

Media, Audience Activity and Everyday Life
The Case of Japanese Engagement with Media and ICT

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the role of media and information communication technology (ICT) in Japanese society, exploring how, in their various ways of engaging with the media in everyday life, Japanese audiences reflexively ‘create’ and ‘recreate’ their sense of self and the social groups to which they belong. Changes in everyday life, linked to the proliferation of media forms and coupled with the communications revolution, underscore the complex relationships between people’s lives and the media. The primary aim of this thesis is to analyse the complex and diverse ways in which audiences engage with media in the context of domestic social change and globalisation. I provide an integrated framework for understanding the complexity and dynamism of individuals, social groups, and cultures, replacing the concept of ‘audience activity’ with ‘audience engagement’, and the paradigm of the active audience with the paradigms of everyday life and complexity. Further, this analysis of the Japanese audience can serve as a modest step towards the de-Westernisation of media studies. In the process, key Japanese emic concepts are employed, adapting them in ways that reject as myth the homogeneity of the Japanese, in order to highlight culturally specific ways of constructing self and other. Methodologically, the qualitative approach employed is intended to complement the characteristic quantitative emphasis in audience research within Japanese academia. Specifically, the present study is an ethnography of so-called ‘modern’ Japanese families living in the media-rich Tokyo Metropolitan Area. The research demonstrates how (1) multiple dimensions of audience engagement, (2) the transformation of the notion of *uchi* (social groups) in a media-rich environment, and (3) the role of media and ICT in the process of self-creation are related to complex processes of globalisation and social change in Japan. From an analysis of this relationship I indicate future possibilities for Japanese society and the future of globalisation addressing the cultural, social, and political question of universalism set against cultural specificity.

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Introduction

The Research Question

The beginning of the twenty-first century is a remarkable time for media. It has been called the “age of digitalisation”, as the development of digital technology has accelerated tremendously. One of the significant changes with respect to television in this age was the growth of multi-media and multi-channelised television. With the development of digital technology, many different kinds of media have penetrated our everyday lives, for example digital terrestrial television, digital satellite television, cable television, internet, mobile phones and so on. Correspondingly there have been many organisational changes within the institution of media itself, for example mergers, bankruptcies, changes caused by government deregulation and so forth. This has created a somewhat chaotic situation, in which media companies, in order to survive, have begun, with increasing desperation, to compete in the task of capturing new markets. The media audience has thus become a much talked-about and increasingly important phenomenon in the face of recent developments of communication technology.

The epoch-making characteristic of digital technology is its ability to represent increasingly broad kinds of information, be it characters, pictures, sounds or movies. With respect to communication media this development makes the following two things possible: first, vast amounts of information can be sent to very distant locations within microseconds and, second, different media can now be combined into a single medium to create an altogether new form of communication. The first capability has led to a rapid expansion of our media environment. For example, now in the UK we basically watch two public broadcasting channels (BBC1 and BBC2) and three commercial channels (ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5). Due to digitalisation, broadcasting companies can now provide many more channels and viewers who have digital satellite television or

cable television can watch over 100 channels, originating from all over the world. We can choose different types of channels depending on our tastes and preferences, such as movie channels, travel channels, hobby channels, sports channels and news channels from different countries. Moreover, with respect to movie channels, we can watch not only Hollywood movies which have, until recently, dominated the screens of terrestrial television but also movies from an increasing number of foreign countries.

The second feature of digital technology, that is, the convergence of several media into a new form, is mainly evident in internet television. Web TV and AOL TV have recently taken advantage of this technological development and soon, while watching a football match on television, we will simultaneously be able to check the record of a player via the internet, or while watching a soap opera, we will be able to order the same dress as the heroine is wearing. Regarding not only entertainment programmes but also news programmes or public debate programmes whose presenters seek public opinion, we will be able actually to participate in the programme via internet through a small digital camera connected to the television. Moreover, the convergence among media is not restricted to the television set in the living room but also applies to the internet refrigerator in the kitchen or the mobile phone which we can use to access information any time and any place.

The advent of these two developments may suggest a very significant change in the relationship between media and people. The expansion of the information and media environment gives us more freedom in selecting information while interactive television transforms the television viewer from a mere receiver of information into a sender of information potentially to millions or billions of people as well as an actual participant in television programmes. Thus people living in such a rich media environment are able to take advantage of technologies which enable them to get more involved in features of the outside world that can be conveyed or communicated via media. The prevailing image of the media audience

in this rich media environment is thus of an *active* audience and the image of the audience as active has been very popular amongst not only media scholars but also government bodies, advertisers, broadcasters and electronic media product creators.

While this activity may be viewed as desirable, more skeptical viewpoints have also arisen. The appearance of film in the 1930s and television in the 1950s were followed by outbreaks of what has been called moral panic. There have been many fears expressed about the possible undesirable consequences in society, especially for children, with respect to new communication media such as internet, digital satellite television, video games and mobile phones. Periodically there are outcries from worried parents blaming exposure to television and the internet for various unfortunate occurrences ranging from the illicit viewing of pornography and cult behaviour to violent crime and suicide. Parents are worried that using the internet may lead to an inability in their children to communicate in the most primary and fundamental manner of face-to-face interaction. Digital satellite television may, they fear, expose their children to undesirable influences in the form of television programmes importing values from outside their own countries. People have also expressed fear of the destruction of the family resulting from the increased private or isolated use of new media technology. In an environment of limited television choice, family members share time, space, conversation and ideas as they watch television together. However it is likely that family members will increasingly become isolated from each other as they each indulge privately in their personally selected form of media entertainment. While, for some, television has in the past served as a 'hearth' bringing families together, it now and, increasingly, in the future serves to drive families apart.

On a societal scale, this fragmentation of the audience has been seen by some as representing an unwanted move towards increased individualism at the expense of community. The development of media and information technology is in this way seen, by some scholars, as signalling the end of community. Once

terrestrial television and its limited selection of programmes is replaced by digital television and its capability to provide a seemingly infinite range of television programmes, audiences will no longer form a viewing community in which values, time, space and discourse can be shared, as has, it is argued, previously been the case with analogue terrestrial television. A public sphere, which allows for, amongst other things, public discussion of common social issues, becomes increasingly hard to identify as media choice fragments the audience. The expansion of the media environment has also led to fears that media users will be unwillingly and unknowingly exposed to images and ideas deemed harmful or otherwise undesirable. Thus, alongside support for the active audience, there has been, in media theory, a counter-tradition of the *passive* audience. Advocates of this more pessimistic view have claimed that audiences receive an undesirable influence from the too powerful media. The Frankfurt School's critique of 'the cultural industries' represented this more pessimistic view as did Schiller's theory of 'media imperialism' and Gerbner's cultivation theory.

Since the emergence of these two opposing views, the historical development of audience theory can be seen as the swinging of a pendulum between the conception of the audience as active and that of it as passive (cf. Katz, 1980). The path of this pendulum from passive to active has correspondingly been tracing a swing between, respectively, pessimistic and optimistic views of the media. The currently prevailing image of the media and their audiences is generally more optimistic as it focuses on the ever-diversifying range of activity which is said to indicate the presence of an active audience. However, there is a question, centring mainly around problems in defining or understanding the idea of audience activity, as to whether this image in fact reflects the real nature of the audience.

Thus the starting point of my thesis is the question, "Is the audience active in the currently rich media environment?" However, as we will see below, this over-simplified question will, in the light of a preliminary investigation of audience activity, require modification. I want to move from an understanding of

audience activity to a broader understanding of the role of the media in people's everyday lives. It is commonly held that the diffusion of new communication technology has led, along with other developments, to a figurative downsizing of the world. The world has, due to the remarkable capabilities of communication, become a smaller place and people's everyday lives have changed considerably. The global diffusion of communication and the expansion of choices with respect to how we live our lives has led, it is claimed, to an increasing capacity for individual self-formation thus increasing individual difference. This claim should prove particularly interesting if we look at it, as I will, with respect to a 'culture' that has dominantly been portrayed in its own literature as homogeneous, that is, 'Japanese culture'. With developing technology, today's lifeworld is penetrated by the media in an increasing variety of ways leading to the creation of rich media environments both inside and outside the home. The media, and engagement with them, are becoming more and more embedded in everyday life. Looking into the diverse ways in which people engage with media and incorporate their content into their lives in the process of creating themselves will, I hope, illustrate the dynamic and diverse nature of contemporary Japanese life, adding to the otherwise largely Western body of audience research.

The Theoretical Aims of this Thesis

My research has three theoretical aims. Firstly, to develop a diversified rather than polarised or reductionist conception of the active audience, thereby showing a possibility for a convergence of a variety of active audience studies, in terms of the concept of 'audience engagement'. Secondly, I wish my analysis of Japanese audiences to serve as a modest step towards the de-Westernisation of media studies. My final aim is to complement, with qualitative research, present quantitative approaches to audiences in Japan. These three aims are elaborated below.

Aim 1. The Problem of Active Audience Research

The field of audience research has oscillated between the poles of active and passive, resulting in its fragmentation and dispute. I think the reason for this is that audience research itself is alive and constantly evolving. It has emerged out of a multitude of different research interests, frameworks, traditions, spaces, cultures and societies and, in reflecting these, has taken on a dynamic nature. Therefore in any attempt to find a consistency within the body of research on the audience, we face many difficulties. The cultures and societies in which each audience research tradition is based are not identical and the research hypotheses and propositions from which they begin vary. Scholars' conceptions of the audience as, for example, passive or active, their approaches to the audience as object or subject, their background philosophies, for example, pluralist or radical, their political standpoints such as critical or administrative, also show tremendous variety. These different conceptions of the audience have resulted in different understandings of the nature of the audience such that identification of an adequately uniform 'tradition' of audience research is very difficult. Within the tradition of audience research are included such diverse studies as those done by the Frankfurt school, on the one hand, and on the other, government funded

research into the undesirable impact of children's exposure to television.

The question of whether the audience is active in the expanding media and information and communication technologies (ICT) environment, is theoretically important in face of the following three difficulties within active audience research: first, the ambiguity of the concept of audience activity, second, the apparent impossibility of convergence of different active audience studies and third, the problem of the concept of the audience itself. In the following sections I will explain in more detail these three difficulties.

'Audience Activity'

The concept of the active audience itself is normative rather than descriptive. Audience activity is largely portrayed from within a context of certain normative conceptions of the audience rather than starting from 'theory-free' observation. Within the literature a confusion is sometimes demonstrated between the *normative conception* of the audience and the *real nature* of the audience. That is, it is sometimes unclear as to whether conceptions of active audience in media- and ICT-rich environments are normative, reflect the 'real nature' of the audience or are merely rhetoric of media institutions or government.

Although various theories and empirical studies of audience activity have emerged in the history of media studies, they have emerged somewhat discontinuously and have been based in different disciplinary paradigms. Thus conceptions of the audience and methodologies used to study it have been various. It becomes clear that, because scholars' different research interests and their normative conceptions of the audience based on these differences as well as the real nature of audience activity all vary greatly, the notion of 'audience activity' is very diverse. Within the active-passive controversy, there has been disagreement and much talking at cross-purposes, due partly to a lack of definition of common terms. For example, while uses and gratifications theorists saw selectively watching television as active, effects theorists saw this as negligible and impotent

against the power of media influence. Thus the level of activity that uses and gratifications theorists were concerned with was not theoretically interesting to effects theorists. Other theories of the active audience have understood it in different terms. Livingstone and Lunt (1994) locate activity publicly at the level of audience participation in audience discussion programmes, while Fiske (1987) sees audience activity as located in the subject in terms of appropriation, that is, creating meaning through interpretation of television programmes. Thus audience activity has been given many different articulations and therefore under the phrase 'audience activity' exist a variety of concepts which often cannot easily be studied together. I hope to locate these isolated concepts in common conceptual ground thus supplying a clearer and broader theoretical framework from which to understand the concept of audience activity.

Convergence

There has been a lot of talk about the possibility of convergence of a variety of active audience theories in terms of the key concept of 'audience activity' (cf. Rosengren, 1983; Schroeder, 1987, 1999). However the goal of convergence has proved difficult to achieve due to an apparent reluctance on the part of both scholars and concepts to fit together and provide a unity to audience theory. If we look at the respective politics, philosophies, historical contexts, research aims and definitions of the audience of these paradigms under which various audience theories lie, such audience theories can appear incommensurable (cf. Ang, 1996). But if we reduce this diversity and dynamism, audience research may lose some of its more fruitful and original tenets because, after all, such research has been developed in order to answer cultural, social and historical problems in different places and contexts. For example, very broadly speaking, in North America, audience research has been developed within pluralism, the latter being one of the more dominant cultural characteristics of the United States of America, taking into an account of society a range of diverse values. However, in Britain, audience

research was developed largely within a Marxist tradition, tending to focus on social class as the most strongly influential factor in understanding society. Thus it is necessary to understand this diversity and the dynamic nature of audience theory before we can discuss the possibility of convergence. As I mentioned earlier, each body of research belongs in its own cultural, social and historical context, therefore audience research should not be understood to be universal but as being greatly influenced by the context within which it is conducted. To capture this, I believe a convergence should not fix audience theory but allow for variation and dynamism relative to the particular context and aim of the research. I hope to find a suitable convergence of various audience perspectives through which to understand media and ICT and their audiences in the present rich global media environment.

Audiences

The final reason why the concept of the active audience must be examined is that, with the powerful invasion of ICT into our lives, some have suggested that there is no longer an 'audience', rather, there are 'users' (cf. Livingstone, 1999 for an examination of these ideas). Others have suggested that the 'audience' is a mere theoretical construct, a creation on the part of broadcasters and advertisers, not an actual phenomenon in the world (Ang, 1991). However, I will maintain that there is still room for the concept of the audience within some of our activity in our everyday lives. In Japan each household has, on average, more than two television sets and watches television for more than eight hours a day (Dentsu Souken, 2000; see Appendix A3). What should we call these people if not 'audiences'? These people select programmes, are involved with the characters, use television personally and socially, interpret it socially or critically, and participate in it—people engage with television at various levels of activity in their everyday lives. Moreover each level of audience activity is related to each other. For example, we cannot separate selectivity of television programmes,

involvement in its main characters and interpretation of its messages, as these are intertwined. Take a typical television drama viewer who selects television dramas because she is involved in their characters and interprets their messages in terms of her own experiences. Because of her involvement in drama, she may centre discussions with her friends around it in face-to-face communication, via telephone or email or browse a programme's homepage thus strengthening her involvement with the drama. Thus different levels of audience activity, usually separated by researchers, such as selectivity, involvement, personal and social use and interpretation, are inextricably related, as is engagement with other media and ICT, and should not be viewed in isolation if we want to understand their importance. While various scholars have redefined the 'audience' as 'public', 'users', 'participants', 'information processors' and 'consumers', I will retain the term 'audience' to refer to people, as groups or individuals, in their capacity as engagers with media and ICT in their everyday lives. I hope to understand how audiences engage with media and ICT as users, interpreters, participants and consumers in everyday life.

Because of these difficulties facing audience research, I think it is theoretically important to understand the various active audience theories within their different paradigms and historical and social contexts, and reconstruct audience research in terms of a notion of multi-dimensional audience activity, so as to create a possibility for convergence of distinct active audience paradigms. As I mentioned earlier, in the history of mass communication theory, the debate over whether the audience is active or passive has continued for a long time. The historical change in conceptions of the audience as being more active or passive has been explained by using such metaphors as a pendulum, oscillation (Katz, 1980) or tug-of-war (Biocca, 1988). In many respects, the pendulum is now seen to be at the active pole of its swing. But because of this active-passive dichotomy, previous audience research has often been categorised or understood simply as supporting either the active or the passive audience. The real nature of the

audience has also sometimes been overlooked insofar as it has been erroneously homogenised and oversimplified. Therefore I think it is important to question this linear understanding of the audience and look at the audience from the point of view of a multi-dimensional concept of audience activity. I aim to identify such a concept, incorporating further dimensions of activity which may arise in my data, look at them all in the everyday and social contexts in which they exist, and thereby understand the diversity, complexity and dynamism of the audience.

Aim 2. De-Westernising Media Studies

Social scientific research, both in Japan and in the West, has been based upon and around certain concepts, arising within the wider body of Western social science. Such Western concepts have been taken by many Japanese scholars to be universally applicable concepts, capable of providing an understanding of and enlightening Japanese society. However, the application of such etic concepts has been criticised by other Japanese scholars, chiefly those from the body of *Nihonjinron* (Japanese culture studies) research, who have claimed that, as Japan is a unique society, it requires, for its enlightenment and an understanding of it, its own set of unique concepts. Nakane (1967) was of this opinion and thus developed a set of Japanese emic concepts through which she offered an analysis of Japanese society and culture.

Previous Japanese audience research has followed the former path and unreflexively adopted Western etic concepts for the purposes of understanding Japanese audiences. I wish to avoid both of these approaches in my analysis of Japanese audiences. I hope neither to use exclusively etic concepts, developed within Western traditions, nor exclusively Japanese emic concepts, developed from within *Nihonjinron*. Instead, I aim to adopt, appropriate and adapt any concepts, etic or emic, Western or Japanese, that will be relevant to and enlightening of Japanese audiences. In doing this, the second theoretical aim of this research is to de-Westernise audience research. This should have several

facets. Firstly, the appropriation and adaptation of Japanese emic concepts will introduce new concepts into audience research, concepts that may be relevant not only to Japanese audiences but to non-Japanese ones as well. Secondly, the appropriation of Western concepts and their use in a Japanese context will show their relevance to audiences outside of the West, thus providing further evidence of the cross-cultural validity—and strength—of such concepts. Evidence of cross-cultural validity also constitutes a de-Westernising of concepts. The final way in which I hope to contribute to a de-Westernisation of media studies is by providing a framework for understanding the complex and diverse ways in which audiences engage with the media against a background of social changes and globalisation. In appropriating both etic concepts (from Western research) and emic concepts (from Japanese research), I aim to show the usefulness of this theoretical framework for understanding data from the contemporary Japanese field. Thus, armed with a suitcase of appropriated etic and emic concepts, I will look at the phenomena in the field, interpret them in the light of my framework and negotiate an interpretation both of those phenomena, as well as a ‘recreated meaning’ for the hitherto Western concepts, contextualised in the contemporary Japanese field. This will be the most important contribution of my de-Westernisation of media research.

Aim 3. Complementing Quantitative Research

Previous Japanese audience research has largely been conducted for advertising, broadcasting or government purposes and has thus been, for the most part, quantitative. Even Japanese audience research conducted by Japanese media scholars has focused on collecting quantitative data. There is now a vast amount of quantitative audience research in Japan. My final theoretical aim is to complement Japanese quantitative research with a qualitative study. I will select some of the more salient phenomena arising within these quantitative studies, incorporating them into my own study, in order to contextualise the quantitative

data and bring richer content to its findings. These phenomena may be contextualised within aspects of the social context, such as social, familial and power relationships, the viewing situation at home and in everyday life, upbringing, past history and the like. I hope to gain an insight into the impact of media and ICT in people's life-paths, past, present and future, and ethnographic research enables me to observe these over time. Findings taking account of such phenomena will add to—or even subtract from—the validity of quantitative data and will add explanatory power to its analyses. My research should be the first ethnographic research on audience engagement with media and ICT in Japan.

The Structure of this Thesis

This thesis contains six chapters. Chapter One outlines the theoretical framework for the thesis, outlining what I take to be the limitations of the current paradigm of active audience research – tracing the history of active audience research, looking at its strengths and weaknesses in more depth, from the first studies in the tradition of uses and gratifications studies to contemporary audience reception studies and Japanese audience studies – and discussing the advantages of moving to the respective paradigms of everyday life and complexity. This chapter thus addresses the first of my theoretical aims. The next two chapters look at how the second of my theoretical aims will be achieved. Chapter Two addresses specifically Japanese concerns and includes a brief history of Japan's modernisation from the perspectives of some contemporary commentators as well as offering an insight into some salient aspects of 'Japanese culture'. Through the latter I draw out some concepts of Japanese culture theory that I take to be revealing of Japanese people's engagement with media and ICT. In Chapter Three, I will look at methodological issues relevant to studying Japanese audiences and outline my proposed methods of ethnographic research. This chapter also includes discussion of the issues of validity and reliability and how these can be maximised with a complementary approach to quantitative and qualitative research methods. Hence in this chapter I also discuss how my third theoretical aim will be achieved. Chapters Four, Five and Six present my findings; firstly (Chapter Four), regarding multiple dimensions of audience engagement; secondly (Chapter Five), regarding the role of media and ICT in the formation of social groups; and, finally (Chapter Six), discussing the role of media in individuals' creation of their lives. In the conclusion to the thesis I indicate future possibilities for the present rich global media environment. I have included two appendices for the benefit of the non-Japanese reader. Appendix A is a brief history of Japanese culture studies and the Japanese family and media environment, while Appendix B is a

supplement to my methodological chapter.

Chapter One: Audience Activity, Everyday Life and Complexity

- A Theoretical Framework for Understanding Audiences -

Introduction

This chapter addresses the first theoretical aim of the thesis and sets out the theoretical framework for answering my research question. At the heart of audience research have lain the most pressing sociological concerns, namely, questions about the relationship between individuals and society. Within audience research these questions have been more specifically concerned to establish the nature of the power relations between media institutions and audiences. Parents worry about the impact of new media on their children, some scholars argue that audiences gain power through new interactive media while others are interested in the corresponding changes in everyday life accompanying the expansion of the media environment.

I argue that audience research has too often been understood by employing a dichotomy between active and passive portrayals of the audience, and that the employment of such a dichotomy has led to an oversimplified view of the diversity of both audience research and the real nature of audiences. This chapter outlines a theoretical framework for the reconstruction of audience research centering on the concept of audience engagement. In developing this concept I aim to stimulate the convergence of hitherto fragmented audience research in order to investigate the diversity and dynamism of the audience in the context of social changes and globalisation.

1.1. Active Audience Theories

How can the activities and understandings of the audience be conceptualised in

the currently rich media environment? Much research in media studies, in recent decades, approaches this question in terms of the concept of 'audience activity'. In order, therefore, to find a definition of 'audience activity', I begin by explaining the tradition of media audience theory, this reveals a tremendous variety of definitions of audience activity stemming from different research traditions and resulting in a range of research aims, questions, historical, social, political and cultural contexts and normative conceptions of the audience. Thus a single definition of audience activity cannot easily be found. In order to get a workable definition of audience activity a convergence of these diverse and divergent audience theories must be orchestrated.

In the following section, in order to get a workable definition of 'audience activity', I look at the main bodies of literature within active audience research. I focus mainly on three major active audience approaches in media audience studies, namely (1) uses and gratifications studies within American communication studies, (2) audience reception studies of British cultural studies and European reception theory and (3) *Joho Kodo* (information behaviour) studies of Japanese audience studies.

1.1.1. Uses and Gratifications Studies within American Communication Studies

Within American communication studies, audience activity has been portrayed as filtering the impact of the mass media upon its audiences. As a barrier against the influence of the media, such activity has usually been seen as evidence for limited media effects. Here the concept of audience activity is conceived of as consisting either in selectivity with respect to what audiences choose to view or in interpersonal relationships which mediate viewing. The concept of selectivity has been developed in uses and gratifications studies while the concept of interpersonal networks was proposed within the theory of the diffusion of innovation (cf. Katz, 1980). This latter theory developed from the two-step flow model of media messages with its concept of "opinion leaders" (cf. Lazarsfeld and

Stanton, 1944; Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955). Rogers' (1982, 1986) convergence model of communication, discussed later in this chapter, was a further development in this line. Despite severe criticism over the last half century, ever since gratifications studies emerged in the 1940s, uses and gratifications studies has represented the main body of traditional or administrative research into audience activity.

While effects theories look at what the media do to people, uses and gratifications studies look at what people do with the media (Katz, 1959). Thus uses and gratifications studies have investigated the diversity of uses media have been put to in terms of the gratification of people's needs. The key idea has been that the media are a source of pleasure and/or information which are ritually or instrumentally used by audiences for purposes such as diversion, personal relation, self identification and surveillance (McQuail et al., 1972). Effects theories and uses and gratifications studies are regarded, for obvious reasons, as representing different and opposing paradigms but I will show why I think they share many significant assumptions. I will first look at the historical emergence of these two bodies of research.

Early Uses and Gratifications Studies and Effects Studies

The first uses and gratifications study was "*Professor Quiz*-A Gratification Study" conducted by Herzog (1940) with the help of Hadley Cantril, one of the leading scholars in studies of propaganda (Cantril, 1965), who presented a conception of the "atomised audience" of radio (Cantril and Allport, 1935) and supported the model of powerful effects (cf. Cantril, 1940). During the early stages of radio it was intended as a tool to educate people who did not read the newspaper (Lazarsfeld, 1940). However the results of radio research showed that most serious radio programmes did not reach such a target audience. Despite classified as entertainment programmes, it was the serial dramas and quiz programmes that people within the 'lower cultural levels' considered to be

sources of information from which to learn, rather than the serious programmes regarded by educators to be educational. Hence, radio researchers became interested in investigating why serial dramas and quiz programmes appealed to mass audiences, combining Gratifications Studies with content analysis and a study of the characteristics of the listeners. The study of *Professor Quiz* revealed four general appeals: the competitive appeal, the educational appeal, the self-rating appeal and the sporting appeal, together with a variety of gratifications that are fulfilled by listening to *Professor Quiz*.

However, Herzog (1940, p.92) warned:

the information [the viewer] seeks is disjointed, unrelated, unsystematic. It is preferred so because he does not know how to organize information and does not want to undergo the intellectual discipline necessary to learn how. "Education" for him is rationalized to mean, then, the *passive* absorption of anything which happens to be presented. (My italics)

Here, while Herzog's study exists within a body of research often considered to portray the audience as active, her conception of the audience is rather passive. Similarly, Lazarsfeld's (1940) study of 'audience building', as developed in uses and gratifications studies such as Herzog's (1940) and Suchman's (1941), examined the idea of inducing a mass audience to listen to serious programmes so as to educate them with their content. The attempt at audience building also tended to regard audiences as passive and malleable, assuming that audiences can be controlled and influenced to the extent that they adopt certain beliefs, in this case, educated beliefs about the world and its affairs.

The '40s are seen as 'the golden age of radio research', especially because the tradition of media audience research was becoming much more firmly established at this time in American communication studies. A variety of uses and gratifications studies were conducted following Lazarsfeld's "Radio and the

Printed Page". Next were Lazarsfeld and Stanton's (1949) "Communication Research 1948-49", Waples et al.'s (1940) "What Reading Does to People" and Warner and Henry's (1948) "The Radio Daytime Serial: A Symbolic Analysis". Above that uses and gratifications studies are usually understood as opposing effects research. However it seems to me that the '40s uses and gratifications studies could perhaps be seen as fitting in with the effects tradition. Some uses and gratifications studies and effects research share not only similar conceptions of the audience (i.e., as rather passive), but also similar aims of research (i.e., to establish and understand media effects), purposes of research (i.e., administrative) and concepts about the audience (i.e., their individual predispositions). While uses and gratifications studies established that audiences use the media in a variety of ways that the media owners had not intended and that people interpret messages from within their own social context (cf. Kaufman, 1944), the purpose of such research was to understand people's interpretations and uses of media in order to find ways to educate them using the media. In other words, underlying this research aim was the assumption that people can be affected by the media.

In the '50s, as television developed in Western countries, people became increasingly concerned with the powerful and undesirable influence of the media on children. Television programmes were held to lead to violence, juvenile delinquency, moral permissiveness and other social problems. In the history of American mass communication studies, if the '40s is the 'golden age of radio research', the '50s can be called the beginning of television research in response to social demand. In the '50s, many studies of television effects were conducted. At the same time, what are now called '50s uses and gratifications studies looked not only at media influence on children but at *children's media use* from both psychological and sociological points of view. These studies were "not designed primarily to study gratifications but rather the relationship between peer and familial integration and media use" (Rosengren, 1985, p.13). Audience activity

in the '50s uses and gratifications studies was conceived of as including three activities derived from a variety of needs (cf. Riley and Riley, 1951; Maccoby, 1954; Schramm et al., 1961). These activities are: selectivity (selecting the medium, for example, movies or television, choosing what to watch on television), use (children use television for entertainment, escape, getting information and for social purposes, for example, children's make-believe games are based around television characters) and interpretation (children interpret the same television character differently depending on their reference groups, for example, children who are members of social groups interpret the main character of a Western television programme for its social utility by incorporating it into their play, while solitary children interpret the same television character as having no relation to their everyday lives). Schramm et al. (1961) turned the idea of television acting upon children around and investigated not "what television does to children" but "what children do with television" (p.169) that is, how children use the same television content in different ways. The '50s uses and gratifications studies claimed that, due to viewers being "social beings", media effects are alternatively reinforced or diminished depending on the specific social situation of the viewer. '50s uses and gratifications studies marked an important break from earlier research insofar as while the '40s research approached the viewer in terms of his or her individual psychology, the '50s research treated the viewer from a social perspective, that is, as "a *persona* interacting with others, participating in cooperative social activities" (Friedson, 1953, p.230). "The opinion of an individual is a function of his group affiliations" (Riley and Riley, 1951, p.445). The '50s uses and gratifications studies are generally seen as belonging to active audience theory. While some scholars emphasised the activity of the audience, they were basically concerned to establish how different social situations of audiences' determine different degrees of media influence. Thus at this early stage of the uses and gratifications approach activity of the audience was not considered to exclude the possibility of

effects but rather as concretising effects.

Attempts at Theoretical Unification

The body of research called “uses and gratifications” studies emerged as an attempt to save media audience studies. Katz (1959) saw Berelson’s (1959) pessimistic perspective of communication research, that it was “dead or dying”, as applying not to media audience studies in general but only to persuasive studies, and thus came up with an alternative. Katz integrated the various gratification studies of the 1940s and “children and mass media use” of the 1950s, named them “the functional approach to the media”, or “the uses and gratifications approach” (Katz, 1959, p.2), and emphasised its importance for the future of audience research. Soon after, uses and gratifications theorists offered a counter-argument to the critique of popular culture which had derogatorily labelled media use as escapism (cf. Katz and Foulkes, 1962; Blumler, 1964; McQuail, Blumler and Brown, 1972). Katz and Foulkes (1962) responded by insisting that, even if audiences viewed the same programme, each audience member could use that programme differently, therefore its effects could be different for different people. For example, programmes which are classified as ‘escapist’ can be used for purposes other than escape, and, conversely, programmes which are not seen as ‘escapist’ can be used for the purposes of escape. “It is very difficult to infer uses, or effects, from content” (Katz and Foulkes, 1962, p.383).

Using quantitative research methods, various researchers developed typologies of gratifications (Blumler and McQuail, 1969; McQuail et al, 1972; Katz et al, 1973; Rosengren and Windahl 1972) and uses and gratifications studies have become a part of the mainstream in America, Britain, Sweden, Finland, Japan, Israel and elsewhere. Katz et al, in their 1974 study, identified the basic assumptions of this now mainstream approach as the following.

- (1) The audience is conceived of as active, that is, an important part of mass media use is assumed to be goal directed...
- (2) In the mass communication process much initiative in linking need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member...
- (3) The media compete with other sources of need satisfaction...
- (4) Methodologically speaking, many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves...
- (5) Value judgements about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms... (Katz et al., 1974, pp.21-22).

Criticism of Uses and Gratifications Studies

In the 1970s, the uses and gratifications approach was criticised severely particularly for its functionalism and also for its theoretical problems. Various aspects of the approach came under attack such as its mentalism (its reliance on mental states and mental process whose existence and importance is difficult to assess), its individualism (the fact that it deals with processes inside the individual's head and not social processes), its empiricism (Elliott criticises both its methodology and its lack of foundational social theory), and its static-abstraction (that is, its method isolates the subjects from their social situation thus isolating the mass communication process from other social processes). This latter problem of abstraction leads to the theory having low explanatory power, that is, its ability to explain the *real* social process of mass communication is weak (Elliott, 1974).

For Elliott and other critical scholars, people cannot be abstracted from their social structures in this manner. Rather, the relationship between audiences and the media must be regarded as a relationship between two socially embedded phenomena and studied as such. Elliott thinks uses and gratifications studies paint a too optimistic picture of the relationship between the media and audience.

If, according to uses and gratifications studies, audience activity acts as a shield against undesirable media effects, there is no need for changing broadcasting policies and the status quo can justifiably be maintained. This result is obviously unacceptable for anyone arguing for changes in broadcasting policy as are critical scholars (for other criticisms of uses and gratification studies, see Takahashi, 1996).

In response to Elliott's criticisms of uses and gratifications studies, its proponents' counter-argument insists that it is "a stepping-stone for attempts at change" (Rosengren, 1974, p.284; cf. Mendelsohn, 1974). As a consequence of these criticisms, uses and gratifications studies tried to move away from its hitherto functionalist approach and has since taken on a 'multi-theory' nature, integrating with other theories such as McQuail and Gurevitch's (1974) three approaches, the structural/cultural, action/motivation and 'functional' approaches, McGuire's (1974) approach of sixteen paradigms of psychological motivation and Cazeneuve's (1974) anthropological, ethnographical and philosophical perspective.

Uses and gratifications theorists tried to integrate theoretically with these other approaches, and, drawing upon the broad and multi-theoretical framework, the following three theories were established. These theories concerned: (1) expectancy-value relationships to gratifications; (2) transactional processes of gratifications and effects; and (3) audience activity. I take up the latter branch, as it is more relevant to active audience research, with which I am concerned.

Uses and Gratifications Studies and Audience Activity

The first theoretical framework, an expectancy-value approach to gratifications, was offered by Palmgreen (1984) and was later integrated within a societal structure in response to the criticism of uses and gratifications studies' individualism, to give the formal theory of uses and gratifications studies (Palmgreen et al., 1985). At the same time, with the advance of the

information revolution, the concept of 'audience activity' was focused around the characteristics of new media. Levy and Windahl (1985) constructed a typology of audience activity (Table 1.1.). This typology is constructed with two dimensions: (1) the *qualitative orientation* of the audience towards the communication process, including selectivity, involvement and utility and (2) *temporally*, that is, before, during, or after exposure. This typology is useful in understanding the diverse range of audience activities and I would like to look, in my research, at some of the dimensions of audience activity they identified.

Following Levy and Windahl's work, the concept of audience activity was applied to such new media as cable television, the personal computer, the remote control, the VCR and video games and a more active audience than that of the old media was found (cf. Heeter and Greenberg, 1985; Levy, 1980, 1987; Rubin and Bantz, 1989; Walker and Bellamy, 1991).

Table 1.1. A Typology of Audience Activity (with some examples)

AUDIENCE ORIENTATION	COMMUNICATION SEQUENCE		
	Before Exposure	During Exposure	After Exposure
Selectivity	Selective exposure-seeking	Selective perception	Selective recall
Involvement	Anticipation of exposure	Attention Meaning creation Parasocial interaction Identification	Long-term Identification Fantasizing
Utility	"Coin of exchange"	Using the gratifications obtained	Topic use Opinion leadership

Levy, M.R. and Windahl, S. (1985, p.113)

In the body of uses and gratifications studies, audience activity is conceived of as the diverse media uses derived from psychological factors such as predispositions, needs and gratifications. Uses and gratifications studies, as a theoretical approach, was severely criticised by critical studies scholars for its lack of theoretical foundation and its failure to take into account the social context of the media audience and media use. Perhaps in slight concession to

these criticisms and out of a belief that scholars studying the same phenomena should do so together, uses and gratifications scholars began to incorporate other theories into their own and look at the possibility of convergence between the various theories of the audience. "To the extent that the same problematics are empirically studied by members of various schools, the present sharp differences of opinion will gradually diminish and be replaced by a growing convergence of perspectives" (Rosengren, 1983, p.203). To support the case for convergence Rosengren (1985) argues that Radway's (1984) study of romance readers is in fact a 'reinvention' of uses and gratifications studies. I will return to the idea of a convergence of active audience studies below.

1.1.2. Audience Reception Studies within British Cultural Studies and European Reception Theory

Arising partly out of the criticism against uses and gratifications studies, an alternative approach to television audience research was developed at the Centre for Contemporary Culture Studies at the University of Birmingham in the 1970s (cf. Morley, 1988, p.26). Hall's encoding/decoding model emerged against the background of several prevailing research paradigms. Among these were the American communication studies, which included uses and gratifications studies (for example, Blumler's research at the Centre for Television Research and as Reader in Mass Communications at the University of Leeds) and the effects tradition (for example, James D. Halloran who directed the Centre for Mass Communication Research at the Leicester University). Other prevailing paradigms were the British *Screen* theory and various theories of political economy (for example, Peter Golding and Graham Murdoch at the University of Leicester). Hall criticised these latter two for their predeterminacy of textual meaning and their failure to look at audience interpretations. He also objected to the indeterminacy of textual meaning implied by the concept of selective perception, the latter being a central idea of both behaviourism and uses and

gratifications studies.

Hall's (1980) encoding/decoding model and Morley's (1980) *Nationwide Audience* brought audience research into the paradigm of British cultural studies which had hitherto downplayed audience activity because of the paradigm's adherence to the Marxist hegemonic model of the media which was often taken to imply a politically passive audience. Here I would like to discuss Hall's encoding/decoding model, Morley's research and audience reception studies generally.

The Encoding/Decoding Model

In the encoding/decoding model, Hall argued that the paradigm of audience research should move away from behaviourism in which it has been based ever since media audience studies emerged in American communication studies. Behaviourist audience research starts with the stimulus-response model and thus understands television and its messages as directly in a linear manner causing an individual's observable, physical behaviour. On this model, given a certain stimulus a corresponding response will be elicited although many mediating factors have been subsequently included in the model. This idea has been represented by analogy to a hypodermic needle and has been criticised as not accounting for social factors leading to differences amongst different social groups. It was the unidirectional flow of independently existing meanings against which Hall developed his encoding/decoding model. He focused on the discursive codes used in both the production and reception of texts and presented a cyclic rather than linear model of the communicative process by drawing upon Marx's analysis of relations and practices of production. He claimed that messages which were encoded in broadcasting structures were released into the structure of social practices through decoding in the process of audience reception. Because of the cyclical nature of this process, media effects, uses and gratifications cannot be understood in terms of the linear stimulus-response

model of the behaviourist, positivist perspective.

In the encoding/decoding model, Hall discussed the symmetry or asymmetry between encoding and decoding and claimed that symmetry is not always present. Thus communication is not always “perfectly transparent” but should be understood as “systematically distorted” (Hall, 1980, p.135). The possibility of less than transparent communication results in a variety of interpretations which Hall is careful to distinguish from pluralism. Drawing on Parkin (1971), Hall hypothesised (and later Morley showed see below) three different codes which audiences use in their decoding: (1) the dominant-hegemonic code, the use of which reproduces the ‘preferred reading’; (2) the negotiated code, the use of which reproduces contradictions and disjunctions between what is encoded and what is decoded; and (3) the oppositional code through which audiences “retotalize the message within some alternative framework of reference”(p.138), that is audiences give an alternative reading both unanticipated by the encoders and opposed to the encoded.

Brunsdon and Morley (1978) analysed the current affairs television text, *Nationwide*, in terms of Hall’s ideas about encoding and later in the *Nationwide Audience* project, Morley (1980) examined audiences empirically using the decoding model. He considers the process of how meaning is generated in communications from the two perspectives of semiotics and sociology. Morley investigated the diversity of audience interpretation resulting from different socio-economic backgrounds, such as class, gender and subcultures, while uses and gratifications studies investigated audience activity from the individual psychological perspective. From the result of focused interviews, Morley aligned groups representing different social backgrounds with three different readings: oppositional, negotiated and dominant. He concluded that to understand the meaning of a text, we need a ‘cultural map’ (Morley, 1992) showing the audiences’ membership to various subgroups. Such membership gives access to a variety of discursive codes which are used by the audience to decode the text. Thus, we

must understand that textual meaning is produced through an interaction between text and audience. In the encoding/decoding model, audience activity consists in an interpretive struggle between dominant-hegemonic codes of a text and audiences' own subgroup membership-determined codes.

Prior to the influence of Hall's encoding/decoding model, the audience had been seen by most British cultural studies theorists, as victims of ideological hegemony. Hall's model represents a break with this paradigm insofar as it allows for the possibility of audience activity. For, according to the encoding/decoding model, negotiated and oppositional readings represent a degree of struggle and resistance, both forms of *activity*, on behalf of the audience. Some scholars, for example, Rosengren (1983) and Schroeder (1987), hailed this as a move towards their paradigm of the active audience, emphasising the significance of Hall's and Morley's active portion of the audience. But perhaps this was optimistic, even a misinterpretation of Hall's and Morley's respective works insofar as these scholars may have failed to recognise that Hall's and Morley's models remain within the Marxist perspective, at least according to British cultural studies scholars (Ang, 1996). For while these models allow for audience activity in the form of opposition and resistance to, and struggle against the dominant ideology, this activity is far from free. Rather it is, for both Morley and Hall, 'determined' by the individual's membership to various subgroups and their consequent access to various codes. Thus this conception of audience activity is one not of the interpretative work of freely acting individuals but of 'constricted' activity, the limits of which are restricted by social context. This has been described by Ang (1996) as neither determinacy nor indeterminacy but *overdeterminacy*.

Audience Reception Studies

In the humanities especially, several branches of thought have looked at this relationship between texts and their readers. In Germany these fell under

'reception aesthetics' or reception theory. In Italy Eco analyses the 'role of the reader' in relation to literary texts and in America the reader-response approach to texts was developed (cf. Livingstone, 1995). The idea of overdeterminacy has been represented within audience reception studies by the idea of textual 'openness', which developed within Reception Theory. The latter emerged as an application of literary criticism to popular culture and, as a criticism of structuralism, examined the mutual interdependence of audience and text in the creation of textual meaning. Within Reception Theory, 'openness' of the text has been an important issue of debate and we have seen new conceptions of the reader such as Iser's (1980) "implied reader" and Eco's (1979) "model reader". These readers are distinct from actual readers of the text in question, being somehow contained in the text in terms of a set of assumptions made by the author and/or the author's choice of words. Such readers are supposed to both direct and set constraints on textual interpretation.

Audience Reception Studies partly draw upon Reception Theory, which emerged within literary criticism. Eco made a distinction between 'closed texts' and 'open texts'. The open text presents an opportunity for audience activity. In the case of a closed text, the author intends a particular reading to be understood by the reader, aberrant readings being considered mistaken (Eco uses the example of Fleming's James Bond novels). If divergent interpretations result from reading a closed text such diversity is regarded as communicative failure and indeterminacy on the part of the novel insofar as it failed to determine that the intended interpretation be made. On the other hand, in an open text (for example, Joyce's *Ulysses*), the author intends various readings to be made by the reader via her knowledge or codes which she is expected to have acquired from her socio-cultural circumstances. Eco's model reader is a representation of such a reader which can be found in the text and it is through this model reader that the text has any literary 'intentions'. Any actual personifications of the model reader are the author's 'ideal readers'. On this

model, actual readers making diverse readings within the range of the author's intended interpretations is regarded as communicative success and represents openness. However, as it is difficult to understand the author's intention, it seems to be hard to draw the line between aberrant and legitimate readings (cf. Livingstone, 1995).

The Encoding/Decoding Model and Audience Reception Studies

Accordingly, if non-fiction programmes such as news, documentaries and current affairs programmes are regarded as closed texts because they encourage audiences to make a preferred reading, Morley's and Hall's negotiated and oppositional readings should seem to be regarded as aberrant according to Eco's model because they show communicative failure on the part of the encoder-producer to produce the preferred reading. However, it is precisely these readings that scholars such as Morley are interested in because they represent audience activity in terms of negotiating or creating meaning. Thus instead of ignoring Eco's cases of communicative failure, Morley has legitimised these readings, calling them negotiated or oppositional, and empirically researched them as a means of understanding the diversity of codes existing within a diversity of subgroups in society. What for Eco may have been *aberrance* is for active audience theorists *diversity*.

However there are some problems within the encoding/decoding model and its concept of preferred reading has been especially criticised. Hall and Morley's idea of the preferred reading is, coming from a Marxist perspective, the reading which best serves the interests of the dominant ideology and thus the reading preferred by media institutions. The concept of the preferred reading is clearly a political/ideological concept, in contrast to Eco's concept of 'model reading', and thus readily applies to news, current affairs and other non-fictional programmes. Its ease of application to fictional programmes is dubious. Morley himself noted the limits of the concept of the preferred reading, pointing out that it could not

easily be used to understand such programmes and merely stating that this was because such programmes do not make factual statements about the world. Whether this is the case or not, Morley suggests expanding the encoding/decoding model to apply to fictional programmes by focusing on genres. According to his suggestion, audience reception studies, although not encoding/decoding studies, have been done on fictional texts such as romance novels (Radway, 1984) and soap operas (Ang, 1991; Liebes and Katz, 1990 etc.).

Audience Reception Studies and Uses and Gratifications Studies

The history of audience reception studies has been understood in several different ways. On the one hand, audience reception studies have been regarded as a convergence of different paradigms. According to Livingstone (1998), audience reception studies represent the convergence of six different research paradigms: (1) Hall's encoding/decoding model, (2) uses and gratifications studies, (3) (within critical mass communications research) the idea of the resistant audience which was against the theory of media hegemony, (4) poststructuralism, (5) the feminist approach, (6) the culture of everyday life. Schroeder (1987) also argued that audience reception studies represent a convergence between media sociology and cultural studies and has welcomed such a process of 'cross-fertilization'. On the other hand, audience reception studies have been emphasised as distinct from the mainstream approach of uses and gratifications studies and effects studies. For example, Jensen and Rosengren (1990) argued that five different traditions of audience research coexist in media studies: (1) effects, (2) uses and gratifications studies, (3) literary criticism, (4) cultural studies and (5) reception theory. However, Morley (1992) saw his own study as a progression beyond uses and gratifications studies which was in turn developed against the hypodermic model of effects studies. Nevertheless, Curran (1990) emphasises the similarities between Morley's research and the mainstream approach and insists that audience reception studies is merely a 'new

revisionism' of early effects studies. As Curran argued, there are lots of similarities between early traditional audience studies and audience reception studies, for example, between methodologies, explanations of different media use and interpretation as, in part, functions of social situation and between findings. With respect to this point, we can see the variety of studies as belonging to the one paradigm, as they commonly represent audience activity in terms of opposition against dominant codes. However, audience reception studies should be regarded not simply as a revisionism of early traditional audience research because the historical, social, cultural and political contexts of these respective studies have contributed to significant differences between them. They are underlain by contrasting political paradigms (the former by Marxism and the latter by liberal pluralism); by different conceptions of the audience (as "social subject" and as individuals, respectively); different measurements of activity (opposition against the dominant code and filtering media effects, respectively) and by different philosophical approaches (the former by a critical approach, the latter by positivism) (cf. Ang, 1996; Morley, 1992). These differences become important when we look at the possibilities of convergence of active audience studies.

Audience Reception Studies vs. Media Imperialism

Despite different conceptions of audience reception studies, active audience theory plays a very important role in media studies. Because of the diffusion of digital satellite broadcasting and the internet, giving us the opportunity to watch programmes and get information from other countries, the theory of media imperialism once again comes into play¹. Media imperialism is the specific application of cultural imperialism to media institutions. Via these processes it

¹ Herbert I. Schiller pointed out that because of the innovation of technologies such as the information super highway and multiple channels, shopping, entertainment, violent and pornographic programmes etc. have increased, furthering American cultural imperialism (A personal interview in September, 1994, at New York University, also cf. Schiller 1993a, 1993b).

is feared that economically powerful nations extend their control, including cultural control, over developing and relatively powerless countries. The media is thought to be more and more becoming a frighteningly efficient means of such imperialism. According to this theory, the audience was once again viewed as passive victims of the media. But again the conception of the audience as passive was criticised by audience reception scholars who defended, once more, the activity of the audience. For example, audience reception studies of *Dallas*, the American soap opera which enjoys international popularity, indicated a diversity of audience interpretations varying with social and cultural context. Such diversity is understood as a sign of activity (cf. Liebes and Katz, 1990). This type of qualitative study represented a trend in active audience theory through the '80s and '90s. A diversity of interpretations was found amongst audiences particularly between cultural and international boundaries. Liebes and Katz (1990) showed, for example, that audiences in Israel had very different interpretations from American audiences and within Israel different interpretations were given depending on ethnicity, thus showing that American cultural imperialism theorists had perhaps been overly pessimistic in their portrayal of the power of the media. Of course it is an open question whether studies such as Liebes and Katz's genuinely undermine the media imperialists. Does the existence of a variety of interpretations really show that audiences are active enough to withstand the power of the media? Schiller (1992), for one, criticises the findings of reception studies. While the 'pendulum' of the audience remains today at the active pole of its oscillation, a variety of scholars, for example, Seaman (1992), continue to criticise active audience theory thereby maintaining the active-passive controversy.

1.1.3. *Joho Kodo* (Information Behaviour) Studies in Japanese Audience Studies

Since the time after World War II Japanese audience studies developed through the translation and importing of American communication studies such as effects

theories (for example, Bullet theory or the hypodermic needle model, two-step flow, agenda setting function, spiral of silence), uses and gratifications research and marketing research for the purposes of advertising. In order to understand Japanese audiences, Japanese media scholars have used the same questionnaires as those of American communications studies and compared their results with an aim of providing cross-cultural analyses.

Uses and Gratifications Studies in Japan

In the '70s, uses and gratifications studies gained popularity in Japan. In 1972, Edelstein (1973) and Katz et al. (1973) presented their studies at the International Conference of Psychology in Tokyo, Japan. This conference had a strong impact on Japanese media scholars and the theoretical framework, findings, methods and criticisms of uses and gratifications studies were eagerly taken up by Japanese scholars (for example, Takeuchi, 1976, reprinted 1990; Okada, 1976, reprinted 1992; Hiroi, 1977). At the same time, vast amounts of empirical studies were conducted, based on such studies as those of Katz et al. (1973) (Tokinouya and Sato, 1977), Greenberg (1974) (Mizuno, 1977), McQuail et al. (1972) (Takeuchi, 1977; The National Association of Commercial Broadcasters in Japan, 1976), Rosengren and Windahl (1972) (Miyazaki, 1981) and Blumler and McQuail (1969) (Tsuruki, 1978; Tokinouya and Hayashi, 1981). From a comparison of the results of those studies with their Western counterparts, these Japanese scholars demonstrated alternative 'needs' for media use among Japanese audiences and they tried to explain these differences in terms of differences between Japanese and Western culture. Tokinouya (1984) summarises differences in gratifications of Japanese and Western audiences as follows:

Tokinouya and Hayashi (1981) show that the levels of gratification gained from interpersonal communication in terms of politics are low in Japan. Although Tanaka

(1977) discussed the peculiarity of Japanese communication as being “heteronomous and situational”, in regard to these differences of the needs-gratifications of expressions there are differences in the fundamental values between the individualism in American culture and the collectivism in Japanese culture.

Takeuchi (1977) and The National Association of Commercial Broadcasters in Japan (1976) found gratifications which could show the particularities of Japaneseness; such as having a new understanding of human relational bonds, making harmonious human relation and discovering local culture. (my translation, p.184-185)

Joho Kodo Studies

As new media, for example, computer, fax, video camera, photocopy machine, emerged in Japan some uses and gratifications studies, focusing on new media such as the personal computer (Kawaura et al., 1989), cable television (Ikeda, 1990) and video games (Miyata, 1993) were undertaken in order to understand new media use. Japanese media scholars tried to understand the meaning of these new communication technologies in terms of function, utility, influence, changing life style and other factors.

The concept of *Joho Kodo* (Information Behaviour) has emerged out of an attempt to understand both person-to-person communication and the interaction between people and “*mono*” (things) such as computers, faxes, CDs, diaries and photos. *Joho Kodo* is defined as information seeking, gathering, storing, transmitting and processing behaviour. Examples include watching television, reading books, writing letters, calling friends, attending seminars, talking with friends face-to-face and engaging in other such activities. Thus *Joho Kodo* is conducted as a result of the interaction between people and the information environment (cf. Nakano, 1980). This approach uses an interactive model of communication to try to understand audience activity in terms of processing information through both the media and interpersonal communication.

A Japanese equivalent of the term ‘communication’ did not exist in Japanese

before it was imported from English. The concept of '*komyunikeishon*' (communication) in Japanese has a narrower definition than its original meaning in English and usually refers only to the interaction between people. The concept of *Joho Kodo* is understood as being broader than *komyunikeishon*, so while *komyunikeishon* is a part of *Joho Kodo*, in cases of media-facilitated person-to-person communication, *Joho Kodo* is also intended to include information behaviour which does not involve communication to a second party, for example, making a photocopy or writing in a diary (cf. Ikeda, 1987; Mikami, 1991). However, in American communication studies, the concept of communication is much broader than that of the Japanese understanding and covers the same scope as *komyunikeishon* plus *Joho Kodo*'s 'information processing model' of intrapersonal communication. Therefore I think *Joho Kodo* shares, for all intents and purposes, the same meaning as the concept of communication in American communication studies.

Joho Kodo Studies and Uses and Gratifications Studies

The basic assumption of *Joho Kodo* studies is also very similar to that of uses and gratifications studies. While *Joho Kodo* studies and those of uses and gratifications share similarities they also show differences, one of the more beneficial of which is the broader understanding of communication behaviour employed by *Joho Kodo* studies (cf. Takahashi, 1997).

First, the similarities. For both uses and gratifications and *Joho Kodo* studies the central concept is audience activity and audience's behaviour is seen as goal-directed (cf. the first assumption of uses and gratifications studies). Moreover, some uses and gratifications researchers (such as Katz et al., (1973) and Rosengren and Windahl (1972)) examine audience behaviour with respect to a variety of media as do *Joho Kodo* studies (cf. the third assumption of uses and gratifications studies). Finally, the Expectancy-Value model is used in both paradigms, that is, both theories take into account viewers' expectations and

value judgements.

On the other hand, there are some differences between uses and gratifications and *Joho Kodo* studies. Firstly, while most uses and gratifications studies are limited to a particular medium (or television programme), *Joho Kodo* studies consider media exposure within the total information environment, that is, they look at the large variety of communication behaviour in everyday life. A second difference is that while *Joho Kodo* studies concentrate mainly on new media use, uses and gratifications studies on new media use are relatively rare. The audience is also conceived of differently. Uses and gratifications studies see the audience only as receivers while *Joho Kodo* studies see the audience as senders of messages in addition to being receivers. Finally, while uses and gratifications studies focus only on the audience, *Joho Kodo* studies considers the sender and the message (information), too.

In short, while uses and gratifications studies try to understand the psychological mechanisms of media use, *Joho Kodo* studies try to understand people's communication behaviour in everyday life. The Information Behaviour census, which was conducted by the University of Tokyo (Tokyo Daigaku, 1986, 1997, 2001), set out to understand *Joho Kodo*. It looked at four sources of information: Mass Media (television, radio, book, video), Personal Media (Fax, mail, video-camera, PC), Non Media (conversation, diary) and Events (concert, sports event); five types of activity: receiving (watching television), transmitting (writing letters), exchanging (telephone), creation and transformation (taking photos) and gathering (diary); and five elements of behaviour: place, content, purpose, communication partner and time. With the aim of understanding Japanese lifestyles, the data was analysed quantitatively, compared in terms of age, generation, gender and occupation and typologies of people, in terms of their communication behaviour, were made. These data were analysed historically (in order to understand how Japanese people's communication has changed as a result of emerging new communication technologies), economically (in order to

understand how much money the Japanese spend on the media), socially (in order to understand where, to what extent, with whom and about what people talk) and psychologically (in order to understand what kinds of needs Japanese people seek to gratify when they use new media).

There are many similarities between *Joho Kodo* and uses and gratifications studies, and its concept of communication does not significantly add to that provided by American communication studies. However, it is far from superfluous. I believe the advantage of *Joho Kodo* studies in media audience research is its having a broader scope than that of uses and gratifications studies insofar as it looks not only at a particular medium, for example, newspaper, radio, television or video, but at all of these, plus the internet, video games, mobile phones and a variety of interpersonal communication, not only through media but also face-to-face. It is crucial, in understanding contemporary everyday Japanese life, that we understand audience engagement not only with television but with the variety of media confronted in the daily routines, activities and communication of families and their members in the currently rich media environment.

1.1.4. Conceptions of Active Audience

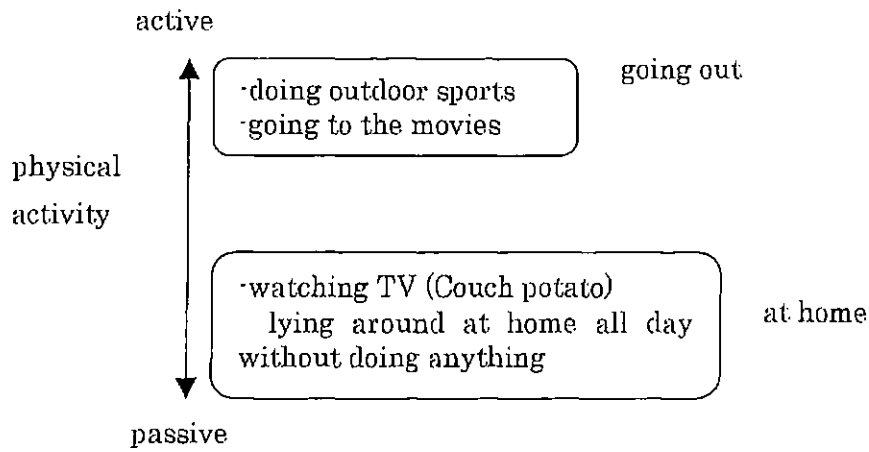
Diversity of Normative Conceptions of the Active Audience

There is a diversity of conceptions of the active audience corresponding to the diversity of the contexts in which it has been portrayed (Figure 1.1.). In the academic study of leisure activities, real experience is regarded as more active than virtual experience through media (For example, doing outdoor sports is regarded as more active than watching television at home; Figure 1.1.(1)). In *Joho Kodo* studies, people who use media to process and send information across time and space are regarded as active (For example, sending messages via internet is regarded as more active than watching one-way terrestrial television; Figure 1.1.(2)). In media effects studies and uses and gratifications studies,

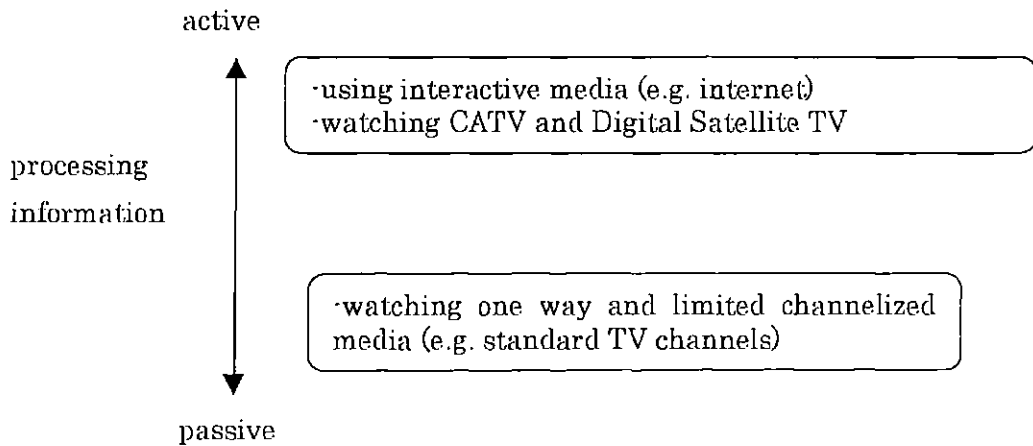
audiences who are not affected by the media are regarded as active (Figure 1.1.(3)), while in audience reception studies, negotiation or opposition in interpretation against the dominant ideology is regarded as active (Figure 1.1.(4)). In the theory of the public sphere², people who are critical and aware of ideology and participate in the 'public', for example in public debate on television programmes or on the internet are regarded as active (Figure 1.1.(5)). Thus normative conceptions of the active audience are given within each paradigm and different respective measures of its passivity or activity constitute the diversity of the nature of the 'active audience'. Underlying these norms of activity is a corresponding variety of political philosophies such as American liberal pluralism and British Marxism (cf. Hall, 1982) which have affected these norms. Furthermore, diversity of approaches is created not only by a diversity of paradigms but also by diversity within the same paradigms. Such diversity comes from the historical and social context in which audience research has been conducted. In the next section I would like to discuss the historical and social dynamism of conceptions of audience.

² Habermas (1989) originally proposed the concept of the public sphere and many media scholars have discussed and examined this concept in terms of people's participation in television and the internet (Scannell, 1991; Livingstone and Lunt, 1994). In terms of television audiences in a postmodern society, Abercrombie (1996) introduces both a pessimistic and an optimistic view of public sphere; while the pessimists stress the fragmentation of audiences which may make it difficult to create public sphere, the optimists discuss skilled audiences who are critical and aware and argue that these "audiences have the power to save us from producers" (p.209).

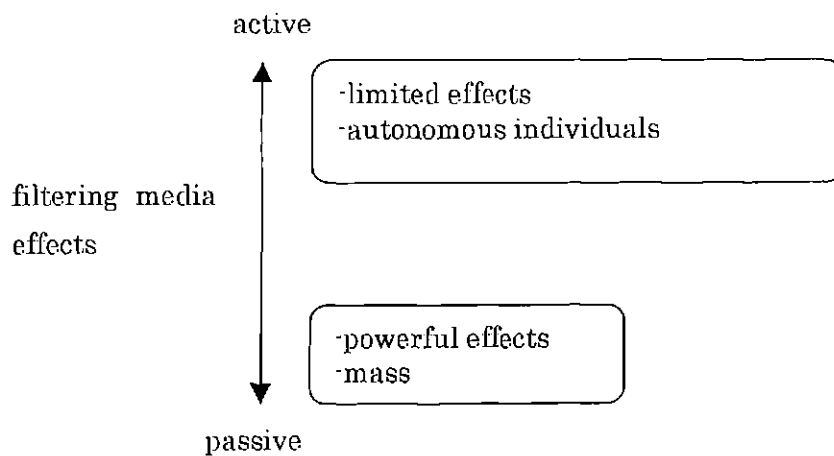
(1) Audience activity in terms of leisure activities



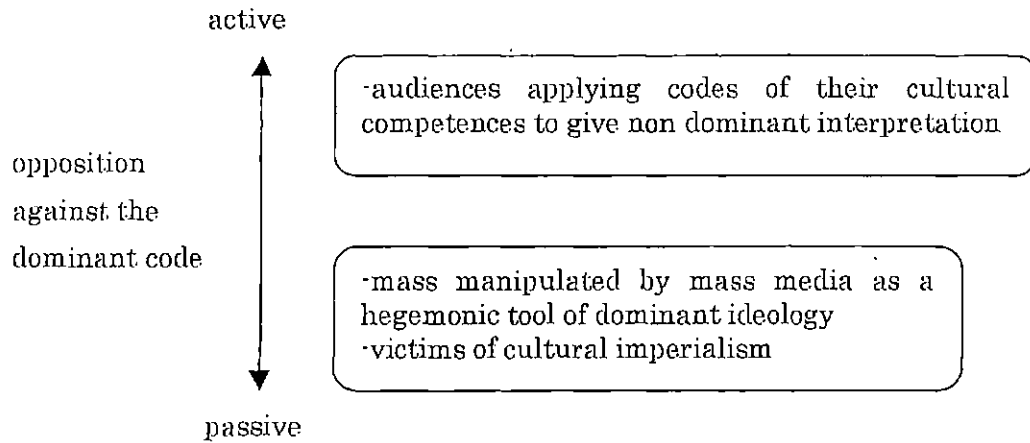
(2) Audience activity in terms of processing information



(3) Audience activity in terms of filtering media effects



(4) Audience activity in terms of opposition against the dominant code



(5) Audience activity in terms of participating in the "public"

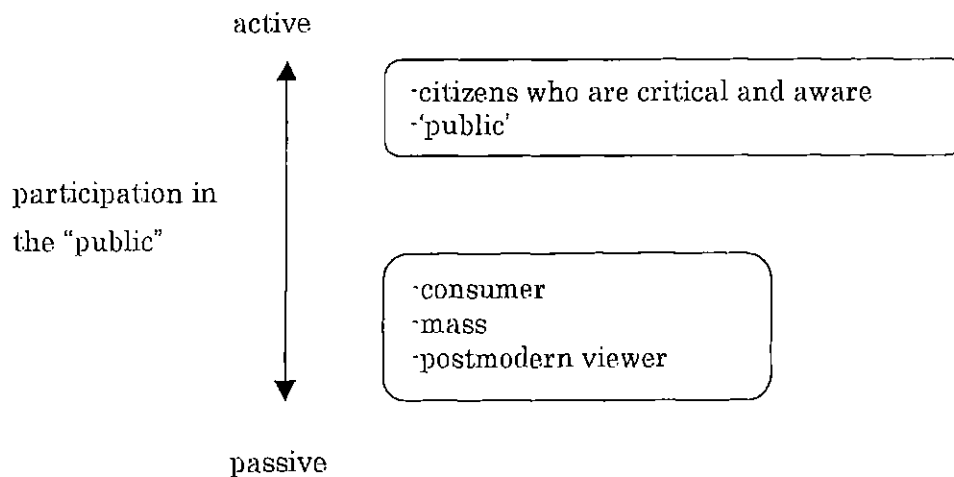


Figure 1.1. Five Measures of Audience Activity

Historical Dynamism of Conceptions of the Audience

In general, the history of American communication studies has been divided into the following four periods and behind the changes in conceptions of effects there is a corresponding change in conceptions of the audience (See Figure 1.2.; cf. Severin and Tankard, 1992). This historical change in conceptions of the audience between active and passive is explained by using such metaphors as a pendulum, oscillation (Katz, 1980) or tug-of-war. If we adopt this model and focus on the mechanics of the pendulum, conceptions of the “active audience” can be understood as always having emerged as an antithesis to conceptions of the “passive audience”. In period (I), audiences were considered an atomised, homogenised mass of victims who had directly received the powerful impact of the mass media. This is the mass society thesis of the critical school. As an antithesis to this conception of the “passive audience”, in period (II), conceptions of the active audience as not receiving any powerful effects from the media emerged from the empirical research of the administrative school. In period (III), because of the diffusion of television, people swung back to the idea of powerful media effects, especially on children. The pendulum had gradually moved towards conceptions of the audience as passive again. Then in period (IV), with the expansion of the media environment, conceptions of the audience as active (with respect to the new media) have re-emerged against the idea of the passive audience as receivers of one-way, old-style mass media.

- I Bullet Theory (early 20th century-early of 1940s) -Passive Audience-
- II Limited Effects Model (1940s-early 1960s) -Active Audience-
- III Moderate-Powerful Effects Model (late 60s-80s)-Passive Audience-
- IV New Media Studies (80s-) -Active Audience-

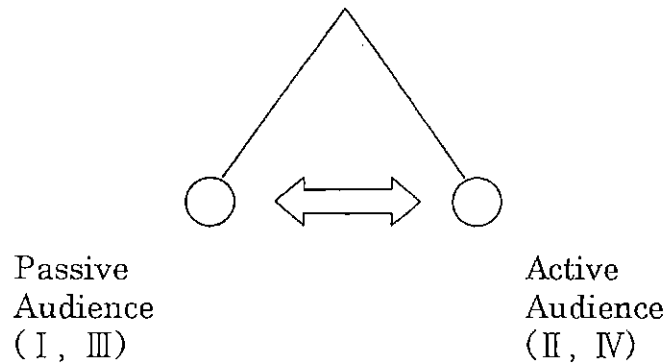


Figure 1.2. The Pendulum of Conceptions of the Audience
in American Communication Studies

These metaphors are useful to understand the history of media audience studies, but at the same time they oversimplify the diversity of audience research. First, this model might make the multi-dimensionality of conceptions of audience seem one-dimensional. It is obvious that conceptions of audience are different between periods (II) and (IV), and between periods (I) and (III) because their historical and social contexts are different. While it is true that both the Limited Effects model and new media studies are characterised by the concept of limited effect and audience activity, there are important differences between them which may be masked by the pendulum model which makes the latter studies look like a step *back* to the former model. But period (IV) should be seen as a step *forward* as it incorporates historical and technical developments and in adding to the means by which audiences avoid media effects (that is by taking into account new technologies for example, remote control, VCR, satellite television, internet and so on.) it represents important developments of the Limited Effects model, not a step back to it. Similarly the Bullet Theory and the Moderate-Powerful Effects model share the concept of strong effect and passivity

yet there are important differences in their respective models of communication. While the Bullet Theory invokes a stimulus-response model and suggests a hypodermic influence on a homogenous audience, the Moderate-Powerful Effects model invokes the concept of mediated effects on a psychologically and socially diverse audience, these diverging factors acting as filters of media messages. It may seem to be possible to unify different conceptions of audience under the concepts of 'active' or 'passive' and understand them with the metaphor of the oscillating pendulum but I believe this masks the diverse nature of, and important developments in, audience studies.

The "Obstinate Audience" (Bauer, 1964) was offered as a conception of the active audience in period (II), the key concept being of limited effects. However, such an 'obstinate audience' (that is, an unaffected audience) had already been discovered in the audience research of the Payne Foundation (and elsewhere) and used as evidence for certain versions of the bullet theory of period (I) (Shuttleworth and May, 1933; Cantril, 1940; Merton, 1946). So the shift from period (I) to (II) cannot simply be described in terms of a pendulum swinging from passive to active.

According to the pendulum model, period (II) was characterised by the active audience, the Limited Effects model being dominant at this stage. However, during this period, the seeds of uses and gratifications studies were sprouting. This early uses and gratifications research looked at audience activity but was concerned to find ways to educate or in other words *influence* audiences. Thus such research operated on the fundamental assumption of the effects tradition, that is, that the audience is passive and can therefore be affected by the media. Thus it is not clear at all that this period should be seen as one characterised by active conceptions of the audience. During this period approaches to the audience were apparently diverse.

In the theory of agenda setting in period (III), the concept of needs is taken from uses and gratifications studies. Thus this theory has an active factor and

should not be seen simply as one of the passive audience. These arguments show that the pendulum model is insufficient in three respects, first, diverse paradigms are erroneously conflated at the respective poles of the active-passive oscillation giving the false impression that there are only two different perspectives in audience studies, that is, of either an active or passive audience. Second, at any given time period of audience studies both active and passive conceptions of the audience can be found, contrary to the picture the pendulum model paints. Third, the pendulum model seems to imply a direct relationship between effect and activity, that is, as effects increase so too does audience passivity and, conversely, as effects decrease activity increases. I think this model is too simple insofar as it fails to capture the actual historical absence of correlation between effects and activity and there is no necessary connection between on the one hand 'active' and 'resistant to effect' and on the other 'passive' and 'susceptible to effect'.

Of course historical oscillations in conceptions of the audience do not reflect any actual oscillations in the audience, that is, the nature of the audience has presumably remained roughly the same despite scholars' conceptions of it changing. And this does not exclude today's arguments in favour of an active audience. As I discussed in the beginning of this thesis, new communication technology has certainly changed the relationships between media and audiences. For one thing, the expansion of the information and media environment has given us more freedom in selecting information and, additionally, because of the interactive nature of new communications technologies, we have become senders of information where we were hitherto only receivers of media contents. However, on the other hand, even though the information and media environment has expanded and interactive media have been developed, the claim that audiences have suddenly become active seems to be excessive. Interactive media give us the chance to become senders of information however we cannot forget that any interaction with the media is limited by certain aspects of our

social context, for example, income, education, media literacy, language.

Diversity and Dynamism of Conceptions of the Active Audience

As scholars talk about a convergence between uses and gratifications studies and British cultural studies, as I discussed earlier, they find their aims, politics and philosophies are fundamentally different especially from the point of view of British cultural studies. For British cultural studies, such convergence is undesirable because *Communicational cultural studies* (American cultural studies) has a “too narrow vision of cultural studies” (Grossberg, 1993, p.334). The convergence between American communication studies and British cultural studies may mean, for the latter, a loss of the fundamental aim and politics of its original paradigm and diminishment of its attractiveness and critical nature. Thus a convergence remains, at least for critical scholars, an impossibility.

However I think it is time to look at just what is meant by talk of convergence. If the term ‘convergence’ means to agree in terms of politics, philosophies, aims and conceptions of the audience, a convergence in audience research will be virtually impossible. However, if the term implies bringing the theoretical or methodological advantages of each tradition into the present historical and social context in which we now conduct research, a convergence may be more likely and audience research can continue as an interdisciplinary approach. The idea I have here is, for example, Morley’s (1986) incorporation of the concept of use from uses and gratifications studies without any corresponding incorporation of its political standpoint. Such a ‘convergence’ will avoid the old problem of reducing the diverse, dynamic and multidimensional audience by looking at it from only one level of audience activity and simplistically labelling it either active or passive. I think it is more realistic and more interesting to look at a variety of conceptions of audience activity and find audiences either active or passive in terms of a variety of dimensions.

The call for convergence suggests scholars see themselves as in some sense

sharing a common goal with respect to active audience research. It is not clear that there is such a common goal within the research canon but if we were to identify one, it would be important to look at the reasons we do audience research, that is, just what is it that we want to know about audiences? If there were to be a common goal in audience research, I think it should be to understand the role of the media in people's everyday lives and I believe this can best be achieved by certain forms of 'convergence'. The nature of the convergence a researcher chooses will depend on his or her research aims and interests, the cultural and historical context in which the study is being conducted and so on. The kind of convergence I will explore takes into account a variety of dimensions of audience engagement with media and ICT within the paradigm of everyday life. I will appropriate from the paradigm of complexity to understand the myriad ways in which people undergo self-formation via appropriation of media resources in their everyday lives. If we categorise conceptions of the audience in the history of communication studies using the active-passive dichotomy represented by such a simple mechanism as the oscillation pendulum, it simplifies the diversity of conceptions of the audience and its historical, social, cultural and political dynamism. Moreover the real nature of the audience will be understood as one-dimensional and thus oversimplified.

In order to understand better how people engage with the media and ICT which are embedded in their everyday lives, it is necessary to use a variety of tools and concepts and adapt and adjust them to look at the relationships between people and the media. In order to get as complete a picture of the 'audience' as possible, it is necessary to look at the audience from micro (psychological) perspectives to macro (sociological) perspectives because each perspective relates to its neighboring perspective to create the complex phenomenon of 'audience activity'. Each perspective has its own measurement of activity, that is, irreducible to any other perspective's measurement of activity. Thus we should not aim to look for a singular conception of audience activity and

declare audiences either uniformly passive or active in terms of it. Such a blanket description hides the complexity of the audience and the different aspects in terms of which the audience may be passive or active. An interesting account of the audience will describe it as passive in one respect but active in another and yet in other respects the active-passive dichotomy will not be used as measures at all. Other measures can be used to gauge the nature of the audience (such as oppositional, dominant, powerfully affected, unaffected, selective, involved, etc.) without aligning them with the active-passive dichotomy which does not necessarily add anything to our understanding of the nature of the audience but may in fact cloud it by masking its diverse nature.

Hence, an task is to describe the process of audience engagement with media within the audiences' social contexts of their everyday lives and thereby understand the complexity of the audience.

1.1.5. The Concept of Audience Engagement

Rather than asking about the active-passive continuum of audience activity, as I did originally, this thesis will instead focus on the concept of audience 'engagement' with media and ICT, asking: "how does the audience engage with media in everyday life in a rich media environment?" The answer to *this* question, in contrast to the answer to my original question, will not be a resounding and dramatic "yes" or "no" but will, I hope, supply us with a more realistic understanding of audience activity in media-rich environments. Therefore I hope to provide a useful framework with which to understand the further question of how audience members, in their varied ways of engaging with the media in everyday life, create and recreate both their senses of self and the social groups to which they belong, in the context of social changes and globalisation.

The concept of audience engagement encompasses some of the ideas developed within active audience theories in media audience studies. I have

borrowed the following types of audience engagement from uses and gratifications studies, audience reception studies and *Joho Kodo* studies: information and communication activity; selectivity; involvement; utility; and interpretation. I may also borrow the following varieties of engagement from alternative traditions: diffusion; and participation. I have identified seven dimensions of audience engagement from my previous research on audience activity; both theoretically (Takahashi, 1994, 1998c) and empirically (Takahashi, 1998a, 1998b)³ (Table 1.2.). In addition to these forms of engagement I hope to discover, from my research, new dimensions via which television audiences engage with not only television but other media such as mobile phones and the internet. I will look at this engagement in its social context and thus view it in terms of different dimensions of social interaction. That is, I hope to discover a variety of ways in which people engage socially (or even antisocially) with the rich media environments of their everyday lives.

Table 1.2. Audience Engagement

Audience Engagement	Audience Activities
(1) information and communication activity	communication behaviour; information/message seeking, gathering, transmitting and processing
(2) selectivity	selective attention, selective perception and selective retention; selective exposure
(3) involvement	attention, meaning creation, parasocial interaction, identification and fantasising
(4) utility	personal use (diversion, personal relation, self identification and surveillance); social use (structural use and relational use)
(5) interpretation	'preferred', negotiated and resistant interpretation
(6) diffusion	transportation of messages and news through social networks
(7) participation	feedback, participating in television programmes and social participation

³I have conducted both quantitative research—on cable television audiences and their internet use in Tokyo (Takahashi, 1998b)—and qualitative research—on Princess Diana's death in London (Takahashi, 1998a).

1.2. Media and Everyday Life

Media Audience scholars have discussed the limits of the active-passive dichotomy and the issue of the importance of the context of everyday life. Silverstone (1994) finds reason to reject talk of active and passive viewing. He asks whether activity means *action* or *agency* and finds that neither notion alone captures the significant realm of audience practice that should be meant by audience 'activity'. Silverstone suggests that while changing channels may not be significant activity, "creative or critical engagement with television messages" (p.154) probably is. But if we take this as significant activity we must then look at the relevant social, cultural and political factors which constrain or otherwise define that engagement. Silverstone argues that 'active' theories of the audience often romanticise the nature of the relationship between media and people, thus disguising the importance of these defining factors. The claim is that there are just too many things meant in the literature by the term 'activity' and that the question of whether or not the audience is active by and large offers little insight into the nature of the relationship between media and people. Silverstone thus moves from recognition of the importance of political, social and cultural factors in audience activity to the paradigm of everyday life in order to understand television and its role here.

Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) see the history of audience research in terms of the transitions between three paradigms. The first of these is behaviourism, the second corresponds to what I have classified as audience reception studies, and the third represents what they see to be the future of audience research. They similarly see the first two paradigms of audience research as representing audiences as being either passive or active. The reason they reject the active audience paradigm of reception studies and argue for the transition to a third paradigm, focuses on the notion of the active audience. In agreement with arguments made by the Frankfurt School they claim that this

paradigm has erroneously equated the active audience with resistance, and that this leads to a variety of unacceptable consequences. Firstly, it over-emphasises the abilities of audiences to create their own meanings in the interpretation of texts. This, in turn, leads to a squeezing out of the role of the power of the media and a consequent inability to give analyses of the relationship between media and people in terms of hegemony. The problem is that if we accept the existence of the active audience we may also have to accept that any television programme or text will be acceptable, that is, deemed acceptable viewing, just because the audience is active in relation to it and thus can resist any harmful messages that may be contained in it. These considerations lead Abercrombie and Longhurst to the search for a new paradigm from which to conduct research on audiences. The paradigm they choose is that of everyday life.

This paradigm⁴ has been used by social anthropologists, sociologists and media scholars in an attempt to understand social and cultural phenomena in their embeddedness in people's lives rather than as isolatable and existing at some level outside of everyday life. In the following three sections I introduce some concepts useful in understanding the role of the media in everyday life.

1.2.1. Television and Everyday Life

What does the claim that television is embedded in everyday life mean? For a start, television is very obviously physically embedded in people's everyday

⁴ I will make much use of the term 'paradigm' in this thesis following Kuhn (1970). In the present discussion, I follow Abercrombie and Longhurst in their use of the term. They follow Kuhn in his definition, stating that a paradigm is "a network of assumptions which prescribe what kinds of issues are proper research problems" (Abercrombie and Longhurst, 1998, p.3). This itself can be a vague definition and the use I make of the term is possibly even more vague. By 'paradigm' I mean 'bodies' of research (spanning beyond 'schools' to 'disciplines'—the one paradigm can be shared by mathematicians, economists, psychologists, biologists, etc) which share fundamental philosophical assumptions, and perhaps ontological and epistemological commitments. But the borders around paradigms are not clear—two distinct paradigms may share ontological commitments while two bodies of research in the one paradigm may differ in these. I use the term to refer to a 'way of looking' at certain phenomena, a perspective, and one which prescribes what phenomena will be visible or interesting in the research concerned.

environments. The television set is usually situated at the centre or focal point of the living room which is itself arguably the domestic centre or 'hearth' of the home. Perhaps the following picture is changing as households acquire more televisions and other forms of communication media but family members traditionally utilise the television as a point at which to gather as a matter of daily routine. Television not only acts as a spatial organiser of homes but also as a temporal organiser. Television schedules arrange our daily as well as our annual routines as we plan our time around the evening news, late-night dramas or special media events. Television thus plays a significant role in our home life. Social theorists have identified the home as an integral factor of identity. Heller (1984) describes 'home' as the spatially fixed point in which we feel safe, to which we are accustomed and in which we have our most intense emotional relationships. Silverstone (1994) focuses on home as a construct, a human place, rather than a physical space, to which we are emotionally attached and in which we find security. From birth to early adulthood it is the home which probably has the most powerful input, or at least filters most of the input into our identities. As adults we assert our identities as we create our own homes. Home offers us an environment in which to create identity and feel security. Silverstone (1999) argues for the central role of television in imbuing our lives with various senses of security. We rely on nightly soap operas, their stories and characters, to always be there for us, we turn to the news media in times of community or national crisis. Television, as an important fixture of the home, plays a role in possibly countless and complex ways, in our everyday life.

1.2.2. The Active Consumer

The relationship between people and the media has been the centre of great debate since the media's emergence. As the nature of the media changes so too does the nature of the relationship between it and people. As ICT develops there are more and more points of connection or interaction between people and

the media. New communication technologies are penetrating our lives in new ways. Our increasing use of technologies such as the mobile phone and communication via the internet by e-mail or the playing of video games with cyber-partners leads to increased mediated and reduced face-to-face communication with others. Media theory seeks to understand the nature of this ever-changing relationship between the media and people. The increasing globalisation of communications led to fears of cultural imperialism, that is, recognition of the imperialist nature of the consequences of worldwide imbalances in the flow of communication. Extreme theories in this tradition, along with those arguing for harmful media effects, portrayed the dangerously powerful media as a hypodermic needle, directly injecting the audience with ideology. The unwitting consumption of media messages has been believed to impoverish and disempower media audiences, making them passive victims of consumerism.

Against views such as these other scholars have argued for a picture of consumption which gives more agency to the consumer. Michel de Certeau (1984) claimed that consumption was, rather than being passive and unwitting, an active and indeed subversive form of production. The consumer-producer, lacking any significant power in the face of the overwhelming power of the media, must resort to the tactics of guerilla warfare. In resisting the strategies of the media, we 'poach' from them, using their products for our own purposes in the invention of everyday life. We thus resist the dominant order by using the products it imposes on us in ways unintended by it. We similarly resist the order and appropriate its products by using its places as spaces for our own pursuits or to serve our own, often subversive, interests. For de Certeau, the poaching which constitutes everyday life is essentially defensive and aggressive. While theories of cultural imperialism and overwhelming media power painted the audience as passive in their consumption of media products, de Certeau's picture is of a very active audience. Silverstone (1989) points out de Certeau's

use of the dichotomy of 'strategic places' and 'tactical spaces', associated respectively with media institutions or government bodies on the one hand and, on the other, consumers or 'users'. However his dichotomised picture of the relationship between media and people pits the latter very much against and at war with the former. The relationship is one of fighting, resistance and subversive activity. De Certeau's view can, thus, still be framed within the active-passive dichotomy. His 'users' are not passive victims of society's powerful institutions but active resistance fighters. However, unlike advocates of the powerful active audience, for example, uses and gratifications theorists, de Certeau recognises that, while people can and do resist domination, they remain weak to nullify or otherwise avoid the power of dominant institutions. He emphasises not people's activity as such but their productivity. This identification of consumption as *production* points to the creative aspect of the process of poaching or appropriation and it is this more positive process on which subsequent theorists have focused in looking at the relationship between the dominant institutions of a society and people.

1.2.3. Self-formation and Media

Paralleling and superceding, the active-passive dichotomy is that, which de Certeau also seems to employ, between structure and agency or between society and individual. The basic idea of such a framing is that the structures of a society (and these structures vary in nature from, for example, ideology to the military) are forces which, through various mechanisms of power, contain, limit or restrict people. In competition with structure is agency, which is the force of human growth, liberation and empowerment. The two opposing forces of structure and agency are conceived of as pitted against each other in attempts to understand the relationship between individuals and society. Within this framework there is a chicken and egg problem concerned with whether individuals (agency) create structure (society) or vice versa. Giddens (1984),

however, argues that structure and agency cannot be separated along the lines this dichotomy specifies, and thus modern societies cannot be understood within this framework. Giddens' theory of 'structuration' goes beyond the structure-agency dichotomy and instead places structure not external to individuals but internal to their activities. Individuals thus, via appropriation from the social world, constitute and reconstitute it in their activities. Structure is thus not consistently constraining but is also that which enables human activity or empowerment. Giddens' reframing of structure and agency transcends analogies of the anatomy of an organism or the frame of a building and replaces it with the concept of *autopoiesis*. In Giddens' later work (1991) he focuses on the concept of self-identity and sees it as a kind of adaptive or reflective process or achievement taking place in the constantly changing, on both local and global scales, circumstances of social life.

Thompson (1995) takes the idea of self-identity and looks at its creation in relation to the media and the expanding media environment. The process of self-formation is, for Thompson, fed by both 'lived' and mediated experience. Modern society represents an expansion of mediated symbolic forms (media messages or meanings) which people appropriate in the process of self-formation. As we create ourselves partly through mediated experience, Thompson gives the media a very intimate role in people's everyday lives and focuses on how people appropriate from the media in a process of self-formation as well as on the media's power and to what extent audiences are passive or active in the face of it.

Lull also wishes to move away from questions of activity or passivity and sees people as initiating or creating, via processes of communication, cultural experience. Lull (2000, 2001) sees people neither as cultural or audience members nor as consumers but rather as 'cultural programmers' of their own 'supercultures'. These supercultures are created from the pool of both 'distant' and 'close' cultural resources, which has been expanding with the globalisation of communication. Lull sees globalisation not as necessarily giving rise to

domination or repression but as supplying a rich stream of cultural resources. People extract cultural fragments from this stream of resources and, in doing so, in some sense create themselves. That which they create, incorporating fragments from 'distant' and 'close' cultures (which may already be hybrids themselves), is a kind of 'personal hybrid' which both contributes to and appropriates from, at a higher level of social organisation, 'cultural hybrids'.

Thus Giddens, Thompson and Lull each transcend dichotomies between, respectively, structure and agency and active and passive, to give alternative pictures from which to understand the dynamically reflexive relationships between self and culture or society. I follow this step in looking at audience engagement with media in everyday life and the complex and dynamic relationships between self and culture or society, micro and macro. In the next section I construct an integrated framework for understanding the complex nature of the relationships between self and culture.

1.3. An Integrated Framework: The Complexity Model of Audiences

Social and natural scientists have used the complexity paradigm to address issues of the complexity and dynamism of phenomena which hitherto in traditional approaches had been made invisible or had been regarded as aberrant – thereby adding to our explanatory and manipulative power (Eve, 1997). This paradigm emerged from a number of different disciplines and has taken a number of different forms. Perhaps its most well known incarnation is in what has become known as the ‘butterfly effect’. Edward Lawrence, a meteorologist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, claimed in 1963, after discovering for the first time the implications of the then unnamed chaos theory, that a butterfly fluttering its wings in Peking one day could possibly cause, a month later, a hurricane in New York. Chaos theory (cf. Lawrence, 1993) and work in the area of fractals (representing a discovery threatening reductionism, showing that no matter how many times a whole is divided, its parts remain complex; cf. Mandelbrot, 1983) were part of the move to the paradigm of complexity within mathematics. In physics this move manifested in the emergence of theories of self-organisation and phase transition, and in biology, it appeared in theories of self-adaptivity and self-reflexivity. The paradigm of complexity also appeared in the social sciences. In economics it took form of the concepts of bounded rationality, increasing returns and self-reflexivity, and in sociology it appeared in the ideas of autopoiesis and self-organisation. My argument is that, within the disciplines of media, culture and audience also, the paradigm of complexity has become recognised, as seen in Giddens’ (1991) concepts of self-identity and reflexivity, Thompson’s (1995) self-formation, Lull’s (2000) cultural programmers, Rogers and Kincaid’s (1981) convergence model of communications, Hamaguchi’s (1998) contextualism, Hannerz’s (1992) model of cultural complexity and Tomlinson’s (1999) complex connectivity.

In the following sections, firstly, I introduce some useful concepts and

theoretical framework regarding the issue of agency in the paradigm of complexity. Secondly, I construct an integrated framework for understanding the diversity, dynamism and complexity of audiences in the context of social changes and globalisation by extending the notion of complexity—perhaps more as a metaphor or “a human version of the theory” (Appadurai, 1996) than as a mathematical or predictive model—from natural sciences to the social sciences. Finally, I discuss the issue of the ‘de-Westernising’ of media studies.

1.3.1. The Paradigm of Complexity

What is the Paradigm of Complexity?

What links the concepts of the paradigm of complexity under a common term, that is, the ‘essence’ of complexity, is difficult to identify and it remains undefined even by the complexity theorists. Some scholars argue that it is too much to expect the formulation of a general theory of complexity, but instead stress that the ideas identifying the paradigm share several characteristics. The approach of complexity avoids certain assumptions made previously by the natural (and many examples of social) sciences, these being reductionism, linearity and the myth of universal stable determinism. In opposition to the myth of universal stable determinism (the assumption that, given sufficient data and reliable formulae, accurate predictions can always be made within any area of science), nonlinear approaches recognise that systems can very rapidly become unpredictable due to their remarkable sensitivity to initial conditions, such that, *even if* we could input all the data concerning a system at a given moment and we applied the relevant laws of physics, we would still not be able to predict the outcome of that system at a later time. The assumption of reductionism is that if we can understand a system’s parts, then we can understand the whole nature of that system. But the crux of nonreductionist approaches to systems is that the nature of that system, that is, the system as a ‘whole’, is, proverbially, more than just the sum of its parts.

Using qualitative and ethnographic methods, various media audience researchers have transcended reductionist and linear approaches and recognised issues of complexity of determination and reflexivity (cf. Morley, 1986, 1992; Lull, 1991; Ang, 1996; Silverstone, 1994; Gillespie, 1995; Willis, 2000). In communication theory, E.M. Rogers and D.L. Kincaid (1981) have applied a fledgling version of complexity theory to communications. Rogers (1986) identified two opposing paradigms being used to analyse communication in the 1950s, paradigms informed respectively by Shannon and Weaver's (1949) 'mathematical model' and Wiener's (1948) 'cybernetics' model. Rogers claims that American communication studies developed within the former paradigm, focusing on mass media and linear, one-way communication. The usefulness of the paradigm of cybernetics, focusing on the role of feedback in communication has, however, with the increase of interactive media, been regenerated. Rogers and Kincaid use this paradigm to construct their convergence model of communication. This model is meant to displace the linear idea of "effects" on a "mass audience" and emphasises mutual understanding and consensus in networked relationships, providing continuous feedback amongst individuals. It understands communication as "a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding" (Rogers, 1986, p.200). Individuals are necessarily connected in networks and communication cannot be understood without taking account of the relationships between individuals.

This model of communication has been attractive, as it focuses, as I wish to do, on interactivity and feedback between dynamic, rather than fixed, individuals who change and develop in the process of communication. It takes the focus of the site of communication away from the individual, placing it instead in the interrelationships between individuals and thus resembles the 'contextualism' model of inter-personal relationships of the Japanese culture theorist, Eshun Hamaguchi (1998), whose work I will discuss in Chapter Two.

In addition to the above three features of the approach of the paradigm of complexity, there are four characteristics of a complex system: interactivity, self-organisation, adaptivity and dynamism (Waldrop, 1992). Complexity theorists claim that many of the world's systems are complex in the sense that they contain a great number of independent agents interacting with each other in a great number of ways. The nature of this *interaction* is extremely rich and complex and it is this very richness which results in the system undergoing *spontaneous self-organisation*, for example, economic agents organise themselves into complex economies through a variety of individual acts of buying and selling. Complex systems are *adaptive* in the sense that they actively respond to events within them, changing circumstances and their environment. Complex systems are not merely complicated static objects, but possess dynamism in that they are somewhat disorderly, alive and responsive, and thus capable of spontaneous, self-initiated action, while retaining some stability and thus not falling into total chaos. However, any system can, as a result of these dynamic processes of interaction and self-organisation, reach a point of criticality at *the edge of chaos*. At this threshold the system can go one of two ways: into chaos, signifying the end of the system as it is but with the possibility of its recreation in a new or altered form as its parts again undergo self-organisation; or it can maintain enough stability at the edge of chaos such that it remains intact as an ongoing system. I aim to use the idea of a complex system as a model in understanding the role, or one of the roles, of media in culture, society and life by reconstructing the complexity of audience engagement in everyday life.

Audience Research as an Integration of Micro- and Macro-Phenomena

The question of the relationship between audience engagement with media at the micro-level and culture and society at the macro-level has often formed the centre of the question of the importance of audience research, that is, 'why do it?', 'why is it interesting?' or 'why should it be funded?' (cf. Livingstone, 1998). This

question has traditionally been answered with attempts to show that research about audiences and their engagement with media (being at the micro-level) tells us important things about culture, politics and society in general (the macro-level). The traditions of audience research can be seen, with varying levels of importance attributed to either the micro- or macro-level phenomena, as addressing this question of the relationship between the micro and the macro. Uses and gratifications studies, in their earliest incarnations, focused on psychological phenomena (needs, wants) in trying to understand the relationship between people and media, but in doing so they were criticised for under-emphasising the role of society in the reception process. Later uses and gratifications studies (Palmgreen et al, 1985) attempted to answer this criticism by locating individuals' characteristics within societal structures. With the location of gratifications and so forth in the social environment, uses and gratifications studies came closer to the conceptual terrain of audience reception studies. The latter began with a focus on media textual analysis and mapped the interaction of the micro and the macro onto the interpretive process linking text with reader/viewer, production with reception. British cultural studies scholars emphasised the power of the media and its hegemonic role in the transfer of the dominant ideology at the macro-level to audiences at the micro-level. Stuart Hall (1980) aimed to capture the interpretive nature of the relationship between macro and micro with his encoding/decoding model of production and reception. Scholars within this tradition of audience research have characterised the relationship between media institutions and audiences, macro and micro, as one of power, thus the site of interaction between the two has been portrayed as one of struggle, audience 'activity' varying between being recipients in hegemonic processes and resistance and subversive appropriation of media messages and images. John Fiske (1987), attributing both audiences and television producers with a certain amount of discursive power to make meanings, called this site of struggle between micro and macro a site of "semiotic

democracy”.

Willis (2000, p.xvi) tries to add some complexity to the relationships between individuals and structure:

Everyday culture is the main middle term that I want to add as mediation between individuals and structure. I see the production of this symbolic realm as in part a result, *upon conditions*, of the creative self-activity of agents, also thereby producing and reproducing themselves. But the symbolic realm also operates at another, connected level, where it is involved, viscerally, in the maintenance and differentiated formation of the social whole or whole social formation, including the reproduction of the connections upon which ‘self-activity’ originally takes place.

I also view the relationships as complex, dynamic and sometimes unpredictable and as the site of the dynamic interactions among complex systems such as individuals, families, social groups, communities and cultures. This plethora of complex systems is undergoing constant, dynamic interactivity, such that the micro-, macro- and every level in between are reflexively feeding back into each other. Waldrop (1992, p.88), trying to explain the issue of agency in the paradigm of complexity, characterises it by the following:

...every topic of interest had at its heart a system composed of many, many “agents”. These agents might be molecules or neurons or species or consumers or even corporations. But whatever their nature, the agents were constantly organizing and reorganizing themselves into larger structures through the clash of mutual accommodation and mutual rivalry. Thus, molecules would form cells, neurons would form brains, species would form ecosystems, consumers and corporations would form economies, and so on. At each level new emergent structures would form and engage in new emergent behaviors. Complexity, in other words, was really a science of emergence.

Perhaps this idea is illustrated by the increasing presence of long-term travelers and ex-patriots, international internet communities and the like, people, that is, freer from 'nation'. This picture, when applied to people and societies, may give the impression that society emerges out of people's 'free' interaction. However, I do acknowledge the power of societies' institutions to impact on people's interactions through their reflexive interconnectedness with each other. Adopting Giddens'(1994) theory of structuration and Lash's (1994) structural-and self-reflexivity, I want to paint a picture of the complex interactions between individuals, families, social groups, societies, cultures and the various factors that have been considered in various active audience theories to play a role in the relationship between people and media.

1.3.2. The Complexity Model of Audiences

Appadurai (1996) calls for a human version of the complex theory:

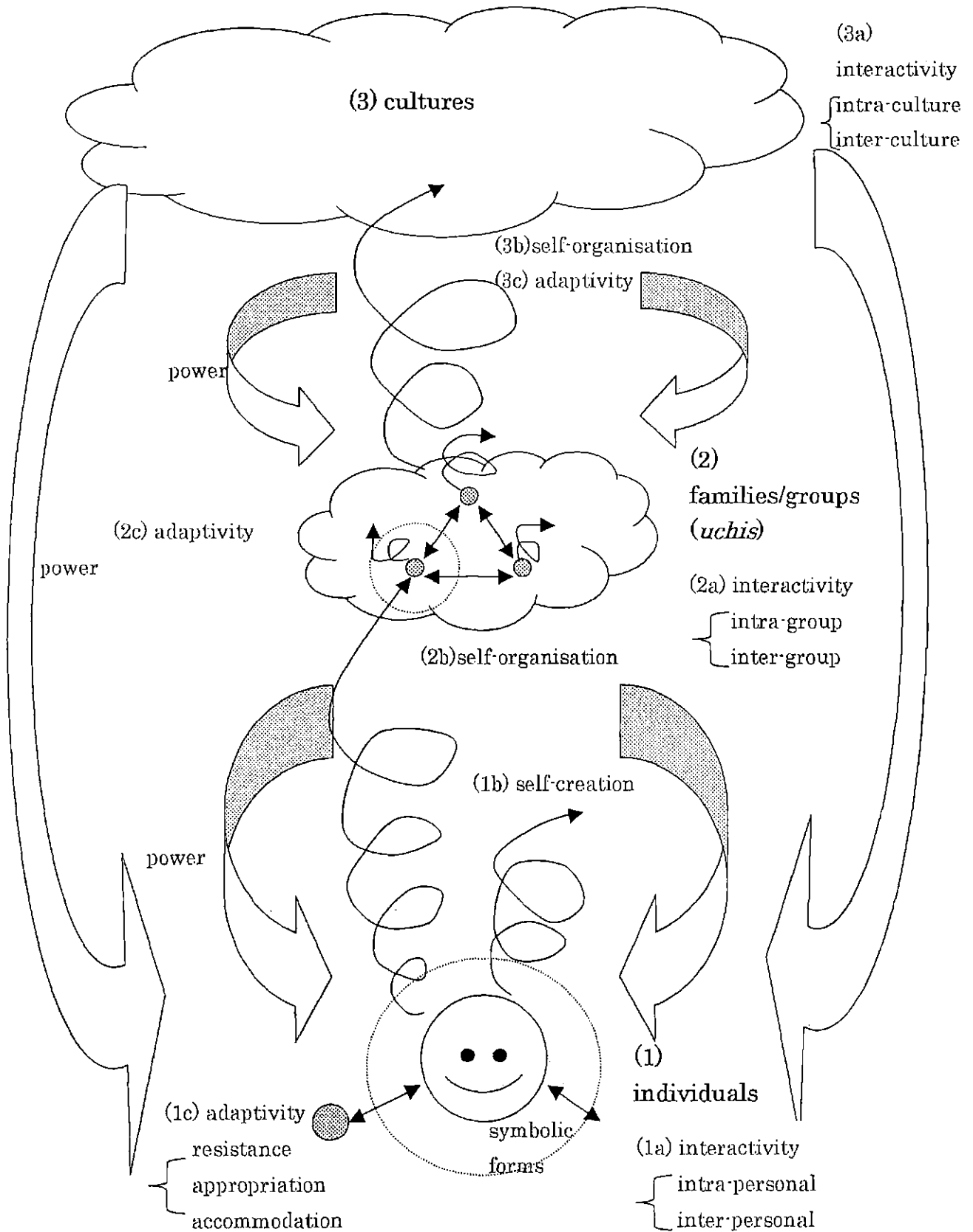
In order for the theory of global cultural interactions predicated on disjunctive flows to have any force greater than that of a mechanical metaphor, it will have to move into something like a human version of the theory that some scientists are calling chaos theory. That is, we will need to ask not how these complex, overlapping, fractal shapes constitute a simple, stable (even if large-scale) system, but to ask what its dynamics are. (p.46)

In this section, I will provide an integrated framework for the demonstration of the complexity of individuals, audiences, families, social groups and cultures and the paths of dynamic interaction between these in terms of interactivity, self-organisation, adaptivity and an edge of chaos (See Figure 1.3.).

I draw three different levels in Figure 1.3. in order to simplify the model but, as discussed above, there are numerous complex systems that exist among the

micro and macro levels and each level cannot be separated but rather is intra- and inter-connected and it interacts with each other dynamically. The individual I have drawn at the bottom of Figure 1.3.(1) represents a magnified picture of a member of families and social groups which I have drawn in the middle of the picture (the black circle in the left side of Figure 1.3.(2)). This picture represents what Willis has called “the *internality* of possible relations and strings of overlapping connection between the creativity of individuals and groups...and wider structures” (Willis, 2000, p.xvi). In the following three sections I look at each level and its dynamic interaction with each other.

Figure 1.3. The Complexity Model of Audiences



The Complexity of Audiences (Figure 1.3.(1))

At the beginning of this thesis I defined audiences as groups or individuals in their capacity as engagers with media and ICT. At the level of the individual, there are two types of interactivity: intra-personal and interpersonal (Figure 1.3.(1a)). In describing intra-personal interactivity I borrow from the uses and gratifications studies' understanding of audience members in starting with such psychological phenomena as needs and wants. To this I add other factors such as beliefs and emotions. In everyday life, human practices can be seen as stemming from the individual intra-personal interactivity of a variety of sometimes conflicting and sometimes accumulating needs and wants. The processing of information in the brain has, in various traditions of audience research, particularly *Joho Kodo* studies, been understood as intra-personal communication; that is, interaction within the individual (I am calling this 'intra-personal interactivity'). So, within the individual, pieces of information, beliefs, emotions, needs, wants and so on, coming from a variety of sources such as personality, family environment and various factors of social context, are interacting both with each other and with media messages and images and, out of this interaction, emerges everyday behaviour, activities and practices.

Interpersonal interactivity refers to individuals interacting with other individuals. This interaction may be either face-to-face or mediated. To the typology of individual interaction, Thompson (1995) adds 'mediated quasi-interaction', referring to the 'one-way (hence 'quasi') interaction' between producers and recipients of media texts. *Joho Kodo* studies provide a theoretical framework for both inter- and intra-action. This framework includes 'interaction with things' or, in other words, with 'symbolic forms' (intra-action), such as keeping diaries, browsing the web, taking photos, playing video games and so on and interaction with people, including both mediated and face-to-face communication. At this level of interactivity we can observe a variety of types of audience engagement such as information and communication activity, parasocial

interaction, the diffusion of messages and participation (for example, feedback to media producers in the form of letters).

Thus, through this interactivity, people organise themselves internally as they reflect upon and deal with their beliefs, values, thoughts, feelings and the like, and 'externally' with others via face-to-face and mediated communication in the process of shaping and reshaping their identities (Figure 1.3.(1b)). This process of shaping identity involves the appropriation of ideas, values, images and so forth from the world and their organisation into shifting identities. These things are appropriated from a myriad of sources but I am particularly interested in the role media images and messages play as 'cultural resources' or 'symbolic forms' in this process. Giddens (1992, p.30) links the characteristics of self-organisation and appropriation and the role media play in them.

The self today is for everyone a reflexive project—a more or less continuous interrogation of past, present and future. It is a project carried on amid a profusion of reflexive resources: therapy and self-help manuals of all kinds, television programmes and magazine articles.

This self-organisation within the 'complex system' that is the individual and through processes of communication, is what I interpret Thompson to be identifying as 'self-formation' and is what I am calling 'self-creation', allowing for more creative freedom, on the part of people, than Thompson, focusing a little more on the power of media, wants to allow for.

The talk within some active audience theories of, on the one hand, resistance to dominant ideology or to change and, on the other, 'appropriation' of cultural resources, is the active aspect of adaptivity (Figure 1.3.(1c)). I intend to make use of three forms of complexity theory's concept of adaptivity. The first two forms, resistance and appropriation, are the active aspects. The third form, accommodation, is the more passive aspect, involving circumstances or situations

over which the individual has little power (Figure 1.3.(1c)). However these three forms of adaptivity are in many cases inseparable, as media messages are arguably often the medium of social control and ideology. Thus individuals' adaptivity involves a combination of resistance to, accommodation to and appropriation of cultural resources and symbolic forms. At the site of adaptivity are further forms of audience engagement, such as selectivity, utility and interpretation—'preferred', resistant or negotiated (Hall, 1980). Audience reception studies focus on this interpretation as the site of play between what I have called resistance, accommodation and appropriation. At this site individuals appropriate from cultural resources but are subject to and therefore must accommodate to external forces or factors such as those created by, for example, personal, group and family circumstances, class and gender, cultural or social norms, powerful institutions, ideology and so forth (Morley, 1986; Radway, 1984; Ang, 1985; Lull, 1988, 1990). Adaptivity describes the dynamics of the processes of self-creation and of individuals' relationships with their external environment (other people, institutions, media) and it shows how the external environment in turn feeds back into self-creation (Figure 1.3.(1b)).

I maintain that the processes of self-creation have the potential to reach criticality. We often claim to have reached 'turning points' in our lives which signify big changes in beliefs, values, aims and so on. These points are usually positive phase transitions in our lives, although when they occur at the edge of chaos they can be very difficult and confusing. They may be initiated by a variety of lived or mediated experiences, for example by appropriation from travel, from a conversation or from a book, these experiences then combining and feeding into the 'emotional symphony' building up to criticality.

Obviously, the 'same' experience (taking part in the same conversation, reading the same book or watching the same movie) has different results for different people. Certain media texts may have a highly undesirable impact on people. They may, in their self-creation, reach a critical point and go over the

edge of chaos. This may manifest itself in a variety of undesirable ways, for example in violent or otherwise destructive rampages, divorce, identity crises, and other behaviours leading to suicide and so forth. However, in such chaotic situations many people can find a balance between chaos and order, finding security and stability through adaptation to changing social circumstances and creation of a sense of 'home', where, in Waldrop's words, "life has enough stability to sustain itself and enough creativity to deserve the name of life" (Waldrop, 1992, p.12).

The Complexity of Families and Social Groups (Figure 1.3.(2))

Individually self-creating and interacting people create and recreate the families and other social groups to which they belong (Figure 1.3.(2)). The relationships at this level, of group, reflect those at the level of individuals seen in the previous section (Figure 1.3.(1)). Within and amongst families/groups there is, again, interactivity of two kinds: intra-group (between family/group members) and inter-group (between one family/group and another) (Figure 1.3.(2a)). The family/group self-organises as members interact with each other and from this individual interaction (which is equivalent to family/group self-organisation) the family/group emerges (Figure 1.3.(2b)). The self-organisation of the emergent family/group feeds back to members and in turn influences individuals' interactions and self-creation (Figure 1.3.(1)). Inter-group interactivity, that is, self-organisation of family/group through interaction with other families/groups, combines with intra-group interactivity in the dynamic organisation and reorganisation, shaping and reshaping, of the family/group.

Resistance to traditional values and appropriation from cultural resources take place as families incorporate new ideas into their intra-group interactivity (Figure 1.3.(2c)). Through this resistance and creative appropriation, traditional family relationships partially and gradually give way to increasingly modern ones. Giddens (1992) focuses on this reflexive process and speaks of the

increasing role of romantic love in providing the basis of the marriage relationship as traditional or more economically based marriages become fewer. Increasingly, romantic love influences the shape of the family as do changing economic and social situations, leading to the decline of strongly gender-differentiated families and the declining birth-rate. As with individuals' self-creation, this self-organisation is not unfettered but is influenced to varying degrees by social and cultural norms, powers, controls, ideologies and so on. Morley (1986), for example, in looking at family relationships in terms of social class and gender and through a framework of patriarchal ideology, offered an analysis in terms of power relationships. He looked at the mechanisms for social influence on family relationships, specifically male/female relationships. It is to such influences that families/groups accommodate in their self-organisation. The media play a role both as indicators of these changing patterns of family members' interactivity (Morley, 1986, used control over programme choice as an indicator of family power relationships) and as forces in them (in their capacity as the medium of ideology). As individuals resist traditional cultural values, appropriate cultural resources and accommodate to societal structures in the processes of self-creation, they simultaneously resist, appropriate and accommodate in their capacity as members of self-organising families.

Families similarly reach points of criticality, which can be manifested by either desirable or undesirable changes. Families may become more liberated from cultural or social norms as their members incorporate values and ideals from, for instance, 'distant' cultural resources into their family relationships. Thus, for instance, gender-differentiation within a family may decrease—we can see this in the increasing numbers of 'househusbands' and working women, or family relationships may change as, for example, more career women and men use the home as their base, only going into an office once a week, thus spending more time with spouses and children. Similarly, families separated by

circumstance can virtually share everyday activities through internet television or maintain relationships through easy and cheap thus frequent communication. On the other hand, families may suffer fragmentation as increasing individualism weakens family relationships. Higher numbers of television sets per household and of television channels may lead to a loss of communal space or 'hearth', changing the meaning of 'home' (Silverstone, 1994, 1999, investigates the role of television in providing a family hearth), leading to a tendency towards such fragmentation and individualisation in the family (Beck, 2002).

The Complexity of Cultures (Figure 1.3.(3))

The aim of this discussion is to show the dynamic interaction of micro-level phenomena (individuals), macro-level phenomena (cultures) and all the phenomena in between, thereby demonstrating the complexity of 'culture', a term which is becoming increasingly hard to define as the 'boundaries' (to the extent that they exist) of 'cultures' become increasingly indistinct. I will start with the concept of interactivity, again identifying intra-cultural and inter-cultural interaction (Figure 1.3.(3a)). In describing intra-cultural interaction, I borrow from Lull's (2001) idea of 'supercultures'. I interpret Lull's idea of the latter as claiming that supercultures can exist at several levels. A superculture belongs to an individual and is "the cultural matrix that individuals create for themselves" (Lull, 2001, p.132). It is created through the appropriation of cultural resources and consists of a conglomeration of cultural resources from both 'distant' (global) and 'close' (national and local) sources. Central to Lull's idea is the recognition that supercultures have the potential to become increasingly mixed, varied, broader and diverse, "in a world where access to 'distant' cultural resources has expanded enormously..." but maintain the embodiment of "traditional or 'close' cultural resources too—the values and social practices characteristic of 'local' cultures as they are learned and reproduced by individuals and groups" (Lull, 2001, p.132). Lull terms people 'cultural

programmers' and I liken cultural programming to self-creation (Figure 1.3.(1b)). Each individual has a superculture and when individuals interact, so too do aspects of their supercultures. Through this interaction, values, norms and so forth are exchanged and appropriated in the processes of self-creation and out of this, culture emerges (Figure 1.3.(3b)). Tomlinson tries to capture the processes of the emergence of culture by talking of "the ways in which people make their lives, individually and collectively, meaningful by communicating with each other" (Tomlinson, 1999, p.18).

Of course it is difficult to draw a boundary between two distinct cultures and thus identify what is inter- and what is intra-cultural interactivity—should we use geographical, ethnic, national or other criteria? By inter-cultural interactivity I mean to refer to that which is entailed by phrases such as 'cross-cultural difference', 'the Westernisation of Japanese culture', 'inter-cultural communication', 'the meeting of cultures' and so forth. These phrases describe interaction between 'cultures', however indistinct their boundaries may be. It is clear that, through the processes of globalisation, 'supercultures' are interacting more and more with each other, leading to the increasing indistinctness of 'cultural boundaries'. Hannerz (1992) sees cultures not as entities but as on-going processes of creation of meanings by the people of a society. As people create and interact more and more with 'transnational' meanings, 'cultures' become increasingly diverse and complex. The processes Hannerz identifies as *constituting* 'culture' are those from which I identify 'culture' *emerging*—thus our views on what 'culture' is, are not dissimilar.

Through both types of interaction, inter- and intra-culture, cultures are self-organised, through the shaping and reshaping of the values, ideas, understandings, norms, rules and so forth which constitute them (Figure 1.3.(3b)). In turn, the emergent phenomena themselves feed back into and shape and reshape the interaction and self-creation of the individuals and groups out of whose interaction culture emerges (Figure 1.3.(1) (2)).

Therefore the transformations cultures undergo at the level of the macro are connected closely to individuals' actions in everyday life. Tomlinson (1999) states that globalisation is 'complex connectivity', referring to "the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependences that characterise modern social life" (Tomlinson, 1999, p.2). The model of complexity I am using as one of the paradigms for my research links individuals' 'micro-actions' with the 'macro-transformations' of culture. Viewing the world as a system of complex connectivity "links the myriad small everyday actions of millions with the fates of distant, unknown others and even with the possible fate of the planet" (Tomlinson, 1999, p.25). While Tomlinson is more concerned about linking individuals with other distant individuals at the micro-level (as, for example, when he links a teenager's clothing choice to the fate of a sweatshop worker in the Philippines), I am also interested in the interaction between individuals from which other groupings, from families, through localities, to 'cultures' emerge.

Adaptivity concerns the various responses to globalisation the people of a 'culture' are making (Figure 1.3.(3c)).

The central problem of today's global interactions is the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenisation. (Appadurai, 1990, p.295)

As a consequence of these interactions and the resultant tension, Hall (1992a) has discussed three ways in which 'cultures' are adapting to globalisation, and these are applicable to my typology of adaptivity. The first mode of adaptivity is that of accommodation, whereby national identities are being eroded as a result of homogenisation of culture in a globalising world. The second mode of adaptivity, that of resistance, is that in which national, local or 'particularistic identities' are being strengthened through resistance to globalisation. The final mode of adaptivity, appropriation, is the way in which national identities are

declining but, in their place, 'new identities of hybridity' are emerging (Hall, 1992a, p.300).

This view of adaptivity can be seen as corresponding to Carey's (1989) model of communication, which identifies two types: the ritual and transmission views of communication. Carey's linear transmission model of communication can be seen as corresponding to Hall's 'erosion' and 'strengthening' modes of adaptation. This view states that communication is a matter of sending or transmitting a message from one point to another. When the sender of the message is a powerful and globally dominant culture, and the receiver is a relatively weaker one, we will have a situation of cultural imperialism. On this view the weaker culture will have to accommodate to the cultural values of the more dominant culture, its traditional culture giving way to a more global, and not necessarily more desirable, culture. To the extent that a culture appropriates, its incorporation of new values is desirable but, to the extent that that culture must accommodate to others, some of the transformations it undergoes may be undesirable. The non-linear ritual view of communication, corresponding to Hall's emergence of new identities of hybridity, focuses on the ways in which communication is a means of sharing, participation, communion and fellowship. The appropriation of distant cultural resources within inter-cultural interactivity, seen as the sharing of global or universal values, could, ideally, result in such a state of global communion and fellowship.

As the globalisation of the world means both more intra-cultural interactivity (the intensification of the diversification of supercultures as distant cultural resources are increasingly mixed) and more inter-cultural interactivity and transnational connectivity (made possible by increased media resources and technology, travel, diaspora and the like) it is likely that contemporary cultures are 'deterritorialising' (Appadurai, 1990; Lull, 2000; Morley and Robins, 1995; Tomlinson, 1999), as they move towards an edge of chaos; still, perhaps, sustaining themselves but also, perhaps, building up to the emergence of new

'cultures'. I am interested in discovering the extent to which media and ICT may be precipitating a third phase transition in this process in Japan.

1.4. Towards the 'De-Westernising' of Media Studies

There are growing signs that US- and UK-based media academics are beginning to feel embarrassed about viewing the rest of the world as a forgotten understudy. (Curran and Park, 2000, p.3)

The second theoretical aim of this thesis is to aid in de-Westernising audience research. The aim of the remaining chapters is to examine and develop the theoretical framework that I have proposed in this chapter, with reference to the Japanese field, a non-Western society.

Chie Nakane (1967), a Japanese social anthropologist working from the perspective of British structural functionalism, set out to analyse Japanese culture and people using Japanese emic concepts. Nakane identifies two general ways in which research has been conducted on Japanese society, both of which she finds to be inadequate. The first, of which some of both Japanese and Western scholars are guilty, applies Western concepts to Japanese society, purportedly identifying such Western phenomena in modern, 'Westernised' Japanese society but, Nakane claims, failing to recognise the important ways in which Japan remains different from the West. The alternative trend in the research is to look for uniquely Japanese phenomena. While Nakane thinks this represents a step in the right direction, this position still entails the problem of attempting to understand Japanese society in comparison with Western society, for, lurking behind the assumption that Japan is unique is a background of Western concepts, in comparison with which Japan appears to be unique. Nakane's claim is that both these approaches fail, because of their beginning with Western measurements, to capture the reality of Japanese society. In using Western measurements to understand Japanese society much remains undiscoverable and these approaches thus become invalid. Nakane, in her study of Japanese, Chinese and Indian societies, attempts to find the essentially

Japanese structures within Japanese society, searching for the structure underlying group consciousness, which she sees as i) definitive of and ii) unique to, Japanese society. She relies almost exclusively on the pair of concepts *uchi* (inside, interior, us) and *soto* (outside, exterior, them) and on the hierarchies which relate to them, in understanding Japanese culture. While it is not at all clear that either of these two premises are true, and while Nakane has been heavily criticised by other Japanese culture studies scholars (Sugimoto, 1997) on these points, the concepts of *uchi* and *soto* remain useful in understanding various aspects of Japanese society and culture.

Therefore as the first process in the 'de-Westernising' of media studies, I recontextualise some Japanese emic concepts such as *uchi* and *soto* in contemporary Japanese society. I borrow the concept of *uchi* from its structural functionalistic approach, restructure it within the paradigm of complexity and recontextualise it by making use of the ethnographic research in contemporary Japanese society. As a result of this, I argue that *uchi* is a useful concept which can encompass all levels of cultural and social structures ranging from micro to macro (for example, families, friends, colleagues, social groups, 'taste', virtual, local, national and global communities and so on) in Japan (See Figure 1.3.(2) and Chapter Five). Thus through the process of recontextualisation and reconstruction of Japanese emic concepts, I hope I can open a window for 'wider comparative research' on the cross-cultural validity of non-Western, Japanese emic concepts, thereby introducing them into the Western literature on media.

Secondly, I contextualise Western emic concepts, which hitherto have been uncritically considered as etic concepts, and examine the cross-cultural validity of those concepts in Japan. By referring to the ethnographic research on Japanese audiences, I show the validity of some dimensions of 'audience engagement' which encompass some concepts within various active audience studies (Table 1.2.). However, I also show the necessity for reconstruction of other Western concepts of audience engagement, in order to understand Japanese

audiences because of the differences of their traditional cultural norms and ideologies (Chapter Four). Thus, from my findings of ethnographic research in Japan, I will argue that some Western concepts in the social sciences may be only Western emic rather than universal, etic concepts.

Finally, the theoretical aim in this thesis of aiding in the 'de-Westernising' of media studies is not only an attempt to introduce Japanese audiences into the Western literature on media and to construct a 'unique model' of Japanese audiences by comparison in terms of the dichotomy between "the West and the Rest" (Hall, 1992b), but also to work towards the construction of a 'culturally hybridised model' in order to understand the dynamism and complexity of audiences in the context of globalisation. The theoretical framework which I discussed in this chapter is not only constructed as an integrated framework based on various audience studies which have been developed within different cultural, social and historical contexts in the West, but also based on my ethnographic research in Japan. My concept of self-creation emerged from both my personal and my informants' mediated experiences with 'distant' cultural resources during the time of my pre-fieldwork in Japan (cf. Chapter Three). Therefore this theoretical framework has been developed, and its cross-cultural validity has been tested, on the basis of an ongoing examination of the theories and concepts of both the West and Japan, and that of social practices of Japanese audiences in everyday life, as Chapters Four, Five and Six will show.

This model itself is not a fixed, but a fluid one. For example, in Figure 1.3., 'power' can incorporate different kinds of ideologies in different cultures. In Japan, 'power' incorporates patriarchy, seniority, hierarchy, collectivist and "ie ideologies" (Appendix A2), while in other societies it may incorporate matriarchy or individualistic ideologies. This picture also shows that the arrow of 'power' from cultures and social groups is much bigger than that from self-creation from individuals. This is because, on the basis of my ethnographic research, I realised that 'power' which comes from Japanese traditional culture and from the

social groups to which people belong, still has a great influence on their everyday life. Individuals, however, have created and recreated themselves in original and creative ways through both mediated and non-mediated interaction. In other cultural settings, including some specialised settings in Japan, the arrow of 'power' might become much smaller and the arrow of self-creation might become much bigger in some cases, such as in that of diaspora, and among people who live 'between' cultures (Clifford, 1992, p.109).

Through the three procedures I have suggested in this thesis for the 'de-Westernising' of media studies, I hope I can provide media scholars both opportunities for better understanding Japanese audiences and for creating a global communicative time-space which can encompass the role of media in the context of globalisation. I believe this 'dialogue time-space' which exists beyond our cultural, geographical and national boundaries may provide a modest step towards the 'de-Westernising' of media studies.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined a theoretical framework to analyse the complex and diverse ways in which audiences engage with media in the context of rapid social changes and globalisation. By using the concepts of both 'audience engagement' and 'self-creation', I have shown the possibilities of the convergence of a variety of active audience studies in regard to the paradigm of everyday life and complexity, in order to understand the dynamism of audiences and the complex interactions between individuals and social and cultural structures. In the remaining chapters I will apply the model I have developed in this chapter to Japanese culture, families and audiences, and by referring to my ethnographic research I will investigate the dynamism of contemporary Japanese culture. Finally, in the conclusion, I will address the issue of the 'de-Westernising' of media studies with respect to current issues existing in the

body of social science methodology; that is, the dichotomy between 'universalism in the West' and 'the peculiarity in the Rest'. In the following chapter I will discuss some of the more pertinent aspects of conceptions of Japanese culture.

Chapter Two: Conceptions of Japanese Culture and Emic Concepts

Introduction

Adding empirical data about Japanese audiences to the media literature is one of the aims of this thesis. In presenting findings about Japanese audiences it has been my wish to step out of hitherto overused dichotomies between 'Western' and 'Japanese' phenomena and the polarity between collectivism and individualism (cf. Rosenburger, 1992). Within research informed by such distinctions, Japanese people have often been portrayed as lacking a sense of self or any self-determination (cf. Befu, 1997). The concept of self-creation I have introduced, I hope challenges, or at least provides an alternative understanding to, this view. In this chapter I look at Japanese conceptions of self and inter-personal interactivity.

This thesis applies the theoretical framework of Chapter One to Japan in an attempt to understand the dynamic relationships between conceptions of Japanese culture, audiences and individuals. This chapter aims to show the dynamism of Japan today and the possibility of a third phase transition in its history. It also aims to select, examine and develop some concepts from Japanese culture studies that will be useful in my analysis of interpersonal relationships and a sense of self in the contemporary Japanese society.

I start with a brief account of recent Japanese history from the perspective of complexity, incorporating into my perspective the views from three Japanese commentators. I apply the ideas of the paradigm of complexity to conceptions of Japanese culture to illuminate the ways in which Japan can be understood as changing from a more closed and traditional culture to one opening up and accepting, or even embracing, new values.

2.1. The Impact of Media and Cultural Resources on Japanese Culture

Before looking specifically at the emic concepts contained within Japanese culture studies, I want to take an historical perspective on the more recent general transformations in Japan. In this section, I present the respective perspectives of three commentators on recent changes in Japan and the increasing change brought by the dramatic influx of cultural resources via the boom in ICT and worldwide travel. I then incorporate these perspectives into the application of the model of complexity to such changes at the level of culture in order to provide a picture of the impact of ICT in Japan today.

2.1.1. Japan's Forced Modernisation

Hidehiko Sekizawa, director of a Japanese advertising research institution, writes, in the introduction to the results of a survey conducted into the changes in people's attitudes and behaviour since becoming internet users, of two historical phases of change in Japan's social structure. The first of these was the Meiji Restoration of 1868 and the second, the events directly after the end of World War II. Both of these phases represent Japan's forced 'opening up' to the rest of the world and both, Sekizawa argues, had significant effects upon Japanese society and culture (Hakuhodo Seikatsu Sogo Kenkjujo, 2000). Kenzaburo Ooe, a Japanese Nobel Prize-winning novelist, and Seiji Ozawa, the director of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, both famous and well-respected figures in Japan, in a conversational newspaper article on the way forward for Japan in the twenty-first century, share the view that these two periods in Japan's recent history represented important transitions in its culture and society (Ooe and Ozawa, 2000). This thesis is not the place to present their arguments for such a view in any detail. What I want to draw attention to is the claim, made in both pieces, that the recent and rapid expansion of ICT will represent the third important phase of change in modern

Japanese society.

The first two phases of change were imposed from the outside. The Meiji Restoration occurred when the ships of Western imperialism, after taking Hong Kong, arrived on Japan's shores to demand that Japan commence international and trade relations with the Western world. Japan, having witnessed the defeat of China at the hands of the French and British in the Opium War and thereby unwilling to fight the war that refusal would have meant, was forced to sign unfavourable trade agreements with The United States, The Netherlands, Russia, Great Britain and France. Thus after two hundred years of being closed to the rest of the world, Japan was forced to open up. The end of World War II brought a second wave of enforced co-operation with the West when American troops and military and political institutions took over Japan in the seven-year occupation from 1945 to 1952. Both events meant an influx of Western influence, significant changes in social structure and, for many, an 'impurification' of Japanese culture.

2.1.2. Japan's Autonomous 'Opening Up'

Unlike these first two phases of change, the third phase is being precipitated from within, that is, Japanese people themselves are, in their increasing engagement with media and ICT of all types, again, opening up to the West. Sekizawa sees the internet as being at the centre of the transition to an 'Information society'. Coming from a commercial point of view, he is concerned with the business opportunities for Japanese companies created by this transition but stresses, borrowing from the modern Japanese novelist, Souseki Natsume's 1911 lecture, that while the modernisation of Japan was caused by external forces, this next 'shift' must come through the autonomous opening of Japan's doors by Japanese people themselves.

Ooe's and Ozawa's conversation is more concerned with the question of which way Japan should go in the twenty-first century. Should Japan, currently geographically and linguistically isolated, remain so or, alternatively, adopt new

international strategies in opening up to the rest of the world? Both men agree that now is the time to make this decision. Similarly, both agree that 'opening up' is the right way forward and that ICT will be at the centre of creating the possibilities for participation in the world. They focus on individualism as being at the centre of the new strategy via which Japan can participate on a more equal footing with Western and other countries. The beginning of the 'individualisation' of Japanese people should be with the re-education of its children, whose 'individual spirits' should be encouraged, no longer suppressed by oppressive and traditional institutions. Children should be taught the virtues and techniques of the open and confident expression of opinions. ICT will allow for the direct exchange of views between individuals, free from oppressive institutions and nation. If Japan generates this kind of individual then it will be able to open up in this next transition. If Japanese people take on a stronger sense of individualism and exchange their unique standards, which have always been used to excuse Japan from complying to world norms, for global standards and equal participation, then Japan's institutions, organisations and nation will prosper and succeed in the global realm.

Another aspect of Japan's increasing venturing out into the world is raised by Shinji Yamashita (2000), a Japanese cultural anthropologist, who recently wrote a piece for one of the largest newspapers on Japan's changing travel tendencies and growing female diasporate population. I mention his article here as it points to another factor, alongside and interlinked with ICT, in Japan's increasing inter-cultural interactivity. Japanese people, especially young women, are developing closer links with foreign cultures as they become increasingly unable to live within Japanese society.

Yamashita claims that there are 700,000 Japanese living abroad and that ten percent of these are people who have left Japan and joined other cultures through marriage because of a desire to seek some kind of fulfillment that cannot be found living in Japanese society. This group of diasporate Japanese, Yamashita

distinguishes from the earlier Japanese immigrants to The United States and to Hawaii. The group he focuses on are largely young women who, after travelling abroad several times, on return to Japan have found that they cannot adapt to Japanese culture and specifically its gender-differentiated work ethic so choose to live and work abroad, often marrying men from the countries they choose to be in.

In 1995 more than 300 young Japanese women were living in Bali, married to Balinese men and bringing up their families in ways they never thought possible in Japan. These women were struck by the relaxed lifestyle, warm and co-operative family relations and rich family values normal in Bali but no longer present, they felt, in materially rich yet emotionally impoverished contemporary Japanese families. Such women have not cut their ties with Japan, still keeping their Japanese citizenship and maintaining contact with friends and family by frequent visits. They “go home” to both Japan and their new country, living not *in* either culture but *between* cultures (cf. Yamashita, 1996a, 1996b).

What I want to take from Yamashita's article is the significance of new patterns, emerging from young Japanese women's attitudes and lifestyles, of inter-cultural interactivity and the diversifying supercultures of these women. While these women do not reside in Japan it is similar attitudes, in people residing in Japan and showing suggestions of the next transition in Japanese culture and society, I wish to highlight in my research. I believe that such changes, shown by Yamashita, Sekizawa, Ooe and Ozawa, do show a tendency towards significant change in contemporary Japan, change that can be illuminated by the paradigm of complexity, which provides a model for understanding the dynamics of both Japan's inter- and intra-cultural interactivity, which may well be precipitating a third phase transition in Japan's history.

2.1.3. The Transitions Towards Chaos in Recent Japanese History

The model of complexity can readily be applied to the transitions described by the commentators I have discussed. The Meiji Restoration forced intercultural

interactivity upon the leaders and elites of Japan who had wanted to maintain the stability of the country in isolation from contact with the West. These leaders, on coming into contact with Westerners, were forced to interact and adapt to the new forces they represented in order to sustain Japan and avoid the total loss of national identity through colonisation by Western countries. After a chaotic period of war and much killing amongst Japanese people, many traditional institutions were forced to adapt to the changes brought by the new Meiji leadership. This adaptation involved changing the structures of military, political, social, educational and economic institutions. Japanese leaders developed Japan's own constitution, appropriating from that of the French and informed by several European advisors, in their drive to retain independence yet incorporate strategies for successful international relations. Japanese society was further organised by leaders and put on a path of modernisation. As the Empire of Japan grew and self-organised through the actions of its new leaders, during the first part of the twentieth century, it became an increasingly strong imperial power. This growing strength, particularly military strength, and nationalism reached a point of criticality during the Second World War, ultimately precipitating the second transition in Japan's modernisation.

After Japan's defeat by the Allies and its recognition of its powerlessness against them, Japanese leaders were, again, forced to adapt to Western power. American troops invaded and occupied Japan, and Japanese leaders were again forced to incorporate Western values into the remodernisation of their country. Japan had to adapt to new democratic institutions, and, in their appropriation of the modern ways of the West they drafted the new democratic constitution. After the chaos of these times passed, business leaders began to appropriate Western ideas and cultural resources, opening Tokyo Disneyland and becoming world leaders in the manufacture of electronic home appliances, new symbols of wealth in 'remodernising' and rapidly self-organising Japan. The economic and commercial reorganisation of Japan led to enormous international economic

success, allowing for the nation to maintain many of its traditional and unique social and economic structures, without conforming to Western standards. The Japanese, in their regained strength, again developed pride in their unique recipe for international success.

However, the economic recession of the 1990s brought with it a renewed need for adaptivity to the West as Japan's economy could no longer sustain itself without adapting. Old hierarchical company structures thus began to give way to new systems, appropriated from American performance-based structures but still tailored to Japanese employer-employee relations.

The changes brought by the Meiji Restoration and the re-modernisation of Japan after World War II came from external sources, namely, the West. The American ships and the end of the war initially brought chaos to Japanese society and after the chaos died down Japan was left with changed values and a loss of its national identity. Japanese leaders were forced into a position from which they had to adapt to and appropriate Western values. They re-organised Japanese society, creating new constitutions, educational systems and economic institutions. These two periods represent respectively the modernisation and re-modernisation of Japan during which the country recovered from its losses and recovered its national identity. Along with this recovery came a rising nationalism which took the form, in Japan, of emphasising its uniqueness in the world, resisting Western standards and developing unique standards, guiding its own activities, against the rest of the world.

Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, intellectuals and business leaders are talking about the third transition of Japanese society. Sekizawa, Ooe and Ozawa talk about the capacities of ICT and the role it may play in creating a country of people with a stronger sense of individualism. ICT allows 'borderless' and direct communication, free from societal institutions and nation, with other individuals all over the world. Yamashita also shows us how many young people are tending to step outside of the physical and psychological bounds of Japan by

living inter-culturally in order to find satisfaction in their individual lives. These commentators are interested in the power of individuals to set such transformations of Japanese culture and society in motion. These transformations will come from neither the elites or leaders of Japan nor, externally, from the West or the rest of the world, but internally, from ordinary people.

The above thoughts represent high hopes for a people often thought to move collectively and have relatively little individual self-determination (cf. Rosenburger, 1992; Befu, 1997). However, if Japan is showing signs of such transformations with the increasing utilisation of ICT, this would have very interesting implications for the country's future. In my research and observation of my informants' engagement with media and ICT in their everyday lives, I will not treat the thoughts of these commentators as a hypothesis to be tested. Rather, in my trying to gain an understanding of the ways in which people engage with media and ICT in everyday life, I will attempt to observe the extent to which, on one hand, adaptation to traditional norms and ideology and, on the other, appropriation from distant cultural resources, form part of people's everyday self-creation. I want to observe the extent to which this self-creation is becoming the creation of more individualistic selves and the extent to which such self-creation is driven by the inter-cultural interactivity made easier by media and ICT. In the next section I will discuss some useful emic concepts which I have taken from Japanese culture studies.

2.2. *Nihonjinron* (Japanese Culture Studies)

This section discusses emic concepts, from *Nihonjinron* (see Appendix A1) I consider useful in understanding self and inter-personal relationships within Japanese society. There have been vast amounts of books and papers published on Japanese identity and culture since the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Both the 1854 pre-Meiji Restoration and the 1945 post-war ‘invasions’ of Japan by the West left Japan and its culture in chaos. There was considerable wiping out of traditional practices and institutions and a subsequent loss of cultural and national identity as Japanese people—scholars, novelists, politicians, intellectuals and ordinary people—struggled to answer the question, “Who are we?” The body of literature constituting *Nihonjinron* represents thousands of attempts to answer this question and maps Japanese people’s own changing perspectives on and attitudes towards their identity. The swinging between inferiority and superiority to the West follows the changing economic relationships between Japan and the West and shows Japanese people’s very dependent sense of identity. *Nihonjinron* thus comes from various sources, from professionals’, intellectuals’ and scholars’ need to fill the empty feeling left after the devastation of traditional values and practices to Japanese political and business elites’ sponsorship of works aimed at inciting nationalism amongst Japanese living both inside and outside Japan and from Westerners’ attempts to understand the Japanese in order to best overpower them during the war, to their wish to emulate their 1980s economic success. Such studies have been brought under the category of *Nihonjinron* and through them and their use of both what are thought to be universal *etic* concepts and Japanese *emic* concepts to account for it, we can begin to grasp ‘Japanese culture’ and identity.

Because most scholars accept that what are thought to be *etic* concepts are really just Euro-American *emic* concepts, transformed, through the forces of eurocentrism, into ‘*etic*’ concepts (cf. Sugimoto, 1997) I will use both ‘Western’ and

'Japanese' concepts in my study in an attempt to avoid eurocentrism. However, at the same time, it is important to avoid obfuscation and retreat into obscurity by over-reliance on the use of concepts thought to be emic Japanese ones when Western concepts would be equally illuminating. I will extract the conceptual tools I see as most illuminating of Japanese concepts of self and inter-personal relationship. However, *Nihonjinron* has received a lot of criticism to which I feel I must reply, the main criticisms being (i) that negative and positive appraisals of Japanese culture have merely followed swinging economic relations with the United States of America, thus have weak validity (for example, Aoki, 1990), (ii) that they all assume Japanese culture and people to be homogeneous rather than trying to understand their diversity (for example, Sugimoto, 1997) and (iii) that theories of the latter kind have been aimed at fostering a spirit of nationalism and, being politically motivated and emphasising Japan's 'uniqueness', are of dubious validity (Befu, 1997).

2.2.1. The Validity of Japanese Emic Concepts

The first criticism is that perceptions of Japanese people and culture have been unjustifiably influenced by contemporary economic considerations. This criticism assumes that a nation or people's identity is fixed and thus that the way it is perceived should not change in accordance with changing understandings of relationships between one country and another (economic relationships, for example). However, I agree with Stuart Hall (1996) in suggesting that identity is not fixed but in flux, changing against the backdrop of its environment. Therefore perceptions of 'culture' can justifiably change as perceptions of relations with other 'cultures' transform.

Regarding (ii), the criticism that *Nihonjinron* has assumed 'Japanese culture' to be homogeneous, this may be true. However, this does not entail that the concepts used within *Nihonjinron* entail homogeneity and I intended to use these concepts in a way which does not over-emphasise the homogeneity of Japanese

people.

The use of Japanese emic concepts such as *amae* and *uchi/soto* has been criticised for emphasising the uniqueness of Japanese people and culture (iii). When this 'uniqueness' has been specifically used to foster nationalism, the use of emic concepts has been criticised as unjustified. However, the use of emic concepts when etic ones are insufficient for understanding cultural phenomena is surely justified. I aim to take the more useful Japanese emic concepts out of the context of *Nihonjinron* and put them into the context of attempts to understand Japanese inter-personal relationships, where, I feel, they are more illuminative than Western etic concepts. My use of Japanese emic concepts neither assumes nor implies uniqueness of Japanese people, inter-personal relationships or 'culture'. Such concepts may equally be illuminative of these phenomena everywhere and their development within *Nihonjinron* need not preclude anyone from using them so long as the concepts themselves are justified. Many of the theorists whose work I borrow from have not been concerned to encourage nationalism thus their emic concepts may be justified (Yoshino, 1997). Nakane and Benedict, for instance, are social anthropologists, thus concerned to identify the real nature of the Japanese. The political or otherwise dubious motivations of theories, instead of showing them to be invalid, should suggest that a rigorous assessment of their claims is required before they are accepted. Thus I have taken the concepts from *Nihonjinron* which I see as illuminative of Japanese concepts of self and Japanese inter-personal relationships.

2.2.2. Japanese Emic Concepts from *Nihonjinron*

From *Nihonjinron* I select, examine and develop the following useful concepts: Nakane's *uchi* and *soto* and notion of hierarchy, Doi's *amae* and Hamaguchi's contextualism (cf. Appendix A1).

Uchi and Soto

In searching for the most enduring, unchanging and thus, Nakane assumes, correctly or incorrectly, essential or definitive feature of Japanese society, she looks towards relations, which she argues are the one phenomenon of Japanese society and culture that have not changed since Japan's modernisation.

Uchi and *soto* have several meanings in the Japanese language. *Uchi* is used to refer to inside, the house, family or that belonging to either of these. But *uchi* also, importantly, refers to a sense of belonging together in family or social groups. Each member of an *uchi* is, essentially, an individual and so the internal nature of the group is not homogenous. The members of the group occupy the same 'ba' (equivalent to Giddens's (1984) 'locale') but simply sharing a locale does not, Nakane argues, constitute a social group but merely makes a 'crowd'. Thus the 'group' must be constructed and this is done through a 'strong, everlasting bond' (for example the *ie* ideology (Appendix A2), life-long employment and life-long living in one village with a close-knit community). These bonds can be created only through 'unification' and 'internal structure'. Unification, the becoming 'as one', is achieved through emotional bonds, built up through constant face-to-face communication in the locale. In the locale there is no private space for the individual, only space for the 'group'. An individual has no independent existence, only the group exists. Within the group, opinions, beliefs, values and philosophies must be shared to create internal homogeneity.

The internal structure of the *uchi* emerges through its 'tangibility', the constant sharing of the locale and constant face-to-face interaction. People on the outside, *soto*, are not even considered human beings. To overcome the inherent instability inevitably arising from individual difference within the group, 'group consciousness' must constantly be raised and fostered and this is done through, for example, the daily recitation, in some companies, of the company philosophy. Such 'consciousness-raising' exercises serve to reinforce belongingness to the group and stamp out individualism, and the hierarchy existing within the *uchi* serves to

maintain ties of interdependence between members. The degree of unity of an *uchi* is a function of the contact over time and the passion or intensity of the active reinforcement of the internal structure.

It is the belonging to an *uchi* which gives a person their 'social capital' (the commodity of social interaction) and without this, an individual is nothing. If someone leaves the locale, they lose their social capital as it does not extend beyond space—*uchi* is intrinsically connected to the locale. Thus the *uchi* requires a person's total and exclusive commitment, they cannot leave it nor belong to an alternative *uchi*.

The time and space requirements of belonging mean that, given the gender-role division in Japanese families (much stronger in Japan at the time Nakane was writing, as it was in the West), a woman's *uchi* is the home and family. Families, particularly housewives, are relatively isolated from each other, with inter*uchi* networks poor. However men get outside the home. A man's *uchi* is thus his section at his company. There is of course conflict here for, while, at least from a woman's point of view, a man should belong to the family *uchi* he really puts most of his time and effort into his company or job thus really belonging to the *uchi* of the place of work. This conflict between husband and wife, company and family is one of the more definitive of family relations in Japan.

This picture, if it were indeed true at the time of writing, would be somewhat frightening if it is still true today. I want to look at the importance of *uchis* and their bonds, examining their strength and their changing nature in the face of social change. Have social changes (for example, in family relationships and the economy) led to the decline of the *ie* ideology, life-long employment and geographical stasis? If so, how has this transformed the nature of *uchis*? How has globalisation affected company structures and the closed nature of the home and community? Has the 'home' been 'opened up' by an influx of media images and the connectivity they create? I will investigate face-to-face communication and the question of its giving way to mediated communication through technological

change. I also hope to contextualise the *uchi* with a discussion of deterritorialisation and the question of the disembeddedness of interaction from the locale. In order to address these questions and avoid employing the dichotomy between structure and agency, I will disembed the concept of *uchi* from Nakane's structural-functionalist approach and place it within the paradigm of complexity.

Amae

The second emic concept I have appropriated from *Nihonjinron*, is that of *amae*. Kitade (1993) argues that while in Western families and society the central relationship is that between husband and wife, in Japan the relationship between parents (especially mothers) and children is the most central in society. For Doi (1971), too, the concept of *amae* (psychological dependence) is the most fundamental relationship in both society and inter-personal relationships and is manifested not only by the relationship between mother and child but by those between employer and employee, teacher and student and senior and junior. The implications of this for families and values in Japan run deep. While Western children are encouraged to be independent and overdependence on parents is viewed as undesirable, Japanese children are not discouraged from depending on their mothers and it is normal for children, up to no matter what age, to remain under their parents financial and domestic care until they marry. The household term 'parasite single' (Yamada, 2001), derived from the horror movie *Parasite Eve*, is these days applied to the increasing numbers of men and women in their late twenties and thirties taking full financial and domestic advantage of parents while spending their own substantial incomes on travel, expensive clothes and other luxuries. Such dependence is valuable to both children and mothers (who would be alone in the home if not for their children) and its perception as undesirable stems only from the advanced age to which it extends and its consequent preclusion of the creation of new families. There is a basic understanding in Japanese society that by one's mid- to late-twenties, one should

not only be marrying and having children but should be building up the means by which to take care of one's parents and let them, in their turn, depend on their children in their old age.

The concept of *amae* is essential in understanding family relationships in Japan and has been blamed for supporting a structure which will have a "serious influence on the future of Japan"—the interdependent relationship between the 'parasite single' and the housewife (Yamada, 2001, p.iv). Many of my informants are 'parasite singles' and I will, as with the concept of *uchi*, look at the extent to which *amae* is still present in family relationships today and how it is being transformed in the face of social, economic and technological changes.

Hamaguchi's Contextualism

The paradigm of complexity was directly used within *Nihonjinron* in the work of Eshun Hamaguchi (1998). Hamaguchi applied the model of a complex system to his earlier work on Japanese social relationships, that is, to his model of the 'contextual' (1977). Hamaguchi criticises the dichotomy between individual and society or group and suggests focusing on 'relations' or 'situations' rather than 'individuals' when trying to understand Japanese people in social interaction. In this way he avoids reductionism to constitutive parts by focusing on relations amongst a group rather than individuals within it. In order to do this it is necessary to shift from 'methodological individuum-ism' to 'methodological relatum-ism', that is, apply a methodology which recognises the *relative nature* of the Japanese concept of 'human being'. The Japanese character for human being or person (人間) is composed of the character for 'person' (人) and that for 'among' or 'between' (間), thus the notion of 'human being' in Japanese is essentially relational, necessarily implying relations between individuals. In his 'contextual model' of the Japanese, Hamaguchi sees himself as deconstructing the 'Western idea of the human individual' (its ego-centredness, self-reliance and understanding of human relationships as a means to an end) and describes the

Japanese person not as an isolatable individual but as an emergent property of a social situation, sharing mutual dependence and reliance on others and having regard for personal relationships as ends in themselves. Miyanaga (2000) criticises Hamaguchi's, failing to transcend, as he aimed to, the dichotomy between individualism and collectivism by merely substituting it with a dichotomy between, on the one hand, the West and Japan and, on the other, the individual and the 'contextual'. "While he denies he is a collectivist himself, his model is a distinguished collectivist theory" (Miyanaga, 2000, p.85).

In contrast to Hamaguchi himself, I do not claim that the relational concept of 'human being' is unique to Japan. Rather, his analysis applies to human beings in general but the degree to which Japanese people understand themselves as individuals and place the importance of themselves and their interests, as individuals, below the importance of the interests of their closest groups (*uchis*) arguably differs from Westerners. The difference, if any, between Japanese and Western conceptions of self, is probably more in degree than in kind. Furthermore, the concept Hamaguchi identified as 'the contextual' functions as a norm in Japanese society, around which a 'discourse' (Hall, 1992a) has been constructed in order to prescribe the nature of people's interpersonal relationships. It is encouraged as a virtue in Japan. What Hamaguchi rightly (and by no means uniquely) acknowledges is that the individual cannot be separated from society or social groups. The aspect of Hamaguchi's model that I would like to employ in my analysis, is that the 'self' emerges from interaction with others. In Japan, 'the contextual' provides a model for understanding the ways in which individuals adapt to or appropriate from cultural norms, ideologies and the strong requirements of *uchi* relationships.

Conclusion

This chapter started with the views of some contemporary commentators on the

advent of ICT and what changes its increasing utilisation may bring to Japanese society. The hope expressed is for Japanese people to precipitate, from within, the next phase of opening up to and joining global trends. In order to do this, Japanese people must develop, and institutions must foster, a sense of individualism in the prevailing Japanese sense of self. *Nihonjinron* provides us with a picture of the perception of self amongst Japanese scholars and ordinary people in their search for identity and, from it, I have extracted some emic concepts useful in understanding the interactivity involved in personal relationships between family or *uchi* members. I discussed the concepts of *uchi* and *soto*, *amae* and 'the contextual' and their relevance in an understanding of Japanese interpersonal relationships. I aim to investigate the changing relevance of these 1970s concepts in the face of recent social, economic and technological change. I am interested in the role of media and ICT in the processes of creation and recreation of contemporary Japanese everyday life. I will investigate this role through ethnographic research and, in the next chapter, turn to the methodological issues surrounding such research generally and, in particular, doing ethnographic research amongst Japanese audiences.

Chapter Three: Ethnographic Research on Japanese

Engagement with Media

- Methodological Approach -

Introduction

In this chapter I look at the design of my research in order that the second theoretical aim of this thesis can be approached. Researching Japanese audiences requires being sensitive to 'Japanese culture'. This chapter addresses the question of how my ethnographic research will complement the existing body of quantitative data on Japanese audiences and enable the construction of a methodology for 'de-Westernising' ethnographic media studies.

I aim to show the processes by which I have transformed my theoretical aims into ethnographic methods and have gone, in turn, from thinking about methods to actually testing them in the field. I start with an analysis of the various methods employed and methodologies followed in some previous qualitative and ethnographic research into Western media audiences. The discussion here of general theoretical issues of validity and reliability looks at how this debate has led to developments in ethnographic methodology. I aim to show how my sometimes challenging but always fascinating experiences during the pre-fieldwork stages of my research have led to changes both in my theoretical framework and in the design of my research in a Japanese context. These sections will show how the process of going to the field and back again, testing, analysing, adjusting and retesting my methods, questions, concepts and hypotheses has strengthened both my methods and their ability to reveal the salient features of Japanese people's everyday lives. In this process I realised I had to consider several issues that make doing ethnographic research in Japan, dealing with Japanese families, difficult, because of certain features of Japanese social relations, communication and culture. Therefore this process itself may

illustrate significant comparative cultural indicators. The other issue I have had to deal with is the fact that I myself am a part of the culture I am studying. As I am doing ethnography 'at home', I have had to take into consideration the extent to which I am both an insider and an outsider of Japanese culture. I show how these issues and my particular research interests have led me to adopt the style of in-depth interview, participant observation and general research approach that I have chosen, and I describe and discuss these in detail in this chapter.

3.1. From Theory to Practice: Lessons from Some Previous Ethnographic Research Projects

The central concern of this thesis is audience engagement with media and ICT in everyday life. Previous scholars investigating this or related interests have used a variety of ethnographic research methods, their particular strategy depending on their particular research concern. As the present research adds new media technologies to those hitherto studied in the main body of research into media and everyday life, it is necessary to consider carefully the method to be used in order to best bring to light features of rich media environments that were not the object of earlier ethnographic methods.

The trend towards qualitative and, especially, ethnographic approaches has emerged against the hitherto dominant methodological approaches of textual determinism, media imperialism and behaviourism's psychological reductionism. The main advantage of using ethnographic research in media audience studies is that, to the extent that the use of media is embedded in everyday life, it is best understood from a point of view which takes concrete everyday life, rather than a theoretical or literary abstraction of it, as its source of information. Empirical, and particularly ethnographic research, is able to account for the fact that the audience uses the media and creates and/or recreates its meaning from within its social context (cf. Silverstone, 1990; Morley, 1989). Ethnographic studies of the

audience have exposed the diversity of audiences' use and interpretation of media that are greatly influenced by social factors such as class, gender, ethnicity and culture (Radway, 1984; Ang, 1985; Lull, 1988, 1990; Morley, 1986; see also Chapter One). The present chapter addresses the methodological issues surrounding these studies.

3.1.1. Qualitative Research in Active Audience Studies

From the beginnings of media audience research in the 1930s, qualitative research methods were being employed in an attempt to understand the use of television, film and radio. Katz (1959) was later to label this body of research, 'uses and gratifications studies'. With the growing availability of technologies capable of analysing statistical data and with developments in statistics itself, in the 1960s and '70s, qualitative methods of research gave way to the increasing popularity of quantitative methods of analysis and what were thought to be more 'scientific' approaches to studying media use. While quantitative research was largely the method of choice in the administrative research paradigm, in the critical school qualitative methods were beginning to be employed in an effort move away from the approaches of textual determinism and towards a polysemic understanding of texts. The studies of this stage are understood to be the first active audience studies within the critical school. There have been many audience reception studies conducted over the last two decades and I will discuss only a few of the better known ones.

Textual Analysis and Qualitative Research

In the late 1970s and '80s Brunsdon and Morley (1978) undertook the *Nationwide Audience* project, the first audience research project in British cultural studies qualifying as qualitative. Their method, in the initial stage of the project, was textual analysis of the current affairs programme but the study was complemented by Morley (1980) who showed video tapes of the programme

to groups of people from varying social backgrounds. Morley then interviewed them in order to ascertain their interpretations of the programmes and draw conclusions about correlation between such interpretations and their social backgrounds. Morley used the technique of group interviews, his groups consisting of five to ten people and his interviews lasting 30 minutes. The importance of Morley's work was that he reintroduced qualitative methods into the media audience research tradition in order to establish relationships between interpretations of texts and social context.

Radway (1982, 1983) also used a combination of textual analysis and interview in her study of romance novel readers. She was interested in the appeal of romance fiction to women and interviewed her sixteen informants, romance fiction enthusiasts belonging to a 'club' in a small mid-western town, twice in order to establish arguments against the structuralist view of the autonomy of the text.

Qualitative Research against Media Imperialism: *Dallas*

The extent of the international broadcast and appeal of the American soap opera *Dallas* represented a new phenomenon. The consequences of this phenomenon, viewed against the claims of media imperialism, required new methods of investigation. Ang's well-known *Dallas* study (1985) was concerned to address the issues the soap opera raised and she was also concerned with the appeal of fiction to women. Ang placed an advertisement in a Dutch women's magazine inviting fans of the serial to write letters about their liking or disliking of it. These letters then formed the basis of her analysis of the myriad reasons why women choose to watch such television serials. While Ang did not employ the ethnographic methods of interview or participant observation, her study is considered an important qualitative analysis of women's interpretations of television fiction, showing evidence against the ideology of mass culture and media imperialism.

Interpretations of *Dallas* were also the subject of Liebes and Katz's (1990) study of 200 married couples from a large variety of subcultures and ethnic backgrounds in Israel. Liebes and Katz were interested in the claims of cultural imperialism and therefore were concerned to ascertain the implications of the reception of the American serial in cultures claimed by advocates of the cultural imperialist thesis to be the victims of American cultural imperialism. Through focus-group interviews of groups of three couples the researchers established that a diversity of readings existed amongst the various ethnic/social groups. They found that viewers selectively perceived, interpreted and evaluated the programme from the points of view of their own cultures and personal experiences thus showing evidence against the thesis of cultural imperialism. While the programme does pose constraints on interpretation, viewers are not mere passive recipients of the values and ideology of American culture but rather decoding of such cultural products is an "interaction between the culture of the viewer and the culture of the producer" (p.x). With this study, Katz, one of the most important figures in uses and gratifications studies, was seen to be making an important step in the convergence of divergent or purportedly incommensurable research paradigms. Katz and Liebes introduced qualitative methods, hitherto having been used largely only in critical studies, into the methodological domain of audience research which had originated from administrative concerns.

3.1.2. Ethnographic Research on Family and Television

More recent research has expanded qualitative methods to include in-depth interviews (lasting for longer durations or continuing over longer periods of time) and participant observation (observing informants in a variety of their daily activities and, importantly, in their television viewing). The 1980s and '90s saw the development of ethnographic research on family and television with an increasing interest in the viewing context of domestic family relations.

Silverstone (1994) used ethnographic methodologies to study television as a domestic medium. He studied families within their viewing contexts and used his observations to add to our theoretical understandings of the concepts of home, household and family and the role television plays within these. Silverstone's work is important in revealing the limitations of the active audience paradigm and moving to that of everyday life in developing an understanding of television as a domestic medium.

The Social Uses of Television

Lull (1980), who did the first ethnographic research on family and television, in American social science, observed the social uses of television in domestic contexts. This study showed us not only the usefulness of ethnographic research in media studies but also the possibility of a convergence between cultural studies and uses and gratifications studies, research paradigms hitherto understood as incommensurable. Lull was interested in the variety of ways in which people used television for social purposes. Lull used the ethnographic methods of participant observation and in-depth interviews to discover the ways in which people used television in inter-personal communication within the family viewing context. Lull's observation periods for each of more than 200 families ranged from two to seven days and prioritised natural observation techniques, for example, observers accompanied family members in their daily routines, at meal times and watched television with them.

From the results of this research Lull established a typology of the social uses of television. The uses he noted were i) structural (environmental and regulative) and ii) relational (communication facilitation, affiliation/avoidance, social learning and competence/dominance). Lull hoped that his ethnographic methods added to the knowledge provided by quantitative research by having sensitivity to factors which the latter is limited in disclosing.

Television Viewing and Gender/Power Relationships

Morley (1986) showed an alternative possibility for convergence by looking at both questions of 'use' and questions of 'interpretation' together, these lines of inquiry having been hitherto pursued separately within different paradigms. Morley, by focusing on the remote control device as a symbol of power, analysed television viewing from the point of view of gender/power relationships situated within both family and patriarchal society and thus, importantly, established a connection between domestic television viewing and such power relationships.

Morley studied eighteen south London working-class/lower middle-class families and their changing uses of television and drew a variety of conclusions about the gender differences existing in television viewing. He found that men and women differed in their power and control over programme choice (men showed more control); styles of viewing (men were more attentive and less prone to interruption while women tended to talk more and perform various domestic duties during programmes); planned and unplanned viewing (men used the television guide to plan an evening's viewing more than women did); television-related talk (while women admitted they talked about television with their friends, men were reluctant to do so. However some men admitted to talking about sports and news); use of video (women tended to rely upon husbands and sons to operate VCRs); "solo" viewing and guilty pleasures (many women admitted that their greatest pleasure was to watch their favourite drama or soap opera while the rest of the family was not there. As they accepted the terms of the male hegemony that defined their programmes as having low status, they felt guilty for having such pleasures and instead of arguing for their preferences they watched them solo); programme type preferences (men tended to watch factual programmes like the news while women preferred fictional programmes) and national versus local news programmes (women were much less interested in national news than they were in local news which they saw as having more relevance to their lives).

Morley explained his findings basically in terms of the fact that these families are part of a patriarchal society in which the home is a different kind of place for men and women respectively. While for women, the home is the place of work, whether or not they have jobs outside of the home, for men it is a site of leisure, men generally having fewer domestic duties in the home.

A Multi-Cultural Approach to Family Viewing

Lull (1988) used a multi-cultural approach by comparing research which looked at television viewing within different cultures such as Britain, China, United States of America, India, Venezuela and (West) Germany. Lull explores and expands McLuhan's (1964) idea of extension and shows that television viewing extends cultural, household and personal attributes by representing viewers' interests. A person's gender, age, generation, sexual orientation and so forth can be extended through the programmes they choose to watch. Mental orientations and specific activities are extended in routine television viewing, for example, while watching television a person's emotions, moods, pleasures, identity, desires for companionship and more are extended. At the same time television provides a means for the extension of individual activity in forms such as escaping, relaxing, passing time, changing moods and being entertained. At the level of culture, television viewing extends, for example, in India, religious norms and gender status by reproducing or amplifying these. In Western countries television viewing acts amongst other factors to extend the cultural trend of staying at home for evening entertainment. Similarly household roles are extended as more people either use television as a babysitter or use television viewing and talk about television to extend interpersonal communication.

Lull is particularly interested in issues of television viewing and gender but argues that while in Western countries television could be seen as creating or increasing a "gender gap" this is not altogether clear for developing countries in which television viewing may well improve the position of women. Through a

correlation between the holder of the remote control and the holder of power within the family, Lull asserted certain family power relationships, for example, in British, patriarchal society the father holds the family power while, because of the Venezuelan mother's responsibility at home, she often holds this position. In all cases, television viewing can be seen as an extension of gender issues at the levels of culture, household and the person. While Lull emphasises a more 'active' form of engagement with television he is quick to point out that alongside television's role in extension is its capability to introduce influences and changes into culture, the household and the person which are not completely under people's control.

3.1.3. Problems for Ethnographic Research: Issues of Reliability and Validity

Criticisms of Ethnographic Research in Media Audience Studies

The methodologies employed in previous ethnographic research on television and its audiences have been criticised for being inadequate. Moores (1993) argues that even though such research has been classified as ethnographic, these studies are examples merely of qualitative research as they largely include only one-time in-depth interviews or the analysis of fan mail, as opposed, for example, to living with the subjects of one's study for one or more years, as has been the method of many anthropological ethnographies. The criticisms leveled at such research are, in general, ones that challenge their validity and/or reliability, these criteria seen as important, in some form or other, for the production of quality ethnography.

According to the positivist approach, in any kind of empirical research three fundamental requirements are held to be necessary if the study in question is going to be of any use. These are the values of validity, reliability and generalisability. We want assurance that a given finding is true of the specific case (validity), would be found by other researchers to be so (reliability) and gives a representative picture of the truth for other relevantly similar cases or of the

relevant group as a whole (generalisability).

Much ethnographic research may be less concerned with generalisability and more concerned with the nature of social practices, as it often attempts to show phenomena about a particular group, or to show that that a certain phenomenon exists at all. However ethnographic researchers need to be very concerned about the reliability and validity of their work (though there remains a very big question as to how these requirements are to be defined in a methodology not tied to positivist principles). A concern for validity may have been one of the moving forces behind the development of qualitative research in favour of quantitative methods. An informant's opinion is sought, usually in a face-to-face encounter, via open questions and can be checked, confirmed, or explored by the interviewing researcher and is likely to be accurately represented by that researcher.

On the other side of the coin is the question of reliability. Here, quantitative methods generally win out over qualitative ones simply in virtue of their nature. While any two researchers can analyse the results of a survey and obtain the same results, the ethnographies of two researchers using qualitative methods of analysis would be unlikely to arrive at the same interpretation of the data. Thus qualitative researchers must be and have been concerned to find ways of enhancing the reliability of their work.

Moore's aforementioned criticisms of qualitative research thus can be seen as amounting to the claim that much of that research is less than valid (the criticisms do not challenge the reliability of qualitative research). This is due to the lack of depth or detail obtained from the informants by the methods of the researchers. Moore's criticisms call for higher validity of ethnographies through the use of more rigorous qualitative methods such as longer interviews and more time spent in face-to-face interaction with informants.

Anthropologists have, furthermore, advocated more 'natural' or culturally sensitive research methods for ethnographic research. Such methods may

involve longer times spent living amongst the subjects of their studies, rejecting the use of tape-recorders, or at least being aware of their power to impinge on and influence interview outcomes, on the grounds that they are alien objects to many cultures and just generally being sensitive to the lifestyles, customs and routines of informants.

Incorporating Anthropological Methods: Living in the Culture

While some demands from the discipline of anthropology may be stringent, more media scholars are attempting to bring more depth to their ethnographies by elaborating their methodologies. Lull (1991), in order to increase representativeness, randomness and generalisability, chose nearly one hundred families from different Chinese cities. The large and random sample chosen increases external validity. Internal validity was increased by using in-depth and participant methods. He studied Chinese families and their use of television at a time in their history when television was a new cultural phenomenon, a symptom of their modernisation and opening up to the West. Lull made several visits to China, living amongst his informants for periods of up to three months. Lull conducted in-depth interviews of his nearly one hundred families and concurrent observations of the physical details of those families and their homes. From an aim to further understand the use of television as a mechanism of propaganda in Chinese society he showed that television was contrastingly used not only as a mouthpiece of the Communist Party but also as an inspiration to active audience members for resistance to the Party's ideologies.

Marie Gillespie (1995) similarly used immersion in the culture of her informants to add depth to her understanding of television, ethnicity and cultural change. She taught and carried out her ethnographic research in Southall, west London, over a period of more than a decade, enabling a multiplicity of data-gathering strategies and drawing upon the experiences of a large number of people.

Using methods such as these has undoubtedly provided researchers with a deeper understanding of the groups they are studying and has brought increased internal validity to their studies. Some scholars may feel comfortable that this strengthened validity is enough to overcome the criticisms leveled at ethnographic research into media audiences, "Qualitative methods compensate for their lack of reliability with greater validity" (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996, p.92). However, possibilities for increasing the reliability of qualitative studies have also been explored.

Increasing the Reliability of the Qualitative Method

In acknowledgement of the respective limitations of both qualitative and quantitative methods, scholars have begun to search for ways of strengthening their methods. Researchers concerned with qualitative methods have looked for ways of increasing their reliability. One line of inquiry into this involves finding new ways of achieving 'right interpretations' (Lindlof, 1995). Several methods have been used by ethnographers to increase the reliability of the interpretations of their data. These include negative case analysis (the formulation, testing and ongoing reformulation and retesting of hypotheses to accommodate all new, including apparently aberrant, data); member checks (seeking confirmation from or the opinions of one's informants on the conclusions the researcher has reached); quitting the field (removing oneself from the field in order to achieve a more objective perspective or one informed by hindsight) and triangulation (using multiple sources, methods and/or investigators).

Ethnographic researchers standardly use some or all of these techniques in the processes of conducting their fieldwork but it is the technique of triangulation which perhaps supplies us with the most hope of overcoming the problems associated with the reliable interpretation of results. Making the assumption that a phenomenon is more accurately identified and understood if done so from a multitude of perspectives, scholars use a variety of methods, for example,

interviews, observational field notes, diaries, from a multitude of sources, for example, asking different family members, friends and others about the one phenomenon and 'double checked' by having, say, two observers in the same site or by using teams of analysts working together on analytic tasks. While such multiple modes of data generation may lead to divergent outcomes it is argued that this strengthens rather than weakens the credibility of a study because we learn how phenomena "behave differently through the specific media of our methods" (Lindlof, 1995, p.239).

Gaskell and Bauer (2000) advocate the combined use of triangulation and other criteria in their modification of the positivist requirements of validity, reliability and generalisability. Arguing that these requirements are not appropriate for the purposes of qualitative research, Gaskell and Bauer have augmented the method of triangulation, drawing on the debate amongst social anthropologists, by suggesting alternative criteria, the degree of presence or absence by which we can assess the quality of such works. The two general criteria assuring quality are confidence (c), that is, whether we can be confident that the results of the study represent reality, and relevance (r), the utility and importance of the research. These indicators are in turn tested by the degree to which the following features are to be found not only in qualitative but also in quantitative studies. Gaskell and Bauer describe the following six criteria which contribute to the confidence and relevance of qualitative research: Triangulation and reflexivity (c); transparency and procedural clarity (c); corpus construction (c,r); thick description (c,r); local surprise (r) and communicative validation (r).

Triangulation is one way of concretising, in the research method, reflexivity, the method by which the researcher makes an effort to ensure the awareness of the ways in which political or power relationships existing between his or herself, the researcher, and the informants or their situation influence data collection and interpretation and thus the results of the study. As reflexivity is an important

issue in anthropology, and for many doing ethnographic research, I will explore it in more detail below. Gaskell's and Bauer's criterion of transparency and procedural clarity is important if another researcher needs to reconstruct or check the researcher's work. Thus quality research must include notes on the procedures of data collection and analysis such that these procedures will, in principle at least, be replicable. Corpus construction replaces representative sampling and concerns neither size of sample nor number of interviews but is concerned with maximising the variety of unknown representations. The presence of thick description indicates confidence to the extent that, through plenty of verbatim reporting of sources, the reader can assess the validity of a researcher's interpretation or, alternatively, come to their own. Thick description advocates a balance between presenting either nothing but a collection of transcripts or a short, interpretative passage claiming to derive generalisations from such a collection. Also adding evidence of a study's relevance is the discovery of surprising results. If a study were only to reveal support for commonly held beliefs or for the researcher's theoretical hypothesis we would have reason to doubt the quality of that research. The emergence of surprising phenomena is evidence that the researcher was not guilty of selecting from the data only the evidence that supports his or her view. Gaskell's and Bauer's final criterion, that of communicative validation reflects Lindlof's technique of member checks in requiring that researcher's analyses of interviews are agreed with or consented to by their sources.

One of Gaskell's and Bauer's criteria is reflexivity, the development of which in anthropology has had an important influence on the ways in which ethnographies are produced. Reflexive approaches to ethnography have emerged against the hitherto dominant tendencies of positivism, the most traditional method most strongly representing the scientific approach with the researcher seen as a scientist conducting an experiment and naturalism, according to which the research is not seen as an experiment but rather as

non-interactive and thus non-interfering objective observation of the natural state of the subject.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) criticise both the scientific and naturalistic approaches for failing to take into account the fact that researchers are inevitably part of the world they study. Thus 'self-reflexivity' must be part of ethnographic research. This involves the researcher including his or her own role, as well as those of the subjects of the study, in the processes of research. The 'fly on the wall' approach of traditional anthropology is therefore seen as both unattainable and undesirable as it is not seen to be capable of obtaining the objectivity it claimed to. In fact reflexive approaches reject the whole notion of objectivity and instead focus on incorporating the researcher's own presence, power and political position in doing the research, that is, for example, as a government-or industry-funded researcher with certain aims and power, into both the collection of data and its interpretation.

Another aspect of reflexivity as an approach to doing ethnography is taking into account not the political or power position of the researcher as above but who the researcher is. The researcher's values, interests, beliefs and affiliations to various cultural or social groups will shape their research, in its aims, theoretical framework, design, methods, interpretation—in everything. This 'shaping' is what reflexive ethnographers must not only be aware of in their research processes but must also make overt in their written work. Thus reflexive ethnographies need to include information about the researcher's background and how this enters into the research processes.

The use of reflexive approaches is thought to, by way of being capable of achieving a more accurate representation of that studied, increase the confidence we may have in that study, thus lending it more reliability.

3.1.4. Methodological Convergence: Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

An Integrated Approach

The issues raised by researchers concerned with strengthening qualitative methodology go a long way to improving the reliability and thus value of qualitative research. Schroeder (1999), however, advocates a slightly different approach to increasing the reliability of qualitative research. He proposes, not simply trying to add reliability to qualitative analysis by, for example, making one's procedures transparent or using a multitude of sources but rather by incorporating quantitative with qualitative approaches and, with the former, their inherent reliability.

'Cross-fertilisation' between quantitative and qualitative approaches is not, in Schroeder's opinion, lived up to by research which attempts a solution of the problems we have been discussing by merely supplementing qualitative with quantitative research or vice versa. Schroeder, while acknowledging the progress triangulation has made towards cross-fertilisation, nevertheless questions its usefulness on the grounds that the process by which the validity of one and the reliability of the other are able to compensate for each others' respective invalidity and unreliability. It appears, however, that, in his consideration of triangulated approaches, Schroeder considers only those which attempt to supplement qualitative with quantitative methods (or vice versa) rather than those which propose the enhancing of reliability through the use of multiple qualitative techniques such as Lindlof (1995) and Gaskell and Bauer (2000) suggest. Thus Schroeder's objection to triangulation does nothing to challenge the reliability of such approaches.

Schroeder advocates an "integrated approach" whereby the inherent limitations of each approach, rather than being condoned, are instead reduced. While Schroeder does not specify how such integration should be achieved he does offer examples, one in the form of a case study, which sheds light on his

conception of cross-fertilisation. In his study of media use in Denmark he uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in order to achieve reliability and validity. His study is given validity by the selection of a small geographical area, the prior study of the regional social system of which enables a familiarity being gained by the researcher of the informants' daily life and concerns such that references made to these during interviews can be better contextualised and understood. Reliability is partly given to the study by quantitative and thus repeatable procedures of sampling and data analysis but much is made by Schroeder of the enhancement of the reliability of his study by the use of several researchers working independently but along the same guidelines on the same task of creating profiles from interview transcripts. Schroeder clearly values the use of the external auditor of a study for increasing that study's reliability but it must be noted that it is not the inherent reliability of a quantitative method that is called up here, rather it is merely the strengthening of a qualitative method along the lines on which Lindlof (1995) and Gaskell and Bauer (2000) also add reliability to qualitative methods. While Schroeder fulfills his aim of bringing reliability to an integrated qualitative and quantitative approach much of the reliability of his study comes from use of more reliable qualitative methods.

Triangulation Using Qualitative and/or Quantitative Methods

Livingstone and Bovill's (1999) triangulated approach to the study of young people in rich media environments supplements a comprehensive quantitative study into the many uses of new technologies with a multi-sourced, multi-method qualitative study. The administrative aim of this research is to update the work of Himmelweit et al in order to compare media use of the 1950's child with that of the contemporary child. Livingstone's (2002) subsequent qualitative research methods include one-hour interviews with her informants, two-hour observation of participants' internet use at home and a further 1-2 hours interview and

observation at cybercafes, school and with friends. The resulting study should add to knowledge of access to and the meaning of new media technology use within the home. Livingstone's study is important in that it expands the notion of media use to include not only television but the use of PC, CD-ROM, television-linked games machines, internet and email along with radio, hi-fi, telephone, books, newspapers, magazines, personal letters and any other forms of communication. This study is similar in its scope to those of *Joho Kodo* quantitative studies in Japanese media audience research but Livingstone recognises the importance of complementing the quantitative research with an qualitative study of her informants.

3.1.5. Designing Research: New Media Environment, New Method?

A variety of research methods, including quantitative, qualitative and ethnographic methods have been employed over the last several decades to establish relationships between the media on the one hand and, on the other, people, families, culture, ethnicity, society and so forth. Those scholars concentrating on new media and/or rich media environments have been concerned to develop appropriately new research methods. Schroeder's (1999) and Livingstone's (2002) respective studies represent alternative attempts at a convergence of qualitative and quantitative methods. Some of those specifically interested in the internet have even incorporated its use into their methods by completing, in addition to face-to-face interviews, 'virtual ethnographies' (e.g. Miller and Slater, 2000), that is, those informed by internet contact with informants. The methodologies employed in each case have been chosen because of their appropriateness to their research aims and the cultural characteristics of the group under observation. It is the job of every researcher to find the most appropriate and fruitful methodology for the aim of his or her research and I will adopt and/or adapt previously used methods in designing my own research.

Previous ethnographic research on family and television (Morley, 1986; Lull,

1988; Silverstone, 1994), looked at families, including children, and gender differences in modes of engagement with television in the domestic viewing context. In accordance with my theoretical framework and research aims, my primary unit of analysis is similarly the family (as the primary social group), looking at individuals in their capacity as family members. Thus this previous research, both in terms of methodologies and research questions, will be useful in framing my own research.

Morley's method for understanding power relations and gender differences in engagement with television consisted in two-hour in-depth interviews. Because of the complex nature of my research interests and as my questions cover more than just power and gender issues I feel that even extended in-depth interviews would be inadequate for the purposes of my research. Thus I will complement extensive in-depth interviews with participant observation.

I myself found that, in analysing the results of my previous qualitative research (Takahashi, 1998), one-time 2-3 hour in-depth interviews were too limited to provide me with the data I really required in order to answer the research question I had developed. For the present research, in contrast, I hope to establish prolonged relationships with my informants giving me the data I need to more fully understand their engagement with media and new information technologies. Livingstone's qualitative research method will be useful in my own study as that research is concerned with people in rich media environments and its methods are sensitive to a wide range of engagement with media.

With these general ideas about the appropriateness or otherwise of various research methods I went to the field with a specific concern to test them in their application within a Japanese context.

3.2. From Theory to Practice and Back Again: Lessons From my Pre-fieldwork

The aim of pre-fieldwork is to assist in the process of transforming theoretical aims and questions into practical methods for obtaining the information the research requires (cf. Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Results, findings and experiences stemming from the pre-fieldwork can be used in a reassessment of theoretical aims which may be reinforced, developed, adjusted or even abandoned in light of discoveries made during the pre-fieldwork stage. Thus pre-fieldwork is both the tool by which and the medium through which negotiation between theory and practice is made in an attempt to secure the best fit between theoretical aims and research methodology. At the pre-fieldwork stage many factors that may become problems in the theoretical or methodological design of the research have a chance to show themselves so that they can be overcome before the fieldwork is undertaken. Theoretical frameworks and methodologies are designed from behind a desk and it is more than likely that many assumptions made about anticipated findings or the methods used to obtain them will, during the fieldwork, prove to be less than useful.

3.2.1. Pre-Fieldwork Stage One: Selecting the Kindergarten as the Site of my Research

I initially chose my own children's kindergarten as the site in which to find the families that would be the subjects of my study. I chose this context for three reasons, acting on what I saw to be the most important criteria at this pre-field stage. The first factor motivating my choice of the kindergarten families was the research of the social anthropologist Joy Hendry (1986). Hendry, a British scholar of Japanese society, enrolled her children in a Japanese kindergarten and chose that as the site of her research. As a mother and an active participant in kindergarten life Hendry was able to participate freely and fully alongside the subjects of her research and gain a deep understanding of the early processes of

Japanese socialization. For the duration of her fieldwork she was able to spend most afternoons with her informants thus clocking up many valuable hours of participant observation. Secondly, my primary criterion in selecting families is that they have a rich media environment in their homes. It has been shown (Yuseisho, 2000: Japanese Ministry of Post and Telecommunications' Survey of Information and Communication Technologies) that the individuals most likely to live in such environments are in their 20s and 30s. As the family was my primary unit of study at this point in my research project, I needed to find families, the mothers and fathers of which were in this age bracket. A site of pre-school education seemed to be ideal. The final criterion for the selection of my families was that some kind of social relationship or, at least, a basis for trust needed to be in place between myself and those families before access to private spaces could be gained. This criterion stems from features of Japanese customs the details of which I will elaborate on in the next section on 'Difficulties with Fieldwork with Japanese Families'. Given this restriction I anticipated that the families at my children's kindergarten would be suitable due to the nature of the relationship already established between them and myself.

Difficulties in Maintaining Research and Real-Life Roles

I spent two months attending both kindergarten with my children and kindergarten-related social activities and events with the other mothers and tried to establish an appropriate researcher-informant relationship which, at the same time, allowed me to be both kindergarten mother and researcher. However several factors prevented me from achieving this. The nature of the kindergarten, the intricacies of its social organisation and the relationships existing between mothers all led me to abandon this context as the site of my research. The kindergarten in question is private, Catholic and not only prestigious but an increasingly popular choice amongst television producers and actors. The status of the kindergarten can be seen not only in the Gucci suits,

Chanel bags, Cartier watches and exquisite kimono worn by the mothers, nor in the Mercedes and BMW-filled car park, many sporting diplomat number-plates but, more importantly, for the purposes of my research, in the expectations placed on any mother wishing her children to attend such a place. At a kindergarten such as this, requiring children to take entrance examinations for admittance, education must be seen to be highly prized by the mothers. Mothers are expected to show a very high level of involvement, in terms of both time and energy, in their children's education to the extent that the kindergarten's training covers not only the pre-schoolers but spills over to become a training ground for young Japanese mothers too. Mothers are not only expected and pressured (if only by the conformity and disdainful looks of other mothers doing so) to sew small bags for their children's shoes, lunchboxes and clothes (when simply buying them would seem to be more efficient) but are also required to don yellow aprons for early-morning car park duty. At one stage I was required to carve my daughters' names into their twelve wooden, pencil-sized clay tools not only because names written in ink may wear off but, according to the chairwoman of the PTA, to show my love and commitment to my children. Requirements of mothers such as these and the desire to be seen as a 'good', caring mother lead to a high level of conformity amongst mothers. Any mother not adequately performing her duties soon feels the pressure to conform to the rest of the group. In any situation like this it is very difficult to be different.

This created two related difficulties for me and my intention to do my research in this context. Firstly, to be a researcher in this situation is to be different and to stand outside the group. The outcome of this may not be so bad for someone wishing to play only the role of researcher. However my other role as mother and my desire to conform to this to a certain, what I saw as necessary, extent meant that being a researcher in this context lead to my feeling uncomfortable about my role in the group and my relationship with the other mothers. The second difficulty was related to the fact that my relationship with

the other mothers and my children's relationships with their children are going to be long-term and thus play an important role in our lives. The current pupils of the kindergarten will remain with each other throughout their school lives, that is, for at least fifteen years. Of course I want these relationships to remain amicable throughout this time so was wary of doing anything that might threaten either relationships between myself and the other mothers or between my children and their peers.

It seemed, during my pre-fieldwork, that other mothers would similarly be concerned about the effects of participating in my research. As my research requires going into private spaces; both physically and emotionally and discussing often fairly private matters with my informants and as the nature of the kindergarten discourages aberrance I quickly got the feeling that candid disclosure of private information would not be forthcoming from the mothers at this kindergarten. I said earlier that some kind of social or trusting relationship was required between myself and my informants but that existing between myself and the other mothers at the kindergarten proved to be a little 'too close' for the purposes of my research.

While Hendry seemed to have achieved a workable and comfortable position in her kindergartens from which to achieve her research aims I wish to point out that, as a non-Japanese mother, the expectations of her were likely to have been less demanding than those of me. In addition, neither she nor her children had the prospect of a fifteen-year relationship with the families at the various kindergartens in which she carried out her research, the smooth future of which needed to be considered. Her longest period of investigation was, in contrast, only six months. With these considerations in mind and with other options available for finding families to be the subjects of my research I let my broader concerns for other, non-research related aspects of my life lead me to abandon my kindergarten project.

My pre-fieldwork, then, revealed to me further criteria by which I must

select my informants. I thus set out to find families in relation to which I could be a mere researcher, observer and participant without at the same time having to fulfill any other roles. While I needed some basis for trust in order to gain access to private places I needed to avoid relationships that might preclude frank discussion of issues pertaining to my research. Consequently, I did not gather much useful data from my kindergarten pre-fieldwork.

3.2.2. Pre-Fieldwork Stage Two: Selecting the Home as the Site of my Research

My second stage of pre-fieldwork also constituted a learning period and involved three families selected through both my own and my friends' social networks. I conducted 2-3-hour in-depth interviews with a tape-recorder and participant observation both during and after the interviews, watching television with my informants, noting physical details of family seating patterns, taking photos and looking through private rooms in the house. I started my interviews and participant observation in the homes of three families having rich media environments. All families had two children but differed in respects such as number of working parents, occupation, age and socio-economic level. The families also differed in the types of communication and information technologies they used in their homes. In an attempt to ascertain the most efficient and practical method for finding the information my research requires I interviewed in and observed a variety of domestic situations. For one family I interviewed only the housewife during the daytime; for the next, I interviewed the housewife with her two children and for the last family, I interviewed the working mother and father on the weekend while the children were absent. I revisited the second family, having the richest media environment, while the father was present and carried out an in-depth interview, focussing on him.

Adjusting my Method

Through this preliminary work I got a feeling for which methods and interview

questions were going to work best in my fieldwork. Since conducting my pre-fieldwork I realised that I must make the following adjustments to my method. As some informants were made uncomfortable in the presence of a tape-recorder I have decided to limit my use of the device, instead relying on notes or memory, in order to free up conversation and disclosure of information. I also noticed that many types of information I require, especially those pertaining to personal experiences or thoughts, are best sought while the informant is alone as other family members sometimes inhibited discussion of these issues. And, as most fathers spend most of their waking hours and thus their everyday lives not at home but in their offices I decided that many cases it would be best to spend time both with mothers at home alone or with children and with fathers at their offices during working times. The need to spend time with family members outside of the home was further reinforced by my realisation of the extent to which engagement with media extends beyond the household. People's everyday lives are not contained within the house or home but extend to other places and other social groups. Thus I have spent time at my informants' offices and schools and with their friends and colleagues.

Although my unit of analysis is the family it may often be more fruitful to observe family members while not in each other's presence. However, as direct questions aimed at gaining insight into family relationships, particularly power relationships, can prove less than fruitful, interviewing or observing the family together as a group can be a good way of assessing such relationships. This can be seen through family members contradicting each other, scoffing at each other's responses, interrupting each other or otherwise interacting as a group. Similarly I found that direct questions about involvement with television programmes and their characters or about interpretations of various television shows was a less fruitful way of finding out such information than was simply observing people in their viewing or talk about television with other family members or friends.

3.2.3. Pre-Fieldwork Stage Three: Selecting the Office as a Secondary Site of my Research

After deciding to extend my fieldwork outside the bounds of the household I conducted interviews with seven informants in their offices at a single company. I carried out 2-hour in-depth interviews with a tape-recorder and observed my participants in their use of ICT and their general office routines and relationships. As all these people have cable and internet at home they provided me with access to families with rich media environments. While these people all work for a single company they exhibit a variety of social backgrounds and interests and therefore together contribute to a diversity of forms of engagement with media. From this time in the office environment and my observations of the use of communication technologies in it I realised the importance of this environment in the role played by such technologies in people's everyday communicative relationships. As Japanese fathers, and in some cases mothers, tend to spend much of their everyday lives at the office and conduct many of their relationships there too, it would be shortsighted to focus exclusively on family relationships and the domestic setting in my attempt to understand the role of the media in people's everyday lives.

3.2.4. Adjusting my Concepts

After the three stages of my pre-fieldwork not only did I discover the need to make adjustments to my methods but it became obvious that certain of my theoretical concepts had begun to lose their fit with what I observed in the field. The first conceptual deficiency in my work was the growing inability of the term 'audience' to apply to the subjects of my study. The second relates to the unanticipated appearance of a phenomenon for which I hitherto had no theoretical framework. My experiences in the kindergarten and my findings from interviews led me to an increased awareness of the role media and

information and communication technologies play in the processes of people's self-creation.

'Audiences', 'Users' and 'Communicators'

My pre-fieldwork showed me the extent to which people's engagement with media is not engagement with television. This has a theoretical implication for my research. As I am concerned not only with engagement with television but with a variety of communication and information technologies the theoretical concept of 'audience' does not always fit my informants. While talking on the phone, writing email, playing a video game and surfing the net, people may not be accurately described as audience members. With the expansion of communication and information technologies the notion of audience loses its power to capture all those on the consumer side of the media.

While 'audience' remains a useful concept with respect to television viewing perhaps the concept of 'user' more accurately describes the engager with new communication and information technologies (Livingstone, 1999). When someone plays a video game, uses a mobile phone or computer they are not usefully understood as being part of an audience. On the other hand, the term 'user' may also be limited in its use as an umbrella term as it tends to hide or at least underemphasise, in cases of sending email or using a mobile phone, the person on the other side of the communication process. Perhaps the term 'communicator' is the only one broad enough to capture all cases of engagement with media and communication and information technologies. However 'communicator' may often seem to be too broad, failing to capture the characteristics of the particular situation. Instead of identifying and using one and only one term to refer to the people in their capacity as subjects of my research I have alternated between terms depending on what is most appropriate in each context, sometimes referring to 'audiences', sometimes, 'users' and sometimes 'communicators'.

Self-Creation

I began thinking about the processes of self-creation through three different routes during the time of my pre-fieldwork. The first was through my personal experiences as a mother at the kindergarten. The social world in which I found myself as a kindergarten mother manifested itself to me as a set of constraints upon who I could be. My beliefs and perceptions about who I was and who I wanted to be were challenged by the conformist politics of the institution. My response in dealing with the personal difficulties and conflicts associated with entering this world was to seek solace in communication with my friends. For this purpose, wishing to contact friends living overseas, i.e. outside my local situation, I used email; not only PC at home but also by my personal mobile telephone which gave me access to the internet. By this means I was able to communicate with friends anytime and anywhere. It struck me, after coming through the difficulties, that the internet had played a crucial role, which can succinctly be described as a tool for gaining access to distant cultural resources, in dealing with issues of personal identity and self-creation.

The second route to thinking about these issues was through my pre-fieldwork at Nippon Shouji, the company at which I was conducting interviews. In interviewing the employees about their careers, I realised the extent to which media and ICT played a role in people's processes of developing their life aspirations.

The concept of self-creation came up again when I thought about the extent to which watching Spanish soap-operas via satellite television had influenced the family values held by one of my friends. What was revealed was the role of satellite television as an importer of different cultural values.

3.3. Difficulties with Fieldwork with Japanese Families

In finding a suitable research method, I think it is important to be sensitive to 'Japanese culture' and the ways in which social relations differ from those of 'Western culture'. I believe there are several factors that do not come so strongly into play in the case of Western research subjects that must be taken into consideration when attempting to form a researcher-informant relationship with Japanese people. One of these is the much more distinct line drawn in Japanese society between private or family space on the one hand and public or non-family space on the other. The other is the general style of Japanese communication and the restrictions it creates on information-seeking and giving between researcher and informant. Doubtless other considerations must be addressed when studying Western families which also pose methodological challenges for the researcher.

3.3.1. *Uchi* and *Soto* (Inside and Outside)

Kaseifu wa Mita (The Housekeeper Saw), a popular Japanese drama series, nicely shows the interesting and, for the purposes of my research, important distinction between private, family spaces and the public realm. The show's considerable popularity plausibly resides in the intrigue of getting a peek at another family's home and everyday life through the eyes of the secretly watching housekeeper. The show demonstrates the distinction between *uchi* and *soto*. *Uchi* refers not only to that belonging communally and exclusively to the family but also to the physical aspects of the home. A boundary, both physical and social, demarcates *uchi* from *soto*. These boundaries can be seen not only in the high brick or concrete walls that typically fence off Japanese houses from *soto* but in the guardedness with which Japanese people typically keep their private and family lives hidden even from close friends and relatives.

Nakane (1967, 1970, 1977) looks at and compares this pair of concepts as it

exists in China, India and Japan. While in the former two cultures she found that couples showed little reluctance to expose the conflicts in their relationships to neighbours or the outside world, Japanese couples hid such aspects of their relationships in a way that constituted *uchi* and *soto* as completely separate worlds. While relationship conflicts and problems are an inevitable part of any family's life, Japanese families typically feel shame in admitting that it is a part of *their* lives and thus tend to keep such things to the realm of *uchi*. In the realm of *soto* family relations are always portrayed as smooth and peaceful.

Difficulties in Penetrating *Uchi*

This creates obvious problems for the ethnographic researcher. Gaining both physical and non-physical access to Japanese people's private lives of the form the researcher requires is not a straightforward task. On entering Americans' houses, as soon as I was invited inside I was told to "feel at home" and "feel free to help [myself] to anything in the fridge". Despite being a foreign guest, I was treated as, what I felt to be, a member of the family. In contrast, when, as a researcher, I visit Japanese families' homes or even when I visit my close friends' homes, I am treated as an honoured guest and am kept in the living room where I am served tea in a delicate Wedgwood teacup. Even with close friends it takes a long time to create a relaxed atmosphere in which I would be able to see the rest of the house or enter the kitchen. I am describing a typical and more traditional feature of Japanese social custom and one I came across frequently in my fieldwork. During my pre-fieldwork I had to abandon my association with one family when the adult son refused to let me enter the family's home, angrily telling his sister that they should not be exposing their private lives to an outsider. Compared with rural areas, in some parts of Tokyo, it is necessary to build very close and highly trusting relationships with people before being able to visit their homes, ask about family or private issues and do participant observation. Thus the Western methodology of one-off interviews at home,

which media ethnographic researchers have conducted for Western families, must be challenged in a Japanese context because of the strong *uchi/soto* division.

Multi- *Uchis* as Closed Spaces in Everyday Japanese Life

To the extent that *uchi* is an enclosed realm of belonging we must recognise that the home is not the only site of *uchi*. Most men and working women, due to the high level of commitment required by office 'rules', spend most of their time at the office and must put most of their energy into their companies. Not only this time commitment but, more significantly, the energy and loyalty commitment required to the Japanese company means that the company becomes, for most Japanese workers, the site of a second *uchi*. Traditionally, employment by a Japanese company is for life and the company undertakes to provide, not only an individual worker, but his entire family, with a guaranteed livelihood. Families, rather than individuals, belong to companies in Japan. Families are not only required to attend company functions but are also expected to prioritise these above any non-company related social engagements. Thus the loyalty expected to one's company often means that the company is the primary *uchi* in a family's life and the worker's relationship with his company is, in many cases, accepted as being more central in his life than his relationship with his wife or family. School can, in similar ways, become another *uchi* in the lives of children and their families and often a long relationship will become established between a family and a school. Likewise, groups of friends at school, as with groups of colleagues working closely together in a larger company, become associated with their own, smaller *uchis*.

Uchis at the company or at school have the effect of establishing circles of friendship or comradeship in amongst larger groups. Thus in wanting to understand Japanese engagement with media within contexts of social relationships I have extended my research to these sites while keeping in mind

the difficulties in getting into these Japanese *uchis*.

3.3.2. The Style of Japanese Communication

Many scholars, Western and Japanese, have studied the differences between the Japanese and American communication styles. Most have reached similar conclusions, all of which go towards creating difficulties for ethnographic researchers in acquiring information through the technique of interview. Most features of what is taken to be the archetypal Japanese communication style noted by scholars centre around the observation that the Japanese do less talking and therefore more guesswork in communication (cf. Kitade, 1993).

The Virtue of Suppressing One's Feelings

In terms of numbers, Japanese daily conversation is only 50% of that of Americans (Ishii and Klopff, 1976). Kindaichi (1975) suggests that this may stem from spiritual or religious beliefs of the sixth and seventh centuries that neither talking nor writing was virtuous and that talking or writing to an unnecessary degree would bring bad luck. These values are reflected in the beliefs of the titled classes in the Edo period (nineteenth century) who advocated the suppression of not only verbal but also non-verbal communication. *Samurai* were educated to hide their emotions, on the basis that not doing so was considered bad manners and were taught to be as brief and succinct as possible, using as little facial expression and gesture as was necessary to communicate a message. For communication to succeed in such a meagre medium a considerable amount of perceptive guesswork was required on the part of the receiver of the message. Kindaichi, a linguist, notes the abundance of terms in the Japanese language for the English verb 'guess' as evidence for the importance of this skill in the Japanese communication style.

The Skill of Guesswork

Houga (1979) claims that even now the tendency amongst Japanese, at least in comparison to Americans, is not to talk. This is evidenced in Americans' tendency to keep on explaining an idea or line of thought until they feel assured that their audience has understood them. In contrast, Japanese will not embark on explanations of their ideas but rather will rely on their audience's capabilities of guesswork, intuition and shared understandings for being understood. According to Ishii's (1987) 'politeness and guesswork' model of Japanese communication, Japanese tend generally to reduce the intensity of their feelings before expressing them such that, on the other side of the communication process, the listener must estimate the degree to which the intensity of the feeling expressed should be multiplied in order to arrive at an accurate understanding. With less verbal expression Japanese need to rely more heavily on non-verbal messages, such as facial expression and gesture, in interpretation of what is spoken.

Both Houga (1979) and Ishii (1987) suggest that the most important criterion for a smooth social relationship is having the capability to understand one's communication partner's background and thus be able to reasonably accurately guess the meaning of his or her words. Japanese may turn out to be considerably good at such guesswork as they live in what Hall (1979) has termed a high-context culture. Unlike Americans, living in a low-context culture, Japanese people have an overwhelming amount of shared values and understandings. While Americans, coming from a diversity of ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, must, to a degree, make these known in a conversation if understanding is to be achieved, Japanese, living in a much more homogenous culture enter into conversations with each other on the assumption that many if not most cultural and personal values will be shared. This sharing of communal values often means that, in conversation, fewer words and explanations are needed to reach understanding. While American communication styles tend to

be assertive, logical and direct, the Japanese communication style tends to be polite, passive and full of pause, giving time for listeners to fill in the gaps (Barnlund, 1975).

The Humble Presentation of One's *Uchi*

While an American man is likely to introduce his wife proudly, with the words, "This is my beautiful wife, Jennifer" a Japanese man, in many contexts, will replace 'beautiful' with 'stupid'. "*Uchi no Gusa!*" ("my stupid wife") is used both in introduction and in general conversation, to refer to one's wife. One may similarly refer to one's child as a pig (*tonji*) (McClain, 1993). While it is becoming less likely to hear these terms nowadays, such humble language is still very much a part of the way Japanese people communicate with each other. Even amongst close friends it is standard to talk about one's family in a negative way, offering only complaints rather than expressing any pride in them or their achievements. Japanese deal with compliments of their families or homes in a similarly humble or demeaning way. On receiving a compliment of one's home, a Japanese person will reply that it is old or small or that there is a large mortgage on it. Such language is intended to humble oneself to another and is an important part of achieving smooth social relations by, through a process of placing oneself below another, actually mutually aiming to locate oneself at the same, or as near as possible to the same, social level. Once an understanding of sameness is achieved, feelings of security and closeness will aid social relations by bringing each other into one's *uchi*. Japanese people do not generally speak well of people in their *uchi* in front of others. A housewife's idle complaint about her child or husband may in fact reflect her pride or fondness of them. The Japanese communication style creates significant gaps between what is said or presented, especially to an outsider, and what is really meant.

3.3.3. Doing Research on Japanese Families

It must be remembered that research findings and general perceptions such as these characteristics of the Japanese communication style represent are generalisations only. Most of the research conducted in this area has compared Japanese communication to the American communication style using, again, dichotomies such as active/passive and direct/polite which tend to produce stereotyped images of Japanese people and the way they communicate. The picture created, of Japanese people being unable or unwilling to express their true feelings is, naturally, inaccurate when it comes to genuinely intimate relationships. There is a big distinction between formal and informal contexts of communication in Japanese culture and language and such generalisations reflect more the philosophical basis of formal communication than the day-to-day style of communication of, especially young, people in Japan today. It must also be remembered the extent to which Westerners, perhaps the British more than Americans, also keep their true feelings or thoughts hidden and humble themselves to each other, for the sake of politeness and smooth social relations.

The first thing I have had to do, as a researcher going into people's homes, was to make the effort to establish a smooth relationship, one conducive to open expression, with my informants. It is important, before my informants feel they can speak openly and honestly, that they feel that their thoughts, preferences, habits and so forth will not be judged or evaluated by me. To this end I have always tried to create a relaxed atmosphere by the use of humour, by playing with the children—and, importantly, the cats and dogs—and by humbling myself to my informants so that they do not feel threatened by the presence of an academic researcher.

While the aforementioned generalisations about the way Japanese people communicate may be stereotyped it is certain that they will be truer of some families or individuals than others. Thus, in conducting my research, I have

kept in mind and assessed for myself, for each family and individual, the extent to which such styles of communication are coming into play. I have been aware that humble presentation of oneself and one's family has not necessarily reflected the participants' real feelings or attitude towards themselves or family members. In order to make such assessments I have had to be very careful in my observation of non-verbal messages such as facial expressions, tone of voice, conversational pauses, choice of words and eye-contact, and other forms of communication, with other family members. I have had to employ my guesswork skills. The heavier reliance on non-verbal communication between Japanese people has also meant that in my participant observation I have had to be aware of, and watch closely, the variety of means by which my participants relate to and communicate with each other. As the Japanese are often reluctant to express their thoughts, especially private ones, to both *uchi* members and outsiders alike I have had to be a very active listener, encouraging people to talk and explain themselves and seeking clarification in instances when my guesswork skills have been insufficient to understand the message or from what point of view the messenger is coming from. Next I will discuss the design of my research.

3.4. Research Design

The aim of my research is to gain an understanding of the many ways in which media and information technologies play a role in people's everyday lives. In this and next sections (3.5. Method) I discuss and set forth the ways my research and method have been designed in order to best illuminate these phenomena, particularly in regard to Japanese audiences. Through lessons gained from some previous Western audience ethnographic research, from my pre-fieldwork in Japan and from Japanese social relationships and communication styles, I construct a 'de-Westernising ethnographic methodology' which challenges both the ethnographic technique and the prevalent assumptions about ethnographic theory and practices in the West.

3.4.1. Theoretical Sampling

I collected my data in a manner that was controlled by the theories which began to emerge from my pre-fieldwork. In this sense, my sample was 'theoretical' (Glaser and Strauss, 1968). I chose informants in their 20s and 30s (and the members of their immediate families if they shared a house) who lived in rich media environments. While by no means most Japanese people are using digital technologies (some figures represent very small percentages of the population) its use is certainly increasing, in some cases very rapidly (SkyperfecTV! had 70,000 new subscribers every month in 1999 (Dentsu Souken, 2000) and the Japanese government predict that internet users will more than double by 2005 (Yuseisho, 2000)). The current 'using' population represent early adopters of the new technology and as such, tend to be urban, young (20-39) and with higher incomes. Thus it is these people I have included amongst my sample (See Appendix A3).

3.4.2. My Unit of Analysis

Through doing my pre-fieldwork, I realised that *uchi* is a useful concept for

understanding Japanese society. It seems to me that, in engaging with media and ICT in their everyday lives, Japanese people create and recreate themselves within the multiple *uchis* to which they belong. Therefore my primary unit of analysis is the *uchi*, be it the *uchi* of family, business or friend.

The other reason for selecting the *uchi*, rather than the individual, is the importance of inter-personal relationships in engagement with media. Engagement with media is a form of communication and Rogers' and Kincaid's (1981) convergence model of communication, discussed in Chapter One, provides a good reason for looking at this type of communication through family or group relations. In understanding communication, individuals cannot be seen as isolated from each other but rather their interconnectedness must be acknowledged. Hamaguchi's contextualism, discussed in Chapter Two, gives me a further reason for taking the *uchi* as my unit of analysis as it emphasises the 'relationism' between Japanese people.

3.4.3. Engagement with New Media in Multi-*Uchis*

In relation to previous research on family and television my own research can be seen as having two aims. First, following previous research, I have collected data on the viewing context and social uses of television at home but in various Japanese contexts. Second, I have wanted to extend previous research in three aspects. The first is that of the notion of activity or engagement. I have argued for an expanded notion of engagement with media to investigate in one study the variety of audience activities that have hitherto been studied in isolation in the research of different scholars. Secondly, I have wanted to extend the scope of previous research in bringing it up to date with the latest changes in people's media environments. My research is on, not only television, but on other media and new information technologies, such as the internet, mobile phones, video games, cable television and satellite television, as our engagement with these various forms of media is interrelated and cannot be studied in isolation from

other forms. Finally, I have also extended the zone, or physical context, of previous research to the extent that I have collected data on how media and information technologies are engaged with outside of the household: at school, at the office and at other places of social interaction. I have looked not only at the family as a whole but also at individual family members in their own places of activity, thus investigating, in addition to family relationships, other social relationships in places of work and elsewhere. I have collected data not only on how families engage with television together in the living room, as most previous research has done, but also in other situations, such as with second or third television sets used in children's rooms or other bedrooms. I have also looked at individual or solo use of information technologies such as the internet as this tends not to be a family activity. I hope my data shows a wider, than has hitherto been demonstrated, scope and nature of audience engagement with television and ICT in people's everyday lives.

3.4.4. Methodology: Follow the *Uchi*

Typical early social anthropological studies involved the anthropologist, for example, going to a small island, living in the community and observing the networks and relationships—social, political, kinship—amongst its people. However, while early studies tended to have a single site of research contemporary studies are moving towards the field of multi-sited ethnography (cf. Marcus, 1998). This change comes, perhaps, with a change in the research interests and aims of modern anthropologists. While early studies were concerned, for example, to find out as much about a culture as possible before making the best plan by which to invade its territory (cf. Ruth Benedict's (1946) study of the Japanese, commissioned by the US government in 1944) the interests of contemporary social anthropologists often tend more towards conceptual phenomena, for example, diaspora studies.

Multi-sited ethnographies have been in accordance with various methods of

‘following’. If the ethnographer is interested in the place of artifacts in a society then his or her method will ‘follow the thing’ as it changes hands through a society, if the interest is in diaspora the researcher will ‘follow the people’ in their migration. While the sites of studies such as these are physical or spatial, non-physical sites are explored by ethnographers employing methods of ‘follow the metaphor,’ or ‘follow the plot, story or allegory’. That which the ethnographer follows depends on the object of research.

My object of research can be conceived broadly as being social relationships (ones in which media and information and communication technologies are involved) thus the sites of my study will be those in which such relationships exist. In the case of studying pre-modern, tribal cultures the physical site of research is fixed by that which confines people to a limited location. While these social relationships are tightly confined within limited locations, in our modern societies travel and email make possible the extension of social relationships all over the world such that they are no longer subject to physical confinement. In order to understand the social relationships of my informants I must employ a multi-sited approach. I have thus ‘followed the *uchi*’. That is, I have followed the multiple *uchis* to which my informants belong; such as family, business, friends and local *uchis*. These comprise the social and communicative time-space that they engage in with media and ICT and the sites through which they create and recreate themselves in everyday life.

3.4.5. Validity and Reliability

As discussed above, the criteria of validity and reliability are crucial to the quality of any empirical research but scholars are still debating the important question of how to bring more reliability to ethnographic works. Lindlof (1995) and Gaskell and Bauer (2000) have discussed various ways of doing this and I have employed some of these methods in order to increase the reliability of the interpretation of my data.

I have routinely conducted 'member checks' with my informants, attempting to fulfill the criterion of communicative validation. This process has taken place at several levels within the processes of both data collection, for example, confirming, exploring and seeking elaboration on responses and interpretation, seeking confirmation of and consent to my analyses.

I 'quit the field' at appropriate times, both after sessions of participant observation and interviews and left Japan, coming back to London to analyse my data, with the benefit of hindsight and fresh perspectives, in attempt to increase the reliability of my interpretations.

I have included, in the empirical chapters of my thesis, sections of verbatim reporting of sources, avoiding the careful selection and editing of such, in order to provide the reader with the material, their own reading of which can either affirm or provide an alternative to my interpretation. This, together with descriptions of my data collection and analytic processes, increases the transparency and procedural clarity of my study.

Some of the techniques recommended by Lindlof (1995) and the criteria put forward by Gaskell and Bauer (2000) have not been employed in my study. The first of these concerns the sample. Gaskell and Bauer advocate the use of the technique of corpus construction in selecting the sample. I have used the alternative technique of a snowball sample as it better suits the nature of my study. My method of 'following the *uchi*', that is, following people's social networks in communication/cultural spaces, required introductions to new informants on the part of my initial informants and I have already discussed the benefits, for doing ethnographic research, of having some kind of social connection with Japanese informants and thus an invitation into their private family spaces. The second reason for using a snowball sample is that it identifies those families living within rich media environments.

Lindlof argues that the technique of negative case analysis increases the reliability of the findings of a study due to its use increasing the generality of

those findings. If a general principle can be found that accommodates all cases, including those initially appearing aberrant, then we may have more confidence in its truth. However, while I made use of the process of going from hypothesis to the field and back again, adjusting and retesting my hypotheses, in order to increase the accuracy of my interpretations, I did not attempt to draw such generalisations about my informants, or Japanese people in general, as the aim of my study has been to reveal diversity through the documentation of diverse engagements of Japanese people with media and ICT and with each other.

Conducting interviews with all members of my families along with their colleagues and friends has given me multiple sources of data, as has using a variety of methods, including in-depth interviews, participant observation, taking photos, viewing relevant websites and maintaining email contact throughout. Through using multiple methods and sources my analyses have the advantage of a triangulated approach, my findings being pinpointed from a number of collaborating factors. Lindlof's third feature of triangulated approaches is that of using multiple investigators. Schroeder also advocates the value of using 'external auditors' whose collaborative analysis adds reliability to the interpretations made of the data. While practical considerations have not allowed me the luxury of research assistants I have, however, discussed my data and analyses with colleagues throughout the duration of my fieldwork.

My Research as Complementing Quantitative Studies

I have not conducted any quantitative surveys as part of this thesis. Nevertheless I have incorporated relevant findings of quantitative studies into my research thus complementing the quantitative data and increasing (and in some cases challenging) its validity. I have selected salient findings from quantitative studies and investigated them in my own research. Qualitative researchers quickly become aware of an often present discrepancy between, on the one hand, respondents' answers, or their self-awareness of their behaviour

and motivations and so on, and, on the other, reality. If such discrepancies can be brought to light by a qualitative study involving both interviews and participant observation, the validity of quantitative studies using only interviews or questionnaires is brought into question. Using my qualitative methods, alongside pre-existing quantitative data, I have been able to both reveal such discrepancies in certain data and increase the validity of other data.

In this section I have already discussed ways in which I have brought increased reliability to my study. Quantitative research can also be used to complement my study by bringing a certain amount of generalisability to some of my findings. Some of my results have similarly been found by quantitative methods, by their nature highly generalisable, thereby lending my research greater generalisability.

I do not, of course, wish to give the impression that ethnography is valuable largely in terms of its role in complementing quantitative research. I have already mentioned some of the perceived virtues of doing ethnography of media audiences. I want to mention another reason why ethnography is particularly appropriate to my study. Quantitative research uses statistics, which, by their nature, deal in linear mathematics. I have stated my desire to investigate the nonlinearity of phenomena and it is only qualitative methods that can take account of nonlinear phenomena such as those I wish to discuss.

3.4.6. Reflexivity and Ethnography 'at Home'

We have to be aware of issues of reliability, particularly when doing ethnography 'at home'. I have mentioned, above, several ways scholars have increased the reliability of their studies. However, the purported 'problem' that ethnographic research is based in the subjectivity or subjective interpretation of the researcher will perhaps always remain, despite the use of various techniques of increasing reliability. The approach of reflexivity aims not to overcome the reliability problem but to deal with it in a more overt way.

Who Is the Researcher?

The first thing to be done in a reflexive ethnography is to think about the relationships between the researcher and the informants. In my case, I have conducted my research independently of any government, commercial or industrial interests, thus political relationships between myself and my informants are minimised. However, I have conducted this research project as a student of the London School of Economics and Political Science and this fact may have played a role in impinging on the relationships with my informants. Some informants may have initially seen me, living and studying in London, as an outsider or even a foreigner. Others may have felt threatened by my being a researcher insofar as they felt that certain aspects of their private lives may have ended up under public scrutiny. These two factors initially made people both less willing and more willing, to allow me 'into' their *uchi*. Merely being aware, in a reflexive way, of these factors is not enough. In order to gain deeper access to people's lives, I adopted a relaxed, friendly and humble approach to my informants. In terms of research design, I developed prolonged relationships with them, explained the aims and processes of my research to them and gained their confirmation and consent to my analyses of them. My informants have remained anonymous and their information confidential. The trust I achieved between myself and my informants, again, reduced the 'political' factors in our relationship.

Particularly during participant observation I had to remain aware of my presence within and influence on the *uchi*. I was an active participant but was aware of my influence as such, that is, I allowed my informants to carry on with their lives in as 'natural' a manner as possible (natural being understood as meaning 'as if I were not there') but am aware that my presence always, to some extent, precluded this. Families do not behave in the same way when they have guests, or researchers, in their houses as they do when they have none. It is

exactly this that the reflexive ethnographer must remain aware of in both data collection and analysis.

The other thing I must consider in taking a reflexive approach to my ethnography is the extent to which factors of my background and who I am shape my research. I am Japanese, grew up in Tokyo, have shared the same time, space, culture, society and experience of the media and television programmes with most of my informants and affiliate myself to many beliefs, practices and social groups—student, woman, mother, child, employee—as those of my informants.

Objectivity and Quitting the Field

Perhaps the first set of issues the reflexive approach will reveal is those related to my being, clearly, an ‘insider’, rather than an ‘outsider’ in relation to the culture I am studying. This specific type of ethnography has been called ‘indigenous anthropology’ or ‘auto-anthropology’ (Strathern, 1987) to distinguish it from earlier and more traditional forms in which a group of people, foreign to the ethnographer, is studied.

Many scholars have noted some limitations with respect to doing such ‘ethnography at home’. These limitations have centred around the anticipated problem that ‘insiders’ will have a tendency to take things for granted or fail to see through ‘common sense’ perceptions thus not being as capable of identifying the salient features of that being studied as the ‘outsider’ would be.

Strathern (1987) notes, on the other hand, what is generally understood to be the possible advantage of ethnography ‘at home’, that is, that insiders will be capable of gaining more insight than would an outsider because they do not have to overcome cultural or linguistic barriers. Ethnography ‘at home’ is thus considered to have greater reflexivity as the researcher’s relationships with that or those being studied are capable of revealing more about both the researcher and the ‘culture’.

I have attempted to utilise the best of both worlds, that is, as both an insider, with the advantage of sharing linguistic and cultural codes, and an outsider, able to have achieved a sense of objectivity through my frequently leaving the field to return to London. Each time I returned to my informants I felt a fresh sense of objectivity and also strengthened the social bond with them through frequent 'reunion'.

The point at which I decided to quit the field was precipitated by several factors. After a while, informants' patterns of everyday life and personal histories had been sufficiently revealed, such that further contact would have revealed little new insight. At the same time, my categories and lines of inquiry became saturated with data and the emergence of novel categories slowed down. When I quit the field for the final time, returning to London to begin the process of coding my data, I acquired a strong sense of being a total outsider.

3.5. Method

Because of the aforementioned difficulties with respect to studying Japanese families, that is, the boundary between *uchi* and *soto* and the Japanese style of communication and because that which I study is embedded in everyday life, I have believed that the most effective method, through which to conduct my ethnographic research, is that of prolonged relationships involving in-depth interviews and participant observation.

3.5.1. Informants

In my research, I have worked with thirty families. My informants all have rich media environments in their homes or accessible in their offices or schools. The minimum requirement for my informants has been that they have cable television or satellite television at home and that at least one family member has access to the internet. My informants are parents or single people, most in their 20s and 30s, with a few in their 40s and 50s, children and teenagers, from a variety of social, occupational and educational backgrounds and live in either urban or suburban environments in the Tokyo metropolitan area. As my informants are 'early adopters' of the new technology they tend to be middle or upper class people, who have higher levels of education. I have tried to incorporate diversity into my sample group by selecting informants from different gate keepers (See Appendix B2 for details of my informants).

3.5.2. Interviews and Participant Observation

I conducted, from the period April 2000 to December 2001, semi-structured, conversational interviews, using a tape recorder, as well as informal interviews with neither a tape recorder nor a list of questions, as a means of achieving a more natural and relaxed atmosphere in which my informants could feel more comfortable in disclosing private information. During all the time spent with

my informants, including during both semi-structured and informal interviews, I participated in my informants' everyday lives and made observations. I visited at different times and on different days in order to participate in a variety of everyday situations with them, on each occasion spending between two hours and a whole day together, occasionally sleeping over (See Appendix B1 for the framework of my interviews).

There were several factors determining the amount of time I chose to spend with each family. Firstly, some families were more welcoming of me than others and made it easy for me to visit again and again. Other families were very busy. Other informants required longer and more frequent periods of contact so as to build up trust in me, which enabled them to open up. Another factor was the quantity and quality of informants' media engagement. Some informants spent many hours a day engaging with a variety of media and ICT while others did not. A further factor was the relevance of some families' engagement with media and ICT to my research aims. Some families supplied larger amounts and more diversity of data, thus a longer time was required with them. On a new category of analysis being revealed, I went back to other families to investigate it with respect to them. For families for whom such a category was irrelevant, I inevitably spent less time with them.

Participating and Observing

As discussed earlier some forms of engagement I have observed were better investigated through participant observation than through direct questions. During my participant observation sessions I made notes on: family relationships, involvement with television programmes and characters, interpretation of news and other programmes, how television programmes are selected in a family, the use of the remote control device, viewing context and the role media and ICT, and engagement with them, plays. The hidden assumption of previous studies of family viewing is that television is a domestic medium, that is, it plays its role

primarily when the family is watching it together in the living room. This idea is linked to the image of the hearth in Britain and the fireplace in the United States of America. The *iroiri* (fire) has played a similar role in Japanese families. Scholars have previously been criticised for idealistically portraying television as providing an opportunity for families to maintain familial relationships and unity in an increasingly individualised and fragmented society. I am interested in this issue and hope my data show whether television still plays such a role in the family.

3.5.3. Analysis of my Data

I used Glaser and Strauss's (1968) method of grounded theory to arrive at my analysis from my data. I started by reading through the entirety of my transcripts and notes, noting in margins and on post-its the various categories I have used in my research. I tried to approach this initial categorisation with only very general categories in my mind, being open to novel categories being revealed by the voices of my informants. I paid strict attention to each line of dialogue, asking myself, for example, what does this mean, for her, in this family, with this life? I attempted to recall the moment of utterance, and the physical, social and emotional import of the environment at the time, remembering facial expressions and tone of voice. Throughout this process I constantly compared cases within each category both to each other and to cases in other categories. I also constantly made notes and memos, recording my thoughts about my analysis, as it developed.

After the stage of open coding, I went back to my data again and again, constantly re-coding it in terms of other and higher dimensions of theory. I was sure to identify not only categories and concepts common to a majority of my informants, but also those apparently aberrant, but significant to me, in the light of the broader concerns and scope of my research, constantly keeping an eye out for diversity. This focused coding process went through several stages of

re-coding and further analysis, into increasingly general theorising. I maintained a catalogue of cards, which I constantly re-organised in terms of further categories, linking cases together in a variety of dimensions. In the categorisation and comparison of cases, further analysis required the reflexive re-thinking and re-conceptualising of categories themselves, which, in turn, led to further analysis through re-categorising. My interpretations of the data emerged from it, in the interpretive interactivity of my categories, my cultural code and all the facts and impressions of my informants.

While delimiting of my developing theories occurred, I attempted not to go too far with this, as I have been concerned to avoid reduction and instead discover diversity. Computer software (such as Nud*ist) was not available for my use as none has been developed that is sensitive to Japanese characters. I said, in an earlier section, that I have not had the resources for a second independent coder.

Conclusion

Chapter One set out the theoretical framework in which audience research in general and my research in particular exist and stated my aim to understand Japanese audience engagement with media. In Chapter Two I applied the theoretical framework developed in Chapter One to Japanese audiences. This chapter has shown the many, lengthy and complex processes by which my theoretical research interest has been transformed into concrete methods.

My summary of the methods employed by various qualitative studies of media audiences aimed to show both the advantages and limitations of using the various qualitative methods. Through a discussion of the issues of validity and reliability I looked at ways in which ethnography may be strengthened to overcome some of its perceived lack of reliability. From incorporating anthropological methodologies, stronger qualitative approaches and quantitative

methods, scholars have begun to work at a convergence of the various research methods. While I have not undertaken a quantitative study I hope to have complemented the existing quantitative research on Japanese audiences and users of new communication and information technologies, highlighting some of its findings and providing them with more qualitative contextualisation. I have incorporated the strengths of previous qualitative studies into my methodological approach to studying new media environments while at the same time taking into account the particular features of Japanese culture and families that make doing ethnographic research in Japan more of a challenge. I have selected the techniques of in-depth interviews and participant observation in the homes and offices of my informants. The multi-*uchis* of my informants are the sites of social engagement with media. Thus it is the *uchis* I will follow in my collection of data.

While referring to ethnographic methodologies which have been developed in the Western social sciences, I constructed the original ethnographic technique from the lessons from both the Japanese literature and my experiences in pre-fieldwork with Japanese families. The literature about Japanese social relations, families, communication and culture and the data from my pre-fieldwork in this chapter and my research findings which I will present in the next three empirical chapters may show the existence of Japanese cultural specificity. However, at the same time they may also reveal an element of Western cultural specificity and may challenge some current assumptions about ethnographic theory and practices in the West. This argument may parallel that of Geertz (1988), an American social anthropologist who turned Benedict's(1946) work—which emphasised Japanese uniqueness (See Appendix A1)—on its head when he stated that, after finishing the book, the culture he had felt to be unique and strange was not Japanese culture, but his own:

Japan comes to look, somehow, less and less erratic and arbitrary while the United

States comes to look, somehow, more and more so. There is, in fact, nothing "wrong with the picture", just with those who look at it upside down. (p.122)

After discussing my findings from the Japanese field, I will come back to the issue of universalism and cultural specificity at greater length in the conclusion.

The remaining three chapters focus on the empirical work conducted. In Chapter Four, I shall discuss the varied ways in which the Japanese audience engages with the media. Chapter Five considers the role of the media and ICT in transforming the notion of *uchi*. These come together in Chapter Six when I shall discuss the possibilities and processes of self-creation through the more transnational aspects of the media and ICT.

Chapter Four: Audience Engagement with Media and ICT

Introduction

This chapter looks at the various ways in which Japanese audiences engage with the media and ICT. It makes use of previously identified dimensions of audience activities from several traditions of audience research and adds to these new dimensions revealed from my fieldwork. It both complements existing quantitative Japanese research with a qualitative analysis and contextualises existing qualitative studies to Japanese audiences. I also apply relevant etic concepts developed in Western literature to the Japanese case. This chapter also serves to introduce the informants I will focus on in this and the following two empirical chapters.

4.1. Media and Domestic Time-Space

In this section, I focus on the domestic time-space where individuals engage with media in everyday life. Domestic time-space may be regarded as the fundamental *uchi* and closed private space existing in Japanese society, as I discussed in Chapter Two (see Appendix A2). I will address the following questions: Does a rich media environment make 'home' more open to the rest of the world? Does television still function at the centre of the home as a hearth? How do power structures within the social context of the family (patriarchy, *ie* ideology (see Appendix A2)) influence the way family members watch television? I shall first comment on the relationship between the domestic time-space and the media and introduce the notion of ontological security. Following this will be a discussion of family viewing and fragmentation within the family.

4.1.1. Television, 'Mother' and Living room: Ontological Security

Television and Ontological Security

In media studies, television has been described as creating the hearth of the domestic space (cf. Silverstone, 1994). In the 21st century, the television set occupies a central or prominent location in the living room in most Japanese houses, with the familial space created in front of the set, complete with a comfortable sofa, carpet, or a tatami mat where family members lay to watch television. Although most families have multiple television sets in their houses (cf. Appendix A3), the television set in the living room is typically the newest and biggest, and probably the one connected to the cable or satellite network, providing the most variety of channels. DVD, video games, LD, video sets are also likely to be connected to this television set, as evident from the many remote control devices sitting on top of it. This makes the living room television set the most attractive in the house.

Masatoshi's (f19, father, 54) television set is located between the living and the dining rooms. It sits on a revolving platform so that it can always be turned towards where the family happens to be. It is as if the television set is another member of the family, always made to face the other members. As long as someone is at home, this television set is always on and the person who controls the television set may change with each new entrant to the house. Turning on both the television set and the lights upon coming home, whether or not the former is actually watched by anyone, has become ritual behaviour for the entire family, done almost unconsciously.

As part of the home in this way, television has a continuity that provides us with a sense of security (Silverstone, 1994, 1999). Television is always on and provides familiar television programmes and news at the same time everyday. Scannell (1988) discusses the idea that the formation of 'the national audience', watching the same programme at the same time, is the role of public broadcasting bodies such as the BBC. Some Japanese families still watch

Japanese soap operas together on NHK every morning before they go to school or work. However, these days, the so-called national audience does not always watch the same programme at the same time because satellite television provides the same show at different time slots throughout the day. People watch the same shows but at times that better suit their personal schedules. Technological developments since VCRs have given the audience some opportunity to shift the time of viewing.

People in Japan still tend to watch NHK soap operas in the morning, or at noon, before they leave home, as part of the rhythm of everyday life. Before going to bed, they tend to watch news, drama and sport. With the range of options offered by terrestrial, cable or satellite television, they may choose programmes according to their taste or mood. They can watch television in the living room, with other family members or alone in their bedrooms. While cooking, they may watch their favourite programmes on a small television set in the kitchen, or through the door of their bathroom which they have left ajar, while taking a bath. Television watching can now either bring the entire family together, or facilitate their separation into different arenas of viewing.

The story-lines of NHK's soap operas in Japan have also changed. In the '80s, the Japanese soap opera *Oshin* was very popular not only in Japan but also in Asia and other parts of the world. *Oshin* is a Japanese woman who works hard and succeeds in the period immediately after World War Two, when the country was impoverished. This show represents Japan's economic success in the 1980's, and had an ideological origin, insofar as it was designed to instill the value of success and hard work as virtues.

This may be contrasted with the recently released soap *Sakura* (NHK, April 2002), touted as the station's first digital high vision programme. The main character, Sakura, is a fourth generation Japanese who grew up in Hawaii. Her full name is Elizabeth Sakura Matsushita. In the story, she is a postgraduate student who refused her fiancé's proposal, telling him to "wait one year" while

she went to Japan to be an English teacher. The story tells of her many experiences in Japan, many of which appeared to her as “Japanese irrational interpersonal relationships”. She is particularly disturbed by the gender discrimination among school teachers, something she cannot understand, and for which the only explanation she ever gets is that it is simply the way things are done there. Sakura is, at the same time, also attracted to the wonders of Japanese traditions. We get a peep into her thoughts through the regular emails she sends to her fiancé in Hawaii every night. The story-line has thus been adapted to reflect certain aspects of the global age and to address contemporary issues and values. While television story-lines may change and the circumstances of viewing may alter, it is the ever-presence and ubiquitousness of television, this ritual of viewing, so embedded in our everyday lives, that contributes towards our sense of what Giddens (1990, 1991) has termed ‘ontological security’, a sense of trust in and reliance upon the continuity of things or people in everyday life.

The Parasite Single and her Mother: *Amae*

It was Japanese family sociologist, Yamada (2001) who coined the term ‘Parasite Single’, defined as someone between the ages of 20 and 34, who lives with his or her parents and is economically and emotionally dependent on them. The existence of a ‘parasite single’ in a Japanese family is not uncommon nowadays. According to Yamada, there are presently ten million (out of a population of 125 million) such singles living with their parents. 60% of single males and 80% of single females do so. Their parents have been found to be mostly businessmen in their 50’s and housewives in their 40’s. The prevalence of this social arrangement, which is also borne out by my encounters in the field, has been attributed to Doi’s (1971) concept of *Amae*, or “indulgent dependency”, rooted in the mother-child bond. Following from the concept, it is perhaps not surprising that the central figure in the home, or the domestic *uchi*, is the housewife. Other

members in the family, too, are part of the domestic *uchi* but they are just as likely, if not more, to find their primary *uchi* elsewhere. The housewife is the pivotal figure in the domestic *uchi*. For one thing, she generally locates herself in the living room. When the other family members are not at home, she does housework or watches television. As soon as other family members come home, she becomes busy, attending to both her husband and the children, if any. When they are home, she does not allow herself the time to sit down to watch television.

Take Haruko (f25, mother, 46), for example. Listening to her, it appeared as if her whole life revolved mostly around her home and the family members. The few times she talked about the world outside the home, she was in fact relating stories she had heard from the others in the family. These were originally their stories, not hers. There was, however, no resentment or envy in her voice. She was free to go out as she pleased but saw little need to, saying that she was glad to get to stay at home. Leisure time for Haruko is sprawling in front of the TV set, something she would not do if any of her family members were home. In those times, Haruko would always sit in a particular chair in the living room. What is curious is that she cannot possibly see what was on the television screen sitting where she does.

Researcher: Why do you sit in this chair? You can't see the TV at all, can you?

Haruko: No, because I prefer to watch my family's faces.

By that time of the evening, Haruko would have watched enough television during the day to tell the family the news and weather, if only so that she could tell them what to wear for the next day's weather. There is a role to be played by ICT in the maintenance and even reinforcement, as the following informants show, of the *amae* relationship between mother and child.

Junko (f22, mother, 52) receives a call from her 27 year old son, Jun. He is upstairs in his room, calling her from his mobile. He wants dinner and, as usual,

without complaint, Junko prepares the meal and takes it up to him. When he has finished, she will receive another call from him. She will then collect the plates, taking some green tea to him at the same time. All weekend, Jun would stay in his room, leaving the house only if Junko decided to go shopping. Then it would be Jun who would have to wait on her, playing the chauffeur.

Like many Japanese mothers of her generation, Noriko's (f14, mother, 53) schedule is mostly tied up to her family's. In the day, she would potter around the house, staying in the living room to do her drawing or watch television when the housekeeping is done. She told me she was happy staying at home like this, and rarely feels the need to go out. Though it would be about midnight when her husband or daughter (Norika, aged 20) returns from work, the family would eventually come together at the sofa to watch television. It is often Noriko who ends up waking everyone up to go to bed. In the morning, when Noriko is out, her mobile phone enables her to wake her daughter up, while being able to be away from the home as a site of work (cf. Morley, 1986).

The mother of a 'parasite single' almost invariably spends most of her time at home. When other members of the family are in, she would work hard to make them comfortable so that she has little time to sit and watch television. It may be easy to suggest that such mothers are an oppressed group but this viewpoint, though valid in some specific instances, tends to eclipse the more subtle and complex aspects of these mothers' relationships in Japanese society. The mother, through her actions and interactions with others in the family, creates the conditions of dependency, both practically and emotionally. The children may have grown up, but as long as they are single, and staying at home, the mother may in fact thrive on the fact that they continue to depend on her. In any case, there is an underlying assumption that, in her later years, that dependency may be reversed – that she can then depend on them when she is too old to care for them. For the present, the domestic *uchi* in which she is a key player, provides her with a sense of security and predictability, away from the

stress of being in other *uchis*.

For these mothers, the television set (and other related forms of technology like the video or DVD player) provide relief and pleasure during the day when they are mostly alone. It is when they are watching television, that they are most at ease, often lying down on the sofa or tatami mat '*dainoji*' (spread-eagled). Many Japanese programmes, produced with such an audience in mind, assure them that they are being good housewives; especially when they compare themselves with television portrayals of the young inexperienced housewife who lacks the skills at good housekeeping or is unable to cook good Japanese food.

For the so-called parasite singles, the domestic time-space may be a source of their ontological security. The continuing attention and care they received from their mothers is something they have grown up with. Though they are now in their 20s or 30s, their dependency on their mother is still encouraged, so that it continues to be a part of the 'natural attitude'. This is an instance of what Doi has termed the *amae* relationship, that is, one of mutual dependency and trust.

The mother or housewife is clearly a pivotal figure in the domestic time-space, but what about the other members of the family? What does the 'home' in this context mean to them? Reiko's daughter, Reika (f15, daughter, 25), expressed a common sentiment among the parasite singles I have met. "Home", she says, "is a place where I can be selfish. Do whatever I want. I know my mother would never throw me out. Instead, she will be there to defend me, protect me". Similarly, Takeshi (f9, son, 28) spoke of the home as a place where he can most relax. "It's a place to sleep, gives me relief from everything outside. And when I want to, I can still reach to the outside by sending emails or watching television". Before Takeshi used the internet or mobile phone, home was more isolated from the outside world. For the parasite singles, the close and dependent bonds they experienced with their mothers in their younger years often continue despite their getting older. It is a relationship of trust that what was the case in the past, will probably remain

the case in the future; hence the domestic time-space is for them a source of ontological security.

However, this may be overstating the case a little. Seika (f25, daughter, 35), for example, told me she felt a sense of insecurity living in a household where there is so much dependency. She is single partly because her mother wants to have a say in her choice of a spouse. Many a time, her boyfriends have been rejected by her mother, usually on the grounds of their educational or family background. Her mother had offered to arrange her marriage. This happens every time the Japanese princess Masako appears on television with her husband or baby. Occasionally, Seika's protests would lead her mother to what she thought was a chilling conclusion, that her daughter does not need to marry, for they have enough money to look after her the rest of her life. Seika has had a mobile phone for a year and, at such times, she will retreat to her room to chat with her friends or colleagues via either this or email. This may be understood as a strategy to regain her ontological security—disembedding herself physically from the domestic *uchi* and re-embedding herself with another that she shares with her friends.

4.1.2. Family Viewing Reconsidered

Meanings of Home

Morley (1986) has argued that the home, for men, is a site of pleasure while for women, a site of work. This conclusion has been echoed through numerous studies with gender rightfully on their agenda, but it has to be read against the specificities of the particular cultural and historical context. In my study, I found similar patterns, albeit tampered with by some of the nuances and complexities specific to the contemporary scene in Japan. What, for example, is the meaning of 'home' to the Japanese? One of my informants, Satoko (f20, mother, 32) phrased it like this, "the home is the place where the housewife can exist". Another, Aiko (f1, mother, 35), said that the home is synonymous with

herself. How are we to understand these expressions? What do they tell us, and what do they conceal about the concept and experience of home? The following interview with Aiko and her husband, Ataro, is an attempt to find answers to these questions.

Researcher: What does home mean to you?

Aiko: Home...here? Here...is myself, the place where I am. There is nowhere else I can be. But if somebody asks me if I'm alive here, I can't say yes. Because I hate housework. I hate nursery. I love to watch television. Here is a place I can watch television. ...I don't know what I live for.

Researcher: Don't say that!

Aiko: (Looking and sounding depressed) I feel I live for television.

Attending to her feelings (anger, almost) at the time of the interview, it was hard to have noticed how Aiko had switched from expressing her detestation for housework to her claiming solace in watching television. This, as I will discuss later, has significance for our understanding of the role played by the media and other ICTs in present day Japan. For now, I turn the same question to Aiko's husband, Ataro:

Ataro: Home is where I come to at midnight. Home is a place I come back to exhausted, only to sleep.

Researcher: (*later*) How would you describe your family?

Ataro: A family without a father.

Aiko and Ataro live in a *nisetaijukyo* (a two-generation household), with their two children. Ataro works for Toshiba. In a tone that is sometimes envious, other times dismissive, Ataro talked about his *kikokushijo* (Japanese people who have returned from long periods living abroad) colleagues, who, like foreigners living

in Japan, go home at six and have dinner with their wives and children. He added mockingly, "Otherwise their wives will sue them. Even though they are supposed to be Japanese living in Japan, they would be sued. How scary. I'm glad that I live in Japan." To this, his wife immediately complained to me, "Well, he can say that because he has somewhere else to go to (his business *uchi*) but for me, there is no escape from my duty at all." While Morley's women saw the home as a place of work, Aiko seemed to see it more as a labour camp. On one occasion, when we were alone together, Aiko confided that she sometimes "felt like just driving off, going away somewhere, without saying a word to anyone."

The disparity in meanings of home for another couple, became clear when I asked the couple if they would mind if their daughter continued to live with them after her marriage. This sort of *nisetaijukyo* living arrangement is not uncommon, especially since property is very expensive in Japan.

Masako: No, no. I don't want to be constrained by my daughter's family.

Masatoshi: Oh really? I was just thinking we should do that.

Masako: Really?! (*She snapped right in, anxious to get her point across*).

For me, no, no, no, it's okay. I can live alone.

It was significant that she said she could live 'alone' as if her husband was not part of the home. She was saying that she belonged to the domestic sphere but he did not. Her husband eager to maintain a close relationship with his daughter, clearly has a different idea about the home and this is illustrated by the typical viewing situation of the family. In attempting to affirm his domestic *uchi*, the media and ICTs can be made into good allies. Not only does television, in particular, provide entertainment and escape but by providing a focal point in the home, creates a common time-space in which the domestic *uchi* finds expression. Masatoshi (f19, father, 54) makes it a point to leave the remote control device (RCD) in his daughter's hands, hoping that this will encourage her to stay in the

living room to watch television together with the family.

Researcher: Who controls the RCD?

Masatoshi: My daughter.

Maki: [*turning to her father*] You're always sleeping on the sofa, holding on to the remote control. I only take it away quietly.

Masatoshi: Perhaps, I don't want her to go to her room, which she may if I watched the programmes I want to watch. As long as I keep her favourite programmes on, she'll stay here. But if I watch my favourite programmes, you'll [*to daughter*] go to your room, to the net.

Maki: I don't think that's true.

Masatoshi: It's true.

Maki: Whatever I may switch to on other channels is probably just as trivial as what's already on. Probably not worth the bother, since everyone else is enjoying the show. I'd rather do something else.

Masatoshi: I'd still watch with you whatever you switch to.

Maki: Oh, really? I didn't know that.

Power Structures in the Home

Since Morley (1986), the RCD has often been conceived of as a symbol of power in the domestic sphere. In his studies, Morley shows that the English patriarchal family structure is enacted by the father's ultimate dominance over the device. Lull's (1988) comparative study suggested a slightly more complex picture. In Venezuela, it is typically the mother who wields control over the RCD as it is she who is the one most responsible for matters of the home. In China, on the other hand, with its strictly one-child policy, it is the children who hold the device, reaffirming their value in the family.

My study suggests, at least in the case of Japan, that the control of the device does not correspond to or map onto any straightforward family structure.

In the first place, familial politics are far from being one dimensional or fixed. In a Japanese household, the control of the RCD may pass from one person to another in the course of the day. And even the passing of the RCD, as Masatoshi's case has demonstrated, may be interpreted not as an act of succumbing to power but of handing power over. In so doing, participation and control, whether actual or possible, is shared amongst family members. Control of the RCD then has an exchange value, which can be traded to keep the family together. While it indeed seems to be a symbol of power in the home, that power is refracted through the fluidity and complexities of familial relationships and interactions which cannot be attributed solely to gender.

For many scholars, Aiko and Ataro represent the archetypal Japanese family—a single income family with kids, and the woman solely a housewife and/or mother—with strong gender role differentiation. Yet, contrary to Morley's English families, the father is not the one who controls the device, or dictates what to watch. If Ataro has viewing preferences that conflict with Aiko's, he will have to go downstairs to negotiate with his parents the use of their television set. But Aiko will, on the other hand, readily hand the device to her daughters, again in hope that that will keep them glued to the television set, along with the family. It is also a matter of social intimacy, a desire to keep the family close emotionally. Aiko's control of the RCD not only corresponds to her view of the home as her domain but, together with this view, places their household alongside those of Venezuela, which Lull (1988) found to be dominated by the woman.

Tactically using the television to keep the family together is a common theme even among Japanese families with alternative economic structures. The dual income family, for example, has become a significant feature of Japanese society, especially in the "post-bubble economy" era when an increasing proportion of women decide to take up employment. Under these circumstances, women find themselves participating in both a business (or company) *uchi* and

the domestic *uchi*. What then becomes of the home and the domestic *uchi*? In the following two examples, the 'traditional' gender role differentiation in the family is still maintained, with the wife doubling up her roles.

Atsuko (f3, wife, 34) is an example among my informants of a career woman. She told me that the only relaxing time she has are the times between her arrival at home and her husband's (Atsushi, f3, husband, 38). During those few hours, she would usually watch the day's dramas on television and record them on videotape at the same time. She will then watch it again with her husband when he comes home and has had his dinner. But that will not be until the early hours of the morning since he only comes home about 11pm. It is while he is watching television that Atsuko will get to talk with her husband, often about her work in the office. Typically, she said, his responses are mere acknowledgement of her presence, his eyes all the time fixed on the screen. "But at least," she says, "I have his attention and we are spending time together". Atsuko is able to take advantage of the VCR in order to, at a later time and on a second viewing of the same programme, spend time with her husband, despite him, rather than her, having the power in the household if we are to use Lull and Morley's power barometer: when I asked Atsushi who had control of the RCD, he unhesitatingly replied, "I do."

Despite going out to work, women like Atsuko hold on very closely to the traditional notion of the domestic *uchi*, with the wife or mother playing a pivotal role. On top of the work she does, she is still expected to maintain the household. Increasingly, however, we are seeing in Japan, families in which differentiation of role by gender is less pronounced, or even reversed. Tadashi (f26, father, 41) and Taeko (mother, 41) may be described as such a couple, sometimes referred to in Japan as a 'modern couple'. They both work full-time and share the housework and childcare. As far as housework is concerned, the understanding between the couple is that the one with the time should just do it. In reality, however, most of the housework falls on Tadashi. He said, "Home is a

place of work for me. I work all day long!" To which his wife replied sceptically, "Really? So when do you relax?" "I don't." Maybe, it is when the rest of the family has gone to sleep that Tadashi finds his moment of relaxation, as he watches his nightly movies, checks his email, surfs the internet or plays computer games. Here we see a gender reversal of the idea of the home as a site of work for the mother of a family.

The families discussed in the foregoing section are but a small sample of the variety of familial circumstances and social arrangements common in contemporary Japan. But while the circumstances may differ, there is an underlying sense in which social actors try to adapt, create and re-create in their everyday lives that familiar centre which I have identified as the domestic *uchi*. In the cases I examined, television has been a useful and convenient focal point on which entire families sometimes converge. If we are to look at families and their members' use of television solely in terms of power relations, we can see that, as in some families it is the father and in others it is the mother who has control of the RCD, both matriarchal and patriarchal family structures appear to be in place in Japanese families. Furthermore, when RCDs are handed over to the children, it suggests that Japanese families bear resemblances not only to English and Venezuelan families but also (and not surprisingly, perhaps, given the geographical and cultural closeness) to families in China. Thus the control of the RCD can reveal findings about power relations. But the phenomenon I found to be significant in the time I spent with my informant families was that RCDs, television and other ICTs were used tactically (cf. de Certeau, 1985) for the manipulation not only of power relationships but of emotional relationships. Family members used them to create intimacy, at least physical if not always emotional, in the creation and recreation of personal senses of *uchi* and in the expression and reinforcement of a notion of home, in an environment of relaxation together.

4.1.3 Fragmentation

In the preceding section, I highlighted the role ICT can play in bringing families together. However, the media have often been held responsible for fragmenting families (Morley, 2000). A quick survey of the patterns of ownership of media technology in Japanese households raises further questions about how television is actually being watched behind closed doors, in families where there are, say, more television sets than family members. And we have yet to take into account the other forms of ICT such as broadband Internet and mobile phones. How has this proliferation of media technology in the homes reorganised the family, and what are its implications for the maintenance of the domestic *uchi*? Has media become more personalised, thus fragmenting domestic viewing? And, furthermore, if the answer to this question is yes, does this mean the family itself is being fragmented? In my field research, I found several families for which this may indeed seem to be the case.

Divergent Tastes in Television Programmes

Haruko (f25, mother, 46) recalled that her family used to watch television together, in a cosy pile on the floor but that has all changed. Now, each member prefers to engage in his or her favourite type of media entertainment in a separate room. Somehow, none of the family members' favourite television programmes coincide: Haruko likes two-hour suspense dramas and news, Haruo watches *samurai* dramas and historical documentaries, Harumi prefers *torendiidoramas* ('trendy dramas') and music shows while Haru watches variety shows and sports shows on the second television set and plays video games. Thus after dinner, the children would usually go to their own rooms while Haruko either cleans up or watches television alone. She is aware of the role that televisions and so forth play in keeping her family apart. Her children have asked for their own television sets and a computer for their rooms but she refused, explaining to me, "I said no because otherwise I will never see them."

Researcher: So, you can't watch television together, because everybody is busy?

Haruko: Oh, is television a thing that families watch together?

Haruko had not even conceived of television being a tool for bringing families together, merely adapting family television viewing time to become a time for her to quietly observe her children.

Personal Space in Multi-media, Multi-*Uchi* Family Viewing

Jiro (f22, father, 55) has five television sets in the home. During dinner, he controls the RCD. If there are some television programmes in which he thinks other family members are interested, he turns up the volume. If other family members are talking too loudly at the dinner table for him to follow the programme, he would pull out his cordless headphones thereby withdrawing into a personal space (cf. Bull, 2000). Jun (son, 27) said of his father, "He destroys the pleasure of a happy home." While this example may be an extreme one, it is not at all uncommon for members of a family to send and receive text messages and mobile phone calls during the evening family meal thereby disembedding from the family *uchi* and embedding in a personal space shared via ICT with friends.

One evening, I was invited to dinner at an informant's place and had hoped to join in their family viewing. But it was not what I had expected. Dinner had just finished and I made my way to sit comfortably at the sofa facing the television set. My host, Youichi (f21, father, 51) stayed at the dining table, with a laptop computer in front of him because he wanted to access the internet. From where he was sitting, he said, "I can watch TV from here". With me on the sofa were his wife (Yoshie, mother, 48) and 13-year old daughter Yoshiko. Yone (grandmother, 73) had already gone to bed while Yoshiki (Youichi's oldest son, 21) had not come home yet. The younger son, Yoshikazu (son, 19) had gone

to his room, where apparently he was watching the same programme. Youichi explained that his younger son does not usually join in the 'family viewing'.

On television was a local drama, *Antique*, which starred Taki, a member of the pop group Janese, over which Yoshiko was crazy. We were watching and talking about the show when Yoshiko suddenly received an email on her mobile, after which we practically 'lost' her, as she continued to exchange emails on her mobile with her friend, another fan of Taki: "Yeah, he looks so cute tonight!!". She typed away her messages without looking at the mobile phone she was a member of the new generation subculture, *oyayubibunka* (thumb culture—referring to those so skillful at operating their mobile phones that they can do so merely by swift manipulations of their thumbs and without looking). Suddenly, Yoshie stood up, declaring that she had to do some housework and she went off to the kitchen. With my host lost in cyberspace, his children embedded in their respective personal spaces created by personal media and his wife retreating into her domestic space, I was left pretty much alone (but for the family dog, Yon) in this so-called situation of 'family viewing'.

Even though some of the family members, at least periodically, share time-space in front of the television set in the living room, they are each doing different things therefore not meaningfully sharing personal or communal space. They are connecting with other *uchis*, such as their friends, colleagues, fan *uchi*, and so forth. Because of the personalisation of television and ICT, the domestic space, or 'home' is opened up to the outside, thereby contributing to a fragmentation of the family 'hearth'.

Meyrowitz (1985) had noticed the same phenomenon occurring with 1980s' technology:

Electronic media destroy the special-ness of place and time. Television, radio and telephone turn over private places into more public ones by making them more accessible to the outside world. (p.125)

In the light of the foregoing examples, the domestic *uchi* has to be rethought, as a time-space in which a multiplicity of *uchi* can and do exist. Although the television set is still placed in the centre of the living room, and it continues to have the potential for drawing the different family members together, the meaning and significance of this common time-space may have been transformed. The traditional image of family viewing, of television as a 'hearth', may no longer bear out so simply in reality. The family may still come together momentarily, but equally they may also drift apart, disembed themselves from the domestic *uchi* and into another *uchi*, socially, emotionally or even physically. The tension between television and ICT as a facilitator of family closeness on the one hand and of fragmentation of the family on the other has been borne out by my various informants. Perhaps the tactical use of television and ICT to facilitate a communal space is a response to fragmentation happening against a wider background of social change in which young people are increasingly identifying with social groups outside the home. Or perhaps it is the media themselves facilitating or even causing this fragmentation of the family. Maybe the media are a neutral instrument, alternately used for both the creation of personal space and the creation of communal space, depending on the mood, perceived duty, needs or desire of any given family member. A recent NHK survey (Kamimura, et al. 2000) revealed a fall in the number of people perceiving television to be a facilitator of a family 'hearth' from, in 1985, seventy percent to sixty-five percent in 2000. The researchers concluded that this and related statistics showed a trend towards individual, as opposed to family, viewing (Kamimura et al 2000, p.7). Amongst my informants I have indeed found families and individuals whose viewing habits could be seen to corroborate the existence of such a trend and whose everyday lives supply clues as to why such a trend exists. I will return to the question of the role of multiple *uchis* within the family space in the process of fragmentation in later chapters.

The preceding sections have served to place my informants in their social contexts and family situations, addressing the transformations in family relationships stemming from recent social change. Having provided a background for the understanding of my informants environments, in the next section I look in detail at the various dimensions of their specific engagement with media and ICT.

4.2. Audience Engagement

In Chapter One I laid out the different types of audience engagement with media that I would investigate in my research. Added to these are several new dimensions through which I found it useful in the field to understand the ways in which audiences engage with media. Some of these may be universal categories while others are more specific to the Japanese audience. The seven modes of engagement I will consider are: information-seeking activity, connectivity, 'world-creation', parasocial interaction, utility, interpretation and, finally, participation.

4.2.1. Information Seeking Activity

Nearly seventy percent of internet activity is information-seeking (Multi-Media Shinko Centre, 2000, p.15). This reveals an obvious need for information that either is not or cannot be accessed via other media such as television and newspapers. Both *Joho Kodo* and uses and gratifications studies identified information-seeking behaviour and selectivity to be significant aspects of audience activity. My research has revealed some of the factors involved in creating the various needs people have for the information they seek.

The first factor that became clear was the role of the primary *uchi* of the informant in creating a need for particular information. I allude here to people's embeddedness in local life that other theorists (cf. Giddens, 1990) have also identified as a factor in people's behaviour in general. The '*uchi* division' I identify here, the fact that membership to a particular *uchi* influences the kind of information sought, may in fact map my findings on to those of Morley using his persisting idea of gender differences in tastes (Morley, 2000). However, by using, not gender, but *uchi*, which may turn out to be a more useful factor, at least in the Japanese context, to understand people's preferences, I can, momentarily at least, sidestep the gender debate.

Informants who primarily identified with the domestic *uchi* tended to use the internet and television to seek information contributing or relating to family life (Haruko's watching of the television weather forecast in order to pass information on to her children). Aiko and Masako, both housewives, use the internet to search for recipes, buy cushion-covers, children's clothes and other smaller items, the purchase of which their husbands were not involved in. Similarly, business-people (usually men) spending most of their waking time at the office or with colleagues and belonging, therefore, primarily to a business *uchi*, tended to seek information related to their business or to money (several times a day checking the stock market, researching market trends directly effecting their business or gaining information about clients). In this way, social context and *uchi* roles (which may turn out to correspond to gender roles) seem to have a great influence on the kinds of information people need.

Social and economic change also has a great part to play in people's selection of information. In an economic climate in which redundancy has become increasingly likely, several of my informants were gathering information which they hoped would help them in an increasingly competitive job market. Satoshi (f20, father 33), having narrowly avoided redundancy when his company went bust and which had, prior to this, been a market leader, was frightened into "stockpiling as much information as possible inside [him]self" and used the internet and newspapers extensively to do this in any free moment he had.

The extent to which one of my informants accessed information via the internet and other ICTs revealed an interesting dimension to information-seeking activity. McLuhan (1964, p.332) stated that "TV is...an extension of...the senses" and Ryo's (f10, husband,31) ICT-related activity can be seen as a contemporary corollary of this idea. He is accessing some form of mediated information almost constantly in his day. He watches the television news in the morning then, on getting into his car, uses his car navigation system to continue to receive the television signal via satellite. He also accesses information

pertaining to his chosen route of travel to the office. In the office his computer is set to open up to the CNN website which he continues to check throughout the working day. Before he goes to bed, Ryo again logs onto the internet to check the news and browse websites, his broadband connection making this cheap and fast. At times when he does not have a computer in front of him, he accesses the internet via his mobile phone. He told me, echoing McLuhan, "the computer is part of my body". The internet enables him to reach all around the world, to see images of it and absorb messages and information from it. Ryo's extensive use of ICT to seek information was ritual as well as instrumental, a natural part of his daily rhythm and something that contributed to the creation of his everyday life. He gained ontological security not only from his acquisition of knowledge of the world that the news provided but from the reliability that his daily ritual provided. In his case, ICT provides the means to connect with the world and, in doing so, create his global-local life.

Even Keiko (f12, single, 35), from a low-income and less educated background and not able to afford a home computer, regularly flouts company regulations and logs on to the internet to find information and trivia pertaining to lunchtime conversations with colleagues. "Zing! And I log on to the net!" Again, the speed and ease that the internet provides encourages greater information-seeking. For Keiko, too, setting aside the constraints her financial position creates, ICT provides access to information from around the world at any time and at the drop of a hat.

4.2.2. Connectivity

This dimension of engagement with media revealed itself to me in the field as I became more aware of the variety of motivations my informants had in using ICT. They seemed to be exploiting it as a means of connecting to a variety of phenomena for a variety of reasons. Tomlinson (1999) talked of increasing global-spatial proximity in the world today and the media and ICT naturally play

a significant part in this process of 'making the world a smaller place'. The ICT my informants regularly use enables them to disembed themselves from their local life (be it home or the office) and embed themselves into 'other worlds'. The embedding into these non-spatial localities and subsequent re-embedding back into spatial localities or local lives, changes the nature of those local lives in the sense that the home, for example, becomes open to the world. People increasingly exist and operate in non-spatial locations as this process of 'deterritorialisation' (Appadurai 1990; Lull 2000; Morley and Robbins 1995) driven largely by ICT, is taken advantage of by people who benefit from a sense of transnational connectivity.

I have already described the family (f21) whose members spend much of their television family viewing time absorbed in their own *uchis*, accessed through ICT. Other informants also provide examples of this connectivity to worlds outside the immediate spatial locality, emailing friends abroad, watching foreign television programmes via cable or satellite and browsing foreign websites. Satoko (f20, mother, 32) lived in New York for four years as a child and is now a housewife in Japan, spending most of her time in the home. Despite her time in New York being relatively short and long ago, she has had to make a conscious effort to conform to Japanese social customs in order to fit back in to what she perceives to be 'Japanese life'. Yet she still has a sense of yearning for her previous 'American' existence and satisfies this desire to reconnect to it by a daily ritual of watching CNN news during the one hour her baby sleeps. She thereby escapes to an American representation of the world and feels connectivity both with her earlier life and with America. She also watches, via BS Satellite, the *World News Hour*, and the glimpses of people from all over the world remind her of walking the streets of New York and she feels a comforting sense of familiarity and nostalgia. "I don't care what's on the news, I just like feeling the atmosphere." This transnational connectivity enriches her everyday life. From a similar desire to maintain connectivity to a different

locality, Haruo (f25), on his regular trips to his family's holiday house in Hawaii, takes with him vast numbers of video tapes on which he has recorded months' worth of *samurai* dramas. He does not have the time to watch these in his regular working week and so saves them up until he is on holiday, when watching these shows enables him to maintain connectivity to his Japanese everyday life, which he dearly misses and so tries to recreate in Hawaii.

Shunya (f30, single, 32) has been travelling between California and Tokyo for the last few years for his job. While in California, he regularly watches Japanese television via satellite and also video tapes of news programmes and documentaries he has recorded off Japanese television when he has been there. He also constantly maintains connections with Japanese friends and colleagues via email and his mobile phone, which was ringing almost continually with incoming calls from abroad during one of our interviews. His use of ICT is motivated largely by a desire to remain embedded in his Japanese existence while physically having to live in a foreign country.

Another example I found were Yoshiki and Yoshikazu (f21, sons, 21 and 19 respectively), who stayed up until midnight to watch a live football match. Their participation in this international media event gave them a sense of connectivity to fellow football fans around the world as they disembedded, via satellite, from their home locality to embed in a global-communal time-space.

These informants, whether physically at home or not, all use television, video technology and other forms of ICT to, in some sense, transport themselves to non-spatial locations in which a sense of connectivity with familiar things or a sense of belonging to other communities can be achieved. It may be a case either of wanting to disembed *from* or embed *in* the 'home' but what is significant in this mode of engagement is a desire to achieve connectivity with something which is not physically in the immediate spatial location of the person.

4.2.3. World-Creation

Another mode of engagement both revealed from the field and stemming originally from uses and gratifications studies' concept of 'involvement', was the use of ICT in the process of creating informants' own 'worlds' within their lives. This type of engagement is based around the idea of appropriation and borrows from concepts such as bricolage (Levi-Strauss, 1966), poaching (de Certeau, 1984) and the 'cultural supermarket' (Hall, 1992a and others since). De Certeau (1984) talks of 'productive consumption' and I want to use this idea to understand the ways in which my informants appropriated images, styles, values, relationships and ideas in a process of producing the respective natures of their identities or 'worlds'. This process is that referred to by Lull as the creation of 'supercultures' (Lull, 2000) but the message from my informants themselves was that it is a matter of entering into their 'own worlds', a much more personalised notion of appropriation.

Aiko (f1) is a fan of *SMAP*, a popular Japanese boy band, and this is strongly evidenced by the overbearing presence of posters and paraphernalia of its members stuck all over the house and covering the fridge. She spends most of her free time talking to or emailing friends about *SMAP*, browsing their website, watching their weekly television show, attending fanclub events and is a member of Fuji Television's club, this broadcasting company being responsible for the promotion of *SMAP*. Aiko has created in her life her '*SMAP* world', using non-mediated, mediated and mediated quasi interaction. Most of her engagement with television and ICT has the aim of creating and re-creating her '*SMAP* world'.

Hiroshi (f7, father, 31), an avid sports fan, has created a very-much sports-oriented media environment in his home and life. He watches vast amounts and only sports programmes on terrestrial and satellite television and most of his reading material is centred around sports. He uses the internet at the office to browse sports websites and his pager to view sports news and get

up-to-the-minute sports results throughout the day. Hiroshi's involvement in sports and his support for the Italian soccer team, *Azzurri*, inspired his daughter's name, 亜純理(Azuri), selected for its unusual sound, very different from common Japanese names, but its written form, adapted by Hiroshi from Japanese characters, looking like a Japanese name. Through his use of television and ICT, Hiroshi can appropriate parts of the world outside of Japan for his personal world, without having to leave the comfort and ease afforded by it (he hides from his American colleague at work, in fear of a confrontation in English which may involve for him an embarrassing moment of miscommunication).

Minako (f2, mother, 34), on the other hand, moves in more global networks, learning foreign language to allow for information gathering and involvement in circles that extend beyond Japan. She carefully selects material and information from the media which relate to her strong interest in Italian culture. This interest started with her husband's enthusiasm for the Italian football team, watching a lot of Italian soccer matches on WOWOW and SkyperfecTV! and seeking information about the Italian football team on the internet. The couple's growing enthusiasm for the team led to their planning a trip to Italy to watch and support it in action. The trip to Italy bred an interest in most things Italian: Italian wine, food, fashion, family and community. On her return home Minako began watching NHK's *Italiagokouza* (an Italian language programme), learning Italian with her husband. She browses Italy-related websites and exchanges email with other Japanese Italy-lovers, sharing their enthusiasm and getting information about other people's trips to and experiences in Italy. She frequently checks the homepages of Italian broadcasters and newspapers and any other homepages she can find that relate to Italy or its culture. Her involvement in Italian culture and football have now led, however, to her becoming involved at a local level in the support of her local Tokyo football team. Minako and her husband now hold season passes to the stadium at which her

local team, FC Tokyo, play. The 'Italy-world' Minako has created encompasses most aspects of her life, the food she eats and cooks, the wine she drinks, the clothes she wears, how her and her husband spend their leisure time, the friends she chooses and the way she has chosen to be involved in her local community. In the process of producing her world, Minako has at her disposal a vast 'cultural supermarket' from which she can consume and which she accesses via television and ICT.

Minako shops from the 'cultural supermarket' made accessible by internet shopping, not only in the creation of her 'Italy-world' but also in the creation of an international atmosphere in her own home and life. In her productive consumption of American maternity pajamas, herbal tea and teddy bears from London, books and regional food from all over Japan and football merchandise from all over the world, she creates a bricolage of international consumer products. This bricolage, bringing with it the feeling of connectivity to other parts of the world that it does, changes both the physical, material nature of her locality and the non-physical, immaterial nature of her local life.

4.2.4. Para-Social Interaction

This dimension of engagement with media and ICT was first identified from within uses and gratifications studies (Horton and Wohl, 1956; Levy, 1979), when it was observed that many people watch television in order to have some kind of (quasi) interaction with its characters. Reception studies developed this idea and used it extensively in attempts to explain women's fascination with soap opera (Ang, 1985; Radway, 1983, 1984; Modleski, 1982). I observed the same phenomenon in several of my informants, both housewives and single women, who fantasised about pop or sports stars as if they really were intimate friends or lovers. Aiko provides the most extreme example amongst my informants of para-social interaction, through her involvement with Nakai, her favourite member of the boy band, *SMAP*.

Aiko claims to be privy to inside knowledge of Nakai's personality beneath that which is represented through his media image.

Researcher: What is it you like about Nakai?

Aiko: (Defensively) Oh, he's different from what you see on TV.

Researcher: What do you mean?

Aiko: More... Oh, I don't know the reality but... when you see him on TV he is silly and loud and clumsy and has no motivation... He comes across like that on TV but the reality seems to be different. He cares about other people.

At one point I asked her specifically about her husband and she came alive, her eyes brightening, saying how they were similar in their day-to-day habits. She went on, describing their similarities,

When he accidentally squeezed conditioner into his hand instead of shampoo, he didn't wash it away but put it on his thigh while he shampooed his hair and then later scooped up the conditioner from his thigh and used it. I, also, put conditioner onto a towel first and then use it. These kinds of habits are similar... (She then gazed off at a fan displaying Nakai's face for a while before turning back to me).

At this moment I realised that she had in fact been talking about Nakai all this time, not her husband.

I noticed, over the two-year period during which I visited Aiko, that her 'para-social relationship' with Nakai seemed to be developing and getting stronger, as evidenced by the increasing number of photos and fan paraphernalia displayed in her house and her commenting that she had become an even bigger fan of Nakai. She also commented that her husband, Ataro, had become busier with his job over the last two years, working even on the weekend and coming

home after she had gone to sleep most nights, "I don't know what time he gets home and I don't know what he's doing." It seemed that Nakai had become a kind of substitute husband or lover for Aiko, and this may not be surprising given the nature of her day-to-day life. With two children aged one and four, she finds it difficult to leave the house for more than fifteen minutes at a time, feeling she cannot ask her mother-in-law to childmind for long or frequent periods. She rarely sees her husband and has little face-to-face interaction with her friends and can only text or email them during the one hour a day when her children are napping. It is as if her para-social relationship with Nakai replaces the lack of live and genuine interaction in her life. When I asked her what television meant to her, she replied, "It's my friend."

Identification (cf. Rosengren and Windahl, 1972), closely related to para-social interaction in that each involves a special relationship with a (usually) television character, was another dimension of engagement with television I found amongst my informants. Shingo (f5, father, 36), a businessman, strongly identified with a businessman on a television show he watched and even gained inspiration from him to continue in a job he was becoming increasingly dissatisfied with.

As an elder son, Jun (f22, son, 27) was pressured by his family to go into his father's ironworks company, in spite of a dream to become a wedding advisor. He claims not to be moved by television's stories, "They're not real" despite watching television all weekend and evening. He told me excitedly that, for the "first and last time since [he] was born" he was moved to tears by a particular television documentary. It was the story of a couple's wedding and towards the end of the programme the couple thanked their wedding advisor, causing him to become emotional and teary. At this moment, watching the wedding advisor crying, Jun found himself crying too, identifying with the joy and satisfaction the wedding advisor felt.

While uses and gratifications studies attributed identification and

para-social interaction solely to the psychological state of the viewer, it is clear from the above cases that the relevant psychological state of the viewer that causes them to feel a certain relationship with a character is itself a result of various factors within the “structured context” of an individual’s life (cf. reception studies in Thompson, 1995, p.39). In Aiko’s case, her dissatisfying home life and lack of interaction with family or friends, leads her to look to television for interaction, even for friendship. Shingo’s job and social position is a factor in his identification with a character in a similar position.

Identification with a person on television in Jun’s case seemed to provide him with an opportunity for an experience he was unlikely to get otherwise. Although Jun sees television, including news and documentaries, as “fake” or in some sense not representative of the truth, he was able to have a mediated quasi-experience of what it felt like to be a wedding advisor, what he had for a long time dreamed of being. Such mediated quasi-experiences can, Thompson (1995) hopes, have a role to play on a moral, as well as a personal, level. He discusses the possibility that people may, through mediated quasi-experiences, be motivated to take on moral or social responsibilities for the less fortunate people with whom we co-habit the planet. As media and television bring quasi-experience into our living rooms, as more and more images of starving children enter our intimate spaces, as the significance of spatial relations between people diminishes and as our practical actions take on the capability to be effective at greater physical distances in an increasingly interconnected world, there becomes an increasing likelihood that people will start caring more about and doing more for the fate of the planet and its people (Thompson, 1995).

Thompson admits this view is precarious but I was motivated by his ‘vision’ to see if I could find any hint of this greater sense of responsibility developing, amongst my informants living in rich media environments. I was in the process of interviewing my informants when the events of September the 11th occurred and was curious as to their responses to the event and to the people of

New York for whom it caused suffering. The three informants whose responses I will discuss were all shocked by the event but had differing thoughts and feelings in its aftermath. Shingo and I watched the evening news together a few days after the event and was excitedly talking to the television, repeatedly saying, "There's gonna be a war!" When the Prime Minister of Japan appeared on the news to discuss the possibility of Japan sending troops to Afghanistan, Shingo periodically turned to me, at one point even standing up, explaining and interpreting the discussion, not because I did not understand it myself but because he wanted to express his thoughts and convey his excitement to me. Shingo's response to the problem presented by September 11th was that Japan should, contrary to the case of the Gulf War, send not just money to the cause but also troops. This could be interpreted as his feeling some sense of responsibility to the people suffering from the event but it was motivated more by a sense of national pride and an acknowledgement that Japan, in order to survive in the global economy, would have to build up its reputation as a contributing and caring nation. He did not seem to be motivated by pity or sympathy for others at a distance but this motivation is not required by Thompson's picture of global responsibility. Shingo himself may not take any action towards contributing to a solution but he supports Japan in participating in one and this perhaps shows some sense of moral responsibility of the kind Thompson imagines.

Satoko, on the other hand, after receiving a reassuring email from her friend who was working in New York at the World Trade Centre, stopped worrying about the events of September 11th and felt that as long as she was in Japan, she was secure and the problems were distant.

Norika (f14, daughter, 20) felt extremely shocked by the news and continued to watch television news constantly, sleeping very little, up until a week after the events. She felt very insecure because of what had happened and felt her world threatened, wondering if Japan would be drawn into the conflict. While the events of September 11th affected her deeply, she felt no great empathy

for the people of New York specifically, rather fear for the world as a whole and for herself as a part of it. It seems that in her case, too, there were no significant signs of a sense of moral responsibility for the people whose suffering she watched constantly on the television.

It seems that some degree of moral or social responsibility may be found amongst people who become aware, via television news, of the suffering of distant others but this was observed only in Shingo's case and he was not motivated to take any direct or indirect action regarding the problem. This, of course, is not evidence against Thompson's picture but it may be the case that, and I would tend to conclude this from my informants' responses, it would take more than just mediated quasi-experiences made available by media and ICT, to effect a 'moral-practical reflection' (Thompson, 1995). Tomlinson shares my doubt with respect to this,

The moral existential effort required to do anything *with* the experiences available via media technologies has to come from other sources—ultimately from within the situated lifeworld of the self. Without this, no amount of technological sophistication can make us cosmopolitans on-line. (Tomlinson, 1999, p.204)

Tomlinson is here suggesting that the step from quasi-experiencing other people's suffering to feeling a sense of responsibility and doing something about it is one that requires further stimulus, beyond what technology on its own can provide.

4.2.5. Utility

Uses and gratifications studies identified various dimensions of the personal use of media and Lull (1990) investigated the social uses of television. I have already discussed a variety of uses of television and ICT that were revealed to me in the field such as world-creation, connectivity, to gain a sense of ontological security and as a time-space organiser. Other ways of utilising television and

ICT that have been identified by previous studies, I also observed in the field. The most prevalent I came across was relaxation, which corroborates the quantitative research (see Appendix A3).

I found my informants using media and ICT in various ways in order to relax. Aiko keeps Fuji Television on most of the day, making use of it as background noise against which the daily household activities and routines are played out. It is clear that television plays a much-needed role in helping Aiko relax, reduce tension, enjoy having a laugh and possibly escape from the dissatisfaction of her day-to-day life:

I envy you, being able to go out and leave the house and your children. But me, I'm always shouting at my children all day, and they only ever see my face all angry... Sometimes when I watch a TV show that makes me laugh, the kids look at me really strangely... they hardly ever see their mother laughing.

When the children are sleeping, Aiko has time to put on her videos or watch her favourite shows thus diverting her from the stresses of taking constant care of her children and having time to herself just to escape from her routine.

Jun stays in his bedroom all weekend vigorously flicking, at five-second intervals, between channels, as a means of escaping the stresses he experiences at work as the son of the company president. It seems as if the control he is able to wield over the remote control at home somehow makes up for the lack of power he feels at work. He not only has little interaction with other colleagues but also feels he cannot express to his father (who is also his boss) his frustration at being in a job he finds dissatisfying. While at the office he frequently enters internet chat rooms to 'talk' to people on-line with whom he has something in common, "We use each other to skive off from working and to kill time." It also helps ease the boredom and isolation he feels amongst his colleagues who generally have interests he does not share.

Keiko (f12), a single working woman, also relieves job stress by watching television. Although, in the expanding Japanese media environment, people have access to more and more channels, American news programmes, dramas and movies remain the most widely watched of non-Japanese programmes. Keiko likes to watch Bollywood movies as she read in a magazine that doing so was good for relieving stress. She tried this once and, finding that it worked, now subscribes to cable television so that she can get the Star Channel and watch Bollywood movies frequently. She says that the story is always the same but the unchallenging story-lines, happy endings and somewhat inexplicable presence of dancing in the movies, make her laugh and relax. "I feel better...I can laugh..."

Shingo uses music that he has downloaded from an American pop music website, MP3, as background noise at the office, to create a more relaxing environment. Rather than listening to any music the radio plays he likes to select music from websites which suit his mood.

Aside from these personal uses, my informants also put media and ICT to a variety of social uses. Aiko uses television as a babysitter for her children and to control their attention to various activities (for example, the news makes them focus on their dinner, cartoons take their attention from their mother, and so forth). For Aiko, television programmes also provide communication facilitation when the mothers at kindergarten discuss the previous night's drama or *SMAP* television appearance, while their kids are busy with kindergarten activities. As Aiko uses television content in facilitating communication, Shingo uses watching television to facilitate familial relationships. He works far away from his house and stays in a small apartment during the week, only returning home on the weekends. On Saturdays he watches television cartoons all day as this enables him to spend time with his children, sharing their favourite activities with them and thus making up for time lost during the week by rebuilding their relationship. Shingo uses television to maintain intimacy with his children in a similar utilisation of it that we saw earlier, in Section 4.1, in which I described

some parents handing over control of the remote control device to their children or spouse in order to create a shared family space.

The final significant use of ICT and media that I observed in the field was the use of, not only English language television programmes, but also English news, dramas and movies, to improve English language skills. This trend exists against a background of the increasing value of English language skills in a Japan its former Prime Minister has described as having low 'global literacy', a concept including not only English, but ICT literacy and general interpersonal and communication skills. The Japanese generally consider themselves poor communicators, particularly when it comes to communicating with foreigners and this is perhaps corroborated by the fact that Japan has the lowest average TOEFL (Test Of English as a Foreign Language) score in Asia (Shioda, 2000).¹

My qualitative research into the uses media are put, as well as identifying new dimensions of utilisation of media and ICT, both corroborated some of the results of previous Japanese quantitative surveys and contextualised, for the case of Japan, existing Western qualitative studies. I found numerous cases of media being utilised for their ability to relieve stress and offer an escape from local life and its pressures created by the obligations, loyalties and commitment membership to its *uchis* brings. All of my informants, to greater or lesser degrees, used television or ICT as a means of disembedding from their immediate locale and embedding in a non-spatial location in which they could simply forget and relax. The other most significant use of media and ICT was its utilisation for the purposes of facilitating both communication and social relationships. My informants used ICT and other media to maintain and strengthen the bonds that hold together the various *uchis*, domestic or business, to which they belong. The next dimension of engagement I want to look at, that of interpretation, involves a

¹ In Appendix A3 I presented the conclusion of the Hakuhodo survey of internet users, which found that the internet was, for Japanese people, a 'wall', rather than a 'window' to the world. My fieldwork has thus provided qualitative collaboration of this quantitative result.

more cognitive response to television and ICT and their contents.

4.2.6. Interpretation

Audience reception studies investigated the diversity of interpretations amongst audiences and tried to understand these in terms of the various social contexts of audience members. Fiske's (1987) model of semiotic democracy and Hall's (1980) encoding/decoding model made use of aspects of social context in understanding differing interpretations of media content. In considering people's interpretation of media messages I want to focus on the extent to which viewers or readers view or read critically. My observations from the field suggest that Hall's model may be useful in understanding the most prevalent mode of interpretation to be found amongst my informants. The ongoing expansion of the media environment with ICT gives people the opportunity to explore alternative sources of information and may lead to increased awareness of the possibility of manipulation or at least misleading of media audiences. Amongst my informants I found diversity with respect to the issue of critical reading of media messages and have broadly categorised this diversity into compliant and resistant viewing.

Compliant Viewing

Haruko was not at all critical of or reflective on the information television reports. This phenomenon perhaps has special significance in Japan as it relates to compliance to authority, something Japanese culture scholars often point to as being important in understanding 'Japanese culture'. When I asked Haruko, who welcomes a sense of responsibility in regularly reporting information she gets from television to her family, whether she usually agrees or disagrees with experts on television she replied unhesitatingly, "Oh no, I trust everything they say. I'm *sunao*. If someone on TV gets something wrong, then I will too." *Sunao* means, without doubting, questioning or being cynical and is a quality

indisputably understood as being desirable. It reflects dependence on and trust in the judgement of one's senior, mother and so forth, over independence and faith in one's own judgement. Here we can see evidence of the primacy of the Japanese 'hierarchical system' of social relationships and Hamaguchi's (1998) model of 'the contextual' gives us insight into why Haruko may readily accept the 'preferred reading' (Hall, 1980). Through quasi-mediated interaction with 'television others', governed by the relational concept of interpersonal relating (Hamaguchi, 1998), Haruko creates herself into a virtuous and *sunao* person, a good traditional Japanese housewife. Here we see the undesirable side of 'the contextual', as it can lead to unquestioning acceptance of media messages.

The valuing of the personal quality of *sunao* may be questioned by Westerners or anyone valuing independent thinking and healthy scepticism of others' opinions and it has not gone uncriticised by Japanese scholars themselves, particularly feminist ones. *Sunao* might reasonably be understood as being naïve. The value of *sunao* perhaps comes from Japan's history of relative isolation from the world, absence of strangers and the fact that, for a long time, generation after generation lived in the same communities, with the same families of neighbours. This led to the real possibility of being able to have a natural attitude of trust towards each other. I do not want to claim that Japanese can trust each other more than can people from other cultures nor that Japanese people can still trust each other in this way and to this extent anymore. Nevertheless, Haruko, who watches television *sunao*ly, is revealing her attitude of trust in those deemed by society to be in authority and, to this extent, her interpretation matches what Hall termed the 'preferred reading', interpreting using the 'dominant code'.

Resistant Viewing

I also found instances of 'negotiated' and 'oppositional' readings amongst my informants. Chika (f13, daughter, 20) studies and is interested in politics and

believes there is a 'backstage' to political behaviour and television news stories of which the public is not generally made aware. Her scepticism of television news daily brings her into conflict with her mother, who watches it *sunady*.

My parents are just ordinary people, if someone on TV says, "Koizumi [the Japanese PM] is good", Mum goes, "yeah, he's good." But if someone else says that he is no good, she says, "Oh, he's no good afterall". I said to Mum, "People believe whatever they see on TV is true" and she said, "Everything on TV *is* true."

Noritaro (f14, father, 51) was involved in the student protests of the 1970s and still is very cynical of the government and media thus believes very little he sees on the news. When watching television with his wife and daughter he frequently explains to them what he thinks is going on behind the political scenes but his daughter is mostly unappreciative and says of this habit, "He goes on too much!" She feels, however, that she does not have enough alternative information or independent knowledge to disagree with or criticise what she sees on television, "so, all I can do is believe it."

Reika (f15), when watching television, gets frustrated by anyone making utterances of what she sees as token sympathy for any suffering depicted in the news. She thinks television news and sensationalist current affairs programmes de-sensitise us to people's suffering or misfortune and keep audiences ignorant of the real issues lying behind stories. She usually supplements her knowledge of current events with news and stories from the internet news sites and tends to align her opinions with these.

Reika: There was a story about what happened at Ikeda primary school [a person suffering from mental illness killed eight children] and both me and my Mum felt sorry but then I looked at a psychiatrist's website. And he said that a higher number of people died as a result of the TV coverage. So I got another

perspective...

Researcher: What do you mean?

Reika: Some people suffering from depression and who are often suicidal, saw the TV coverage and killed themselves because they felt blamed, and responsible for what happened, from all the pressure from the coverage.

Researcher: Is it true?

Reika: I don't know...but this guy is usually quite good and I trust him. And then I told my mother about what he said.

Researcher: What did she say?

Reika: "Oh, really!" ...I think the internet is good because it gives us another angle on things.

Reika, Chika and Noritaro each interpret media messages in a more resistant way while other members in their families (Reika's and Chika's mothers and Noritaro's daughter, Norika) give the more preferred reading, led by the tendency to be *sunao* in their approach to particularly television news. The informants having resistant readings each seemed to have a particular 'lived experience' or knowledge which had resulted in them becoming more sceptical, even cynical in some cases, of reported news (Chika studies politics and has a part-time job during elections at the polling booths; Reika, an anthropology student—and also interested in psychiatry—lived in Indonesia for a year, this experience giving her an alternative perspective on Japan; and Noritaro has experiences as a politically active student).

The pairs of informants having, respectively, resistant and preferred readings (Noritaro and Norika, Chika and her mother and Reika and her mother), each created their own individual interpretations from the backgrounds of their own personal contexts. Through sharing communicative space created by the family viewing context, some of the informants were able to voice their readings, through conversations with other family members, and then, in some cases,

negotiate new meanings, sometimes shared with the other family member, sometimes in conflict with them. This shows the importance of taking into account two factors when investigating diverse interpretations of television programmes: firstly, the natural television-watching environment and secondly, meaning creation amongst the family, rather than by the individual.

While Norika was generally *sunao* in her interpretations, she did have one lived experience that gave her some scepticism, at least of television interviews and hence interviews.

Norika: Actually I was interviewed on the street and the interviewer led my response. She asked me a question which she hoped would give her the answer she wanted to hear from me... In the end, the producers just pick up what they want to broadcast so it's not wise to take it from face value.

Researcher: Tell me more about the interview.

Norika: Oh, it was about some girl band...*Morning Girls*, I think. The interviewer asked me to ask a question but I there wasn't anything I wanted to ask! She said, "What about this...?" "What about this...?", suggesting different questions she wanted me to ask and then she told me to just repeat a question she gave me. So I did...

After this experience, Norika watches television a little more critically. Akira (f8, single 40) was also interviewed by a journalist in relation to an accident involving his company. He was horrified to see on reading the newspaper the next day that his words were misreported to the extent that his account of the accident was replaced by the uninformed and subjective view of the reporter. He was very upset by this, not only because he had been misreported but because he realised that this journalistic practice was probably fairly widespread. Akira said he no longer wanted to waste his money on a subscription to this newspaper if it was going to report "rubbish". Japan has one of the highest rates of

subscription to newspapers in the world with 1.24 per household (Fujitake and Yamamoto eds.,1994) so this decision was not trivial. True to his word, he cancelled his subscription and now gets his news via a variety of internet sources. He prefers not to read journalist's stories but to make his own assessments of current affairs by comparing the headlines of various Japanese newspapers in combination with CNN and other international news sources. He can do this conveniently and cheaply via the internet whereas he could not possibly afford the time or money involved in buying and reading all these newspapers.

Kazuo (f6, father, 45) has the same attitude towards television news and chooses not to watch the editorial comments of "so-called experts" on commercial Japanese television but only watches CNN or NHK to get "the facts". Both Akira and Kazuo feel that the internet or cable television gives them the opportunity to free themselves from the limited political viewpoint of any one news source.

The informants I have discussed represent the diversity I found of interpretations of television. They ranged from Hall's 'preferred readings', what I called, contextualising to Japan, 'compliant viewing', to 'resistant readings' or 'critical viewing'. Compliant viewing, dominated by a tendency to respond to authority in a *sunao* manner, was predominantly found amongst housewives, or anyone embedded in the domestic time-space and for whom television is the primary window to the world. For these informants, a preferred reading of television is perhaps not surprising, especially with the value attributed by the Japanese to being *sunao*. Critical viewing tended to be the predominant way of responding for those who had had particular lived experiences, giving them alternative perspectives or particular knowledge which had, in turn, given rise to a healthy scepticism of authority, particularly in the media. What also enabled many of my informants to form such readings was their access to ICT and a variety of alternative news sources.

4.2.7. Participation

Habermas's idea of the 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1989) has often been used by scholars in an attempt to understand people's participation in the media (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994; Scannell, 1991). While it is not true that there is no public sphere in Japan, I found no instances amongst my informants of any kind of participation in the media. I found, instead, a lot of evidence of my informants being not only fearful of doing so but believing that such participation is pointless due to its inefficacy.

I asked all of my informants whether they had ever participated, or were in the habit of participating, in some sense or other, in the media. I also asked them about their interest in politics or politicians.

Researcher: Are you interested in politics?

Aiko: No, I'm not, not at all. No matter who is Prime Minister, it's all the same... They're all no good.

Researcher: (To an informant who likes to watch an NHK public debate programme)
Would you ever participate, yourself, in such a programme?

Reiko: No, I'm not brave enough...if somebody asked me to...no way!

Researcher: Would you participate in interactive TV?

Minako: No way!

Researcher: What do you think of mail magazines [an electronic public forum for commenting on the Prime Minister's policies, opinions, etc]?

Naoki: Even though people express their opinions, it means nothing. They should
(f4, father, 35) ask experts rather than ordinary people. Leave it to the experts.

Researcher: Would you participate in a public debate programme?

Kazuo: No way, I'm not interested. It doesn't change anything.

Researcher: Do you write letters to the editor?

Eiji: Some old whingers write letters...but I never have. Once I started a letter
(f11, husband, 38) like that, I wouldn't be able to stop complaining all day! I don't like forcing my opinion on other people and don't like it when people do that to me...So I've never thought of writing a letter saying, "you should do this..." or "you should do that..." I often feel angry about the world but I would rather be a politician than write a letter.

Researcher: Have you ever participated in the media?

Noritaro: No. Anyway, if someone says something important, about the economy, say, producers might pick it up but otherwise they don't. They just ignore it. So saying your opinion is pointless.

Researcher: Do you write letters to the editor?

Masatoshi: When I get old I might...

Masako: Most people who write letters are on their '60s.

Researcher: Why would you write such a letter when you were older?

Masatoshi: I think people do it only to vent their frustrations.

Researcher: How about interactive TV? Would you participate in that?

Masatoshi: Yeah, I'd like to. I want to encourage people to be more interested in politics. I've done this with my children.

Masako: But Americans voice their opinions on TV and in newspapers...but in Japan, it's better not to.

Researcher: Do you think this will change?

Maki: When I watch *Chatplace* [a public debate programme] I get the feeling more
(f19, daughter, 24) people are talking on TV. I feel like maybe I'd have something to say.

Researcher: How about chatrooms? Have you ever been to one?

Maki: No. Oh...there are 'chiefs' in chat rooms...I said just one thing once and everyone attacked me! The people who follow the chief are really domineering and don't let new people in.

Masatoshi: In Japan we need to see someone's face and know what they're thinking before we can discuss something. We're not good with anonymity. Our way of discussing is different...that is our DNA...We don't like people who are good at debating...Japanese people can't like anyone who has a different opinion from them.

I think the above shows an overwhelming reluctance to participate in the media. The two reasons given are fear and a feeling that participation is pointless as it cannot effect change. People are willing and, to greater or lesser degrees, interested in discussing issues with their families, friends or colleagues but just do not seem to see a public arena as the place to discuss things or air opinions. It is within the *uchi* that discussion and voicing of opinions takes place but in *soto*, people are fearful of standing out amongst the crowd and being criticised. One of my informants, Jiro (f22, father, 55) offered an historical explanation of why this kind of fear may exist.

From our history, because of the fact that in small villages if someone did something wrong he was ostracised...and also because if a member of a group did something wrong the whole group was punished...This is why Japanese people are afraid to stand out, or be different.

There is, of course, a question as to what degree this explanation still has force today, particularly for younger Japanese people. However, it does seem to be the case that a sense of security, and trust that one will not be judged, is required before people feel comfortable in expressing their opinions and it is only within an *uchi* that this condition exists, not in 'public'. Furthermore, there seems to

be no reason to get over such a fear and publicly express views, as people believe doing so would be completely incapable of effecting change—and therefore pointless.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have investigated the multiple dimensions of audience engagement. Some of these dimensions of engagement were first revealed in the field and others, I borrowed and developed from existing literature, both qualitative and quantitative studies. I identified and described the following dimensions of engagement with media:

1. Information-seeking activity—seeking information relevant to domestic or business life or general interests.
2. Connectivity—forming a connection to people, groups or countries or 'home', disembedding from immediate locale.
3. World-creation—appropriation from the 'cultural supermarket', creation of one's 'own world'.
4. Para-social interaction—fantasising about and identification with television characters or real people on television.
5. Utility—relaxation and stress relief, facilitation of communication and social intimacy, learning English, for ontological security, time-space organisation.
6. Interpretation—compliant and resistant viewing.
7. Participation—lack of participation through fear and disbelief in efficacy.

As well as containing new dimensions of audience engagement, discovered in the field, the above classification represents a kind of convergence of the audience activities previously identified by active audience studies. I have brought these previously isolated types of audience activity together under the term

'engagement' and, in doing so, hope to have shown a suitable convergence of various audience studies, previously thought to be incommensurable. In moving beyond the previous paradigm of active audience research, I have suggested a solution to some of the problems faced by uses and gratifications studies. The latter were criticised for their psychological reductionism but by looking at audience engagement with media in the social contexts of the audiences I avoid this problem. In my qualitative research I have complemented the previous quantitative research, such as *Joho Kodo* studies, offering explanations for some of their findings. I have, additionally, complemented the findings of cultural studies by contextualising them for Japanese audiences. Furthermore, I hope to have opened a window through which we can see the embeddedness of the global in everyday local phenomena.

In describing the various dimensions of audience engagement I found in the field, I have discussed how the expansion of the media environment has created greater access to and interaction with media messages and images. People's information needs stem from their social contexts and they thus use media and ICT selectively. I described how my informants use media and ICT to disembed from their immediate spatial locations to achieve cultural and social connectivity. Through appropriation from 'cultural supermarkets', my informants created and recreated their own worlds, re-embedding global phenomena in their local lives. For some of my informants, television offered opportunities for para-social interaction and identification but this did not seem to extend to feeling any significant moral connection to distant others.

The preceding findings are possibly fairly universal but there were other findings, which perhaps showed the Japanese to be significantly different in some respects, particularly Western audiences. The prevalence of compliant viewing, or 'preferred readings', amongst my informants stemming from a tendency to interpret messages from authorities in a non-questioning manner (the concept of *sunao* and 'the contextual') and the relative lack of interest in participating in the

media are significant if we are interested in differences between Japanese and other audiences. While using media and ICT to relax is not exclusive to Japanese audiences I want to emphasise this aspect of engagement as I feel it reflects another significant aspect of the way the Japanese tend to be. The lack of both questioning and participation found amongst my informants is, I believe, part of a wider tendency away from self-expression which can result in an increased need for the creation of a personal space in which one can relax.

The ever- and increasing presence of television and ICT gave some informants a sense of ontological security as well as providing both personal space and a communicative family viewing space. I hope to have shown the extent to which the 'home' has become open to the 'global' as a result of the diverse dimensions of engagement with diverse and increasing media technologies. I have tried to reveal the role media and ICT can play in people's adaptation, or resistance, to pressures that aspects of traditional Japanese culture can place upon them and how this adaptation or resistance in turn plays a role in people's creation and recreation of their everyday lives and the *uchis* to which they belong. In the next chapter I will discuss this creation and recreation of *uchi* through the various dimensions of engagement with media and ICT that I have identified in this chapter.

Chapter Five: Media and *Uchi*

Introduction

In Chapter Four, I considered the multiple dimensions of audience engagement within the individual's social context. In this chapter, I will focus on social groups, employing the complex model of audiences which I demonstrated in Chapter One, and considering the role of media and ICT in the processes of the groups' self-organisation.

I will consider, in particular, the possibilities opened up by a more connotative and complex notion of the concept of *uchi* than that conceived by Nakane. As discussed in Chapter Two, Nakane characterised Japanese society as being organised in terms of rather closed and static groupings called *uchi*, held together in some form of a hierarchical structure. *Uchis*, she argued, are created and maintained through face-to-face communication. If this is so, what will be the consequences of ICT becoming more and more embedded in our everyday lives? Are *uchi* reinforced or do they become more open? In the context of 1970s Japan, when interactional time-space was limited, it is conceivable that most people considered themselves to belong to only one *uchi*. Given the processes of distantiation (Giddens, 1984) of time-space by media and ICT, has that now changed? If so, how? I want to look at the extent to which people find themselves both creating new *uchis* and belonging to multiple *uchis*.

I will investigate the role media may play in making *uchi* more open and dynamic and less hierarchically structured, arranged horizontally rather than vertically. I will also look at the extent to which the disembeddness encouraged by media and ICT provides the possibility of the creation of global *uchis*. Finally, I hope to show, through my discussion, the usefulness of this notion of *uchi*, which has, in the past, overstated Japanese groupism and uniqueness, in describing social relationships in contemporary Japanese society. I want to investigate the

transformation of the notion of the *uchi* by the media and through the complex processes of globalisation and social change.

I will start this chapter with a description of several contexts in which *uchi* is definitive of social interaction and a sense of belonging, concentrating on the domestic and business *uchis* and showing how a sense of *uchi* can extend beyond either of these to locality and nationality. I will discuss how the traditional *uchi* provides, along with its sense of belonging, a sense of Giddens's 'ontological security'. I will then discuss the emerging 'modern' *uchi* and how media and ICT have played a role in this emergence and continue to play a role in the creation and sustenance of people's modern business, domestic or other *uchis*, in the context of the question of social change and modernisation in Japan. Finally, I will discuss the globalisation of *uchis*.

5.1 Paradigm Shift: *Uchi* Reflexivity

The emic concepts discussed so far were developed in the 1960s and 1970s and they need to be understood in terms of the particular historical, social and political contexts of the research of which they are part (see Appendix A1). The thrust of the criticism against them has concerned their tendency to exaggerate the uniqueness of the Japanese. This claim to uniqueness has made these concepts vulnerable to appropriation by the state and business interests, especially during the high growth era of the time, which used them to support nationalism. *Nihonjinron* (Japanese culture studies) was particularly vulnerable to appropriation for nationalist causes. Social anthropologists Nakane and Ruth Benedict, psychiatrist Doi and social psychologist Hamaguchi may defend themselves against the charge of overstating Japanese uniqueness by arguing that their interests lie only in understanding Japanese society and culture. Nevertheless, their concepts do continue to inspire the conception of Japanese people as a homogeneous group.

Aware of these associated problems, my use of their concepts has been accompanied by a shift towards the paradigm of complexity. For example, when Nakane explained Japanese society using the binary pair of concepts, *uchi* and *soto* (literally, inside and out), she was working within the structural-functionalist approach current in her time. She claimed it was important to de-Westernise Japanese studies and find indigenous concepts that could, better than Western concepts, capture the reality of Japanese society. Therefore she sought to understand Japanese society in terms of some sort of organising logic or structure, definitive of and unique to it. We now understand such theories as static and essentialising, often failing to take into account historical changes and agency. Even so, her work is still very popular in Japan and she was awarded the Order of Culture by the Japanese emperor as recently as November 3, 2001. For my purposes, I reframe the notions of *uchi* and *soto* within the paradigm of complexity, allowing for more fluidity and dynamism. Instead of the fixed entities Nakane conceived them to be, I prefer to think of them as emergent through social interaction. *Uchis*, as I use the concept, should not be understood as a club to be joined. They emerge out of the complex interactions and relations between real people. This is not to suggest that people create *uchis* in a social vacuum, for they often draw on existing social practices and ideas which may be reinforced, modified or rejected in the process. This is reminiscent of Giddens's structuration theory (Giddens, 1984), where structure is enacted, reinforced, or destroyed, by the decisions and actions of individual actors. In this chapter, I will demonstrate three different formations of *uchis* which are dynamically created and recreated even as they adapt to social change and globalisation. These three formations are: traditional, modern and global *uchi*.

5.2 Traditional *Uchi*

First, I will focus on the traditional *uchis*, which are reflexively recreated through a reinforcement of existing patterns of traditional Japanese interpersonal relationships. It is this type of *uchi* that most epitomises Nakane's representation of *uchi* relationships. Nakane used the concept of *uchi* as if it were a stable, solid and collective entity. Each person is thought of as belonging to a single and internally homogeneous *uchi*, usually a function of his or her social role. Women's *uchi* is in the home, while the men belonged to the company and children to their schools when they come of age. For Nakane, *uchi* formation requires face-to-face interaction and this itself is limited by 'locale', that is, a person's embeddedness in time and space. Furthermore, commitment and loyalty are often taken to be the necessary values for membership in an *uchi*.

In the following, I would like to reveal how people reflexively organise and reorganise their 'traditional *uchis*', for a variety of reasons, notably, the avoidance of conflicts with other Japanese and resistance against social changes and globalisation. This is the process of 'reflexive traditionalisation', which Lash discussed in relation to Robert Bellah's "sense of an ethics of commitment and obligation, not to the self (as we might see in Anglo-American production systems) but to a *community*, this community being the firm in the Japanese case" (Lash, 1994, p.126). I would like to consider this reflexive traditionalisation, not only in business but also domestic *uchis*, in local and national time-space, using the Japanese emic concepts of 'uchi' and 'soto' (literally 'inside' and 'outside') instead of 'community'. My reasons for doing this are, firstly, that these emic concepts capture the homogeneity that is expected among *uchi* members of each other and, secondly, the pair of concepts echoes Giddens' (1994) perspective of tradition as 'contextual' rather than fixed: "Tradition always discriminates between 'insider' and 'other'" (p.79).

5.2.1. Domestic

Nakane's research was conducted in the high growth era of the 1960s, when the government sponsored efforts to develop a productive labour force via the ideology of the ideal family consisting of the dedicated salaryman and housewife. A survey by NHK in 2000, however, suggests that Japanese attitudes have moved in favour of married women or mothers going out to work. In 1973, 20% were in favour but by 1998, that figure had gone up to 46%. The report however added that the practical reality of housewives opportunities is incongruent with this attitudinal change. It noted a lack of places in nursery or play-schools and that husbands spend significantly less time doing household chores or looking after the children than do wives (NHK Housou Bunka Kenkyujo, 2000). It remains a question, however, whether or not the provision of more facilities or spouse support would indeed result in more women going to work. As with Nakane, my data suggests the presence of a normative perception among women that their place is in the home, especially if they are married and have children. However, it is not as if all women who remain at home share the same values or motivations, or that they can be analysed as a single undifferentiated category. This would be too simplistic. To illustrate, I compare two groups of women who have been housewives for a number of years.

I consider first Haruko (F25, mother, 46), Noriko (F14, mother, 53) and Kazue (F6, mother, 41), all of whom are college graduates who have never done a paid day's work in their lives. Going to work was never an option any of them considered seriously. Staying at home after graduation just seemed the "natural" thing to do. They attribute this to their upbringings. None of Haruko's female friends work. "Housewives like me," she said, "don't belong to any social groups." Haruko and the others do say they envy women who work, but it is "not for them". If they went to work, they said, it would not be for money. Presently, however, as Japan is seeing its worst post-War economic performance, these same housewives have expressed fear about their ability to survive on their own should their

husbands lose their jobs. They experience conflict between their normative perception of women as housewives and the need to acquire some marketable skills should they need to seek employment. I was having tea with Kazue and her 11-year old daughter Kayo at their house when Kayo said,

Kayo: I want to be a piano teacher when I grow up.

Researcher: Why?

Kayo: Because my mum told me so.

Kazue: I don't want her to be a professional pianist. Because if we become professionals, I feel we lose something important about being a woman. But these days I know lots of mothers in my children's school who have to work at the supermarket because their husbands have been laid off. If it happened to us, I couldn't do anything. So now what I can do is to take care of my husband to keep him in good health and to give good education to my children so that they can enter better schools and get good jobs in the future.

These mothers try to stay at home in order to take care of their family by spending all their energy on organising their family *uchi* as much as possible. They reflexively create themselves as mothers of 'parasite singles' for their own security.

On the other hand, there is a younger group, exemplified by Satoko (F20, mother, 32) and Hiroko (F7, mother, 32), who had worked for some years before they got married. They did not enjoy working life and reflexively chose to be housewives after marriage. Satoko said that getting married was her passport to finding herself and creating her own home and family. Then, she said, she would be able to do whatever she wanted, including furnishing her house the way she wanted it. She worked in a bank before her marriage, but she said it was purely for the money. A career was out of the question as her job was limited and dissatisfying.

On the surface, the two groups of women share a commonality as housewives,

spending most of their time and effort building the domestic *uchi*, but they differ in how they each interpret and understand their positions. Most significantly, the latter group felt that they knew what working life was like, and actively rejected it, in favour of the home. The former group, on the other hand, was less likely to consider the option of working in the first place. Being a housewife was perhaps the culturally ascribed thing to be.

5.2.2. Business

Nakane argued that the businessman or salaried man in Japan experienced his primary *uchi* as a closed and stable social group, situated within the workplace or company. The bulk of his interactional time-space is often limited to the office. Businessmen are expected to work long hours and frequently over the weekends as well. Even if they have finished work for the day, they are unlikely to leave the office until either their colleagues too have finished or their bosses indicate that it would be acceptable to finish, frequently not until nine or ten o'clock, after which they then proceed for drinks or dinner together. It is through this almost constant face-to-face interaction and communication, which often, in Japanese society, smudge the boundaries between the so-called private and public spaces commonly upheld in the West, that strong emotional bonds between workers and their companies are built. That companies should exert such importance in the everyday lives of the Japanese could perhaps be understood in the context of the aftermath of World War II when the Japanese economy was driven, not by the government, but by big companies. The Japanese emic concept of '*kaishashugi*' (literally 'company-ism') was introduced in Japanese sociology in the 1980s and 1990s to describe the social structure, its determining force lying somewhere between capitalist competition and communal or socialist relationships (cf. Baba, 1991).

The Japan of today, however, has been, following global trends, facing its worst economic recession. Unemployment in Japan, at the time of writing, is

running at 5.5%, the highest since World War II, and it is expected to rise further. Corporate bankruptcies, accompanied by a general wave of conglomeration and corporate restructuring, have long unsettled the Japanese notion of lifelong employment. In many companies, the long established seniority-based reward system has also given way to one that emphasises performance. What happens to the Japanese notion of *uchi* and *soto* in the face of such social and economic changes? The stories of two of my informants tell of different responses, one reinforcing, while the other challenging, the existing social relations in the workplace.

When Ichiro (F27, single, 31) joined a bank after graduation, he would never have thought it would be on the verge of bankruptcy seven years later. Like many Japanese, he had planned to stay in the same company for life. But in 1999, at the age of 30, he found himself looking for another company to join. Afraid of losing his new job, he told me he had to work hard to “fit into the company”. On a recent business trip, he slept in a hotel for only two out of the six nights, the remaining nights were spent on the plane, shuttling between Johannesburg, London and Tokyo. The night he returned to Tokyo, he went straight back to the office and then out for drinks with his bosses. In an email to me relating the event, he commented in brackets that this was “really Japanese”. His comment suggests that he was highly conscious and critical of the practice but he also added that there were certain advantages to it – his boss pays for the drinks and he gets money for his taxi fare home. However, by dedicating almost all his time to his work, even staying at the company’s dormitories, Ichiro’s actions reinforce the normative idea of the company as the salaryman’s primary *uchi*.

Like Ichiro, Koutaro (F17, single, 37) joined his present company, an upmarket hair salon, mid-career, after working eight years elsewhere. Upon joining the salon, he realised that all the other staff had previously joined as trainees, and they seem to think of themselves as having a common root. His roots were different, and that alone made him feel that he did not belong. Koutaro,

however, was eager to break into the group. Although he was experienced, he put aside his cutting styles and ideas in order to be accepted by his colleagues and he followed the in-house manual on hairdressing – just as any trainee would.

He explained that to assert himself at that time, however, may have resulted in him being socially ostracised and his work hampered by a lack of support, even from his juniors. He felt he was an outsider (*soto* to his colleagues' *uchi*), and as such did not have the freedom to express himself in his work. This is in spite of the salon's image as a highly progressive and fashionable outfit. On a wall in the backroom is a whiteboard where the current performance and ranking of each staff is recorded on a daily basis. To a great extent, staff members are rewarded according to their performance, measured in terms of customer demand. Koutaro saw this as an expression of the hierarchy of social relationships in the salon.

It has been ten years since he joined the salon. He started off by swallowing his pride and conforming to the ways and expectations of the other staff, but he thought those sacrifices would be worth the reward and, perhaps confirming this, his present score on the whiteboard puts him close to the top. More importantly, he told me, he has since been able to groom his own group of trainees and develop more casual and equal relationships with them and some of the original staff. All along, Koutaro felt that the traditional hierarchical structure was stifling. But to change the unwritten rules, he has to comply with them for a long time. Once established in the salon—in the *uchi* defining the social structure on which it runs—Koutaro can now redefine and change some of its rules and gain some freedom of expression. In these ways, the more traditional hierarchical structure governing relationships in the salon ten years ago has now been reorganised and partially replaced by a parallel structure which is more egalitarian.

The stories of Ichiro and Koutaro can be read as illustrations of the persistence of the hierarchical structure in two Japanese companies. However, the point of departure between them is crucial for understanding the nature of social relationships in the contemporary context. In Koutaro's case, an alternative social

structure has developed in competition with the existing hierarchy in the salon but Ichiro has reinforced the existing structure through his actions. In neither case was the individual's response the proscribed action of some fixed cultural code but was instead the conscious and rational decision towards the achievement of certain ends. It should be noted, however, that what is considered rational here is situationally defined. Obviously, what is rational in a certain set of circumstances may well be irrational in another. In the paradigm of complexity theory, rationality is always seen as 'bounded', or contextualised, rather than 'perfect' or decontextualised.

Boundaries between social groups are often situationally defined, including certain people and excluding others, but not just according to the dictates of Japanese 'culture', as Nakane seemed to suggest, rather they are negotiated in everyday life. Societal changes continually bring about new problems which must be resolved. One of the most significant changes in recent times has been the advent of globalisation and the accelerated international flow of capital, labour and media. These changes have brought the Japanese into closer and more sustained contact with foreigners. This fact has had interesting implications for the business *uchi*.

Ataro (F1, father, 35) is a marketing executive at a leading Japanese electronics manufacturer, Toshiba. Almost everyone in his department of about forty is a Japanese national but, as far as he is concerned, about a third of them do not belong in the country for the simple reason that they have lived and worked overseas for over two years. These colleagues speak fluent English and are assigned to service American and other English-speaking clients. Ataro, on the other hand, is not quite as fluent in the language and is tasked to service the Asian market, which he considers an inferior assignment. His strong feelings against these colleagues came up quite unexpectedly, when I was asking him about another matter.

Researcher: Do you have colleagues you are close to?

Ataro: In my department?

Researcher: Yes.

Ataro: Yes. (He paused, then suddenly, spoke in an agitated tone.) You know the *kikokushijo* (Japanese people who have returned from other countries) you know, the *gaijin* (literally, foreigners)! There is a boundary between them and I. I can't cross it.

In response to a question about *uchi*, Ataro thought of *soto*. It is perhaps only in the encounter with *soto* that the boundary between it and *uchi* is defined, a kind of 'us'/'them' relationship. *Uchi*, for Ataro, is part of that taken for granted, revealed only when reflecting on *soto*, in this case, his Japanese colleagues whom he considered foreigners.

Researcher: You mean you feel that there is a clear division between the *kikokushijo* and non-*kikokushijo* (non-foreigners)?

Ataro: Yeah.

Researcher: Do you speak to them?

Ataro: Yeah, but they don't like Japanese things. They don't like the "Japanese style", how we depend on each other, how we do things together and all that. I ask them to go out for drinks and they will say, "I've got something to do tonight". But they have something to do every night! (He sounded exasperated). Oh they never try to adapt, they are just so American. The people in the Asian section are different.

Later, when we were talking about his family, he brought up the subject of the Japanese foreigners once more. This time, it was over the hours they keep. The *kikokushijo* leave work at about six every evening while he does not usually get home before midnight. One might have thought he would rather be like them and work the shorter and reasonable hours but he does not, for reasons, it seems, of fulfilling expectations.

- Ataro: I *have* to work long hours.
- Researcher: Why don't you declare that you will also stop work at six, like them. Do you think you will be fired?
- Ataro: No, no. Here it is your results that count. The hours are flexible. But I can never, never do that.
- Researcher: Why not? You mean you cannot work if you do not go to your office?
- Ataro: No, it's not the number of hours I put in. Thirty to forty per cent of that is here (pointing to his heart) emotional. I just feel I have to do it. Like going for drinks with my boss. It's just the way it is.
- Researcher: Okay, then what about the *kikokushijo*?
- Ataro: They just go home.
- Researcher: And it's okay for them? What does your boss think?
- Ataro: (Again, his voice quickened) Yeah, yeah. With people like me, my boss would say, you're Japanese, how could you go home now? Not with them. They're different.

Ataro's feelings about the *kikokushijo* are not uncommon and we can try to understand the reasons people like Ataro feel the way they do. Many think of *kikokushijo* as having disembodied themselves out of their roots, pointing to their inability to read *kanji* (traditional Japanese script) or Japanese newspapers, as evidence for this. Dislike of *kikokushijo* could thus be read as an assertion of one's ethnicity, or a protective stance against possible 'pollution' by foreigners. The 'foreigners' here, however, are Japanese persons whom Ataro, and others like him, considers to have rather different cultural values and ideas from himself. Ataro initially referred to this group as *kikokushijo* and then quickly switched to the term *gaijin* or foreigners, thereby expressing the view that they really are outsiders. By so defining, Ataro is in effect reinforcing his own Japaneseness and reaffirming his membership in the company *uchi*.

This also illustrates the dynamic nature of the company *uchi*, which is

contrary to the conceptions of the company as the coherent and homogeneous social units envisaged in the 1980s. Never fixed for long, the company *uchi* is constantly created or re-created, sustained or damaged. In this case, Ataro's strategy of understanding alternative and changing social relationships is one of defining the *kikokushijo* as not Japanese and not part of the company *uchi*. However, with increasing globalisation and rapid shifts in capital and manpower flows, the established ways of work in Japan, and the social relations they entail, are increasingly under pressure. Sometimes these forces can have highly disruptive effects, as the next example illustrates.

In the year 2000, Carlos Ghosn, born a Brazilian but educated in France, became the president of Nissan, previously a wholly Japanese controlled concern. Its employees suddenly found themselves working within a radically different structure. Nissan was a Japanese company but it was run by a Frenchman and the effects of that were filtered down from the boardroom to the shop floor and offices. One of the first things Ghosn did was to abolish the system of hierarchy based on seniority, which had always been a common practice in Japanese management (Ghosn, 2001). Generally, senior (older) workers felt their privileges being stripped away; while the younger workers, with more to benefit from the change, tended to welcome it. Atsushi (F3, husband, 38) was one of the latter group.

Researcher: What do you think of the French management?

Atsushi: I don't work directly with them but it's a welcome change. They have revolutionised the company and only people from the outside can do what they did - "*spar spar*" (a common expression that suggests something done decisively, without hesitation). We won't be able to change things like that – too much concern about interpersonal relationships. Oh, I cannot fire you because of personal ties, or just because you have been working here for so long. It's not rational. With foreigners, they aren't tied down by emotions.

The changes amongst the top management in the company also brought about a change in the language used in the workplace. French was not widely spoken among the Japanese staff, but English was. It was adopted as a compromise to facilitate communication within the company. On this issue, Atsushi seemed rather torn between accepting the dominance of English as the *lingua franca* and asserting the need to maintain Japanese identity among his Japanese colleagues.

Atsushi: Yeah, I think English should be our main language. But even so, we must depend on our Japanese. In business settings, it is okay, like in meetings. But then again, if everyone in a meeting were Japanese, then it wouldn't be right to talk in English.

(Later)

Researcher: Language aside, has anything changed since (the French took over the company) in the way you do business?

Atsushi: I don't really have experience (working directly with the French). But previously, we emphasised *nemawashi* (harmony) in our Japanese culture. Now, we have conflict.

Atsushi's colleague, Naoki (F4, father, 35), an engineer working directly with the French, had a different opinion. During my interview with him, he spoke calmly and slowly until I mentioned the word, "French".

Naoki: Oh, they can be so selfish! You know, before we go to see some clients, we discuss among ourselves, come up with some understanding first, right? Well, in the meeting with the client, they actually change their minds! How can they? What happened to the consensus? This would never happen with the Japanese. The French simply lack a sense of obligation or reciprocity.

What was interesting in talking to Naoki was that talking about the French invariably turned into talking about his Japaneseness, in a cataloguing of differences between them. Despite his frustrations with the French, he states that he is highly adaptive, or as he put it, he works like the French when he is with them, and he works as a Japanese when he is with his own. Naoki saw some virtues in the French, their conscientiousness during working hours, for example, and the fact that they go home by seven o'clock—the latter, Naoki has begun to do himself.

During the bubble economy of the 1980s and early 1990s, Japanese groupism was considered to be a persistent feature of the society. However, this is now being challenged and the examples at Nissan, above, lend support to this challenge. Other corporate giants, such as Nippon Telecom, Showa Shell Oil and motorcar manufacturers Matsuda and Mitsubishi, have similarly taken on board non-Japanese managers as part of the companies' restructuring. The picture emerging seems to be one of the Japanese struggling to adapt their ways and values to changes both within the society and in the contact zone with the outside world. The boundaries between inside and outside, *uchi* and *soto*, are sometimes redrawn, other times reinforced, but they are never quite as fixed as once imagined.

5.2.3. Locality and Nationality

Uchi, as a relatively stable or closed social grouping, however, is not just experienced in the context of the family or workplace. Jiro (f22, father, 55) told the story of the local leisure complex being dominated by an older generation of local men, determined to keep younger newcomers out of what they affirmed to be their domain. This was a way in which the locality *uchi* was sustained. Another place we can see the sustenance of a locality *uchi* is in the park, a place in which housewives and mothers convene to form social relationships. The importance of membership to what we might call a 'park *uchi*' is revealed by the often traumatic

Kouen Debyuu, or 'park debut', in which a new mother first appears with her baby. It can be a difficult and lonely experience for mothers attempting to find acceptance amongst the senior members of the *uchi*.

At the level of nation, I found one informant for whom an extended conception of *uchi*, equating almost with a sense of national identity, had been important in her own self-development. Reika's (f15, daughter, 25) poignant encounter with a conception of *soto* not only made her aware of her own status within a national *uchi* but caused her to develop a sense of an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983). Reika's attendance of a language school in Indonesia brought her into contact with many other Japanese from different social groups from that to which her own elite and privileged upbringing had afforded membership to. She experienced 'culture shock', at her own 'culture', and at that of, in her words, 'ordinary Japanese people'. Reika felt no connection with this group, who ridiculed her for not having the 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1977) expected of people her age. For the first time, Reika felt she was *soto*, an outsider among her own people. Since this experience, Reika has consciously attempted, through developing herself, to become a member of what she sees as the traditional national *uchi*, defined as much by what it is as what it is not. Through the reinforcement of this national *uchi*, Reika has gained more of what I found generally to be gained from membership to *uchis*. I now turn to this question.

5.2.4. Traditional *Uchi* and Ontological Security

The values, ideas and beliefs in Japanese society concerning the roles and position of a housewife, salaryman, mother, local or a Japanese are constantly created, challenged, and recreated by the socialising forces of education, upbringing, media and everyday life. People emphasise their similarities as they interact with each other in the same *uchi* while emphasising differences against those they regard as others, or *soto*. The boundaries have to be sensed, and enacted through social action and interaction.

This point, that the boundaries of *uchi* and *soto* have to be continually redefined, is an important departure from Nakane's use of the terms. She thought of them as a pair of relatively stable and bounded categories of persons in Japanese society. My use, however, suggests that *uchi* and *soto*, even when experienced as relatively solid, are being negotiated all the time both within the *uchi* and from its outside in order to adapt to rapid social changes. As we have seen, *uchi* is sometimes reinforced by the ways in which individual members respond to their personal and social situations, thereby maintaining or recreating the imagined boundaries and resisting the new.

What I refer to as a traditional *uchi* is therefore one in which members actively reinforce their connectivity and closeness to each other in order to keep security and stability, by reflexively adapting the traditional ways of interpersonal relationships to on-going social processes. Nakane (1978) stated "the notion of Japanese *uchi* has the same characteristics as the notion of the Western individual" (p.38), meaning that the two were equivalent in various senses, including their relative independence and their being the primary unit of society. Her use has overemphasised Japanese groupism, but at the same time, it helps us understand how traditional *uchi*, due to its homogeneity, may be understood as contributing to a sense of "ontological security" (Giddens, 1990, 1991). *Uchi* has a continuity in everyday life. Sometimes it is a 'protective cocoon', which holds those inside together and 'filters out' the *soto*. People trust each other through their consistent face-to-face interactions, imagine their shared common values within the *uchi* and depend on each other (what Doi called an *amae* structure). As 'trust' and interdependency are the preconditions for ontological security, through their everyday face-to-face interaction people feel secure in being together and affirming their sameness through their social actions. Thus "tradition...contributes in basic fashion to ontological security of past, present and future, and connects such trust to routinised social practices" (Giddens, 1990, p.105). However, it can also work against people, as when they feel the pressure to do what they would prefer not to

do, only for the sake of demonstrating their loyalty and commitment and thereby maintaining their membership to an *uchi*. As Hamaguchi's contextualism model suggests, people are expected to sense the 'rules' in a situation through verbal and non-verbal communication with other *uchi* members, adapt to them and then react appropriately. Through such processes, through numerous contexts of social interactions, diverse forms of *uchi* emerge, are organised and reorganised, even as they adapt to the social forces and changes impinging upon everyday Japanese life. Thus people reflexively create this traditional sense of *uchi* through their performance. Next I will discuss how people negotiate the traditional *uchi* and recreate it as a modern *uchi* through their engagement with media and ICT.

5.3. Modern *Uchi*

In the previous section, I discussed how people reflexively reinforce 'traditional *uchi*' to gain and sustain a sense of security. However people do not always feel security in this traditional *uchi*, due to the very bonds tying it, its expectations and pressures. In this section, I will demonstrate how media and ICT have made it possible to distantiate, in some cases escape, from this traditional time-space and maintain multiple *uchis*. This section will illustrate how ICT may be used to create 'modern *uchis*', disembedding from the traditional. Finally, it will also show how modern *uchis* challenge the traditional structure by their own reembedding in the traditional time-space. Here I would like to focus on the process of the 'reflexive modernisation' of interpersonal relationships as they involve the use of media and ICT.

5.3.1. *Uchi* Creation by Media

In Chapter Four, the home was been described, not only as providing a sense of identity and ontological security to the family members, but also, especially to the housewife or mother, a sense of being constrained and trapped within. This ambivalence towards the home has been further complicated by the increasing penetration of media technology and ICTs. The fragmentation of the domestic *uchi* threatens family viewing and the family hearth but the diffusion of media and ICT, held, at least in part, responsible for it also presents opportunities for family members to explore other ways of imagining themselves and their worlds.

Fan *Uchi*

Aiko, whom we met earlier, expressed her frustrations at having no escape from the home. The domestic *uchi* was all she belonged to. With the advent of the internet and email, however, she has managed to keep in touch with her old college friends who are living in various parts of Japan. Email, she found, was more

convenient and cheaper than the telephone. But most importantly, it is less disruptive to a mother's schedule. Aiko's old college *uchi* is maintained in cyberspace, in the absence of the physical sharing of space.

Furthermore, the media also provide material around which new *uchis* can develop, providing new opportunities for the mixing, mingling and mobility of *uchis*. The media culture surrounding *SMAP*, a popular Japanese boy band, is a case in point. For Aiko, *SMAP* has allowed her to create a 'modern *uchi*' outside the home, at the kindergarten. The kindergarten mothers are brought together despite their differences in age, family situation, locality and so forth, as they share a common enthusiasm for *SMAP*. It also provides the basis for a lighter, more enjoyable level of connectivity upon which to create traditional *uchi* bonds. Mothers can relate to teachers at a more personal and friendly level. It is as if some sort of a '*superuchi*' has been created, bringing together the various traditional *uchis* of the kindergarten children, teachers and mothers. Aiko said,

I was at the kindergarten the day after a *SMAP* concert. One of the teachers went up to a group of mothers and happily declared, "Oh, we went to the *SMAP* concert last night and we were sitting in the front row. So we'll be on TV—watch out for us, I'm wearing a pink sweater..." This kind of conversation between teachers and mothers, I thought, was something rather unexpected.

At this kindergarten, the teachers, both old and young, the mothers and the children can share their enthusiasm for *SMAP* culture by talking about last night's show, the latest on the homepage and so forth. Some of the younger teachers were even teaching *SMAP* songs and dances to the older ones and the children. Media culture thus provides the material for closer and less formal relationships between teachers, parents and children. This is a departure from the more traditional, hierarchical model, which was more distant and fixed, and in the context of which, creating a *superuchi*, or 'taste community' (Lash, 1994, p.160),

that cuts across established *uchi*, uniting members by their 'taste' for a particular thing, would have been unthinkable.

Aiko felt constrained inside her 'traditional' domestic *uchi*. But in consuming *SMAP* music and products, she is 'producing' another identity for herself, that of a *SMAP* fan (cf. de Certeau, 1985). Through her participation in the fan club, events and homepages, her creating an alternative identity for herself "entails the transgression of distinctions between consumer and producer" (Lash, 1994, p.161). Furthermore, through her own actions, extending the identity into both mediated and non-mediated interactions with the other mothers and teachers who are also *SMAP* fans, a *SMAP uchi*, as a taste community, could be said to have emerged, a community into which Aiko can momentarily escape, via both interpersonal interactions and quasi-mediated interactions with *SMAP* media texts. The next case is much more clearly an internet-created one and one which shows the tendency towards the diminished importance of face-to-face communication for Japanese people.

Virtual *Uchi* Online and Off

I think it is difficult to get Japanese to relax in front of people and thus it may be difficult to get a sense of community in a group of invisible strangers unless they have something significant in common such as being outcast from society in some way, or sharing a strong common interest, or common physical location. (Rheingold, 2000, p.229)

This may suggest that the internet chat room would not be a desirable means of communication for Japanese people and talk of them, along with virtual communities, got little enthusiasm from my informants, as I discussed in Chapter Four. However, Jun's (f22, son, 27) case shows how such on-line communities may be said to create some kind of a virtual *uchi* that, in these cases, may modernise

traditional local *uchi* by their members subsequently meeting off-line, leading to the emergence of a new local *uchi*.

Jun had never felt quite at ease in his hometown of Mitaka City, where the local community, he thought, was very closed and rigid. Efforts by the local government to create a more 'open' community in recent years had not really achieved much. Jun's response was to create a homepage that went by the name of "Mitakappe" (Mitaka Village people) (<http://www.yokoyama-inc.co.jp/fullword0/>), saying, "I did it because I wanted to make the community flat", one in which interpersonal relationships are organised horizontally, not vertically along the lines of social or economic standing or position. Spending most of his time in his father's company into which he failed to 'fit', Jun was feeling isolated from other people and insecure. The company *uchi* was hitherto the only *uchi* he had had, and he wanted to go beyond it. The community website he created was one way of opening up alternatives. However, not content with staying virtual, Jun eventually met some of the people he communicated with through his homepage after suggesting that they participate in the "*Awaodori* (Awa dance) festival", a Japanese traditional dance festival, organised by the local association of small shop owners on August 19, 2000. The day before, Jun's group, comprising twenty people, including entire families, and aged from five to forty-five, met a local Awa dance teacher to practice their dance.

In the process, social intimacy among what had hitherto been a 'virtual community' was reaffirmed in material reality. At the time of my research, Jun's group were still talking regularly on-line, and meeting once every two months. A 'local *uchi*' may be said to have been created. Through a process of local people disembedding from their physical time-space, meeting each other on-line in local cyberspace and creating the 'virtual local *uchi*'. They were finally reembedded in their locality by participating in a traditional local festival with other local people. But here, there are two interacting localities, one in cyberspace and the other physically in their hometown, Mitaka City, brought into being and re-created by

the locals' mediated and non-mediated interpersonal interactions.

5.3.2. Media and the Remaking of *Uchi*

Above I discussed how modern *uchis* are *created* through the use of media. In the present section, I turn my attention to the question of how *uchis*, already created through face-to-face interaction, may be recreated and sustained, social intimacy reinforced, and interpersonal relationships transformed by ICT and media. Here I want to consider how the latter has modernised the traditional *uchi*.

Uchis Reunited and Sustained

According to a survey by Hakuhodo (2000), "the internet has done little to change interpersonal relationships between relatives" (p.46).¹ In my research, however, I have come across a number of cases where family members who had previously been separated, or distant from each other, have been brought together via email and for whom their connectivity seems closer than before.

Hiroshi (f7, father, 31) is one example. Like many Japanese youths, he was drawn from his birthplace in Akita prefecture, in a northern part of Japan, to the bright lights of Tokyo. His parents were against his decision to move as, being the eldest son in the family, he was expected to stay home to be the 'keeper of the family', to maintain *Yamada-ke*. But Hiroshi chose to leave his hometown. "I am the one who destroyed *Yamada-ke*", he said. Because of this, he lost contact with his parents for several years.

¹ To the statement that, "Through the diffusion of email and the internet, I think we can communicate more with relatives and families who live separately, thereby not having to worry about them unnecessarily", only 20% of respondents who have used the internet for over 18 months agreed. By contrast, 65% of users agreed with the same statement but regarding *friends*, not relatives. 35.6% of respondents agreed with the following statement: "Through the diffusion of email and the internet, I think the level of connectivity with relatives and families who live separately will become deeper." For the same statement regarding friends, 69.4% agreed. Hakuhodo explained the difference between friends and relatives in terms of "the degree of freedom" among their interpersonal relationships. "We can choose our friends and then cut them out of our lives if we do not like them but we cannot choose our relatives nor cut them out, even if we do not like them"(p.45).

That changed, however, when he had a child. He began to email his parents, sending them digital pictures of their granddaughter. They have since begun to exchange emails with him frequently. He was almost nostalgic when he said,

If I go back to Akita, I still have a good close group of friends and also everybody knows each other. Without saying anything, they understand me.

Hiroshi is looking for a job in Akita and, if he finds a good one, he wants to take his family 'home'. Through the use of ICT, Hiroshi has found himself reconnected to his home beyond his immediate time-space and, in the process, recreated his 'traditional 'home' *uchi*' as a more modern one where he feels more security and intimacy than before.

In this next case of ICT benefiting the extended family, the family is what is known as a *tanshinfunin* family, a living arrangement in which the father lives apart, to be close to his workplace while the rest of the family lives close to the children's schools. Shingo (f5, 36) is one such father, living away from home on weekdays. To stay in touch, he makes it a point to email his daughter, Shiori (daughter, 8), on her mobile phone daily. Their mobile phones can also be used to send and receive digital pictures, which they do often. Shingo's wife also works during the daytime. So, Shiori has to stay home to look after her younger brother Shinji (son, 6) after school, until about seven o'clock, when their mother comes home, after picking up baby Shoko (daughter, 1) from the nursery. A few times a day, her mother calls Shiori to make sure they are all right.

This situation has been described as the modern nuclear family in Japan. They live in *danchi*, apartment blocks, usually with shared outdoor facilities, such as a small park or playground. The children are called *Kagikko* (or latch-key kids). A common feature among these children is that, despite their often young age, they hold the key to the family's apartment and let themselves in and out unsupervised. Baby-sitters are expensive and hard to come by in Japan. This

arrangement is not well favoured but many such families will tell you they have no choice. What parents and children do is to make use of mobile phones, especially those that are email-capable as well, in such a way that they can maintain as much contact as possible with each other. Such children carry their mobile phones as if they were parts of their bodies. This case shows separated family members recreating their interpersonal relationships via ICT beyond time-space, trying to keep their connectivity and reinforce their social intimacy by the exchange of messages and pictures via mobile phone while at the same time enabling them to take on more 'modern' economic roles within the family.

It is not just familial relationships that have benefited from the use of ICTs, but friends and colleagues as well, according to the Hakuhodo Survey (2000). Seika (f28), a 'parasite single', has been having difficulty obtaining acceptance by her colleagues. It has not helped that she recently changed jobs twice. At home, too, she found it inconvenient to call her male friends as her parents kept a close watch on the phone records. She was feeling isolated until about a year ago, when she bought herself a mobile phone that is email-capable. "Suddenly, my world has opened up again. I've managed to fit back in with the people at my former company ". Now she can participate in her ex-colleague *uchi* via email from her bedroom at home and arrange to meet up face-to-face. It was a reunion with an *uchi*, which was particularly significant for Seika as she finds mutual understanding and security there. ICT makes it possible to escape the bounds of both the traditional family *uchi* and her new company and enter into her ex-company *uchi*, beyond 'locale'.

ICT thus has the potential for reuniting once-separated, friend, college, and colleague *uchis*, making it possible to sustain the *uchi* in people's everyday lives. These *uchis* are recreated through disembeddedness from their former location where the traditional *uchi* is self-organised only by daily face-to-face communication. *Uchi* being disembedded from location creates the possibility of maintaining membership to multiple *uchis*, the ties of which are sustained by ICT.

Thus, in contrast to the findings of the Hakuhodo survey, I found several and significant cases of the internet “changing interpersonal relationships between relatives”. I will return to the issue of the conflict of my findings with the Hakuhodo survey in the conclusion to this thesis.

Modern Business *Uchis*

As I discussed earlier, Japanese employees do spend much of their time at work, maintaining their business *uchis*. While this may conjure up the image of Japanese workers endlessly labouring away, the reality in the office or other workplace may reveal a somewhat different picture. Shingo (f5, 36), Takeshi (f9, 28), Hiroshi (f7, 31) and Ryo (f10, 31) work for the same company but in different departments located on different floors, such that they have little work-related business with each other. But they are very good friends. During working hours, they rarely see each other but they certainly ‘talk’ a lot, sometimes on work related matters, but mostly on personal ones. While previously, there may have been the occasional worry of the company monitoring their communication, now, by using free software such as *Messenger*, they can exchange files, information and, most interesting of all, ‘electronic gossip’ without fear of being tracked. This is possible through ‘peer-to-peer’ communication, that is, computers communicating with each other without first passing through a company server.

Ryo: I can send messages to my colleagues directly using *Messenger* via LAN without going through any server. Because of this special free software, no one can read my messages. Records only remain in each other’s computer. I know when the others read my messages so I can ‘see’ them... Oh, now he is back at his desk. [Despite my presence in his office, Ryo could not resist having a quick look at the new message from Takeshi].

By bypassing the company’s servers, and thereby escaping detection, Ryo and his

three colleagues have opened up for themselves alternative channels of communication. This may be read as resisting the more formal hierarchical structure of the company, the 'official' business *uchi*. Here, ICTs make it possible for employees to create a horizontally structured colleagues' *uchi*, out of the bounds of their respective sections (cf. Nakane, 1967). These colleague *uchis* are disembedded from the company structure. Colleagues connect to each other via LAN, using *Messenger*, making them 'visible' to each other and thereby excluding others not in the group. Through frequent communication, they develop an emotional bond that helps to sustain their *uchi*.

This desire for a more horizontal colleague *uchi* was also seen in an earlier section when I introduced hairstylist Koutaro (f17, single, 37). Once he had established himself in the salon, he created and became the editor of the salon's website, showing suggestions of fancy restaurants and related beauty shops in Tokyo, the ideas for which he derived from his outings and holidays with the younger staff. He exchanges emails and chats casually with his younger colleagues, establishing a horizontal colleague *uchi*. One incident demonstrated how uncharacteristically relaxed the relationships in this horizontal colleague *uchi* are. I was having dinner with Koutaro, when one of his younger staff, who had just returned from a holiday in his hometown, called him on his mobile, inviting Koutaro to a meal of regional eel that he had brought back.

In these ways, new and modern *uchi* may be created, disembedded from the traditional company structure and, through frequent communication via ICT, new alignments of social intimacy established. This 'modern *uchi*' has the potential to transform the traditional structure in a way that makes it more horizontal and yet reembedded in the traditional company *uchi*. The next section looks at these same changes but in relation to the domestic *uchi*.

Modern Domestic *Uchi*

One of the concerns of this thesis is the question of the modernisation of the

Japanese family (see Appendix A2). Here I will discuss how family members interact with each other via ICT beyond the domestic time-space and how they thus recreate their family in a more modern form, through mediated interaction in everyday life. It will be helpful to discuss some of the criticisms often levied against Japanese family relationships, in particular the criticism concerning the lack of communication amongst family members. Comparing family relationships in Japan and 'the West', Yamada (2001) wrote rather critically of the former, arguing that,

The notion of affection or love which has become wide spread in Japan after World War II is based on mutual dependency. They believe love can be expressed by money, things or service. That is, 'I do ... for you' has become proof of one's love. So, when parents 'buy things', 'make their children's rooms', 'buy them beautiful clothes', 'pay the tuition fees' and so on, it is done to prove one's love for their children. On the other hand, when children respond to their parents expectations, it is proof that they requite their love. So when they 'study', 'enter a big company', 'marry a highly educated man', it is proof that they love their parents. What is culturally believed here is that the appropriate relationship between parents and children is built on mutual support and dependence. On the other hand, in the West, many people believe that affective relationships are expressed through communication. (p.236)

With Yamada's description in mind, I will consider, in this section, how the media and ICT may in fact alter the dynamics within the Japanese family, by introducing an element of distantiation in the domestic time-space and to what extent this creates alternative conditions of communication between family members. Would the presence of such communication signify the sort of 'affective relationships' which Yamada claims are absent among the Japanese?

Listening to Masatoshi and his family one day, I sensed that ICTs may in fact provide new opportunities for Japanese families to redefine their communicative

practices. That day, I was in the car beside Masatoshi (father, 54) at the wheel. His wife, Masako (mother, 53) and daughter Maki (daughter, 24) sat in the back. We were talking about new communication technologies when, at one point, the family, almost forgetting my presence, began to talk about the time when Maki was studying in the United States.

- Masako: Our generation is not good at emailing. But when Maki decided to go to the US, we'd no choice. So we picked it up emailing our daughter, about 5 years ago.
- Masatoshi: Yeah, we exchanged emails a lot. I saved them all.
- Maki: Oh, really? Did you save them *all*?
- Masatoshi: Yeah, I saved all of them [He looked meaningfully at his daughter].
- Masako: I always loved to read the emails my daughter sent ...and she always said you can reply anytime because there is a time difference anyway.
- Maki: But, Mum, you always called me and asked, "did you read my email?" and told me "I wrote this and that in my email." [laughing]
- Masako: Yeah, we had these sorts of exchanges a lot!

There was a certain warmth amongst the family evoked by this conversation that I had not noticed previously. It seems that the distance between the daughter and parents during those years was in fact a bridge to each other. These distant mediated interactions were embedded in their everyday lives. The parents were afraid of 'losing' their daughter, so much so that they made the effort to learn how to use new media, and this helped to keep their family 'together', allowed them to share their feelings and share events in virtual time-space and to create common memories and reinforce their connectivity across thousands of miles. The exchange of email has made it easier for them to open up and communicate.

- Masatoshi: I could talk about lots of things via email that I couldn't say when I was face-to-face with you. I was very glad I could write emails to you.

Maki: I was, too.
Masatoshi: Oh really? Did you feel that, too?

Returning to Yamada's point, it may be the case that while the Japanese commonly have a tendency not to express their feelings within the family, or even between couples, distance, brought about by changes in living and working arrangements and communication facilitated by ICTs, have made it easier for people to communicate with each other more openly. For families living apart, email seems the most effective communication tool, partly because the problems of time difference are eliminated and its low costs. To an extent, ICT not only increases the frequency of communication, but also transforms the expressions themselves.

Naoki (f4, father, 35), whom we met earlier adjusting to changes at Nissan, told me how he maintained contact with his wife throughout the working day. He feels his wife 'lives in a different world', one which, on briefly entering it, relieves his stress at work. He gleefully showed me some of his wife's emails, "I lost my hat", followed by, "Oh, I found it!!". "Amuro Namie's (a Japanese pop singer) mother was murdered." He said it was more important to know what his wife was doing, thinking, feeling or watching during the day than to know the latest news. Whenever he receives her emails, he said, he thinks about her and their child. They transport him into 'a different world', that of his 'family uchi.' The same thing continued outside the office, when I was interviewing him in a café. He and his wife would be exchanging emails:

"What do you want to eat tonight?"

"Sushi!"

"What time will you be back?"

"I'll be back soon."

He was drifting back and forth between our shared time-space and his family *uchi*.

In the cases of the two families just discussed, Masatoshi's and Naoki's, the ability to enter the family *uchi* at odd times, transcending the immediate business, domestic or national time-space using ICT, has helped to reinforce the intimacy between family members. Naoki's family has reorganised its communicational structure, reorganising at the same time the dynamics of its interpersonal relationships through mediated and non-mediated interactions. Naoki's family was formerly strongly gender-differentiated and, like Ataro and other Japanese businessmen, he always stayed at the office until late. However this traditional family structure has been transformed through both intra-group and inter-group interactions.

In family intra-group interactions, the virtual family *uchi* is created and recreated when Naoki disembeds himself from the business *uchi* and embeds into his wife's domestic or local *uchi*. Their intimacy with each other is reinforced beyond their immediate time-space. In inter-group interactions between family and business with his French colleagues, Naoki learnt and appropriated their way of organising their family life. Now he tries to go home by seven o'clock to be with his wife and to watch cartoons or videos with his one-year old son. Through his interactions with his wife and colleagues, the virtual family *uchi* is re-embedded in the traditional domestic time-space, recreating it to be a modern family *uchi*.

We have looked at the case of relatively weakly gender-differentiated couples with both parties going out to work. They do not get to spend much time together but ICT provides more opportunities to talk with both each other and with their children, even making fluid arrangements to meet whenever they wish to. The relationships within these families are different from those in the 1970s in the sense that, the work of creating the family *uchi* falls not only on the wife but on the husband as well. For men, the primary *uchi* was always the business *uchi* but this is no longer always the case, as the example of Hiroshi (f7, father, 31) illustrates even further.

Hiroshi is highly involved in sports, using sports in the media to help create his family *uchi*. He was described in some detail in Chapter Four. The rich sports media environment in his home is not only for himself but also for the creation of the family *uchi* and the reinforcement of family intimacy in a more modern way. He said he will have at most another twenty years with his daughters but after that, they will have grown up, married and probably be living somewhere else with their husbands, so Hiroshi wants to create as much common time-space as possible. His family may be gender-differentiated, as far as economic roles are concerned, but he said he would not mind switching roles with his wife.

Hiroshi: It's not gender but just different roles we have in our family. If my wife wants to work, I'm happy to be a house husband. I'd prefer to be a house husband actually.

Researcher: What does home mean to you?

Hiroshi: Home is a place where I return to. I chose my wife by myself and married her. So home is a thing that both of us create together.

Hiroshi tried encouraging his one-year old daughter to share his love for sports by showing her sports television and playing versions of sports games with her. He planned to take her to watch the Italian football games and show her the origin of her name, Azuri. In his case, media play an important role in creating both family intimacy and activity. Although he sometimes works until midnight, like his other colleagues, he goes home at eight or nine o'clock to bathe the baby, returning to the office later at night. "Work is just a means to feed the family. Sports is a means to share time with the family. My priority is the family." Hiroshi was almost embarrassed when saying this, but for once, he said, he felt like expressing his feelings about these matters. He uses media and ICT and reflexively creates his domestic *uchi* in which all family members are willing and able to participate.

The next and final case is one of resisting the traditional 'relative *uchi*' (the

uchi of family relatives) and reflexively recreating it in a more modern form. The internet can be, as we shall see, a useful tool in this regard and this case provides an insight into how the Japanese can recreate their traditional relative *uchis* in ways that increase the degree of their own freedom from and amongst family and relatives.

In a departure from established practice, an increasing number of Japanese couples are having their wedding ceremonies abroad², thereby avoiding elaborate rituals and the obligation to invite all their relatives. Satoshi (f20) and Ryo (f10) were among such couples. Ryo was married in November 2001, when I was conducting my fieldwork. He said,

I was sad to have to give up a tradition but if I'd followed it, it would've cost too much. Also, I feel pain in inviting people who do not really know me at all. There is no meaning. It's just a custom or obligation. So it's better not to follow the Japanese way and just do it abroad.

Ryo thinks that Japanese interpersonal relationships have been transformed, citing the fact that *Ochuugen* and *Oseibo* (seasonal gifts) are not exchanged anymore while *Giri* (obligation) has diminished. Even the way relatives communicate with each other has become less formal and rigid. Ryo was convinced of this when he created a homepage for his relatives. In it, he showed a picture of his apartment and wrote about the latest happenings in the family (see Appendix B5).

I feel I am able to communicate with my relatives in a much more relaxed or casual way since creating the homepage. Before, whether we had anything to say to each

² In 2000, 58,000 couples went abroad for their ceremonies, 7.35% of all couples marrying in that year. The comparative figure for 1989 was only 11,000 and the projected figure for 2005 is 10% of all couples wedding in that year (Watanabe Wedding, 2001, quoted in Asahi Newspaper, 3/23/01, p.39)

other or not, we were supposed to do so, according to the occasion, obligations and our relative social positions. It was as if social relationships dictated that I had to communicate with others, like a teacher and his students, or a father and his son. Now, I decide what to say to whom and when.

In having his wedding ceremony overseas, and using his homepage to change the style and mode of communication within the family, Ryo may have recreated his traditional relatives *uchi*, organised along the lines of obligation and position into one that is organised along more flexible and open lines of communication. It is the accessibility and yet anonymity, due to the either intentional or contingent avoidance of face-to-face communication, provided by ICT which seems to have facilitated these changes in family relationships. These, in turn, are features of the disembedding of the *uchi* from a physical location.

5.3.3. Disembedding from 'locale'

Nakane (1967) wrote that the

strength of function of interpersonal relationships in Japanese society is correlated to the length and hardness of face-to-face contacts. (p.54) ...If individuals belong to a social group according to 'ba'(place), then, realistically, individuals can belong to only one social group. If they left that 'ba'(place), at the same time, they would also leave the social group. It is impossible for them to situate themselves in two places at any one time. (p.67)

However, in the twenty-first century, with the development of ICT, individuals can constantly communicate with each other even though they have physically left the 'locale' and in the process, maintain and reinforce their emotional bonds important for sustaining their feelings of belongingness to their social groups.

The disembeddness of time-space makes it possible for people to belong to

multiple *uchis* at the same time, as we have seen among my informants at work and at home. The moment that people shift into an *uchi* different from their actual locale via ICT, as Bull (2000) discussed, the '*ba*' (here, 'situation') becomes invisible for them.

(Personal stereo) users appear to achieve, at least subjectively, a sense of public invisibility...public spaces are void of meaning and are represented as 'dead' spaces to be traversed as easily and as pleasurably as possible. ...Public space in this instance is not merely transformed into a private space but rather negated so as to prioritize the private. (p.79)

If I recontextualise Bull's argument in terms of the *uchi/soto* distinction, *uchi* or 'locale', in which individuals are physically situated, can become *soto*, transformed by an individual disembedding themselves from that *uchi*, via ICT. ICT momentarily and situationally connects individuals together giving rise to emergent *uchis*. The traditional *uchi*, what Nakane described as 'the thing the self depends on' (p.31) becomes 'dead' space. People escape into other 'social and communication space' (cf. Gillespie, 1995, p.206) where they can feel renewed security. These family, friend, and colleague *uchis*, once disembedded from their traditional forms, are constantly and reflexively organised and reorganised by mediated, non-mediated and quasi-mediated interactions. When these alternative *uchis* are re-embedded in the places of traditional *uchis*, they may even challenge power structures, such as the hierarchical structure at the workplace, the patriarchal structure at home, and the *ie* ideology of the Japanese traditional family thereby transforming the traditional *uchi* into a more modern *uchi*.

5.4 Global *Uchi*

This process of modernisation of *uchi* encourages and is encouraged by increasing opportunities to be more inclusive and open in one's approach to social relationships. The epitome of this may well be what I call the 'global *uchi*'. In this section, I will discuss how people become disembedded from their national time-space to create global *uchis* which allow for even more freedom and heterogeneity. I will also discuss the possibility of the globalisation of local *uchi* as a consequence of global *uchi* being re-embedded in traditional local *uchi*. Here I focus on the process of 'reflexive globalisation' and the role media and ICT plays in it.

Hana (f18, single, 22) cannot use a computer very well but that has not stopped her from accessing the internet, or using her mobile phone. After graduating from high school, she trained to be a hair stylist. Despite the fact that her friends from high school are now dispersed by space and time, they remain fairly close. One is a college student in Los Angeles, another in London with her Italian boyfriend and a third is a flight attendant based in Hong Kong. Hana can be on the train or on a street in Japan, but she frequently and effortlessly communicates with her friends via email on her mobile phone. During summer holidays, she stays with one or the other, whether in London, Los Angeles, or Hong Kong. Thus, the interaction with her high school *uchi* members, who live outside Japan, is well embedded into her everyday life, no less than the interaction with her friends in Japan. One of her friends asked her to come and live with her in Hong Kong so she is seriously thinking about working for the Hong Kong branch of her hair salon though she never thought she would leave Japan of her own accord.

Similarly, Takeshi (f9, son, 28) has, for the past few years, managed to sustain friendships established from attending a one-month English course in Cambridge, England, in 1997. He keeps in contact with these friends, who had once come together to share a common time-space but re-dispersed all over the world, and

thus maintains a modern, global, heterogeneous *uchi*, comprised of people living in a variety of cultures. In my interview, while asking about different ICT used, the significance of email in creating and maintaining this global *uchi* became clear.

- Researcher: Do you have a mobile?
- Takeshi: Yeah, I do.
- Researcher: What about i-mode?
- Takeshi: I'm thinking about getting it...
- Researcher: Oh, you're thinking of using it? Do you think you need it?
- Takeshi: It's probably pretty useful...but basically I'm an analogue kind of person.
- Researcher: Really? But you use a computer and the internet all the time...
- Takeshi: No, only in the last two years. Before then I didn't use a computer. I had one when I was a kid but I didn't use it, I mean, I never learnt how to use it. But recently it's become more useful, since I came back from England. It's the best way to communicate with the rest of the world. Email and so on. If I use it I can communicate with people overseas even though I'm in Japan...that's why.
- Researcher: Oh, I see.
- Takeshi: Yeah, from when I started wanting to keep in contact with them...
- Researcher: Oh, *that's* interesting.
- Takeshi: In '97 we only wrote letters...
- Researcher: As recently as '97?
- Takeshi: Yeah, I only wrote letters. I couldn't keep in touch much but recently, since I started using email, we've become *much* much closer...Now they're always asking me to put their friends up! (laughs).

It is not the norm for Japanese to invite strangers into our houses, as the high-walled houses, *uchi/soto* distinction and other aspects of Japanese living may suggest. Even for me, it would usually take several meetings before I could

comfortably broach the subject of visiting my informants' homes to watch television with the family (see Appendix B2). By contrast, the creation of a global *uchi* has exposed Takeshi to new experiences and ways of thinking. He has had several overseas visitors now and enjoys opening up his home and culture to them. What is significant in the case of Takeshi is that it illustrates how new communication technologies have not only created the possibility of belonging to *uchis* which go beyond the home, office and local friendship ties, but have also transcended the homogeneity of the traditional Japanese *uchi* by encompassing global space, conventions and values, and including people traditionally considered as being outside Japanese culture. If Takeshi's on-going interactions with the people he met in Cambridge created some sort of a global *uchi*, by inviting them into his house, and sharing his Japanese culture with them, he has in fact integrated the global with the local *uchis*.

Researcher: We can't usually enter into other groups, can we?

Takeshi: Yeah, that's true. But I think it's natural overseas. In the past, we didn't but I think it will change in the future. When I asked my local friends to come to see my English friend, they were too shy to do so.

Researcher: I think so, too. We still have a tendency to keep our interpersonal relationships closed. Do you foresee that changing?

Takeshi: If it's OK for developed countries to keep going in their own ways, then I think it's OK to keep our traditional customs. But we have to be involved in foreign countries. So I think we could lose it.

Japan is a group of geographically isolated islands, well connected with other places and cultures, in part sustained through mediated interaction between members, whether Japanese or non-Japanese, of the global *uchi*. In the process, the global *uchi* is, in turn, recreated, altered, or reinforced, becoming a potentially more inclusive community, one on a scale larger than conventionally conceived,

which integrates different levels of *uchis*. As is the case with Takeshi, the mediated interactions in his everyday life include, in a socially significant way, individuals who live outside of any notion of a Japan *uchi*. Takeshi reflexively recreates his local *uchi* as a global one in order to adapt to the social changes in the Japan of today. Giddens argues that, "the creation of 'intimacy' in post-traditional emotional relations today... involves the generation of 'community' in a more active sense, and community often stretched across indefinite distances of time-space" (Beck et al., 1994, p.186). Takeshi's local *uchi* is open to the possibility of becoming a global community with Takeshi as the medium and this gives a chance to local people to participate in a global world beyond time-space in their everyday life.

Sometimes, the processes involved and the route taken to the opening up to alternative cultures and ways of life can be quite tortuous. In the example of one of my informants' family, comprising Kazuo (f6, father, 45), Kazue (mother, 41) and their two children, Kaito (son, 14) and Kayo (daughter, 11), living in the USA for three years had meant that there was quite a bit of readjustment to be made on returning to Japan. Kaito and Kayo, in particular, had difficulty in re-assimilating into the *uchi* to which they belonged before going abroad. For Kaito, his newly-acquired 'American characteristics', like expressing his opinions openly, challenging his teachers, calling his friends by their first names without adding the conventional and respectful suffix *kun*, and his lack of knowledge of Japanese popular culture, made it difficult for him to fit in with his old classmates. All was not lost, however, as Kaito told me how the 'subversive' playing of video games helped him overcome the initial difficulties and provided opportunities for cultural exchange and integration. One of Kaito's friends had wanted to go over to his house to play *Playstation* but he was forbidden by his mother. This friend, however, found a way around her objection by claiming that he was learning English at Kaito's house, knowing that his mother thought this was a worthwhile. The boys rekindled their friendship in front of the *Playstation*, helped by the

excitement of the 'underground tactics' used to defy the friend's parents. The *uchi* has been recreated but now with elements of cultural hybridisation, borrowing from Kaito's experiences of living in America.

Media provides possibilities not only to interact with people inter-culturally but also intra-culturally. As Lull (2001) argued through his notion of 'cultural programming', interpersonal interaction between people may result in a sharing of values and ideas which they, in turn, bring in from outside of Japan and modify for their own. Gillespie (1995) stated, "Media are not only being used by productive consumers to maintain and strengthen boundaries, but also to create new, shared spaces in which syncretic cultural forms such as 'new ethnicities', can emerge" (p.208). Gillespie's focus was on television talk but equally, ICT and other media can also provide similar opportunities for their participants (or "productive consumers"). The global *uchi* I have discussed in this section may well be one of those 'new, shared spaces' created. If people create the global *uchi* with the sense that 'there are no *others*' (Tomlinson, 1999, p.186), then the global *uchi* goes beyond the Japanese emic way of distinguishing between the insider and outsider and becomes instead a universal cosmopolitan time-space.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I focused at the level of social groups of the complexity model of audiences, which I demonstrated in Chapter One. I discussed the self-organisation of *uchi*, an important concept, I have attempted to show, in understanding Japanese interpersonal relationships. In my analysis of *uchi*, I, however, depart from Nakane's structural-functionalist approach, according to which *uchi* are the fundamental social structure *determining* people's behaviour. I have applied the paradigm of complexity to the concept, arguing that *uchis* *emerge* through people's interaction and self-organisation. I demonstrated a typology of various forms of *uchi*, which I found during my fieldwork (cf. Table 5.1). The

typology consists of the three following *uchis*: traditional *uchi*, modern *uchi* and global *uchi*.

Table 5.1. Characteristics of the Three Types of *Uchi*

	Traditional <i>uchi</i>	Modern <i>uchi</i>	Global <i>uchi</i>
Form	solid	fluid	gas
Degree of freedom	low	medium	high
Ontological security	high	medium	low
Interactivity	intra-cultural interaction	intra-cultural/ inter-cultural interaction	inter-cultural/ transnational interaction
Forces/Structures	patriarchal, hierarchy, seniority and <i>ie</i> ideology	horizontal, rational, social intimacy	responsibility to the global potentiality to the new life
Internal consistency	homogeneous	medium	heterogeneous
Style of reflexivity	reflexive traditionalisation	reflexive modernisation	reflexive globalisation

At home, at the office and in locality or ‘nation’, people reflexively create traditional *uchis*, based on face-to-face communication. By adapting to established traditional cultural values, they create an *uchi* to be a protective cocoon, against *soto*, inside which they feel ontological security. We saw television playing only a minor role in the creation and recreation of traditional *uchis*, that of reinforcing them, at the level of nation, in the creation of an ‘imagined community’.

This traditional *uchi*, which on the surface appears static, is in fact always in flux, reorganising itself to adapt to social changes and the new pressures and influences of globalisation. On the one hand, the traditional *uchi* is being reinforced, making it resistant to the new, in the process of ‘reflexive traditionalisation’. On the other hand, it has been negotiated by appropriation of new cultural values and recreated for more flexibility in the face of the new. ICT releases people from the bounds of ‘locale’ that is the interactional time-space in which people have to share for the purposes of face-to-face communication, once

indispensable for maintaining their *uchi*. Once people find themselves disembedded from this interactional time-space via ICT, they are able to maintain multiple *uchi* at the same time in their everyday lives. On the one hand, people sustain their traditional *uchi* but on the other hand, when they feel constrained because of its implicit and often restrictive 'rules', they simultaneously 'travel' to and embed themselves in other *uchi* in which they find relief or stimulation. This 'modern *uchi*' is created and sustained by media and ICT is more open and flexible. Tradition could possibly be transformed when a modern *uchi* is reembedded into a traditional *uchi* and I have seen a trend towards this. The modern *uchi* challenges the structure of the traditional *uchi*, its hierarchy, patriarchy, *ie* ideology, and seniority, in the process of 'reflexive modernisation'.

Through globalisation, people have more and more chances to interact with others who have different cultural values. They can then create 'global *uchis*' which are dynamic and heterogeneous, beyond the geographical and cultural boundary of *uchi* contained within Japan. These global *uchis* are embedded in everyday life via mobile phones and email such that they become a part of the self. Each member of a global *uchi* constantly recreates it, through mediated interaction in their own social contexts in everyday lives. ICT makes it possible to achieve and sustain transnational 'complex connectivity', in the process of 'reflexive globalisation'.

I will now demonstrate the combination of these three different types of *uchi* in contemporary Japanese society within the metaphor of a complex system. If we see an *uchi* as a complex system and people as water (H_2O) molecules, we can see that the *uchi* is self-organised through the interactions between people and their adaptation to social change, their undergoing 'phase transitions'. In a traditional *uchi*, which is prescribed by 'locale', people 'sense' each other using verbal and non-verbal face-to-face communication and interact with each other in order to maintain traditional order and to control the relatively low degree of freedom within the traditional *uchi*. It is through such interaction with and against others

(*soto*) that a traditional *uchi* reflexively acquires its solidity and remains stable, like water in the state of ice. The social forces at work in and on a traditional *uchi* are patriarchy, hierarchy, seniority and *ie* ideology, all acting to maintain a state of homogeneity within the traditional *uchi*, thus providing high levels of ontological security. However, to extend the phase transition metaphor, in adapting to external change, just as, faced with external heat, ice becomes water, an *uchi* can become more fluid and its vertical structure and the degree of freedom within it increases. In a modern *uchi*, self-organised through mediated, as well as face-to-face, interaction and governed more by structures of horizontality and rationality, people's circles of interaction become broader. Just as H₂O molecules, fuelled by heat, interact with increasingly distant others in 'freer' interactions, people in modern *uchis* have more freedom to interact with others that are distant from them. As people meet in cyberspace, the modern *uchi* loses some of its homogeneity and also a degree of the ontological security it had to offer. As water may turn into steam, in a global *uchi*, individuals are released from the constraints of their immediate time-space and can potentially 'fly away', or depart from it with an increased responsibility to the global and the potentiality for a new life, taking advantage of the high degree of freedom and creating an *uchi* much more heterogeneous.

In contemporary Japanese society, these three different formations of *uchi* are not to be understood as proceeding in one way or the other, as in evolution or degeneration theories such as traditionalism or cosmopolitanism. People are neither passive in traditional *uchis* nor active in modern and global *uchis*. These different types of *uchi* coexist and people reflexively create and recreate these them through their mediated, non-mediated and quasi-mediated interaction, often adaptive to external changes: traditional *uchi* (solid) is adaptive to traditional culture and reinforced against external forces; modern *uchi* (liquid) is appropriating new cultural values in everyday life; while global *uchi* (gas) is heterogeneous and highly dynamic. In the face of social change and globalisation,

various levels of *uchi* emerge, as *uchi* are organised and reorganised in the processes of people travelling between the relatively homogeneous and stable local *uchi*, in which people have greater ontological security, and the relatively dynamic and cosmopolitan global *uchi*, in which people feel stimulation and the presence of new possibilities.

In this chapter, I investigated five dimensions of audience engagement with media and ICT in terms of *uchi* self-organisation:

- (1) *uchi* reinforcement
- (2) *uchi* creation
- (3) *uchi* reunited and sustained
- (4) *uchi* modernisation
- (5) *uchi* globalisation

In the next chapter, I will discuss how people create and recreate *themselves*, in both the contexts of these multiple *uchis* and beyond them.

Chapter Six: Media, Self-Creation and Everyday Life

Introduction

In the preceding two chapters I have described the ways in which my informants engage with media and ICT and how this engagement impacts upon their social groups. Underlying this media engagement and social interaction is a process of self-creation, a concept which I now bring to the foreground in the present chapter. In all the dimensions of audience engagement I identified amongst my informants, we can see how this engagement, to greater or lesser degrees, either played a part in, or reflected (or both) a kind of project of creation *of* the self, *by* the self. I described how my informants, both actively and less actively, sought information relevant to themselves and their interests and how this information was interpreted and utilised variously by them, reflecting, again, their respective 'selves'. We saw how some of them strongly identified or connected with people real, fictional or created by broadcasters, and how this identification and connectivity played a part in the development of their senses of self. Finally I described how some informants engaged with media and ICT in a way which created their own worlds, a time-space for the creation of themselves. I then discussed the social time-space and social relationships. I now want to reveal the way in which these social relationships feed back to the individual, within a reflexive process of self-creation.

The concept of self-creation I put forward in this chapter relates closely to Appadurai's (1990, 1991, 1996) notion of the 'imagination' as a process of creation of social life, which I interpret to be a kind of power to see new possibilities and create new life. The media play a central role in their creation of 'mediascapes' ("large and complex repertoires of images, narratives and 'ethnoscapes'" (Appadurai, 1990, p.299)), providing access to the transnational images and ideas feeding into the process of imagination. Appadurai claims that the imagination is

the “key component of the new global order” (1996, p.31) and I hope to show how people are adapting to globalisation through their ‘imaginative self-creation’ in their everyday lives.

6.1 Self-Creation

I have derived the concept of self-creation from Thompson’s (1995), Giddens’ (1991) and Hall’s (1992a, 1996) respective concepts of self-formation, self-identity and identification. Self-formation is a process

...through which individuals develop a sense of themselves and others, of their history, their place in the world and the social groups to which they belong. (Thompson, 1995, p.8)

Self-identity

...is not something that is just given, as a result of the continuities of the individual’s action-system, but something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual. (Giddens, 1991, p.52)

Hall’s concept of identification is a result of a non-essentialist concept of identity and is “a construction, a process never completed—always ‘in process’” (Hall, 1996, p.2). Hall is emphasising the process rather than the product of identification and I propose that ‘self-creation’ replicates this emphasis. While Hall focuses on identification rather than identity, I will focus on self-creation rather than the ‘self’, the process rather than the product while nevertheless defining the self as in flux, constantly changing through time, dynamic, ephemeral. Hence it is the process through which the self is created that I emphasise, thereby borrowing closely from Thompson’s idea of self-formation. Thompson’s idea is that the

process of self-formation draws not only from direct experience but also mediated experience and I, too, want to concentrate on the role media and ICT play in self-creation. My terminology is intended to reflect the creative, original and indeed individual nature of this process as this is how it revealed itself to me to be when in the field with my informants. It is Giddens' portrayal of self-identity as reflexive and responsive to both global and local changes that I want to echo in the concept of self-creation. Giddens' position is that "globalising influences intrude deeply into the reflexive project of the self, and conversely...processes of self-realisation influence global strategies" (Giddens, 1991, p.214). In my notion of self-creation, I would like to focus on how people create and recreate themselves, even momentarily, through both mediated and non-mediated interaction, thus 'deserving the name of life.'

6.2. Self-Creation and Traditional Images

6.2.1. Self-Creation as Escape

First, I would like to focus on the self-creation of those amongst my informants embedded in traditional *uchi*. Ataro (f1, father, 35) works for Toshiba with *kikokushijo* (Japanese people who have lived abroad) and predominantly locates himself in his business *uchi*. He reinforces bonds with his Japanese 'traditional *uchi*', frequently socialising with his non-*kikokushijo* colleagues out of the office. At the same time, and as part of the same strand of his project of self-creation, he defines himself, in a reactionary fashion, against the *kikokushijo*. Feeling more security within his business *uchi* than within his domestic *uchi* (he defines his family as a family without father), he thus reflexively creates himself according to the traditionally-derived image of the Japanese businessman.

Aiko (f1, mother, 35), Ataro's wife, quit her generally dissatisfying job after marriage in order to create a family and home. In Chapter Four I discussed the extent to which she has become involved in *SMAP*, in order to escape from the overbearing pressures of her traditional domestic *uchi*. Through selective exposure and involvement with *SMAP*, she can become momentarily free from other facets of her identity such as her roles as mother, wife and daughter-in-law. "The process of becoming a fan can be understood as a strategy of self... Through the reflexive incorporation of the symbolic forms" (Thompson, 1995, p.223) associated with *SMAP*, she is creating that aspect of her identity that is a '*SMAP* fan'. Aiko, in her complex project of self-creation, identifies with other *SMAP* enthusiasts, with young mothers in the internet child-rearing advice forum and with her college *uchi*, appropriating from these, bringing their artifacts and values into her life and adapting them to her situation as a young mother constrained by the demands of her children.

Satoko (f20, mother, 32), who lived in New York for four years, now, back in Japan, consciously attempts to behave in a way directly opposite from how she did

while in the United States. She reflexively defines herself according to the traditional image of what it is to be Japanese in order to 'fit in' with her present locale and successfully re-embed in Japanese society.

In the U.S., you have to stand out...but in Japan you shouldn't. Here, if I do something different, people don't like me so I do everything opposite to what I would in America.

Despite Satoko's leaving the United States when she was still only a child, I got a strong impression that she has held on to many 'American values'. She wishes her daughter to study abroad in order that she, too, gains understanding and appreciation of a different culture or cultures.

When visiting Satoko's home, she stood out amongst my informants as particularly open in conversation and as very welcoming of me. It felt easy for me to enter her *uchi*, her private domestic space. Satoko, exclusively amongst my informants, did not make me tea at the commencement of the interview, my polite, and absolutely customary in Japan, refusal of her offer being uncharacteristically heeded! (It is etiquette to politely refuse tea three times and, conversely, for one's host to repeat their offer three times, until tea is politely accepted.) Her being more 'American' than 'Japanese' in these aspects made me aware of the degree to which, despite claiming she avoids behaving as she would in the United States, she still does behave in this way while in Japan.

Of course I must consider carefully the requirements of self-reflexive ethnography (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995) in this case and ask whether it was not her knowledge that I attended university in London, and consequential expectation that I, too, may have discarded some traditional Japanese customs and replaced them with more Western ones, that made her behave in this uncustomary way. Perhaps Satoko felt comfortable enough with me, as a fellow *kikokushijo*, to drop her conscious replication of what she understands as 'Japanese' behaviour. On the other hand, it could have been these facts about me

which made Satoko consciously emulate 'American' behaviour. Either way, it seemed natural for her to behave like this around me and this led me to see her as able to naturally respond to her situation, picking and choosing between personae, depending on the circumstances.

Competing against her desire to remain connected to many American values and customs, Satoko has a desire to be a 'traditional Japanese housewife' and admires her own mother's performance of this role, closely watching and emulating it. She lives close to her husband's parents and makes sure she sweeps the front entrance of her house every morning, preparing for their daily but unannounced and unwelcome visit.

I felt that Satoko had two distinct modes of being and that her daily ritual of watching CNN News and thereby disembedding momentarily from her locale to embed in 'America' was a secret and hidden, though essential part of her project of self-creation. Satoko reflexively creates herself into a Japanese housewife and sustains her traditional domestic *uchi*. However, she also keeps her belongingness to the United States and to global culture through television. She is mostly embedded in locality but disembeds from it for about an hour a day via satellite television. In her case ICT is more than just a 'window to the world'—it is for her a 'door', to a 'global world', through which she steps back into the cosmopolitan environment she grew to appreciate during her time in New York. In this way she attends to the secret side of her project of self-creation.

In order to fit in with other Japanese people and to gain a sense of ontological security from the maintenance of the domestic *uchi*, Aiko and Satoko reflexively create themselves in accordance with the image of the traditional Japanese housewife within her traditional domestic *uchi*. However, on the other hand, when they feel dissatisfaction within their traditional domestic *uchis*, within a moment they can disembed from it and embed in an alternative world offered by television. Through this connectivity with distant others in Satoko's case, and parascocial interaction in the case of Aiko, each woman reflexively and momentarily recreates

herself as, respectively, a member of a cosmopolitan community or as a fan of *SMAP*, a Japanese-British-American hybridised product of popular culture.

6.2.2. Self-Creation and Membership of an 'Imagined Community'

In continuing to look at self-creation into a 'traditional Japanese' person, this section focuses on the diversity of normative images and interpretations of what it is to be a 'traditional Japanese' person. I will look at Reiko and Reika (f15, mother, 52 and daughter, 25) and the respective ways in which they use the normative images of television to recreate themselves into two distinct, diverse and yet 'ordinary Japanese people'. Reiko and Reika select different television programmes to watch; Reiko selects predominantly NHK productions while Reika chooses commercial television channels from which to appropriate normative images of 'ordinary Japan'. By viewing television compliantly and conforming to preferred readings, these two informants apprehend an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983) and, in identifying with these respective communities, contribute to their individual projects of self-creation. These 'imagined communities' may be the result either of broadcasters' ideology-ridden television messages or of an individual interpretation of a mass of dislocated messages—or of anything in between.

Reika said of her mother, Reiko,

Mum is a traditional type of housewife. She gets angry when she sees bad young housewives whose houses are messy, on daytime television programmes. Well, she seems to watch them just so she can get angry with them. The real reason that she watches home renovation programmes is so that she can criticise the slack housewives and feel that she is a much better housewife than them. I think she gets pleasure from it.

Reiko thus reflexively creates and sustains her image of herself as a traditional

housewife within her domestic *uchi*. Her self-creation draws not only on the television discourse and representations of 'ordinariness', her interaction with symbolic forms, but also on both interpersonal interaction with other housewives and quasi-mediated interaction with people depicted on NHK. Reiko, like Haruko (Chapter Four) is, if we use Hamaguchi's (1998) model, contextually creating herself with 'television others', through a compliant reading of the medium.

On the other hand, her daughter, Reika, reflexively creates herself into an *alternative* 'ordinary' Japanese woman, through quasi-mediated interaction with the symbolic forms and characters of commercial television. She consciously uses television to seek information relevant to 'ordinary' Japanese people. Her seeing adaptation to 'Japanese culture' as a value, came through clearly during an interview.

One of my best friends had psychiatric problems and had to have surgery. There are
_____ three of us in a close group of friends. Our other friend, who had just come back from France, thought she shouldn't have the surgery because we are in a different era now. She meant that our friend might well be 'insane' in Japan but she might be sane in, say, France. She said that she shouldn't have to adapt to Japanese culture, that she should just be whoever she was. But *I* said to her, she *should* have the surgery because she should adapt to Japanese people as long as she was living in Japanese society.

Reika came to strongly feel that she herself should also adapt to what she repeatedly called the 'ordinary Japanese' after a formative experience in Indonesia.

I thought if I went to, say, France or America, I could be free from my Japanese-ness. But I learned I could never escape from it. Even if there had been no Japanese around me [in Indonesia], I still would have kept my Japanese-ness inside me... But my friend is different. After she came back from France, she was alive and insisted on being her

'new' self. She has never tried to re-adapt to Japanese people. I wish I could be like her. I felt there was something wrong with me when other Japanese people in Indonesia criticised me for being different from them.

Against her experiences in Indonesia, Reika reflexively and 'contextually' creates herself into what she perceives to be an ordinary Japanese person, in relation to other 'ordinary' people. This reflexive self-creation is in response to her lived experience with other 'ordinary' Japanese people, both in Indonesia and in Japan, and to mediated experience, through selecting, interpreting and identifying with television messages and images.

Even though Reiko and Reika each strive to be 'ordinary' Japanese people, they have created themselves into very different people, resembling each other, in terms of values and ideals, very little. While Reiko creates herself into a refined Japanese housewife, her daughter creates herself into someone who has 'pop cultural capital', sharing this knowledge with the younger generations that she takes for 'ordinary'. The diverse images and ideologies accessible via television have, in this case of mother and daughter, led to the imagining of diverse communities. The diverse interpretations of what is 'ordinary' lead to diverse selves being created and divergent paths of self-creation being embarked upon, even in the one domestic time-space. This point also reveals fragmentation of family television viewing—and possibly of the family itself—since Reika's return from Indonesia. Reiko's image of 'ordinary' Japanese-ness, through which she has attempted to create herself, is a more 'traditional' 'ordinary', while Reika's has a more hybridised nature, coming itself from hybridised commercial television, rather than the more strictly 'Japanese' NHK and thereby incorporating images and ideas from outside of Japan.

6.2.3. Local and National Self-Creation

This section looks at two informants' use of media and ICT, each of them

self-creating against a heavy backdrop of tradition. They reveal identification with respectively, the local and the national.

I discussed Jun (f22, son, 27) in Chapters Four and Five and described his disappointment at having to give up his dream of becoming a wedding advisor, in order to follow in the footsteps of his father, as Japanese tradition dictates the eldest son should do. Jun resigned himself to eventually taking over his father's position once he realised that he could not possibly escape from his father's power. He is dissatisfied with his life at the company, not belonging to the *uchi* there, and envies the lives of people who have more freedom. Coming back in the car one night, from an evening with his friends, Jun said of his friend, who has only a part-time, casual job, is supported by his fiancé and plays video games most of the day, "I couldn't be like him...If I had his kind of life I wouldn't be able to withstand the pressure I'd get from my father." Instead, conforming to tradition and family expectation yet getting no sense of achievement from this, he puts his self-creativity into his local community.

Jun sustains his local *uchi* via his own homepage. He watches the community channel of local cable television and once participated in it when he recorded footage from the traditional *Awaodori* festival, discussed in Chapter Five, and sent it in to be broadcast. He thus creates himself into a local, rather than national, person. It is interesting that this identification with the local *uchi* does not translate to identification with the national, with Japan. This was revealed in Jun's comments, when we were talking about the idea of globalisation. He said,

I don't think I want to work outside Japan. I don't understand other languages and I've never been to any foreign countries. Anyway, I'm not interested in that. But at the same time, I don't think I'll contribute anything to Japan. I have no love for Japan. But I do have love for Mitaka [Jun's city]. I don't like Tachikawa or Nakano. In the World Cup, I'll support Japan, but if there was a Mitaka team there, I'd support them. I like Japan and I don't want to leave, in the same way that I don't want to get out of

my cosy bed on weekends.

Jun has strong feelings for his local area. Having grown up there, he felt a sense of belonging and security in the locality thus Tokyo and the idea of Japan belong, for him, to the outside, to *soto*. He has neither knowledge of nor interest in foreign countries. His feelings for the local *uchi* are expressed in various ways, from the homepage he has created, the email exchange in cyberspace with other people from his community and their participation in the traditional *Awaodori* festival. As it is his professed desire to become, like his father, a powerful person in his local area, Jun creates himself as belonging in his local life, through both mediated and non-mediated interaction with other local people.

Unlike Jun, following a traditional life-path, Shunya (f30, single, 32) spends much of his time living in the United States and yet strongly identifies with selected aspects of traditional Japanese culture. He experienced a crisis in his life when he began spending time in the United States and during it relied heavily upon images and ideals represented by Katsu Kaishu, a samurai hero from the time of the Meiji Restoration, to get him through this difficult period. Over dinner, Shunya described the circumstances under which he came to and adjusted to the United States.

I was seeing someone and we wanted to get married but... her parents were against it. I had only been to a night college and they were all lawyers so didn't think I would be a good enough husband for her. Her mother met up with me one day and told me that Kaori's father was seriously ill because of me, and she begged me, "Please don't kill him, leave us alone" and was crying... Kaori said she would go to America with me but she could never quite make up her mind. She visited once or twice and helped me with the house...she put ornaments around it and so on... But she always said she could never just 'throw away' her parents... She was really struggling and felt torn. Anyway, after two years of this, I could see that she was really unhappy with the

situation so I decided to break up, for her sake...and mine, too, I guess.

During this period in his life, Shunya was finding it very hard being the only Japanese person amongst an office predominantly full of Texans. He “hated” his American colleagues who he found selfish and inconsiderate.

It was clearly painful for Shunya to tell this story and feel again the pain he had felt during this period. He had tried to forget it all, pushed it away and, apologising for making him remember it all again, I asked him how he had dealt with it at the time.

I drank a lot every day...so that I didn't have to care about anything. And if I didn't drink I couldn't sleep. And I called up old high school friends from Japan. I tried to meet people outside of the office—I hated them. I did meet some other Japanese people there. And I watched a Katsu Kaishu video over and over again...he was my only anchor. I had thrown away my anchor when I broke up with Kaori and Katsu Kaishu was a kind of substitute for her. I watched it over thirty times.

Katsu Kaishu became a real role model for Shunya during this time and he used the inspiration he gained from him to move on and become strong, taking control of his life as Katsu Kaishu did. Shunya would show his video to anyone he met and learnt all Katsu Kaishu's lines by heart. He carried Katsu Kaishu's inspiration over into his job, reinventing his identification with the Japanese company work ethic.

My American colleagues were slack and had no commitment to the company. They'd just leave at 5 o'clock and take holidays without any warning. They were there only for themselves and had no feeling that they should give their lives to the company. But *I* was ready to *die* for my company.

This sentiment very strongly echoes the *samurai* spirit of Katsu Kaishu and shows how Shunya threw himself back into work and identification with traditional Japanese values in order to fill the emptiness he felt when his former life fell apart. Shunya adopted Katsu Kaishu's personal motto ("where there is a will, there is a way") as his own, determined to recreate his life and gain a sense of power where formerly there had been a lack. Hall, giving a psychoanalytic explanation of the search and achievement of identity, states that it arises from a feeling of "lack of wholeness" which we attempt 'fill' from "outside us" (Hall, 1992a, p.287).

6.2.4. Traditional Images as 'Protective Cocoons'

In the preceding sections we have seen various and diverse examples of people using images and ideals, embedded in tradition and re-moored on television (Thompson, 1995), to self-create in a manner which constructs an individual 'protective cocoon' (Giddens, 1991) against which life's dissatisfactions can, to greater or lesser degrees, be bounced off. In this way, people are swinging to and fro between, on the one hand, the hybridised values created by the confrontation of Japan with America and, on the other, traditional Japanese values.

Shunya appropriated from the Japanese *samurai* tradition, watching a single video tape over and over again, in order to recover from a personal crisis and find strength in a life in which he found himself with diminished identification. His Katsu Kaishu video tape and embedding in *samurai* culture gave him a sense of ontological security and thus provided an anchor during a turning point in his life. Reika also used media and ICT to respond to a turning point in her own life when she was made to see herself as different from 'ordinary Japanese people'. In a quest to become 'ordinary' she sought ideas and images from what she took to be 'ordinary Japanese culture', re-moored in commercial television. She uses these images of popular culture to construct a protective cocoon of ordinariness in order to fit in with her contemporaries. Jun, also wanting to 'fit in', uses media and ICT in a local environment in which his 'cocoon' protects him from the sense of

emptiness his reluctantly chosen life-path has induced. Aiko also feels emptiness and dissatisfaction with her life as a traditional housewife. She escapes the domestic time-space through para-social romantic love, regaining a sense of identification. Her idol, Nakai, “answers a lack which [she] does not even necessarily recognise...And this lack is directly to do with self-identity: in some sense, the flawed individual is made whole” (Giddens, 1992, p.45). Perhaps Aiko has chosen Nakai because she identifies with his ‘bad boy’ image, herself—before attempting to become the ideal Japanese housewife for the sake of her husband and his parents’ expectations—being a bit of a ‘bad girl’ at high school. Thus her para-social relationship with Nakai provides her with some continuity with her earlier and freer life. In a similar utilisation of television Satoko maintains a sense of continuity with her former existence in the United States. While there is physical discontinuity with that life, CNN provides the opportunity for Satoko to ‘travel’ back to America and feel continuity in her biography.

This section has looked at some ways in which people have used media and ICT at turning points in their lives, as a way of recreating themselves in the face of pressure from traditional Japanese culture to conform. In the next section, I will look at self-creation as a response to a different kind of pressure from America that Japan experienced after World War II and that achieved its influence through giving rise to childhood dreams.

6.3. Self-Creation through Romanticisation

The following informants have all, to greater or lesser degrees, relied upon television images of America in their projects of self-creation in an environment of increasing influence from the United States. The following discussion confronts the question of cultural or media imperialism and tries to find, in the lives of my informants, some kind of answer to the question of the extent of the influence of American media images in Japan.

6.3.1. 1960's and 1970's American Domestic dramas

Japanese audiences were, as media imperialism scholars have argued in their criticisms of the transnational media, greatly influenced by American domestic dramas. Schiller (1979) argued that the power of transnational media corporations is accompanied by an "ideological power to define global cultural reality" (Tomlinson, 1999, p.81). Schiller's perspective was from a political-economy, macro-level approach but I am more interested in the influence at the micro-level that the content of American television programmes had in people's everyday lives. "The distribution of commercialised media products containing the ethos and values of corporate capitalism and consumerism" were transmitted into a culturally devastated Japan, providing, as a substitute for what had been destroyed by the war and subsequent United States occupation, "a 'way of life' and a 'developmental path' for [Japan, as] a developing nation...to follow" (Tomlinson, 1999, p.82, paraphrasing Schiller, 1979).

Partner (1999) discusses the post-World War II United States Senate's proposed introduction of American television into Japan. In the following speech, United States Senator Karl Mundt expressed a new philosophy emerging in the United States, concerning the potential uses to which the powerful new medium of television might be put in Japan.

We must not leave Japan or Germany until we effect some conversion to basic democratic concepts.

Why not let these people see for themselves? Why not show them our American system of living and being? Why not let them see our Bill of Rights as it operates in practice in America? Why not let them see how private enterprise, political independence, and individual initiative pay off for the American farmer, the American laboring man, and our little-business man? Why not let them see democracy and decency in action on the American scene? Why not let them see, by comparison, what communism would bring to them, with its Asiatic forms of tyranny and godless doctrines of materialism? (quoted by Partner, 1999, p.79)

"The Vision of America", June 5, 1950 (quoted in Partner 1999)

The broadcasting service came into being in Japan in 1953. At that time, television shows instigated a process of modernisation of the home, by creating a desire in the consumers to buy electrical products such as washing machines, air conditioners and televisions. Television became a hegemonic tool which drove the ideology of an '*akarui seikatsu*' (bright new life), achieved through 'home electrification' (Yoshimi, 1999). Television spread consumerism and the modernisation of Japanese homes and families throughout the nation, leading to the soaring and rapid economic growth in post-World War II Japan (see Appendix A2). In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a vast number of American domestic dramas on Japanese television, a result partly of the United States' strategy and partly of a lack of homemade Japanese television programmes. During this period, Japanese families were very poor and few could afford to buy their own television set. People watched television collectively on the street or at the house of somebody rich enough to have bought a television.

The American influence included the transmission of American capitalist consumer culture and the American way of life, covering American's professed ideals of family and other personal relationships. As I hope the experiences of the

three informants below show, American television has had a great influence on Japanese life, but their experiences also show diversity in their respective responses to exposure to American television programmes in their childhoods. For this reason, it is useful to also consider the alternative approach taken by active audience studies, which have identified ‘negotiation’, on the part of the audience, with the programmes. This negotiation involves “different types of readings, different forms of involvement, different mechanisms of self-defense, each with its own kind of vulnerability” (Liebes and Katz, 1993, p.xi). These two contrasting approaches represent the ‘passive’ and ‘active’ of the dichotomy that I wish to avoid in this investigation into audience engagement. I have proposed approaching audience engagement and self-creation from the paradigms of complexity and everyday life and hope that the stories of the informants below support my chosen approach.

During my interviews, several of my informants in their 50s, without prompting, began to talk about American television dramas, their faces animated and their eyes lighting up, as if they were back in childhood.

Researcher: Do you think Japan will change?

Noritaro: Yes, it will. We’ve had a lot of information and influence from Western countries, I mean, America and Europe. I think this will continue and Japan will change. The very first time I became directly aware of America, we had just got television and there were a lot of half-hour programmes like *Superman* [here he started to become excited]. Shall I say more? There was *I Love Daddy*, *My Mom is the Best in the World*, so-called ‘domestic dramas’. They had different fridges and electrified lives! And, moreover, happy families! ...They had gardens and even if they were only 15 or 16 they had cars. They had TVs, fridges and electrical appliances. They had absolutely everything they needed. There was a *huge* gap between their lives and ours at that time, a *massive* difference! This was from forty or fifty years ago. There was a *huge* difference

in their family relationships at home. I was hugely influenced by all this. But I still feel that I am influenced. Even now, when I watch movies or listen to music, I prefer American ones.

At another time, Noritaro (f14, father, 51) again began talking spontaneously about his childhood images of America.

Noritaro: In the same way that I can't remember any new music now but easily remember music in my childhood, I still clearly remember some scenes on TV programmes I watched when I was a child. I used to watch American dramas with a yearning to be like those families. Their parent-child relationships are completely different from ours.

Researcher: Can you tell me more about that?

Noritaro: Firstly, American fathers are kind. Definitely kind. Fathers always give solutions for problems. Children are respectful. They were ideal parent-child relationships. The Father didn't only work but also took care of the kids. I was able to see the ideal life and ideal family...There were no arguments and no unemployment in those dramas. In Japan we didn't have that kind of life, so we yearned for it both materially and spiritually.

Noritaro has been greatly influenced by American domestic dramas, which he watched in his childhood and since that time has been reflexively creating his life according to those images and his childhood dreams of being like the ideal American family which, he thought, was being truthfully represented by these shows. In the process of 'imagination', into which 'mediascapes' are fed, the "lines between 'realistic' and fictional landscapes are blurred" (Appadurai, 1990, p.299).

Noritaro: I thought it was one hundred percent real, because it's a different country.

Researcher: Oh? Really? Did you think it was real?

Noritaro: Yeah. When I watch Japanese dramas, I know they aren't real but when I watched American TV I didn't know anything about America so I just assumed they were real. Because I had no picture of reality, it seemed to be one hundred percent real. But, then, if American movies draw a picture of the Japanese, I laugh at it because it's not true... Americans don't know anything about us and we don't know anything about them. We think their dramas are real...I felt a real yearning.

Each of the several times I visited Noritaro's house, I could see how much he had been influenced by the American ideals of lifestyle and parent-child relationships. His house is very modern and has a bigger entrance and living room than ordinary Japanese houses. The living room was open-plan, somewhat unusual and very modern in Japan. Noritaro appears to respect his daughter's freedom and independence, her arrival home at midnight from her part-time job, revealing this. Yet, strong family relationships are maintained and this was obvious from their viewing television together after Norika had come home, despite each having a television in their own rooms. Noritaro's big television and big living room with its big, soft couch and cosy family space seemed to be a direct emulation of the American ideal.

Together with Noritaro's imitation of American material, consumerist culture, he has a corresponding political belief system. He strongly criticised the principles of *Nihonjinron* (which I discussed in Chapter Two), saying,

Noritaro: That's for nationalists. I am only Japanese because I happened to have been born here. But I'm *me*. In Japan, they always like to say how everything should be. I think Japan should be the fifty-first state of America rather than an independent nation, politically, anyway...because there are no outstanding politicians in Japan. We would have more benefit in our lives if we became part of America. I think it'd be enough to improve the present bad system for

us to adapt to the American system.

Through strong identification with television images and ideologies, Noritaro has tried, within the constraints of his birthplace, to create himself in accordance with the 'American ideal'. He does not have a strong sense of Japanese identity, believing that Japan is merely a "locality". When he was a college student, he participated in the student movement and dropped out of university in his first year. He identified with the 'flower children' of his generation and watched national television sceptically, giving resistant readings, as I discussed in Chapter Four. His car, house, furniture and other material possessions, his attitude regarding family, lifestyle, nation, politics and identity has been greatly influenced by American consumerism and its capitalist ideology, to which he was exposed, through American dramas, in his childhood. The influence of American television appears to have played a large part in his discarding of Japanese customs, values and identity.

Masatoshi (f19, father, 54) has also created himself and his family in the image of American fathers and families as represented in those same American television dramas but has adopted a starkly different attitude towards his Japanese identity.

Masatoshi : I aspired to the rich American lifestyle. We had nothing in Japan when we were watching those American dramas. They had everything, big refrigerators, cars and televisions...and big dogs. Our house was a wine shop so we had a big refrigerator too, but what was inside it was different, we just had wine, no whole chickens and big fruit bowls.

Masatoshi's house is also bigger than most Japanese houses. When I praised his house, he said, "I have a strong attachment to my house." Ten years ago, when he had his house built, he decided to spend most of his money on it. This was so that,

as his children would one day leave, while they were with him in his house, he wanted to create a close but independent relationship with—just like American families and just like what he had wanted in his childhood. He described an image from an American domestic drama,

Masatoshi: When the Dad, who was quite tall, scolded his children, he bent down until his eyes were the same height as his child's and then spoke to him. [Masatoshi stands up and bends his knees, acting out the role of the father.] Afterwards, he said to his children "Thank you for understanding me." So I tried to be like this with my children too.

Although Masatoshi also has created himself, his family relationships and his house in accordance to the American ideal, when we talked about social change in Japan, I noticed he was critical of America and instead has a strong sense of his Japanese identity.

Masatoshi: I don't think we should adapt to American culture. We have our own DNA, of Japanese society. We can keep living comfortably in our own way.

Researcher: Have you ever read *Nihonjinron*? (I asked this question because I felt he may have shared the same perspective as some early *Nihonjinron* scholars.)

Masatoshi: Yeah. I read them, it's one of my interests.

Researcher: Do you agree with it?

Masatoshi: I think it's true. We have more capability than foreigners to sense what others want to say. They live in a world in which they can't understand anything unless it is said, while we live in a world in which we can understand even though we don't directly say anything. But if big, tall foreigners stand in front of me and speak to me in English very fast, I get scared. In order to beat them, I think we need to build up confidence. For this reason, *Nihonjinron* is very important for us...because when big, tall foreigners tower above our heads and

overpower us, we should keep our Japanese spirit and have a strong sense of being Japanese so that we can hold out against them. [He clenches his fist in front of his heart, shaking it to symbolise the power of the Japanese spirit.] If we lose this Japanese spirit, it's over, we are shit!

Contrary to Noritaro, Masatoshi has reflexively taken the preferred reading of *Nihonjinron*, to feed his strong sense of nationalism, in order not to be defeated by foreigners. Masatoshi provides support for Befu's (1997) criticism of literature, which I discussed in Chapter Two, that *Nihonjinron* was only used instrumentally by politicians to foster nationalism. Masatoshi's nationalist spirit and his anti-globalisation sentiments came through again when we talked about his vision of Japan.

Masatoshi: I think we should close our country. We made a mistake from the very beginning of Meiji Restoration. It's impossible to keep *wakonyousai* [a marriage of Japanese spirit and Western innovation]. We should protect our culture and let in only material things. If millions of foreign workers suddenly came to Japan, we wouldn't be able to accept them. We'd have to change everything, like our communication style.

Masako: But we already have the internet and lots of information, so it's impossible to close our country.

Maki: But what about in Islamic countries? They censor television, don't they...

Masatoshi: Well, we have already changed a lot so it's impossible but...[looking frustrated]

While Masatoshi was greatly influenced by American television dramas, he has also been influenced by *Nihonjinron* and recreates a strong sense of Japaneseness. After his two sons left home, he became a host family to international students. While they are staying with him, he comes home early and performs his 'good

father' role, copied from the ideal American family "because I want to show that Japanese fathers also have dinner together and take care of their families, just like in American families." Masatoshi says this even though, as I showed in Chapter Four, following the traditional roles for Japanese husbands and wives, he rarely comes home early. Masatoshi has been selective in his appropriation from American television dramas, emulating the parent-child relationship and material culture represented therein but maintaining a very traditional Japanese relationship with his wife.

Youichi (f21, father, 51) came from modest beginnings, his family running a small local noodle shop. But he also watched the same American shows as a child, in the restaurant with the customers. He now has his own business, a musical instrument shop as well as a big house, large living room and entrance, big television and a dog. Aside from his house he does not seem to have had as powerful an influence from early American domestic dramas as have the above two informants. He admires American music, fashion and lifestyle, saying, half-heartedly, "I wish I could be like that" but seeming to think it is not a realistic goal. He appeared to have neither a strong sense of Japanese identity, nor of American identity. He seems to appreciate and appropriate parts of each culture, telling his son that, if he wanted to, going to America would be a good idea.

The fact that some of my informants appear to have been heavily influenced by American television programmes in the values and life-paths they have chosen might be seen as lending support to theorists of cultural and media imperialism. However, we can see no straightforward support for the purported relationship of predictable determination between television content and people's ways of life. If we imagined a (highly simplified) graph, depicting the respective life-paths of Noritaro, Masatoshi and Youichi, at zero, the initial point at which they watched American television, their paths traveled, approximately, together. At various points in their later lives, their paths diverged, Masatoshi's climbing off into reflexive 'Japanisation', Noritaro's, in the opposite direction, into reflexive

'Americanisation' and Youichi's middling along a path of reflexive hybridization (reflecting my typology of modes of adaptivity: resistance, adaptation and appropriation). While the path from zero to midway looks simply determined, their paths beyond that point look highly unpredictable. The position of media imperialism scholars does get some support from this 'graph', at its initial stages at least, but it is the effects over time and the increasing diversification of life-paths which makes media effects unpredictable.

While the three informants I have discussed in this section all had exposure to the same media products of consumerist America, they have responded to those products in diverse ways. There were both similarities and differences in the material, emotional and political lives of these informants forty or fifty years on from their exposure and the 'effects' such exposure has contributed to their lives could not have been predicted merely from an analysis of the content of the television programmes they watched. Within the paradigm of complexity, we can see that other factors within their personal histories, their family backgrounds, values, education, occupations, localities, tendencies and dispositions, happenstance and momentary experiences and other media images—and much more—must have been jointly responsible, in a tremendously complex and interrelated fashion, for the life-paths these people have chosen, either reinforcing or eroding the underdetermining influence of these media products.

6.3.2. Self-Creation as Realisation of Dreams

Transnational Images

The last section looked at the 'Americanisation' of the lives of informants for whom the advent of television and, in Japan's case, modernisation from the 1960s, had been of great significance. In this section I again look at the influence of media and ICT but in the context of a growing diversity of television and other media products in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Specifically, I will look at the ways in which childhood television viewing has played a role in the self-creation of my

informants' and do this against the background of the debate between uses and gratifications studies and the effects tradition, hoping to converge these in my analysis of the uses and effects of media messages and images. I want to focus not on short-term effects, as these earlier approaches did, but on the longer-term effects media has had on people's projects of self-creation. In doing this I aim to show the greater usefulness of the non-linear model of effects, rejecting the earlier use of a linear model.

The circumstances under which Takeshi (f9, son, 28) decided to become a racing-car driver provide us with an example of self-creation through media images. Takeshi quit high school after just two months to follow his dream to take up racing-car driving, which had begun with something he saw on television. He told me in my interview how, when he was at junior high school, he turned on the television and was confronted with an image he will never forget of racing cars screaming around the racetrack. His eyes lit up as he told me he decided then and there that he wanted to become a racing-car driver.¹

I turned the TV on and *straight away*...in that year, Honda was really strong, they'd won all the races, Honda...This race in Italy, one of the Hondas was in the lead but in the last two laps, it suddenly stopped and then the other Honda car stopped, too and Ferrari won! It was a really exciting race so when I saw it I just felt 'Aaaahhhh...' [Takeshi clasps his hands in front of him and sighs in awe] and I thought, 'I'd love to do that.'

I came across other examples of such cases of television images setting off life dreams and aspirations. Another of my informants, Ryo, decided he would love to get involved in the space industry after watching a Carl Sagan television

¹ Takeshi joined a local racing team and did become a racing-car driver for a while. Unfortunately, he had an accident while driving which led him to give up. He then took a school-leavers' exam to gain entrance to university, whereupon he saw a poster advertising the summer course at Cambridge University, this leading on to the formation of his 'global *uchi*'.

documentary series. The way his mood changed in the interview when we moved onto this topic made me realise what a central role this introduction to outer-space has played in his life.

Researcher: So, your dream, since you were a child, has been to get into computers?

Ryo: Outer-space!

Researcher: Oh, really?

Ryo: [in mock seriousness] Outer-space is the only way forward! (laughs).

Researcher: How did you get interested in outer-space?

Ryo: [Thinking, to himself] How did I?...Ummmm, the first thing was Carl Sagan's *Cosmos*. Do you know Carl Sagan? I think when I was at primary school, on Asahi Television, every week there was a documentary, a space one...space, more like from the emergence of the solar-system to the emergence of people, and about each planet... [off in his own world but keen to explain the documentaries and their contents, he keeps talking about individual planets and launches off into a description of Saturn's beauty] Then I opened my eyes and realised, aaah, space, that's for me...

Ryo struggled to combine his fascination with space with a career in the space industry and almost gave up at university, asking himself, "Do I really want to be an astronomer? What do I really want to be?" He finally decided to major in electronic engineering and now works as an electronic engineer in the industry. He is not fully satisfied with his current job as it has not enabled him to have the contact with outer-space-related work that he dreamed about and he is thinking about a career change.

Ichiro (f27, single, 31) worked for a bank and but had to change his job when it went bankrupt. His eyes sparkled as he told me,

- Ichiro: I wanted to be a banker. Do you remember *Kane and Abel*? It was a drama series. Who was the author?...Jeffrey Archer! *Kane and Abel* was made into a TV drama and I watched it, and I really wanted to be a banker.
- Researcher: A banker?
- Ichiro: A bank manager. So I began to work for a bank but it went bankrupt and now I work for a manufacturer.
- Researcher: I see. So because of that television drama, you decided to work for a bank.
- Ichiro: Yeah! 'Cause I thought it was cool!

Takeshi's, Ryo's and Ichiro's cases seem fairly straightforward in the sense that in each case it took one television image of something and the consequent formation of a dream, to set them on their respective paths to realising those dreams. The apparently linear connection between television image and life-path is not sufficient to support the effects approach. In the cases of these informants, a myriad of other factors jointly determined their life-paths—parental support, financial circumstances, education, skill or talent, to name only the most obvious. The outcomes, in these cases, were not predictable from the content of the television programmes, nor even from a combination of this together with other factors of the informants' social context. The paradigm of complexity maintains that, even if all relevant data were taken into account it would remain underdeterminate of the outcome that, for example, Takeshi became a racing-car driver while his contemporary did not, showing again, the long-term unpredictability of media effects. But in this non-linear spiral of factors, the significance of the television image cannot be denied.

The uses and gratifications approach looked at not the effects of television but on how television and its images are used by people. Some scholars looked at the uses children made of the television programmes they watched and identified the following: para-social interaction with heroes, fantasising of and identification with, heroes, images, and messages (Schramm et al, 1961) and affective,

behavioural and cognitive involvement (Rubin and Perse, 1987). We can see these dimensions of engagement in the cases of Takeshi, Ryo and Ichiro. It is through these modes of engaging with television images (amongst the other factors) that set these informants on to their reflexive projects of self-creation, which can be considered a long-term 'effect' of exposure to television.

Tokyo images

I found that some of my informants create themselves not from the influence of transnational television programmes but from the influence of television programmes and images from Tokyo. Hiroshi (f7, father, 31) and Koutaro (f17, single, 37) each came to Tokyo from the countryside with a yearning to live in a big city. I discussed in Chapter Five how Hiroshi broke with his family tradition and now struggles living in Tokyo. Koutaro also resisted his father's expectation that, as the only son in the family, he should keep his father's barbershop in Hokkaido, the most northern island of Japan, and went to live in Tokyo. Although he lived in Hokkaido, he watched the same television channels that were available in Tokyo. He watched television dramas and music programmes broadcast from Tokyo and read fashion magazines, such as *Popeye* and *Men's Nonno* and thereby expanded his image of Tokyo. When he was a high school student, Koutaro's class went to Tokyo on a school trip. Although other students went sight-seeing, visiting temples, shrines and the Tokyo Tower, Koutaro persuaded his friends to come with him and without permission they went to Aoyama, the most up-market and fashionable place in Tokyo, frequented and inhabited largely by young professionals (perhaps its London equivalent would be South Kensington). Aoyama, its fashion and lifestyle are regularly featured on television programs and in fashion magazines that are available throughout Japan.

Koutaro: I swore to myself, I will live here someday!

Koutaro developed a yearning for Tokyo through both mediated experience via television programmes he had seen in his childhood and through lived experience on his school trip to Tokyo. He now lives in Aoyama, as one of the many immigrants to Tokyo from the countryside, revealing also the displacement of rural Japanese populations.

Atsushi (f3, husband, 38), growing up in one of the cities of outer Tokyo but now living in the centre, as a young man, identified with the hero of a popular Japanese 'trendy drama', *Tokyo Love Story* and has created a part of himself after the image of its main character. I talked to him and his wife, Atsuko (f3, wife, 34).

Atsushi: I feel my life was changed by *Tokyo Love Story*. I strongly identify with *Eguchi Yosuke*.

Researcher: But he is a casanova!

Atsushi: Yeah, but he is very genuine when he says those sweet things to girls. I've watched it on video thousands of times. I've memorised his words, I copy the way he speaks, his fashion, gestures... I use his words when I speak to girls, I've been to the same restaurants, cafés, parks and so on where they went in the programme. I've changed my character because of this drama.

Researcher: Oh really? Were you shy before?

Atsushi: Yeah...really.

Atsuko: He was. For example, *karaoke*. He wouldn't sing in front of other people.

Atsushi: But, since *Tokyo Love Story*, I started going to *karaoke*. I also went to lots of *goukon* (a dating party). I met my wife at one of *many* of these parties. We've been together for ten years. *Tokyo Love Story* was on television ten years ago and I still have those images in my mind.

Atsushi had an elite and sheltered upbringing, attending a prestigious school for boys aged six to eighteen and then graduating from the University of Tokyo. For him, this television drama series opened up his world and he reflexively recreated

himself through the quasi-mediated experiences of the character *Eguchi Yousuke*.

6.3.3. Romanticising Images

Through the same dimensions of involvement with media displayed by Takeshi, Ryo and Ichiro—para-social interaction, identification and fantasising, even romanticising—Atsushi and Koutaro, reflexively created themselves, or at least aspects of themselves, into actualisations of their idols or ideals. This kind of engagement with television images is, more or less, what we found when considering the informants who underwent a kind of ‘Americanisation’ after the influence in the 1960s of American television. Contrary to the picture drawn by cultural or media imperialism, in those cases we saw informants who variously and diversely appropriated from and ‘indigenised’ these images, creating in their own local lives hybridised houses, family relationships and value systems—hybridised material, social and political ‘cultures’.

In the 1980s Japan saw an expansion of transnational and national media images and people had a wider variety of images from which to select in their identification and self-creation. Thus we saw Takeshi, Ryo and Ichiro being inspired by various transnational images to follow particular life-paths. Atsushi and Koutaro were similarly inspired by images of Tokyo to direct their lives along particular paths. The 1980s television images inspiring them were products of a fast developing national television and media industry. While Japan had been economically devastated in the post-war period its economy soared and climaxed in the 1980s. The generation who were influenced by American television in the 1960s, at this time (the 1980s) in their twenties and thirties themselves, began making the television programmes and editing the magazines and newspapers that largely replaced, in terms of predominance and power, the transnational media products people had consumed in the 1960s and 1970s. This generation’s creation of media products was influenced by the images that had been impressed upon and inspired them as young people. Out of this context came the Japanese,

yet strongly hybridised, 'trendy drama', combining post-war American television's ideals with modern 1980s Japanese life and thereby depicting large and modern—but Japanese—houses, modern lifestyles, Western fashions, modern relationships between men and women and new styles of communication (characters now shook hands instead of bowing). The new producers were appropriating both early American images from their childhoods, which they had earlier used in the, even then, hybridised, creation of their lives and selves, and modern American images, and 'indigenising' both of these in the creation of new, culturally hybridised, media products.

Just as Masatoshi and Noritaro, existing in a culturally depleted post-war Japan, had been enticed by images of America, Koutaro and Atsushi had a similar kind of response to images of Tokyo, which were exciting and "cool" to them, coming from where they did, their geographical or social circumstances also culturally depleted and lacking the modernity, excitement and enticement of the 'big city'. It is as if the cultural depletion and 'emptiness' of these situations, post-war Japan, the modern countryside and the isolation and shelteredness of higher social status, created a kind of sponge in the lives of my informants, making them anxious to grasp onto and romanticise images of the novel, the exciting and the "cool". We can apply this analysis to the informants who developed dreams and ambitions from seeing transformative television images in their childhoods, viewing them as relevantly similar in the sense that, as children, their minds were 'sponge-like', ready to be impressed and enticed, ready to embark on new paths, following romantic or exciting images of heroes and role-models. I do not wish, here, to paint a picture similar to that painted by cultural or media imperialist scholars. The key to the analysis I am offering is not direct transmission of media images and messages to native, innocent and passive populations, as represented by the metaphor of the hypodermic needle. The key to my analysis is the concept of the appropriation, poaching and indigenising of media messages and images in individuals' projects of self-creation.

In the three preceding sections we can see, broadly speaking, an 'influence' on people's life-paths and projects of self-creation from media images. I have tried to show, on the one hand, a degree of 'determinism'—or at least 'strong influence'—on the part of media images, pertinent particularly in the case of the 'Americanisation' of 1960s Japan and, on the other, the extent to which media images are underdeterminate. It is a vast and complex myriad of factors in a person's life, taken as 'occasions' in his or her reflexive and dynamic self-creation which, through complex modes of interrelation add up to, reinforce, erode, detract from or create the choices, possibilities and realities in that life.²

² I am aware that all the informants in the preceding sections have been men. This raises very interesting questions concerning the differences between the role romanticising and 'dreaming' play in men's and women's self-creation. Unfortunately, I am unable to offer any analysis of this issue here, but it is something I consider a worthy question for a future research project.

6.4. Self-Creative Adaptation to the Global

The preceding sections, in a sense, dealt with self-creation in the face of various forms of 'pressures', external or internalised, from Japanese tradition (Section 6.2.) and from America and a hybridising Japan (Section 6.3.). This section can be seen as dealing with pressures from an increasingly hybridising and globalising Japan. In this environment of the latest phase of social change, the 'post-bubble economy' bringing with it high unemployment, the end of life-long employment and general recession, the Japanese people are sensing growing threats to their security. At the same time Japan is still experiencing the expansion of the media environment and the corresponding expansion of opportunities for and modes of social interaction. Through more widely ranging lived experience, made possible by increasing travel and the increasing opportunity to meet foreigners both abroad and at people's companies, and through more widely ranging mediated experience, made possible by the increasing use of media and ICT, people are more frequently and more easily achieving connectivity to deterritorialised 'non-places' (Tomlinson, 1999). People are non-spatially 'traveling' to these non-places and, through appropriation and re-embedding—shopping at 'cultural supermarkets'—of cultural products, are hybridising their local lives. The local is increasingly becoming global.

Given both the current economic climate in Japan and the expansion of the media environment, people are beginning to find solutions to the problems caused not only by the recession and corresponding social changes but also by the reflection of these in the media themselves, by accessing cultural material, values and lifestyles from almost anywhere in the world, thereby hoping to minimise the effects of the growing 'risks' (Giddens, 1999) of their current world and so compensating for their increasing sense of insecurity and threat to their lives. People reflexively create and recreate themselves in order to create a protective cocoon that will 'filter out' (Giddens, 1991) threatening pressures, such that they

have “enough stability to sustain [themselves] and enough creativity to deserve the name of” human (to echo Waldrop’s (1992) idea).

During interviews with my informants the following ideas and fears came through, in some cases very strongly. There was a pessimism regarding the future of Japan and their personal futures in it, a collapse of the stability they used to feel in their lives, fear of overnight bankruptcy of their companies and their own redundancy, and a general lack of expectation that the situation would change. I have divided my informants in this section into three categories, concerning, respectively, self-creation for survival in the Japan of today, for survival in a global world and as globalising in the locale. These divisions are not intended to be definitive as many of the cases overlap each other in terms of relevant similarities. While these categories are enlightening to a degree they are also for the sake of clarity.

6.4.1. Self-Creation for Survival in Today’s Japan

Chika’s (f20, daughter, 20) family is different from that of other ‘parasite singles’. Her parents have uncustomarily asked their children to leave home after their graduation from university. Her two elder brothers left home and now live by themselves in Tokyo. Chika has only one more year until she will have to be financially independent from her parents. She told me her favorite programme was an American television drama, *Ally McBeal*. She said,

Chika: I want to be a professional like Ally. She is an attractive woman but at the same time she is a lawyer. I envy women like her because she knows what she wants and what she’s doing.

Chika has also met some professional women through her part-time job. Now Chika tries to meet as many people as possible in many different fields and attends job seminars in the media industry. She is still in the self-creative process

of 'finding herself' and finding the profession and lifestyle that suits her and meets her needs. Ally is currently her role model in this process as she represents to Chika independent survival, something that Chika will have to achieve in her unusual 'modern' circumstances.

Satoshi (f20, father, 33) worked for a large insurance company but changed his job when he successfully predicted that it would go bankrupt. After this he decided to stockpile as much and as diverse information as possible ("I even looked at supermarket ads and learnt the price of a single carrot!"), largely using the internet, along with newspapers and television—anything—in order to prepare himself for any further eventualities within the market. He, too, is inspired by the American dramas he watches on cable television.

Satoshi: I've expanded my images of Americans from watching these dramas.

Researcher: What kind of images do you have?

Satoshi: Well they are easy-going and positive and they all seem to have their own dreams...while the Japanese are more uptight. If Americans have an idea, they just do it, even though other people might think its crazy.

Researcher: Would you want to be like Americans?

Satoshi: Well, my wife has lived in America and she says my way of thinking is quite American, although I've lived in Japan all my life. The idea of harmony is a virtue in Japanese companies but I personally think that if there is too much harmony it's not a good thing. But America, or Westerners or, I don't know, they make out that they are better than they actually are and they grab things...I feel that characteristic isn't good either. So, both American and Japanese cultures have good aspects and I like to take the best of both worlds.

As I described in Chapter Four, Satoshi is preparing, by creating an 'imagined world' (Appadurai, 1990, p.299) in case his present company too goes bankrupt. He said,

Satoshi: Maybe everything would've been alright if my company hadn't gone bankrupt...But, then again, If I hadn't had to change jobs, I wouldn't have had to start preparing myself and getting more knowledge and information...So, that would have been a more insecure situation, I think. I feel more secure now that I have had to prepare myself...and have lots of information.

The above two informants are, in the face of an economically and socially changing Japan, creating themselves to be better equipped to deal with any eventualities in the changing climate. Chika uses a transnational television role-model to direct her path of self-creation while Satoshi uses ICT to gather information “inside of [him]” and also enriches his self-creation by appropriating images of ‘America’, thereby creating himself into a kind of personal hybrid (Lull, 2000). He feels his use of media and ICT in these ways will enable him to survive should the situation in Japan decline. The following informants use media images and ICT to maintain global *uchis*, thereby creating for themselves opportunities to leave Japan if they have to and survive elsewhere.

6.4.2. Self-Creation for Survival in a Global World

Hana (f18, single, 22) is an apprentice hairdresser with a low salary, no holidays and,

Hana: Everyday just shampoo, shampoo, shampoo... Even on our one day a week holiday I have to do training and don't get any overtime for that. Everyday I get home really late so I can't even go out on dates!... I am seriously thinking about going to live in Hong Kong.

While interviewing Hana, I got the feeling that her dissatisfaction with her present situation had led to a build-up of kinetic energy within her such that the

next frustrating event or 'aberrance' in her life-path would topple her over the edge of chaos and have her leaving Japan for Hong Kong. While she is not preparing herself to leave Japan by learning new skills or gaining new knowledge in the ways the previous informants are, Hana feels confident that she can transfer to the Hong Kong branch of her salon. It is the existence of the global *uchi* to which she belongs and constantly sustains by email, which makes the move to Hong Kong possible.

At the time Takeshi (f9, son, 28) was racing cars, he found it helpful to adopt some of the principles of *Nihonjinron*, which he decided to read in order to make his driving more successful. He, like Masatoshi, believed that a strong sense of Japanese identity and strength would help him compete against foreign countries on the racetrack. He was thus reluctant to make any compromises with his national identity for the sake of building ties with people from other countries. Since he attended the English course at Cambridge University, this has changed, as he now maintains friendships via email with people from all around the world. During one of my interviews with Takeshi he became very excited when talking about national identity.

Takeshi: When I compete...compete?... I mean, yeah, *compete* against people from other cultures I need to have my own... *something*.

Researcher: Is that 'something' Japanese or is it individual?

Takeshi: I...I...I don't hold onto being Japanese, I didn't hold on at first. I think...oh, what is my identity? My way of living is... *that*. Japan, where I live, *that* is my identity... I think there are individuals, not 'Japanese' and 'English' and so on. When I went to England the internet wasn't really around much so I felt, at that time, there was 'culture' and 'culture' [gesturing two separate entities with his hands]. But these days the internet is everywhere so I really think the place where you're born or the environment where you grow up...identity isn't determined by these things. It's not innate, more like...it's what we pick

up...skills...[he thinks to himself]...Oh, I can't find the words...

Researcher: Mmm, I see what you mean...

Takeshi: [Encouraged.] No *boundaries* or *nations*...we have to change that structure.

Researcher: But as long as we live in Japan, we must think about Japanese culture, mustn't we?

Takeshi: Yeah. But in the future, from now, it won't be the kind of era where we can't do something unless we go to, say, England. So I will do what I want to do in a place that suits my lifestyle. And if I'm in Japan and I can't maintain my lifestyle then I'll go to...Cuba! And I think that if we use the internet it's possible.

Takeshi's English friend spent some time in Russia on the Volunteers Service Overseas and while he was away Takeshi could not make any contact with him through email. When he learned where his friend had been he also thought he could do some volunteering, the sense of global moral responsibility appealing to him. The point I want to draw attention to is that, due to his high level of global interaction, Takeshi now feels that he is capable of going anywhere in the world.

6.4.3. Global Self-Creation in the Locale

This section focuses on those informants who, not only for reasons of survival in an insecure environment but, from a sense of more personal dissatisfaction with Japanese society, create their worlds and themselves, appropriating from the 'cultural supermarket' as a means of 'de-Japanising' their existences.

Ryo (f10, husband, 31), who works for the space industry, told me that working with his American colleagues has opened up his life. "I've changed since I started working with them." As a child, Ryo was very questioning of what he saw as the 'Japanese way of doing things' but felt he could not express his doubt to other people. When he started working with Americans he started talking to them about these questions and doubts which he had put away in his mind for a long

time. Having expressed himself and asked questions, he had many of his thoughts confirmed, "Oh, I was right!"

They [Americans] state their frank opinions, their honest opinions. I too had wanted to express my honest opinions... but I didn't try. When my American friends did so in the office, I thought there'd be nothing wrong with me stating my opinion honestly. I think Japanese groupism is created by parents' discipline and school education. But so that those of us who were brought up in this way can break away from those values, we have to see how others do things. We can't be aware of other values without comparison.

We talked about fashion one night, when were eating *ramen* at midnight at the place he always goes after work. He said, "I think I can wear a different coloured shirt from other people", showing off to me his yellow tie and brown shirt, "Nobody in my company wears a shirt this colour" he said, proud to be different from his Japanese colleagues. His dress sense is indeed different from that of most Japanese businessmen.

Ryo consciously misidentifies with Japanese people, identifying with what he takes them *not* to be. Through inter-cultural interaction with his American colleagues in everyday life, he reflexively creates himself to be a kind of American-Japanese hybrid. Interacting with Americans was his turning point in resisting the Japanese ideology of groupism and it has made it possible for him to express himself, both verbally and non-verbally in the clothes he chooses to wear. As I discussed earlier, he has created and sustains his modern as opposed to traditional colleague *uchi* via peer-to-peer communication beyond the company's sectional division. He has also created his family *uchi* (himself and his new wife) such that it is non-gender-differentiated and rationalised his wider family *uchi* (his parents and extended family) such that all communication that he now has with them is via his homepage. Ryo and his wife got married during the period over which I was interviewing them. He spent a year planning their ceremony,

finding information and goods on the internet, watching Italian films and recording every television programme on Italy that was screened. They had their wedding ceremony in Rome, with only their parents and siblings attending, avoiding a traditional family wedding and wanting something different. Ryo saw their wedding in Rome as a celebration and expression of themselves and their ability and desire to appropriate different (in this case Italian) cultural products and images from anywhere in their creation of themselves. Ryo's and Ryoko's strong identification with Italy, made possible through ICT and media, has been an integral and unforgettable part of their joint life-path and selves-creation. Together with his identification with American culture, this identification with Italy strengthens Ryo's identity as a culturally-hybridised individual.

In Chapter Four, I introduced Minako (f2, mother, 34), whose passion for things Italian began with watching soccer matches on television. Her case also reveals the way a life can take a particular path from a little media input. I showed how her interest in Italian culture, the Italian soccer team and in her own local Tokyo soccer team developed. But Minako's interest in Italy has had other important consequences in her life. Her husband's initial interest in soccer led the two of them to Italy to watch live soccer matches but her time in Italy had an important yet unforeseen influence in her life. While in Florence, Minako, was struck by the nature of family and community life that she witnessed at the football stadium. There she saw, in contrast to the Japanese stadium, people of all ages, elderly couples, parents and children all enjoying the game together as a part of their community life. She was struck by the extent to which this atmosphere differed from that typical at Japanese soccer games³ and felt, in the Italian soccer fan community, a warmth and genuineness which she wanted to be a

³ Her somewhat negative impression of Japanese fans was of either armchair 'experts' who really have no feeling for the game, pseudo soccer 'fans' jumping on the soccer bandwagon just because it was fashionable to support the new professional league or because they wanted to support the latest cool, sexy soccer star or those going along to the game just to enjoy the noisy festival atmosphere in the grandstand, none of these people having any real understanding or appreciation of the game.

part of. Soccer was embedded in the lives of the people in the community, it was part of a 'tradition', not just a fad.

Minako felt the warmth of family relations in the soccer stadium in Florence when what she took to be teargas was released into the crowds of soccer hooligans and she saw old couples shielding each other with their arms, protecting each other from the toxic gas. In Sicily, she saw old couples, well-dressed and stylish despite their age, holding hands and drinking wine in cafes, still wanting to be together and take care of each other and again she felt a warm feeling for Italian community life. "Jiin to kita naaa... [I just got a really warm feeling] and thought, 'I want to grow old like that.'" The valuing of and respect for family life she began to feel Italians felt, she again sensed in a Prada boutique. In the shop with her was a young and stylish, wealthy, but not snobbish, woman, with a pram, involved in an energetic and friendly conversation with the sales staff. This image contrasted starkly with that in Minako's mind, the prevailing Japanese image of motherhood according to which motherhood precludes style and puts a woman into a much less respected and lower-status category, often portrayed by dowdiness and frumpiness. Minako is constantly reflexively resisting identification with this 'ideal', as represented by Aiko, her old friend from college, whom she, in one sense admires for being the 'ideal' Japanese housewife, but, in another sense, does not want to emulate.

Before going to Italy Minako did not want to have children, due to the financially insecure nature of her husband's work as a freelance designer and her parent's disapproval of him, planting in her seeds of doubt as to whether he really was right for her. However, recent changes in her life have led her to change her mind about having children and she is now expecting a baby. A variety of factors have influenced this decision. When Minako was in her twenties she worked very hard at her career, competing with male colleagues and trying to climb the corporate ladder. She was reluctant to take time out or leave her career to have children, fearing that this would set her back in her career path. But with the

collapse of the bubble economy, several changes were made to her work situation. The tighter economic situation in Japan has meant that many employees no longer get paid overtime for the extra hours they put in. Minako feels that there is now not so much gain to be made by putting a big effort into her career. Also, over the years she has become more familiar with her job and more established within her company, thus gaining job security. She feels that taking a year's maternity leave at this stage will not threaten her career in too undesirable a way, if Japan's economic situation should stabilise. But her decision to have children was not brought on only by career considerations. Her desire to create a family began after her trip to Italy and her subsequent and consequent changing perceptions of family and motherhood. In Italy Minako saw new ways of understanding and interpreting family life and the warmth she experienced in family contexts was something she decided she wanted to create herself in Japan. She feels that if Japan should fail and she should lose her job at least she would still have *something*—a nice, warm family—so she is willing to take the risk of having children in this unstable climate. Although Minako remembers many images and feelings from Italy these are not associated with media. But it was through watching Italian soccer matches via satellite television that her interest in Italy began and has since led, in a path unforeseeable by anyone, to her present ideas of and goals in respect to family life. Furthermore, Minako is able to maintain her connection to Italian life in her everyday life through ICT available today, thus holding onto and developing her perception of the family and a worthwhile life.

Minako and Ryo share a disapproval of the nature of Japanese family relationships and values. They have appropriated values from other countries and cultures (Italy and America) in the ongoing recreation of their own families and values (Minako continuing to emulate the organisation of the extended family in Italy, which she showed me in a magazine during one of my visits), creating family relationships as they think they should be, not as they were brought up to believe they should be. The internet and other media and ICT have aided them in their

respective searches for and expressions of alternatives to traditional Japanese culture.

6.4.4. Imagination and Global Possibilities

The preceding section has described the ways in which my informants are increasingly perceiving Japan today: as a world containing, due to the forces of globalisation, many threats and risks but also, new possibilities. In the face of the changes they see, they are 'imagining' new possibilities for their own and their family's survival. Feeding into these possibilities, and thus into their everyday lives, are transnational images, ideas and values. Imagination has become a form of negotiation between "individuals and globally defined fields of possibility" (Appadurai, 1996, p.31).

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at self-creation through engagement with media and ICT in reflexive response to various pressures or influences. I have looked at self-creation in terms of the traditional or 'ordinary' (6.2.), in relation to romanticisations of images of America and to hybridised Japanese images (6.3.) and in a global context (6.4.). Traditional self-creation included self-creation both for others' expectations and traditions and against 'otherness'—against people from other countries or cities. We saw self-creation as 'escape' from the limitations of the domestic time-space and family expectations, often expressed by the disembedding from the locale to momentarily embed in, an often itself hybridised, alternative non-space, thus achieving connectivity to an alternative *uchi*.

Self-creation in relation to romanticised media images—of America, Tokyo—revealed how a powerful media image in child—or adult—hood could instigate a turning point in a person's life-path, particularly in cases in which information and knowledge are limited and material circumstances are

dissatisfactory.

The further away these audiences are from the direct experiences of metropolitan life, the more likely they are to construct 'imagined worlds' which are chimerical, aesthetic, even fantastic objects. (Appadurai, 1990, p.299)

I explored the role various dimensions of audience engagement with media and ICT, originally investigated within the tradition of active audience approaches, play in people's projects of self-creation. I hoped to show that media images which serve as powerful influences are most usefully viewed not in terms of a transmission model, as theorists of cultural and media imperialism hold, but in terms of a complexity model, seeing where someone is at a given time in their life as one of many incredibly diverse and unpredictable results of a myriad of interrelated factors operating along non-linear paths.

What I referred to as 'global' self-creation is a phenomenon of today and takes place, in Japan, against an increasingly insecure background of social and economic change in the country. Whereas the informants creating themselves in terms of romanticised images had little information and knowledge of other places, countries or cultures, the informants creating themselves globally have access to vast amounts of information and accessing it is a part of their everyday lives. They thus have not only more information about the world and different possibilities but also a more realistic picture of the current situation of Japan in the world climate. They are able to 'step outside', via both ICT, providing a broader time-space of social interaction, and real interaction with people from outside Japan, to gain alternative perspectives on their lives in Japan. They feel threatened and insecure in what they see, and perceive greater risks to themselves, their families and their country than existed before. They appropriate, via ICT and media, images and values that oppose traditional or predominant Japaneseness and connect to friends all over the world, creating global lifestyles

and possibilities for global survival. “The link between the imagination and social life...is an increasingly global and deterritorialised one” (Appadurai, 1996, p.55). They reflexively prepare themselves, in response to novel threats, and take, rather than avoid, the increased risks of living in today’s changing world, in order to sustain their senses of self-identity and, to greater and lesser degrees, break away from tradition or family. In these ways, they create themselves into members of an ‘imagined’ global community, with hybridised identities.

In the cases of all the informants in this chapter, they are variously and alternately including or excluding others and identifying themselves with or through images and ideas they access via ICT and media. They are thereby adapting to pressures within traditional Japanese culture—either adapting *to* or *within* that culture, appropriating, in many cases, from other cultures. In diverse ways and through diverse dimensions of engagement with media and ICT, they are achieving connectivity to other people and cultures, thereby creating their own worlds as protective cocoons in which they maintain and sustain their self-identities.

Conclusion

Recent reviews of the research on the mass media have identified...the need for...understanding the complex and interweaving factors that are likely to attend the processes of...media reception... The problem, however, lies not so much in the identification of these factors or indeed in their study as isolated phenomena but in providing a framework for their integration. (Silverstone, 1994, pp.2-3)

The aim of this thesis has been to understand the diversity, dynamism and complexity of audiences in the global rich media environment of today and create an integrated framework of the sort Silverstone argues is required. In response to three of the problems existing in media research; namely, the lack of a convergent approach, its domination by Western literature and the lack of qualitative data on Japanese audiences, I have proposed an integrated framework and explored this through a qualitative study of audience engagement in Japan. In the conclusion to this thesis I wish to address three issues. In Part One, I will, through a summary of my findings in terms of the complexity model of audiences which I proposed in Chapter One, indicate the complexity and dynamism of Japanese audiences of today. At the outset of this thesis I stated three theoretical aims. The second part of this conclusion will discuss the extent to which, and the ways in which I have achieved these aims. In the context of globalisation, we face two important issues related to the cultural, social and political debate about universalism and cultural specificity: (1) cultural homogenisation and cultural heterogenisation (cf. Appadurai, 1990) and (2) universalism 'in the West' and peculiarity 'in the Rest' within the tradition of social science (cf. Hall, 1992b; Iyotani, 2002). I will address the latter issue with reference to my second theoretical aim of the 'de-Westernisation' of media studies in Part Two. In the final part of the thesis I will consider the possibility of a recreated self-identity in a global Japan and the

future of globalisation, addressing the former issue of universalism and cultural specificity.

Part One: The Complexity Model of Audiences

In Chapter One I proposed a complexity model of audiences, by means of which I have interpreted my findings regarding audience engagement. The concepts derived from the paradigm of complexity that I have used are: interactivity, adaptivity, self-organisation and the notion of the edge of chaos. I have identified three dimensions of complex systems: individuals, social groups and cultures. Drawing on my background of mathematics I have come to incorporate the paradigm of complexity, and I believe that this paradigm is also useful for illustrating the complexity and dynamism of audiences within the social sciences. As Appadurai (1996, p.46) calls for a human version of the chaos theory in order to further the theory of global cultural interactions, I have applied a non-linear, non-reductionist model to audiences, using a metaphor from chaos theory and the notion of phase transitions. Increasingly, social scientists and cultural anthropologists are trying out the extension of this theory — metaphorically or in an even more practical way — from the natural sciences to the social sciences, and in doing so, they may parallel, or overlap with, other frameworks in the social sciences which aim to capture the complexity of determination (cf. Appadurai, 1996; Rosenau, 1990; Eve et al., 1997; Giddens, 1991; Rogers and Kincaid, 1981; Hamaguchi, 1998). My use of 'reflexivity' was appropriated from Giddens' notions of structuration and self-identity, which themselves stem from the concept of autopoiesis, also they belong to the paradigm of complexity. I have incorporated Hamaguchi's model of 'the contextual', stemming directly from complexity theory, into my own approach, and also Rogers and Kincaid's 'convergence model of communication', which itself developed out of Wiener's 'cybernetics model'; a fledgling version of complexity theory. I have taken the concepts of Nakane's *uchi*

and *soto* out of her structural-functionalist approach and re-embedded them into the complexity model, rejecting the dichotomy between structure and agency. I have developed my model of audiences in conjunction with those concepts and theories using the ethnographic method, which is a non-linear methodology, as well as by referring to various audience ethnographic researchers who have addressed issues of complexity of determination, reflexivity and the importance of the context of everyday life (cf. Morley, 1986, 1992; Lull, 1991; Ang, 1996; Silverstone, 1994; Gillespie, 1995; Willis, 2000). The audience ethnographic researchers have developed these issues in order to overcome the problems of reductionism (for example, the dichotomy between active and passive audiences and the reductionism of behaviourist psychology), problems related to linear models of communications (for example, media imperialism), and problems of determinism (for example, textual determinism). They adopt an anthropological methodology which is able to investigate the ways in which audiences create and recreate meaning from within social contexts in everyday life. Although these studies did not adopt a complexity model, they run in parallel to my complexity approach as they offer one of several ways out of the problems of the linearity approach.

In the following section I summarise my research findings in terms of the original theoretical framework—the complexity model of audiences—which I outlined in Chapter One, showing how this model can help to draw out an understanding of the complexity of audiences, urging the field to move beyond simplified or dichotomised visions of audiences and providing a valuable lens through which to ask questions about, and to understand the phenomena of, audiences in a global media rich environment.

Interactivity and Adaptivity of Individuals

The interactivity I found in the field involved both intra-personal interaction (an individual interacting with media and symbolic forms) and inter-personal

interaction (an individual interacting with other people, through mediated, non-mediated and quasi-mediated para-social interaction). I found various types of reflexive audience engagement embedded in the context of power structures and social and technological changes in contemporary Japan. The power structures within which people engaged with media stemmed from the forces of ideology (patriarchy, ideology of *ie*¹, seniority and hierarchy) and *uchi* roles (as, say, mother, father, businessman, and so on). The social and economic changes within which the engagement was embedded were recession, the modernisation of the family, increasing contact with the world outside Japan, modernisation of traditional company structures and geographical mobility. Another powerful factor in people's reflexive engagement with media was the rich media environment of their everyday lives, involving personalisation, mobilisation, multiple media, multiple television channels, diversity of content, access to the transnational and the sheer mass of media technology and products. In these social and technological changes and changes in everyday life we can see the embeddedness of globalisation in local life.

The most significant dimensions of audience engagement were information-seeking activity (intra-personal interactivity), connectivity and para-social interaction (both inter-personal interactivity). Information was sought depending on people's needs and interests, which were themselves emergent phenomena from *uchi* self-organisation. For example, women embedded in the locale, and for whom the domestic *uchi* was primary, sought information beneficial to their children. Information was also sought in order to ease insecurity and aid survival in a threatening economic climate. Finally, almost constant information seeking, gathering, storing and processing at any time and any location seemed to be a corollary of the rich media environment, with some

¹ For example, Japanese eldest sons are in many cases still obliged to take on the role of head of the family while Japanese women, upon marrying, are obliged to transfer family ties to their 'new' parents (See Appendix A2 in detail).

seeing the internet as a 'part of the body', and with the closely integrated relationship with media offering ontological security.

Connectivity offers the opportunity for interaction with information, news, media images and messages, and with other individuals, *uchis* (fan *uchis*/taste communities) and cultures, both national and transnational. People use media and ICT to disembody themselves from the locale (domestic, business, local or national *uchi*) and gain connectivity with 'other worlds', often so they can 'escape' from the pressures of conformity to *uchi* roles. Individuals exchange emails, browse homepages, watch satellite or cable television and participate in global media events in a way that makes the home open to the world (Meyrowitz, 1985; Tomlinson, 1999) and the world permeated with a sense of 'home', as people carry their Japanese media products and images, like snails, as they travel around the world. Here we see the 'deterritorialisation' of Japan.

Para-social interaction (fantasising about, imagining, identifying with and romanticising) is a mediated quasi-interaction, revealing interactivity between individuals and television stars, characters or people on the news and those in documentaries. Through such interaction with media representations of people, individuals are interacting not only with people but with media images and messages themselves. The 'structured context' (Thompson, 1995), within which people are embedded when they interact para-socially, contains pressures from ideologies that are reinforced in traditional *uchis*, pressures from the romanticisation of America and pressures from the need to survive in today's climate of increasing economic insecurity and risk. Also exerting pressure within the 'structured context' are the increasing modernisation of the family and resistance to tradition, and the decreasing trust in and reliance upon both authoritative structures in Japan and upon 'Japan' itself.

Adaptivity is necessary in such a complex world and can be found in people's engagement with media. I found three aspects relating to people's adaptivity to their sometimes changing and sometimes sustaining world: accommodation,

resistance and appropriation. People accommodated to tradition as they felt pressure to and learnt to conform to it. We can see this in the compliant readings some people gave of television programmes. Some housewives, students and others who are embedded in the domestic *uchi*, and who have limited social contact, tend to watch television in the dominant manner described by Hall's encoding-decoding model (1980), absorbing the traditional Japanese cultural values of *sunao*, *amae* and hierarchy. The relative lack of participation in the media that I found also revealed accommodation and conformity to cultural norms. Through fear of being different or standing out and through having given up on believing people have the power to effect social change, very few people show an interest in participating in the media.

However, resistance to tradition, authority, politicians and media producers was also revealed. Some people give resistant viewings to television programmes and newspapers, often due to skepticism and cynicism stemming from their own lived experiences, and their wider knowledge or particular interests. These viewers and readers resist preferred readings and create their own alternative meanings, often collecting news from a variety of sources.

Neither exclusively accommodating to nor exclusively resisting tradition, people appropriate various things from the media in a variety of ways. People appropriate images, ideas and products from and through the media as they disembed from their locales, connect with both national and transnational worlds and then re-embed, carrying with them what they have appropriated in their everyday lives, creating their own worlds (sports world, *SMAP* world, Italian world). People appropriate (create a bricolage (Levi-Strauss, 1966), poach (de Certeau, 1984), shop at the 'cultural supermarket' (Hall, 1992a)) in this manner to enhance their lives, adapting to pressures and changes brought about by living in Japan today.

Another manner in which these pressures and changes create the space for adaptive appropriation is through people's personal utilisation of media and ICT

for purposes of relaxation (escape, stress-relief, killing time, filling a gap) and creation of personal space. Uses and gratifications studies identified using media in these ways as a form of appropriation insofar as people are using it for their own purposes, which may well involve ignoring or de-prioritising its messages and images in favour of its utility value. The final dimension of audience engagement showing adaptivity through appropriation is people's using media to learn English. In a world in which speaking only Japanese is becoming more limiting, people are learning English in the hope of opening up more opportunities for themselves. Through accommodation and resistance to tradition and ideology and appropriation from these through the media, people are actively adaptive to the multiple dimensions of complex systems in local, national and global worlds.

The Complexity of *Uchis*

Interactivity at the level of *uchi* involves intra-group interaction (among *uchi* members) and inter-group interaction (between *uchi* and *soto*). The most significant dimension of audience engagement revealing such interactivity is social use (using media technologies and products to facilitate communication and social intimacy—intra-*uchi* interactivity). People use media and ICT to disembed from one *uchi* and re-embed in another, providing the opportunity for interactivity between members of spatially dislocated *uchis*. Some people accommodate, in a more traditional way, or appropriate, in a more modern way, values and ideas about relationships and ways of life from the media and other people and incorporate them into the *uchis* to which they belong; their own families, for instance.

As shown empirically in Chapter Five, through intra- and inter-group interactivity, *uchis* are self-organised by their members, giving rise to three types of *uchi*: traditional, modern and global. Members of traditional *uchis* exist as such either by resisting *soto* (for example, *kikokushijo* and foreigners) or by reflexively choosing traditional ways, thereby minimising risk and maintaining ontological

security. Some informants, in the processes of 'reflexive traditionalisation' (cf. Lash, 1994), used television and other media images in the creation of a 'Japanese *uchi*' or an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983). People use media and ICT to create modern *uchis* (taste communities, virtual communities, 'modern' families, 'modern' business *uchis*) by dis-embedding from one *uchi* and meeting, via ICT, with people who are members of one or another of their multiple *uchis*. By sustaining membership of multiple and modern *uchis*, people momentarily escape from the confines of tradition and ideology permeating company or domestic structures. The creation and recreation of modern *uchis* concerns intra-cultural interaction (the interaction of members of social groups), while the creation and recreation of global *uchis* occurs within a broader social interactional time-space, involving inter-cultural or transnational interaction. I found ICT to create and sustain, global *uchis* through transnational connectivity. The heterogeneous members of which such broadly defined categories live in different parts of the geographical world yet remain tied to each other through the bonds of a global *uchi*. The creation and sustenance of these hybridised global *uchis* both is facilitated by, and leads to the further emergence of, social and cultural proximity and intimacy. These processes involve both mediated and occasional non-mediated (face-to-face) communication.

The idea of phase transition was revealed in people's engagement with media in terms of their disembedding from their traditional *uchi* (at home, work), meeting with each other and embedding themselves in a virtual or ICT facilitated time-space, then re-embedding back into their respective traditional *uchis*. As discussed at length in Chapter Five, through this process of 'reflexive modernisation' of company, family or relative *uchis*, people recreate the traditional *uchi* into one with modern characteristics, for example, with horizontal rather than vertical structures in the company, less gender-differentiated families and more rational inter-personal relationships and communication amongst relatives. The other side of this reflexive modernisation is perhaps less desirable. The

diffusion and personalisation of ICT and media also lead to fragmentation of the family, with each family member disembedded from the domestic *uchi* and embedded in his or her own media worlds or alternative *uchi*. The creation of personal space, in this fashion, renders the domestic space a 'dead space' (Bull, 2000). The result of this phase transition is increasing disorder, as the family approaches an 'edge of chaos', lacking not only the shared 'hearth', but also losing imposed authority and patriarchy structure that in other families, past or present, had held it together. Through these features of *uchis* (interactivity, adaptivity, self-organisation and phase transition), a feedback loop is created which feeds emergent phenomena back into the same processes at the level of the individual in an ongoing loop of creation and recreation.

Self-Creation and Turning Points in Individuals

This feedback loop constitutes part of the process of individual self-creation. It is not only individuals' diverse relationships to the multiple *uchis* to which they belong, but also their individual mediated and non-mediated experiences, which feed into their projects of self-creation. This self-creation is not fixed but is fragmented and in flux (cf. Giddens, 1990; Hall, 1992a), and the complexity of this process is intensified by individuals' membership in a variety of diverse *uchis* and their background of diverse individual experiences. For such individuals, the process of self-creation is not exclusively traditional, modern or global, but is a complex result of the interaction of all these. Thus the individuals' projects of self-creation may increase a tendency towards fragmentation and individualisation in Japanese audiences in a global rich media environment.

Complex self-creation can be seen in all dimensions of engagement with media, but this is particularly in the cases of world-creation, in the time-space of self-creation and in para-social interaction and identification. I identified three modes of self-creation, based on my fieldwork (Chapter Six): traditional, romanticising and globalising. Traditional self-creation involves, through the

process of creating a 'protective cocoon', the reflexive embracing of a traditional role, largely set down by ideology, and the appropriation of media products and symbolic forms used in the ongoing recreation of self-identity in terms of these roles. For example, some informants reflexively created themselves into 'ordinary Japanese people' through compliant television viewing and the 'imagination' of themselves as Japanese. Other informants reflexively traditionalised through resistance to 'the West', as represented by foreign colleagues. Some housewives, due to a lack of real interaction in their lives, stemming often from their husbands' embeddedness in the traditional business *uchi*, para-socially interacted with television characters or personalities, in an attempt to compensate for this lack. Such self-creation takes shape in, on the one hand, reflexive self-creation into a traditional housewife and, on the other, momentarily, into a fan, embedded in hybridised popular culture. These projects of self-creation represent the to-ing and fro-ing that operates between traditional Japanese culture and hybridised cultures.

Romanticising self-creation involves the strong impression laid down by childhood television images and their on-going influence on people's life-paths, their continuing appropriation from these images and the incorporation of them into their projects of self-creation. Some television images, for example 1960s' American domestic dramas, can be seen to have been the causes of turning points in people's lives. This can be seen as a case of the Americanisation and consumerisation of Japan during the period of re-modernisation, after World War II. In such cases, the programme or image *alone* has not determined the future life-path but has been a strong influence, interacting with other factors in the life of the individual. This is not, therefore, a simple picture of the transmission model but is the result of people's poaching, indigenising and appropriating media images and messages. In this sense, neither the picture painted by media imperialism nor that of active audience theories seems to give an accurate account of the causal relationships involved in such self-creation; both tending to portray

the relationship between individuals and the media in mutual opposition. The model of complexity renders the latter relationship as a reflexive one; one of 'structuration', in which an individual's internalised romanticising endows the media with power. This individual self-creation in turn feeds into *uchi* self-organisation, as people create their families and material environments after romanticised television images, values and ideals.

Globalising self-creation reflexively takes place in the context of social and economic change, increasing mobility and access to the transnational. In order to survive, people take greater risks, in partial abandonment of their traditions, by reaching outside Japan for the material for their projects of self-creation. I have called this "de-Japanisation", a process via which people resist traditional ideology and appropriate from transnational television images and mediated and non-mediated interaction with foreigners, in the creation of themselves as hybrids of alternative cultures (appropriating Italian ways of life, for example).

The Complexity of Cultures

While I observed first-hand both individual and *uchi* self-organisation, it was difficult, if not impossible, to observe the process of self-organisation at the level of 'culture'. What I did find, however, was cultures emerging from the interactivity, adaptivity, self-organisation and phase transitions within individual and *uchi* activity. Just as *uchis* emerge from individual activity, cultures emerge from interactions between individuals and all levels of *uchis*: local, national and transnational. The complexity model sees cultures as emergent phenomena, involving, *but not exclusively*, the sum of their constituents. As individuals and *uchis* become increasingly global, cultures become increasingly deterritorialised. This individual self-creation and *uchi* self-organisation broadens social interactional time-space, at the same time expanding the time-space for the self-organisation of 'culture'. Hall (1992a, p.300) wrote of the effects of globalisation on national identity, citing three ways in which national identities

are adapting to global phenomena:

- 1 National identities are being *eroded* as a result of the growth of cultural homogenization and 'the global post-modern'.
- 2 National and other 'local' or particularistic identities are being *strengthened* by the resistance to globalisation.
- 3 National identities are declining but *new* identities of hybridity are taking their place.

In my fieldwork I found these same three phenomena: I observed national identity being eroded through the rejection of Japanese values and sense of nationhood, being strengthened through resistance to globalisation and retreating to old Japanese traditions and values (*samurai* spirit, *Nihonjinron*) and being hybridised in the emergence of new identities of hybridity through membership of global *uchis* and appropriation from global-cultural supermarkets. These three responses to globalisation will materialise as, firstly, homogenisation or, in Japan's case, Westernisation or Americanisation, secondly as traditional 're-Japanisation' and thirdly as hybridisation. Perhaps the complex interaction between the first two could lead to the augmenting of the third, the reinforcement of hybridisation. I will return to this idea, linking it to my three forms of self-creation in the closing pages of this thesis, after addressing the theoretical questions posed in earlier chapters.

Part Two: Revisiting the Theoretical Aims

The primary aim of this thesis has been to analyse the complex and diverse ways in which audiences engage with the media in the context of social changes in contemporary Japan. I have aimed to do this, initially, by finding a convergence of different traditions of audience research in terms of audience engagement. My second aim has been to show that the analysis of Japanese audiences can serve as a modest step towards the de-Westernisation of media studies. The final aim has been to complement the predominantly quantitative research within Japanese audience studies with a qualitative approach.

Convergence

I argued, in Chapter One, that it was generally useful to understand and bring together audience activities under the concept of audience ‘engagement’, as this term a) encompasses the multiple dimensions of audience activities and thereby it b) moves beyond simplified or dichotomised visions of audiences. In Chapters Four, Five and Six, I identified amongst my informants the following nine dimensions of audience engagement:

- 1) Information-seeking activity
- 2) Connectivity
- 3) World-creation
- 4) Para-social interaction
- 5) Utility
- 6) Interpretation
- 7) Participation
- 8) *Uchi*-creation and recreation
- 9) Self-creation

In the complexity model of audiences I have appropriated significantly from several traditions of media research, using uses and gratifications studies' concepts of selectivity, para-social interaction, identification, fantasising and utility. From audience reception studies I have borrowed the framework of social context, taking into account power structures, ideologies and the concept of resistance to them. *Joho Kodo* studies' concepts of intra- and inter-personal interaction lend themselves to use in a complexity model and I have usefully borrowed these in my analysis. This area of research also focuses on new media, supplying a broader framework within which to understand audience engagement with diverse media, and I have used this framework for my own understanding. I have also observed the existence of a sense of media imperialism in the Americanisation and consumerisation of Japan, but have challenged the dichotomy between the 'active' audience and media 'effects'. I have tried to show that 'media effects' exist to the extent that they have determining power, through people's reflexive appropriation of media images, but they are unpredictable insofar as their power is complexly diffused by a myriad of jointly determinate factors, following people's paths of self-creation.

Through offering this integrated approach to audience studies, I have tried to reconstruct audience research in terms of a multi-dimensional notion of audience activity, which I have called 'audience engagement'. In so doing I have raised the possibility for a convergence of distinct audience research traditions. By understanding audience engagement in terms of the paradigms of everyday life and complexity I have attempted to provide a model from which the diversity, complexity and dynamism of audiences in a global media rich environment might be understood.

De-Westernisation

The second theoretical aim of this thesis has been related to the issue of 'universalism in the West' and 'the peculiarity in the Rest' in social science

methodology; that is to say the 'de-Westernising' media studies. Western social science has produced a plethora of theories concerning, and concepts pertaining to people and societies, derived both from theoretical and empirical studies. While the concepts this research has produced have been taken by many scholars and researchers to be etic concepts, that is, universally applicable to any and all people and societies, it is also important to recognise that, as Iyatani (2002) points out,

regions where those measures do not fit are exotic Asia, that is 'Oriental', and the analysis of those regions is not a study for social science but, rather, represents an example to be cited in a cultural anthropology report. The West is a mirror which embodies the ideal of modernisation forever and the image of 'the West' which reflects on it constructs the ideal model for the other non-Western regions. The universalism has often been constructed as the process of the non-Western civilisation. (my translation, p.8)

Japanese scholars have themselves used these etic concepts in their studies of Japanese society and, thereby, as some critics claim, have erroneously analysed Japan through 'West-coloured' spectacles. *Nihonjinron* (Japanese cultural studies) has criticised such an application of Western concepts and theories to Japan, claiming that, because Japan is unique, such an application is not only unenlightening but is distorting of the reality of Japan. Nakane argued that Japan has had its unique process of modernisation and that in order to understand Japanese society, our own unique measure is required—a pair of spectacles "Made in Japan". Such an analysis would produce Japanese emic concepts, that is, concepts uniquely applicable to Japan, giving the 'real' picture of the society and possibly (depending on the scholar) capable of being usefully applied to understanding other societies.

In this thesis, I have proposed shifting from a concept of dichotomy between 'universalism in the West' and 'peculiarity in the Rest' to one which incorporates

'universalism' and 'peculiarity in both the West and the Rest' in order to avoid 'colonial academic methodology' in social science. I hope my ethnographic writing in English, a Western language, ultimately will have a 'de-Westernising' effect rather than but a 're-Westernising' one. In other words, I wish to avoid reinforcing a 'colonial academic system'; that is, one in which "non-Western people' not only offer materials for (Western) theory and for study as 'native informants' but also cooperate with the reinforcement of the Western intellectual hegemonic structure" (my translation of Motohashi, 2002, p.65). Therefore my aim in this thesis has been to propose the sort of 'universal' model which social science seeks, but at the same time one which can display some range of 'peculiarity', depending on the cultures under analysis. This model should be developed as a result of the 'interpenetration' of Western theories, concepts and methodologies with those of the rest of the world in the context of globalisation. I propose taking the following three steps towards 'de-Westernising' media studies.

Japanese Emic Concepts

Firstly, in approaching my research I have wanted to avoid fitting exclusively into either of these approaches; that is, I have attempted to avoid the exclusive use either of Western etic concepts or of Japanese emic concepts. Instead, I have attempted to appropriate concepts from any tradition that could usefully be applied to an understanding of Japanese audiences. I have therefore adopted—and adapted—, for example, the emic *uchi/soto* distinction. In order to understand the interactions amongst Japanese people in their inter-personal relationships, I have integrated my use of *uchi/soto* with reference to both Doi's concept of *amae* and Hamaguchi's model of 'the contextual', but in a fashion which issues a challenge to the dichotomisation that exists at the heart of *Nihonjinron* (Japanese culture studies), namely, that of Japan as opposed to 'the West'. I have thus attempted to find and use concepts relevant and applicable to Japan, as opposed to those used in much Japanese audience research, which has

unreflexively adopted and applied Western etic concepts.

The question may come up as to why I have used the Japanese emic concepts of *uchi* and *soto* rather than the Western etic concepts of 'private' and 'public'. The reason is that these pairs of terms are not equivalent. *Uchi* is both nonequivalent to 'private' and sometimes equivalent to 'public' while *soto* is nonequivalent to 'public' (while never being equivalent to 'private'). The English term 'private', while often referring to the realm of the family or close social group, also applies specifically to the individual. *Uchi*, however, does not contain any reference to the individual, as it is necessarily a group phenomenon, referring only to the group to which an individual belongs. *Uchi* necessarily implies a sense of community, and thus social relations between members of a neighbourhood, school or company can be described in terms of *uchi*. However, in English, these are clearly part of the 'public', as community relations are present. *Uchi* is where our fellow members judge us, using norms to which we are expected to conform. This realm of communal responsibility is more accurately described, in English, by 'public' than by 'private'. Where *soto* applies, no community or feelings for 'the other' exist, thus *soto* should not be understood as 'public'. Perhaps the pair of English terms closest in meaning to *uchi* and *soto* are 'us' and 'them' but the antagonistic connotations of the latter are in many, but not all, cases inappropriate to that captured by *uchi* and *soto*. Also unsatisfactory are the terms 'inside' and 'outside' as they fail, I think, to imbue any notion of group or family. Some *uchis* can be reference groups and others are not, but *uchi* has to be created within membership groups. The notion of 'community' is also sometimes close to *uchi*, as I have rephrased it in some contexts. However both concepts of group and community may not capture the dynamism of creation and recreation offered by my use of the concept of *uchi* and *soto*, and more importantly, they cannot capture the sense of the Japanese traditional cultural values which expect homogeneity among *uchi* members. This structural power is what Nakane wanted to emphasise through her analysis of social interactions in the 1960s' high economic

growth era in Japan and it is relevant to my analysis of the transformation of *uchi*, using media and ICT in the context of social changes and globalisation. The other reason is that 'community' also may not adequately include small *uchis* such as close friends, couples and family which are the most important to an understanding of the role of media in Japanese people's everyday life.

In using Japanese emic concepts I have attempted to contribute to a de-Westernisation of audience research. Next I will discuss the Western etic concepts such as 'public' and 'public sphere' and suggest why they may fail to capture an adequate sense of Japanese people's social and communicative time-space in their everyday life. At the end of this thesis I will discuss the possibility of cosmopolitanism by using some examples of emic concepts in Japan such as self-creation and *uchi*. These may have some application in the West, raising the possibility of their being etic.

Western Etic and Emic Concepts

The second contribution I have tried to make to this de-Westernisation process is my use of Western etic concepts and my Japanese contextualisation of them. In appropriating and applying Western etic concepts that turn out to also be useful for understanding Japanese audiences (for example, selectivity, para-social interaction, identification, fantasising and personal use), I have provided further support for the claim — that has often been challenged, not only by *Nihonjinron* but also on the grounds of eurocentrism — that these concepts are indeed etic. There are various similarities in the psychological and personal levels of audience engagement with media and ICT in between Japan and the West, although some social and cultural contexts in which people use the media are different, as I discussed in Chapter Four. Therefore these findings from my ethnographic research in Japan may show the universalism of media audiences in terms of those dimensions of audience engagement.

However, I have recognised the fact that other concepts of audience

engagement, existing in more social and political aspects, must be negotiated within the Japanese social and cultural context because of the peculiarities that exist in both the West and Japan. For example, in the dimension of utility, Lull's (1980) notion of social use must be expanded because of the differences in social relationships between the U.S. and Japan. In everyday life, Japanese people reflexively and socially use media and ICT in order to organise and reorganise the *uchis* to which they belong. Thus, the most significant aspect of the social use of media and ICT in Japan is that of *uchi*-creation and re-creation (cf. Chapter Five).

In the dimension of interpretation, Hall's (1980) encoding-decoding model must be remodeled in terms of *sunao*, which means 'compliant viewings', or in Hall's terms, 'preferred reading' — in a Japanese context. *Sunao* is usually translated as of 'meek', 'obedient' or 'docile', but it can also mean honest or frank. In English, these two groups of terms seem to have little connection, and thus it is very difficult to find an expression in English which captures the meaning of *sunao*. A common use of *sunao* is in the phrase *sunao naiiko* (good/obedient child); hence the notion of obedience being included in the meaning of *sunao*. However, students and younger people may also be praised for being obedient in this manner, which may lead us to the temptation to jump to the judgement that the Japanese praising of obedience reveals a valuing of what we might think of as 'blind obedience' because in the UK, we may expect more criticism and resistant. But it is important to resist this temptation to see *sunao* as an undesirable quality in an adult as this fails to capture the full meaning of *sunao*, a quality indisputably understood as being desirable. The notion of obedience contained within the concept of *sunao* should better be understood as 'trust', in a way which reflects dependence on and trust in the judgement of one's senior, mother and so forth, over rash independence and faith in one's own judgement. Here we can see the Japanese 'hierarchical system' of social relationships come into play. If we understand a *sunao* person as being trusting, rather than obedient or meek, we can make the connection to honesty, as an honest person is one that can be trusted.

In English there remains a separateness between trusting (obedient) and trustworthiness (honest), which corresponds to the separateness between two distinct individuals; that is, someone who is trusting and someone who can be trusted. However, when considering the Japanese tendency to minimise the distinction between individuals, we can perhaps begin to see that trustworthiness and being trusting, both expressed by the term *sunao*, are one and the same in a society or community based on a group model.

Responding to rapid social changes, Japan is changing as much as the rest of the world as it moves away from community-oriented living. However, being *sunao* is still considered a virtue in Japan and is seen as moral trust rather than as blind trust, which is important in order to maintain social relations and structure. This is in contrast to particularly Western cultures which may value 'telling it like it is', and where these characteristics in adults may be seen as naïve or childlike. According to British cultural norms, research should expect more resistant television viewing, as Morley (1980) demonstrates in his Nationwide Audience project. Thus we may see the way in which the traditional cultural and social norms shape decoding differently in Japan and Britain from comparing both Morley's and my qualitative audience reception studies.

However I do not want to give a stereotyped and simple picture of either Japanese or Western audiences by using the dichotomy between 'the West' and 'the Rest' for which *Nihonjinron* has been highly criticised. I also discovered critical viewing amongst my informants in Japan, just as Morley (1980) found a diversity of decoding in terms of social contexts in the UK. Recently by introducing the Western notion of media literacy into Japan, this *sunao* attitude increasingly has been criticised, particularly by feminists, as being naïve. If the authorities — broadcasters, in this case — are misleading viewers, which feminist critics claim to be the case regarding the propagation of patriarchal ideologies, then a *sunao*, or compliant, attitude towards television images is surely a naïve one. Such discourse, and the recent public discovery that television producers do not always

report the truth, has led to the demand for media literacy classes in elementary schools. The debate as to whether or not such classes should be included in the curriculum is still continuing. It is another issue as to whether or not such classes would indeed create a critical reception of media without stimulating corresponding changes in social values; for example, without encouraging school children to develop and express individual opinions.

This argument is related to the dimension of participation from the Habermasian (1989) notion of 'public sphere', as interpreted in a Japanese context. This 'etic' concept may have to be reconsidered with regard to its cross-cultural validity because of, on the one hand, the political and social differences between Japan which was modernised by the West, and the West which was in contrast, modernised by its own people. On the other hand, it may relate to the role of contemporary information and communication technology in general, as well as to the culturally mediated influence of personal communication technology. Abercombie (1996) claims:

It is much less clear that *technological* changes have substantially changed viewer behaviour... in household that have more than one television set, for the bulk of the time, only one set is on. There is no serious evidence that zapping and grazing are particularly common, although every viewer may well perform these unnatural acts from time to time, and people do not, on the whole, make use of the range of the programming by looking at it all. (p.185)

However, in many Japanese households, I saw 'postmodern audiences' who were fragmented by their multiple engagements with media and ICT. Family members engage with not only multiple television sets, channels and programmes by using the multiple remote control devices of new communication technologies with connect with television, but also engage with ICT, and they do this simultaneously. ICT frequently interrupt 'collective viewing' at home or at the nation from the

outside. Such multiple engagement with media and ICT in Japanese people's everyday life may make it more difficult to create a 'public sphere'. The mobile telephone which is equipped with internet access and a digital camera has become a 'part of the body' for the Japanese youth and their so-called 'thumb' culture. While we can see a significant tendency towards fragmentation and individualisation of audiences, people may *reconnect* with each other as *uchi* members rather than as 'public' and may create social intimacy and ontological security while maintaining their *uchi* rather than 'public sphere' by means of their constant engagement with personalised media and ICT in Japan.

I will not discuss in great deal the historical, theoretical and philosophical literature on the Western 'public/private' and the 'public sphere' in Japan here because of the limits of both my capability and space, but instead I will give some implications from my fieldwork, with particular regard to the recent trends in the debate about "public" in English and "*ooyake* (public)" in Japanese.

What do Japanese people actually think about the term 'public' themselves? Just as it is very difficult to translate *sunao* into English because of cultural differences, it is also very difficult to adequately translate "public" into Japanese. It has usually been translated as "*ooyake*" or "*koukyou*". When I asked my informants about the term *koukyou* (which is a more commonly-used term for "public"), surprisingly, some of the informants suggested something evil, and others recalled World War Two saying, "I cannot die for the country." Where do those negative and fearful feelings come from? What is the connection between "public" and dying for one's country?

The Nobel Prize-winning novelist Ooe (1999) discusses the notion of 'public' in Japan, quoting seven meanings of *ooyake* (which is a linguistically older term for "public" in Japanese) from the *Koujien* dictionary: 1. emperor, 2. government, 3. state/society, 4. openness, 5. public property, 6. justice/fairness, 7. the wealthy. Ooe writes:

These days a popular critic frequently uses the term *ooyake* and he seems to be using meaning 3. (He wants to say) something like (we) want young people to recover the attitude to think about *ooyake*... Why does he use the term of *ooyake*, which is different from today's daily language? ...What is wrong about saying we want young people to think about the nation and society as a priority? I think if he rephrased it, he would feel it would be far away from the word feeling of *ooyake* which the speaker or writer has... Why doesn't the feeling of the word fit precisely? Why do we feel that other words are too much or too short? For people who hold the term of *ooyake* as their own word, even though they use it with meaning 3 in their heads, meanings 1 to 7 are also melting into each other in their hearts...It is obvious that "public" in English is irrelevant to meaning 1 of *ooyake*, but also, nobody would connect it with 7. If so, we must think about why *ooyake* connects to the wealthy in Japanese 'culture'... (my translation, p.5)

On the one hand, as Ooe mentioned, there is a tendency observable among writers of intellectual discourses on 'public' to relate to the nationalism implied by meaning 3 of *ooyake*. Those critics and intellectuals are concerned about the people's social psychological movement away from *Messhiboukou* (selfless devotion to one's country) before and during World War Two to *Mekkouboushi* (devotion to one's self without caring about the country) after the War and they appeal for the reconstruction of *ooyake* and the reestablishment of nationalism. Kim (2002, p.ii-iii) questions the possibility of constructing a 'civil society' in Japan based on a concept of *ooyake* which would not be constructed by top-down and self-less devotion as it has been understood in modern Japanese society, but rather by bottom-up action which is initiated by an active self, as it is in the West.

On the other hand, Japanese people also connect 'public' with the national collective memory of World War Two, in which many young people died for the emperor (meaning 1 of *ooyake*), the so-called *kamikaze*, who have been shown on television programmes again and again throughout their life-paths. The complex meanings from 1 to 7 of *ooyake* have emerged from traditional Japanese culture.

When Japanese hear this term, the seven meanings of *ooyake* interact with each other, conveying cultural representation and symbolic forms in everyday life and they create 'unpleasant emotional symphony' in people's hearts. This is the other reason that I use the Japanese emic concepts of *uchi* and *soto* rather than the Western etic concepts of public and private in this ethnography.

However, I do not want to claim that there is no public sphere in Japan. There are public debate and audience participation programmes on television², many political web sites and chat rooms in the internet, and many volunteer groups existing in Japan. There are also democracy, voting³ and public opinion polls in Japan. However it is also true that, in my fieldwork, none of my informants participated in those political discussions 'in public'. Rather, they refused it in order to avoid conflicts, and to maintain their social relationships. Mizoguchi (2002) refers to the way that Habermas' notion of public sphere emerged from the European historical context and he emphasises the uniqueness of the notion of public/private in Japan. He explains, "the notion of public/private which interprets the 'private' as the 'domestic' and the 'public' as the 'state', itself actually exists (only) within the Japanese context...people should not speak about the 'state public'...and this definition is still alive today"(my translation, p.217-218). Thus in Japan, historically, 'public' has been normatively understood as not a thing that people create together but a thing that authority gives people from the above and people should not even talk about. In Chapter Four, I gave two reasons why people resist participating in the media: fear of standing out, and because they feel it is pointless to do so. In my fieldwork, it was not that people did not care about politics at all but they tended not to talk about public matters outside of their intimate *uchi* such as family and close friends where they feel

² The number of those programmes may not be so many as in the West and people tend to talk behind the wall or mosaic on their faces and change their voices in order to protect their privacy and feel more comfortable to expose and express themselves when they talk about their private and intimate matters.

³ The voting rate in both the 1996' and 2000's elections is about 60%. (*Mainichi shinbun*: <http://www.mainichi.co.jp/>)

ontological security. Thus, as Nakane (1967) points out, “it is too simple to think all Japanese ways of thinking and interpersonal relationships change to Western ones or become close to them” (my translation, p.17). Even though in Japan forms may appear to be the same or similar, because of the peculiarity of its historical, political, social and cultural context, meanings for people may be quite different from those in the West. For example, the popular newscaster Tetsuya Tsukushi’s following comment illustrates such skepticism about Western assumptions. He criticised the American attitude of using the alleged American success story of Japan in World War Two as a justification for starting a war to implant democracy in Iraq (Tsukushi Tetsuya NEWS 23 in March 05, 2003). Tsukushi questioned whether democracy or civil society has really been developing in Japan, although America occupied Japan for a long period of seven years after the war and implanted democracy there. He ironically asked, “Did it really succeed in Japan?...How long should America occupy Iraq after this war in order to implant democracy?” I want to question how much democracy and civil society have been ‘melting with each other in people’s hearts’ in Japan, after the more than half a century since they were implanted by the West.

In the recent history of the world, it may be true that the universalism of Western modernity has been penetrating into the rest of the world, especially in response to the following three factors: firstly, the fall of communism and the further expansion of capitalism as a general world economic system; secondly, the market tendencies and explosive economic growth of the 1990s; and thirdly, the recent incredible effect of technological growth, including that of ICT. However, it may also be important for social scientists who wish to understand ‘the Rest’ to recall that, as Hall (1992b) points out:

The destruction of indigenous cultural life by western culture is, for most of them, a very mixed blessing. And as the human, cultural and ecological consequences of this form of ‘western development’ become more obvious, the question of whether there is

only one path to modernity is being debated with increasing urgency. The historically inevitable and necessarily progressive character of the West's expansion into the Rest is no longer as obvious as perhaps it once seemed to western scholars. (p.317)

Thus there have been various debates regarding the Western notion of 'public/private' and 'public sphere' in Japan because of the social and historical differences between the West and Japan. As Higashijima (2002) argued, it may be true that "it is wrong to expect the term of *ooyake* to correspond exactly to the Western modern public one" (my translation, p.65). These confusions may show that those concepts in fact may only work in the West and may be Western emic rather than etic ones. By questioning the cross-cultural validity of such concepts with regard to Japanese audiences, I hope to have further de-Westernise audience research.

The Complexity Model

In appropriating and using etic and emic concepts to interpret Japanese phenomena, their meanings are re-negotiated in the process of this interpretation, and what has emerged is their contextualised meaning—in the Japanese field. I have examined and developed the model of audiences through this interpretation of audience engagement with media in Japan. I will give the following three examples of this process; first, I developed a model with some new dimensions of audience engagement such as connectivity, world-creation, *uchi*-creation and self-creation through negotiation between both Western and Japanese emic concepts and social practices of Japanese people in the field. Second, in the model of audiences I have proposed, I reject any rigid dichotomy between micro- and macro-phenomena. I tried to view people's everyday life as a site of dynamic interactions between multiple complex systems between the micro and macro. Through my fieldwork in Japan, I found that these multiple complex systems are comprised of the variety of groups into which people organise themselves;

domestic, family, relatives, business, school, fans, college, friends, local, national, global and virtual *uchis*. The importance of both the dynamic self-organisation of these *uchis* and the interactions among them at all of these levels suggests that the simple picture of interaction between micro- and macro-phenomena is insufficient. The complex interactions amongst this myriad of *uchis* leads to emergent phenomena, which reflexively feed back into the ongoing interactions, in turn leading to the further emergence of phenomena. Using Giddens' idea of structuration and Lash's ideas of structural- and self-reflexivity, I hope to have painted a picture of the diverse, numerous and unpredictable ways in which people engage with media and with others in the creation of not only themselves but that of further complex levels of organisation. Thirdly, I proposed the concept of self-creation, based on the social practices of my Japanese informants, non-Western audiences. I developed this by considering the interactions with Western etic concepts such as Giddens' (1991) self-identity, Hall's (1992a, 1996) identification, Thompson's (1995) self-formation, Lull's (2001) cultural programmer and Appadurai's (1990, 1991, 1996) imagination. I also appropriate from the notion of self-organisation, derived from the paradigm of complexity, and some assumptions of this paradigm. This concept has thus emerged from an interaction and hybridisation between Western concepts and non-Western social practices in everyday life. I want to access the cross-cultural validity of this concept in future projects. The developing of an integrated framework in the Japanese field may be the most important contribution of my attempts at de-Westernisation of audience research.

Through these three steps I have tried to 'de-Westernise' media studies by proposing an integrated model whose aim is to be generalisable, but a dynamic, adaptive, 'complex' one. This model itself should be reflexively contextualised and recreated depending on the cultures or societies which we seek to understand in the context of Twenty-first Century globalisation.

The Mutual Complementarity of Qualitative and Quantitative Research

The third theoretical aim of my research has been a methodological one, and it has had two strands. Firstly, I wanted to provide a Japanese complement to the largely Western body of qualitative audience research. Through lessons gained from some previous Western audience ethnographic research, studies of Japanese social relationships and communication styles and my pre-fieldwork, I established a 'de-Westernising' ethnographic methodology in understanding the role of media in Japanese people's everyday lives. In revealing the findings regarding Japanese audiences—whether they resemble or differ from the findings of studies of Western audiences—I have provided such a complement. Secondly, there already exists a vast amount of quantitative Japanese audience research, but it contains very few qualitative studies that could serve to complement it. I intended that my research could both a) serve as a complement *to* and b) be complemented *by* this quantitative research. The third—and most important—aspect of this mutual complementation is c) the fact that my qualitative study reveals significant *non-linear phenomena* existing within audiences; something which quantitative studies have been incapable of revealing. I hope that the identification of such phenomena will be a significant contribution to audience research in general.

Concerning (a), in Chapter Four I discussed the concept of the validity of a study, showing that while qualitative research has strong potential for high validity, quantitative research is vulnerable to invalidity. It is with respect to the validity of findings that the former can contribute to the latter, thus complementing it. In doing more in-depth research than that conducted within other Japanese audience studies, the findings of my qualitative study have contributed to—or in some cases undermined—the validity of some Japanese audience research findings. For example, consider the question of the fragmentation of family viewing, discussed in Chapter Five. An NHK survey (Kamimura et al, 2000) showed a tendency towards increasing fragmentation of the family (a drop of five percent over fifteen years in the number of people

perceiving television to be a facilitator of family togetherness). My results found a similar tendency and, giving validity to NHK's results insofar as they can provide them with increased explanatory power, they can be seen as complementing that research. A possible explanation of NHK's findings that my research has revealed was that—due to firstly, the increasing presence in the home of personalised media and, secondly, the importance in my informants' lives of belonging to and maintaining *uchis*—family members are either retreating into their bedrooms or own spaces (the kitchen for some housewives) or are retreating into 'personal spaces' *within* the living room, to watch television or videos, use the internet for viewing and/or contributing to homepages and/or emailing friends or colleagues or to talk or text on their mobile phones. And some informants are doing these all at once! Engaging with media and ICT in these ways was, I concluded, a means of my informants maintaining connectivity to *uchis* to which they belonged and existing outside the domestic *uchi* but readily and frequently accessed in an act of disembedding from that domestic time-space. Concerning (b), one way in which qualitative research can be complemented by quantitative studies is that the latter can provide reliability to the former. NHK's survey, revealing the tendency towards increasing fragmentation of the family, provides evidence of the reliability of my own findings regarding this phenomenon.

Another of my findings offers an explanation, again employing the concept of *uchi*, of the finding that nearly seventy percent of internet activity is information-seeking (Multi-Media Shinko Centre, 2000, p.15). My results also showed this kind of engagement to be prevalent and significant. I interpreted this kind of engagement as arising out of needs for information that, in turn, often arose from people's belonging to their various *uchis*. Examples I gave were those of housewives getting recipes off the internet and buying children's clothes, and of businessmen researching market trends. Again, the quantitative result increases the reliability of my finding that information-seeking accounted for a large part of people's internet use.

Another example of a quantitative study contributing reliability to my results concerns the utility of television. The Dentsu Souken (2000) survey found relaxation to be the most common reason for watching television. My results also revealed relaxation to be a significant reason for watching television, and since this is also confirmed by the quantitative study, it increases the reliability of my findings. Of course, my explanation of why relaxation is so important to my informants (that it offers escape from local life and its pressures, created by the obligations, loyalties and commitments of *uchi* membership), in turn increases the validity of the quantitative data.

Conversely, either some of my results could undermine the validity of some quantitative data or, by the same example, the quantitative results could reduce the reliability of my data. In Chapter Six I discussed the Hakuhodo finding that “the internet has done little to change interpersonal relationships between relatives” (2000, p.46). This conflicts with my finding that the internet has, in many cases, served to sustain communication between family members which would, were there no internet connection, decrease. Does the Hakuhodo survey undermine the reliability of my findings? Or, conversely, do my findings undermine its validity? I will, in light of my own findings, challenge the validity of the Hakuhodo conclusion on the grounds that i) it is possibly out of date and ii) the responses to the questions asked in the survey were an insufficient basis from which to draw the conclusion the researchers made. Regarding (i), because of the extremely rapid diffusion of the internet and the corresponding climb in internet literacy, Hakuhodo, conducting their research three years prior to my own research, is quite possibly out of date with respect to this finding. It is likely that now, with ever-increasing ICT use and literacy, there are greater numbers of people, particularly amongst the older generations, using the internet to sustain relationships with their family members. If we add to this the fact that contact is maintained not only via the personal computer but also commonly via mobile phone technology—something the Hakuhodo survey did not investigate—we could

possibly see even further use of ICT to maintain contact with families. Concerning (ii), the use of the word “relatives” in the questions could have been problematic. Upon seeing this word, it is likely that many respondents would think immediately of distant relatives (grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles) and not their fathers, mothers, wives, husbands, children or siblings. I used examples of informants increasing their connections to immediate family members to show an increased connectivity between families for which ICT is responsible. While many people maintain contact with their immediate family members (or particular relatives), they may not show particular interest when it comes to distant relatives (or *all* their relatives). Thus the wording of the question in the Hakuhodo survey may have failed to capture significant cases. Therefore, if we accept that internet diffusion has changed the situation in significant ways over the last three years, that use of the word ‘relatives’ could have been problematic, and if we take into account mobile phone use, I think we have sufficient reason to conclude that the Hakuhodo finding could be undermined by my own.

Finally, concerning (c), while quantitative statistical studies using linear mathematics can deal only with linear phenomena, the methodology of qualitative research has enabled me to discover of a variety of *non-linear* phenomena. My research revealed the following non-linear phenomena: the reflexive, on-going processes of self-creation and self-organisation of *uchis*, the unpredictable effects of media throughout people’s life-paths, turning points and phase transitions, the power structures from within which people engage with media, interaction between individuals and groups, the significance in people’s life-paths of certain media events or products, the emotional symphonies going on inside people when they engage with media and, finally, the new dimensions of engagement that I identified (world-creation and connectivity, discussed in Chapter Four, *uchi*-creation and recreation, Chapter Five, and self-creation, Chapter Six).

The Limits of this Research

While I have aimed to achieve a great deal with this thesis by means of my findings, I acknowledge several limits to its scope. Firstly, the aim has been to understand audience engagement with media and ICT in everyday life. One of my findings was that global phenomena are embedded in local life, in terms of people's self-identity. However, it has not been part of this project to offer a comprehensive analysis of either globalisation or identity. The second limitation stems from my interest in, and hence focus on, the emotional side of people's lives, their interactions, communication and relationships with family and friends. Thus my thesis has been able to merely indicate implications for relationships with culture, politics and economy. Thirdly, my informants selected vast amounts of media texts, the analysis of which, has also been outside the scope of my research. The fourth limit concerns my use of the concepts of *uchi/soto*, self-creation and the complexity model, neither of which I have attempted to apply in contexts outside Japan. The testing of these in other contexts could be investigated in future research. A fifth issue, which lies beyond the scope of this thesis, is the question of the public sphere in Japan. Investigation of this question would be the topic of a further project on audiences who actually participate in television programmes or political web sites in the internet. Finally, as noted at the outset of this thesis, I selected informants who were early adopters of ICT, so for this reason my sample was not intended to be representative or to provide grounds for generalisability. Still, within my sample, I have made sure there was diversity in terms of wealth, occupation, family organisation and lived experience abroad. The reason I chose early adopters was to pick up developing trends in the ever-increasing diffusion of new media and ICT technologies. After all, the benefit of qualitative research in this case is not to provide a picture of the 'average' but to take a close look at the dynamism of ICT users at the 'cutting edge'. Even amongst this group my research has revealed diversity.

However, despite these limits of my research, I believe in the possibility and

usefulness of using the complexity model of audiences to provide a framework and tools for the observation, comprehension and analysis of the diversity, dynamism and complexity of audiences. As audiences are somewhat elusive and as we should not attempt to reduce them to a definitive phenomenon, I hope my use of the paradigm of complexity has allowed them to reveal themselves to a greater degree than had been possible in the past.

Part Three: Reflections on Japan in the Twenty-First Century

In this, the final section of my thesis, I wish to step back from my findings and indicate their possible wider implications, offering a perspective on Japanese culture and society in the globalising world. I will discuss the role of media and ICT in relation to globalisation and cosmopolitanism with reference to the first issue in the cultural and political debate about universalism and cultural specificity, namely, the question of cultural homogenisation and cultural heterogenisation.

The Third Phase Transition

The paradigm of complexity is one of emergence and collapse. A famous Japanese quotation reminds people of the everpresent possibility of collapse, and the fact that it will inevitably follow on the heels of arrogance:

The sound of the Gion Shoja bells echoes the impermanence of all things,
The colour of the sala flower reveals the truth that the prosperous must decline,
The proud do not endure; they are like a dream on a spring night,
The mighty fall at last; they are as dust before the wind.

The Tale of the Heike, anonymous, 13th century

In Chapter Three, I discussed Ooe's and Ozawa's idea that there have been two notable collapses already in modern Japanese history. The first occurred preceding the Meiji Restoration of 1868, when the ships of Western imperialism forced Japan to open up after two hundred years of being closed to other nations. After a period in which nationalism again reached a peak, the country tumbled down a second time with World War II. Both were occasions in which the hitherto dominant Japanese culture disintegrated and gave way to a new order through

active adaptation to the West. Since end of the Second World War, Japan's economic success and confidence grew steadily, peaking with the 'bubble economy' of the 1980s, with images of American television imbuing people with dreams of achieving 'American success'. However, Japan's present recession is, again, a 'fall' coming after 'pride', in which people are coming to understand that the success of the previous decades was never to last.

The first two phase transitions in Japanese society were largely externally induced, being the results of impact with the rest of the world. However, Ooe and Ozawa argue that the next phase transition will have an internal impetus, stemming from within the individuals constituting the Japan of today. I want to develop this picture of the possibility of a third phase transition within modern Japanese society, coming from the move towards individualisation which is suggested by my findings. By doing this I wish to extend my use of the model of complexity into the future of Japan.

One of my informants, quoting something she had read, said critically that Japan was "like Disneyland"; a self-contained world constructed using its own measures, and run on its own rules; a happy utopia of homogenous occupants, isolated from and without a care for the outside world. "After all, we don't look outward if we are inside a Disneyland, do we?" Her husband interrupted, frustrated, saying, "We were happy in the old days. If we worked hard, our company would take care of us. But, now companies themselves are increasingly threatened by global economic change. Even if we work hard, we cannot escape the threat of losing our job." The belief in a 'utopia' of the 'old days' was prevalent in the 1960s and 1970s and was reinforced through Nakane's analysis of society, employing the concepts of *uchi* and *soto*. While membership exclusively in one *uchi* required embeddedness in a single locale, as well as loyalty and commitment built on constant face-to-face communication, the members acquired a guarantee of membership for the rest of their lives and an ontological security that existed inside of their *uchi* a 'protective cocoon' which has been considered as being

'homogeneous'. However, things have changed, and the present fears regarding the perceived 'collapse' of Japan today constitute a part of people's everyday lives.

Coming through strongly from my informants' stories was the idea that, in the past, all people had to do was work hard within the *uchi* (domestic, business or school) and everything would be fine. There was no need to look outward, as the *uchi* provided everything that was needed. However, in the face of the social and technological changes of today, businessmen's and fathers' economic positions have been threatened. Housewives, not contributing to taxation, have been accused of being "the burden of the nation" (Ogura, 2002) and suicide and divorce rates are high. We are seeing increasing numbers of foreign company presidents, the end of life-long employment and the seniority system and growing bankruptcy. School *uchis* are falling into disorder as youth crime increases and young people are losing faith in old structures, while at the same time they are losing the impetus to study, work hard and achieve. Support for Prime Minister Koizumi has dropped from 90% to 40% since his election, as scandals have caused the public to lose faith in the government's authority. The situation in Japan today is one of uncertainty in all dimensions of culture, society, economy and politics, ranging from micro to macro levels, and people are beginning to look outward for solutions.

People's perception of increased risk in society has led to increased awareness of alternative, often transnational, ways of life and values, as these become visible in a world of widely diffused media and ICT, and to easy access to travel. With the lapsing of tradition and the prevalence of choice (Giddens, 1999), reflexive self-creation takes over as people take control of their lives back from authorities and institutions on which they can no longer rely. In the field, I saw a variety of modes of self-creation, including that of survival and risk-taking in a world increasingly full of risk; this mode of self-creation in turn leading to the modernisation and hybridisation of *uchis*.

The possibility of Cosmopolitanism in Japan

What will emerge in the future from the present chaos of Japan? Perhaps the order that will emerge from the chaos will be a global cosmopolitan identity, able to carry Japan through the pressures and conflicts it is facing in the world today. Furthermore, I believe that it is possible, indeed desirable, for individulisation to develop along with the process of gaining a global cosmopolitan identity.

I do not pretend that this picture is not idealistic, and it may well be criticised from the viewpoint that asserts that Japan is far from being cosmopolitan, due to its purported uniqueness, its nationalism, its *uchi/soto* division, homogeneity, its relative isolation from the rest of the world and its lack of a sense of 'public' and 'public sphere'—these qualities and perceived images having been created by governments and scholars contributing to the body of *Nihonjinron*. Nevertheless, now, after having finished my fieldwork in Japan, I would like to believe that there is indeed a possibility for Japanese people to achieve a cosmopolitan identity. I also expect that the media and ICT will play a great role, and that this will affect the creation of a cosmopolitan identity in people's local life, as Ooe and Ozawa discussed. Using the analogy of Japan as Disneyland, a symbol of isolation and closedness to the outside, we may ask, is this land capable of 'opening up' and connecting to the rest of the world? Even in Tokyo Disneyland itself, I have observed a level of sustained connectivity to the outside world via ICT and the process of disembedding from the locale and embedding in non-spatial *uchis*. By using their personal mobile media, children inside Disneyland were simultaneously engaged in playing video games involving Japanese, rather than American Disney characters—these characters themselves wearing *kimono* and speaking Japanese. These factors highlighted the already hybridised and heterogeneous nature of Disneyland. The connectivity and hybridisation of Disneyland point to its openness to the world, and we can see, stepping out of the analogy, this phenomenon being paralleled in Japan itself, with the gradual erosion of the "clear-cut distinction between 'inside' and 'outside'" (Hall, 1995,

p.190). The deterritorialisation we can observe in Disneyland corresponds to a deterritorialisation of Japan.

If there is indeed a possibility of cosmopolitanism, what would it look like? It would not come from the 'grasshoppers' Brazilians laugh at: the Japanese tourists who come to their country, traveling together on deluxe tour buses, stopping for five minutes at a souvenir store, buying all its contents, leaving nothing behind in the shop after they have gone and considering a foreign location 'experienced'. Neither would it come from the pre-dawn queues of schoolgirls outside the main branch of the Louis Vuitton store in Paris, traveling for the express purpose of shopping. The Sony businessman, flying to San Francisco every two weeks, attending a meeting and then flying back to Tokyo—all in the space of a day—is not a candidate for cosmopolitanism either. A cosmopolitan "needs to have a wider sense of *commitment*—of belonging to the world as a whole...[for whom] there are *no others*" (Tomlinson, 1999, p.186). How can this sense emerge from within Japan, with its strong sense of *uchi/soto* distinction? The key to cosmopolitanism, and something I detected a tendency towards in my fieldwork, is the concept of a global *uchi*, which involves the interaction with distant others (Thompson, 1995) or 'significant others' (Tomlinson, 1999) and joint membership in a global world in which moral responsibility has an opportunity to emerge. This social, cultural and communicative time-space may not be a particularly 'public sphere', in which a critical public actively participates in political debates on public issues. It may be more of a small, 'privatised familial *uchi*', in which people can feel social intimacy and ontological security through interactions with global *uchi* members. Within global *uchis*, individuals' projects of self-creation proceed in an environment structured by what I will call 'contextualised individualism', linking up with the idea of 'solidary individualism' (Berking, 1996; Tomlinson, 1999), and referring to a deeper sense of mutual responsibility to 'distant others'. That is, the individual is neither a fixed and isolatable one nor a self-less member of a group, but from this mediated and non-mediated interaction between transnational and already

hybridised individuals, a new self emerges. The 'individual' is an emergent property of the expanded time-space of social interactions sharing mutual dependence and reliance on 'distant others' and having regard for personal relationships as ends in themselves (cf. Hamaguchi, 1998). The picture of the media and ICT emerging from this is not one of linearity and transmission from 'the West' to 'the Rest' but rather one of a ritual model (Carey, 1989) and, with it, a 'convergence model' of communication (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981) that works for mutual understanding with 'distant others'.

However, the most important thing to emerge from this interaction may be the discovery of family values and ways of life that have been forgotten through the forces of materialism and consumerism (Yamada, 2001, Yamashita, 2000 and my informants), these latter having masked what is really important in life. For example, as I discussed in Chapter Six, one of my informants, who used to be interested in his self-actualisation only within his business *uchi*, became aware of the possibility of finding a new life, values and meanings by doing volunteer work as another form of self-actualisation. He accomplished this through exchanging emails with his global *uchi* members. After developing his frequently mediated and occasionally non-mediated interactions with his global *uchi* members, he came to reflexively recreate himself from being a nationalist to becoming a cosmopolitanist, as well as to recreate his local *uchi* from being homogeneous to becoming a global and heterogeneous one. The other informant, who resists traditional cultural norms for Japanese women, appropriates from social relationships in family and community in Italy. She reflexively recreates her family and local community with traditional Italian cultural values through her engagement with cable and satellite television and ICT. By this means she is able to maintain her connectivity to Italian culture in everyday life. It is becoming possible to find such new values within the expanded time-space of social interaction, by means of media and ICT. Through individuals' projects of self-creation and the recreation of new and globalised values it may be possible for

us to move beyond the to-ing and fro-ing between, on the one hand, a strengthening of the traditional conception of national identity stemming from the Meiji Restoration and, on the other, the erosion of it through active adaptation to perceptions of 'the West'. Out of the chaos of the complex integration of these two poles of self-creation could emerge new cosmopolitan identities, both in and of Japan. I will discuss this issue at greater length in the next section.

Cultural Homogenisation, Heterogenisation and Hybridisation

What implications can I draw from my ethnographic research in regard to the broad cultural and political debate about cultural homogenisation and heterogenisation in the process of globalisation? Robertson (1995) refers to 'glocalisation', from an emic concept of *dochakuka* and 'global localisation' in business in Japan, that is the "interpenetration of . . . the global and the local, or—in more abstract vein—the universal and the particular" (Robertson, 1995, p.30). In the following section, I will demonstrate the complex process of 'interpenetration' of the universal and the particular within the Japanese context based on some findings of my ethnographic research, using the complexity model of audiences which I proposed in Chapter One.

Just as the ships of western imperialism spurred the Meiji restoration and opened Japan to the rest of the world, today a 'careering juggernaut' (Giddens, 1990) of Western operators makes Japanese people's local life even more chaotic under the name of globalisation.⁴ Japanese people, on the one hand, are forced to accommodate themselves to power and pressures for universalism (the juggernaut), but on the other hand, are willing to take risks for the possibilities of new life by appropriating from Western cultural values which are different from Japanese traditional cultural ones. Even in Japan, which—like Disneyland—is well-known for its closeness, uniqueness and isolation from the rest of the world,

⁴ From the point of view of the non-Japanese societies, one of the powerful operators of this 'juggernaut' may be a Japanese.

people have already been drawn into this 'juggernaut' in their local life. In the complexity model of audiences, the arrow of power from 'cultures' to individuals not only shows Japanese people deriving power from the Japanese traditional culture but also from Western and other cultures. The level of 'cultures' in this model implies a dynamic and complex process in which both 'territorial' and 'translocal cultures' (Pieterse, 1995) are reflexively created and recreated from both inter- and intra-cultural interactions with individuals as well as groups.

As I discussed in Chapters Four, Five and Six, local life has become more and more integrated with global. People are, actively or passively, adapting to power from the global world within the local. Through intra-, inter-cultural and 'transnational' interactions, adapting to 'the local', 'the global' and 'the globalised local', cultures are being self-organised into heterogenised as well as homogenised ones and are becoming increasingly complex and hybridised (cf. Hannerz, 1992). Morley and Robins (1995) have discussed the interpenetration of the global and the local, also adding the interesting notion of re-localisation:

Globalisation is, in fact, also associated with new dynamics of *re*-localisation. It is about achievement of a new global-local nexus, about new and intricate relations between global space and local space. (p.116)

In a Japanese context, some informants resist Western or Westernised 'others' and actively accommodate to the traditional Japanese cultural values through identification with *Nihonjinron*, *samurai* drama or NHK. Thus they reflexively create themselves as members of an 'imagined' Japanese community. From these intra-cultural interactions with 'Japanese us' and cultural representations of traditional Japanese culture, as opposed to inter-cultural interactions with 'Western others', the traditional Japanese culture has been reflexively strengthened. This process of traditional re-Japanisation (i.e., traditional self-creation), when viewed from a world-wide perspective, may be considered as

one of cultural heterogenisation through resistance to globalisation. Other informants accommodate to the non-Japanese cultures through both mediated and non-mediated experiences and thereby resist the traditional Japanese culture. For example, one of my informants interacts para-socially via satellite with an American character in a transnational television drama who is not afraid of being different from others and who makes an effort to achieve his own dream. He actively accommodates to the Western individualistic ideology with his 'compliant viewing' and reflexively recreates himself by romanticising Western images (i.e., romanticising self-creation). From the mediated quasi-inter-cultural interactions with American television characters via satellite, as opposed to mediated quasi-intra-cultural interactions with Japanese symbols via terrestrial and non-mediated interactions with people in locale, Japanese national culture may have been eroded. This process of Westernisation or Americanisation may be considered as one of cultural homogenisation through accommodation to globalisation.

However, those two opposed types of self-creation—traditional self-creation and romanticising self-creation—are not fixed, but are in flux. Riding in today's careering 'juggernaut', people go to-ing and fro-ing between two different cultural values and ways of life. On the one hand, while people reflexively re-Japanise themselves as members of an 'imagined' Japanese community, they momentarily disembody from their locale by means of ICT and satellite television and re-embed themselves in the Western or global world. They feel pleasure in embedding themselves into non-Japanese environments by selective exposure to transnational television programmes or by romanticising the possibility of gaining a new life or a new way of self-actualisation. On the other hand, in the process of Americanisation or Westernisation, people create diverse ways of receiving Western popular cultures within their social contexts. In this process they also have to adapt to power from the 'territorial' Japanese culture.

Through complex interactions between both intra-cultural interactions

among these Japanese people who have their personal ‘supercultures’ (Lull, 2001) and inter-cultural or transnational interactions with ‘distant’ others and cultures via media and ICT, people appropriate cultural values that are different from traditional Japaneseness and reorganise ‘the local’ with ‘the global’. From mediated interactions and mediated quasi-interactions with ‘distant’ others and cultures within their expansion of social interaction time-space, people imagine new possibilities for their survival and self-actualisation in the global world. This process of de-Japanisation (i.e., globalising self-creation) may be considered one of cultural hybridisation occurring in globalisation. Thus people adapt to power from both ‘territorial’ traditional culture and ‘translocal’ cultures and reflexively create a new self and a new hybrid culture within the complex process of the concurrent interpenetration of cultural heterogenisation and homogenisation. I will discuss this ‘new hybrid culture’ in the following, final section of this thesis.

The Future of Globalisation—Suggestions from ‘Distant Others’—

Complex Connectivity in a Global World

How can I suggest the future of globalisation—a process which falls over the edge of chaos today—from the perspectives of Japanese who are ‘distant others’, being far from the West both geographically and culturally? Perhaps, firstly, I may point to the complex connectivity and interpenetration between both ‘the universalism in the West’ and ‘the peculiarity in the Rest’ in Japanese people’s everyday life and life-path. Secondly, I may show how Japanese people transnationally interact with ‘distant others’ via media and ICT in their locale and reflexively create themselves in the global *uchis* to which they belong. And from both the first and second findings of my research, finally I may show a possibility of the emergence of ‘a new culture in which there are *no others*’. I will discuss the third issue by focusing on audience engagement with media and ICT in globalisation.

In the same news programme which I discussed earlier, a group of Japanese high school students was reported to have made *direct*, ‘mediated face-to-face’

communication with Iraqi high school students who live in Bagdad, via internet telephone (Tsukushi Teshuya News23 in March 5, 2003). The dialogue between 'distant others' who had never met before began from getting to know each other. Their conversation included the following questions:

"What do you know about Japan?"

"What do you know about Iraq?"

"What is your personal hobby?"

"What is your dream?"

When an Iraq girl asked, "Why do Japanese people support America?", a Japanese girl hesitatingly but strongly answered, "In Japan, there is no dialogue between the government and its people. As Japanese people have different opinions from the government, I hope we can unify our country based on people's opinions." After she expressed herself, she received the warm and supportive applause from her friends. At the end of this programme, the newscaster Tsukushi said, "If the war with Iraq occurs and Bagdad is attacked, these high school students will have complex feelings." And he added the fact that after this dialogue these high school students wrote a letter to Prime Minister Koizumi for the first time in their lives.

Unfortunately, but unsurprisingly, both this letter from high school students and data from public opinion polls show that although about 80% of Japanese people disagree with the war, their collective opinion did not substantially affect the government's decision. On the one hand, the attitude of the government, which ignored its own people's opinions, reinforced the traditional Japanese cultural value that "people should not speak out about the 'state public'" (Mizoguchi, 2002, p.218) and created empty feelings in people's minds that made them lose their motivation to participate in politics. Prime Minister Koizumi commented on this matter,

"(I know) public opinion disagrees with the exercise of military power, and I understand the feelings that a vast amount of majority of people disagree with exercise of military power...I also understand the American standpoint. I made a decision to support [America] for the Japanese national interest" (my translation, public speech, March 20, 2003).

Although Japanese people, having been the only nation to be a victim of the A-bomb, reflect on World War Two and wish to recreate their nation with a pacifist identity and contribute to world peace, the Japanese government made this significant political decision to support the Iraq war without any dialogue with its people.⁵ Are the Japanese people, who immediately accept this decision, not 'a politically autonomous public of citizens' but rather a 'mass' of people who are loyal to the state (cf. Habermas, 1989)?⁶ What is the nature of this 'Japanese democracy' that has been presented as a success case of American policy after World War Two and which America uses to justify its plan to implant democracy in Iraq after this war?

Despite such reservations, on the other hand, we should also recognise the fact that people have become able to connect with each other transnationally, free from state control (cf. Lull, 2001; Tomlinson, 1999). Those high school students were able to talk with each other with 'mediated face-to-face communication'—not via television telephone, which the Iraq government did not allow—but via internet telephone. They reconstructed their communicative time-space beyond geographical and national borders, and they talked about not only the differences between traditional Japanese and Iraq cultures, but also they shared their 'favourite American' popular culture. I believe these mutual understandings

⁵ 81% of Japanese people answered that the prime minister did not explain to people sufficiently about the Iraq war before making his decision. (public opinion; News station, March 24, 2003)

⁶ The survey of public opinion showed that about 76% of people accepted its decision. The question asked: Do you agree with the decision of the Japanese government that supports America in the Iraq war? : Agree 12.1%; Cannot be helped 63.8%; Disagree 22.3%; NA 1.8%. The older generations supported more than younger ones. (*Yomiuri shinbun*, March 25, 2003)

between Japanese and Iraqi students through this ritual communication by 'mediated face-to-face' interactions may give them an opportunity to 'directly' know about and feel emotional proximity with 'distant others'. This is a chance for the students of both Japan and Iraq, who have only been educated inside of their own nations.

As we can see from the example of these high school students, in comparison with older generations, adolescents and young adults tend to connect with 'distant others' more easily and to de-Japanise themselves into 'individuals' beyond their own nations, cultures and ethnicities. The following examples from my informants' conversations within their family *uchi* can perhaps illustrate the move towards individualisation that is taking place among the younger generations through globalisation.

Masatoshi (father, 54): If big, tall foreigners stand in front of me and speak to me in English very fast, I get scared. In order to beat them, I think we need to build up confidence...

Maki (daughter, 24): Really? I don't get scared at all... I say, "I have a friend...By the way, he is an American." I don' say, "I have an American friend..." If an Indonesian girl does something, I used to think Indonesians were like that. But now I think *she* is like that.

Kazuo (father, 45): If black tall people come to me, I get scared...

Kaito (son, 14): Not at all! I don't get scared of white or black people, but I'm more scared of some Japanese bullies in my class!

Media and ICT for an 'Imagined' Global Community

What is the role of media and ICT in the process of individualisation and cosmopolitanisation? ICT may play an important role in terms of expanding the social, cultural and communicative time-space of social interactions in everyday

life, and making it possible to disembody oneself from the locale and maintain the connectivity and social intimacy with 'distant others' through their interactions. Thus ICT gives people an opportunity to create a new cosmopolitan identity and culture, and this in turn may lead to a possibility of restructuring a global world beyond nations. One young man I spoke to expressed these attitudes as follows:

I think there are individuals, not 'Japanese' and 'English' and so on. . . These days the internet is everywhere so I really think the place where you're born or the environment where you grow up. . . identity isn't determined by these things. It's not innate, more like...it's what we pick up. . . No *boundaries* or *nations*...we have to change that structure. (Takeshi, age 28)

As my informants' cases illustrate, by frequently interacting with 'distant others' via ICT, 'others' gradually become embedded into our local everyday life. Through these interactions a small global *uchi* emerges, just as a small local *uchi* emerges through frequent face-to-face interactions with 'local others'. Social intimacy and emotional bonds with 'others' are developing, and 'distant others' are becoming mentally 'close *uchi* members' by reflexively and actively adapting global ways. The notion of global *uchi* which I propose may be a very small *uchi* but it may be a irreplaceable locus for its members. It may be as important, or sometimes more important than their local *uchi*. In the process of creating and recreating this small and closed, yet global, *uchi*, each individual member may have to struggle and take lessons to learn how difficult it is to mutually understand the cultural differences among heterogeneous *uchi* members and how important it is to respect each other beyond those differences. However if he or she finds out new or forgotten meanings of ways of life among the 'distant others' through their mediated experiences I believe that a sense of 'global *uchi-ism*' may emerge from this human and social practice of self-creation. It may constitute an '*uchi* membership' wherein people have social intimacy, emotional bonds, ontological

security and moral responsibility with significant members in their privatised global *uchi* who have 'social imagination' of a further heterogeneous global world rather than a 'citizenship' coming from the etymology of 'cosmopolitanism'. From these numerous interactions with small global *uchis* a new 'imagined' global community may emerge. Thus an 'imagined' global community is created and recreated by the interconnectivity and interdependency both within and between global *uchis* through the individuals' transnational mediated and non-mediated experiences.

What is the role of television in developing a global *uchi-ism*? In Chapter Four, I discussed how it would take more than just mediated quasi-experiences with television to effect a 'moral-practical reflection' (Thompson, 1995). However, I believe that a global *uchi-ism*, emerging from non-mediated and mediated experiences with distant others, has been strengthened through quasi-mediated experiences with television images. Numerous small global *uchi* members may reflexively recreate themselves as members of an 'imagined' global community through identification with various different ways of life delivered via satellite television in today's global rich media environment. Televisions—in our living rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, cars and in big crossings in cosmopolitan cities, highly embedded in today's everyday life—can show not only the modern and fancy ways of life in the West but also, for example, may show an extended family living happily together or the sunny smiles of children in Bagdad. Media audiences who have global *uchi* identities may develop a 'complex emotional symphony' in everyday life through mediated quasi-interaction with the massive flickering images that exist at the intersection between 'the West and the Rest'.

If we truly know the meaning of love, friendship and compassion and if we know that exclusion, discrimination and revenge do not give rise to anything positive, I believe that the order which will emerge from the chaos of a global world will be created not by terrorism or war, but by the emergence of a wide range of cosmopolitan identities. Indeed, the sound of the Gion Shoja bells—signaling

the “impermanence of all things”—still echoes in a global world.

Appendix A: Japanese Culture, Family and Media:

A Background for the non-Japanese Reader

1. *Nihonjinron* (Japanese Culture Studies): A Brief History of Japanese Literature

1.1. Meiji to World War II

In the first half of the Meiji period, confronted with the big and strong bodies of Westerners and their powerful and advanced technologies, the pressure on the Japanese to modernise led to a trend towards a conception of themselves, at least in the eyes of intellectuals, as inferior. While education was seen as a way of making up for technological backwardness, some scholars argued for intermarriage as a way of strengthening the Japanese race. However this trend was reversed in the second half of the Meiji period with a backlashing wave of nationalistic 'Japanisation', spurred on by Japan's successes in the Sino- and Russo-Japanese wars of the late nineteenth century, in which the Japanese were represented as powerful and superior.

The Taisho and Showa pre-World War II periods saw an attempt to get away from the simplistic categorisation of the Japanese as either inferior or superior and a more international or objective analysis of Japanese culture was attempted in the face of becoming a member of the post-World War international 'community'. This period focused on the uniqueness of the Japanese culture and language and intellectuals painted pictures of the Japanese and their culture in terms of metaphors with the four seasons, zen and Confucian concepts, in which Japan's connection to spiritualism and the natural order was emphasised. In the period leading up to the second World War and during the Sino-Japanese war of 1937-1945, this confidence in the uniqueness and strength of themselves was manifested in Japanese fascist nationalism. At this point the Japanese sense of

superiority was at one of its highest--but was to be destroyed by the turn of events with the second World War.

1.2. Benedict and the Post-War Period

The post-World War II period brought with it a deep need for self-reflection in the face of failure against and humiliation in front of the West. At this point, during occupation by American troops, Japanese scholars and intellectuals felt the need to find a new identity for Japan and looked to The United States and Americans as their role models. Again, the Japanese self-image swung back to one of inferiority.

During the war American social anthropologist Ruth Benedict was commissioned to study the Japanese by the United States government, the latter hoping that such an analysis would aid in their effort to penetrate and then conquer them. This study, while coming from outside Japan and from social anthropology, nevertheless represents the start of the tradition of post-World War II *Nihonjinron* and is referred to by most subsequent studies. Benedict (1946) presented her findings in terms of several illuminating dichotomies and her analysis is probably at least partly responsible for many of the perceptions of the Japanese that linger today. She applied her "patterns of culture" as an analytical tool and argued that while American culture was one of individualism, Japan's was one of collectivism. Americans, living in a 'guilty culture' morally acted upon their consciences while Japan's 'shame culture' meant that the Japanese's actions were guided by what would and would not shame them in front of others. Control, a sense of one's own of which is vital to the American sense of self was, for the Japanese, lacking from within but imposed from above. I will note here that Benedict's study worked within a framework of dichotomies, the central one being that between Japan and the West, in this case, the United States. Japan was understood only in terms of the many ways it was different from and opposite to the 'West'.

Benedict's work spurred a considerable body of literature and a lot of criticism from Japanese scholars, defending themselves and their culture from her analysis, which many felt portrayed Japanese people as inhuman. Since her work, *Nihonjinron* took off and took on, by means of a much more consistent and scholarly pursuit, the issue of Japanese identity. A special edition of *Minzokugakukenkkyu* (Anthropological Studies)(1950) was devoted to debating Benedict's work and, at this time, after the loss of the war, historians, social anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers and legal scholars attempted to understand their culture from a more objective perspective, in the light of Benedict's 'Western' and very negative analysis. Such scholars, reflecting the nation's feelings of bewildered failure, located responsibility for the loss of the war in Japan's failure to modernise, this being due to their 'uniqueness', and hence perhaps inability to cope, in the world. While Benedict's work was heavily criticised it remains very influential amongst both Japanese and Western Japanese culture scholars.

1.3. Recovery

After Japan regained economic strength during the 1950s and 1960s and their confidence increased, their self-image, as portrayed in the literature, also became more positive. This new perspective was encouraged by the government, which, in 1955, proclaimed that Japan was no longer in the post-war period. Several positive and fresh perspectives on Japanese culture were put forward at this time. Kato (1955) argued that the 'Westernise/purify' debate between intellectuals was misguided as it failed to acknowledge that Japan was already a hybridised culture. He claimed that Japan's hybridity and Japanese people's already existent ability to incorporate hybridised phenomena into their everyday lives should be acknowledged and Japan's unique version of hybridisation celebrated. He argued that whereas in Singapore and Malaysian cities and skylines, for example, the evidence of modernisation was imposed by their status as colonies,

Japan had hybridised with Western phenomena it is own special and self-directed way. Only intellectuals, failing to acknowledge, Kato claimed that their wearing of Western clothes and their using biros rather than Japanese writing brushes was evidence of hybridisation, called for purification or going back to 'traditional culture' while 'ordinary people' were happy to live with the inextricably mixedness and embeddedness of Western phenomena in their everyday lives. Other scholars also offered positive images of Japanese culture, emphasising, for example, Japan's parallel evolution alongside, and thus not inferior to, that of the West (Umesao, 1967). Subsequent scholars also brought attention to Japan's similarities to, rather than differences from, the West (Bellah, 1957).

1.4. The Sixties and the Japanese Sense of Self

The period from the mid-sixties to the mid-eighties, saw increasing confidence within Japan, both in its economy and in its cultural identity. With Japan's emergence as an economic competitor to the United States came, once again, a feeling of greatness and pride in its uniqueness. This pride was reflected again by scholars. Nakane (1967) claims that, while Western societies are structured horizontally, Japanese societal relations are arranged vertically. Despite the hierarchical nature of Japanese social relations, Nakane displays its fundamental collectivism, depicted by Benedict as undesirable, in a positive light.

Doi (1971), a Japanese psychiatrist, uses what he at first claimed to be the uniquely Japanese concept of *amae* to capture the nature of Japanese interpersonal relations, thus painting a picture of Japanese culture. *Amae*, if it is indeed a more universal concept than Doi at first thought, can perhaps be translated as psychological dependence and characterises relationships from those between mother and child to those between boss and worker at their most fundamental level. Doi came up with his concept of *amae* when comparing the way Japanese relate to each other with that of Americans. *Amae* and its functioning at the emotional rather than logical level is thought to make for

smooth interpersonal and social relationships. Doi saw this as being in contrast to what he at least initially experienced as the rational and almost cold independence of American interpersonal relationships. The distinction at the heart of Doi's analysis is that between Japanese *amae* and Western (or American) independence. Doi's and Nakane's respective analyses do not share the blind confidence of pre-war conceptions of the Japanese national identity but restore a positive image of the characteristics of Japan and its people distinguishing it from the West.

Another psychiatrist, Kimura, gave an analysis of Japanese culture and identity in terms of interpersonal relationships. His focus was on *jibun*, commonly translated as 'self' but intended to be understood in opposition to the Western notion of self. Kimura's (1972) notion of *jibun* (literally 'self part') was, in contrast to 'self', not fixed or having continuity but dynamic and very much dependent upon other people. *Jibun* exists not within an individual but between individuals. It is "a part of a larger whole that consists of groups and relationships" (Rosenburger, 1992). Hamaguchi (1977) and Murakami et al (1979) also give analyses of Japanese relationships in terms of alternative notions of the self and criticise Benedict's dichotomy between individualism and collectivism, claiming that this very dichotomy is itself a Western idea. In describing the nature of relationships defining Japanese culture, these scholars use, respectively, the concepts of *kanjinshugi* (contextualism) and *aidagarashugi* (relationism), emphasising, along with Kimura, the extent to which the Japanese sense of self is neither individual nor collective but exists in the realm between people, in dynamic relation to them and the situation.

These much more psychological analyses of Japanese identity reflected on international relations and perceptions of Japan's position in relation to the Western world in the following way. Nakane argues that the question of Japan's modernisation should not be equated to its 'Westernisation'. Scholars rejecting the appropriateness of the concept of individualism to Japanese culture also

rejected the appropriateness of Western modernisation, arguing that Japan, being different from the West, should modernise in its own way, finding means of further industrialisation and modernisation that preserved Japan's unique cultural characteristics.

Japan's 'groupism' was held responsible for its economic success at this time and was also being held up and admired as a model for further Western economic development. American business scholars and economists looked to Japan to show the way forward, Vogel's 1975 *Japan as Number One* stands out, in Japan if not in the United States, as a work applauding the unique and successful aspects of Japanese culture.

1.5. The Burst Bubble and the Debate over Internationalisation

The United States responded to Japan's phenomenally successful "bubble" economy with harsh blows of criticism of its society, culture, trading practices and, in academic circles, its tradition of culture theory, *Nihonjinron*. The Japanese self-image was once again destroyed in the face of disapproval from the West as they saw on television news images of Japanese-made cars being smashed up by out-of-work and angry Detroit auto-industry workers.

Through the 1980s and increasingly in the 1990s, after the burst of the bubble economy, Japan faced mounting pressure to somehow 'internationalise', that is, conform to Western standards of fair trade, business practices and communication, environmental protection and so forth. Japan was ordered by the West, particularly the United States to accept migrant workers, open up its market, live up to internationally accepted standards of business and commercial behaviour and stop the practice of hiding behind excuses of cultural uniqueness to justify their exclusion from Western standards. Scholars and intellectuals have responded to the debate over what to do in the face of these demands with two alternative extremes.

Some radicals demand that, again, Japan shut itself off from the rest of the

world to “purify” itself and protect the uniqueness of Japanese culture. Others argue, alternatively, that Japan must introduce English as an official language, open its doors up to immigrants and get rid of its idiosyncrasies, the unique aspects of its culture, those, it is argued, showing Japan to be ‘pre-modern’, so that it can “Westernise” and thus compete successfully in the global economy and international society. These scholars and cultural commentators understand modernisation to be Westernisation and argue for the abandonment of Japaneseness. While neither of these alternatives seems attractive enough to anyone to pursue, suitable answers are still being sought in the ongoing search of *Nihonjinron* for a sense of Japanese identity and way forward.

2. The Japanese Family

2.1. The Family System

Ie Ideology

The Japanese word *ie* has best been translated as 'house', since it maintains connotations of 'family' and 'home', as does its English counterpart (for example, in 'House of Windsor'). Central to the notion of *ie* is the concept of continuity of the family line, which passes, via either blood or marriage, from the father to the oldest son. The *ie* ideology conforms to Confucian thought and provided the traditional model of the institution of the family in Japan up until the post-war period. It was set in law in the nineteenth century as a means of determining the patriarchal hierarchy via which family name, property and power were passed. It was legally demolished, due to its perception as being responsible for many evils, in the 1947 Constitution but remains a central and powerful ideology within modern Japanese families. Eldest sons are in many cases still obliged to take on the role of head of the family while women, upon marrying, are obliged to transfer family ties to their 'new' parents. The stereotypical conflict between mothers- and daughters-in-law is often, in reality, as much of a struggle as its depiction in television programmes frequently suggest.

The *Koseki* System

The *Koseki* system (Family Registration Law) was initially created in 670 but modernised in 1872 and 1873 for administrative purposes to register, and thus gain more control of, Japanese people. It can perhaps be likened to the American Social Security System. However, the unit of the *koseki* is not the individual but rather the family. A woman will belong to her father's household until she marries and thus transfers to that of her new husband. The couple then, on producing their own children, constitute a new household to which their children will belong until either their own marriages or the birth of their first

child. The *koseki* system controls not only family inheritance of wealth and status but also people's freedom. Those not fitting into the conventional male-dominated family structure set down by the *koseki* system, for example, de facto couples, children born out of wedlock, racial minorities and those wanting to divorce are forced, if they are to receive the social benefits of belonging to a *koseki* into relationships they do not want. Many women wait until their children marry or find a job before filing for divorce as a divorce on a *koseki* certificate represents a 'stain' and has thus often destroyed people's chances at jobs. An 'undesirable' family history, fully disclosed on a copy of one's *koseki*, has led, in the past, to many cases of discrimination. While the official power of the *koseki* has declined in the last few decades (due to the success of activism of minority groups) such that contemporary comedians now take advantage of their status as, and indeed make their names as, *batsuichi* (those once divorced), it unfortunately remains a powerful factor in the selection of employees, students and husbands, wives, sons and daughters-in-law.

2.2. Changing Japanese Families

The Modernisation of the Japanese Family

Sakamoto (1997) identifies two branches in the literature on changes in family structures. The first, a feminist point of view, puts the transformation at the turn of the century as Japan entered into its first period of modernisation in the Meiji era. As Japanese thinking and its education system began to be more and more influenced by the West and its alternative values, the role of the family similarly changed. While the *ie* ideology determined that a wife and mother's importance was in her womb's contribution to family continuity, modern ideas about family and gender roles emphasised the values of love and emotional bonds between family members. The ideal family became a unit of love and support rather than a means of producing an heir. Muta (1996) analysed Meiji era

magazines and identified the advent of the 'housewife' as occurring at this time. The housewife became the idealised role of the wife and mother, creating a purpose and job for her in the care of and provision for her family. Gender roles thus began to differentiate in the Japanese family as the household became the realm of the woman and the public realm was reserved for men. This was in contrast to the traditional, pre-modern or pre-Meiji farming family in which men's and women's roles were less differentiated.

The other branch in the literature places the transformation in the post World War II period with the advent of "home electrification" (Yoshimi, 1999). This view claims that the Japanese family became modern when the household and family became the centre of consumerism as families were encouraged to show their status as a 'modern family' by the ownership of consumer electrical products such as the washing machine, air-conditioner and television. The push towards ownership and utilisation of such goods was portrayed to be a move towards greater efficiency and rationalisation in the home, doing away with the more traditional lifestyle of pre-war society. In this way the process of modernisation of the family was intertwined with that of the modernisation of the nation.

The 'Domestic drama' Ideal Family

Whatever time the transformation of the Japanese family from traditional to modern should be historically placed, Sakamoto identifies a further influence on the refinement of this transformation in the appearance of a new movie genre in the 1950s. The popularity of the 'domestic drama' increased from the 1950s, cultivating, Sakamoto argues, the ideology of the wife and mother as active controller of the family. While women had previously been portrayed in submissive roles in the family the domestic drama provided an alternative which gave women power in the family at least, if not in the still largely inaccessible public world of (non-domestic) work. Most Japanese women these days still hold

the purse-strings in their households. The 'domestic drama' image of the family did more than cultivate such a role for the wife/mother. In doing so, it additionally portrayed families as, to a large extent, uniform. The ideal family, with its ideal wife and mother became that which all families should, and indeed could, strive towards. This ideal could be achieved not only by the more fortunate ones but was accessible to and desirable for all. The idea of *ichiokusouchuryuu* (100 million middle class) provided for and encouraged the formation of a nation of homogenous families.

Global Trends and Japanese Initiatives

The United Nations declared the 10-year period between 1975 and 1985 to be the 'Women's Decade', further encouraging the growing global trend against gender discrimination. In Japan, this decade culminated in the 1985 Equal Employment Opportunity Law for Men and Women, which provided for, at least superficial, change in women's work habits. More women began working outside the home and more women began to be seen in higher positions of authority in their companies. These changes signified increasing diversity from the previous homogeneity of Japanese family life. The United Nations declared 1994 to be the 'Year of the Family' which prompted the Japanese government to face the problem of the population-threatening decline of the birth-rate and corresponding aging of the population and set in motion campaigns encouraging values and lifestyles that would combat these population problems. While the United Nations' idea was to promote diverse notions of the family, Saito (1998) points out that the Japanese government was criticised in the press for promoting the image of the traditional, extended family (three generations living together) as the ideal rather than a more contemporary nuclear family or any other alternative conception of the family.

Media Representation of Japanese Families

Between 1985 and 1995 various textual analyses of television programmes, commercials and cartoons were conducted by media scholars and show increasing diversity in the depiction of Japanese families. Gossmann (1998) and Shioya (1998) looked at Japanese television dramas and found that prevailing images showed diverse conceptions of the Japanese household. From the 1990s we saw men and women sharing housework and breadwinning and non-nuclear families in the form of divorcees, young people house-sharing and parentless children households. Nakano (1998) looked at three popular cartoons, two showing traditional families but the other portraying the decline of fixed gender-roles in the home and working mothers. Yoshida (1998) explored the changing family of the television commercial from 1985-1995 and argues that in 1985, with the Equal Employment Opportunity Law, we see the revolutionary phenomenon of men reluctantly entering the kitchen. Later we see working women and then the modern childless couple happily co-operating in the kitchen. While the appearance of these alternative lifestyles and family structures in the media does signify a break from the exclusive portrayal of traditional and nuclear families, it is important, if we want to understand the extent of diversification of Japanese families, to note that the predominant television image of the latter remains of the traditional, strongly gender-differentiated sort. As it is likely, and fairly widely held, that media images both reflect and cultivate social trends we can assume that while diversity amongst Japanese families may be growing, the majority remain of the traditional sort. However, as changes in consciousness may precede changes in material circumstances it is important not to let the predominance of traditionally structured families lead us to underestimate the trend towards increased diversity.

Changing Consciousness

NHK, the Japanese public broadcasting service, conducted surveys at 5-year

intervals into, amongst other factors, people's attitudes towards trends in family life and gender-differentiation. The survey traced such changes in attitudes between 1973 and 1998 and found that the area of most significant change was family life (NHK Housou Bunka Kenkyujo, 2000). People, in consciousness even if not so much in their behaviour or lifestyle, are increasingly claiming that sex in a loving relationship but outside of marriage is okay (1973: 19%; 1998: 43%); it is not necessary to get married in one's lifetime (1993: 51%; 1998: 58%); it is not necessary to have children (1993: 40%; 1998: 47% (it is interesting to note that these latter two questions were not even asked before 1993)); it is okay for a woman to keep her maiden name after marriage (1973: 26%; 1998: 40%); it is better for a woman to work after getting married or having children (1973: 20%; 1998: 46%); parents which share gender roles are preferable to gender-differentiated parents (1973: 21%; 1998: 45%); fathers should help out in the kitchen and with the children (1973: 53%; 1998: 84%); higher education for women is desirable (1973: 50%; 1998: 66%) and retirement will ideally consist of relaxing and pursuing hobbies rather than looking after children and grandchildren (1973: 20%; 1998: 32%). Note that the above figures do not, in most cases, represent majorities in favour of the more 'liberal' view but rather show trends towards such views. NHK concluded that, "All these results point to a strong trend towards increasing individualism within and fragmentation of the family unit" (NHK Housou Bunka Kenkyujo, 2000, p.214 (my translation)). NHK lauds these results as realising the values contained in the Japanese constitution and, it seems to me, as movement towards a stronger sense of Japanese national identity. What NHK does not note is that these trends are not unique in Japan but represent trends towards liberalisation of family values that are common all over the Western world.

NHK's general conclusions about attitudes towards family life were that people are decreasingly likely to follow prescribed gender roles and increasingly likely to doubt society's constraining institutions such as the *ie* ideology. People

now, more than one to two decades ago, question how we should live in families and in society and are increasingly believing in the importance of equality of the sexes and independence of the individual. Their analysis of the reasons for such movement in consciousness centres around both men's and women's increasing dissatisfaction with the roles prescribed for them and their partners by what was previously portrayed as the ideal family. This 'ideal' arose with the post-war economic growth of the 1960s, the changing industrial structure of which called for the rapid cultivation of the salaryman (white-collar, male company employee in the private sector) culture. This culture was seen as the best way to serve the interests of the industrialising nation but unfortunately was not so kind to the maintenance of the family. Women became increasingly dissatisfied with the cold relationship between husband and wife and with husbands who showed little care for family affairs. Men also suffered from overwork during the bubble economy in the 1980s when we saw a sharp increase in *karoushi* (death caused by overwork) and again after its collapse in the 1990s as they faced unemployment and reduced job security. These failures of the 'ideal' family structure have led, the NHK survey argues, to its value being questioned.

The Gap between Consciousness and Reality

NHK, in wanting to assess the disparity, if any, between consciousness and reality, used data from other research to look at whether or not people's habits or activities were changing along with their attitudes. Not surprisingly, perhaps, disparity was found between attitudes and reality. While 84% of respondents in 1998 agreed that men should help with housework and childcare in the home, research showed that amongst working couples, while 98% of women do housework, only 30% of men do. Further, that 30% of men spend only 1 hour and 54 minutes a day on household chores and childcare while their wives spend 4 hours and 37 minutes on the same activities. The NHK survey further found that, while people increasingly agree that mothers need not quit their jobs after

having children, in fact, due to lack of places in preschools, many mothers have no other options. The notion of the ideal father was also found to be more myth than reality as fathers continued to spend relatively little time with their children. The survey shows, then, that while attitudes and consciousness may indeed be changing, reality shows little change.

The above studies have looked at the historical development of the Japanese family and attempted to trace its transformation through ideology, media images and changes in consciousness caused by changing economic and social conditions. The quantitative study NHK conducted paints a picture not only of relative homogeneity amongst families but of little concrete change from the traditional family. The gap shown, by the NHK survey, between consciousness and reality was found only by a comparison of people's attitudes with the results from another survey revealing the average number of hours spent on housework and childcare and the number of children on pre- and nursery school waiting lists. But the nature of such a comparison will have difficulty in capturing trends in changing reality due to its analysis of limited material. The NHK survey showed a trend towards individualism in attitudes about the Japanese family but did not find such a trend in reality.

3. The Media Environment in Japan

3.1. Broadcasting

Japanese broadcasting consists of three systems: terrestrial, satellite and cable each of these offering both national and global programmes. National terrestrial television offers a total of 6 channels with additional regional channels. The public broadcasting service channels are NHK1 and NHK3 and the commercial channels are Nihon Terebi, TBS, Fuji Terebi and Terebi Asahi. Tokyo's regional channels are Terebi Tokyo and Tokyo Metropolitan Television.

Satellite television offers over a hundred channels, both national and global. It is divided into BS and CS (both digital). There are three BS channels: NHKBS's BS1 (56% news and documentaries) and BS2 (55% educational programmes, subscribers to NHKBS: 20% of households) and WOWOW (59% movies, 2.5 million households out of a total of 46.81 million households in Japan). The situation with CS television has been constantly changing. In 1996 PerfecTV! appeared followed by DirecTV a year later. In 1998 a new supplier, JskyB merged with PerfecTV! to become SkyperfecTV! (1.8 million households). DirecTV (0.42 million households) is due to shut down its signal, due to financial difficulties, in December 2000 (Dentsu Souken, 2000).

There are countless cable television suppliers and 33.8% of households subscribe to one company or another. In addition, 75 679 households also take advantage of cable internet, while 73% of households have video players (Dentsu Souken, 2000). Most households in Japan have television sets and the average number is 2.15 sets per household (Yuseisho, 1996).

In this rich media environment it is perhaps not surprising that the average time each person spends watching television is 4 hours and 4 minutes a day (8 hours and 9 minutes per household). Furthermore, over 90% of households watch television during the prime time hours from 8pm to 10pm (Dentsu Souken, 2000). So what do they watch? The highest rating television programme in

2000, with nearly half of the viewers watching, was the New Year's eve special and national media event, *The 51st Kohaku Utagassen* (9:30-11:45pm), an annual show in which male and female teams of professional singers, both old and new, compete. The second most widely viewed programme was *The Sydney Olympics (Soccer: Japan vs. America)*. In fact, out of the top ten shows of 2000, eight were media events (sports or music) and the remaining two were Japanese *torendiidorama* (dramas) (See Table 3.1.).

According to Dentsu Souken, Japanese people's favourite programmes are foreign movies (57.1%), news programmes, travel programmes, dramas, baseball and documentaries (Figure 3.1.). The most common reason for watching television is relaxation (filling in time and taking one's mind off daily stresses) but another motivation is acquiring information or knowledge (Figure 3.2.). People's involvement with television is both active and passive, with 74% of respondents looking forward to and watching weekly favourites and most of them arranging their schedules so that they can watch these shows. However, nearly 70% of respondents turn the television on even though there is nothing in particular they want to watch (Figures 3.3.).

3.2. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Twenty-seven million (out of a total population of 126 million) people living in Japan have access to or use the internet, in the form of using email and accessing the World Wide Web, via personal computer, mobile phone, games machines, television sets (WebTV) or other gadgets. 19.1% of households and 88.6% of large companies have access to the internet. This results in a general figure of 21.4% of people in Japan having access to the internet, placing it thirteenth in the world, behind Scandinavian countries, the USA, Canada, Australia, Great Britain and some other European countries. 58% of Japan's internet users are male and 42% female. Of these internet users, 76% of them are in their twenties and thirties—69% of male and 85% of female internet users are in this

age group (Figure 3.4.).

Mobile phones are used by 51.7% of the population but this figure increases in the twenties (78%) and thirties (67%) age brackets. 68% of mobile use is personal (higher for women than for men) while the remaining 32% is for business purposes. These days figures for i-mode use (accessing the internet via mobile phones for the purposes of sending email, getting news and information and banking) are increasing (Yuseisho, 2000). See Tables for figures on the income differentiation of subscription rates to satellite and cable television (3.5.) and internet access (3.6.).

3.3. Access to the World?

Japanese internet users suffer from the existence of a hurdle to which their Western counterparts are unsusceptible. This is the language barrier. The Hakuhodo (2000) survey looked at three different groups of internet users (N=560), those planning to get internet access within the next year (Group I), those having had six months' of internet access (Group II) and those with over eighteen months of internet experience (Group III). The findings suggested that while Group I had high expectations of the internet in providing them with access to worldwide resources, Group II failed to realise such access due to their inability to communicate in English and Group III showed a slight increase in access as they tried to overcome the language barrier (See Figures 3.7. and 3.8.). The survey established a relationship between duration of internet use and a desire to improve English, concluding that those using the internet long term had a stronger desire to improve their English (Figure 3.9.). The survey deemed that rather than being a window to the world, the internet was a "wall to the world" for Japanese internet users (p.29).

Table 3.1. Top10 TV programmes (the Tokyo Metropolitan Area)

	Programme	Network	Rating	Genre
1	The 51st <i>Kohaku Utagassen</i> (9:30-11:45p.m.)	NHK	48.4	Music
2	The Sydney Olympics (Soccer: Japan vs. America)	NHK	42.3	Sports
3	Beautiful Life (The last episode)	TBS	41.3	Drama
4	The Sydney Olympics (Marathon)	TV Asahi	40.6	Sports
5	The Sydney Olympics (Soccer: Japan vs. Slovakia)	NHK	40.1	Sports
6	The 51st <i>Kohaku Utagassen</i> (7:20-9:25p.m.)	NHK	39.2	Music
7	Baseball (Nihon Series: the 6 stage)	Nihon TV	36.4	Sports
8	Baseball (Nihon Series: the 1 st stage)	Nihon TV	36.2	Sports
9	<i>Yamatonadeshiko</i> (The last episode)	Fuji TV	34.2	Drama
10	Baseball (Nihon Series: the 2 nd stage)	Nihon TV	32.9	Sports

(Video Research Ltd., 2001 <http://www.videor.co.jp/a-rate/ra-topic/best30.html>)

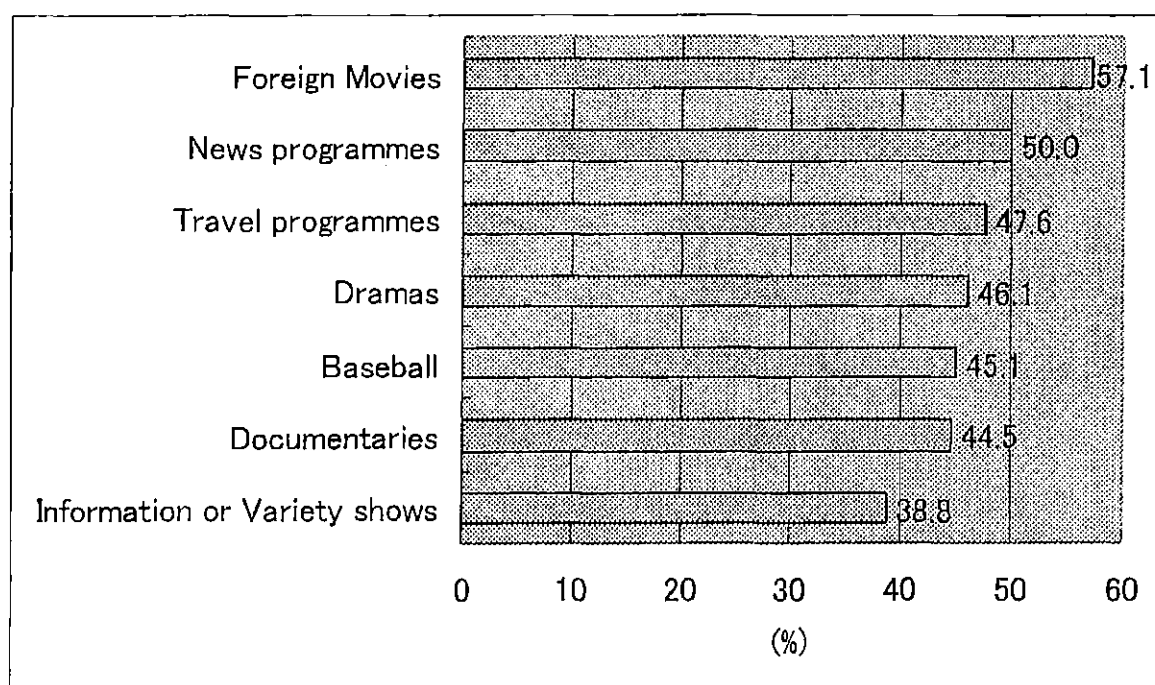


Figure 3.1. Favorite types of TV Programme (the Tokyo Metropolitan Area)

Dentsu(2000, p.125)

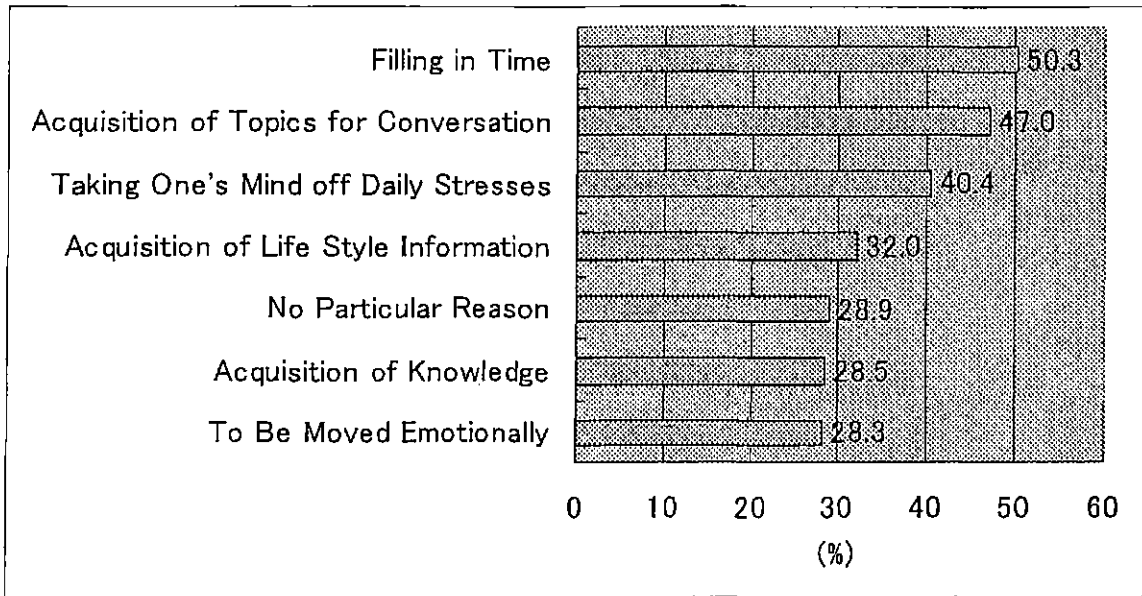


Figure 3.2. Reasons for watching TV (the Tokyo Metropolitan Area)

Dentsu (2000, p.125)

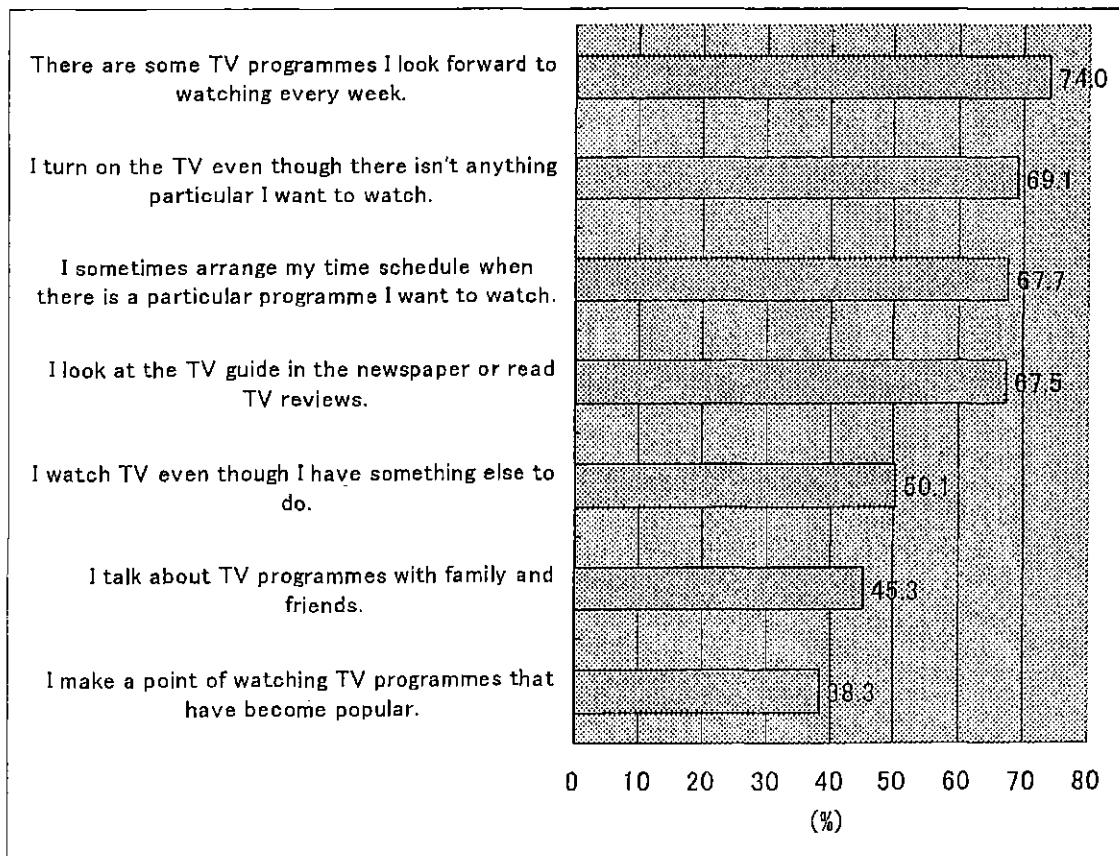


Figure 3.3. Involvement with TV (the Tokyo Metropolitan Area)

Dentsu (2000, p.125)

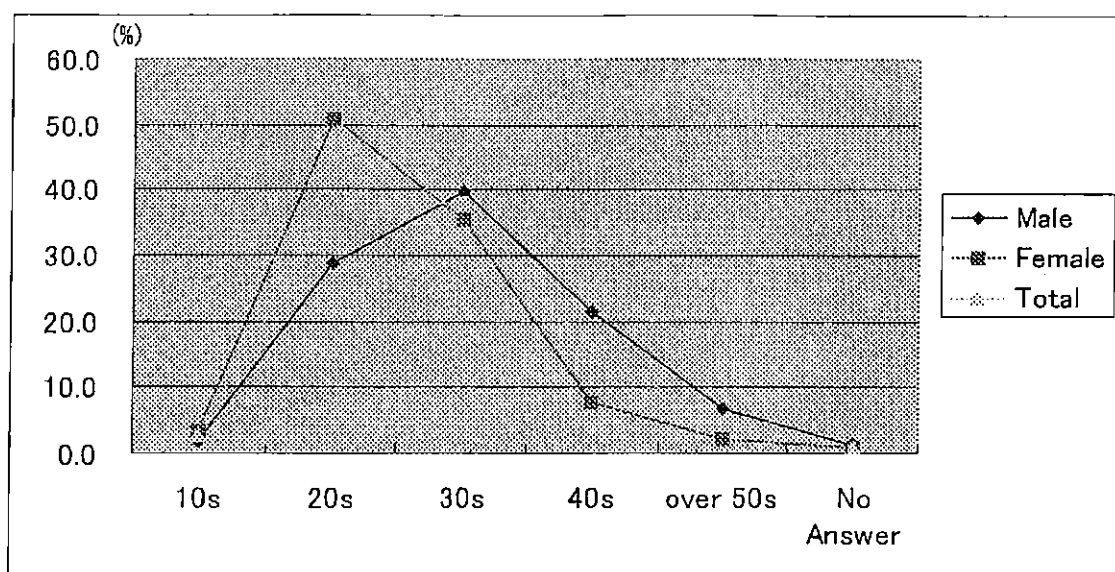


Figure 3.4. Internet Users by Age and Sex

Yuseisho(2000, p.21)

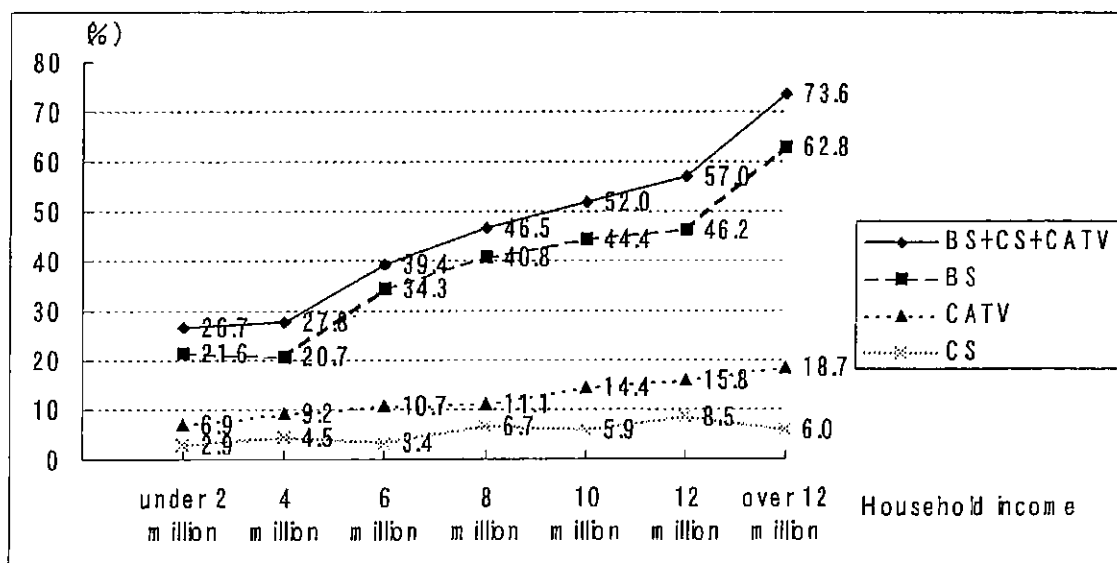


Figure 3.5. Household Satellite and Cable Television Subscription Rate

University of Tokyo (2001, p62)

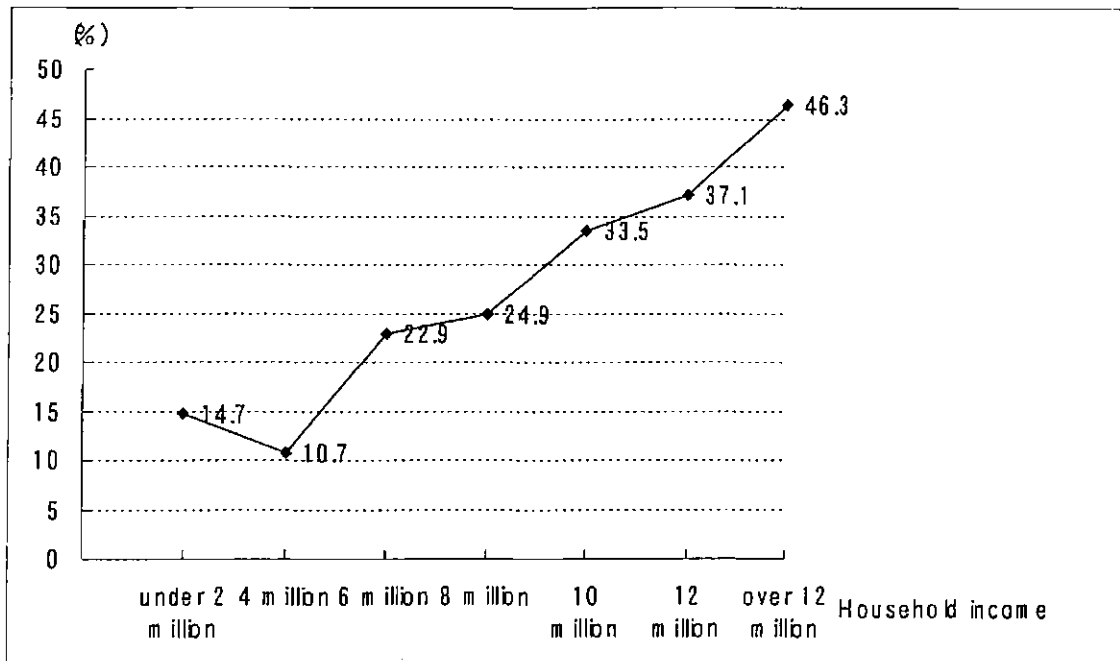


Figure 3.6. Household Internet Access Rate

University of Tokyo (2001, p60)

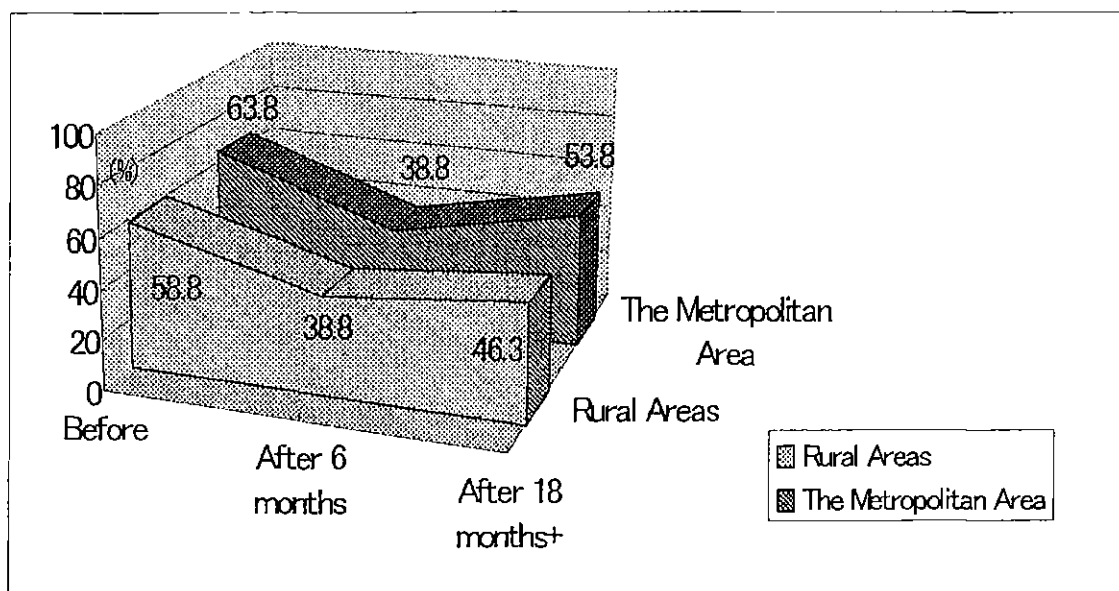


Figure 3.7. Internet Use (Q1: I want to get information from overseas about my interests, studies and research via the Internet.)

Hakuhodo (2000, p25)

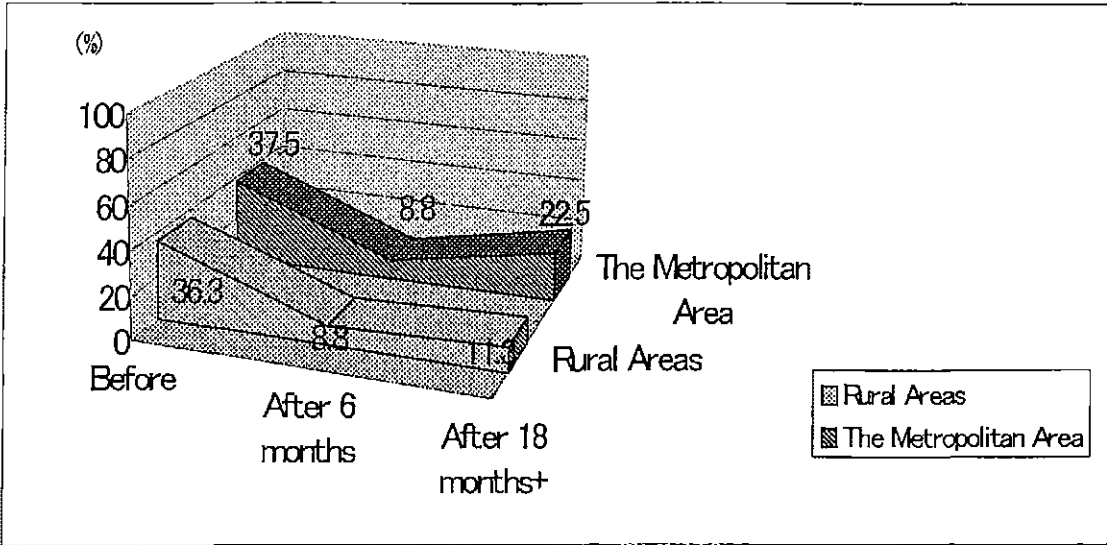


Figure 3.8. Internet Use (Q2: I want to communicate with people living outside of Japan who have the same hobbies.)

Hakuhodo(2000, p.26)

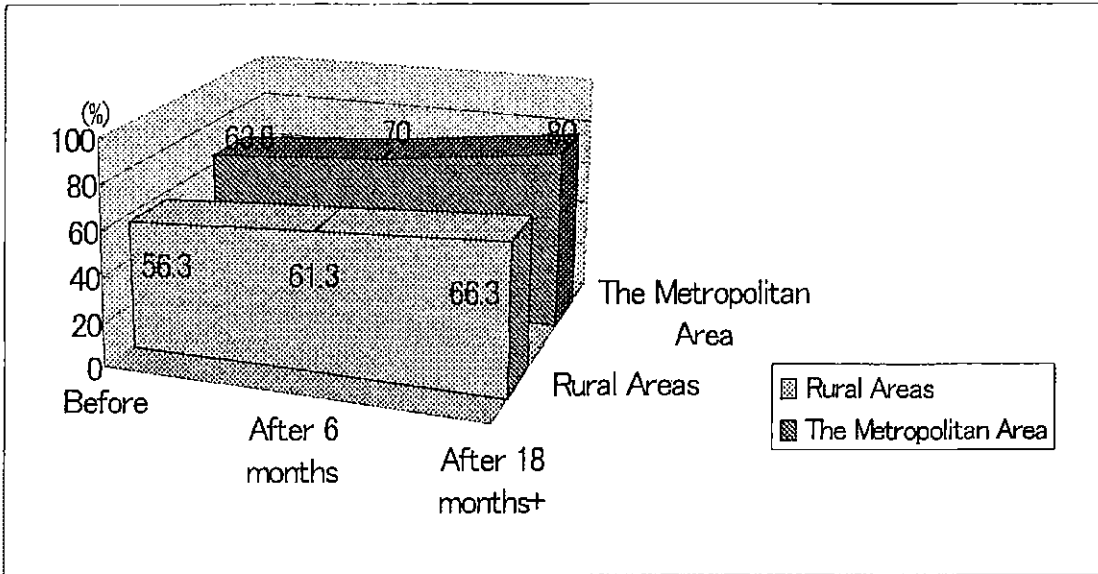


Figure 3.9. Internet Use (Q3: I want to improve English in order to better use the Internet.)

Hakuhodo (2000, p.27)

Appendix B: Methodology

1. Interview Framework

- 1) Introduction of family members (age, occupation, education)
- 2) Media environment (type— cable television, satellite television, video, video games, DVD, internet, mobile phones, telephones, fax)
- 3) Time schedule (diary in 15-minute intervals, each family-member's routine activity on both weekdays and weekends, including media engagement, place, length of time)
- 4) Audience engagement with media and new communication and information technologies, including
 - i) Information and communication activity (face-to-face communication, telephone, mobile phone, PC, internet, video camera, television, concert, sports event, etc., e.g. Do you write and/or receive e-mails? Letters? How many? Do you use *i-mode*? For what purpose? etc.)
 - ii) Selectivity (What channels/programmes do you watch? How do you select programmes for viewing? What newspapers/books/magazines do you read/look at? What homepages do you view? how do you select them? Do you choose carefully, with a particular aim in mind, or just browse? etc.)
 - iii) Involvement (Do you pay careful attention to television programmes? Which ones? Do you have the television on while you are doing other activities? What are your favourite programmes? Do you video record them if you won't be able to catch them? Do you have favourite television characters or personalities? What do you think about them? Do you regularly check news groups/homepages/email? Do you have any *merutomo* (email friends)? Do you view the homepages of television dramas? etc.)

- iv) Utility (Do you watch television for entertainment? To be informed or to learn? To relax? To kill time? Do you use television as a babysitter? Do you talk/think about television shows at home/school/work? Which ones? When? Who with?
 - v) Interpretation (Do you criticise news programmes? Their presentation? Their content? Do you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with 'experts'? With ordinary people? Do you think about themes or messages behind dramas? Do you think broadcasters and/or advertisers use television to manipulate people? Does watching television ever upset you? etc.)
 - vi) Participation (Do you ever communicate with broadcasters? How? Do you ever participate in television talk shows? Do you use internet chat rooms? Participate in newsgroups? etc.)
- 5) Viewing context: channel choice and familial relationships (Do you watch television alone? With your family? How are programmes selected? Whose choice usually wins? If you can't watch what you want to, do you watch it in another room? Record it? Forget it? Watch something else? etc.)
 - 6) Social groups and familial relationships (What kind of social groups do you belong to? Do you enjoy belonging to them? Do you belong to them out of choice or obligation? How often do you see your friends? Via which media do you communicate? What do you do together? Do you enjoy belonging to groups outside of your family? How much time do you spend with your family? Who takes care of the children? Who does the housework? Do you eat together as a family? Do you go out together as a family? etc.)
 - 7) Personal history, interests, preferences, aspirations and world-views (Is there any particular television programme/movie/book that has influenced your life? What were your dreams in your childhood? What do you want to be when you grow up/achieve in the future? What are your hobbies? Latest interests? Have you ever been to a foreign country? What was it like?

What did you learn? How does it compare to Japan? Where would you rather live? What does being Japanese mean to you? Is Japanese culture changing? Are new technologies influencing Japanese culture? Is this a good or a bad thing? etc.)

Example of Time Schedule Record: television time schedule

		Father	Mother	Child1	Child2	TV1	TV2
AM	5:00						
	30						
	6:00						
	30						
	7:00						
	30						
	8:00						
	30						
	9:00						
	30						
	10:00						
	30						
PM	11:00						
	30						
	12:00						
	30						
	1:00						
	30						
	2:00						
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	4:00						
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	7:00						
	30						
	8:00						
	30						
	9:00						
	30						
	10:00						
	30						
	11:00						

QUESTIONS FOR MEDIA USE

1.Name

Age _____

Occupation _____

Family members

Number of family members who live with you _____

Name & Relationship to you: _____

Address/phone _____

Email

2. Media Ownership

How many of the following equipment are there in your house?

TV sets

Cable TV sets

BS TV sets

CS TV sets

Video recorder

Video game

DVD

PC _____ (Internet link _____)

Mobile phone _____ (Internet link _____)

Telephone _____ (Fax _____)

Digital camera

Video camera

Radio

Newspapers

Others (details) _____

3. Television Viewing

How much TV do you watch a day? _____ Hours

What types of TV programmes do you like? Please circle.

Sports	News	Drama	Documentary
Movie	Variety shows	Quiz shows	Others

Which TV channels do you frequently watch? _____

Do you have a favourite TV character or personality?

Yes / No Name _____

Do you have a particular TV programme you watch most regularly?

Yes / No Programme name _____

Do you watch a foreign programme via cable or satellite TV regularly?

Yes / No Programme name _____

Who in the house usually decides which channel to watch? _____

4. Internet Use

How much time do spend on the internet in a day? _____ hours

How many emails do you exchange daily?

Receive _____ (Private _____, Business _____)

Send _____ (Private _____, Business _____)

How many friends do you regularly exchange emails with?

Do you have any overseas friends with whom you exchange emails on a regular basis?

Yes / No _____ (If Yes, from which countries?)

Do you participate in chat rooms, or post messages or opinions on web based bulletin boards?

Yes / No _____ (If Yes, list the ones you participate in the most)

Do you browse websites of non-Japanese sources?

Yes / No _____ (What are some of these sites do you check out?)

What kind of websites do you browse regularly? _____

5. Travel

Have you ever traveled abroad, either for pleasure or business? Yes / No

If yes, have ever lived abroad for study or business?

_____ (where, and for how long?)

Thank you. All answers are anonymous and confidential. Your name will not be attached to any information you give me.

2. Informants

Table 2.1 Methodological Information

Family	connectivity	the type of interviews conducted	the nature of visits (home, office, other)	the type of research (observation, interview)	timescale	the form of the data
f1	friend <i>uchi</i> f1f2	family/individual	home/school/other	observation/interview	16months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f2	f1f2	family/individual	home/other	observation/interview	11 months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f3	business <i>uchi</i> f3f4	family/individual	home/other	observation/interview	3months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f4	f3f4	individual	other	observation/interview	3months	notes, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f5	business <i>uchi</i> f5~f12	family/individual	home/office/other	observation/interview	21months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f6	f5~f12	family/individual	home/office/other	observation/interview	18months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f7	f5~f12	individual	office/other	observation/interview	15months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f8	f5~f12	individual	office	interview	3months	notes, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires
f9	f5~f12	family/individual	home/office/other	observation/interview	16months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f10	f5~f12	individual	office/other	observation/interview	17months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f11	f5~f12	individual	office/other	observation/interview	7months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f12	f5~f12	individual	office	interview	3months	notes, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires
f13	college <i>uchi</i> f13f14	individual	office/other	interview	7months	notes, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f14	f13f14	family/individual	home/other	observation/interview	7months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails

f15	college <i>uchi</i> f15f16	family/individual	home/college/other	observation/interview	4months	notes, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f16	f15f16	individual	college	interview	4months	notes, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f17	shop <i>uchi</i> f17f18	individual	home/office/other	observation/interview	17months	notes, questionnaires, photographs, emails, homepages
f18	f17f18	individual	office	observation/interview	9months	notes, questionnaires
f19	local <i>uchi</i> f19~f24	family/local friends/individual	home/office/other	observation/interview	3months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f20	f19~f24	family/local friends/individual	home/office	observation/interview	3months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f21	f19~f24	family/local friends/individual	home/office/other	observation/interview	3months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f22	f19~f24	family/local friends/individual	home/other	observation/interview	3months	notes, diary, photographs, questionnaires, emails, homepages
f23	f19~f24	local friends	other	interview	3months	notes, diary, questionnaires
f24	f19~f24	local friends	other	interview	3months	notes, diary, questionnaires
f25	—	family/individual	home/other	observation/interview	5months	notes, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires
f26	—	family/individual	home/other	observation/interview	20months	notes, diary, photographs, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f27	—	individual	other	interview	4months	notes, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f28	—	individual	other	interview	21months	notes, tapes plus transcripts, questionnaires, emails
f29	—	individual	other	interview	3months	notes, questionnaires, emails
f30	—	individual	home/other	observation/interview	3months	notes, questionnaires, emails

*The 'connectivity' column notes relations among informants. For example, f1 and f2 are friends.

Table 2.2 Informants Details

Family	Names (pseudonyms)	Ages	Household / Family type	Occupations	Occupational status (Head of Household)	Household Income (H/M/L)	Home & Home Status	Place	Travel Abroad
f1	Atarou Aiko Aimi Ayato	35 35 2 1	father mother daughter son	Market executive Housewife Kindergarten	B	H	<i>Nisetajikyō</i> Owner	Tokyo, <i>ku</i> , Periphery	Long (Father): Singapore
f2	Mikio Minako Minato	34 34 0	father mother son	Designer Market researcher	B	H	Apartment Owner	Tokyo, <i>shi</i> , suburb	Short
f3	Atsushi Atsuko	38 34	husband wife	Engineer Sales person	B	H	Apartment Owner	Tokyo, <i>ku</i> , Periphery	Short
f4	Naoki Naoko Naoto	35 35 1	father mother son	Engineer Housewife	B	H	House Owner	Kanagawa Prefecture	Short
f5	Shingo Shizuka Shiori Shinji Shouko	36 32 8 6 1	father mother daughter1 son daughter2	Engineer Office worker Student Student	B	H	Apartment Tenant (father, weekday) Apartment Owner (family)	Ibaraki Prefecture Tokyo, <i>ku</i> , Periphery	Long (Father): U.S.A.
f6	Kazuo Kazue Kaito Kayo	45 41 14 11	father mother son daughter	Engineer Housewife Student	B	H	House Owner	Saitama Prefecture	Long (Family): U.S.A.
f7	Hiroshi Hiroko Azuri 5*	31 32 1	father mother daughter	Engineer Housewife	B	M	Apartment Tenant	Saitama Prefecture	None
f8	Akira	40	single (male)	Engineer	B	M	Apartment Tenant	Saitama Prefecture	None
f9	Takeo Takeko Takeshi Takeya	55 53 28 22	father mother son1 son2	Cook and Restaurant owner Housewife Engineer Office worker	C	H	House (Restaurant- Ground Floor) Owner	Chiba Prefecture	Short
f10	Ryo Ryoko	31 26	husband wife	Engineer Office worker	B	H	Apartment Tenant	Ibaraki Prefecture	Short

f1 1	Eiji Emi	38 34	husband wife	Engineer Office worker	B	H	Apartment Tenant	Ibaraki Prefecture	Short
f1 2	Keiko	35	single (female)	Office worker	D	L	Apartment Tenant	Ibaraki Prefecture	None
f1 3	Chizuo Chizuko Chika	55 52 20	father mother daughter	Office worker Housewife Student	D	M	Apartment Tenant	Tokyo, ku, Periphery	None
f1 4	Noritaro Noriko Norika	51 53 20	father mother daughter	Director Housewife Student	A	H	House Owner	Tokyo, ku, centre	Short
f1 5	Reiji Reiko Reika Rei	57 52 25 18	father mother daughter son	Director Housewife Student Student	A	H	House Owner	Kanagawa Prefecture	Long (daughter): Indonesia
f1 6	Tora Torao	53 29	mother son	Lodging house owner Student	C	L	Lodging house (with 4 lodgers) Owner	Tokyo, shi, suburb	Short
f1 7	Koutaro	37	single (male)	Hairstylist	D	H	Apartment (with 1 roommate) Tenant	Tokyo, ku, centre	Long: France
f1 8	Hana	23	single (female)	Beauty shop assistant	E	L	Apartment Tenant	Tokyo, shi, suburb	Short
f1 9	Masatoshi Masako Maki	54 53 24	father mother daughter	Director Housewife Office worker	A	H	House Owner	Tokyo, shi, suburb	Long (daughter): U.S.A.
f2 0	Satoshi Satsuko Saya	33 32 2	father mother daughter	Account executive Housewife	B	M	House (Owned by husband's parents)	Tokyo, shi, suburb	Long (wife): U.S.A.
f2 1	Yone Youichi Yoshie Yoshiki Yoshikazu Yoshiko	73 51 48 21 19 13	grandmother father mother son1 son2 daughter	Shop owner Housewife Student Student Student	C	H	House Owner	Tokyo, shi, suburb	Short

f22	Jiro Junko Jun Juri	55 52 27 18	father mother son daughter	Factory owner Housewife Designer Student	C	H	Apartment Owner	Tokyo, <i>shi</i> , suburb	None
f23	Yusaku Yuuko Yuuki Yuuka	54 51 27 24	father mother son daughter	Shop owner Housewife Engineer Office worker	C	H	House Owner	Tokyo, <i>shi</i> , suburb	None
f24	Hide Hideko	26 26	fiance fiancee	Part-time sales person Office worker	F	L	Apartment Tenant	Tokyo, <i>shi</i> , suburb	None
f25	Haruo Haruko Harumi Haru	50 46 20 14	father mother daughter son	Director Housewife Student Student	A	H	Apartment Owner	Tokyo, <i>ku</i> , centre	Short
f26	Tadashi Taeko Takuya Takashi	41 40 10 7	father mother son1 son2	Engineer Nurse Student Student	B	H	House Owner	Tokyo, <i>ku</i> , Periphery	Short
f27	Ichiro	31	single (male)	Account executive	B	M	Company's dormitory Tenant	Kanagawa Prefecture	Long: China
f28	Seiji Seiko Seika Seito	63 60 35 30	father mother daughter son	Director Housewife Office worker Office worker	A	H	House Owner	Tokyo, <i>ku</i> , Periphery	Short
f29	Daisuke	36	single (male)	Teacher	B	H	Apartment Tenant	Tokyo, <i>ku</i> , Periphery	Short
f30	Shunya	32	single (male)	Account executive	B	H	Apartment Tenant	Tokyo, <i>shi</i> , suburb	Long: U.S.A.

- 1* Socioeconomic status: A: Director and Administrator B: Professional and Executive C: Self employed small business D: Office worker and Sales person
E: Manual Worker and Drivers F: Part-time worker and unemployed (cf. University of Tokyo, 1994, 2001)
- 2* Household income: Low: under 4million yen; Middle: 4million yen-7.5million yen; High: over 7.5million yen
Average Household income is 6.5million yen. (Statistics Bureau & Statistics Center, 1999)
- 3* Tokyo: 23 small sections, *ku* (ward) in the Center and Periphery and *shi* (city) in the suburb, Outside of Tokyo: Prefecture
- 4* Travel abroad: Short: e.g. holiday, business trip under 6months Long: e.g. study, business over 6months
- 5* Real name; See Chapter Five.

Table 2.3 Media Environment (at home)

Family	Number of media (Cable/Satellite)	Video	Video game	DVD	PC (i:Internet)	Mobile phone (Internet)	Telephone (Fax)	Digital video camera	Digital camera	Other	Broadband
f1	1CS	2	1	1	2i	3i	1f	1	1		CATV Internet
f2	1CS	2	1	iBook	3i	2i	1f	1	1	LD	CATV Internet
f3	1C	1	—	—	1i	2i	1	—	—		CATV Internet
f4	1S+1	1	1	—	1i+1	2i	1f	1	1		
f5	1C+2	3	—	—	2i	3i	1	1	1		CATV Internet
f6	1C	1	1	1	1i+2	4	1f	1	1		CATV Internet
f7	1C+1	2	—	—	1i	—	1	1	1	Pager	
f8	1C	2	1	—	1i	1i	1	1	1	LD	
f9	1C+3	3	—	—	2i	2i	1f	1	1		ADSL
f10	1C	1	1	—	2i	2i	1f	1	1		ADSL
f11	1C+1	2	—	1	1i	2i	1f	—	1		CATV Internet
f12	1C	1	—	—	1i	1i	1	—	—		
f13	1C	1	—	—	1i+1	1i	1f	—	—		
f14	2CS+2	3	2	1	2i	3i	1f	—	1	ITS	CATV Internet
f15	1S+4	5	1	—	1i+5	3i	1f	—	—		
f16	1C	1	—	—	1i	1i	1f	—	1		
f17	1S+2	1	—	—	1i	1	—	—	—		
f18	1S	1	—	—	—	1i	—	—	—		
f19	1CS+2	2	—	—	2i+1	3i	2f	—	—		CATV Internet
f20	1C	1	—	—	2i	2i	1	1	—		CATV Internet
f21	2C+3	3	—	—	2i	5i	1f	1	—		CATV Internet
f22	1C+4C	5	1	1	1i	4i	1f	—	1		CATV Internet
f23	1S+2	2	1	1	1i	4i	1	—	—		
f24	1S	1	1	—	1i+1	2	1	—	—		
f25	1S+1	4	2	—	—	1i	1f	—	—		
f26	1S+1	1	5	—	1i	2i	1	1	1		
f27	1S	1	1	playstation2	1i	1i	1	—	—	LD	
f28	2S	1	—	—	—	2i	1f	—	—		
f29	1S	1	—	—	1i	1i	1f	—	—		
f30	1C+1	1	—	—	1i	1	1f	—	—		

* Broadband: ADSL

CATV internet (= Cable Television Internet)

Map of Tokyo Metropolitan Area Showing Informants' Geographical Distribution



3. Photos: Japanese Engagement with Media and ICT in the Domestic Time-Space



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

Masu-chin 宅のアパート案内

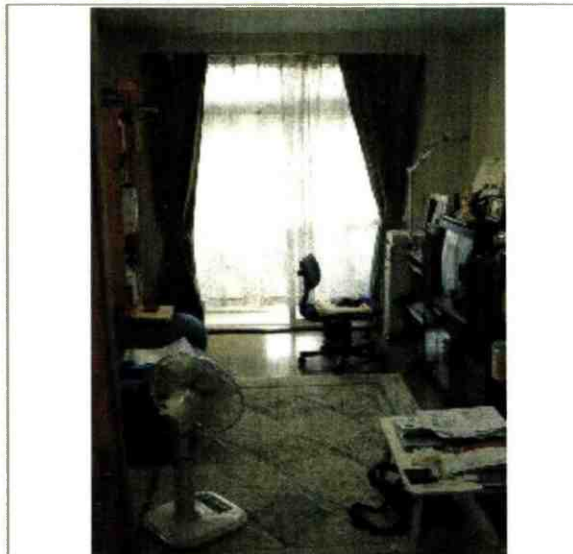
ここでは、Masu-chin のアパートを案内します。



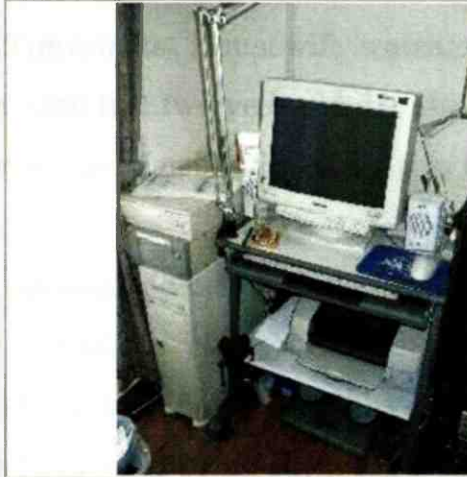
玄関を入ったところ。
ちょっと机が汚いなあ…。



和室です。寝室にしています。



洋室。ここはコンピュータールーム&エンターテイメント・ルーム。おっきなテレビで映画を見ます。



これが Masu-chin
のマシン。フルタワ
ー型なので、大きい
ですが、これにしま
した。



これが台所。6 畳
のダイニングキッチ
ンです。

～おしまい～

Photo 1. Timeshifts: Housewife watches tennis match from Wimbledon on cable television with her two-year old daughter. The game is also being recorded onto a video tape for her husband's viewing in the night.

Photo 2. Accessing Global and Local Time-spaces: Housewife checks for emails from her friends in New York. She also uses the internet to check out local websites of goods and services that cater to children, e.g., children's clothes, play groups and places to bring them to, medical and health services, and so on.

Photo 3. Daytime Viewing: With young children around, there is seldom the chance for the housewife to sit down and watch television during the day.

Photo 4. Early Start: Children seem to be drawn to the rich images often found on the internet. Their attention, however, is often divided between the television, internet and their toys. The experience of switching between the media and internet time-space and 'real family place' has become part and parcel of the Japanese early socialisation.

Photo 5. Remote Control: Parents made a conscious decision to leave the remote control device with their daughter, allowing her to choose the channel to watch. This is a common strategy for creating and maintaining the familial communicative time-space.

Photo 6. Family Viewing and Fragmentation: Sunday evening. A pair of siblings watches television while waiting for dinner. Off and on, they receive and send emails on their mobile phones, and they drift into their personal virtual spaces. Elsewhere in the house, grandmother too is watching television but in her room, while father is on the internet at the dining table, so that he too can watch television. The mother is preparing dinner in the kitchen where there is also a

small television set. Finally, the eldest son is busy emailing or browsing the internet in his room.

Photo 7-8. Multiple Media Engagement: Away from the rest of the family, in their private space, parasite singles engage with multiple media simultaneously.

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