in the case of Lukas and Nicklas, the majority, namely, two-thirds, of the met and migrate patterns were dominated by the European husband–Japanese wife pattern. Such gender-biased character actually reflects the Japanese migration flows to the areas where these couples meet. The flows from Japan to Europe or Australia and North America are dominated by women, especially in the case of non-business and particularly study-related stays.[11] In other words, the probability that a European man can meet a Japanese woman outside Japan is considerably higher than the probability of the opposite occurrence. The gendered character of these flows has been usually associated with persisting gender discrimination in Japan, combined with 'occidental longings' (Kelsky 2001) and hypergamy (Kamoto 2008) of Japanese women often idolizing Western men in sexual as well as status terms. Nevertheless, what is of interest for our study is the fact that a growing number of single, young Japanese going to Europe (or other parts the world where they can meet Europeans), and especially those staying abroad for longer periods—who are, again, more frequently women[12]—brings with it a higher probability that they encounter there a non-Japanese partner and, in some cases, induce a Japan-bound migration. Such a tendency has been discussed in the case of the within-Europe migrations (Scott and Cartledge 2009), but this case demonstrates that many international marriages involve increasing numbers of diverse individuals and places. Moreover, the case of international marriages demonstrates how out-migration from Japan relates to in-migration—an aspect that has not been fully recognized yet.

In regard to the gendered character of the couples I interviewed, the question of motivations for choosing Japan appears as an intriguing topic. Whereas the case of foreign women following their Japanese husband might seem to be self-explanatory,[13] the economic rationalization of the decisions made by the families with a foreign man might seem harder to decipher. For the majority of interviewees in this category, the already introduced narratives of Nicklas and Lukas are representative in two ways. Firstly, their decision to come and live in Japan is not a career-oriented choice. The considerations of employment options in Japan were usually

framed only as an issue of the feasibility of their stay, which reveals the economic dimension of their migration decisions. Yet, at the same time, they are usually not driven by disparities in possible incomes nor in terms of upward mobility in their careers. Similar to Lukas, few other male interviewees actually abandoned their careers in the previous place of residence that promised higher incomes or more promising careers.

Secondly, many of these men stressed the importance of factors related to positive images of Japan and related their decision to lifestyle factors. In general, they agreed on the fact that whereas their (or third) countries might have been better for their careers, they saw Japan as better suited for their family lives. In addition to Lukas' emphasis on the environmental aspect, Slavko, who came to the UK from Serbia and naturalized there before moving with his family to Japan, elaborates on other aspects of comfortable family life in Japan.

> When I moved for the first time from Serbia, from the Eastern Europe it was just a step up in almost every way. It was very obvious. And that's how I feel coming to Japan for the UK. It's definitely - I wouldn't say that's the stair is that high but I think in terms of where I'm now with my life, having young family, I think it's as they say, it's a no brainer. It's kind of, the choice is very clear. Services are better, trains are on time, there is less crime on streets - it's just kind of small things, when you live in one place you don't even notice…. This is what I missed [in London], this is what is for me very important now. I mean, I think London is a great place if you want to study, if you want to meet people, if you want to have an experience working…. You know, I've done my university, now I'm having a job that's good for my cv, it's good for my career but I'm just not sure if I would like to be here for next 20, 25 years. And you know, when we started the family we had basically decided that coming to Japan would be better option for us.

Slavko clearly distinguishes between the character and expectations for his moves to the UK, which was career-oriented, and Japan, which was expected to provide different benefits. Life in Japan provides a relatively good environment in terms of daily life, safety, and comfort or convenience, which is further amplified by a lack of blatant discriminatory behavior experienced by white migrants (see the following chapter). Thus, the life here is appealing for many, yet 'abandonment' of the career traded for such lifestyle appears as a repetitive pattern among male interviewees that might be partially related to their actual opportunities in the Japanese labor market (see Chap. 4).

Moreover, these stories actually reveal a further dimension of what might be interpreted as a seemingly obvious migration pattern. In other words, international marriage as an obvious explanatory factor for migrating to Japan is, in reality, a more complex decision process where the marriage is only one of the factors contributing to the decision to move. It is necessary to emphasize that this decision usually involves other possibilities that are often not limited only to the countries of origin of the couple. These possibilities then might include, together with Japan, also Czech Republic and New Zealand in the case of Lukas, UK and Serbia in the case of Slavko, or USA and Norway, as in the case of Martha, described in more detail later. The intriguing aspect—considering especially the gendered character of this pattern—of the stories analyzed here is that decisions about where to stay or move tends to be often complex and dominated by 'unorthodox' (read non-economic) consideration. Identifying such 'unorthodox' motivations not only in the case of individuals but also in the case of families further emphasize the importance of such motivations as a factor influencing the general population rather than cohort or life stage specific factor.

As I elaborate further, such 'unorthodox' motivations can certainly be seen in other, more individual migration patterns, such as students, as well. In this respect, it is also worthy to note that similar to the majority (8 out of 12) of the Japanese partners, all of the earlier mobility experiences in the case of Europeans traveling to third countries involved study in some form—whether as a language education program, general university-related education, or research. This underlines the significance of educationally related migration in forming further migrations, such as international marriage-related ones in this case, and further underscores the importance of focusing on growing international student mobility. Indeed, as the previous chapter also suggests, student migration can be identified as one of the main migration channels of Europeans to Japan per se.

### *Globalization of Education and Student Mobility*

The international movement of students represents a heavily understudied form of migration (Findlay et al. 2005; Findlay 2011; King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003) and for many is still not even considered as a phenomenon that can be conceptualized as migration. Nevertheless, it has been also acknowledged that international students represent one of the forces that drives the increase of the foreign population in Japan and that many

students further settle in Japan (e.g. Liu-Farrer 2009), which confirms some of the results from the analysis of the European migration patterns in the previous chapter as well.

In Japan, international students have been seen as one of the agents of 'globalization' or 'internationalization', as actors that could help Japan to achieve these qualities. It is not surprising that the first 'Plan to Accept 100 000 Foreign Students before the Beginning of 21st Century' was adopted by the Nakasone government in 1983, which was one of the most passionate proponents of the internationalization discourse and its related policies (e.g. McCargo 2000). Although some authors doubt the actual effect of this plan on the numbers of foreign students coming to Japan, and stress, among others things, the consequent relaxation of the immigration law regarding students (Mozumi 2010; Takita 1988), it can be argued that it was a significant step toward the faster growth of foreign student numbers. The plan stated that the government would support 10 percent of foreign students with a stipendium, and it was followed by a growing number of other scholarship and fellowship schemes,[14] as well as a growing number of international cooperation agreements between universities. It can be argued that this plan, together with the immigration law and other consequent changes, contributed to the development of a more favorable structural conditions for accepting foreign students in Japan.

The initial plan met its objectives by 2003 and was succeeded by a new one in 2008. The new plan set its goal of accepting 300,000 foreign students by 2020, this time as part of Japan's 'global strategy'. The plan can be situated in a new wave of hype regarding 'global education' aiming to educate Japanese students in a way that they become more globally capable and competitive. The role that the foreign students should play in the internationalization or globalization of Japan, according to the government plans, is discussed in detail in the following chapters. Here, I focus on the role educationally related mobility plays in the migration of Europeans to Japan as well as the motivations that had led a growing number of Europeans to choose Japan for their studies or research.

The results of my study strongly indicate that the role of the student and researcher mobility in the growing numbers of European residents in Japan substantially exceeds the impact suggested by the statistics. As explained already, students, together with researchers, represent something more than 10 percent of all registered Europeans in Japan in terms of form of stay, and these numbers were used for selection of the interviewees

as well. Nevertheless, in addition to the present-day students (and/or researchers), the results show that as many as 32 of the interviewees have completed at least part of their tertiary education, or commenced research in Japan. For almost the entirety of this group, study provided the initial opportunity for migration to Japan. Although there were 11 interviewees who were enrolled as students (9) or doing research (2) at the time of the interview, the majority (21) represented people with different visa statuses and occupations. Even taking into account the methodological limitations of this research, it can be argued that educationally channeled migration represents one of the significant factors affecting the growth and settlement of Europeans in Japan.

This can be related to the fact that the majority of foreign students stay in Japan on long-term programs.[15] Similar to the case of international marriages, the concept of mobility capital can again help us to understand the relation between longer stays and further settlement. It has been argued that with increasing time spent abroad, the identities of migrants become less place bounded, and the acquisition of the mobility capital helps them to adapt to different national structures as well (Scott and Cartledge 2009). The former effect has been exemplified in the case of Niklas, yet the combination of both effects can actually result in forming favorable conditions for staying in Japan. This is clearly articulated in the experience of Corneliu (Romania), who completed entire graduate and post-graduate study (ten years in total) in Japan. When he started to look for a job in academia with a PhD in hand, he realized the limits of his ability to move abroad again (this time, from Japan) and the place-bounded character of the capital he gained in Japan.

> It's impossible to get a job abroad as an assistant professor if you cannot get one here. I mean just if you go to Uganda or someplace nobody wants to go with a PhD. In the competitive countries like France or Germany or something like that, there would be people there having as many papers as you have, supported by their professors who are known there so basically you have no theoretical chance to get in there.

Whereas this case might seem to be at odds with the concept of mobility capital, it actually demonstrates its other face. The less place-bounded migrant identity and ability to adapt means, among other things, that Corneliu is capable of living practically anywhere (i.e. elsewhere than his country of origin), including Japan, where he became embedded in

various social structures. Thus, he can choose to stay in Japan rather than moving back to his home country. On the contrary, the distance between Japan and Europe still tends to be too great to be easily overcome and let the various forms of capital be free-flowing. His social and human capital tends to be more bounded to Japan and thus negatively affects the possibility of further exerting his ability to adapt to various social settings (e.g. in France or Germany) and move abroad again.

Nonetheless, it is interesting that this does not apply to students and researchers who are enrolled in long-term courses in the top global research institutions that are part of the transnational research networks. For them, doing research in an institution that is deeply embedded in transnational structures leads to development and sustaining of social and human capital that is transnationally defined. Therefore, while Corneliu got assimilated or embedded more in national (i.e. Japanese) structures, these students (or researchers) are getting increasingly embedded in the transnational structures and their career visions are more optimistic in terms of their further international mobility. In a way, they represent the elite of the research scene, yet such deep transnational interconnections seem to be limited to some of the few top higher education and research institutions in Japan. This illustrates the contradictory results study (or other mobility) experience can bring for Europeans in Japan, as well as the limits of the interconnectedness of various structures between Japan and Europe or the rest of the world.

Another narrative that relates to Corneliu and often resonated with different stories was the existence of a favorable scholarship, or fellowship scheme. Since the adoption of the plan to accept 100,000 foreign students, Japan has become second in the number of the government-sponsored scholarships, and by far, number one in the share of foreign students sponsored by such scholarships. For many of my interviewees, the sheer existence of the scholarship or fellowship represents a motivating factor that enables their education in institutional and financial terms. Regarding the latter, a tendency to mention the scholarship and its amount could be seen, especially in the narratives of interviewees coming from some of the least developed post-socialist European countries, or in other words, those countries where the economic disparities with Japan are still high. Nevertheless, as, for example, the following excerpt from an interview with Bojan from Macedonia illustrates, even in these cases, that economic motivation alone cannot sufficiently explain their decisions.

Interviewer: So did you find it [the scholarship] interesting?

Bojan: Yes, I did. At that point I thought it was an astronomical sum of money. Translated to Euros, probably you would understand, it was like 1500 Euros per month. When I came here I realized those money, that sum of money is not that great deal. Then again. Also travel to Japan and - at that point I was still having a bug of traveling. I really like traveling. Here and there, abroad, in the neighborhoods, in the Balkans. So I was, oh, Japan, I've never been there. It would be worthwhile to see. Yeah, I decided in the end. I actually found a job after graduating and was working for a couple of months before the announcement. So it wasn't that easy decision. I had to abandon pretty steady and decent job to come here and do I don't know what. Because I don't know, nothing was certain here. I wouldn't know how it would be. Whether I find employment afterwards etc. and but then, it was a nice choice. And a nice opportunity.

His case demonstrates that the decision process in the case of students involves a set of factors that are not limited to economic considerations, and the considerations of the possible gains from such a move are long-, rather than short-term-based (Findlay et al. 2005). Moreover, as he stresses, even the long-term financial gains seem to be far from guaranteed for him, which is an uncertainty many of those not belonging to the already mentioned global research elite have to face in their decisions. The rational justification of his calculations are then anything but clear, at least in its economic core. He had to make a choice between a more stable, relatively well-paying career and more risky, or 'fluid', way of further education that, on the contrary, involved travel and other aspects of a different lifestyle.

As I argue later, recent developments in student mobility in Europe can inform us of the possibilities of theorizing student decisions—one of the keys for understanding the driving forces of contemporary European migration to Japan. The argument I want to stress at this point is that similar to many international marriage migrants, the majority of the students and researchers, except the few representatives of the global research elite, again highlighted the importance of a certain lifestyle, rather than carrier-wise considerations. Interestingly enough, a similar tendency can be found in some cases among another group: high-skilled, professional migrants, an analysis of which brings us further insights into the meaning of Japan as an opportunity for the European migrants I interviewed.

### *Professionals and 'Professionals': Japan as not the Best Opportunity?*

Some of the above-mentioned stories suggest a rather contradictory character of Japan as perceived as an opportunity for upward mobility through the accumulation of more capital in various forms. A similar tendency is reflected in the case of the high-skilled professionals as well. Except some cases of professionals who continued their careers after graduating from a university in Japan, there were only a few cases when career considerations were a primary motivating factor. As, for instance, Oishi suggested, Japan in the global market for high-skilled migration is not perceived as an attractive destination (Oishi 2012, 9). More precisely, it is not seen as the best opportunity for forging a promising career for highly skilled, highly mobile professionals. Such an observation resonated in the narratives of those professionals choosing Japan that were not already significantly embedded in the structures of Japanese society from long-term study.

For example, Penelope gained her PhD in cognitive science at a top institute in the USA, but despite the possibility of continuing her career there, she opted for Japan. She explains why in the following quote:

> I was very clear that I didn't want to live in the US. I … do not want to have my family here, I do not want to work here, I do not want to contribute to this society. I want to leave. And that is when I got the offer from Kobe. And so the offer from Kobe meant going down … Instead of taking a position as a PhD professor I took a lower position but I wanted it. I wanted to study Japanese, I wanted to see the world and I wanted to have a quieter life than I could in the States as a researcher. It's very competitive there. I had seen it and I did not want that.

While being a representative of high-skilled professional migration, Penelope opted for an opportunity that would not be the best in career terms, but would, instead, provide her with a compromise of a less competitive and prestigious career, 'quieter life', and a possibility to travel and study Japanese. Although these are, again, only her own representations of her decision made under the influence of her experience of living in Japan for more than 15 years, they exemplify the complexity of factors affecting the choice of Japan, and indicate that it can be chosen as an alternative, rather than as the option providing the best career and economic opportunities. Interestingly enough, a number of interviewees working as professionals or considering such careers in Japan mentioned that when looking

for success in terms of career, one should aim for China, emphasizing the economic growth and hunger for 'global talent' in this country, on the one hand, and suggesting that both these elements are lacking in the case of Japan, on the other hand. Such a tendency is even clearer in cases of people who enter Japan as high-skilled 'professional' migrants.

This group consists mainly of those coming on the 'Specialist in humanities/International services' type of visa. As already mentioned, whereas their visa status is conceived as a form of high-skilled migration, in general (e.g. Oishi 2012), there are many authors doubting such a categorization on the basis of the necessary qualifications as well as the type of work they engage in (Liu-Farrer 2011a, b; Tsukasaki 2008). One of the main reasons for these doubts is the fact that many holders of these visas use their cultural skills—particularly, their language skills. This is somewhat at odds with a more general understanding of high-skilled professionals as those holding specific scientific or technical skills, and the definition furthermore lacks a link between their high skills and the profession they do.

Such a contradictory character of these 'professionals' was confirmed among my interviewees as well; all of the nine interviewees who have held these visas at some point during their stays in Japan used for their work primarily foreign (i.e. not Japanese) language or a more general knowledge of 'their' culture. More specifically, disregarding their origin or education, it was their English language ability—whether as used for language education or translation—that was the common job type for the majority (six) of them, and, as I discuss in the following chapters, for many others coming or staying on different visas as well.

Exposing the link between English and the 'Specialist in humanities/International services' visa indicates that we can relate their growth to the demand for the English language and its instruction in Japan. The English language education business boomed in the 1980s and its growth continued throughout the 1990s (Budmar 2012). Many major *eikaiwa* schools (Nova, Berlitz Japan, Gaba, and Seiha) were established in this period and institutional programs supporting English language education commenced as well. One such program is the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET), which started in 1987. Through this program, there were more than 1500 Europeans (mainly from the UK) staying in Japan in its peak period of 2001, but this number has dropped to around one-third in recent years. This brought job opportunities for many Europeans, including non-native speakers, and enabled their migration and continued stay in Japan.

Nevertheless, as already suggested, there is again a tendency of seeing the opportunity as an issue of feasibility of stay in Japan, rather than that of career-forging in these cases as well. This could be seen throughout all the narratives, yet the following case interestingly illustrates how this type of visa and the opportunities in the English teaching market represent a way of entering Japan for non-native speakers of English as well. Gabika is from Slovakia and came to Japan in 2005. As she claims, 'I did not want to go and teach [*English*] in Japan. Everybody goes to teach [*English*] to Japan.' Nevertheless, after trying to get around in Japan for a few months without a proper visa, she decided to take the English teaching job that provided her both legal status and stable pay. In other words, the English teaching job provided her with an opportunity to stay in Japan. Yet, as the quote illustrates, it was definitely not the purpose of her time in Japan, nor was the decision to teach English motivated by career considerations. It was simply a means to realize her dream to live in Japan.

Moreover, as suggests the case of Gabika, this pattern of 'professionals' often overlapped with a previous interest in Japan. Gabika used to be a serious practitioner of karate, but she claims that she felt 'a calling' for Japan even before that. As she puts it, this calling led her to optional Japanese language classes during her undergraduate study of psychology in the UK, deeper interaction with local Japanese exchange students, and a short stay in Japan. Eventually, the initial calling evolved into a strong interest and decision that she wanted to live in Japan.

### *From 'Japonism' to 'Cool Japan': Interest in Japan and Migration*

Previous interest in Japan represents actually an important piece in the mosaic depicting the motivations of many Europeans in my sample. Whether they were students, researchers, or different types of professionals choosing Japan as their destination, almost half of my interviewees—namely, 26 out of 57—shared a previous interest in some aspect of Japan that was directly related to their decision to go and stay in Japan for a longer period. For all of them, it was a strong, and in many cases, primary motivating factor for coming to and/or staying in Japan. In addition, this does not include another few cases such as Nicklas', where the subject's interest in Japan developed through other opportunities, and can been seen as one of the factors shaping their decision to go and stay in Japan as well. The image of Japan prior to migration was unvaryingly positive, and

as I argue, the presence of Japan in Europe that shapes these images, and particularly, its increase, can be seen as one of the factors contributing to the growth of European migration to Japan.

The cultural presence and awareness of Japan in Europe have a long history, and as argued in the case of early Czech residents in Japan, this presence played a significant role in shaping the path that led them to Japan. However, similar to the case of globalization in general, what distinguishes the trends in recent decades is the extent of this presence and awareness. As, for example, Harumi Befu and Sylvie Guichard-Anguis stress, the 'global Japanese presence today is a quantum level more pervasive than a century ago, when things Japanese abroad was by and large limited to art and antique goods' (Befu and Guichard-Anguis 2001, xix). Accelerating globalization brought, among others, new, extensive flows of ideas, images, people, or goods that further extended and promoted the already established Japanese presence. In combination with spreading mass consumption, many Japanese commodities, such as *sushi*, 'went global' (Bestor 2000) and today Japan's cultural presence encompasses just about anything from food to sports (e.g. martial arts), from language to pop culture (e.g. *anime* and *manga*).[16]

Moreover, Japan served for a significant period in the postwar years as a model for successful modernization and development of a non-Western country that, for many influential authors such as Ezra Vogel (1979), represented even a model worth following by Westerners themselves. Even after the limits of the economic miracle in Japan were exposed by the outburst of the bubble in the early 1990s, there were other positive sides of Japan that were presented as a model or alternative to the Western style. As, for example, Roger Goodman argued, it could be that the welfare state model of Japan started to be perceived as an inspiration for politicians and the wider public in the 1990s in the UK (Goodman 2001), or the more recent spread of Japanese pop culture (e.g. Iwabuchi 2002a, b) and the government supported presentation of Japan within the 'Cool Japan' strategy.

What these representations have in common is that they present Japan as an alternative to Eurocentric ways of development, modernization, social organization, or culture. More specifically, whether it is the 'exotic' culture, or developed yet different society or economy, Japan is often depicted as a successful, or inspiring alternative that interweaves elements of the 'modern' and 'traditional' in a way not to be seen in other, highly developed, modernized, or civilized Western countries. Similar

observations were made in regard to the ways Japan actually presents itself. Michael Daliot-Bul (2009) in his analysis of the new branding strategies of Japan argued that while the discourse concerning the branding of Japan as 'Cool' is trying to give 'Japan a new imagery quite different from the former "exotic images" of Japan as the land of Mt. Fuji, geisha and kabuki … what seems to be radically new and different is actually part of the same cultural tradition' (Daliot-Bul 2009, 253). In particular, he argues that in this 'new' strategy, the government is actually relating the 'Cool' to tradition and is doing so in order to 'prove reassuringly to itself, to Japan and to the world that the potentially subversive Cool Japan "is still Japan"' (Daliot-Bul 2009, 254). That is to say, it is again the images of Japan as bringing 'traditional' and 'modern' aspects together in a unique way that makes it specific. This seems to be rather a consistent strategy expressed through various ways, ranging from inventing traditions (Vlastos 1998) to branding Japan as 'Cool'.

Such representations of Japan were often made by the interviewees as well. They often described the combination of 'traditional' and 'modern' as something appealing about Japan and related it to their decisions to travel, or stay in Japan. One of the number of narratives concerning Japan as an alternative and its relation to one's motivation to migrate is that of Gabika, when she explains how she decided to live in Japan.

> I think that it was after my first [short-term visit] in Japan. I loved it so much … The [Japanese] guy [I met in Norway] … really young guy, very cool and fashionably dressed and everything. And he took me to his house and he respected his parents so much … and he took me to a temple and explained me everything. I was just fascinated by everything. Because young people in our country, they were like throwing away all traditions, throwing away religion, we don't need it, it so awkward, it so unmodern. And this guy, modern, cool and young had so much respect to traditions, to his family, and I was like wow. People don't throw such things away here, they maintain them and even despite the fact that they are so much developed country, so modern, so technologically advanced. I found it to be [all] in a great harmony. [original in Slovak, translated by author]

It is precisely the image of 'harmony' that connects the modern with tradition and the feelings that these qualities were lost in the modernization process in European countries that were directly or indirectly invoked by many of my interviewees, who were from different regions, with or without prior interest to Japan. Interestingly, it is more often a traditional

aspect of the Japanese culture (e.g. martial arts, *kyōgen*, or crafts) or the Japanese language that makes Japan interesting for many who tend to stay in Japan (i.e. the interviewees). In fact, there were only two cases with a strong, previous interest in pop culture, yet even in their cases, it evolved to a wider interest, including traditional aspects that eventually brought them to Japan.[17] Although it can be argued that the time for the pop culture fans coming in higher numbers to Japan has still to come, it can be also argued that the link with the 'traditional' and/or 'exotic' is one of the factors that helps to turn an interest into a motivation for long(er)-term stay.

For instance, the martial arts represented the most common interest among my interviewees,[18] together with a general interest in language. Similar to other traditional aspects of the Japanese culture, martial arts were introduced to Europe relatively early, and already have a long history in European countries. Some authors even argue that they became a global commodity—something that, in the European context, loses its connection with Japan (Frühstück and Manzenreiter 2001). Nevertheless, for many, the origin is not forgotten. As one of the interviewees stressed, '*budō* is always associated with Japan'. A simple interest in martial arts was, by many interviewees, related to their further interest in Japan. For the most passionate practitioners, the possibility of practicing it in its 'mecca' had a special meaning that led them to Japan. In this way, practicing karate, *kyōgen*, or Japanese language in Japan has a special, added value that can become a motivation for longer stays.

Yet, in the case of pop culture, such a value is rather harder to find. As, for example, the above-mentioned Daliot-Bul's argument indicates, the pop culture that is an essential part of the 'Cool Japan' is seen as something where the link with the unique character of Japan needs to be intentionally drawn and stressed in order to not be forgotten. In other words, pop culture does not represent something so closely related to Japan and Japaneseness as 'tradition'. Moreover, contrary to tradition that has the greatest value in its 'original' settings, pop culture can be consumed anywhere, alone, and without need of a teacher or master. Thus, the 'added value' of experiencing 'a life' in Japan that may result into migration motivation is further depreciated.

In this way, similar to the 'occidental longings' (Kelsky 2001) of Western culture-driven Japanese migrants (e.g. Fujita 2009), it is the image and representation of Japan, shaped by deeply rooted orientalism in Europe (Said 1978) as well as the self-orientalism of the Japanese represented,

for instance, in the above-mentioned 'Cool Japan' strategy (see also, Iwabuchi 1994) that drives many Europeans to try 'an alternative' life in Japan. Nevertheless, to answer the question of how a simple interest or positive image of Japan can compensate for the not-so-obvious, or even lacking economic motivations, we need to focus further analysis on social changes enabling the sorts of decisions already suggested in the prologue.

## Making Sense of Migration and Motivations

The analysis above suggests that the motivations of the migrants can be characterized as certain propensities that eventually lead to migration. Before addressing the eventuality of the migration, let me first explore these propensities and possible explanations for their construction.

### *Propensities, Individualization and Differentiation*

These 'certain propensities' are, in general, threefold, and often combined: a propensity to move (abroad), a propensity for a lifestyle, and a propensity for Japan. Whether they were students, cases of international marriages, English teachers coming through programs such as JET or on working holidays, many interviewees stressed that they just simply 'wanted to go somewhere else' (read abroad) or that they were looking for a different lifestyle. Similarly, as discussed earlier in detail, the interest in or 'calling' for Japan was there for a significant number of the interviewees as well. Nevertheless, as already suggested, such propensities to migration are only apparently natural, and in fact are actually socially constructed.

Whether it is the propensity to move, for a particular lifestyle, or for Japan, they can be understood as socially constructed cultural tastes. It has been argued, in the case of international students, that their propensities to study abroad are actually a sort of 'seeds' that have been planted through the habitus of their middle-class parents who see the study abroad program as an opportunity to acquire a distinct form of cultural capital (Waters 2006; Findlay et al. 2005, 2006). As some of the studies suggest, the cultural capital gained through the mobility experience can be later transformed into new or better career possibilities (e.g. Findlay et al. 2006). On the contrary, it has also been acknowledged that there are often other, more complex expectations of its value involving personal development (King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003), lifestyle (Benson and O'Reilly 2009), or love (King 2002) as well. In the cases presented in this study,

such 'experiential goals' (Findlay et al. 2005) were seen more often and their connection with the possibility of capital conversion is a blurry one. The 'seeds of migration' can be further enforced by the discourse on the mobility culture, or earlier mobility experiences, and are later brought to growth by the 'migration networks' of the universities (Findlay et al. 2005). A similar interpretation can be extended from the case of students to many individuals in this study who are driven by different propensities. The 'seeds' of their migration can be also understood as shaped not in a particular space and time (i.e. static) but rather as dynamic constructions lasting over a longer period, affected by the increasing cultural presence of Japan and the class-sensitive habitus of their families, and often turned into actual migration by globalizing study and research networks.

Furthermore, in explaining increasing mobility in different forms of migration in Europe, many authors addressed a possibility of relating it to the theories of individualization (King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003; Findlay et al. 2005). They underline that the process of disembedding individuals from the traditional structures of Western society, such as nation, class, family, or ethnicity, give students choices that were not available to the previous generations, which positively influence their mobility (King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003; Benson and O'Reilly 2009). The emergence of the reflexive identities (Giddens 1991) caused a transformation of the understanding of one's life, which arguably encourages the mobility of people (Kawashima 2010; Benson and O'Reilly 2009). According to Giddens, there is a shift from understanding the self as heavily shaped by the traditional structures toward an understanding of the self and one's life as a reflexive project—something that can be shaped and chosen.

Such beliefs can be identified in the narratives of many interviewees in this study as well. The role of individualization can be characterized as working against the 'centripetal force' that 'retains' (Arango 2000, 283) individuals from staying in their countries and shapes mobility cultures. In individualizing societies, people are increasingly led to believe that they can choose their life, and indeed, that they have to make such choices (Bauman 2001). This provides new possibilities of how to differentiate oneself (Benson and O'Reilly 2009; Scott 2006), and with advancing globalization, the variety of choices is becoming exceedingly diverse. Japan, with its 'exotic' yet still highly developed image, can become a highly valued choice. As, for example, Martynas (Lithuania) elaborates regarding his decision of his study destination, 'everybody … in the world … they want to go [to study] abroad they think of US and … UK … but there are

number of other countries which are great'. Japan represents one such a place, with possibilities for a high-quality higher education and research in its top institutions, reflecting a global trend of diversification of suppliers in this field (Findlay 2011; Kell and Vogl 2012). At the same time, despite the language and institutional barriers that are still considerably higher compared to other destinations, the 'exotic' part provides an added value that can compensate for these barriers.

However, it is the non-economic character of motivations that distinguishes the cases presented here most. This makes it hard to relate the differentiation directly to easily identifiable goals such as career prospects, class reproduction, or upward social mobility in many cases. Although more complex considerations of migrants have been partially addressed in previous studies as well, many writings still tend to emphasize the expectations of gains from migration related to careers.[19] Such interpretations are harder to apply to many cases presented in this work where the 'lifestyle over career' type of discourse is of central importance. Similar to Benson and O'Reilly (2009), it can be justly claimed that 'lifestyle choices are … a response to the increased demands on individuals to behave reflexively' (ibid., p. 617). I further argue that it is a sort of instability, risk (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), or 'liquidity' (Bauman 2001) that individualization brings that helps us to understand why the choice of Japan does not have to be so directly related to future propositions of career or upward social mobility.

As Bauman argues, the individualization brings a change in both the content and shape of the 'problem of identity' that people have faced 'since the advent of modern times' (Bauman 2001, 146).

> It used to be the kind of problem which pilgrims confront and struggle to resolve: a problem of 'how to get there?' It is now more like a problem with which vagabonds, people without fixed addresses and *sans papiers*, struggle daily: 'Where could I, or should I, go? And where will this road I've taken bring me?' (ibid., italics in original)

In other words, it is not only the paths to goals that need to be found by individuals today, but also the goals themselves that need to be set. The goals become more 'liquid' and what becomes a significant worry for many is 'that the hard-won frame [of social class or category] will soon be torn apart or melted' (Bauman 2001, 146). This can be seen in many cases, but is most vividly depicted in the Lukas' story. For him, the problem was not to achieve the middle-class ideal of his parents represented in

a settled life with sufficient income, house, and family, but his narrative indicates that what worried him was whether such a picture was, in fact, desirable and sustainable in the first place. In this way, individualization drives people to differentiate themselves through constant choices, yet the goals of this differentiation are becoming the subject of these choices as well. With a general shift toward more non-materialistic values, and from absolute toward more tolerant values and norms (e.g. Inglehart and Baker 2000),[20] the 'lifestyle' rather than career becomes an increasingly acceptable and plausible choice. That is to say, it can be argued that individualization not only promotes differentiation that can be seen as a way of class reproduction or upward-oriented social mobility but also transforms these frames themselves. In this way, it contributes to 'super-diversification' of migration—in terms of its destinations, as well as motivations.

### *Eventuality of Migration: Individualized Migration, Class, and Contingencies*

As already suggested, propensities lead to migration eventually. First of all, the eventuality of the migration process can be ascribed to what Adrian Favell called 'a lack of other constraints' (Favell 2008). This not only addresses most obvious constraints such as migration control but also underscores the significance of factors such as the timing of the migration opportunity in terms of age or lifecycle as well. Indeed, for all of the interviewees, the opportunity to go to Japan (or abroad, in general) came at the right time—when they were mostly young. Moreover, it is necessary to acknowledge the role of class as a migration-limiting or enabling factor as well. All of the interviewees in this study can be described as a part of the wide middle class, based on their family background and class identification narratives. Although not in a single case did such a class origin guarantee them the financial support needed for their migration, it can be argued that this allows them to choose a certain type of migration (e.g. because of an interest in Japan or as a lifestyle choice) by not being constrained by, for example, a need to financially support their parents or other relatives in the present or future. In this sense, we can agree with widely cited arguments, such as Bauman's (1998), that mobility is class-specific, and at the same time we can acknowledge claims such as Scott's that particular forms of migration 'become a "normal" middle-class activity' (Scott 2006, 1105, emphasis in original). In other words, we can acknowledge the role of class as an economic factor in migration

in the sense that it enables certain people to be mobile by not posing significant constraints to their choices, although it does not necessarily mean that their given class membership provides them directly with the economic capital necessary for migration (e.g. money for travel from their parents). At the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge that by referring to the wide(r) middle class, we encompass a rather large population, and most importantly, one that is positioned between the low(er) and high classes often referred to in the migration context.

Secondly, what can further help us to understand not only why migration grows but also why there are still relatively few international migrants in general, is to focus on the meaning of the phrase 'eventuality of migration'. In particular, I believe that focusing on the particular events in the life of the individual can help us to improve the 'performance' of probabilistic migration theories. A similar approach has been adopted also by Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels in her study of American migrants in Europe by framing her subjects as *accidental migrants* while acknowledging the role of structures by applying insights from migration systems, cumulative causation, and network theories (2014, 44–50). By stressing the accidental character of migration, however, she focuses mainly on the discord in the initial reason for migration and motivation for settlement, or in other words, a widely accepted claim that initial plans of migrants are not sufficient predictor of their actual length of stay. This claim can be supported by the data from this work, yet the focus of this chapter is mainly on the initial motivation of migration. In this respect, the term 'accidental' invokes something occurring by chance and consequently lacks explanation—what might be seen as problematic.

Thus, I propose to acknowledge the role of particular events that are constitutional for the migration decisions, and to conceptualize them as *contingencies*, it means unexpected or accidental events which cannot be predicted with certainty, on the one hand, but they are still possible as a consequence of previous acts and increasingly complex structural factors. Such events or contingencies can then be seen as a result of path-dependent decisions that were possible because of the structural complexity brought by globalization to everyday lives as well as—to a certain, yet not deterministic degree—already mentioned particular characteristics of individuals such as class, education, life stage, or gender. In other words, we can improve the probability model of migration with these classic variables (i.e. class, gender, education, etc.) by including a variable representing the contingencies and having an uncertain and/or random effect on the outcome variable (i.e. migration).

In practice, this would mean focusing on the significance of 'small events' such as Foltín's switching on the light, or asking how students got to know about the chances of getting a scholarship from the Japanese government. In regards to the latter, the typical argument would be that these opportunities to get to know about the scholarship are institutionalized, or in other words, that the students got to know about them because of their participation in tertiary education. Indeed, there were such cases, like, for example, those of Olivia or Laura, who tended to be involved in the above-mentioned elite global research networks. In these cases, the opportunities are heavily structured by the organizations; Olivia found (or was provided with) the opportunity to do research in Japan through her supervisor and Laura was initially sent to Japan through her study program, which provided her with bases (in terms of social capital and necessary information) for applying for a long-term, degree-seeking scholarship.

On the contrary, focusing on these 'small events' unveils another interesting group of migrants whose paths are more individualized. This can be seen in some of the cases presented above. Interestingly enough, the majority of the large group that had study/research experience in Japan found out about possibilities of study and/or scholarship in Japan via more unofficial or uninstitutionalized channels. For example, the decision to continue study abroad has often been made by individuals themselves and not as a part of their 'study program'; and one of the common patterns of getting to know about the possibility to study or do research in Japan was an advertisement in newspapers or journals. How such an advertisement can actually lead to migration is exemplified well in the following case of Bojan.

Interviewer: [What about your] plans when you were finishing university?

Bojan: I wasn't planning on moving abroad. I was planning to travel, probably find a job in industry, in Macedonia. Having ties preferably somewhere in Europe or at least the neighborhood - Bulgaria, Serbia. Which is quite a decent market. And that was my, more or less idea. But I was floating freely and I have this tendency to always like follow the float. Where the wind blows me. So I got the scholarship, I took it and came here in the end.

Interviewer: So first of all, did you look for the scholarship or something like that? Did you know?

Bojan: One morning my mother came with a paper oh, there is a scholarship, you can apply it. And that week I applied. A month later, there was the interview, the whole procedure and a year later, they said ok, you can come. Well, I will.

Before discussing the role of contingencies themselves, it is important to relate this account to previous discussions in order to unveil another dimension of such migrations. Bojan refers to his 'flexibility' that allowed him to accept the sudden opportunity and follow a previously unplanned path. This was already indicated in the previous discussion on the individualization of societies positively affecting an individual's ability to make such decisions. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasize that this does not imply advocating a sort of 'perfect freedom' of individuals, but underscores the understanding of these actions as shaped by an interplay of structures and agency. In other words, we need to acknowledge here again that these opportunities are also structured by the actor's education or class (e.g. Bojan's mother's intentions as class-specific habitus), yet at the same time, we need to emphasize the role of agency. Nonetheless, even if we acknowledge the role of structures, it is possible to argue that this exemplifies another dimension of migration that is more individualized as compared to the above-mentioned cases where the opportunities are provided via institutional membership.

This case of Bojan, and a considerable number of other examples demonstrate that in many cases of such individualized migration paths, 'small events' or contingencies play a significant role. His story indicates that contingencies that can eventually lead to migration do not emerge only directly from membership in particular structures (i.e. getting to know about the scholarship from your educational institution), but can increasingly emerge in the course of everyday life as a near unpredictable consequence of the complexity of contemporary societies influenced by actors and structures reaching far beyond national borders. However, a question that needs to be addressed here is how can we account theoretically for such contingencies that shape individual actions. In terms of actions, migration theory heavily relies on rational actor theory, although many authors acknowledge its limits, especially in its economic core (e.g. Favell 2008). Moreover, in the previous discussion, I invoked individualization as an explanatory factor in the shaping of migration decisions, which makes the link with rational actor theory even stronger. Nevertheless, I argue that it is necessary to reconsider not only the economic core of rational action theory that cannot sufficiently explain what has been here referred to as 'unorthodox' motivations for migration, but reconsider rational actor theory also in terms of eventuality or contingency. German sociologist Hans Joas presented a useful alternative to more traditional views of rational action theory in his *The creativity of action* (Joas 1996). Joas attempted to reconstruct some of

the assumptions of the rational action theory and emphasized the creative dimension of the human actions. He also emphasized the importance of situation, where he claims that action (or migration decision in this particular case) is not only '*contingent* on the situation', but situation is also '*constitutive* of action' (Joas 1996, pbk: 160). This is done in the context of reconfiguring the traditional means–ends schema of rational theory and implies that situations shape individual decisions in a more profound way where perfect information and setting of goals *ex ante* to the situation is not necessary. In other words, such a conceptualization of action theory allows us to theoretically acknowledge the role of 'small events'.

## Summary

In this chapter, I attempted to explore the factors that drive the increase in European migration to Japan. Firstly, the change in structural factors often described as globalization has brought about significant developments that allow for easier travel and migration to Japan. Relaxation of the migration control policies in post-socialist countries reinstate the 'mobility' rights of many Europeans, which were further strengthened by technical developments easing travel. Moreover, although Japan still has a strict immigration policy, there are (albeit few) new ways that have been opened to migrants in recent decades and are relevant to Europeans, such as 'professional' visas, spousal visas for men, or relaxation on student visa requirements. The attempts to 'internationalize' or 'globalize' Japan brought new opportunities, particularly in the field of international study and research that seems to be one of the main channels for European migration to Japan, but also in the English education market. The last, but by far not the least, factor that relates to globalization is that of the different flows and/or what Arjun Appadurai (1996) called the 'scapes' that shape the Japan-bound migratory flow from Europe. In more general terms, I argued that the increase in some particular migrations that can be seen as more individualized can be ascribed to increasing social complexity leading to unexpected contingencies and the increasing capability of individuals to accept such sudden and often unplanned opportunities. I proposed that the stories presented above illustrate how the 'human dispersal' of Japanese (Befu 2000) and its gendered character can transform into a Japan-bound migration and that the cultural flows coming through media-, ideo-, but also through ethnoscapes construct representations of Japan that promote Japan-bound migration flows as well. This exemplifies

how different global flows and 'scapes' intermingle and transform, contributing to increasing complexity and diversity of contemporary migration.

Secondly, I explored the motivations of the Europeans coming to Japan. I argued that while economic factors cannot be overlooked, they are, in many cases, framed as a feasibility issue rather than in the way more traditional theories present them—that is, as a disparity-driven determinant of migration. Contrary to such interpretations, the narratives of my interviewees revealed rather that Japan, for many, represents a lifestyle choice, based on quality of life or more often interest in Japan. In an attempt to make sense of such motivations, I turned to recent writings that discussed individualization of societies as a factor shaping mobility culture from which migrants draw their motivations. In this line of argument, individualization disembeds actors from traditional structures, promotes an understanding of life as something that can be chosen, and thus promotes, among other capacities, mobility as well. Furthermore, I argued that individualization not only frees individuals to pursue migration as a method of self-differentiation, but it allows them to set more elusive goals or justifications for such a decision and emphasize lifestyle or interest over career. Finally, it is necessary to note that such an explanation does not propose a vision of a completely disembedded individual free to choose his or her life. Despite the fact that some critiques see individualization theories as proclaiming such a change (e.g. Atkinson 2010a, b), I strove to conceptualize an adoption of individualization theory that is 'fundamentally social in character' (Howard 2007, 1), and one that focuses on 'the contemporary shift toward individual (as) driven by collective processes that … promote particular forms of individuality' (ibid.). As stressed in many places, I acknowledge, albeit in a different way, the role of structures such as class in shaping the mobility of individuals. One of the characteristic traits of the theorization proposed here is, thus, that it addresses not only the methods of reproduction of social order but also the ways it is being transformed (cf. Beck 2013, 64).

Whereas the methodological limitations of this study definitely do not eliminate the existence of other possibilities of European migration to Japan and their interpretations, it can be argued that it covers a significant part of the migration trend. The complexity and diversity of migration(s) described above amend the duality of high-skilled professionals and economically motivated female entertainers associated with European migration to Japan. At the same time, by demonstrating the diversity of patterns in terms of class of origin or routes, and complexity of motivations, this analysis deconstructs

the high-skilled elite migration associated with white migrants as well. This also suggests that the East–West, or high-skilled–low-skilled dyads do not (longer) stand as useful analytic tools for understanding migration from Europe or even Western migrations. Moreover, the focus on the cultural factors and social change affecting international migration represents a point that has been overlooked, and in the case of the Japan-bound migrations even bluntly ignored. I believe that this indicates some possibilities for how to overcome the economic paradigm in migration studies and better understand the motivations of increasingly diversifying migrants.

## Notes

1. Both words are usually used to indicate people from Western countries. The first one, *ōbeijin*, literally means 'people from European and North American countries' and the second one, *seiyōjin*, stands for 'Western people' in general.
2. Such an image is not only referred to by scholars but presented by various media as well. One such an example is a recent movie *Bon appétit* (2010), which unravels a love story on the background of the highly mobile life of a young Spaniard, Italian, and German. Despite being from different countries, all the main protagonists work in Switzerland, travel freely around Europe, and, eventually, return back to their countries.
3. This degree is not depended only on the existence of the communist or other historical legacies, but it depends on other factors as well. As, for example, many authors agree, it is heavily class-dependent (Bauman 1998).
4. Adaptation of a verse from the Bible: 'Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!' (Romans, 11:33, New International Version in original).
5. Although in all other instances, I use alias for the interviewees throughout the book, Štefan Foltín's case represents an easily identifiable one and he agreed to reveal his identity at the time of the interview.
6. He lived in Japan until his death in August 2010.
7. Henrich was the only interviewee who was naturalized in Japan, yet despite official denial of the dual (or multiple) nationality, he managed to keep his US and Czech passports as well.
8. He stressed on several occasions that emotional support of his wife's family was one of the factors that made his decision to stay in Japan easier.
9. In combination with the family register system, foreign men were required to become the breadwinners and have sufficient income to support their families. The situation of the foreign women marrying Japanese men was easier since they could become dependents of their husbands.

10. In more general terms, the role of previous migratory experience in further international mobility was acknowledged in numerous studies and general theories such as, for example, the cumulative causation theory (Massey et al. 1993, 451).
11. According to the Statistics on Japanese Nationals Overseas, more than 60 percent of the Japanese staying in Western Europe or Oceania were women. The percentage was even higher in the case of students, where women represented two-thirds of all Japanese students in these regions.
12. According to the statistics on the period of stay of the returning Japanese nationals, the share of the female is higher for longer-term stays. Whereas their share was lower for stays shorter than 6 months, it was 54 percent for stays lasting between 6 months and one year, and even higher (around 60 percent) for stays exceeding one year in 2011.
13. Indeed, the stories of the four women following their husbands to Japan proved to be the case of an explanation based on the career prospects of their husbands.
14. For example, the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science inaugurated its postdoctoral fellowship for foreign researchers in 1988 and the fellowship program by the Science and Technology Agency started in 1989.
15. According to a survey on conditions of foreign students in Japan conducted annually by the Japan Student Service Association, out of 138,075 foreign students enrolled in tertiary education institutions, only 9120 were on short-term (6.6 percent) programs. The share of the short-term programs was considerably higher for the Europeans, yet, with almost 60 percent, the long-term programs still represented a majority in their case as well.
16. The increase in the cultural presence, awareness, and interest in Japan can be exemplified in the case of Japanese language studies. Although the evidence is very limited, the case of ex-Czechoslovakia illustrates how the opportunities to learn Japanese increased, mainly reflecting the demand for such education. In the early 1990s Czechoslovakia, there was only one institution where Japanese language could be learned at the university level. However, there are four such institutions in Czech Republic and three in Slovakia today. Some of the interviewees and other Europeans I encountered through my fieldwork reported similar tendencies in Japanese language studies in their countries as well. Moreover, Japanese language can be studied today in a growing number of private institutions and in many European countries even in high schools.
17. In the case of Udo from Germany, who came to Japan for a one-year working holiday, it was actually Aikido what he reported as the main reason for his coming to Japan. In the case of Cristiana from Italy, who came to Japan as student, then for internship and now work and study again, it was the study of the Japanese language that led her to Japan. Nevertheless, both of them expressed a strong interest in the *anime* and *manga*, which they saw as triggering their further interest in Japan.

18. It was reported to be one of the strongest or even the main motivations for coming to Japan in eight cases, and another interviewee related her contact with Japanese martial arts to a further interest in Japan that evolved into heir later migration.
19. Kawashima stresses, among others, the role of 'a quest to acquire new skills and abilities that would increase one's marketability in Japan' in the motivations of the young Japanese moving abroad (2010, 271) and King and Ruiz-Gelices emphasized that student migration 'also manage to transfer these values into more successful and creative careers' (King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003, 246; see also Scott 2006; Williams and Baláž 2005).
20. Although Ingelhart and Baker (2000) argue that such a development is path-dependent, and indeed influenced by, among others, communist legacies, they basically confirm the modernization theory, arguing that with economic development, such a value change occurs.

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PART II

# Integration and Privilege

CHAPTER 4

# Race and Privilege in Integration: Occupations, White Privilege, and Gender

After exploring the ways in which Europeans have migrated to Japan in recent decades, I focus on the post-migration situation or their integration into the Japanese society. The concept of integration is usually unspecific and vague in its usage (Castles et al. 2002), yet we can identify some dimensions and characteristics of the concept that are thought to be of crucial importance. Although there are alternative concepts with different connotations, integration is seen as a two-way, complex, and wide-ranging process in which migrants and the receiving society should adapt to each other.[1] As Stephen Castles and his colleagues explain at the beginning of their overview of this concept, the term integration refers to a very general question of 'how do newcomers to a country become part of society?' (Castles et al. 2002, 112). First of all, this is usually 'measured' by assessing their opportunities and positions in the labor market, but also in accessing housing, education, or health care services (see also Ager and Strang 2008; Castles and Miller 2009; Ratcliffe 2004). Structural factors, such as the existence of a dual labor market, stereotypes, or lack of migrants' rights, usually limit these opportunities to a greater or lesser extent. Thus, many studies concerned with what happens after the migrants come to the receiving countries focus on mapping the 'niches' of migrant populations in terms of occupation, housing or spatial segregation, and inequalities in accessing educational or other services.

The outcomes of integration are dependent on the characteristics of each particular population such as forms of migration, class, gender, or race (e.g. Banton 2008; Brubaker 2001). Whiteness has been particularly



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associated with bestowing on its holders privilege(s) both in general and during the process of migrant integration in particular. At the same time, however, it has been an overlooked identity, especially in the context of migration. Thus, it is the race on which I focus in this analysis most (although not exclusively). In this section, I will attempt to depict the position of white European migrants in symbolic as well as more particular spheres of everyday life in Japan and the ways in which such positions are shaped by their race. More particularly, throughout the analysis, I focus on the symbolic meanings of the 'outsider/insider' in everyday interactions as well as on the ways these meanings shape their position within the labor market.

## Integration and White Privilege

The integration of foreigners (or 'others', in more general terms) in Japan, their (mis)positioning, and exclusion in Japanese society, has been addressed by countless studies. Whether it was the case of its 'own' people such as *burakumin*, Ainu or Okinawans, 'colonial legacies' such as the *Zainichi* Koreans, migrants with 'same' ethnic roots such as *Nikkei* Brazilians or other 'newcomers' from Asian countries, the ways they were and still are disadvantaged and discriminated against in marriage, education, access to welfare, housing, the labor market or everyday interactions have been well documented (De Vos and Wagatsuma 1966; Takenoshita 2013; Lee et al. 2006; Tsuda 2003; Fukuoka 1993; Lee and Tanaka 2007). Recent incidents of hate speech, mainly against *Zainichi* Koreans (see, e.g. Itagaki 2015) or other cases of blatant discrimination in contemporary Japan (Lee and Tanaka 2007) illustrate that the integration continues to be a major social problem that Japan has to face today and in the future. For example, as has been repeatedly voiced and criticized by scholars, media, as well as international organizations (e.g. CERD 2010), such a basic precondition for the integration of foreigners as anti-discrimination legislation is practically still not adopted and its need has been stubbornly neglected by the Japanese government.

Nonetheless, except for a very few exceptions, groups such as Westerners or white migrants have been rendered invisible in this debate. As has already been suggested, it is not because of their relative nonpresence or historical and contemporary insignificance. Rather as I argue, it is because there are two interconnected concepts which exclude whites, Westerners, or Europeans from debates on Japan's minorities. First of all, it carries

connotations of high-skilled migration, which represents a desirable form of migration for almost all countries and, as such, these migrants become an 'invisible phenomenon' (Findlay 1996) in terms of their integration. In addition to being perceived as a preferred type of migrants, it is often the case that their social integration is seen as unproblematic as well because of their presumed cosmopolitanism that is often understood to be characterized by an adaptability based on a specific habitus that can be extended to different locations (Hannerz 1996).

The second concept that renders Europeans (and other similar groups) as largely an unproblematic and 'invisible' minority in Japan is that of whiteness, and this is what I will be dealing with in this chapter. Whereas, as has been already suggested, many studies as well as popular views see whiteness as closely intertwined with—or even synonymous to—the notion of the West, it has been convincingly argued that whiteness became a racial identity that refers to a certain skin color and relation to European heritage in the first place (Bonnett 1998, 2004a, b). Nevertheless, rather than attempting to precisely delineate the border or whiteness or stick to the question of *who* is white, it is the question of the *white privilege* (or *how* the whiteness is done) that has been identified as more important and significant when considering the experience of whiteness (McDermott and Samson 2005; Bonnett 2008; Twine and Gallagher 2008). It is also this question that is of crucial importance when attempting to address the issue of integration or how white migrants benefit from their race in the post-migratory experience, and indeed the ways in which they are being rendered as an 'invisible' minority in receiving societies.

### *White Privilege and Global Migration*

The whiteness has been traditionally associated with a privileged position within non-European societies to which they emigrated in large numbers. The (critical) whiteness studies originating in the work of DuBois expose white identity as a structural factor granting its holders social and material benefits, and through these, a dominant position within the American society. These studies later included analyses of the institutional basis for such white supremacy, analyses of cultural practices and discourse of whites through which their dominance is being maintained, and a focus on the incorporation of previously excluded, non-Europeans groups (e.g. Latinos) within the concept of whiteness (Bonnett 1996, 2008; Twine and Gallagher 2008). Such whiteness studies have a long and rich tradition

and focus on the ways, strategies, and changes through which racial hierarchy affects white people as the most privileged in American society or other traditional countries of immigration where white colonizers formed a majority (e.g. Hage 2000 on Australia).

On the contrary, the concept of whiteness in the context of other than traditional countries of immigration has been used only rarely. In cases where migration of individuals from white majority countries has been addressed—especially in the non-Western context—their experience was often implicitly used in connection with terms such as 'expatriate', 'mobility', 'professionals', 'elites', 'West'—or in other words, advantage in general (Fechter and Walsh 2010; Fechter 2007; Beaverstock 2002, 2005; Findlay 1996). Although in many cases not specifically related to the race of migrants, in these accounts, there is a clear association between terms they use for describing their subjects—such as 'expatriates', 'cosmopolitans', and 'mobility'—and whiteness, which indicates their position within the receiving society as unproblematic and privileged. For example, Ulf Hannerz's *Transnational connections* is quite suggestive about the geography of 'elite' migrants by distinguishing between 'Third World' transnationals and transnational elites (Hannerz 1996), implying that the latter are mainly from the First World or the Global North, an area and concept which often overlaps with whiteness. By using terms such as 'expatriates', 'cosmopolitans', and 'mobility' in conflation with countries of origin such as the UK, these studies often suggest the existence of a privilege associated with whiteness and emphasize the reproduction of inequalities based on race in the postcolonial world (Fechter and Walsh 2010). In other words, in studies on 'expats' or 'mobile' professionals, the migrants are explicitly or implicitly associated with whiteness and rendered as a privileged group within the receiving societies and a global hierarchy which is an anti-pole of the 'Third World' transnationals associated with various contrasting terms such as 'low skills', 'migration', and 'ethnicity'.

Nevertheless, it has also been recently argued that white identity is not a static, uniform category. Recent works in the field of whiteness studies started to elucidate its fluid, dynamic character and account for the historical context, political factors, local settings, gender, and class in the formation of white identities and privilege (Twine and Gallagher 2008, 6). Similarly, it has been argued that previous studies on white racial and ethnic identity in the USA 'can greatly benefit from moving away from simply naming whiteness as an overlooked, privileged identity' and focus

on the 'long-term staying power of white privilege' while, at the same time, acknowledge the 'multifarious manifestations of the experience of whiteness' (McDermott and Samson 2005, 256). Whereas these calls and suggestions have been made in the context of the USA, it can be argued that they suggest an intriguing research path into how whiteness is experienced in different national or cultural settings, historical legacies, or through increasingly diversified migration patterns. Moreover, although the authors argue for the appraisal of multiple factors involved in shaping the actual experience of whiteness primarily in order to reveal the ways white privilege is maintained, the importance they ascribe to these factors actually indicates the potential of contesting white privilege—especially, it can be argued, those found in non-Western settings. This is of crucial importance for the analysis of this study and drives our attention not only to the usually well-analyzed and addressed ways in which the privilege is reproduced, but also considering the potential of challenging such reproduction, especially in specific historical and local settings where the binding power of the white supremacy model might be contested.

Indeed, as I ultimately argue in this book, in general, and in the following chapter more particularly, a simplistic understanding of whiteness as a factor intrinsically benefiting its bearers in the process of integration is insufficient, especially in the non-Western context. Problematizing such an understanding of whiteness and its privilege represents an emerging trend in recent studies dealing with white migrations in non-Western settings, such as China (Lehmann 2014; Farrer 2010, 2011), Hong Kong (Leonard 2010), Taiwan (Lan 2011), or Dubai (Coles and Walsh 2010). These studies shed light on variations in the forms of mobility, skills, self-identification, and internal class hierarchy among white migrants as well as add gender differences and segregated job niches to the formula depicting their socioeconomic positions within receiving societies. In this way, these studies successfully started a deconstruction of the unvarying images associated with whiteness and exemplify, to a certain degree, how super-diversity relates to the migration patterns from the Global North. These studies can be understood as representing the so-called third wave of whiteness studies that aims to account for the global dominance as well as for the local context of whiteness, its relational and situational character, and focus on the ways it is being reinvented upon its arrival and, at the same time, acknowledge its multiple representations and outcomes (Twine and Gallagher 2008). While the

focus on and problematization of the latter remains the main goal and contribution of this part of my book and represents a crucial piece within the whole study, acknowledgment and analysis of the ways in which the white privilege is reproduced—or 'its long-term staying power'—in the context of migration should serve as a starting point for further critical discussion. While this chapter suggests some of the above-mentioned complexity that is more deeply analyzed and explained in the following chapter, in general, it focuses on a more traditional understanding of the effect of racial origin on the integration, that is, the privileging character, of whiteness.

## The Positive Side of Whiteness: The 'Small Benefits' of Everyday Life

The global hegemony of whiteness certainly has its positive effect on the life of white foreigners in Japan. First of all, such a positive effect can be seen in their socialization patterns and everyday interactions with the Japanese, where blatant ostracism is largely absent. Contrary to the ostracism and similar to the case of Taiwan (Lan 2011), being a white foreigner actually means being approached more and usually in an extremely positive way in Japan as well. As Lukas (Czech), who had been living in Japan for eight years, puts it, 'you are being given more attention than other Japanese would be given' and thus you can sometimes feel like 'a celebrity'. Similarly, Vasil from Ukraine, who studied in Japan and later started his own business, invokes the picture of 'a cool foreigner'. This clearly indicates a privilege in terms of gaining social capital as a crucial resource for migrants in their integration into the wider society not only over other, especially 'visible' migrant groups but also possibly over the Japanese population as well.

Similarly to Farrer's (2011) observations in Shanghai, one of the important venues for such interactions that was repeatedly voiced by the interviewees are *gaijin* (or foreigner) bars or other '(global) nightscapes' of many cities. These serve as places for gaining new contacts across and within racial, ethnic, as well as gender lines (ibid.), and thus serve as both social bonding and bridging venues, which are both an important part of the integration process (Ager and Strang 2008). Still, it needs to be acknowledged that episodes of being actively approached by the Japanese are not limited to these venues which are obviously one of the 'most open and loosely governed "contact zones" for mobile populations'

(Farrer 2011, 749). Encounters with the Japanese range from school kids trying to practice their English by greeting every white foreigner with a 'Hello', to being actively approached (again, usually in English) by Japanese strangers on streets, trains, or in other public spaces.

In addition to such active and positive instances of being approached by members of the majority population, other examples of what can be called 'small benefits' of whiteness include the increased popularity of white men among Japanese women or 'playing a *gaijin* card' (Komisarof 2012). The former trend has been identified in other Asian countries as well (Lan 2011; Farrer 2011; Lehmann 2014) and is discussed in more detail later in the chapter. The later refers to the intentional use of one's 'otherness' in order to gain advantage by not being bound by some of the social norms of the local society (see also Yamashiro 2011). Such instances usually refer to enjoying some sort of preferential treatment that is not directly associated with an increase in opportunities or preferential access to some sort of capital, yet it might involve exemption from social or legal punishment. For example, cases of overlooking the misuse of international driving licenses or free rides on public transportation have been reported by my interviewees. These acts are often intentional, it means it is an active attempt at 'playing the *gaijin* card' and they rely on the presumption that these acts will stay unchallenged, or, as one of my interviewees has put it, on the presumption that 'if you are (white) foreigner they don't want to deal with you'. The term 'foreigner', or the Japanese word *gaijin*, actually often refers specifically to white foreigners, and these instances represent mostly the 'staying power of the whiteness' rather than a general benevolence of Japanese officers toward all foreigners.

Overall, these 'small benefits'—in combination with a relative lack of negative experiences of being openly avoided or shunned in their daily lives—translate to feelings of apparent acceptance and a relative lack of experiences involving overt forms of discrimination. All of my interviewees basically agreed that they feel 'accepted' or 'welcomed' in Japan and many agreed that they 'do not feel any formal discrimination' (George, UK, 15 years). Although, as discussed in the following chapter, this is not a universal experience and there are certain significant limits to such acceptance, it is important to acknowledge that almost all of the interviewees assessed their overall position within Japanese society rather positively, which can be contrasted with accounts of more or less open discrimination experienced by other minorities (e.g. Itagaki 2015; Kim Bumsoo 2011; Lee and Tanaka 2007; Russell 1991).

As the discussion above suggests, these positive answers that come first after being asked about one's position within Japanese society are, in general, common to the majority of the interviewees, irrespective of their nationality or gender. Indeed, the perception that such a beneficiary experience of foreignness or even 'celebrity status' is something that is reserved for the whites was shared by many interviewees. For example, Martha (Norway) stresses that 'I'm white. If I had been Asian it's [a] little bit different.' Vasil (Ukraine) is even more articulate about the fact that the 'different' in this case means 'better off' when he says, 'for white foreigner [in Japan] it's way easy. [For] Filipinos, Chinese, it's much more difficult I think.' Similarly, Stephanos from Greece, who spent more than 15 years in Japan, elaborates on the hierarchy of foreigners in Japan in more detail.

> I think not all foreigners are equal foreigners. So, for example, like maybe there are something like castes, there are people who are treated differently because they are foreigners in one way or in the other. So, for example, I have been treated well but I have seen also people like Chinese or south Asian people that have been treated differently because they are foreigners.

Stephanos here suggests the idea of a racial hierarchy among foreigners in Japan. In this hierarchy—that can be traced at least to early modern Japan—the Japanese see themselves above other non-white races, including other Asian populations, and the whites represent the most significant 'other'. In prewar Japan, '[w]hen facing the West, the people of modern Japan felt inferior, perceiving themselves as a "coloured" people threatened by the Western Powers. When facing the peoples of their own colonies, however, they saw themselves as superior members of an Imperial Power' (Oguma 2002, 311). The racial foundation of this hierarchy became eminent after Japan's rise to the status of a great power in the early twentieth century and its denial of its status as a first-class country by Western powers on different fronts (Majima 2014a, b).[2] Whereas, as I claim later, this 'inferiority complex' toward the West and whiteness has certainly other aspects and has considerably evolved after Japan's defeat in World War II and its miraculous recovery and growth, the whiteness remains to bear the legacy of symbolical superiority in the global age as well. Thus, similar to Lan's observation among Westerners in Taiwan, the white privilege as 'small benefits' becomes 'omnipresent in everyday life' (2011, 1679)—from meeting new people or getting noticed, through being a 'privileged' customer in a restaurant, to just being simply seen as a 'better' or 'preferred' type of a migrant.

## More than 'Small Benefits': White Europeans in the Labor Market

Nevertheless, these 'small benefits' are not limited to symbolic meanings, and often have more palpable outcomes as well. As has been argued by Pei-Chia Lan (2011), social capital accumulated through interactions in various public spaces can be successfully transformed into other forms of capital, especially into new opportunities. As she further clarifies, it is the English language ability and its perceptions by the majority population (or its symbolic meanings) on which the accumulation of the social capital often rests and this, in turn, can then be converted into economic capital. A similar principle and its forming factors can be identified in the case of Japan as well.

### *English Language as a (Re)invented Skill*

The occupation where the benefits of the white privilege are tangible the most, in the case of Japan, are jobs related to the English language, in general, and English teaching jobs, in particular. Foreign—and especially, English language—education has been seen in Japan as one of the crucial means in its efforts to 'internationalize' or 'globalize'. As discussed in the previous chapter, the former discourse was typical for the 1970s and 1980s, when institutional bases for opportunities in the foreign language education sector were also formed. The later discourse on the need for 'globalizing' Japan represents an ongoing discourse that started to be strongly voiced by general public and politicians in recent years. Education is, again, a crucial part of this discourse in the form of the type of 'global education' that aims to educate Japanese students in a way whereby they become more capable and competitive globally. This strategy includes special government subsidiary programs for universities such as Global 30 and Super Global. These programs aim to support, among other things, stronger education of foreign languages, education in English as an unquestionable *lingua franca* of global education, or raising the number of foreign students as well as foreign teaching staff (see Yamagami and Tollefson 2011).

Such policies and discourses have brought with them opportunities in education for many Europeans. Similar to cases of white Westerners in other Asian countries, the whites are seen as representing the 'global' and as being naturally endowed with English language proficiency and other 'global competencies'. As such, it can be understood as a form of embodied

cultural capital, which gives the white Europeans advantage in jobs requiring such qualities and, at the same, distinguishes them from both the majority and other minority groups (Bourdieu 1986). Indeed, English is seen as the central piece of global aspirations in Japan, and together with some other foreign languages, it represents one of the most obvious and highly demanded symbols of globalization. Interestingly, however, the experience of the Europeans in my study suggests that benefiting from such connotations applies to native as well as non-native speakers of English. Thus, it can be argued that it is the whiteness that shapes associations of particular language abilities and other symbolic representations with certain populations and, importantly, that reaches beyond the traditional confines of the West following the old borders of the First and Second Worlds.

Consequently, the occupational niche of white foreigners in Japan is firstly characterized by the English (and partially, other foreign) language education at various levels and in various forms. A high share of English teaching jobs among Europeans is suggested by the visa composition (see also first chapter) and occupations among newly issued visas in categories common for Europeans (Hakkarainen 2012), or some other available statistical data.[3] A similar tendency has been clearly represented in the case studied here, where teaching English represented the most frequent occupation and even a larger group shared the same experience throughout their stay in Japan. Out of 44 working individuals, as many as 19 worked as foreign language teachers at the time of the interview.[4] For the majority of these cases, teaching a foreign language was the main source of their income, ranging from full-time employment at different institutions to part-time teaching to individuals. For the rest of my interviewees, English teaching represented a familiar story as well, as the majority of them experienced teaching English in some form somewhere during their stay in Japan.

As already indicated in the narrative of Gabika in the previous chapter, teaching English is thus regarded virtually by all as the easiest way to get a job in Japan where, in many cases, 'blue eyes and blond hair are frequently their only qualifications' (Dujarric 2010). Despite slowly increasing restrictions based on qualification and growing demand for skilled teachers in the English teaching market facing increasing competition, and more than two decades of a general stagnation of Japan's economy, many interviewees found English language teaching jobs very easily, often without any need to prove their actual skills or without having any sort of qualifications or teaching experience. That is to say, while certain high profile English conversation (*eikaiwa*) schools or higher education institutions

have 'their standard' and require language ability or teaching qualifications in order to obtain employment or promotion,[5] there are still enough opportunities in '*eikaiwa*s where you can just go and hey I'm foreigner and take me' (Michael, Germany). Moreover, besides such institutionalized ways, there is an abundance of opportunities for teaching English individually and, consequently, disrespecting the form and the purpose of migration to Japan, gender, ethnicity, nationality, or even actual language abilities, almost all of my interviewees (re)invented their English as a skill upon their arrival to Japan.

That one's English language ability is indeed invented as a skill in many cases can be demonstrated in the case of Irina. Irina is from Ukraine and came to Japan without knowing any English and she asserts that she 'felt very much lost' without it. Interestingly, however, she asserts so despite the fact that she was fluent in Japanese by the time of her arrival in Japan, which was one of the prerequisites for her job as an international relations coordinator at a prefectural office. In other words, it is the strong expectation on the part of the majority population that *white* foreigners are able to speak English, rather than any particular population defined in other (e.g. national) terms. This social norm is reflected in everyday experiences and its 'breaching' in Irina's case led to feelings of misplacement.

> I met a guy at McDonald's and he said I want to speak English with you. And I said I don't speak English. And he said you don't have to speak English, you have to listen. I speak and you listen. And I had this [feeling] that Japanese people are not interested in me.

This and other similar episodes demonstrate that whiteness in contemporary Japan is devoid of a significant part of its meaning if presented without any English language ability. At the same time, however, this particular case illustrates the symbolic meaning of the English language in Japan as well. What the answer of the Japanese men talking with Irina indicates is that it is not important to actually *speak* English per se, but what is more important is *to learn* or *practice* it as a symbol of globalization. This shift in the meaning of the English language in the everyday life of many Japanese may actually help us to identify one the factors behind the fact that there are still abundant opportunities in Japan's language education labor market even for nonqualified and non-native English speakers.

Japan's engagement with the process of globalization, in general, has been often seen as being 'managed' or limited and leading to what Schaede

and Grimes (2003) labeled 'permeable insulation'. Although it has been applied by them mainly to economic aspects of the globalization process, it is an apt notion for describing some other aspects of this process as well. In the case of the English language as a symbol of globalization, Japan is definitely open to the idea of adopting it, sometimes even frivolously and without considering other alternatives. Nevertheless, this does not mean that competency in English became common for many Japanese. For example, the English language is adopted as the first choice by the vast majority of elementary education institutions and many universities today require English for their entrance exams without regard to the field of study. Nevertheless, the actual level of competence in the English language in Japan has been questioned by many scholars as well as my interviewees, and is reflected, for example, in the average TOEFL test scores where Japan figures as one of the worst countries in Asia.[6]

Thus, despite being adopted as the primary foreign language in all forms of education, Japanese identities are viewed as being opposite to those of whites. As demonstrated, for instance, by Irina's case, whereas the latter are seen as 'natural' speakers of English, the Japanese are seen as 'naturally' lacking the ability to learn English. This is linked with the biological views of Japanese ethnicity that maintain that cultural traits (such as language capabilities) are synonymous with genetics (Burgess 2012b). In addition, the academically deconstructed but still deeply rooted perception of Japan as homogeneous implies that since only the Japanese live in Japan (Befu 2001; Ōnuma 1993; Weiner 2009), the only language necessary (and acceptable) for a life here is Japanese. Consequently, while the English language symbolizes the 'global world' with various positive connotations such as being 'cool' or progressive, for many Japanese, mastering it is effectively rendered by the notions of Japaneseness, not only as something that the Japanese cannot learn whereas all whites inevitably master it, but also as something that is not even a necessary skill for living in Japanese society today. In other words, English represents a commodity of conspicuous consumption where globalizing oneself through practicing English is a symbol of certain prestige. Moreover, it is a commodity validated by the 'package' (i.e. whiteness) rather than content, which is, for many, irrelevant for everyday life in Japan. While these notions of Japaneseness and their rendering of English are not left uncontested, there are still many situations where such notions and their consequences are being reproduced (e.g. Burgess 2012a, b). English is then still often seen by many as biologically or genetically a non-Japanese and socially

irrelevant skill (i.e. downgrading the relevance of the goal to *speak* it), on the one hand, and it is considered a necessity for engaging with the world and viewed as an important clue for progress, giving it symbolic meanings relatively highly appreciated at least in certain social groups (i.e. emphasizing the need to *learn* it) on the other hand.

This contradiction and local meanings of English provide language teaching opportunities for many Europeans, including, importantly, its nonqualified teachers, non-native speakers and non-Western Europeans. Thus, whether it was an Anglophone traveler (John, UK), Bulgarian (Sonya), German (Michael), Czech (Lukas, Henrich), or Swedish (Nicklas), men, or women, high school (Filip, Slovakia) or university graduate majoring in Spanish (Paul, UK), Japanese (Sonya, or Michael), graphic design (Nicklas), or psychology (Gabika), English teaching often provided a feasible first option to stay and live in Japan. English language competence is reinvented by migration as a skill not only for native speakers, but as a skill in the local labor market for other white Europeans privileged in such occupations on the basis of their skin color.

### *English and Higher Education*

Besides the direct teaching of English (or other foreign languages), another role of 'globalizers' in the education sector is to do specialized teaching in English, which could be best seen among university faculty.[7] Whereas the increasing diversity undoubtedly brings more opportunities for speakers of other—not necessarily Western—European languages,[8] it is undoubtedly English that brings the most opportunities in university education. The trend of global education that clearly emerged around the 1980s has recently intensified and the Global 30 and Super Global programs brought to selected universities study programs (often institutionalized as institutes or faculties) are available only in English. Many interviewees and other informants from the higher education sector see the recent years as a boom in this field and this brings new opportunities for foreigners in general.

That this growth is disproportional to the growth of the whole higher education sector in Japan is obvious from available statistics. A relatively slowly growing advancement rate to tertiary education and low birthrates in Japan translate into practically unchanging numbers of university students in the last 10 to 15 years.[9] Consequently, the number of teaching faculty increased between the years 1997 and 2014 only by 25 percent. On the contrary, however, the number of foreign teaching faculty

increased in the same period by 70 percent and although their share is still relatively low (only about 7.2 percent in 2014), this growth demonstrates an increase in opportunities for foreign scholars at Japanese universities in recent years. At the same time, this means that foreigners have a relative advantage over the Japanese in this segment of labor market since their job opportunities grow faster. This occurs in a labor market that has become highly competitive in recent years with stagnating demand, relatively high supply, and increasing neoliberal reformations in education represented, for example, in growing 'outsourcing' of teaching and research activities in various forms of non-standard employment.

Obviously, this is not a trend characteristic only for whites or Westerners and, indeed, it is the Chinese and Asians as the most numerous minorities and significant regions for Japan today, who most probably hold the majority of these jobs. Still, Europe (as well as other Western countries) seems to represent a disproportionately high share. For example, in terms of professor visas that make up about 60 percent of the total number of foreign teaching faculty at Japanese universities, Europeans represent 21 percent of all holders (North America and Australia combined represent another 20 percent), which is almost ten times higher than their share in terms of the total foreign population in Japan. Again, while reflecting also the total numbers, the highest numbers of professor visas are from the UK, France, and Germany, yet there are many other European countries with significant numbers of educators at Japanese universities as well. In my sample, there were six full-time university faculty, including teachers from Ukraine, Czech Republic, Spain, and Bulgaria.

Interestingly, all of them taught in English (sometimes, also in another European language) and this ability was often taken for granted and went unquestioned. Yet once more, the presumption tended to be based on the perception of whites as 'naturally' endowed with English skills, and, on the contrary, the Japanese as 'naturally' struggling to master this skill. Thus, as some of the cases strongly indicate, such presumptions are deeply rooted in Japanese society and through reproduction of this presumption, whites are privileged over the majority and other minority applicants in the 'globalization' of the Japanese higher education sector where English is the preferred language of education.

Considering full-time, and especially, tenured teaching positions at universities in Japan, they undoubtedly represent privileged jobs in terms of their availability, high social and economic prestige, as well as in terms of power and reproduction of the white privilege through migration. It

is also this group which represents, for example, the majority of cases in Komisarof's account of 'contemporary Westerners in Japan' (2012) and can be easily used to demonstrate the privilege of being white. Whereas their relatively low share and limits of this privilege discussed in the following chapter significantly relativize a simplistic understanding of the white privilege as the ultimate structural benefactor, its contemporary connotations of the 'global' and English competencies certainly do reveal the 'long-term staying power' of whiteness in the global arena of education.

### *Other 'Skills of Whiteness' in the Labor Market*

Besides the niche in the education sector, there is another more general occupational niche where migrants extensively use their cultural skills. Many of these occupations, such as the so-called bilingual workforce are again closely interconnected with globalization and language usage. Similar to the case of Chinese workers exerting their cultural capital in order to help Japanese companies penetrate the Chinese market (Liu-Farrer 2011a, b; Tsukasaki 2008), interviewees from Italy, Finland, or Bulgaria were employed as agents of 'internationalization' (Sonya, Maurice), or to oversee 'global' issues, that is, communication with the rest of the world (Luigi, Frederika). As in the case of the above-mentioned 'educators', it is again usually English that is the main resource used in their occupations and the main skill they are expected to use.

Yet, language or the 'globalization agent' is not the only form of cultural capital that can make them a preferred candidate. The case of Elias, who came from Norway initially on a two-year contract with a professional orchestra in 2005, exemplifies this. During his stay, he met his wife (who is Japanese) and they decided to stay in Japan. He found a job in another orchestra where, he believes, he was aided by his whiteness.

> In my kind of job, it [the origin] helps. Because they have little bit this attitude that [white] foreigners are like gods.… Every Europeans, we are singing arias for breakfast or night songs. This is in our blood. And we can see the music and we can make good music … we can make better music without too much effort, it's natural.

Although a lack of skills obviously cannot be replaced by the 'blue eyes and blond hair' in this type of job, the race, in this case, authenticates the

skills that are seen as white. We can trace here similarities with a more general trend of rampant commodification and subsequent consumption of 'ethnicities' or indigenous cultures, where the authenticity in terms of origin becomes the token that can be easily capitalized on (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). As the following chapter indicates, such a parallel can help us to understand some of the usually overlooked aspects of whiteness and its commodification. This particular case, however, illustrates rather the positive and normative meanings of whiteness and its benefiting character for migrants.

What is particular in this case when compared to other commodified 'ethnicities' are the meanings associated with the skills or arts of whiteness, which represent high culture and civilization. As such, they do not represent a cultural heritage that needs to be preserved, protected, or something that can provisionally enrich our monotonous lives, yet they are symbols of normative aspirations, a long-term project of cultivating skills and understanding of the culture that stands for a standard or the highest apex in the hierarchy of cultures. It is such culture and cultural skills are strongly associated with race as a biologically determined trait ('this is in our blood'), and as the case of Elias illustrates, it can help whites with opportunities with higher social prestige or remuneration.

Similar assumptions about cultural 'heritage' can be seen as affecting the work of wedding ceremony priests as well. Wedding ceremonies in the Western style have become increasingly popular in Japan and the white 'priest' is a highly praised part of it (Harnett 2012; *BBC News* 2006). This case once again illustrates the degree to which culture in general, and what is believed to represent the white culture in particular, has become commodified, as well as the relationship between language and identity politics. A Western-style wedding ceremony has become a popular way for many couples to celebrate their marriage in Japan. It represents a symbol of romantic love, equal gender relationship, and ideal family, or things that are often perceived as lacking in many Japanese families when compared with the West (Kelsky 2001). These ceremonies are often held in 'chapels' built or arranged solely for this purpose by wedding companies and the 'priest' or 'minister' is often a white part-timer without any qualification required. As Harnett (2012) claims and as has been confirmed by my interviewees,[10] the only qualification for this job is usually the 'whiteness' of the adept. This demonstrates the importance ascribed to the symbols associated with the West, rather than any religious or other meanings of such ceremonies.

Moreover, this case also illustrates the process of differentiation of Japanese and white identities in terms of language requirements. The language of the ceremony is usually Japanese and the 'ministers' are required to speak (or read) in Japanese as well. Yet, despite the importance of the ceremony and thus the clarity of language, imperfect Japanese (preferably with a strong accent) is often highly appreciated, rather than seen as an obstacle. The imperfectness is seen as bringing 'authenticity' to customers while, at the same time, emphasizing the differences.

In sum, whether it is a wedding ceremony minister or an English teacher, many of the occupations described above can be characterized as cultural service jobs. The culture European migrants are believed to represent has been extensively commodified and the association of these skills with all things global, high culture, or with other symbols helps in numerous cases to job niches that are characterized at the least by higher social prestige. The 'occidental' longings of the Japanese (Kelsky 2001) with all the positive and normative connotations of the West can be understood as driving such cultural consumption, and through it providing work opportunities for white migrants in Japan.

## Gender and Whiteness

Nonetheless, whether it is earlier works in the field of white migrations or general sociological inquiries into the intersections of race with other identities, they have all convincingly argued that position within society and the experience of whiteness differ along gender lines and its representation in both global and local arenas. In other words, in attempting to analyze the role of whiteness as a privileging factor, or as an important element affecting a migrant's integration into the receiving society in general, the role of gender cannot be overlooked. Gender in race studies, in general, has been seen as one of the main intersecting factors, together with class (Andersen and Collins 1992), and it has been identified as one of the main factors shaping the multiplicity of social locations hidden behind the notion of whiteness (Twine and Gallagher 2008, 6). Thus, whereas whiteness tended to be seen as 'a static, uniform category of social identification' (ibid.), gender is one of the primary categories demonstrating the multiplicity of the representations and experiences of whiteness and thus deconstructing the unvarying picture of a privileged identity. Whereas a detailed analysis of gender and its interplay with other identities is not the main focus of this study, gender cannot be overlooked when we consider

migrants' integration, in general, and the role of whiteness in this process, in particular. Considering this, the following part outlines the gendered outcomes of whiteness as a privileging factor and emphasizes the increasing diversity of white migrants and their integration paths.

### *White Masculinities: Hegemony and an Object of Fetish*

Starting with men as the foremost benefactors of white privilege, parallels with other accounts of white migrants in Asia can be drawn. Similar to these cases, white men in Japan enjoy increased popularity among Japanese women as well. As mentioned earlier, the *gaijin* bars are one of the most important venues for such gendered interracial encounters (Farrer 2011) and such encounters constitute one of the prototypes in popular narratives of Western men in Japan. Some of my interviewees identified such narratives as one of the important motivation factors for 'giving Japan a try', as one of them describes below:

> [T]here were two Americans who worked somewhere in Japan as English teachers … and they were talking about it, about the Japanese women, how it actually is, how it actually is a paradise. That everyone can have five girls independently, one girl for Monday, second girl for Tuesday, Wednesday and only on Sunday, like the God, one rests. And that is the happiest day, this Sunday, when there is no women. And the other one was talking about it as well, how it is in Japan. So I told to myself … what about trying it in Japan?

While actual experiences have not usually followed such exaggerated versions of the two Americans portrayed in the story, many of the informants in this group presented the consequent experience of having frequent and relatively easily achieved sexual encounters with Japanese women (often in combination with the availability of relatively easy and enough-paid English teaching jobs) as a significant reason for eventual settling in Japan. The lives of such men often become centered around nightlife and promiscuity, with families established only considerably later. Japanese women are, in these accounts, portrayed as having a natural weakness for white men, making them easy sexual objects. Some, as, for example, 'pick-up artist' Julien Blanc, whose case of racialized sexual abasement of Japanese women and consequent petition calling for revoking his visas to Japan have been widely covered by Japanese and international media

(*The Japan Times* 2014), go as far as to claim that 'in Tokyo, if you're a white male, you can do what you want' (Li 2014). Indeed, as cases such as Blanc's and some of my interviewees actually reveal, white men extensively using their 'white privilege' in sexual encounters with Japanese women represent only one, and arguably, a limited part of the white European population in Japan. Nevertheless, the global hegemony of white masculinities affects wider social groups as well.

As Itsuko Kamoto (2008) claims, white men represent the apex of the 'global heterogamy' in Japan. As symbols of general global as well as particular family style characterized by, *inter alia*, romantic love or gender-equal relationship and thus modernity, white masculinities are juxtaposed with the Japanese ones in an orientalist fashion representing the aspirations of many young, often highly educated Japanese women. Japanese masculinities are rendered as backward, traditional (i.e. non-modern), or indeed, uncivilized oriental 'other' (Said 1978) and thus not able to answer the aspirations of such women. On the contrary, 'the liberatory potential of the West is intertwined with desire for the white man as fetish object of modernity' (Kelsky 2001, 4). As Kelsky importantly emphasizes, such 'occidental longings' (and mobility of Japanese women related to them in her case) are not particular to elites, but are a wide, middle-class phenomenon making it part of everyday experience in Japan. Although other racialized masculine identities, as, for example, that of blacks in Japan, have been associated with sexualized meanings that are not necessarily negative as well (see Russell 2009), it is the idea of modernity with all its connotations embedded in the representations of whiteness that portrays the white man as more than just an attractive or 'exotic' sexual partner. Indeed, the idea that having a child with a white partner (and especially male) is 'the coolest thing a *nihonjin* [Japanese] … could be' (Shoji 2013) represents a popular (though not unchallenged) idea shared by the masses and exhibits the extent of white masculinity as an object of 'fetish'. Thus, similar to observations made by Lehman (2014) in China, cases of older man dating or marrying considerably younger Japanese women—something they would arguably achieve harder in their homelands, given their socioeconomic status and other particularities—are not an uncommon sight in big Japanese cities or are actually the case of some of my informants. These cases demonstrate the gendered face of 'white privilege' as well as represent the prototypical narrative of hegemonic white masculinity in Japan.

### *White Women in Japan*

In contrast to the experience of white men, the experience of whiteness for women in Japan tends to be more or less remote from the hegemonic experiences described above. We can attribute this to a different way of sexualization of white subjects by gender, distinct forms of migration, as well as different associations and expectations on the roles of women within families and in the society. First of all, it has been argued that many white women as migrants in Asia experience being desexualized by both Western and local men, which makes their sexual encounters more difficult than is the case with white men (Lehmann 2014; Farrer 2011). As has been argued by one of the female interviewees in Storlöpare's documentary movie on the life of (white) foreigners in Japan, many foreign (white) men 'are so focused on finding Japanese girlfriend that, like, you don't exist' (2013, 37: 38). Even in the case of Romanian or Ukrainian entertainers or 'mail order brides' who actually became sexualized by Japanese men, the position they occupy within the global hypergamy and Japanese society is on the opposite side of that reserved for white men (Kamoto 2008). Although it is apparently contradictory to include here Romanian or Ukrainian women, who are often perceived as commodified, sexualized subjects from the developing world (Varvara 2011), the point that needs to be made at this point is that white women—whether sexualized or desexualized—are associated with a different set of expectations that shape their experiences of whiteness and thus the extent and character of the privilege in Japanese society.

At the same time, however, it has been acknowledged that besides the experience of desexualization, there are other cases of white women in Asia that 'both legitimate and resist historical constructions of gendered and racialized power dichotomies' (Lehmann 2014, 123). For example, more than half of my female participants (14 out of 24) were actually married or in a relationship with Japanese men suggesting the existence and relative abundance of patterns resisting such historical constructions. A relatively high share of European women–Japanese men couples can be deciphered from available statistics (Ministry of Justice 2013a, b) as well. Besides the case of East European countries with women entertainer or brokered bride legacies where the share of women is as high as 70 (Russia) or 80 percent (Romania), there are countries without such legacies, yet with a still relatively high share of women as well. These include not only the so-called Eastern (and thus, possibly perceived as less Western or modern)

countries, such as Bulgaria (51 percent) or Hungary (44 percent), but also countries which are indisputably part of the generic West, such as Germany (37 percent) or Austria (40 percent).[11]

Women married or being in partnership with a Japanese man often describe their partners as 'not a typical Japanese man' and use episodes of courtesy, romance, or sharing chores to debunk the stereotypical image of Japanese men. As in the case of Daniela from the Czech Republic, such qualities of their Japanese partners are often seen as a necessary precondition for considering a long-term engagement from their side: 'if he was a typical Japanese [man] … I wouldn't probably go for [the marriage]'. This exemplifies both the reproduction and contestation of gender and race. On the one hand, Japanese men are depicted as patriarchal, old-fashioned, or traditional and thus culturally and value-wise incompatible with emancipated, progressive, and modern white women. On the other hand, such discourse acknowledges, at the same time, the possibility of overcoming these dichotomies, the possibility of Japanese men becoming compatible partners for European women. In other words, there is a significant number of cases that do not necessarily follow the power dichotomies racialized and gendered in the traditional fashion nor can they be ascribed to other common-sense dichotomy of the East–West division within Europe. This suggests that with the increasing extent of diversification, such dichotomies are being contested. Nonetheless, at the same time, the gendered character of experiencing whiteness is not dissolved either.

One such gendered outcome of migration experienced by women is a tendency to become a 'trailing migrant' (Lundström 2014). Indeed, in numerous cases in my sample where foreign women followed their husbands, these women found it difficult to (re)start their careers after migration to Japan. A typical case of a trailing migrant is that of Grethe from Denmark, who followed her husband's career-oriented decision to work in Japan, which meant discontinuing her career and restarting it only after raising her children within the limited opportunities of the expat community.[12] Another, more common pattern is that of wives following their Japanese husbands. This applies to cases of 'migrate and met' type of international marriages/partnerships as well, where it is a decision to stay rather than to go to Japan, which is conditioned by the existence of a Japanese partner. Whereas there are important differences in motivation, attitudes toward Japan, or actual language and cultural abilities between 'met and migrate' and 'migrate and met' types of marriages/partnerships,

both groups tend to experience difficulties in (re)starting or continuing their careers in Japan. As I argue in the case of Martha from Norway in the following chapter, certain limitations on their careers are based on their foreignness in the first place, yet there are, undoubtedly, obstacles that can be ascribed to their gender or expectations about their roles as women as well.

In particular, the expectations that are imposed on white women are much more related to the sameness with Japanese women rather than the difference, as in the case of white men. In other words, whereas white men are expected to bring into their relationships qualities that are seen as ones that cannot be provided by Japanese men, white women are often expected to fulfill the same roles as Japanese women.[13] The division of labor along gender lines in Japan has been part of the 'postwar family system', where many of the functions that are in welfare democracies supplied by the state have been transferred to the family (read women) and such a system has been actively supported by the Japanese government (Ochiai 1997). Despite recent calls and pledges of Japanese government to support gender equality by providing better support for families and thus opportunities for women to work and have a career, they are still often expected and structurally confined to fulfill roles such as supporting their working husbands or taking care of old, young, or sick members of the family.

As the following example of Martha from Norway illustrates, very similar expectations are imposed on European migrant women—whether directly by their partners, their families, or wider society—and it is their gender which is the most significant identity that drives such expectations.

> And then my sister in law said to me; usually [as] a Japanese housewife, you don't have to, you should not repeat the dinner until like 40 days later. Then you can start over again. And I think like 40 days? Five dishes a day, that's 200 dishes I have to do.

In other words, it is not their Westernness or whiteness associated with civilization or high culture—which would, in this context, probably include notions such as emancipation and gender equality—but it is their gender that underlines other people's expectations of them. Gender thus detaches them from the hegemonic meanings of whiteness. Moreover, as Martha further elaborates on these expectations, she actually draws a comparison with Japanese women herself acknowledging the significance

of such a parallel which is in contrast with the juxtaposition of white and Japanese identities of men.

> You know just cleaning the house and cooking for [my husband]. I'm not going to do that. But then I realized that in Japan many females are actually having nice education and they still stay at home and have their life at home.

Martha's quote indicates that the process of integration—at least in marriages where the partner is Japanese—involve internalization of gender expectations common in the local society. In a way, it is a gender assimilation which is in contrast with the sort of very positive multiculturalism that tend to be experienced by white European men in similar relationships. However, this case also illustrates that such expectations are not nonnegotiable in the private sphere; Martha found a compromise in many chores and duties that were expected from her (including cooking she does not like) and describes her husband as still 'helping more than Japanese men'. Moreover, as the following chapter discusses in more detail, she managed to find a way to somehow continue her career as well, although in a considerably limited way. Nonetheless, widely held social norms regarding gender roles in Japan tend to strongly limit European women in the public sphere and, particularly, the labor market, as illustrated by the following experience of Valeri from Italy.

> I had some interviews at … catering [company]. But at that point, well …, they asked me are you married? And I was about to. And I said I will get married. And do you plan to have kids? Well, I would like to. I think I will. And so they said, '*ochitsuite kara mata kite kudasai'* (come again when you get settled).

Similar experiences are shared by numerous Japanese women and institutionalized gender discrimination in Japan retreats only very slowly (Sugimoto 2010). Yet, what these cases demonstrate is that whiteness does not exempt European women from such discrimination. This indicates that whiteness is not experienced as a universal privilege, but there are certain limits to it possed by different expectations by gender. This difference in the experience of whiteness is based on masculinized white identity that leads to white women being perceived in terms of gender rather than race.

However, as the following chapter will further demonstrate, the increasing diversity of migration patterns—in terms of motivations for migration,

or aspirations within the host society—actually often result in situations where the gender outcomes of whiteness do not necessarily follow the patterns described in this part. Especially in regard to the aforementioned prototypical picture of white, hegemonic masculinities, there seems to be a considerable number of white men who cannot identify themselves with such a picture. In other words, there was considerable number of interviewees and other informants for whom getting a Japanese girl without much (or no) effort in any *gaijin* bar represents an urban legend, rather than real, achievable experience. Despite a rather limited focus of this study in terms of gender, general findings are in concord with earlier studies more extensively scrutinizing the discords and continuities with historical constructions of race and gender of white subjects. As James Farrer concludes in his study on nightlife in Shanghai, 'familiar racial and sexual categories' are changing and becoming contested (Farrer 2011, 762). Such discussion of gender and whiteness, in turn, illustrates the importance of focusing on both the staying power of the white privilege and its local meanings and the ways its global hegemony might become contested.

## Summary

This chapter has focused on the ways in which the privilege associated with whiteness are reproduced after migration. In concord with findings of other studies, the association with a perceived English ability and the generally positive attitudes toward white migrants tend to privilege white migrants in certain occupations and in everyday life. This is reflected by the interviewees' rather positive assessments of their position within society and lack of overt discrimination. Moreover, the 'small benefits' of whiteness can be translated to particular job opportunities through the conversion of social and cultural capital. The cultural capital consists mainly of English language proficiency and some other 'global competencies'. Importantly, however, the findings of this study strongly suggest that these forms of cultural capital and particularly English language proficiency in Japan are strongly associated with whiteness, rather than limited to the West or native speakers of English.

White Europeans in this study thus resemble the picture of Simmel's *Stranger* since the relationship they have with Japan seems to be a very positive one and is based on the fact that they 'import qualities into it, which do not and cannot stem from the group [i.e. Japan] itself' (Simmel

1950, 402). Whether it is the traditional 'European' culture, one's English ability, or other symbols of the 'global' or 'cosmopolitan', they are seen as authentic bearers of something the Japanese lack but at the same time strive for. As such a racialized skill, it represents a 'cultural competence (e.g., being able to read in a world of illiterates) [that] derives a scarcity value from its position in the distribution of cultural capital and yields profits of distinction for its owner' (Bourdieu 1986, 244). It is this quality and its scarcity that privileges white Europeans over other applicants in certain occupational niches described above. In other words, besides more positive perceptions or 'small benefits' in everyday lives, whiteness through capital conversion indeed does lead to more 'tangible' forms of capital and becomes a competitive advantage in particular niches, thus giving the 'symbolic' privilege an economic dimension as well.

On the other hand, the discussion of gender suggests that the experience of whiteness does not represent a uniform path and the importance of local meanings attached to whiteness and other identities may considerably alter such experiences. This implies a more general questioning of the privilege associated with whiteness, and the fact that we need to critically scrutinize the effect of this privilege further. The discussion of gendered outcomes for white migrants thus reveals to us first signs of limits to the white privilege, or as Lan (2011) called it, its 'double-edged' character. Indeed, when drawing parallels with the picture of Simmel's stranger, which is inherently dialectical, we need to consider the various meanings and representations of this 'double-edged' character and, through such an analysis, further deconstruct the picture of inherently privileged migrants.

## Notes

1. It is necessary to emphasize that the two-way process of adaption is understood only as an ideal state and does not posit that countries using the concept of integration in their policies necessarily follow such an ideal. For example, as Kymlicka argued, while British integration policy promoting 'diversity' suggests mutual accommodation, the underlying assumption is actually that the 'native-born British citizens will not be expected to make any changes in their own habits, practices or identities' (Kymlicka 2003, 205).
2. Ayu Majima's (2014a) account of Japanese elites traveling in the West during the modernization period reveals some of these struggles for acceptance not only in the experience of prominent individuals but also on the level of international politics. For example, as one of the most important demonstrations of such denial, she identifies the US Japanese Exclusion Act of

1924. An unsuccessful proposal of racial equality amendment to the covenant of the League of Nations in 1919 (Shimazu 1998; Majima 2014a) and intellectual endeavors to deny the validity of racial classification where whites were represented as the *a priori* superior race in prewar Japan (Oguma 2002) are some of the ways in which the Western hierarchy has been attempted to overcome or disqualified by the Japanese side as well.

3. For example, the latest census data on UK nationals in Japan show that as many as 54 percent of the working population is employed in the education sector (data from the Population Census 2010 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication, available at http://www.e-stat.go.jp/).
4. Although this includes teachers of other foreign languages as well, there were only three cases where interviewees did not teach English.
5. For example, Michael (Germany), Katka (Slovakia), or Jean (France), all worked in such schools and all claimed that they were required to fulfill certain criteria in order to be hired and various qualifications are increasingly becoming more expected or even required in this type of *eikaiwa* schools.
6. For example, in 2011, the average score from the iBT TOEFL test ranked Japan 28th in Asia and 137th in the world (Daimon 2013) and the data do not show much improvement even more recently. According to the official report (available at https://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/94227_unlweb.pdf, retrieved on August 8, 2015), the average score in 2014 was only 70 points (out of 120) and in Asia only Cambodia did worse with only one point less on average.
7. This does not imply that teaching in English is reserved for universities. For example, there is an increasing number of regular high schools (i.e. those teaching in Japanese) that actually started to introduce some content classes in English as well and there were interviewees who had worked for such institutions as well.
8. For example, many bigger universities commonly offer special courses of French, German, Russian, or Spanish or—depending on the field—offer courses in these languages (often readings). Yet, obviously also affected by the increasingly neoliberal principles in the education market in Japan, more and more universities now offer less dominant languages such as Czech, Polish, or Hungarian, even on the scale of whole departments.
9. According to the Basic School Survey conducted every year by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the advancement rate to universities increased only about 5 percent since 2005 and the number of enrolled students in the same period remained at the level of 2.8 million students. All following statistics on university faculty are based on this survey, which is available at the Portal Site of Official Statistics of Japan (www.e-stat.go.jp).

10. There were two interviewees who worked as a wedding ceremony 'priest' in Japan (UK and Slovakia). Moreover, the discourse regarding this job was very common among other interviewees, who recognized it as a popular, and often well-paying job for white migrants in Japan.
11. This statistic represents all registered foreigners in Japan. In other words, the shares represent women staying on different types of visas and thus not necessarily only European women married to the Japanese.
12. Grethe worked as an executive in the expat-centered NGO she frequented from her early days in Japan.
13. Although, as I claim later, this does not necessarily mean that such expectations are placed on them by their partners, but rather stem from a wider social environment surrounding them.

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CHAPTER 5

# White Privilege Revised: White Man's 'Burden' in Japan

The question of how to frame the case of white Europeans in Japan within the discourse of integration becomes intricate because of its underlying characteristics. By focusing on the whiteness per se rather than Western whiteness, as has been the focus of virtually all the studies in the emerging field of white migrations, the obvious and often unquestioned link with the supremacy suddenly emerges as a suitable subject of inquiry. In other words, by including Russians or Macedonians in the discussion of white migrants and their position within the receiving society, encompassing apparently contradictory concepts such as discrimination or exclusion in our analytical repertoire for the white migrations presents itself as a plausible tool for understanding the situation of white migrants in Japan.

Moreover, combining the characteristics of the subject of this study with the particularity of Japan as a receiving country for these migrants allows us to further expose the limits of the white privilege and explore its alternative meanings. As has been already suggested in the previous chapter, the different meanings and representations of the West and/or whiteness do not necessarily symbolize the 'superior' status. In other words, we need to make a distinction between *positive* perception and perception as *superior,* which has its consequences for assumptions about privilege, and/or 'muting' or even exemption from negative connotations related to the status of the other. It can be argued that when migrants are associated with superior positions within the racial hierarchy, their negative experiences as others are 'muted' or overridden by the privilege they



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enjoy, and that implies the existence of privilege based on such status in a considerably stronger way than in the case of positive perceptions. On the contrary, there are minorities, such as the Japanese in Americas, that have been perceived positively (see e.g. Tsuda 2003 on the Japanese in Brazil) or as 'model minorities' because of their higher socioeconomic position within the host society, yet these instances are not usually associated with the discourse of privilege.

That the understanding of the whiteness as a 'superior' racial category can be questioned in the case of Japan suggests, for example, the discussion of skin color in Japan. The white skin color has been strongly associated with the Japanese and their skin color and quality is perceived as superior to that of the whites (Ashikari 2005; Wagatsuma 1967). This illustrates a shift in symbolic meanings associated with whiteness, yet even more implicit is a study on perceptions of the West and Japan in terms of superiority and inferiority. Answers to a question that is asked repeatedly in a representative, nationwide study of the Institute of Statistical Mathematics clearly show that the perception of the Japanese as being 'inferior' to Westerners does not actually have wide support in Japan over the whole period of measurement (1953–2103).[1] Moreover, these data show that not only do these views fluctuate with economic development, but also that despite recent economic difficulties, there is only a small part of the population that would openly support such an idea. On the contrary, even after the collapse of the bubble economy in the early 1990s, the share of those who agree that the Japanese are actually superior to Westerners did not decrease under 30 percent and, since the 2000s, started to climb to reach 44 percent in the most recent wave in 2013.[2] At the same time, the share of those feeling that the Japanese are inferior to Westerners exceeded 10 percent only once since the late 1960s (11 percent in 1998), thus strongly suggesting that the idea of Westerners' superiority over the Japanese is not widely supported in Japan. Although the nature of the question itself can be regarded as controversial, it further emphasizes the contradictory character of the 'superiority' that encompasses the notion of the West and whiteness in Japan.

Thus, extending this further, it can be argued that there is a possibility that the high level of development of Japan can be seen as a significant factor in constraining opportunities for migrants not only from less-developed countries such as China (Liu-Farrer 2009, 2011b), but for migrants from more developed parts of the world as well. In other words, whereas the understanding of the West and whiteness cannot be simply devoid of

its postcolonial legacy and global hegemony, a lack of such clear-cut legacy in the case of Japan, its high degree of economic development, and global influence, all these are manifested in contradictory tendencies in Japan's perceptions of the West described above. This indicates that the privilege associated with whiteness might be not based on the perceptions of superiority and thus the *extent* to which this privilege is reproduced upon migration might be questioned. As already suggested, this is not at odds with the fact that Westerners, in the broad sense, are seen by the Japanese, as well as other ethnic minorities (Oda 2012), as the most favorable group of 'others' (i.e. a positive perception) (Tanabe 2008, 2009), yet it indicates the potential to question the reproduction of the white supremacy model, and thus the privilege associated with it in the case of Japan.

That whites might not be exempted from historical legacies of Japan denying its 'others' was indicated in the limited writings on Westerners in Japan as well. Willis (2008) identified the legacy of Dejima—an outpost in the Nagasaki bay that was the only open port for foreigners during the isolation of Tokugawa Japan—as being the exclusionary power confining the cosmopolitan elites to 'imagined islands of foreignness' (Willis 2008, 239). Komisarof refers to the legacy of general Douglas McArthur, the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces during the postwar occupation of Japan, who 'lived both among, yet separately from, the "conquered" [Japanese]' (Komisarof 2012, 7, emphasis in original) and argues that this effect lingers over the Westerners even today. Nevertheless, as he clarifies later, 'MacArthur's legacy is that his privilege has been reproduced, albeit on a lesser scale, for decades' (p. 8) and while he admits that the Westerners in Japan 'inhabit a position both privileged yet removed from the mainstream' (p. 185), it is a privilege which ultimately plays a crucial role in their lives in the form of, for example, reported higher salaries.[3] Moreover, his focus exclusively on highly successful elites as well as Willis' focus on 'cosmopolitan elites who live in special floating islands of transnational community' (2008, 240) make it unclear whether the limits of the acceptance or integration of their subjects into the wider society—which they both suggest can be ascribed to race, nationality, or ethnicity, rather than to their class or particular socioeconomic position in the first place.

It can be argued that a more profound analysis of the nonacceptance of white migrants, in general, and in the case of Japan, in particular, is obscured by what Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2011) recently called 'racial grammar'. According to him, this grammar represents invisible practices that 'structure cognition, vision, and even feelings on all sort of racial

matters' (p. 173)—including, *inter alia*, academia and scientific methods as well—and 'normalize the standards of white supremacy' (p. 174). Despite the fact that Bonilla-Silva focused only on the case of the USA, it can be extended further and claimed that a similar sort of grammar shapes the global white hegemony discourse that can address whites and their experience only in a certain manner. Thus, when Komisarof aims to write about the contemporary experience of the Westerners in Japan (as his subtitle suggests) or when Willis approaches the issue of '*Gaijin* (white) foreigners)' (2008, 239), they tend to depict them as success stories or cosmopolitan elites who represent for them the most obvious yet stereotypical subject for such an analysis. In this way, such an approach not only reproduces the white hegemony discourse, but, as has been suggested in the previous chapters, it disregards a large part of the growing white population in Japan as well.

Thus, after analyzing how and when whiteness works as privilege, I attempt to further challenge the dominant discourse of intrinsic privilege. Nonetheless, at the same time, it is necessary to note that this should not be understood as an effort to 'victimize' the white Europeans in Japan and 'deprive' them of their privilege, but as an attempt to unveil the complexity and ambiguity of both the reproduction and transformations of white privilege in non-Western settings of global migration, and account for the experience of a growing, yet still largely overlooked, minority in Japan.

## Europeans as 'Others': Whiteness, Temporality, and 'Skills'

Beside the positive aspects of being white, the previous discussion actually implies that my subjects are differentiated from the 'native' population in a similar way to migrants from other racial backgrounds. Yasuko Takezawa argued that the concept of race and racialization is deeply rooted in Japanese society and is not simply an 'imported' concept from the West (Takezawa 2005, 2011b). By considering the case of *burakumin,* she further showed that the concept of race[4] has been applied in Japan not only to visible minorities but also to nonvisible and imagined differences. Through this discussion, she demonstrates the extent to which race was—and still is—significant in Japan. Other studies stress the perceived exclusive nature of the 'Japanese' versus the 'others' in general, which is based on the deeply rooted myth of cultural and ethnic homogeneity (e.g. Befu 2001; Lie 2001; Oguma 2002). Interestingly enough, it has also

been suggested that through the apparently deconstructing discourses such as 'internationalization' (Befu 1983; Stronach 1995; Itō 1998) or multiculturalism (*tabunka kyōsei*) (Nagayoshi 2011; Burgess 2012a), this dichotomy—as well as nationalism—are reproduced, rather than seriously challenged. Moreover, as has been suggested earlier, even the white elites are not completely exempted from these exclusionary forces (Komisarof 2012; Willis 2008) and, thus, in order to understand the meaning of white privilege in Japan and how their race shapes the social reality of European residents in Japan, we need to further focus on their status as 'others'. In fact, earlier invoking of the Simmel's (1950) stranger when interpreting foreigners' uniqueness or added value in the Japanese society necessitates such an approach because of Simmel's dialectics that emphasize that there are always conflicts hidden behind the apparently positive image of strangers.

### *Stranger: A Welcomed Guest*

Positioning white Europeans as strangers implies that the perception of their privilege is inseparable from their status as outsiders, which is arguably a part of social existence in Japan that can be hardly overlooked (see e.g. Lie 2001; Sugimoto 2010; Weiner 2009). Given that this is the case, it is not surprising that positive descriptions of acceptance in Japanese society by my interviewees usually come with a modifier such as 'to certain extent' or 'as a guest'. On the one hand, it can be claimed that the presence of many white migrants in Japan is, in most situations, not perceived as undesirable or as a cultural or social threat to the society, as is the case with many stigmatized minorities. On the other hand, there is a clear emphasis in the narratives on the tendency of being largely understood as temporary sojourners who should go 'home' one day (see also Komisarof 2012). For instance, John (UK), who has been living and working in Japan for more than 12 years, sees his position in Japan as that of an 'everlasting guest'.

> I consider myself a long-term guest. I feel mainly welcome here, I feel part of the society because I work, I pay taxes, I bring up my children here. But ultimately I'm always a foreign guest. However long I stay here.

Despite having a right to stay and work in Japan, despite fulfilling their civic duty to pay taxes, or the fact that they contribute to the society by bringing up their children (who, in his and many other cases, are Japanese citizens),

many long-term residents strongly suggest that becoming more than a welcomed or 'accepted' guest is something they either find very hard to accomplish or gave up pursuing. As Jean (France), put it, 'whatever you do you [will] always be a *gaijin* … I mean it's [crossing the line] just not gonna happen' and accepting such a position is seen as something necessary for a successful 'integration'.

Incongruences between aspirations to full integration and racial and/or ethnical difference in Japan are reflected in the way in which this issue is usually referred to. The term that is most frequently used in connection with the growing numbers of foreign residents by media, government documents, in popular discourse, but also scholars is *ukeire* which literally means 'acceptance'. Yet this term is generally used both in the context of accepting new immigrants and in the context of post-migratory situations. Thus, referring to migrants and their situation within the receiving society in terms of *ukeire* rather than other alternatives such as 'integration'—which has its equivalent in Japanese as well (*tōgō*)—symbolizes the failure to acknowledge the possibility of migrants becoming an *integral* part of the *Japanese* society and, at the same time, emphasizes the tolerance as a supposed 'virtue' of the Japanese people. Thus, while white Europeans generally do not experience open discrimination (with notable exceptions discussed later), many of the long-term residents (or those who aspire to such status) tend to frame their narratives within the discourse of 'accepted but not integrated', often along with explicit or implicit emotions of frustration and disappointment.

One of the cases representing the welcomed guest rationale is that of a foreign student or researcher. As discussed earlier, foreign students are one of the pillars of Japan's attempts to internationalize in the 1980s or to become more global recently. At the same time, the expectations on foreign students and researchers and their role in Japanese society and beyond vividly demonstrate associations of the global with something inherently external and alien to the Japanese society that needs to be coped with in some way, and, in a sense, 'endured'. As I demonstrate in the following discussion, a perception that things global represented by foreign students and researchers need to be *accepted* rather than *integrated* into the Japanese society is deeply embedded in everyday interactions as well as structures of the Japanese society.

Many students tend to describe their experiences of studying in Japan initially as very interesting and enjoyable, yet some become more critical of their position with time. Longer study stays and, especially, the experience of transition from student life to the labor market in Japan usually confront

individuals with the guest-ology principle as a social norm hidden behind the welcoming pose. Krystiana (Poland), who came to Japan in 1998 as a student, argues that the perceptions of Japanese in her surroundings have changed when she married a Japanese man and became '*shakaijin* (working person) who lives with them, someone they have to live together with'. Thus, in contrast with the position of white foreign students who are perceived as a welcomed yet temporary part of the Japanese society, the image of *shakaijin* is still often associated with lifetime employment,[5] that is, with being a permanent part of the society. Whereas the new Plan to Accept 300,000 Foreign Students adopted by the Japanese government in 2008 incorporated as one of its goals support for graduates seeking employment in Japan, it seems that the idea of foreign students as those who are inevitably bound to return to their countries incorporated in the original Plan to Accept 100,000 Foreign Students from the early 1980s[6] is still deeply rooted in the consciousness of Japanese society and reflected in the labor market. It is reflected, for example, in the statistics on foreign students granted working visas in Japan; the data suggest that the number of students who were granted visas for employment in Japanese companies has virtually not changed since 2008 despite the growing total number of foreign students (Ministry of Justice 2013a). Moreover, the majority of these visas (64 percent) were granted to Chinese students and especially in the category 'Specialist in Humanities/International Services' (72 percent of all Chinese students), which suggests that this trend reflects an increase in the activities of Japanese companies in China (Liu-Farrer 2011a; Tsukasaki 2008), rather than any increased adoption of foreign graduates in general. Indeed, there were only 167 working visa permits granted to European students in 2012 (Ministry of Justice 2013a).

This suggests that the guest-ology principle is not expressed only in everyday interactions but is deeply embedded in the policies, discourse, and structures in Japan as well (Flowers 2012). How the expected role of foreigners in Japan is differentiated from their 'native' colleagues on the institutional level can be further illustrated on the differences in fellowships of the Japanese Society for Promotion of Science (JSPS) according to nationality and type. While doctoral course stipends are available to all students of Japanese universities, regardless of their nationality, postdoctorate fellowships are divided into those for the Japanese and for foreign nationals with differences in length, eligibility, and goals. Postdoctorate programs for Japanese nationals[7] (PD and SPD) reflect the needs and realities of young scientists at Japanese universities in terms of eligibility, as a PhD degree

is not required and it is designed for three years. As the aim of this program makes clear, it is meant to 'foster young researchers who will play an important role in future scientific research activities' (JSPS 2010b) and to help young researchers overcome the transition period between graduation, acquiring a PhD degree, and entering the professional labor market. Whereas the education of foreign students (including graduate ones) does not necessarily involve the possibility of foreigners becoming more a permanent part of the Japanese society, this fellowship emphasizes its role as a facilitator between education and labor market. Consequently, postdoctoral researchers of foreign nationalities are perceived differently; they should be already established, 'highly qualified' young researchers holding a PhD degree, and should come for a shorter period of 12 to 24 months, in which the main aim of their activity should be to 'conduct cooperative research' and stimulate 'Japanese academic circles' (JSPS 2010a). Moreover, such cooperation should 'advance scientific research in the counterpart countries' (ibid.) as well. This clearly demonstrates that while equality is being promoted in terms of the value of stipends and grants, inequalities along citizenship lines are being (re)produced at the same time by setting different terms of eligibility, lengths of programs, and program objectives.

The understanding of the researcher (as well as of students) as temporarily welcomed and not regarded as potentially becoming a more permanent part of Japanese society is deeply embedded in this scheme. Foreign researchers are seen as something that should bring new qualities into Japan's academia, yet this scheme makes it explicit that their stay in Japan is supposed to be only a 'visit' and that they are not envisioned as those who 'play an important role' in Japanese science, at least not directly as permanent members of Japan's scientific and academic community. Their (as well as foreign students') role is to cooperate, build bridges between countries, and possibly take some knowledge back to their home countries, where they are supposed to continue with their careers. Interestingly enough, this also indicates that the qualities and effects they should bring into the Japanese society are not directly connected to specialized knowledge as was, for example, the case of earlier 'modernizers' of Japan from the West. On the contrary, the link with the idea of connecting Japan with the world or its 'globalization' can be seen more consistently and clearly articulated in various student-related programs.

Even though the previous arguments address all foreign students and researches (i.e. not only white ones), it reflects the strong self-perception of Japan as highly developed, as well as the dynamics of the perceptions

and meanings attached to the terms 'Western', 'foreign', or 'different' in Japan. In other words, the whites are not seen as exempted from 'othering' that has been seen by many authors as one of the main obstacles in further (i.e. more inclusive) integration of foreigners and other minorities in Japan (e.g. Takezawa 2009, 2011a). As suggested by the discussion above and further elucidated in the following section, the 'difference' is part of everyday lives of Europeans in Japan and represents a significant issue that they have to deal with in their endeavors to find a place in Japanese society. Importantly, Jean (France) suggests that 'different is actually a code word for saying [that the Japanese are] better', which implies that white migrants themselves—whether it be students, researchers, or others—do not imagine to be perceived as 'superior' anymore, but just, as welcomed or tolerated 'guests'.

### *Everyday Differentiation and Discrimination*

As already suggested by my interviewees, cases of open discrimination against white foreigners in Japan are not common. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasize that they are not nonexistent. There were reported cases of open housing discrimination, for example, when a foreign student from Belgium was recently openly denied housing based on the fact that he was a foreigner (Scott 2013), and similar, though less obvious, cases were reported by some of my interviewees as well. As one of my informants indicated, it is not uncommon to find even nowadays advertisements of the type: 'no pets and foreigners allowed'.

Another, and probably the most known, case of obvious discrimination against white residents in Japan is the so-called Otaru *onsen* (hot spring) incident (Lee and Tanaka 2007). Otaru is one of the port towns in Hokkaido frequented by Russian sailors and fisherman that led *onsen* owners to introducing a 'non-foreigners allowed' policy in the 1990s. A Canadian-born activist Debito Arudō, who has been a naturalized Japanese citizen since 2000, started a campaign to scrap this policy, and in one of his attempts to enter an establishment with a "Japanese only" sign on its doors, brought along his children (who are Japanese nationals as well), but one of his children was denied entrance based on her looks.[8]

Whereas these cases might be considered as isolated incidents of discrimination against whites, they demonstrate that whiteness is not exempted from the larger 'non-Japanese' group and thus poses a significant barrier in their integration. The double-edged character of social relations many

of my interviewees implied earlier demonstrates another dilemma inherent in the nature of strangers. While the already mentioned lack of ostracism suggests an interpretation of their experience in Japan in rather inclusionary terms, a more inclusive integration into the Japanese society is actually hampered by a realization that their being different is essential to these relations on many occasions. As Fredrika (Finland) stressed during her interview, her being different becomes shamelessly a starting topic for many new encounters with the Japanese.

> When I meet new people it's always the same discussion. Like wow, your hair [is] so blond! Can I touch your hair? Your face is so small! Your legs are so tall! And all sort of things I wouldn't be dreaming of saying to anyone.

It is the positive and normative nuances of the phenotypal traits of whites as beauty symbols propelled by the global economies of color (Nakano 2009) that allow them to be blatantly emphasized in everyday interactions. Obviously, although these remarks are well intentioned and not based on negative feelings such as xenophobia, the dividing line between 'us' and 'others' is clearly being drawn and the migrants have to find a coping strategy. Moreover, everyday differentiation the interviewees experience in Japan is not limited to an appraisal of their different phenotype, but is closely connected to expectations regarding their cultural practices and abilities as well. Expectations regarding language abilities are some of the most frequently experienced one, and, as I argue later, are ones that affect the actual lives in the most profound way. Whiteness in Japan entails expectations of both English proficiency and (the lack of) Japanese language abilities, which because of the increasingly diverse migration patterns and Japan's global cultural influence is, in many cases, contradicted by the realities of the migrants. Almost all of my interviewees could actually speak Japanese to some extent, yet as the case of Irina (Ukraine) already introduced in the previous chapter vividly illustrates, they are expected to be able to speak English fluently and this expectation tends to dominate their everyday interactions. On the contrary, Japanese language expectations are very low (if any) and often overlooked or ignored. After she recollected her experience of being approached by a Japanese stranger in English, she continued in the following way:

> And I had this [feeling] that Japanese people are not interested in me … I speak Japanese, so why we cannot speak Japanese? People come … and they have like shocked face. Because they make effort to come closer and make

> question and they ask do you speak English? And I say no, I don't speak. So it's wow. So for them they are shocked and I see the shocked faces and I feel very bad. So I don't meet their expectations.

Many other interviewees experienced similar episodes that can be interpreted as 'unintentional' breaching experiments, revealing how particular language skills are related to race as a social norm. For many, and especially the ones who are more established in Japan, following such a norm puts them in a special role which they do not necessarily enjoy. Despite acknowledging such a possibility, this has been perceived rather as a case of positive racism in previous studies. For example, as has been argued in the previous chapter, there certainly is a potential for such a differentiation becoming an opportunity to gain further capital and indeed understand it as a part of the white privilege (Lan 2011, 1684). Nevertheless, at the same time, such deeply rooted expectations mean that everyday differentiation is seriously limiting possibilities of being accepted as 'a normal' member of the society as well. 'Normal' in this context refers to the Japanese language ability that the majority of my interviewees held (contrary to, e.g. Lan's case), yet many claimed to be *a priori* questioned in their everyday interactions.

The deep-rootedness of the language ability expectations can be related to the historical dominance of English-speaking white migrants as well as the previously mentioned 'inextricable' link between Japanese language, identity, and race (Burgess 2012b, 37; Weiner 2009; see also Lie 2001; Sugimoto 2010). Similar to the difficulty of many Japanese to comprehend and acknowledge the lack of Japanese proficiency in Japanese Americans (Yamashiro 2011) or Japanese Brazilians (Tsuda 2003), many of my subjects often experienced difficulties in having their proficiency in Japanese acknowledged. As has been argued earlier, the perception that there is a biological link between Japanese language and Japanese 'race' implies that the racially non-Japanese are not capable of mastering Japanese in a similar way that the Japanese are allegedly not capable of mastering English. Very common among white foreigners, then, is an experience of being overtly flattered for any utterance in Japanese when such social norm is breached, yet it is because of this link that foreigners' Japanese language ability continues to be denied still by many native speakers. As the idea of integration or *tabunka kyōsei*—what literally means *multi*cultural *co*-existence—or preference for the concept of *ukeire* over integration imply, the position of foreigners within Japanese society is envisaged as of an inherently different character. As such, Japanese language proficiency of foreigners can then be

considered an obstacle rather than a facilitator of a 'successful' integration in Japan (Burgess 2012b, 52). At the same time, the experiences of my interviewees reflect the fact that separate language expectations, of both white and Japanese identities, are being effectively reproduced. Moreover, despite the growing numbers and diversity of the speakers of both languages, they remain relatively uncontested in the public sphere and are often perpetuated by media[9] and in popular discourse.

The type of unintentional, racially biased statements and interactions described above are in psychology sometimes referred to as 'micro-aggressions' (Sue et al. 2007). This term was popularized among the English-speaking community in Japan by the above-mentioned activist Debito Arudō in his article in the *Japan Times* (Arudo 2012). It made it to the top positions in the most-read list of that newspaper's pieces[10] and brought about a heated discussion on the *Japan Times*' and SNS homepages, with camps divided equally into supporters and opponents of his opinion.[11] In the case of both supporters and opponents, the idea that micro-aggressions—such as repeated inquiries into one's ability to use chopsticks, eat *natto*[12] or, indeed, speak Japanese—play a significant role in the everyday life of non-Japanese (a term used by Arudō) demonstrates the importance of this issue for many readers.

On the contrary, as one of his opponents argued in a follow-up article, such incidents can be seen as 'utterly subjective as to be meaningless to anyone other than me, me, me' (Jones 2012). As the same author (who is a professor of law at a famous Japanese private university) further clarifies, it might be important in the cases when such events 'accumulate into a significant problem in the context of employment or some other ongoing relationship', yet these are 'a very different dynamic from the cumulative effect of random encounters between strangers' (ibid.). While I agree that framing the above-mentioned actions as 'aggressions', 'assaults', or 'insults' (even being micro-, unconscious, etc.) can be considered as problematic, at the same time, Jones' argumentation underestimates the role of social norms that eventually can affect the 'dynamics' influencing one's employment and other relationships, as suggested, for example, by Irina's case.

Irina's case symbolizes the struggles of white, non-English-speaking foreigners coming to Japan and illustrates one of the most obvious and common ways of coping with such situations for long-term residents. She found her way to meet the majority expectations by learning English after staying in Japan for a while. First, she suggests that accepting such

a norm seems to be a successful way of coping with the 'bad' feelings she described above.

> But now [when I speak English] it's like please come. If you want me to listen, I can listen to your English, I can listen your Spanish, I can listen to everything. So it's ok for me. But that time for me it was very big shock, like [it was] something I have to do.

Irina saw the acceptance of her difference as a way of coming to terms with the fact that high Japanese proficiency is not enough for her to feel 'fully accepted' or 'integrated' in Japan. Learning English seemed to be one of the clues necessary to get accepted in the Japanese society as a white foreigner (even in the long(er) term) and in other cases as well, which obviously contradicts the idea of integration. Moreover, as Irina further emphasized, she opted to meet the expectations and studied English in Japan in order to find more opportunities. As she claims, without actually being able to speak English, she, as a white foreigner in Japan, felt that 'I didn't have many options to find a job in Japan' with 'just' Japanese, Ukrainian, Russian, and some other skills.

## Race, Culture, and the Labor Market

This suggests that besides the temporary guest status and experiences of differentiation, there actually is a structural dimension that would infringe further integration of white Europeans. In other words, Irina's case indicates the possibility of moving beyond 'utter subjectivity' of such experiences (Jones 2012), demonstrating a negative and, to a certain degree, unavoidable aspect of their social existence as visible racial and cultural others. Focusing on wider social consequences draws us actually closer to the forms of discrimination or marginalization in the public sphere discussed in the case of other, stigmatized minorities. Thus, I analyze how this differentiation shapes the careers of individuals and further discuss how the nature of the apparently positive racial 'label' translates into expectations, opportunities, as well as restrictions in the job market.

### *Struggling High-Skilled Workers: Undesired Knowledge?*

First of all, we can find a tendency among the praised high-skilled professionals where they are unable to just enjoy particular privileges based on

their race, but face considerable difficulties in their jobs based on their status as foreigners as well. Certainly, there are 'highly successful' cases such as tenure track faculty of Japanese universities and the issue of integration for them has usually a merely symbolic character of either accepting or resisting different cultural norms, as was suggested by Colin Jones (2012) himself being one such case in point. Such cases were depicted by Komisarof (2012), and we can include here many experiences of the typical expatriates such as Grethe (Denmark) and her family,[13] high-skilled workers in the still rather scarce foreign-owned companies (Sonya from Bulgaria and Dimitri from Russia), or certain professionals such as performers (Elias, Norway).

Nevertheless, it has been argued that working in Japanese companies is challenging for high-skilled workers in terms of cultural differences in business practices that can be related to career development (Oishi 2012; Komisarof 2011) and it can be further argued that considerable cultural assimilation is often required. Numerous interviewees and other informants who I encountered throughout my fieldwork suggested that working in a Japanese company requires, besides the high level of Japanese language competency, acceptance of local working practices and conditions that are often considerably different from the norms they have internalized in their home societies.[14] Issues most often raised and also identified by Oishi (2012) include long working hours, inflexibility in accommodating particular needs of women or young families, expectations on gender roles as well as more subtle yet important differences in the way of communication or hierarchy principles. Inability or unwillingness to conform to these standards is often not tolerated and affects everyday interactions, professional and private life and, subsequently, the actual output or exertion of the high-skilled workers. Some of the hardship can be aptly described using the example of those coming to Japan mainly for professional reasons and without much cultural and language competency.

One such case is Felipa (Spain), who, as a part of a transnational company, was transferred first to Australia and later to Japan.[15] Her feeling of not being welcomed in Japan started with an unpleasant experience while moving to Japan which she compared with 'much better' relocation services she enjoyed in Australia. This can be ascribed to the fact that the Japanese company is reportedly not used to accepting many transferees from overseas to a similar degree as the Australian company, yet it suggests that the 'welcomed guest' principle has its limits as well. Such a tendency can be discerned from her description and emphasis on everyday obstacles

in her job. Felipa is a pharmaceutical professional, yet she claims that these obstacles do not allow her to fully exert her knowledge. Her narrative depicts the Japanese part of the transnational company network as 'completely different' in terms of business practices or adoption of intra-company standards, yet this difference is stressed by the Japanese side as well. What seems to be then the main obstacle in her professional life is a sort of self-orientalism that sees foreign high-skilled workers as culturally incompetent in fully exerting their knowledge in Japan. In other words, in line with the assertions of the *Nihonjinron*,[16] the Japanese management depict the Japanese way of doing business and 'way of thinking', in general, as categorically and inherently different from the Western (or 'other') ways. Such discourse asserts that this difference cannot be overcome and consequently represents unsurpassable obstacles and represents serious limitations in (and thus more open acceptance) of foreign workers' high skills.

Such a claim was reflected in other interviews but was explicitly demonstrated in the case Woodford versus Olympus that has received considerable attention in Japanese and foreign media. Michael Woodford, who is a British citizen, was made CEO of Olympus in 2011 in another attempt by a Japanese company to become 'global'. However, he was dismissed just few months into his new contract after becoming a whistleblower. What is, however, interesting in this case is the reasoning given by the Japanese management that argued that it 'was Woodford's failure to understand the company's management style and Japanese culture' (Ridley and Smith 2011) that led to his dismissal. Resorting to such a claim in order to cover other possible explanations demonstrates that such reasoning can be understood as reflecting a common-sense attitude, that is, one that is plausible and easily accepted by the targeted audience. In other words, whereas there were cases in my sample where interviewees reported that their different practices and habits were tolerated,[17] what was repeatedly emerging among the majority of those who had such an experience was a demand for a high degree of internalization of *local* working culture (including an adequate command of the Japanese language) within the *globalizing* efforts of Japanese companies. Whereas global should not be understood as denying the local, the problematic part of such views in this case is the conflation of the local with nationalism or self-orientalism *a priori* denying a possibility of connecting local with what is considered to be non-Japanese. Thus, coming back to the case of Felipa, who is not a manager but a high-skilled professional and female,[18] the whiteness might be 'helping' her to not experience open avoidance or blatant verbal

attacks, yet she feels that it cannot 'privilege' her even to such a degree that her position within the company would be based on her skills and performance, rather than on the fact that she is a racial or cultural 'other'. This she contrasts with the ideal of (a more) global working culture and English as a company language, standards in the company's guidelines, and her experience in affiliated companies in Australia, Spain, China, or Korea.

Another barrier for high-skilled workers in Japan identified by Oishi (2012) is an inflexible labor market. Whereas Oishi points out the labor market (im)mobility of workers already established in the Japanese labor market, ways of entering this market are limited as well. Entering the labor market upon graduation from a university (or high school) still represents, in Japan, the vast majority of hiring for standard employment, especially by large companies. With the increase in the number of foreign students and researchers affiliated to Japanese universities and recent calls by the Japanese government for supporting such practices, this way of entering the labor market became open for foreigners (Liu-Farrer 2009), including Europeans. As has been described by one of the early examples of Europeans who took this path, Niall Murtagh (2006) in his popular book, studying at a Japanese university opened doors to both large (Stephanos, Magda, Samuel) and smaller (Frederika, Sonya, Corneliu) companies for a considerable number of my interviewees as well.[19]

Consequently, besides structural interconnection of the school and labor market systems in Japan, given the importance of particular cultural practices described above, the experience of studying at a Japanese university might be seen by employers as a 'guarantee' that applicants acquired at least some degree of Japanese cultural competencies making them more preferable recruits. Lack of Japanese educational credentials has been seen as one of the obstacles in accessing more stable jobs by migrants in the lower segments of the labor market (Higuchi and Tanno 2003) and a similar logic seems to be (at least partially) involved in other segments relevant to white Europeans as well.

This tendency can be further discerned in the globalization of higher education through employment of foreign teaching staff. All four full-time faculty members I interviewed and numerous informants in similar positions usually had an experience of study or research prior to their appointment at Japanese universities. While it can be argued that the role of social capital acquired through study/research at a Japanese university in transition to the local labor market is crucial, following the case of

Martha makes clear that the social capital itself is not necessarily the ultimate clue. As already mentioned, Martha met her Japanese husband in the USA, where they were both staying on a postdoctoral fellowship. During her stay in the USA, she made connections with numerous Japanese researchers who later became influential in her field, and she hoped that they might somehow help her continue her promising career in cardiology or related research in Japan where she eventually moved. Nevertheless, despite 17 years of endeavor, she eventually failed to establish herself as a full-time researcher in Japan. While she claims that in addition to good relations with a number of Japanese scholars holding prestigious posts, her previous work is recognized and credited for in Japan as well, she has been repeatedly told that 'it's hard to make it [the cooperation with her] official'. The only official role she could get was a one-year research project within the Europe–Japan cooperation initiative that could not even cover her salary. While still being involved in research projects in Japan on a voluntary basis, she earns her living by working as a temporary replacement in hospitals in Norway.

In other words, despite having social capital and considerably credited human capital she acquired mainly during her research in the USA, a lack of previous experience within the Japanese educational system offers itself as one of the possible venues of attempting to explain her failure. One might still argue that the failure to successfully continue or start a professional career in Japan in cases such as Martha's can be seen as a 'gendered outcome' of her experience as a 'trailing migrant' (Lundström 2014), yet at the same time, the persisting importance of the work–school transformation and potentially the importance ascribed to the experience of being educated in Japan can be also seen as important factors impeding the careers of foreign professionals in Japan.

On the contrary, the relative closure of the Japanese labor market for 'insiders' in these cases is in contrast with the relative ease of job hunting within the segments of the job market characterized by cultural skills described in the previous chapter.

### *Occupational Niches: Culture Service Workers*

As already suggested in previous chapters, occupational niches of my interviewees were characterized by the dominance of language-related jobs. English language competency (as well as some other forms of cultural capital) that is often strongly expected from white, and thus also

non-native speaking migrants in Japan, presents itself as a strong evidence of reproduction of the white privilege upon migration. Nevertheless, the English proficiency expectations or the value of cultural skills in the job market, in general, represent actually a double-edged sword (Lan 2011). As I will argue, in many cases, these expectations disqualify the white individuals *a priori* (i.e. not necessarily based on the required skills) in other occupations and thus the occupational niches occupied by many Europeans are not only segmented but turn out to be unprivileged as well. Moreover, these specific niches, a relatively high share of secondary labor market jobs, and unpromising careers render a considerable number of European migrants in Japan as middle-class 'cultural service workers', rather than highly privileged and skilled 'elites'.

Culture-centered occupations encompass a relatively wide variety of already mentioned occupations, ranging from language—especially English—teaching or translation jobs through (Western) culture performers or wedding 'priests' to go-betweens or 'internalization' agents in Japanese companies. However, there are few feasible alternatives for European migrants in Japan demonstrating that these niches are segmented. The first alternative is that of the 'expatriates' that partially overlaps with the possibility to find a rather scarce job with a foreign company from Japan, as Sonya did. This is possible, especially in Tokyo, where such companies are concentrated. Although, as in the case of Sonya, these jobs require language skills, interviewees tend to present their actual duties as involving other skills and thus those jobs as being less confined to their cultural skills. Another possible strategy is to start one's own business in the field of one's specialization.[20] Vasil (Ukraine) successfully started a company providing internet services and Sylvaine (Swiss) a design studio. Still, as their cases reveal, such an escape route is conditioned by an acquisition of cultural (e.g. Japanese language skills) and social capital that needs to be accumulated in Japan rather than transferred from abroad. Moreover, the economic capital required to start one's own business as a prerequisite for successful visa application,[21] and the risky and demanding nature of self-employed professional jobs further limits the success of this strategy in terms of class, age, gender, and family status.

A relative lack of other alternative careers can be demonstrated in the case of Michael from Germany, already discussed in the previous chapter as an example of how expectations of English capability privilege white Europeans in occupations such as English teaching jobs. Nevertheless, his earlier attempts to apply for what he called 'a normal job' failed arguably

because of the same whiteness. Based on his solid language capabilities (German, English, Japanese) and the fact that the city where he resides is popular among foreign tourists, Michael repeatedly tried his luck[22] in hotels and restaurants, which are typical employers for many migrants, especially Chinese, in Japan as well. Nevertheless, he claims it was his looks (he has a beard) 'that might intimidate guests' that ultimately lead to numerous unsuccessful interviews. Whereas the Asian (and particularly Chinese) workers can be frequently seen as staff in hotels, restaurants, or convenient stores, Michael's struggles demonstrate how the integration of white migrants into similar segments of the Japanese labor market is hindered by different associations with their race. Whites are associated not only with a command of English and a lack of Japanese language capabilities but also with higher social status and 'breaching' such stereotypes in everyday life poses significant problems. Thus, while one might relatively easily encounter a white man working in high-class, cosmopolitan hotels in Tokyo or Osaka, it is still hard to socially accept their existence in other settings (e.g. middle-class hotels, other cities). Consequently, while whiteness might privilege its bearers in particular occupations, at the same time, it can significantly obstruct access to others.

Whether one concludes that these niches are ultimately privileged depends on how we assess the aspirations of migrants themselves and the ordering of these occupations in terms of social status or class. As Michael's case suggests, the aspirations are often different in the case of many Europeans who come for increasingly diverse reasons and are looking for highly individualized lifestyles.

> [Working as an English teacher] was not my plan. I wanted to work in a Japanese company, somewhere. And I couldn't even get this very tiny restaurant or hotel job.

For some, teaching English represents an easy way to earn a living, but the image of 'losers' identified by Farrer in the case of Shanghai's expatriate community (2010, 1224) can be discerned, to a certain extent, in the case of Japan's white Europeans as well. While Farrer argues that 'avoiding the status of a loser is essential to claiming membership in the class of cosmopolitan urban settlers' in Shanghai (ibid.), in the case of this study, such differentiation is more related to the possibility of getting a more 'insider' position within the Japanese society. As many of the Europeans come in search of alternative lifestyles, for many, 'doing something normal' plays

a significant role in such a lifestyle. Michael's general interest in Japan, its culture, and language can be seen as one of the factors initially motivating him to prefer a job in 'a Japanese company'. Similarly, Gabika's (Slovakia) aspiration to discover alternative values and culture in Japan can be seen as shaping her initial vision of working in Japan; 'I did not want to go and teach [*English*] in Japan. Everybody goes to teach [*English*] to Japan.' Nevertheless, similar to Michael, she could resist this option only for several months during which she lived on her savings and, ultimately, the circumstances of the Japanese labor market led her to an English teaching job. Thus, while Farrer further pointed out that '[f]or Americans (and even many non-native English-speaking Europeans), teaching English in Shanghai provided a refuge in a competitive corporate labour market' (Farrer 2010, 1224), suggesting that English teaching is an alternative to the demanding and highly competitive local labor market, English teaching in Japan for many does not represents an alternative but rather the only (plausible) option if they wish to stay in the country.

Furthermore, cultural and linguistic expectations often delimit the positions in more prestigious and high-skilled jobs, such as in academia. Besides the four part-time university language teachers, I have also interviewed four full-time professors from different universities, who were approached independently and without regard to their specializations. Although all four of them are engaged in the field of their specialization, their cases are illustrative of the positions where it is acceptable to be a foreign professional; Penelope (Spain) is a cognitive linguist and teaches mainly Spanish, Alexander is an economist from Bulgaria, who, despite being able to teach in Japanese, from the beginning was hired to teach economics almost exclusively to foreign students and in English, and Zhanna is an linguist teaching mainly Russian (although she is also fluent in Japanese). The centrality of culture in many academic jobs can be, however, demonstrated by the apparently least 'suspicious' case of Anton from Ukraine, currently teaching mathematics. First of all, a combination of mathematics—in which he obtained his PhD degree from one of the best universities in Japan and the world—and fluent Japanese did not seem to be in demand in the local labor market. His professor was not able to help him to find a teaching job in Japan after graduation[23] and his first teaching came after five years of constant searching by an introduction from a Japanese acquaintance. Yet, rather than a PhD degree in mathematics from a highly prestigious university, it was obviously his origin and supposed 'cultural heritage' that helped him secure a part-time lecturing job

on 'Readings on Russian law and politics'. After another three years since acquiring this part-time job (i.e. eight years after graduation) his professor finally found a suitable full-time position for him and recommended him for a job at his alma mater as part of the commencing internationalization program to teach mathematics in English. In this case, it was an unquestioned assumption of his English ability, a 'global' skill that whites 'necessarily' possess, as well as the recommendation written by his professor which worked in his favor.

It needs to be acknowledged that there *are* positions within academia that certainly contradict such common-sense expectations and stereotypes. Nonetheless, the cases such as Anton's are not hard-to-find exceptions and they underscore a continuing relevance of these expectations and stereotypes regarding white foreigners and the role they play in shaping their careers. The English language expectation—being the most common of all—clearly demonstrates the double-edged character of the privilege related to whiteness; while it can help to obtain certain jobs, at the same time, it effectively cuts off access to other jobs by emphasizing the 'otherness' as the primary (and often, the only) added value that is expected from the white migrants in the local labor market. Without being able to utilize the 'otherness', many express feelings of despair when facing 'local' competition, similarly to Corneliu, who is an engineer with a PhD in engineering from a top Japanese university and fluent in Japanese: 'as long as I compete with the Japanese, I feel like I'm being eliminated without a real contest'. Moreover, the applicability of the white privilege discourse to the cases of white European migrants in Japan is further undermined by the forms of employment among the interviewees and thus their social status.

### *Working Conditions and Job Instability*

Other factors which further cast into doubt the 'privileged' or 'rich elite' view of white European migrants in Japan are the instability and unremarkable economic benefits of their jobs, which again places a question mark over the argument that the occupations where whites are preferred are necessarily privileged in terms of social status or income. The majority of language-related jobs, especially those related to language teaching, can hardly be interpreted as privileged in this sense, or at least such an interpretation is not possible anymore. Although foreign language teaching used to be an above-standard paying job back in the 1980s, the conditions for workers in this industry have been deteriorating in recent years

(Budmar 2012)—a fact acknowledged by many of my interviewees as well. As one of the subjects in a documentary film on (predominantly) white Western foreigners living in Japan by Petri Storlöpare (2013) recalls, '[s]ome of the stupidest things I've ever heard …[is that] the foreigners come here to work as English teachers, make millions of dollars and take it back home with them' (53:40). His further clarification of the working condition of most English teachers he knows is in concord with my findings: 'English teachers earn about 2500 dollars a month [and t]hey can barely scrape through rent' (54:00).

Nevertheless, although such characteristics apply to the most common type of English (or other European) language teaching—that is, working in an English language school (*eikaiwa*) or independently for private clients—the association of other occupations with the 'elite' discourse can also be questioned in the case of more prestigious jobs, such as those in academia. Certainly, a university teacher represents an occupation with one of the highest incomes in Japan, yet it needs to be emphasized that there are profound differences in income, social and job security among various types of teaching positions at Japanese universities. The highest pole can be identified in full-time tenure track university faculty, which, however, becomes an increasingly scarce opportunity given the conditions of decreasing population and continuing marketization of higher education in Japan. Whereas the 'global hype' evidently brought more opportunities for foreign and, above all, white candidates where the popular associations with the global are arguably the strongest, it is also a fact that many such opportunities are offered without a possibility of tenure. Although foreign nationals have been eligible to become tenure tracked faculty since the 1990s (Lee and Tanaka 2007), many positions within the 'global hype' come in the form of fixed-term contracts (Anton), or in the form of part-time teaching contracts (Vincenzo, Krystiana). Both forms represent limited job security. In particular, growing number of teachers in the part-time teaching positions have been recently problematized because of their hard working conditions, very limited (if any) protection, and low incomes. Moreover, these jobs are guaranteed only until the 'global hype' lasts, as illustrated by the case of Anton whose contract—although full-time—needs to be renewed every year ever since the onset of the global education program of which it is a part.

Moreover, it was typical for the majority of my interviewees to work in some form of non-standard employment in general as well. The share of the self-employed is especially high both among my interviewees

(11 cases) and among censored UK nationals (almost 12 percent), which is remarkably high in comparison to the general (9.1 percent) and many other foreign population groups. Highly deregulated non-standard jobs, in opposition to the protected standard form of employment are seen as highly unstable in Japan, with low social prestige, and not promising (Genda 2005). Sugimoto even argued that the precariousness of nonregular employment makes these employees a new underclass of Japanese society (2010, 42). While many young people, women, and foreigners face similar (or even worse) difficulties in the Japanese job market today as well, it is precisely this similarity that further deconstructs the privileged image of white Europeans in Japan.

## Privileged or Not: Cultural Consumption and Obscured Inequalities

Lan suggested that the niches occupied by white English speakers in Taiwan are segregated 'cultural ghettoes' (Lan 2011, 1688). At the same time, she pointed out that despite the double-edged character of those hard-to-escape niches, they are still the privileged ones (ibid.). In this chapter, I argued that there is a considerable potential for questioning claims that the niches occupied by many white Europeans in Japan are 'privileged' and thus different in nature from the similar situations, such as 'an employment situation out of which, due to racial discrimination and social exclusion, Japanese women who emigrated to the United States as domestic workers were usually unable to move, even after they became fully fledged citizens' (Lan 2011, 1688 on Nakano 1986).

In general, similar to what happens in personal relations, Europeans in the job market are seen primarily as authentic bearers of the 'foreign', and particularly 'Western' culture. This culture is commodified, consumed, and, thus, everyday differentiation underlying such process has, in many cases, its consequences in the labor market. This process also implies particular forms of capital migrants can transform into a 'successful' career in Japan. On the one hand, cultural capital, especially in the form of English language capital, represents an asset that is easily capitalized on. This capital is (re)invented upon migration and often validated solely by whiteness, rather than by ethnicity, nationality, or particular qualifications. On the other hand, different forms of capital, notably high skills or knowledge as a form of human capital, are considerably more difficult to convert into job opportunities in Japan. This contradictory reality of the praised

high-skilled migrants can be ascribed to the particularities of the Japanese labor market, such as its inflexibility in terms of hiring age and routes (Oishi 2012), or the persistence of on-job training devaluing prior skills or knowledge. Nevertheless, it indicates that the factors affecting (usually negatively) the division of labor in Japan include race, and importantly whiteness as well. Race clearly delimits the expected social roles and positions of white European migrants in Japan and, at the same time, effectively imposes significant barriers to accessing others. The occupational niches they occupy in Japanese society are capable of providing them with a sufficient living, yet are frequently characterized also by instability and unpromising future careers.

This reveals the limits of flexibility in the capital conversion of white migrants and, at the same time, questions the privilege of the niches they occupy in the labor market. The main factor which does not allow us to openly describe this as an instance of 'racial discrimination' or 'social exclusion' seems to be the whiteness of our subjects. Otherwise, we would conclude that we see forms of blatant discrimination (Kim 2011a, b) or color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva 2003) in its Japanese permutation, including segmented assimilation and disadvantages suffered by immigrants or indeed the social exclusion or racial discrimination Nakano talked about in the case of Japanese women in the USA. This calls for a further consideration of the effects of racial grammar that dictates both who the whites *can* and *cannot* be (Bonilla-Silva 2011), how it shapes the whiteness studies, and whether it is only 'The invisible *weight* of whiteness' (ibid., italics added) we should consider, or whether we can also talk about the *burden* whiteness poses on its holders (beyond the sarcastic meaning attached to it formerly by Rudyard Kipling).

Even without 'victimizing' the subjects of this study by such a 'problematization' of their social existence, it can be argued that culture and its consumption represent a way of relativizing white supremacy and the privilege entailed in it in Japan. Ethnic cultures are often commodified and consumed in neoliberal market economies and the case of Japan and 'white culture' do not seem to be an exception to this trend. Whereas it is again necessary to acknowledge that whiteness occupies privileged positions within the 'economies of color' (Nakano 2009), it is indispensable to focus on such process of commodification and its possible adverse effects on whites as migrants at the same time as well. In the case of Japan, it has been often argued that many local *tabunka kyōsei* policies are preoccupied with the so-called 3F—food, festival, and fashion—while avoiding

promotion of more rights (Takezawa 2009, 2011a). Other authors argued that consumption of foreign cultures is not a sign of Japan's 'subjective desire to internationalize', but is 'provoked by nationalist sentiments' (Clammer 1997, 95) and represents another vessel for nationalism in the age of globalization (see also Iwabuchi 1994). In other words, preoccupation with the culture and lack of focus or efforts in terms of other dimensions of integration (e.g. rights, anti-discrimination legislation, social integration) considerably limits the extent to which foreigners, including white Europeans, are being included into Japanese society.

An analogy with Ritzer's (1999) cathedrals of consumption can be useful in understanding the role of European migrants in the globalization of Japan and it can acknowledge the significance of cultural consumption in this process. Ritzer describes mega shopping malls and other places of hyperconsumption as parts of internationally successful multinational corporations. These sites provide 'situations or structures that enable us to [extensively] consume all sorts of things' (1999, 6) and become cathedrals of consumption. In a sense, Japan represents such a cathedral and commodification and consumption of foreign cultures becomes a *modus vivendi* of the relationship of the Japanese with the world and their way of incorporating migrants.

Although Europeans seem to be 'freed' or sometimes even 'banned' from the so-called 3D or low-end service jobs, culture is the most valued resource central to their integration. Similar to the consumers in the cathedrals of consumption, many Europeans in our case are also given some room for different strategies they may take (Ritzer 1999) and that might be interpreted as 'flexible' ways of converting the highly valued cultural capital stemming from their race. Nevertheless, just as the multinational corporations and highly rationalized malls restrict those strategies for shoppers, in many cases, the managing character of the social structures and norms confines the array of possible labor market, as well as wider social integration strategies to ones centered on their culture. This calls into question the 'privilege' associated with capital conversion strategies.

Such cultural consumption in combination with the local perceptions of whiteness in Japan that are, *inter alia*, considerably ambivalent in comparison with the concept of 'superiority' that would be considered correct according to racial grammar, result effectively in inequalities within the labor market which are, however, obscured by the normative 'positive' meanings associated with the whiteness. These inequalities are obscured by the popular perceptions on the part of the majority population as well

as the white migrants themselves. Whereas a flat denial of any form of discrimination was not a common discourse strategy among my interviewees, it can be argued that rare open acknowledgments of the existence of discrimination can be ascribed not solely to their actual, allegedly privileged social positions but also to the racial grammar rendering such statements as incorrect. As has been argued, for example, in the case of East European migrants in the UK, 'claiming discrimination with its racialised insinuations risked acknowledging and endorsing a racial order that places the discriminated in a *dominated* position' (Fox et al. 2014, 15, italics added). In other words, openly acknowledging discrimination by white migrants would actually mean acknowledging their hierarchical subordination vis-à-vis the Japanese. Especially for the long(er)-term residents and those with a higher degree of acculturation (particularly in terms of Japanese language competency), thus denying, or more often blurring, avoiding, or alternative naming for the discourse of discrimination can be interpreted as an attempt to reconcile their efforts to become integral parts of the Japanese society. These efforts are supported by a relative lack of blatant discriminatory experiences and positive images within Japanese society, yet at the same time denied by the negative outcomes of those images inherent to the status of the 'other'.

At the same time, the complementary strategy of differentiating oneself from the 'always complaining (white) foreigners' that can be seen in the popular presentations of the white foreigners in Japan as well (e.g. Storlöpare 2013) plays a similar role by re-framing the issue of inequalities as an issue of 'unavoidable differences' (Jones 2012; cf. also Komisarof 2012). Certainly, there is a significant (yet, as argued, limited) number of individuals occupying social positions—ranging from high-skilled expatriates to tenured university faculty—where such framing presents itself as hardly contestable. Indeed, in such cases, it is necessary to acknowledge the persistent power of the white privilege that helps many of them to limit their negative experiences to 'unavoidable cultural differences' while often strongly advantages them in many spheres relevant to their overall well-being. Nonetheless, as the discussion above demonstrated, there is a significant number of cases where the whiteness plays a negatively discriminating role as well. Consequently, many of the interviewees struggled to position their experience within an apparently ambivalent discourse of denying discrimination, on the one hand ('I've never felt any [open] discrimination') while acknowledging its existence in covert forms, on the other ('there [is discrimination] in the background' (John, UK)).

## Summary

By analyzing such ambivalent discourses and experiences of white European migrants in Japan, I attempted to reveal 'obscured inequalities' that these migrants face, especially in their careers and work. Tracing these inequalities in everyday social practices and discourses that reveal social norms associated with whiteness and foreignness in Japan and possible negative outcomes of these norms, especially in the labor market, allowed us to further expose the limits of the white privilege and seriously contest its intrinsic character often ascribed to it. In other words, while white identities have been intrinsically associated with privilege, I have argued that as a result of increasing numbers and diversification of white migrants, the privileges, or 'small benefits' of whiteness, are in many cases relativized by limits to capital conversion and cultural consumption.

Although it can be argued that native English speakers have more, or in some cases, even better opportunities within the Japanese labor market, the most salient criteria of external categorization in the receiving society remain the phenotype or race. In other words, it is the whiteness and particular meanings associated with it, rather than a particular ethnicity or 'Westernness' that, in many cases, represent the main factors in shaping the opportunity structure for white Europeans in Japan. First of all, whether it is the case of students, researchers, or working 'professionals', the knowledge or high skills they possess seem to be hardly realized. This is in contradiction with the 'success stories' presented by Komisarof (2012, 10) or the image represented by other well-known elite European professionals, such as Carlos Ghosn of Nissan. Secondly, in the majority of the cases I interviewed, the whiteness helps to acquire specific jobs related to what is supposed to be their culture. This is most often represented by 'the English language' as a white, global 'heritage'. Their occupations range from a typical image of an English teacher, through a university professor teaching 'his/her culture', to a 'naturally' talented classical music performer. Finally, although labor market segmentation is common to basically all types of migration, the question is whether the migrants can get 'a fair chance' of labor market mobility (Castles and Miller 2009, 253). The empirical evidence in this study demonstrates that the aforementioned expectations placed on the abilities of white European migrants in Japan significantly restrain their labor market mobility. Consequently, this leads us to question to what extent the white privilege constructed by the racial grammar is actually reproduced in the context of Japan and whether we can still talk about 'privileged niches'.

Such questioning of the intrinsic character of privilege associated with white migrants represents a further deconstruction of their glorious image. In agreement with some previous studies, I argued that the privilege represents a double-edged sword (Lan 2011) and that the whiteness represents a contested identity with 'benefits' that are negotiated (Leonard 2010). Importantly, outcomes of such negotiations do not necessarily result in a privilege. Similar to different outcomes for locally hired British migrants in Honk Kong as compared to expatriates (Leonard 2010), it is often the 'locality' which is in contrast with the expected 'globality' that led my interviewees to experience significant barriers in accessing certain jobs, job instability, and insecurity, or limited their possibilities of wider social integration. Whereas their circumstances do not (fully) correspond with those of more stigmatized migrant groups and we need to acknowledge their relatively privileged positions as discussed in the previous chapter, the increasingly diversified and individualized forms of migration result in a 'super-diversity' that has consequences for the meaning and validity of many categories we use in relation to migration (Vertovec 2007a, b). This need for reconsideration of common categories and concepts applies to whiteness and the privilege associated with it as well.

## Notes

1. The question asks, 'In a word, do you think that the Japanese in comparison to Westerners are superior or inferior?' with five possible categories, including 'About the same' and 'Cannot say in one word'. Only in the first round in 1953, the share of those thinking that the Japanese are 'Inferior' (28 percent) to Westerners exceeded those thinking that they are 'Superior' (20 percent). In all other 12 rounds, the share supporting the latter idea significantly exceeded the supporters of the former view.
2. Complete results for all waves are available on the official home page of the institute (http://www.ism.ac.jp/kokuminsei/table/index.htm, retrieved December 3, 2014).
3. This claim, however, is based only on the interviews with his 12 subjects of high social status and very limited occupation diversity, which substantially undermines its representativeness and credibility.
4. She claims that it was indeed differentiation and discrimination in terms of race and not class, and supports this argument by showing that 'abundant historical documents describe them as being of a "different race" or of "different racial origin"' (2011b, 9).

5. Although the situation in the Japanese labor market in recent decades significantly undermines the contemporary validity of such an image, it is still considered to be one of the prevailing norms.
6. The original plan states that acceptance of foreign students is important for Japan in order to 'deepen understanding between Japan and (various) foreign countries, increase the level of education and research, and invest in training of human resources in the developing countries'. Moreover, among the particular measures that need to be adopted, there is no mention of support for graduates seeking employment in Japan, yet 'support of returning students' is one of the five main measures.
7. Also, 'Permanent residents' are eligible for this scheme. However, in practice, permanent residency for young adults without prior working experience can be acquired only on the basis of one's parents' status, and thus this applies mostly to the later generations of the *Zainichi* Koreans.
8. Arudō with his colleagues won their case against the company running this establishment for not allowing them entry, but failed in the case against the city of Otaru for not implementing anti-discriminatory policies (Lee and Tanaka 2007).
9. How these assumptions are reproduced by the media can be exemplified in the case of a popular talk show 'Cool Japan' broadcasted by the national satellite channel NHK BS. The participants of the show discuss and explore some 'cool' aspects of Japanese culture. However, whereas the foreign discussants (who are often white) and non-native English speakers have to speak in English and their speech is subtitled, the Japanese coordinators speak Japanese as a rule. This is being done irrespective of their actual language abilities, which are, in both cases, often mutual.
10. According to the JT homepage, the article was the most accessed one for a few days after its publication and still ranked fourth after ten days.
11. As many as 3793 votes were recorded in the poll on the article's homepage, with 35 percent expressing a clear support of Arudō's argument by choosing the option 'He's got a point. Those little things wear you down', whereas exactly the same percentage of voters doubted the importance of such claims and selected the option 'It's not a big deal. People are just naturally curious about non-Japanese.'
12. *Natto*, or fermented soy beans with a distinctive odor and flavor.
13. Grethe works for an NPO that gathers together foreigners on the Rokko Island in Kobe. This area is particularly known as an area of high concentration of expatriates and, as Grethe admits, most of the people coming to their activities are actually from this group. Moreover, Grethe's husband works also as an expatriate.

14. This does not include professions that have more flexible working conditions (especially in terms of working hours), such as language or university teachers or the aforementioned case of an orchestra performer.
15. Although the company is part of a transnational network and thus should not be viewed as a Japanese company, the Japanese part consists almost exclusively of Japanese employees (including management), and, as Felipe explains later, the business practices are specific for the Japanese company as well.
16. *Nihonjinron*, literally 'theories of Japaneseness', is a genre of literature and academic works characterized by cultural essentialism in describing Japanese society and its people (for an critical overview, see e.g. Befu 2001).
17. This, however, seems to apply only to cases who were working for foreign or foreign-affiliated firms. As one of my interviews claimed, in these cases, 'the expectations [for the Japanese and foreigners] are different' and 'foreigners are not expected to work as hard as Japanese people' (John, working as a translator/editor in a Japanese-British finance institution).
18. During the interview, Felipa made a distinction between the position of high-class manager and her position, suggesting that members of the former group enjoy better treatment, especially if they are also men.
19. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasize that a successful transition from a Japanese university to work is often conditioned on a high degree of Japanese language proficiency. Contrary to the above-mentioned cases, who were fluent in Japanese, almost all full-time graduate students or researchers in my sample who had limited Japanese language abilities did not continue with their careers in Japan after finishing their courses or fellowships.
20. Two out of the eleven cases who were self-employed followed the profession they were trained in rather than engaging in previously described occupations.
21. Although there are no restrictions for foreign nationals to start a company in Japan, it is financially difficult to acquire a visa for self-employed foreigners. According to current legislation, foreign nationals who are self-employed can be granted 'Investor/business manager' visas, but for these, they (or their companies) need an investment of at least five million Japanese yen. Both interviewees saw this requirement as a serious obstacle, yet they eventually managed to overcome it.
22. He used his personal network with the Japanese owner of a restaurant as well as services of a local recruiting agency.
23. Anton claims that his professor did not introduce him to other positions prior to this although, as he claims, he did not 'feel that something is wrong with that'. At the same time, however, he admits that all of his Japanese colleagues continued to teach or do research after their graduation.

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PART III

# Cosmopolitanism

CHAPTER 6

# Integration and Social Relations: Between Ethnicity and Cosmopolitanism

The final part of the picture of privileged migrants addresses their social worlds or the connections they establish and retain as migrants. The social relations represent another important part of the integration process of migrants (Ager and Strang 2008; Castles et al. 2002; Ratcliffe 2004). They include a variety of relations such as those with the members of the receiving society, ethnic peers, other ethnic, racial, or religious groups or with those who have left 'home'. Ethnic communities have been often seen as the primary field for such relations and it has been repeatedly argued that a great deal of research in migration and ethnic studies tend to see immigrant societies 'as conglomerates of ethnic communities, whose internal dynamics and external relationships were to be described' (Wimmer 2004, 1). It can be argued that the vast majority of studies on integration of migrants in Japan follows such an approach. As Yasumasa Igarashi argues, for example, studies on the life of migrants in Japan, especially in sociology, focus mainly on the issues concerning ethnicity and culture (2010, 12). Contrary to the mono-ethnic perspective of *Nihonjinron*, many studies highlight the diversity of the ethnic, or other cultural communities, such as the Ainu or *burakumin,* and present Japanese society as multicultural (Lee et al. 2006; Weiner 2009). The 'internal dynamics' of these communities are described mainly in terms of ethnicity and identity of migrants as they are shaped by a different culture. This often leads to 'clashes' with the majority society that are described through the analyses of the external relations of the ethnic communities. For example, there are studies



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dealing with various topics, such as acculturation within the workplace (Tsuda 2003; Komisarof 2011), or education of minority children (e.g. Tsuneyoshi et al. 2011), yet the focus in many is on the construction and (re)production of the differences in the interactions with the majority population (cf. Carvalho 2003). Without downplaying the contribution of those (and many other) studies, one limiting aspect is the conception of the 'ethnic community' and 'culture' as factors that are assumed to determine the lives of such people within Japanese society, from employment, through education of their children, to everyday practices.

Indeed, many scholars see such an approach as problematic or at least limiting for understanding the complexity of lives migrants lead in contemporary societies. The so-called 'ethnic lens' (Amelina and Faist 2012; Glick-Schiller et al. 2006), or assumptions on the natural character of ethnicity (Wimmer 2009; Brubaker 2002, 2009), is identified as one of the main problems shared by the majority of studies concerned with the integration of migrants (as well as migration in general). Moreover, as Vertovec argues, when we consider the super-diversified nature of migration today, such an approach does not sufficiently explain the everyday reality of migrants and, especially, the question of who lives with whom in contemporary societies (2007b, 1025).

Nevertheless, whites or Westerners are often related to the tradition of cosmopolitans in its ideal form that has been understood as the anti-pole of the ethnicity centered social worlds of more traditional migrants. I have been questioning the foundations of such a view in the previous chapters of this text. Particularly, I have argued that their migration patterns or social positions in Japanese society do not perfectly mirror the image of economic elites, high-skilled professionals, or intrinsically privileged minorities. The picture we received from the previous discussion is much distorted reflection of such an ideal and, in some respects, even resembles the situation of usually low-skilled and marginalized migrants. These were associated with ethnic ties in terms of their social relations. Consequently, considering the position between the categories of nonethnic cosmopolitan elites and ethnicized (victimized) migrants leads us to an intriguing question of how the integration of Europeans in Japan can be characterized in terms of social relations.

On the one hand, ethnicity has been traditionally seen as one of the main, and in many cases as the primary source of solidarity for forming relations in receiving countries (Wimmer 2009). Although, as already suggested, this view has been contested, it remains deeply rooted in

popular discourse and can still be often traced in many studies. It sees the formation of communities based on ethnicity as the most common consequence of migration (cf., e.g. Castles and Miller 2009). These communities provide their members with various resources that help them to successfully integrate (e.g. get a better job, access to information or health care) into the receiving society. On the other hand, economic elites, or high-skilled professionals, usually working for transnational corporations, have been seen as forming and participating in cosmopolitan networks that emphasize a certain worldview and are based on shared humanity, rather than shared origin. Similar to ethnic ties, these networks, usually exhibiting a high degree of class homogeneity, are used by their members not only in symbolic terms referring to their identity but also in accessing various services and new opportunities in the free-floating world of transnational elites. These cosmopolitans were not only rendered invisible as preferred (e.g. high-skilled) migrants (Findlay 1996), but their social integration was seen as unproblematic as well because of their adaptability based on a specific habitus that can be extended to different locations (Hannerz 1996).

Considering the limits of these two positions representing one of the earlier identified dyads in the migration studies, I attempt not to presume affiliation of my subjects with either pole of this ethnic–cosmopolitan dichotomy. Thus, I aim to depict the sociability of the Europeans in Japan in reference to critical views of ethnicity and contemporary understandings of cosmopolitanism that can be viewed as mutually compatible. The critiques of the 'ethnic lenses' advocate for critical assessments of ethnicity and its role in everyday life. In other words, such views question the natural character of ethnicity (in terms of social relations and ethnic solidarity) and aim to critically examine 'the precise conditions under which networks coalesce along ethnic lines' (Wimmer 2009, 261). At the same time, cosmopolitanism became to be seen as 'deformed' practice (Beck 2006) related to a broader spectrum of subjects, including those of the working-class and Global South origins (e.g. Werbner 2007). This meant the focus of research shifting toward what Glick-Schiller with colleagues called 'cosmopolitan sociability', including not only the considerations of the 'specific cultural "self"' but also that of 'broader human aspirations' in everyday life and the formation of social relations by migrants (Schiller et al. 2011, 403).

Consequently, rather than referring to the case of Europeans as apparently representing one of the tropes in the ethnic–cosmopolitan dichotomy

within a rather simplistic and unspecified framework such as 'cosmopolitan elites who live in special floating islands of transnational community' (Willis 2008, 240), I attempt to characterize their social existence within Japanese society based on a critical analysis of their social relations, not assuming their allegiance with any certain position. A close examination of the ties they develop in their private lives, their role and strategies they adopt to achieve 'success' in the receiving society can bring us a perspective on integration that gives a more concrete meaning to terms such as ethnic or cosmopolitan.

## Cosmopolitan Orientations

As already explained, the existence and social relations of Japan's minorities, similar to the subject of this study, was addressed in a very limited way. For example, David Blake Willis (2008) talked about the cosmopolitan elites of Western origin living their transnational lives in Japan. As he suggests, these elites are concentrated around the international schools, and despite increasing contacts with the 'natives', they are still largely confined into the 'imagined islands of foreignness' (Willis 2008, 239). Besides the fact that this might well reflect the more traditional views of cosmopolitanism related to elites, and Willis does not give much supporting evidence to his claims of closeness of the Japanese society, the point that needs to be emphasized here is that except by naming such a social practice, many authors do not provide us with insights revealing what it actually means to be a cosmopolitan.

Reflecting the recent critical writings on cosmopolitanism and in order to go beyond such a simplistic naming, I analyze the social relations of the European migrants in Japan and the role ethnicity, race, and nationality play in their creation and utilization. Paraphrasing the question Andreas Wimmer (2004) chose for the title of his article, I examine whether these social categories matter in forming new relations, and their utilization in everyday life. In particular, I introduced elements of social network analysis to interviews in order to map and analyze ego-centric social networks. Following the similar approach of Wimmer, I attempted to account not only for very 'close' or strong ties, but for weaker ties as well. However, contrary to Wimmer and more traditional social network analysis, I do not analyze these networks quantitatively, but stay with contextual interpretations. Such an approach combines a more concrete and precise way of assessing migrants' sociability in terms of ethnicity and cosmopolitanism

with the possibility of interpreting this sociability based on 'thick descriptions' (Geertz 1973). Main tendencies and topics that emerged from a careful analysis of such ego-centric networks and other narratives regarding the role of ethnicity and social 'others' in the life of my interviewees are presented through particular cases.

### *The Case of Vaclav: A Perfect Cosmopolitan?*

Vaclav was born in a regional city in the Czech Republic in a middle-class family. He started to be seriously interested in Japan during his high school studies when he read a translation of a *kyōgen* play. Eventually, *kyōgen* came to shape the rest of his life. His interest led him to study the Japanese language at the university in Prague, and this study provided him an opportunity to both go to Japan, as well as to gain access to *kyōgen* circles in Japan. As a student of Japanese, he had an opportunity to participate in various celebrations related to the commemoration of sister city relations between Prague and Kyoto, where he also met a well-known Japanese *kyōgen* master. In 2002, when he was selected by his university for a one-year exchange study program in one of Kyoto's universities, he contacted this master and has practiced with him ever since. Vaclav quickly changed his one-year program to a Master's degree and, later, a PhD course. After graduating in 2010, he stayed in Japan in order to realize his dream of becoming the first foreign *kyōgen* professional in Japan.

At the time of the last interview for this study (2013), Vaclav was still based in Japan. However, he was without a stable job, and he earned his living through many jobs fitting the occupational niches described in the previous chapter. As illustrated in the detailed account below, he has tried many of the typical jobs for foreigners, from translation/interpretation (from/to Czech or English), through casting and production experiences in Japanese travel TV programs, to working as a tour guide in Japan for foreigners or in Europe for Japanese.[1] In these terms, he represents a rather typical case of a European, who came and later stayed in Japan because of his interest (albeit a very specific one), his migration was educationally channeled and he found his job in a specific, delimited occupational niche. Moreover, such a case is distinct from the stereotypical picture of a free-floating cosmopolitan belonging to the upper-class and exerting his high skills in a transnational corporation.

The intriguing question already posed in the introduction then is, what kind of sociality he developed during his ten years of staying in Japan and

how he has utilized his social network in his transition from school to employment, when facing difficulties in his private life or when he was in need of resources (e.g. money). As already suggested, race or class do not guarantee my interviewees a privileged position, and, similar to other migrants, they face difficulties in finding work or residency and struggle to find their place in Japanese society. The overall picture of what 'card' Vaclav played in order to overcome such difficulties and integrate, as well as what other ties he developed during his stay gives us the following schema.

Figure 6.1 illustrates the network of important actors[2] in Vaclav's life in Japan, as well as their primary role in terms of support, frequency of encounters, and ethnicity. The ethnic composition of the actors surrounding Vaclav suggests that he is very cosmopolitan. Not only does he regularly meet different foreigners, he has some contact with other Czechs and Slovaks and a lot of contact with Japanese throughout

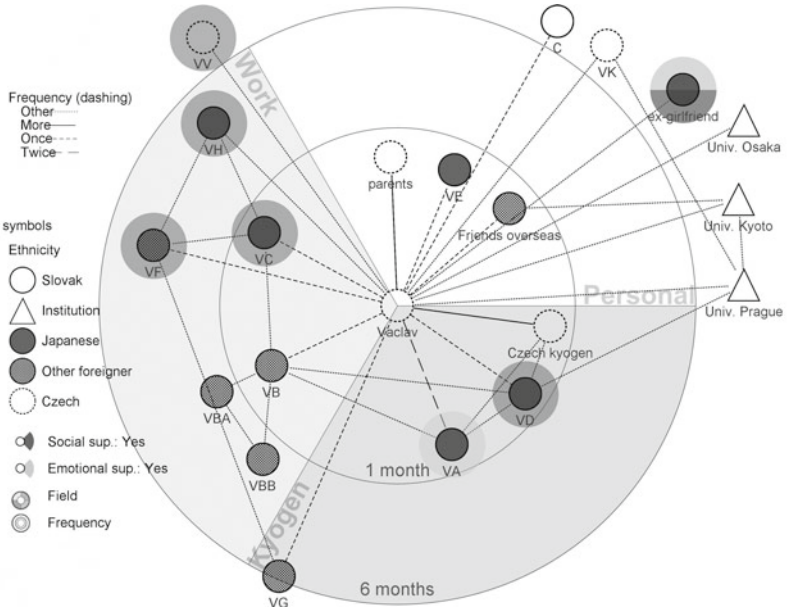


**Fig. 6.1** Social network of Vaclav. The figure was created in dedicated software for visualizing and handling ego-centric social networks VennMaker (available at www.vennmaker.com)

different spheres of his life. He maintains vivid transnational connections in his private life (parents and foreign friends) as well as with the *kyōgen* group in the Czech Republic. At the same time, he is deeply embedded in the social life in Japan through interaction with Japanese not related only to the *kyōgen* world (VA and VD), but to his work life as well. Some of these ties are weaker (e.g. with VH), yet as Mark Granovetter (1983) pointed out, they have their strength as well.[3] Others are more frequent, deeper, and their role in Vaclav's life is more obvious as discussed below. What is, however, of importance here is the fact that Vaclav does not limit, nor prefer, in his relations certain groups of people defined by race, ethnicity, or nationality.

The roles these actors play in Vaclav's life differ, but, in general, can be divided according to social and emotional support. Social support refers to helping with not only getting a job but also accommodation (including becoming a guarantor) and financial help. One of his main supporters from the beginning has been his *kyōgen* master VD, who had provided him with housing for one year and became his guarantor later. In terms of getting jobs, there are more people who have helped Vaclav, as is reflected in his various activities. His networks include very weak ties with people in the Czech Republic and other foreign countries such as VV, who introduced him to a job for the Czech exhibition at the Nagoya Expo in 2005. Through this job, he got to know foreign (VF) and Japanese staff (VH and others) by working for the company managing the exhibition. They offered him not only another job during the Expo, but have stayed in professional and private contact with him until today. VH later introduced him to VC, a middle-aged Japanese man running his own travel agency, who became a significant part of his life in Japan. Although he cannot employ Vaclav regularly, he helps him with his business activities (e.g. tours from Czech Republic) and provides Vaclav with job opportunities (e.g. guiding Japanese clients in Europe) and has guaranteed his visa after graduation.

A similar tendency can be seen in the network of people who Vaclav thought of as supporting him emotionally. Although, being very skeptical about getting such help from others, he thought of some of his Japanese friends who fulfill such a function in his present life. Except his Japanese ex-girlfriend, who used to support him emotionally a lot, he mentioned in particular only VA, the son of his *kyōgen* master and a close friend. As Vaclav reveals, they became really close through a one-year experience of sharing a house. They still meet often (at least once every two weeks)

and cooperate on many *kyōgen* and other activities. Although Vaclav lamented that regarding his specific position of 'first of all, a foreigner in Japan and secondly, a foreigner trying to do *kyōgen'*, even VA cannot fully understand his problems, the important point here is that he did not mention any of his Czech, Slovak, or many other foreign friends as those who would understand his position (as a foreigner, or Czech) and problems related to it better. Thus, rather than emphasizing the shared ethnic origin, or more generally ascribed category, such as (white) foreigner, he emphasized the role of common experience (i.e. living together) and human qualities (i.e. capability to understand his problems) in choosing a preferred person for discussing his private matters or helping him in times of emotional disturbance.

This complicated network of people supporting in various ways Vaclav's existence in Japan exemplifies the cosmopolitan dimension of his social world in (and beyond) Japan. His interpretation of the ways he rely on those people and accounts of how and why he got connected with them suggest that these relationships are based on professional and human qualities and reflect a mutual 'disposition of "openness" toward others … whose origin is non-local' (i.e. different) (Skrbis and Woodward 2007, 730), rather than preference for a certain type of 'locality' (i.e. origin). Although Vaclav's case, and thus the social networks and relations he developed, can be regarded as very particular and specific because of the rather atypical conditions of being a foreign *kyōgen* adept in Japan, such a tendency is illustrative for other cases as well. In other words, with some exceptions I mention later, using the 'ethnic solidarity card' in order to 'succeed' in Japanese society and everyday interactions did not prove to be the driving principle of group formation for the European migrants in Japan that I interviewed.

Nevertheless, rather than celebrating the 'perfect cosmopolitan' orientations of my interviewees based on a very specific case, my aim is to further clarify the formation of social connections in different scenarios and through acknowledging the role of ethnicity and other particularities of this practice point out some of the dimensions along which such an ideal picture is distorted. Although mixing ethnicity with cosmopolitanism might seem to be controversial, it is the mutual compatibility of both of these dimensions that has been stressed in recent writings on the 'lived' cosmopolitanism of many contemporary migrants (Schiller et al. 2011) and is a specific trait of the social world of many of my interviewees.

## Ethnicity and Collective Identity

First of all, it is necessary to acknowledge that migrants in different conditions and/or endowed with different sets of capitals and cultural skills (especially language skills) may form networks that are more biased in terms of nationality or ethnic composition. For example, all four Italians that I interviewed (Emanuela, Vincenzo, Luigi, and Valeri) were introduced through one chain and they are mutually interconnected. Even more interconnected is the case of interviewees who are affiliated with or have graduated from one of the major universities in the Kansai region. The connections between them, as well as contacts that introduced them and were also of European origin (i.e. XB, XF, and XI), are illustrated in detail in Fig. 6.2.

Although Fig. 6.2 illustrates only relationships and not their frequency or importance, the network among these foreign students, teachers (XB, Anton, and Alexander), and graduates (Corneliu) is dense. This network includes actors not only across such different positions, nationalities, or ethnicities, but also across fields (or faculties), gender, or age groups.

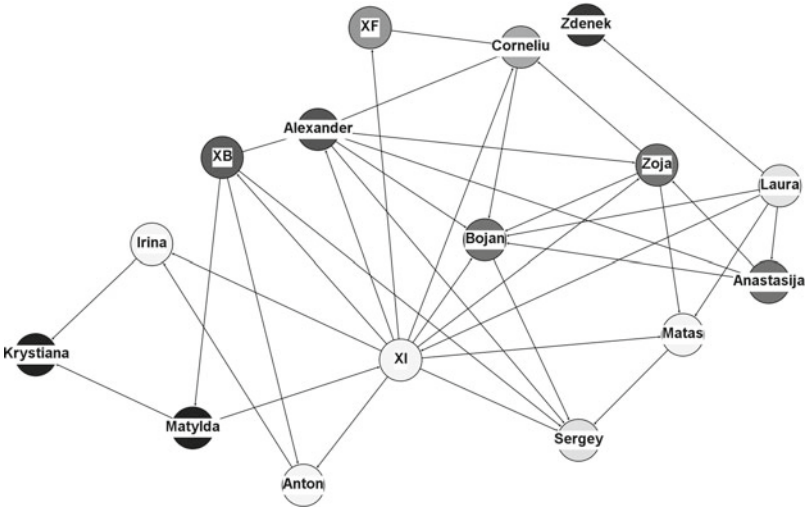


**Fig. 6.2** The social network of Europeans surrounding university. The network was visualized in a dedicated software Gephi in version 0.8.2 (available at www.gephi.org)

Moreover, these connections with other foreign students or teachers were, for many of the interviewees, of high importance in their present life, referring to them as ones they would ask for help or consult with their personal problems. Some of them, as, for example, Sergey from Russia, even claimed that disregarding other differences such as languages capabilities, they feel that their relationships with other foreign students are superior to those with their Japanese friends in certain situations.

> I have very close Japanese friends with whom we talk, we get drunk together and we just discuss many issues. But still there are some barriers that I think they don't understand. Because they don't know how is it to be [a] foreigner in Japan…. And whatever close our conversations are, I don't know, it doesn't matter if we are open enough to each other or not, somehow there is this internal feeling that there is something that they don't understand.

First of all, what is apparent from the overview of the whole network in Fig. 6.2 as well as this quote, is that similar to the accounts of white or Western 'expatriates' from India (Korpela 2010) or Shanghai (Farrer 2010), it seems that for Sergey and other members of these networks, collective identities such as Westerners or foreigners are of higher importance than individual national identities. However, the collective identity of Westerners highlighted by these accounts has more inclusive meanings in the case of students. This distinct identity of 'other' that cannot be 'understood' by and thus is, at least partially, incompatible with that of Japanese, is not limited to Westerners. Many of my interviewees (including many non-students as well) use the word 'foreigner' rather than other categories, such as 'Westerner', 'European', or 'white' when referring to their existence in Japan.

On the contrary, it is necessary to note that this does not mean an identity encompassing everybody of non-Japanese origin and especially nationality. Indeed, similarly to the general usage of the word 'foreigner' in Japanese (*gaijin*), this usually refers to the categories mentioned above (i.e. white or Western), yet defined in a looser, more inclusive way. As, for example, Sergey's case indicates, his network of close friends who can understand him and he can rely on, include a Brazilian. The Brazilians, and some others from Latin America, are not traditionally understood as representatives of 'Westerners', yet can be identified as 'insiders' in the narratives and social practices of many of my interviewees.[4] Moreover, this includes those of different race, namely, *Nikkei*, who 'pass' as insiders in these definitions without mentioning their phenotypic difference.

Nonetheless, this cosmopolitan inclusiveness is far from perfect. Despite some exceptions, the networks my interviewees described do not include many other 'others'.[5] More particularly, the Chinese (together with other Asians) who represent the most populous group of foreign students as well as foreign nationals in Japan, in general, are usually not found in their social networks. The difference with them is stressed not only in terms of perception of getting (or enjoying) different treatment they get from the Japanese majority, as suggested in the previous chapter, but in terms of sociality as well. As, for example, in Maryla's (Poland) description of the local association of foreigners, the people from Asian countries form a distinct community.

> I think there [are] two main kinds of people in this association. One group are the Westerners, from Western Europe or from the US. And another group are Asian people – like couple of Thai girls, some Philipino, maybe some Chinese members. And maybe it's more attractive for those Asian people. Like, this kind of events that this organization organizes is really not attractive for me. But maybe it's attractive for those Asians. So maybe it plays a role for them. But for me not really.

As she suggests, rather than some other differences, what supposedly distinguish these two groups is the form of social interactions that both groups prefer or are inclined to. At the same time, the different 'tastes' in social activities, Maryla suggested, can be seen as the cause for more recognizable boundaries with the Asians. A similar argumentation has been proposed, for example, by Mia from Austria when referring to these 'other' foreigners and explaining why they do not socialize with them as much as with other Westerners or Japanese.

> There are lot of Chinese, there are lot of Korean people but hey kind of stick together very much. They have thick communities and – there is also this guy in my lab, Taiwanese guy and they already have Taiwanese community and they do a lot of things at weekends just with the Taiwanese people. So I think it's kind of hard to get into this group. So basically most of my friends are Westerners. Well apart from Japanese.

While such differentiation with other groups apparently contradicts an ideal cosmopolitan image, the attitudes of the interviewees, in general, emphasize a more cosmopolitan orientation, that is, orientations not

based on stressing the shared origin in terms of race or ethnicity. Indeed, such an orientation itself becomes a differentiating element with 'others', who seem to prefer social relations based on a common origin. This also suggests a link between cosmopolitan practices and Westerners that has been suggested in countless previous writings. Nonetheless, besides a more vague definition of the category of Westerners demonstrated above, the internal differences within this group of 'foreigners' or widely defined Westerners further distort the ideals of cosmopolitanism as well as demonstrate the ambiguity of such conceptualization.

### *Class and Cosmopolitanism*

Besides the limits to unrestricted socialization described above, class plays a significant role in this process as well. As has been documented recently in the case of Taiwan (Lan 2011), Shanghai (Farrer 2010), Hong Kong (Leonard 2010), or argued in the previous chapter, the category of Westerners in these places exhibits class differences that affect the social networks of their members. Reflecting such differences, Luigi argues that there are two distinct types of Italians in Japan and suggests that he can relate only to one of them.

> One is the high community, like the people who are working in the Italian cultural institute, at the embassy, with the big companies. And then normal people who are teachers, or former teachers or people who are just kind of living in Japan, have been living for more than two or three years and started to get a steadier grip in Japan. So [they] stay longer and they are just normal people. I mean people who do not wear expensive clothes or think that it's impossible [to live] in [a] *tatami* room or sleep in *futon*. People who are more ground [sic] to earth.

The first group represent a traditional picture of upper-class expatriates and the other resembles many of those interviewed for this study. Luigi is not referring only to class differences ('wearing expensive clothes' and working with 'big companies'), but suggests that there are other differences in the length of stay and cultural practices. Interestingly enough, the practices he mentioned (sleeping on a *futon* and living in a *tatami* room) suggest a form of cosmopolitanism in terms of accepting the cultural practices of a different country (Hannerz 1990; Skrbis and Woodward 2007), yet he does not relate them to expatriates but rather to the

'just normal' and 'more down to earth' people like him. Similarly, Martha from Norway emphasizes that members of the 'expatriate community' on Rokko Island are rather closed in their worlds that are actually not very accepting toward different cultures.

> I felt that the life of some of the foreigners [living there] was so different from mine. And they thought they were living in Japan and then some of them never tasted sushi. They [are] just living in the Rokko Island. And it's kind of, I don't know, if you been out there, it's very Americanized there…. I was invited to her [an American lady] house and she was complaining the house was not big enough for her and she didn't have a swimming pool. She had huge garden, one of the biggest houses on the street over there and still she was complaining. And I'm thinking, you are living in Japan. If they live in America…

Despite the fact that in terms of class, Martha was significantly closer to the typical 'expats' than Luigi, she found many differences between her life and the 'expat' families and decided to cut her ties with this community. Regarding foreigners, she now socializes more with other, mostly North Europeans who have been in Japan longer and usually share another trait that she finds important—namely, having a Japanese partner. Nevertheless, as she reveals, she found many Japanese friends as well, and similar to the case of the Italian community, her social network cannot be characterized by a single national, ethnic, or racial community.

On the contrary, some of my interviewees mentioned more dense ethnic networks seen among their ethnic peers with which they did not feel comfortable. However, rather than denying their ethnicity, they often suggested that such (ethnic) practices are not something people of their status look for. This applies particularly to reports on more dense networks among Russian-speaking wives of Japanese husbands. Although, as already mentioned, they were not interviewed for this study, some of my Russian-speaking interviewees referred to them. One such example is Zhanna from Ukraine, who got introduced to gatherings of Russian-speaking women in her city by her colleague.

> I went there [to the gatherings] couple of times and the Russian girls I met there - I don't want to sound very snobbish but I didn't feel at ease with them. Because mostly they were wives of ageing Japanese gentleman met through internet or I don't know, some marriage agency. They were young girls with - not with very much education, with high-schools, maybe

> university but mostly not I think. And the topics they were interested in were not ones I would like to discuss or I had anything to say. Like some bad habits of elderly Japanese man or something. I know nothing about that. I can't support that conversation. They all have babies, I don't have babies. So I just didn't, I felt at lost what to speak about. So I stopped going there. I don't want to sound snobbish - they are good girls, they are very good girls and some of them are very decent girls. But it's not just that what is interesting for them is interesting for me.

Zhanna is a university lecturer with a PhD degree from a Japanese university. She is fluent in Japanese (as well as English) and met her Japanese husband (who is about same age as she is) during her studies at the university. In a similar way to Martha or Luigi, Zhanna also suggests that her habitus and/or tastes are different of that of these women with whom she might share her ethnic origin, but not current social status or educational background. Although she does not refer to particular notions such as cosmopolitanism or ethnic community, her case again suggests that she sees more inclusive or nonethnic social practices as characteristic for people of her status and class. On the contrary, she relates the more ethnicized practices to people of lower education, coming through more victimized migration channels as brides for older Japanese men, or in other words of lower social status. Again, it is the lack of common experience and different class background (as perceived by the interviewees) that makes for a difference in tastes and socialization practices.

### *Meaning of Collective Identity*

Besides class, another difference among the collective identities of Westerners, Europeans, or foreigners that is exemplified in the case of students and other foreigners' network related to the university is that of status related to a particular migration experience. Contrary to accounts emphasizing an identity based on origin, it can be argued that the collective identity that plays an important role in the case of the network surrounding university, described earlier, is that of foreign student. That is to say, it does not relate only to the particular origin (e.g. Westerner, or European), but to the status (or having an experience) of being a student in Japan (i.e. particular migration experience) as well. Although similar claims were made by, for example, Farrer (2010), who emphasizes the differences among Westerners in terms of occupation or time of arrival,

it is necessary to acknowledge such differences along with differences in origin. That is to say, the student part of this identity is of similar importance to that of the foreign part, which is often overemphasized. This suggests that the migrants in this study form, and sometimes prefer, such an identity not simply because of different cultural origin, but reflecting their shared experience of being a student and migrant at the same time.

In fact, such interpretation can be actually made also on the basis of above-mentioned Sergey's quote and his preference for foreign friends in certain situations. Later in his interview, he repeatedly emphasized that his Japanese friends, howsoever close to him, cannot 'fully understand what [he] feel[s]' and suggests that foreign friends can understand him better. Nevertheless, the particular method applied in this study reveals that these foreigners he refers to are not random (or even all) Russians, Europeans, or Westerners, but three (a Ukrainian, Brazilian, and Belgian) particular persons with whom he has in common considerably more than the simple fact of being 'a foreigner'. They are all students enrolled at the same university, and as such share particular problems that are not specific only to foreigners, but to students of this university as well. Moreover, they all came in the same period (or even on the same day) to Japan as Sergey, are around same age as him, are single, male, and lived for one year in the same dormitory and still live in close distance to each other. Among tens or hundreds of similar foreign students or other foreigners he knows or has met, Sergey ended up making and maintaining close relationships with these particular persons suggesting that they share with him other similarities (or similar tastes) as humans (e.g. in terms of personality) as well. Thus, although Sergey sees the difference between his Japanese and foreign friends in their capability to understand 'how is it to be [a] foreigner in Japan', it is plausible to argue that this capability to understand his particular situation is significantly enhanced by sharing other experiences based on their status, age, experience, or gender as well.

In other words, these cases illustrate that the perception of self as located in a particular class and/or of particular social status plays a substantial role in relating to others, including those of the same ethnic or national origin. Thus, regarding the interviewees in this study, the meaning of framing their (social) existence in Japan within the concepts of ethnic, foreign, or European community can again be questioned. Yet, this is not to imply that the cultural differences do not exist or do not play a significant role in the relationship of my interviewees and that everybody relates to each other based solely on cosmopolitan ideals of shared humanity. Rather,

the above-mentioned cases exemplify that the social networks are formed on the bases of particular conditions and other shared experiences/qualities than simply that of ethnicity as well. In other words, rather than showing supportive evidence of a 'natural' solidarity among this group that might be suspected from their dense network, it demonstrates that they form more ethnically, nationally, or racially inclusive social networks that are limited by their particular conditions and might be biased along these lines as well. As such, they can be perceived as cosmopolitan, but this cosmopolitanism should not be understood in ideal terms, but as a lived practice 'deformed' by class, status, and, as I argue below, also ethnicity.

## Ethnicity in Everyday Life

Above-mentioned case of the Italians indicates that ethnicity cannot be ignored when considering group formation and, indeed, it does play some role in the everyday lives of European migrants as well. First of all, it is necessary to acknowledge that the Italian interviewees know each other mainly because they are Italians. The simple fact of sharing the same ethnicity leads to forming new connections in many cases, for example, in Emanuela's. In the following quote from her interview, she describes how she met Vincenzo.

> Because of blog. I've been following his blog. And once, I was on my bicycle and saw him. [I did not recognize him but] I thought I saw him somewhere before and I was thinking about it and [eventually] remembered. So I mailed him and we met for a coffee. And we became friends. [original in Japanese, translated by author]

Obviously, it can be argued that shared ancestry and common experience of living in the same town in Japan represented, for Emanuela, a significant reason to contact Vincenzo. Similarly, other interviewees mentioned that meeting a person of the same (or close) ethnicity is indeed a very pleasant experience as, for example, is articulated by Gabika from Slovakia.

> It's nice to be with Slovaks or Czechs, because you have the same point of departure. The place where you come from. You speak the same language, you know same jokes, you know same songs, you laugh on same things. It's such a nice 'cushion'. [original in Slovak, translated by author]

Nevertheless, an interpretation of such narratives as evidence of a 'natural' inclination or preference toward ethnic peers is at least problematic, as suggests further Gabika's narrative. She demonstrates the problematic character of such apparently common-sense interpretation in her answer to my question following the previous statement.

> Interviewer: So here in Japan, would you like to meet more Slovaks or Czechs?
> Gabika: I don't know. If they are ok, I don't mind.
> Interviewer: So it depends on what kind of a person are they?
> Gabika: Of course, of course. I wouldn't meet a person only because [he or she] is a Slovak. But this applies to people from all countries. [original in Slovak, translated by author]

Although she claims that it is pleasant experience to meet a fellow Slovak somewhere abroad, she does not ascribe to such encounters a high importance in her everyday life. In other words, she is indifferent toward the possibility of meeting them more and prefers, rather, to meet more people of the 'right kind', irrespective of their origin. To varying degrees, similar statements were made by many other interviewees. Similarly, it can also be argued that there was something beyond the 'natural' inclination to solidarity based on shared Italian ancestry in the previous case as well. Emanuela indicates this when she refers to Vincenzo's blog as very interesting and to him as a 'very helpful' person in human terms. In this way, these cases clearly indicate the ambiguity of such 'ethnic' connections and notwithstanding their apparent significance, they actually suggest that just the simple fact of sharing the same ethnicity, national, or racial origin is not sufficient for developing social ties.

### *Ethnic Solidarity and the Role of Ethnicity*

Another point that needs to be made in regard to ethnicity in the everyday life of migrants is one related to its role. Although ethnic connections sometimes play a more obvious role in migrants' lives in Japan than in Vaclav's case, previous discussion suggests that they are not the primary forms of socialization. Indeed, ethnic relations are not dominant for everyday lives or support networks of many of interviewees. This might be ascribed to the relatively low number of European nationals in Japan and especially in the Kansai region where the majority of my interviews took place.

Nevertheless, the problem in many cases does not seem to lie in not knowing other ethnic peers or openly avoiding them, but rather in finding time to meet with them specifically. For example, Jana from Slovakia claimed that 'I would like to meet some more Slovaks, but it's difficult (in terms of time)'. She knew about some other Slovaks living relatively close (around one hour's travel) to her place, but it took her about two years to finally meet some. Similarly, Vincenzo knows an Italian teacher teaching at the same university, but they meet only once or twice a year. As he explains, 'the days [when we teach] are different'. What is important in these cases is the fact that the interviewees do not *prioritize* their ethnic peers over other relations. Neither Vincenzo nor Jana found it necessary to find some extra time or to adjust their schedules in order to meet some other Slovaks or Italians. It can be argued that it is such a relative indifference toward the necessity of ethnic ties for everyday life in Japan, rather than the sheer fact of having very few compatriots in one's vicinity, which explains why ethnic ties among my interviewees were rather infrequent and organized in very loose networks.

On the contrary, it can be argued that while these encounters are infrequent, or that such ties are weak, ethnic ties are indeed important in certain situations. Such a view implies that there does indeed exist solidarity between ethnic peers which does not lead to extensive ethnic networks, yet can nonetheless be utilized in situations where they are needed. In other words, ethnic peers are there when needed. In order to explore this dimension of ethnic ties, I asked interviewees not only about people they meet but also about people they rely on the most in general, and in particularly important situations, such as job hunting, or when in need of financial or emotional support. Nevertheless, the general conclusion that can be reached on the basis of such an inquiry is that (as already suggested in the case of Vaclav) playing the 'ethnicity card' in everyday life does not represent a significant strategy for succeeding in life in Japan.

As in the previously mentioned case of Italians who know each other and meet from time to time, almost none of the interviewees mentioned some of their ethnic peers in Japan as someone they rely on in their lives. Whereas other foreigners were included in such accounts, interviewees tended to include in their support networks family members (both in Japan and abroad) and almost unanimously Japanese persons in different roles, such as a family member, student, supervisor, work-related person, or other friend. In other words, their support networks were not dominated by other foreign people (not to mention, those of the same

ethnicity), although their role cannot be overlooked either. Similar to the previously mentioned case of Gabika that concerned mainly new encounters with ethnic peers, some of the interviewees ascribed the ethnic peers' comparable role in general as well. This can be exemplified in the narrative of Alexander from Bulgaria.

> Interviewer: What does it mean to you to meet Bulgarians?
> Alexander: It's a way to keep in touch with my country, to keep my identity so to say.
> Interviewer: Is there kind of instrumental role?
> Alexander: Well, they are not, I mean they wouldn't help me like for example some financial problems. Or like everyday life. But somehow, they're helpful because as I said they help me to feel myself Bulgarian and.
> Interviewer: Kind of emotional?
> Alexander: Emotional. Kind of emotional support. Although this is not very explicit. It's something we have probably somewhere inside ourselves and we feel that we need this…. So there is definitely some need for communication.

Alexander claims that meeting other Bulgarians is, in some way, important to him, but they do not play an instrumental role in his everyday life. Thus, similar to Gabika, we can see it as a 'cushion' that alleviates the differences between the old and new 'homes' and thus makes part of their life more convenient or even fulfilling. Still, ethnic connections are frequently not an integral part of their everyday life strategy for succeeding in Japan. As suggested, more instrumental roles (such as lending money or emotional support) tended to be expected rather from Japanese, or at least from Japanese as well as some other foreigners. This tendency can be illustrated in the case of George from the UK.

> If I'm really having a big problem, I have to call on someone for a help, I can rely on two Japanese friends and two foreign friends. Only a small number. I could also rely on any number of [Japanese] students. Some of them I had long long relationships with … [if] I'm in real trouble, I've been kicked out of the house, I need a place to sleep tonight … they [the Japanese students] would all say yeah, come around…. I know I could rely on them. No question.

This suggests that the strategies the interviewees adopt do not rely significantly on other foreigners, which further undermines the importance usually ascribed to the ethnic/foreign community. The ambiguous

character of ethnic or foreign peers in everyday life strategies can be further recognized in the job-hunting experience of my interviewees as well. These strategies tended to be more individualized, meaning that they rarely relied on resources stemming from (ethnic or other) community membership and focused, rather, on ties with Japanese.

On the contrary, it needs to be acknowledged that foreign/ethnic ties helped some of the interviewees in a limited way and especially in securing a place in the previously described occupational niches open to foreigners, such as English teacher. Nevertheless, whether this can be ascribed to solidarity among ethnic or other foreign peers or instead can be explained by other factors is open to question even in these cases. For example, Luigi was once hired in Japan by a company run by an Italian, or Valeri was introduced to a job by another Italian. However, such experiences represent only a fragment of their careers in Japan and thus should not be overemphasized, and we need to carefully consider whether it was ethnic solidarity that played a central role in these situations. Both cases actually suggest that we should not presume ethnic solidarity, but rather explore approaches scrutinizing the role of ethnicity in forming of job niches, as discussed in the previous chapter. Luigi in his description of this particular job experience emphasized that '[the Italian owner] desperately wanted someone who speaks Japanese, Italian and English'. Thus, he suggests that it was having these qualifications, rather than solidarity with fellow Italians, that helped him obtain his job. Similarly, Valeri was introduced to a job in a shop importing Italian goods by her Italian classmate in language school. He was about to quit the part-time job he was doing there, so he told her about the vacancy. Obviously, in both cases, being an Italian (or speaking very good Italian) represented a necessary condition for these jobs, and thus it makes little sense to ask question why it was Italians (i.e. ethnic peers) who introduced her to the job and hired her.

Considering the above, it can be argued that the ethnic ties many of my interviewees have are rather weak, yet they have their own particular meaning as well. Nevertheless, framing such ties as generally weak yet having strength in particular areas does not support conceptualizations of the sociality my interviewees form in Japanese society, primarily in terms of collective identities of origin. It is again a sort of cosmopolitan orientation or cosmopolitan sociability (as contrasted to traditional conceptions of ethnicity and cosmopolitanism) that more aptly depicts their social world. By conceiving of their orientations or sociability as cosmopolitan, we can account for their rather inclusive social networks based on common

human aspirations, and simultaneously involving the maintenance of ethnic (or pan-ethnic, national) ties, as well as identities based on other social categories, such as gender or status (Schiller et al. 2011).

## The Meaning of Cosmopolitanism: 'Deformed' Practice, Middle Class, and Ethnicity

In order to understand such cosmopolitanism of my interviewees in a more detailed manner, let us consider some of the characteristics that can be outlined on the basis of the analysis conducted thus far. As already suggested, the cosmopolitanism of my subject is 'deformed' in Ulrich Beck's terms, it means it does not represent faithfully and thoroughly an ideal of shared humanity and unconditional acceptance of difference, but an everyday practice that, to a lesser or greater extent, differs from such ideal (Beck 2006). As has Beck further emphasized, this practice is unconsciousness, latent or passive, implying that one does not *choose* to be a cosmopolitan, but *becomes* one (2006, 19). Thus, contrary to the traditional understanding of cosmopolitanism seen as *a conscious decision* of the social and economic elites, the 'real' cosmopolitanism existing today among migrants as, for example, in this study should be conceived, according to Beck, rather as *unconsciousness*, *passive*, or *latent*. Consequently, as he proposes, such cosmopolitanism is a 'side effect' shaped by the conditions of contemporary societies (ibid.). The tendency to become cosmopolitan (or in Beck's terms, cosmopolitanization) can be seen as an outcome of the diversity that globalization, and particularly, migration, has brought about. Moreover, by conceiving of this process as a socially embedded shaping of the taste for cosmopolitanism, we can address the common criticisms of cosmopolitanism as 'rejecting community in favour of individual freedom or the denial of social bonds' (Delanty and Inglis 2011, 2) as well as the fact that it allows us to move beyond the paradigm of conscious choice of shared humanity as an antithesis to ethnicity.

In terms of diversity brought about in the process of globalization and its influence on the types of sociability and resources from specific ties that are used in the process of integration, the case of Vaclav is illustrative. His very specific goal of becoming a professional *kyōgen* actor in Japan can be hardly achieved (just) by relating to ethnic peers or other foreigners, but neither do such relations bring him sufficient social or emotional support in everyday life in Japan. Similar observations can be made of the case of students, who form more dense networks reflecting their origin,

yet, as I argued, this is because they can share with them similar experiences based on their status, rather than just based on their origin. This is well demonstrated, for example, in the fact that Sergey prefers socializing with particular foreign, as well as Japanese, students over his ethnic peers in his everyday life. In general, Sergey, Gabika, Zhanna, and many others prefer social ties with individuals they can relate to. However, in the face of this multidimensional (super-) diversity, ethnic or similar collective identity becomes only one of the many identities that are seen by actors as important for successful and fruitful relationships, both in terms of wider social integration (getting a job, access to services, etc.) as well as personal well-being. The fragmentation of collective identities and the reflexive character associated with contemporary societies and related to their diversification (Beck et al. 1994; Giddens 1991) can be seen as significant factors affecting the sociability of migrants.

Furthermore, the variety and complexity of social relations and their specific roles in the integration of European migrants demonstrate that their cosmopolitan practices do not negate local or ethnic rootedness. On the one hand, ethnic identity represents arguably a less significant factor in the process of shaping the social networks of migrants than is still often presumed by many mainstream migration studies. Gabika's parable of 'cushion' in relation to ethnic ties is allegorical here, suggesting that the image of ethnic peers is associated with pleasant feelings (i.e. it represents rather a 'dream' or romantic illusion), yet other qualities of people are more important for relating to them in the reality of everyday life. However, whereas some authors still see cosmopolitanism as opposed to nationalism[6] or patriotism, the recent debates on cosmopolitanism actually allow us to overcome the antithetical relationship with the ethnicity in the field of migrants' identities and integration. According to, for instance, Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, cosmopolitan studies actually suggest that we should account for the *ambivalence* and *multiple character* of the identities that migrants take up and exert in their everyday lives (Vertovec and Cohen 2002). This includes, and thus does not negate, the possibility of ethnic identities as well. The cases presented above suggest that 'a "cosmopolitan dimension" and the maintenance of ethnic/national ties or religious commitments and identities can occur simultaneously in the daily activities and outlook of some mobile people' (Schiller et al. 2011, 400, parentheses in original). Understanding their practices as 'cosmopolitan sociability' allows us then to scrutinize the process of forming social practices of migrants that rely 'on *both* their specific cultural "self" and the broader human aspirations

that they access, deploy, internalize and reconstitute in different situations' (Schiller et al. 2011, 403, emphasis in original).

As Beck's conceptualization of cosmopolitanism implies further, migrants in conditions characterized by a high degree of diversity along multiple dimensions of nationality, gender, age, migration pattern, or family type do not choose to become cosmopolitan by following intentionally cosmopolitan ideals, but unintentionally become more cosmopolitan in their everyday social practices. Such a claim can be supported, for example, by the fact that the word 'cosmopolitan' (or its forms) was not used a single time in all the interviews I conducted. Their 'choice' is indeed a '*side-effect* of actions that are not intended as "cosmopolitan" in normative sense' (Beck 2006, 18, emphasis in original). Such tendency of unintentional or latent cosmopolitanism is aptly represented in their cultural practices as well. In the following quote, Anastasija (doctoral student, Macedonia) recollects how her reluctance to use Japanese chopsticks faded away with time.

> Everybody was trying to use the *hashi*, at least to use. And I said no way. Like I'm Macedonian, I will use fork and knife for the rest of my life and I don't care…. But then, now I even get compliments that I have mastered it.

She suggested that she experienced a similar 'shift' in other practices, such as food habits in general, and that they changed with her prolonged stay in Japan without her actually planning such changes. While in shorter stays, such successful encounters with the exotic through, for example, food might be interpreted as a means of cultural distinction through consumption (Snee 2013), Anastasija's case suggests a more profound and importantly unintentional change. As she claims, while she did not intend it in the beginning of her stay in Japan, she *became* more accepting of the 'other' in general, often conceived of as basic trait of cosmopolitan orientation (Hannerz 1990).

> I'm way softer that I used to be. Way calmer. More understanding towards other's people behavior. I don't judge that easily as I used to. Just I leave it to whoever he or she is, it's his own or her own private thing. In Macedonia I would say who does she thinks she is or something like that. Now, it's like no, none of my business.

This, as well as others' already mentioned accounts, implies another distinctive characteristic of cosmopolitanism—namely, that it is an individualized, middle-class practice that is closely related to integration.

More particularly, the interviews suggest a relation between cosmopolitan practices and integration in terms of time (i.e. 'living here for more') and 'normal' meaning, in this context, a middle-class lifestyle.

In other words, many of my interviewees did not see cosmopolitan cultural practices to be a characteristic trait of the 'expatriates' or 'transnational elites' that were traditionally associated with them, but as a characteristic of the 'normal' people. In the last two decades, it has been argued that cosmopolitan practices stem from increasing global interconnectedness, rather than representing a 'privilege' associated with a specific group of people. Homi K. Bhabha (1996) introduced the concept of vernacular cosmopolitanism in the mid-1990s. This apparent oxymoron connects the universalism of the cosmopolitanism with the particularism of the local, and allows for a widening of the range of subjects able to engage in cosmopolitan practices (Werbner 2006). Such an approach makes it possible to overcome the traditional Euro- and elite class-centric associations of cosmopolitanism, while still allowing us to account for the openness and incorporation of difference brought about by the acceleration of globalization in everyday lives. Following such a conceptualization, Mamadou Diouf (2000) talked about Senegalese Murid's engagement in cosmopolitan practices as actors 'completely foreign to the intellectual and political elite' (p. 702), Pnina Werbner (2007) discussed the 'working-class cosmopolitanism' of Pakistani labor migrants in the Gulf countries, and Sandra Gruner-Domic (2011) described the cosmopolitan skills and self-identifications of Latin American women in Berlin.

Thus, by associating cosmopolitan practices with living in Japan for a longer period of time, the cosmopolitan practices of my interviews are being actually related to integration into the local settings. In these terms, they are becoming vernacular, rather than associated with free-floating (i.e. borderless) transnationalism. At the same time, as, for example, Zhanna's account or those referring to different social practices of Asian migrants suggests, there is a similar bottom line for such cosmopolitan practices in terms of class, status, and/or origin as well. Such a view gives us a distinctive picture of European migrants in terms of their cosmopolitanism. It is a view of cosmopolitanism (or cosmopolitan orientations) considerably different from the traditional image of the upper-class, highly mobile elites confined to 'special floating islands of transnational community' (Willis 2008, 240) and, at the same time, distinctive from working-class cosmopolitanism (Werbner 2007) or cosmopolitan sociability empowering (ethnicized) migrants (Schiller et al. 2011).

## Summary

I argued in this chapter that while we can (and should) acknowledge the role ethnicity plays in the everyday life of the migrants in my study, it makes little sense to conceptualize the interviewees of this study within any particular 'ethnic group'. 'Foreigners', 'Westerners', or 'Europeans' might seem to be more plausible conceptualizations, yet, as the prior discussion demonstrates, their social worlds in many cases include (besides various foreigners) Japanese nationals who often play important roles in their integration into Japanese society as well. I argued that their cases exemplify under what conditions social networks coalesce along ethnic, pan-ethnic, or national lines. The 'natural' ethnic solidarity presumed by many studies on migrants (Wimmer 2009) does not play a significant role in this process, but it is, rather, the particular conditions of their everyday lives and shared experience defined by various factors such as occupation, class, length of stay, or migration pattern, that can explain the formation of networks with actors sharing a similar collective identity. At the same time, I acknowledge that shared origin plays a role in forming social ties in some cases, yet its role in everyday life is often limited. In this respect, their social networks and usage of them can be conceptualized as a middle-class cosmopolitan sociability, or practice of developing and using rather inclusive social relations that simultaneously allow for the maintenance of collective identities based on origin (Schiller et al. 2011, 399).

While similar cosmopolitan orientations have been identified among more 'victimized' migrant subjects as well, this was demonstrated on a more 'traditional' subject of cosmopolitanism in Europeans. This further signifies the link between migration and cosmopolitan practices, rather than perceiving it as a particular worldview associated with high class, or certain geographical origin. The middle-class connotation is symbolic not only in terms of deconstructing the images associated with white migrants in general. It also demonstrates that similar to skilled migration becoming 'a "normal" middle-class activity rather than something exclusively confined to an economic elite' (Scott 2006, 1105), cosmopolitanism has done so as well. I attempted to suggest that becoming a cosmopolitan reflects the (super-)diverse conditions that migrants face today. As such, cosmopolitanization becomes not only a strategy of acculturation, but that of integration as well.

Such a cosmopolitan perspective liberates us from ethnicized views on migrants and their social worlds, as well as allows us to acknowledge the

role of the ethnic, racial, or national in everyday life. This represents another perspective of deconstructing the cosmopolitan dimension of the privileged migrants' picture and allows us to overcome yet another of the 'traditional dyads' found in migration studies. As I argued, rather than associating cosmopolitanism in its ideal and normative form with the former apex of the privileged victimized dichotomy, conceiving it as an 'ethnicized' and 'deformed' practice associated with increasingly diverse groups of migrants can serve us as a valuable and 'de-ethnicizing' alternative to more traditional views on ethnicity-centric integration, especially in the case of growing spectrum of migrants and migration patterns blurring the traditional dyads.

## Notes

1. In this case, he represents a very convenient 'local guide' who speaks fluently Japanese. Nevertheless, the controversy of his 'locality' lies in the fact that this job actually involves traveling for the purpose of such work from Japan to Europe (i.e. he is residing in Japan, not Europe) and the 'guiding' is often in countries where he lacks local knowledge or language skills such as France.
2. The list of these significant actors was produced on the bases of name-generating questions concerned with the person(s) one relies on in general, ask for particular help (financial and emotional), and to account also for the weaker ties, the persons one has recently met for purposes of socialization (go out drinking, for dinner, etc.). These were complemented by deeper inquiries into the working history in Japan and identification of other actors that played significant role in overcoming difficult situations (e.g. becoming seriously ill). The actors that were mentioned throughout the interview were listed and consequently identified in terms of their basic characteristics (e.g. gender, ethnicity, brief personal history).
3. For example, Vaclav describes his relation with VH or VF as rather infrequent and not very deep, yet both of them did and still do provide Vaclav with job opportunities from time to time.
4. This was apparent especially in the case of students, where the social field *a priori* includes people of different nationalities. Except some of the interviewees, close ties with Brazilians and other Latin Americans were identified throughout the fieldwork among other students as well. Some of these relationship evolved intermarriage between the Europeans and Latin Americans (e.g. a Russian with Nikkei Brazilian, Czech with Colombian).
5. The most notable exception in this respect is the case of Luigi from Italy, who married a Chinese and through her participates in the Chinese community as well. Some other interviewees (e.g. Grethe from Denmark,

or Anastasija from Macedonia) mentioned to have friends from China or the Arab world as well.

6. For example, Gerald Delanty and David Inglis identify cosmopolitanism versus nationalism as one of the main debates in the field today (2011, 9).

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CHAPTER 7

# Conclusions

In the introduction of this study, I outlined the background of this study in terms of advancing globalization that brings increasing diversity and complexity to migration. In comparison with migrations occurring up to the second half of twentieth century, migration in the age of accelerating globalization concerns continuously more countries and regions, and the variety of its forms is growing, both in numbers and perceptibility, and the characteristics of migrants in terms of their origin, class, or gender are changing as well (Castles and Miller 1993). The number of dimensions along which migration varies and their combination result in what might be called super-diversification of migration and prompt us to (re)consider widely used theories, classifications, and criterions used for conceptualizing migration today (Vertovec 2007b)—what ultimately leads us to questions such as who are migrants and what is migration today.

In the context of these changes, this book focused on the emerging studies that are sometimes referred to as dealing with 'privileged' or white migrants, or apparently oxymoronic migration of actors that are contradictory to the 'traditional' migrants coming from (more) affluent background and enjoy relative privileges as migrants. I argued that besides the fact that such studies contribute to the acknowledging and mapping of the increasing diversity of migration, these studies can be seen as significant in their effort to deconstruct the picture of high-skilled, free-floating cosmopolitan elites, which were seen as often the only, antithetical counterpart to more 'traditional' picture of low-skilled migrants. In the rest of this book,



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I attempted to contribute to this trend in studies addressing migrants that do not fit—or oven contradict—the more traditional understanding of migration, and by further deconstruction of the highly privileged picture associated with them, I endeavored to blur the dyad dividing migrants and migration on those who are intrinsically privileged and those (more traditional ones) who are associated with terms as victims and problem.

## Deconstructing the Glorious Image: Migration, Integration, and Sociability

The blurring of such dichotomous understanding of migration starts with the subject of this study itself. I focused on the case of Europeans, rather than selecting some more 'common' or, paraphrasing Bonilla-Silva's concept of racial grammar, more 'grammatically correct' subject, such as the West or particular countries that would undisputedly represent the source of migrants who can be conceived of as privileged. Whereas there can be found less or more significant differences in migration patterns or experience of whiteness among Europeans from different parts of the continent, analysis showed that there are also many commonalities in the migration patterns, or experience of whiteness among individuals that do not necessarily follow the common divisions of Europe on the West and East, or South and North. For example, we could see an increase in the educationally channeled or 'love' migrations as a common pattern found across many European countries, or that being an English teacher is a common occupation not only for native speakers but also those from Sweden, Germany, Slovakia, or Poland. Thus, while we can find more 'traditional' forms of migration (i.e. economically motivated, victimized) in *some* of the countries usually understood as representing the East, and more 'privileged' forms of migration such as high-skilled migration in *some* of the countries associated strongly with the West, discussing the case of Europe unveiled a variety of patterns in migration or experience of the whiteness, that can be—to various extents—found in all its corners, yet would most probably have remained obscured if we focus only on a particular country or region.

At the same time, discussing the case of Europeans allowed us to acknowledge, analyze, and 'give voice' to nationals of those countries which would most probably remained 'invisible' because of their low numbers, or due to their 'insignificance'. As has been argued, one of the discernible trends in contemporary migration is that 'patterns of international migration involving *many* migrants from and to *few* places have shifted

to patterns involving *fewer* migrants from and to *more* places' (Gamlen 2010, 8, italics in original). Analysis in Chap. 2 clearly demonstrates that after the increase in the overall European mobility following the end of the Cold War, this represents a remarkable trend in contemporary European migration to Japan. Fragmentation of the migration routes means that whereas there were migrants from every corner of the world in each of its parts formerly as well, less common migration, such as that from Europe in general, or its non-Western parts to Japan, became more prominent and harder to be easily dismissed as too small. The case of such growing 'ultra-minorities' can be seen as a demonstration of the super-diversity in migration and consequently in receiving countries. Finding frames for acknowledging their existence as well as its consequences should be one of the tasks included in both immigration and integration policies.

The trend of diversifying migration flows and the urgency to reflect this in policies is highly relevant to the case of Japan as well. For instance, the number of nationalities that, in sum, account for 90 percent of the foreign population in Japan has increased from just three by the end of the 1980s to 12 in recent years (Ministry of Justice 2015). Yet, as has been already suggested, only some and—not necessarily the most—populous of them have been accounted for in previous research. More particularly, the majority of the studies on migration Japan largely overlooked those patterns that can be conceptualized as privileged or white migration, and in addition, the limited focus of the migration studies in/on Japan ignored the vast majority of migrants whose numbers are lower. Nevertheless, if we look at such migrants in *total* rather than in terms of *particular* countries, they constitute a significant part of the Japan's foreign population. Nationalities whose holders do not count for more than, for example, 20,000 registered residents, have almost tripled since the beginning of the 1990s, and combined, they represent around 200,000 residents today (Ministry of Justice 2015). That represents actually more than the present number of Brazilian nationals residing in Japan (175,410 in 2014),[1] who are arguably one of the most discussed cases of newcomer foreigners to Japan. Moreover, this is considerably more than the number of Brazilians in the early 1990s when they appeared on the radar of scholars and public discourse.

Thus, as I proposed in this book, exploring alternatives to methodological nationalism, different or less 'traditional' sources of migrants in terms of their direction (e.g. Global North–North), as well as various forms of migration represent a plausible way of accounting and discovering the

extent of super-diversity in migration. As argued by Steven Vertovec, focusing on the changing migration and proposing 'new' ways of its conceptualization does not represent simply a need for discovering absolutely novel, previously unnoticed patterns or concepts but rather elucidating the 'methods, concepts, issues or cases recently taking on fresh or further meaning in the light of changing circumstances or application' (Vertovec 2007b, 968). Moreover, the issue of increasing diversity has far-reaching consequences for societies as well since 'discovering and acknowledging the nature and extent of diversity is a crucial first step in the development of adequate policies' (Vertovec 2007b, 1050).

### *Migration: Culture, Study, Individualization, and Diversification*

As already suggested, in a way, I attempted in this book for a 'rebellion' against what Bonilla-Silva (2011) has called the 'racial grammar'—it means the way we think of and conceptualize migration as a phenomenon that can have radically different outcomes for those who are (seen as) victims and winners. In addition to the selection of a particular case, I underwent such a task by discussing three interrelated topics; migration patterns and motivations, privilege in the integration process based on their race, and the form of social worlds these migrants form (and retain) in the receiving society.

In the first two chapters, I discussed the migration patterns of contemporary migration from Europe to Japan. Analysis of the statistical data showed that there are migration patterns that can be conceptualized as privileged[2] and victimized (e.g. female entertainers) forms of migration and, indeed, that to some limited extent, we can associate these trends with the East–West division. Nevertheless, it is exactly this extent to which we can actually do so that the results question. Statistical data and analysis presented in the Chap. 2, as well as analysis of migration motivations in Chap. 3 suggested the existence of distinct, and usually overlooked, migration patterns that call for further conceptualization. Marriage migration that is based on a 'love factor' rather than being an institutionalized form of economically driven South–North migration, migration that is strongly influenced by opposite flows (i.e. Japan's out-migration), or student migration affected by the globalization of the education sector and the spread of Japanese culture were represented not only in a number of narratives, but could be identified in the limited statistical data as well. These patterns occupy the

gray zone between the apexes of high-/low-skilled or victimized/privileged migration. This aptly reveals the extent of complexity and diversity in the contemporary migration. As I argued, the dichotomy of high-/low-skilled migration and its association with the East–West division of Europe do not represent the contemporary European migration to Japan in terms of numbers and significance, as has been often assumed by limited number of works on this topic and is often reflected in the public discourse on such migrants.

Another significant conclusion and a contribution to studies regarding migration to Japan, as well as studies dealing with privileged migrations originating in developed parts of the world, lies in the less economic-centric and culturally based, lifestyle-oriented motivations found among many of my interviewees. As I argued, the migration in general and toward Japan, in particular, has been conceived primarily as an economically based decision. Similarly, studies on privileged migrants often positioned their accounts usually within the framework of increasing difficulty to find fulfilling employment in highly developed countries such as the UK, on the one hand, and the opportunity that is available in fast growing economies such as China, on the other hand. Whereas there were few individuals that would fit a similar picture in my research as well (e.g. Paul from UK), a different conceptualization was proposed for the majority. Japan was rarely perceived as an opportunity of the same level as, for example, contemporary China. This reflects the economic stagnation since the 1990s as well as Japan's limited involvement in the global issues, in general. Interestingly, this applies not only to nationals from the West but also to many from the East, who often saw more opportunities in China or in their own countries (e.g. Russia) rather than in Japan.

This relative lack of economic motivations unveiled the existence and importance of other factors, such as lifestyle orientations and cultural factors. The role of culture as a motivating factor for migration has been acknowledged in the studies on Japanese migrants driven by 'occidental longings' or the admiration of the West. This study unveils that similar cultural 'longings' can be found in the opposite direction as well, and poses the question of how such motivations can—or should—be reflected in the forming of immigration policy. Demographic research shows that in the near future, possible sources of migrant workforce, especially the low-skilled, in South-East Asia may become drained and Japan's opening doors for migration thus might not lead to the expected influx of migrants (Ogawa 2011, 133). Developments in other major Asian countries such as China—for example, in terms of demand for high-skilled workers

(*The Economist* 2012)—and South Korea—in terms of the fast development of integration policies (e.g. DeWind et al. 2012) and future economic development—indicate that the potential of these countries to lure various groups of migrants can negatively affect possible Japan-bound flows as well. This book's suggestion that migration can be sufficiently motivated by cultural factors, positive representations, or lifestyle choices, and not only simply complement motivations based on a career or economic opportunities, illustrates one of the possibilities in forming a 'competitive' and up-to-date migration policy in the age of changing demographics and increasing competition for the 'global talent'.

### *Integration and Privilege: Obscured Inequalities or Unavoidable Differences?*

It can be argued, that the above-mentioned tendency toward narratives of lifestyle and cultural factors defining one's migration reflect also the actual limits to opportunities for white foreigners in the Japanese labor market. As I argued, similar to the situation of many other migrant groups, we can identify a segmented labor market in the case of white European migrants, and while these occupational niches involve more or less prestigious jobs (e.g. university faculty vs. English language school teacher), the access to and mobility within the job market is limited. Moreover, the niches Europeans in Japan frequently occupy are often characterized by instability and unpromising future careers. Europeans in the job market are seen primarily as authentic bearers of the 'foreign' or 'Western' culture, which is being commodified and consumed in their place of work. This affects more prestigious occupations often as well, and thus career-wise, Japan is frequently not perceived as the best opportunity.

This demonstrates the limits of the white privilege in the labor market what significantly contests its understanding as intrinsic. In other words, the privilege stemming from the fact of being white—and thus being perceived as not *a priori* stigmatized—can bring benefits in certain aspects of everyday life and segments of labor market. These niches, however, do not necessarily have to represent privileged niches, and, at the same time, whiteness frequently disqualifies its bearers from accessing other segments. This situation is rooted in the unwavering perception of the whites as being intrinsically 'other' and significance of this category in the context of Japan, what is further reflected in the symbolic meanings and social interactions of many Europeans as well.

Whereas the limits of the white privilege have been admitted in previous studies, the results of this study suggest that the occupational niches occupied by white Europeans in Japan and their social lives in general does not necessarily have to be interpreted as privileged. There is a dialectic relation between the privilege associated with whiteness and status of the 'eternal other' and we need to acknowledge both parts in the process of integration. The particular position between these two poles needs to be *negotiated* and this negotiation might actually seriously limit the possibility of successful conversion of various forms of capital into economic privileged occupational niches suggested by, for example, Lan (2011). In other words, negotiation between the roles of the 'other' and apparently privileged identity brings about results ranging from more favorable socioeconomic positions to those where association with privilege or benefit can be seriously questioned. One of the main limiting factors can be identified in the widely held perception of Japan as mono-ethnic nation reproducing the unbridgeable distinction between the Japanese and the 'others' (Befu 2001; Burgess 2012a, b) as well as highly positive self-perceptions of Japan and particular meanings of the 'global' allowing for relativization of the white supremacy model. In addition to such perceptions and their deep-rootedness, the substantial increase of white foreigners in Japan has not been matched by a corresponding increase or opening up of the high-skilled (or otherwise privileged) segments of the labor market for foreigners, and deregulation and destandardization of the Japanese labor market has also been substantially affecting jobs held by many white migrants.

Together with increasing variety in individual perceptions of career and motivations for migration found among my interviewees, this results into the diversity of socioeconomic positions held by white Europeans in Japan. Such diversity not only deconstructs the glorious image of high-skilled elites, but urges us to further explore the limits of privilege associated with whiteness and eventually, question its intrinsic character. Consequently, discussing this privilege in the context that lacks clear Western postcolonial legacy, and in a case which (at least partially) escapes the 'grammatical necessity' to frame their experience as being privileged, allowed me to further blur the division between privileged and victimized migrants.

Such blurring leads us to an intriguing question regarding the character of racism and discrimination in contemporary societies. The problem of discrimination against minorities has been largely associated with minorities

having some disadvantaged background *ex ante* to migration: for example, in terms of economic development of their countries of origin, colonial legacy, gender, or views of the majority in the receiving society. Contrary to this, the stories of my interviewees unveil that certain forms of negative experiences or even open discrimination may affect people of *a priori* nonstigmatized origins as well, that is, people who come from developed countries and are positively viewed by the majority population. Indeed, interpretations of such instances may vary, what itself should be developed into further discussion on the characteristics of concepts as discrimination or social exclusion. At the same time, however, these cases illustrate the deep-rootedness and recent increase in nationalism and racism that, in the case of Japan, tend to render differences of *everyone* as inherently alien, unbridgeable, and, thus, incompatible with the majority society. This case thus only underlines the importance of dealing with persisting, and, at the same time, changing racism and nationalism in Japan, which is still frequently denied and dismissed by politicians as well as the general public.

### *Sociability: Cosmopolitanism as Integration*

In the final part (Chap. 6), I focused on the issue of how the European migrants cope with such contested identities and establish their personal niches within Japanese society. Whereas the view associating subjects similar to those in this study with high skills and/or elite status suggests that their social worlds are characterized by the ideals of cosmopolitanism, I presented a more 'ethnicized' view of cosmopolitanism that is distorted from its ideal and normative connotations. I attempted to describe the social worlds of European migrants in Japan as those being shaped by both ethnic/national and more general, or cosmopolitan aspirations/orientations in a nonconflict manner. While ethnicity does not tend to function as a primary form of socialization and does not provide a source of 'natural' solidarity, it retains its (mostly symbolic) meaning in the everyday lives of my interviewees. In other words, I emphasized that the relations they create and maintain as migrants in Japan cannot be sufficiently framed in either of the poles of the ethnic–cosmopolitan dichotomy. I suggested that these relations can be understood better as what Nina Glick-Schiller and her colleagues coined as 'cosmopolitan sociability' (Schiller et al. 2011), a concept taking into account inclusive sociality as well as the maintenance of collective identities. This has been further identified as individualized, middle-class, deformed, and unconscious practice related to integration,

rather than the ideal world–citizenship orientation (regarded to be) typical of the habitus of upper-class or elites. Applying such 'lenses' to a case that has been associated often with transnational, ideal form of cosmopolitanism represents another relativizing and deconstructing piece of the puzzle composing the picture of contemporary Western and/or white migrants in the context of global migration.

Moreover, such a perspective liberates us from ethnicized views on migrants, yet without falling into the trap of associating them with its anti-pole of ideal cosmopolitanism, and thus (re)producing yet another dyad in migration studies. It allows us to account for the complexity of everyday interactions that are brought about in increasingly diverse social settings. As has been suggested, for example, by Steven Vertovec (2007b) and as I attempted to demonstrate especially in this chapter, the diversity of the migrants is not only a diversity in terms of ethnic, racial, or national origin, but it is a super-diversity including other dimensions, such as class, gender, or migration pattern, which shapes the sociability of the migrants, and importantly nonmigrants as well.

## Obscured Inequalities or Unavoidable Differences? Diversity, Privilege, and Victims

It needs to be emphasized that by blurring the dividing line between privileged and victimized migrants through the deconstruction of the glorious picture of the former, I do not deny that there are groups that benefit from migration more and others whose benefits are significantly constrained and that this is certainly not a question of fortune. I *admit* that the global power relations and racial hierarchy tend to benefit certain groups more. There certainly *does* exist a class of transnational elite that possess rich capital resources, enjoy extremely mobile lifestyles, integrate into transnational social circles that are highly cosmopolitan at least in terms of ethnicity (though most probably not so much in terms of class or race), and are extremely benefiting from the process of globalization. And certainly, their existence *is* contradicted by the more prevalent phenomena of 'traditional' migrants—which, interestingly, in some cases might come from the same country—who are motivated to migrate by more existential factors, their national or racial origin is source of stigma or at least does not bring them palpable benefits, and often end up forming ethnic communities providing them with various resources.

In other words, it is important to acknowledge the existence of privileged groups as well as to acknowledge the reproduction of the privilege

based on whiteness through revealing it and its normativeness. In this book, I did not attempt to collect (or reinterpret) voices of 'oppressed' white individuals that can be understood as an instance of what McKoy has called racial ululation, or 'a ritualized process of vocalizing a response to threats to white supremacist order' that actually aims to disproportionally reproduce the power and privilege (McKoy 2001, 24). Indeed, white migrants do benefit from their racial origin throughout the processes of migration and integration in certain situations. Nonetheless, it is the question of the extent of such privilege and the applicability of such label what I attempted to scrutinize throughout the book. Bonilla-Silva's (2011) concept of 'racial grammar' actually indicates that we tend to interpret the experience of whiteness in a certain way, whether it is in terms of beauty standards or experience of migration. Considering this limitation posed on our cognition by such grammar, we can start to ask whether the experience of white migrants as 'others' in receiving societies such as Japan is that of unavoidable cultural differences, or whether such grammar actually obscures inequalities common to more 'traditional' migrants.

What I argued throughout this book is that the increasing diversity of migration and fact that migration tends to affect increasingly more people of different class, gender, or from different regions, brings about a significant number of migrants whose existence is often overlooked, partially because of the biased focus of research agendas and public discourse, and/or because of the increasing fragmentation of migration. In other words, the existence of such 'in-between migrants' does not easily fit the categories usually used in discourse on migrants, such as high- or low-skilled, and as already argued, many do not 'qualify' for attention because of their relatively low numbers. The super-diversity brought by migration means also increasing numbers of 'unorthodox' migration patterns, complexity to migration motivations and migration flows, and consequently mixture of outcomes from the process of integration in terms of social positions and relations within the host society. This brings a mixture of migrations positioned somewhere between the apexes of the victimized–privileged dichotomy. However, such patterns and positions are not necessarily specific for certain countries what implies the methodological nationalism, but rather, might be specific to certain supranational (e.g. Europe), socio-economic (e.g. middle-class), or racial spatialities.

Thus, it is this ambivalent, 'gray zone' that the results of this study emphasize, and in comparison to the glorious picture that I attempted to deconstruct. In other words, I want to propose that we need to reconsider the intrinsic usage of the category privilege in association with white

migrants for the same reason for which the term 'model minority' for Asian Americans was found to be problematic. It can be argued that in a parallel to the exposing of the otherwise invisible white privilege and its reproduction, one of the intentions behind the usage of the term 'model minority' has been that of empowerment of racially different group of migrants, thus representing a challenge to the white hegemony in a way. On the contrary, many critiques were raised against this term because it resulted in obscuring the less- or non-successful cases, or, in other words, it obliterated the heterogeneity of this group and, importantly, also inequalities within it. The results of this research suggest that with the increasing diversity among white migrants along various dimensions and the particularity of the local context (or its relativizing potential), the degree to which the privilege stemming from their race is converted into better socioeconomic standings vary significantly.

Such a picture of white migrants as not an intrinsically privileged group opens further questions in the discussion on immigration and integration but above all urges us to reconsider the question of who should be understood as a migrant and what we should understand under the term 'migration'. It can be argued that still often seen views of migration as a phenomenon driven exclusively by economic disparities, migration either as low-skilled or high-skilled labor, or views seeing migrants either as victims reliant on ethnic communities (and help of others) or unproblematic elites living their cosmopolitan lives were considerably contested by the findings and argument of this book. Thus, it can be also argued that in order to understand and conceive of the increasing diversity and complexity of this phenomena, rather than dividing migrants in such dyads and finding specific policy solutions separately for each group, we should look for more encompassing concepts and policies that would address the needs of all of them. This is particularly relevant in the context of Japan, where besides the lack of coherent immigration and integration policy, the actual attempts to solve problems of migration and migrants tend to be focused on specific groups rather than discussing these topics in general terms in the first place.[3]

## Whites, Japan, and Globalization: Mobility and Second Generation

What this study reveals further are the multiple consequences of the increasing diversity of migration or globalization in general, particularly, in the case of Japan. Similar to the issue of whiteness, it is again a combination

of reproduction and strengthening of certain social norms and structures and forces contesting such norms or structures through increasing migration, its diversity, and other global flows. It can be argued that the diverse migration patterns and the growth of Europeans as a nontypical case of migrants suggest that globalization has had a significant impact on Japanese society. Nonetheless, similar to the concept of 'permeable insulation' of the Japanese economy (Schaede and Grimes 2003), the case of European migration to Japan reveals the 'insulation' of Japan as well as its 'permeability' as a social and economic sphere.

In other words, the otherwise secure wall (i.e. a relatively strict immigration control) surrounding Japan has intentionally or unintentionally been opened through holes which allow for various types of migration. The (more) intentional holes might be related to Japan's coping strategies with advancing globalization, the internationalization wave in the 1980s, and more recent globalization wave that provided institutional bases (e.g. visas or international education) for the growth of particular migrations as well as opportunities (e.g. *eikaiwa* boom) in Japanese society for migrants. The unintentional holes are related mainly to more grass-roots forms of globalization and intersecting flows and 'scapes', particularly the increasing cultural presence of Japan in the global sphere and 'human dispersal' of the Japanese people (Befu 2000) across the world, transforming into new migration flows to Japan.

However, relatively diverse and complex migration patterns often lead to similar positions within the labor market illustrating the limits or restraints of such diversity. The positions Europeans have in Japan today share some parallels with, but at the same time are distinct from the position of their compatriots in Japan coming as *oyatoi gaikokujin* at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, described in Chap. 2. Similar to the situation of rapid modernization more than 100 years ago, Europeans (as well as other foreigners) are still understood as guests with specific roles to play in the development of the Japanese society. However, it is the type of those roles that seems to differ from those found in the Meiji period. While the hunt for specific skills and knowledge necessary for Japan's modernization in the nineteenth century can be still traced in the official stance calling for incorporating global talent and its effective utilization, the reality today suggests that the culture and its consumption play a significant role in the interaction with and incorporation of present-day *oyatoi gaikokujin* as well. The possession of a specific culture, and especially English language proficiency (as a symbol of the global world and

culture), rather than specific knowledge or high skills, has become the distinct trait for which many Europeans are valued as a scarce resource in Japanese society. Thus, on the one hand, there are still some successful examples of highly skilled migrants from Europe (or other countries), such as Carlos Ghosn, strongly resembling the *oyatoi gaikokujin* in their function of helping Japan in its globalization (instead of modernization) efforts today. However, on the other hand, there is a large number of other foreigners who may possess high skills, but due to structural limitations in the labor market and covert discrimination against foreign nationals struggle to make use of their 'real' skills and are pushed to reinvent their cultural skills which are more highly appreciated.

I argued that one of the keys to understanding this peculiar position lies in different meanings ascribed to the global. In the case of Japan, it has been closely related to nationalism and consumption. Rather than accepting the putative universality of Western, white, global norms or standards in order to become part of the (Western) world, the global is not appreciated as an integral part of the Japanese society, at least for now. As, for example, John Clammer claimed, bringing cosmopolitan (i.e. global or international) elements to Japan does not 'mean that the world is colonizing Japan, but rather that Japan is consuming the world' (Clammer 1997, 95). Thus, when white Europeans are associated with the global and seen as its representations, it determines their position in the Japanese society in terms of belonging and temporality. On the one hand, they are seen as privileged, or in some cases even superior, yet only on the *global* level. In the *local* context of Japan, they are being consumed through commodification of the highly praised culture—either traditional or global—that they supposedly inherit and represent. Indeed, the global 'racial grammar' dictating white hegemony is twisted in the local context where the hegemonic position is reserved for the majority population. This reveals how the persistence of relatively closed social structures and the centrality of culture and its consumption restrict the ways of Japan's interaction with the globalizing world.

Still, the complexity of social relations many of the interviewees shared exemplifies what can be called a grass-root globalization. Indeed, it can be understood as another facet of the 'multifarious experience of whiteness' (or more generally, Westernness), yet what needs to be particularly emphasized here is that on the individual level, the 'oppression' from the rather closed structures of Japanese society can be overcome. The personal relationships of Europeans (and possibly, other foreigners) can and, as

exemplified in many cases, do include inclusive and deep relations with Japanese nationals. This illuminates a friction or discord between the restrictively globalized structures and more globalized individuals, or in other words, less and more inclusive elements in Japan. This represents another interesting point that might be related not only to the increasing super-diversity of people coming to Japan, but of those living in Japan in general as well.

### *New Horizons: Increasing Migration, Tourists, and 'Hāfu'*

Such 'diversity dilemmas' of Japan that illustrate the potential of profound social changes induced by increasing diversity (not necessarily limited to migration), and, at the same time, the 'staying power' of exclusionary forces (Lee et al. 2006) have been further discussed by numerous studies focusing on ethnicity, citizenship, education, or local communities, among others (e.g. Graburn et al. 2008; Lee et al. 2006; Tsuneyoshi et al. 2011). These, and many other studies analyzing the increasing foreign population in Japan, provide us with some hints where the further discussion on white migrants can be headed in the future. In other words, as has been argued throughout this book as well, adapting relevant categories, methods, or concepts from the accumulated research on more victimized or *a priori* stigmatized minorities can further facilitate our understanding of the experience of white migrants, both in terms of their similarities and differences with such groups. At the same time, as has been also suggested in this chapter, further exploration of the issues related to white migrants in Japan (and elsewhere) has a potential to reveal to us more about the ways the diversity brought by migration is being coped with in the Japanese society. Below, I discuss some of the contemporary trends and issues that suggest some (but far from all) possibilities of where to direct the future research in these fields.

The first trend emphasizes the importance of dealing with white migration in general. More particularly, it is the ongoing increase in the international mobility of white individuals coming to Japan. As has been suggested in previous chapters, the numbers of registered Europeans and nationals of other countries with white majority are on increase. After the decline following the onset of the global financial crisis and the Fukushima disaster, their growth rate is back in positive numbers and considerably high (e.g. about 5 percent in average for Europe in the last two years recorded). If such tendency continues for another few years, the numbers of white foreigners living (more or less) permanently in Japan can reach

numbers that would make them more visible in just few years. While the visibility is certainly not the only important factor, especially in the case of white migrants, as has been argued in this book as well, such an increase in the following years in combination with the projected decline in Japanese (especially working) population can result in more attention to issues concerning white migrants.

It seems that different media have actually already started to notice such an increasing numbers of white (or Western) foreigners living in Japan. Although a detailed analysis of such media coverage is certainly needed, there seems to be an increasing number of TV programs casting or covering such foreigners and their lives, or increasing number of books on Japan—in Japanese, but written by such foreigners. Whereas only few years ago, an analysis of commercials in Japan suggested more local-(i.e. Japan-)oriented tendencies in terms of used themes or casting (Pongsapitaksanti 2009), increasing coverage of white (as well as other) foreigners opens further questions regarding their representations, changes in perceptions by majority population, or the globalization of Japan in general. Moreover, what seems to be a recent boom in books praising Japan and written mainly for the Japanese[4] might reveal more insights about the perceptions of white migrants in Japan and poses intriguing questions about the increasing diversity of Japan's population, or its connection with nationalism or self-orientalism.

Another visibility and mobility-related issue that is related to similar issues and has a potential of further expositions of white migrants within Japan and possibly affecting their lives is that of tourism. After a sudden drop following the Fukushima disaster in 2011, the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan has quickly rebounded. The average annual growth for foreign tourists was almost 30 percent between the years 2012 and 2014 and it continues to skyrocket, with a projected growth rate of 50 percent in 2015.[5] Whereas the majority of tourists is coming from neighboring Asian countries, the number of visitors from Oceania (mainly Australia and New Zealand), North America, and Europe continue to grow in a similar pace and reached about two and half million visitors in 2014.[6] Besides the potential of further increase in the number of migrants from these countries, the increase in tourists and Japan's endeavor to lure even more before and during the Tokyo Olympic games in 2020 throw up interesting questions regarding the identity of white migrants vis-à-vis tourists, connection between different forms of mobility, or representations of white tourists and migrants in comparison to other races.

Finally, the issue of the second generation of white migrants is another aspect of white migration that has been addressed in a very limited way. More particularly, as has been already suggested, intermarriage with a Japanese partner is a common pattern and this brings an already large and, most probably, further growing group of so-called *hāfu*, or children of mixed origin. These 'half-Japanese' (what the word stands for) are usually citizens of Japan, which makes their position even more peculiar. Moreover, similar to the case of whites in general, having one white parent has a very positive connotation in the Japanese society and thus represents an intriguing topic from the perspective of analyzing racial 'privilege', both in terms of Japaneseness and whiteness. The children of white and Japanese parents can be seen a lot among *tarento*, or entertainment stars, and these positive connotations lead some to believe that being *hāfu* in these terms is 'the coolest thing a *Nihonjin* [Japanese] … could be' (Shoji 2013). Nevertheless, to what extent and in what way are their lives affected by such extremely positive attitudes, consumption culture, or how much they really are regarded to be Japanese, has been given very little scholarly attention. This undoubtedly presents very intriguing questions for understanding the reproduction of inequalities (and privileges) among migrant populations (and specifically, positively understood ones) as well as the changing composition of Japanese society. As I argued in this book, even seemingly positive differentiation might represent a sort of discrimination, and thus, like the mushrooming research on the second-generation children of other migrants, the everyday experiences of the *hāfu* with a white parent, their positions in the labor market, or identities should be put under scrutiny in order to reveal further consequences of the super-diversifying migration.

Besides the importance of these issues in further inquiries in studies focused on white migrations or Japanese society, they lead us to one of the crucial questions in regard to increasing migration—namely, that of 'where, how and with whom people live' in societies affected by its super-diversification (Vertovec 2007b, 1025). As has been suggested in this book, we need to include in such considerations apparently privileged or not *a priori* stigmatized minorities, such as the whites in the first place. At the same time, the complexity, diversity, and contextual character of contemporary migration propel us to 'unthink' or critically reconsider certain presumptions often used around the white migrants. Besides the findings and conclusions presented in this book, this chapter suggests that in a deeper analysis of some of the issues raised in this book, such as,

for example, gender, focus on other forms of international mobility such as tourism, diversity among the majority population, or situation of the second generation and especially the *hāfu* can further elucidate the meanings and experiences of white migrants in the globalizing world.

## Notes

1. Brazilians today represent the fourth most numerous minority in Japan after Chinese, Koreans, and Filipinos. At the same time, however, it needs to be acknowledged that their number before the Lehman shock was considerably higher, counting as much as 316,967 in 2007, representing the third biggest national minority in Japan.
2. For example, intra-company transfers or manager visas suggest that there are a number of those who can be classified as high-skilled, 'transnational elites'.
3. For example, it has been argued that the integration efforts in Japan are often limited to issues concerning a few nationality groups, these debates are solved rather on a regional than national level and, at the same time, discussion on general topics such as the elimination of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and nationality has been generally avoided by the Japanese government (CERD 2010; Takezawa 2009, 2011a, b).
4. There have been at least a dozen books published only in 2014 and written by (or written about the ideas of) white foreign residents in Japan, mainly praising Japan, its culture, and society. These books were written by or about ex-diplomats serving in Japan, bloggers, artists, or other people who live or have lived in Japan. Titles of these books include, for example, *Europeans who want to become Japanese*, *Beautiful Japan that only foreigners know,* or *Foreigners that praise Japan*.
5. Based on Statistics on Foreigners Visiting Japan by Japan National Tourism Organization (http://www.jnto.go.jp/jpn/reference/tourism_data/visitor_trends/#block0, retrieved on November 25, 2015). Estimate for 2015 is based on data for the first ten months of 2015.
6. This is about 25 percent more than in 2010, the year that preceded the Fukushima disaster and nuclear incident.

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# Index





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