Micro politics of Identity in a Multicultural Japan : The Use of Western Colonial Heritages among Japanese Filipino Children (JFC)

Micro-politics of Identity in a Multicultural Japan: The Use of Western Colonial Heritages among Japanese Filipino Children (JFC)

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多文化日本におけるアイデンティティをめぐるマイクロ・ポリティクス： Japanese Filipino Children（JFC）による西洋植民地主義遺産の活用法

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In an era of global circulation, the creation and emergence of Japan as a truly multicultural society is not only the result of the increasing presence of foreign residents; the increase in children born to international marriages between Japanese and non-Japanese nationals also plays a significant role. This paper looks at this process through the ethnographic analysis of the micro-politics of identity among Japanese Filipino Children (JFC), and its articulation in the broader context of Japanese society, where the negative stereotyping of Filipinos has prevailed. JFC seem to have learnt by experience the need to develop specific mechanisms for addressing the Japanese ethnic majority's prejudices, and imagine and create a different and favorable impression by using their multiple inherited cultural backgrounds. With this aim, JFC proudly exhibit the European origin of their family names and their command of English—deriving from the Spanish and American colonial rule of the Philippines, respectively. In configuring the JFC identity, these vindicated colonial vestiges are taken out of their historical context of domination and transnationally used to different ends in contemporary Japan. In so doing, JFC find in their Philippines' Western heritage a symbolic resource, beyond time and space that empowers their individual and collec-

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tive identity, reversing derogatory depictions and subverting negative stereotypes of them.

　グローバルな循環の時代にあって，日本における多文化社会の到来は，単に外国人居住者数の増加だけでなく，日本人と外国人の間に生まれた子どもの数の増加によってももたらされている。本稿は，その一例として Japanese Filipino Children（JFC）に注目し，フィリピン人に関する特定のネガティブなステレオタイプが根強く残る日本社会における彼らのアイデンティティの表象をめぐるマイクロレベルのポリティクスについての民族誌的分析を行う。JFCは，そうした偏見に対処するための方法を磨き，自らの多様な文化的背景を用いて異なるより好ましい印象をつくり上げることの必要性を経験的に学んでいる。そのために，彼らの中には，自身のアイデンティティの一部として，フィリピンの中に見出せる西洋的性質，つまりスペイン帝国やアメリカの植民地時代の産物であるヨーロッパとの混血や英語の能力，を積極的に強調するものもいる。この場合，これらの植民地主義遺産は被支配の歴史からは脱文脈化され，現代日本における異なる目的のためにトランスナショナルに用いられることになる。そのようにしてJFCは，時間と空間を超える形でその遺産を，自らを力づけ，偏見をかわすための象徴的資源として有効活用しているのである。

1 Introduction: JFC in a Multicultural Japan[1]

Foreign residents in Japan are often divided into two groups: "old-comers" as in the case of the Zainichi Korean residents from the colonial period, and "newcomers" such as the migrant workers from Latin America and Asia arrived during the bubble economy era. Statistically speaking, the number of foreign residents in Japan is 2,186,121 and their percentage within the entire population is 1.71 (Ministry of Justice 2010a). Those foreigners tend to settle in specific localities—for example, Japanese-Brazilian in Aichi prefecture where there are several Toyota-related factories—forming multicultural communities as a result, or "diversity points" as Ryoko Tsuneyoshi (2004) terms them.

Nevertheless, in the era of global circulation[2], the creation and emergence of Japan as a truly multicultural society is not only the result of the increasing presence

of foreign residents in a worldwide context of intensification of cultural, political, and economic interactions. The increase in children born to international marriages between Japanese and non-Japanese nationals also plays a significant role in this process. These children are individuals with both Japanese citizenship and diverse cultural backgrounds, establishing a difference that questions and challenges the monolithic relationship between "identity," "culture," and "nation," on which the modern equation of Japanese national identity is based (cf. Lie 2001; Morris-Suzuki 1998; Oguma 1995). According to Sean Curtin (2002), the number of international marriages in Japan in 1970 was 5,546, rising about 6.5 times to 36,263 couples by 2000, when the birth rate in international marriages reached a record high of about 2.9. Nelson Graburn and John Ertl (2008) put forward an interesting argument with regard to changes in the future national demographic. Since the birth rate in international marriages in Japan is more than twice the overall Japanese fertility rate of 1.3, these authors calculate that "in Tokyo, for instance, the next generation of schoolchildren should be about 25 percent non- or half-Japanese, a dramatic change from anything in the recent history of Japan." (Graburn and Ertl 2008: 21).

The notion commonly held by *Nihonjin* (Japanese people) that overlaps the idea of "nationality" with "ethnicity" should, therefore, be questioned in light of the actual diversity of Japanese citizens. In this context, the notion of "Japanese people"—still often regarded as an ethnically and culturally homogeneous group—is shifting in its very definition through an ongoing social transformation process that not only involves Japanese citizens with multiple cultural backgrounds but society as a whole, impacting and changing its configuration. In order to explore this process, I will look at the identity of so-called Japanese Filipino Children (JFC), the children of Japanese and Filipino parents, and the social construction of their image in the broader context of Japanese society, where the negative stereotyping of Filipinos has prevailed. JFC seem to have learnt by experience that the Japanese ethnic majority tends to be prejudiced against them, thus the need to develop specific mechanisms for addressing the stereotyped images underlying their derogatory depiction as a way of neutralizing and subverting them. Although concern about the negative stereotyping surrounding JFC has grown over the last few years, and several studies about their social vulnerability have been published, their subjective behavior in coping with such stereotyping has not yet been considered in depth by scholars. In order to complete this missing piece in the JFC studies jigsaw, it is important to examine the politics of identity among JFC through a qualitative, micro-level focus. With this in mind, I will ethnographically consider the self-representational mechanisms articulated by JFC in order to reverse and empower their individual and collective identity in relation to the Japanese ethnic majority.

2   Filipino Mothers: Stereotyping and Prejudice

Before discussing this subject in depth, some consideration of their family background, and especially of the stereotypical images associated with their mothers as Filipino female migrants, should be highlighted. According to a survey by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (2009) and the Ministry of Justice (2010b), the number of Filipino residents in Tokyo is 32,120, with a total of 211,716 Filipino residents across the whole of Japan.

Filipino migration to Japan existed well before the term "globalization" started being used to characterize the transnational circulation of the contemporary world, in the same way that trans-boundary movement of people between Japan and the Philippines has historically been active and continuous too (Shinozawa 2001). Under the martial law regime instituted by Ferdinand Marcos in 1972, sex tourism for Japanese males emerged as a Philippines' sex industry trend that brought in foreign currency (Ofreneo and Pineda-Ofreneo 1998: 103–104). For economic reasons, from the 1980s onwards a great number of Filipino women started to arrive in Japan as singers or dancers, granted an "entertainer" visa to work at night clubs. According to the Ministry of Justice (2010c), the notion of "entertainer" refers to an actor or actress, singer, dancer and professional sports player. However, some of them were required to work as hostesses, providing companionship services that ranged from chatting and drinking with the customers to dancing in nude shows and offering sexual services. The negative stereotyping started then, and Asian women, including Filipino, became the target of a social prejudice derogatorily referred to as *Japayuki* (Japan-bound). In 1979 the number of Filipino immigrant women hit over 10,000 for the first time, a year that would subsequently be known as the "First year of *Japayuki*," heralding the dawn of a massive wave of immigration (Hisada 1992: 10). It goes without saying that the working conditions of the migrant entertainers were, in many cases, not at all easy. The main problems they had to face were overwork and harassment by employers and customers. In her detailed study of this situation, M. Rosario P. Ballescas (1992: 89–101) presents several cases of Filipino entertainers as victims of rape, suicide, mental illness, drug addiction, violence and abortion. Their precarious visa status made the situation even worse, especially for those in illegal situations who were regarded as criminals instead of victims.

In recent years, the analysis of these issues has been addressed by a considerable number of studies focused on particular aspects of Filipino women working as entertainers and their plight in Japan. However, the scholarly approach to this topic has not been able to counteract the social credit and influence of publications such as travel magazines and Filipino-language books which, by representing "Filipinas" as sex objects, have firmly contributed to reproducing and reinforcing the negative stereotypes attached to Filipino women. Even though some of those

publications aim to promote a more empathetic approach to Filipino women's situation in Japan, these women never cease to be seen through the derogatory image of the "Filipinas," with all that that implies for their social presence and identity. Consequently, the Japanese ethnic majority shares the stereotypical images created by a set of popular texts that provide a representational framework in which the negative connotations that stem from the term "Filipinas" become consistent, and extremely difficult to reverse, preventing and impeding their possible overturn.

As a matter of fact, Japan was identified as being suspected of human trafficking by the "Trafficking in Persons Report" issued in June 2004 by the U.S. Department of State (2004: 14), and designated a monitored country. The following year, 2005, Japan launched a restrictive policy for entertainer visas, as a result of which the number of foreign residents registered as entertainers decreased dramatically from 64,742 in 2004 to 13,031 in 2008 (Ministry of Justice 2009). The effects of such social and legal changes were studied by Nobue Suzuki (2008: 80) who focused on the consideration of the self-actions of Filipino women in Japan, pointing out English teaching and care-giving services as the two major areas in which they attempt to establish their labor niches. Nowadays, over thirty years after the so-called "First year of *Japayuki*," many Filipino entertainers have retired, and as Sachi Takahata (2009: 108–109) points out in her study, entertainer activity is no longer the mainstream occupation for the Filipino women in Japan.

3   Facing JFC Stereotyping

With the benefit of over three decades of hindsight, and bearing in mind the issues considered in the previous sections, let us now shift the emphasis from the stereotyping of Filipino women to the social presence of JFC in modern-day Japan. In so doing, I will consider the social construction of their recognition drawing on data collected through participant observation, open-ended interviews and informal conversations with JFC[3].

When the entertainment business was good—during the 1980s and 1990s—JFC used to be derogatorily called *Japino* (Suzuki 2002: 96), a designation that, following research conducted by the NGO Batis Center, encompasses injurious images such as that their mothers are prostitutes, they are abandoned by their Japanese father, or their parents remain unmarried (Bartis Center 1998: 156). It is obvious that the negative social perceptions associated with the word *Japino* derived from previous prejudices reflected in the notions of *Japayuki* or *Firipīna* that pejoratively portrayed Filipino women in Japan during the '70s. This has given rise to criticism from concerned NGOs such as the Batis Center, in an attempt to combat and overturn those stigmatizing images and prevent their being repeated in the second generation. In fact, the negative stereotyping is not unrelated to the difficult situations—in line with the research results above—in which some JFC are involved, namely

orphans, stateless children and complex family environments (Matsui 1999; Selleck 2001). The media report the tragic consequences of the discrimination against them, such as the case of the JFC minors that end up as street children in Manila, the Philippines (*Mainichi Shimbun* 2008), and the story of a 12-year-old Japanese Filipino girl from Gunma prefecture, who, in 2010, hanged herself to escape from bullying at her elementary school. The daily newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun* posted an interview on its website in which her bereaved father declared that the suicide of his daughter may have been triggered by bullying about his wife's Filipino nationality (*Mainichi Shimbun* 2010).

Although the situation of Filipino women is gradually changing, the public's hunger for these stories suggests that racial or ethnic discrimination is still an unresolved issue reflecting strong prejudices. As mentioned above, those prejudices negatively affect the lives of the people that are thus labeled, with consequences that have to be coped with in different ways in their everyday interactions with the Japanese ethnic majority. Among them, I will focus in the next section on the consideration of the self-representational mechanisms articulated by JFC at a micro-level, against the challenging backdrop of building a truly egalitarian, multicultural society.

4　Micro-politics of Identity among JFC

The following discussion is based on fieldwork undertaken in Tokyo and Kanagawa prefecture during 2008 and 2009 with the ethnographic goal of exploring the micro-politics of identity among JFC. My aim is to offer a few brush-strokes of the contesting images articulated by the JFC in an attempt to reverse their negative stereotyping and empower their individual and collective identity. Although the main JFC informants are now adults, the focus of our interviews was on their childhood, and their personal experiences as JFC children and youngsters at school and in the neighborhood. All of them were born in Japan and they have never lived in the Philippines, a place they had been to only sporadically during the summer vacation or on similar occasions, when visiting their mother's family. However, their process of self-awareness is quite different to the Japanese ethnic majority's—even though their legal status is the same—describing themselves just as *hāfu* (half) or *Firipin tono hāfu* (half-Filipino).

Hiroki (pseudonym) is a Japanese Filipino male born in 1985 in Koto City (Tokyo), a region with a significant number of Filipino residents, especially in Kinshichō, a downtown area in the neighborhood of his birthplace that used to be known as *Firipinjin no seichi* (Filipino sanctuary)[4]. However, during the interview, he looks back bitterly on his childhood in the city. He did not have opportunities to make friends with the same cultural backgrounds, and he remembers that his presence was conspicuous in the classrooms.

"*: When was the first time you felt you were *hāfu*?

Hiroki (then a 23-year-old): It was when I was in kindergarten, when my Filipino mom took me to and from home. And my face used to be more foreign-looking.

*: Were you often asked: 'Are you a *hāfu*?'

Hiroki: Everybody around me in my school knew it. But to be honest, the Philippines don't have a good image in Japan, you know. I don't mean to discriminate, but white people are higher in Japanese favor, right? When they say the *hāfu* things to me, it was more as if they mocked me."

(Field notes, 22nd October, 2008)

The children from international marriages are often called *hāfu* regardless of the ethnicity or nationality of their parents. Needless to say there is great diversity among the people grouped under this designation and the perceptions held by the Japanese ethnic majority towards them are anything but uniform. For Hiroki, the children born from Japanese and Caucasian parents tend to be socially valued as objects of desire, even envy, ahead of those born from a non-Caucasian progenitor. Consequently, he describes himself as "a quarter European (Spanish)" and until recently, he avoided using the word "Philippines," claiming that his grandmother was a creole (European born in the colony), something that is not entirely untrue.

This kind of identity fetishization also seems to have something in common with other images. According to Satake and Da-anoy (2006: 135), Filipino children who have a white or Japanese parent are often recognized as "high breeds," giving rise to a sort of cultural admiration in the Philippines. Such admiration is not far off from the cultural imaginings of Japan as a kind of "second America" that the Filipino writer Rey Ventura has described as being found among Filipino laborers working in Yokohama (Ventura 1992: 165). Similarly, Lieba Faier, who conducted fieldwork in Kiso (rural Japan) with Filipino women married to Japanese men, describes the Filipino women's longing for the United States by using the term "the imagined America." In their eyes, the United States is a place of "power, wealth, cleanliness, beauty, glamour, and enjoyment" (Faier 2003: 145). We must take these images in the specific representational context of the social appreciation of children born to Japanese-Filipino couples. For instance, as Kawagoe (pseudonym)[5] noted, the children born in international marriages are socially appreciated in Filipino society, especially those born from Filipino and American parents upon whom the highest status of appreciation is conferred. The children from Filipino and Japanese marriages (JFC) are considered second to them. In a related move, Hiroki also flashed back to his childhood and let me know that he and his mother spoke Japanese and Tagalog at home, and that his mother was eager to teach him English, to the extent of enrolling him in an English crammer for elementary school students.

Seiji (pseudonym) is a Japanese Filipino male born in 1987 in Kawasaki City (Kanagawa prefecture), a place with a large community of Asian migrants. The

city has been enthusiastic about multicultural policies starting with national health insurance coverage for the foreign residents since the 1970s (Kawasaki City 2013). Seiji is an active member of the Filipino Christian community, deeply involved in his local church from very young. His constant contacts with other Filipino residents and JFCs there, made him aware of the economic gap between Japan and the Philippines.

> "Seiji (then a 22-year-old): I had been thinking that I wished I were an *Amerika tono hāfu* (half-American) too[6]. But I've learnt that Filipino is also OK because people say being a *hāfu* itself is cool no matter what half you are."
> (Field notes, 11th October, 2009)

When asking JFC about being a *hāfu* in Japanese society, in many cases, their first answer points to a positive appreciation. Nevertheless, the negative stereotypes that they face make them realize that they are far from being envied for their origins, unlike the offspring of Westerners—a result of Western hegemony in the world. On the contrary, it is a common experience for them to have been teased by their school classmates with phrases such as "go home," "Philippine pub," *gaijin* (alien), and *binbō* (poor), regardless of the economic status of their families and the fact that they were born in Japan and are Japanese citizens.

Takako (pseudonym) is a Japanese Filipino female born in Hiroshima in 1986. Compared with the more than 5,000 Filipino who were living in Tokyo at that time, there were only 630 in her prefecture (Hiroshima Prefecture 2010, Tokyo Metropolitan Government 2011). In the interview she explains that her Japanese grandparents were so conservative they disputed their son's marriage to a Filipino woman because of her origins. Yet, ever since Takako was born, they had softened their stance towards the marriage of their son. By way of compensation, she was brought speaking only Japanese and learning Japanese culture. Nevertheless, she also experienced some kind of teasing by classmates for her Filipino roots when she was school age, which resulted in a backlash during a rebellious stage that very nearly led her to juvenile delinquency. Finally, she left home in Hiroshima for a private university in Tokyo taking with her her adolescent's memories. The following is a fragment from one of our interviews:

> "Takako (then a 22-year-old): When I introduce myself as a *Firipin tono hāfu*, I always add on 'my mom is an English teacher.'
> *: I see. Well, excuse me, but the blue color of your eyes…
> Takako: Oh, they are tinted contact lenses to claim my identity."
> (Field notes, 17th October, 2008)

It is interesting to wonder why she feels the need to refer to the job of her mother when introducing herself. There are at least two possible answers to this question: 1) because she wants to link herself to the social appreciation conferred

by the role of a teacher in Japan, and 2) because English is a globally powerful language, much more symbolic and prestigious than Japanese on the world stage. Both reasons are intimately linked to one another. It is often considered that people from Western English-speaking countries such as the USA, UK, Canada, and Australia assume the major role in teaching English in Japan. By emphasizing that her mother makes a living as an English teacher, Takako clearly states that, although she comes from the Philippines, she is not an entertainer, thus creating a distance between her and the most broadly stigmatizing image of Filipino women, at the same time as empowering herself with the linguistic superiority of mastering a socially desirable language such as English[7].

5   The Use of Western Colonial Heritages

The reappraisal of the discussion on Tessa Morris-Suzuki's notion of "cultural resources" is particularly interesting for the consideration of this question. Morris-Suzuki (2002) points out that identity is closely connected to the cultural resources at one's disposal, including language, ethnicity, gender, class, knowledge and religion. The larger part of these cultural resources are acquired in one's childhood such as, for instance, one's mother tongue. In this sense, and recalling Bourdieu's notion of *prises de position* (position-taking), she argues that identity is formed by taking a position in the multicultural context through using cultural resources—formed through conflicts and compromises—which operate as "symbolic markers" that both enable and constrain one's actions[8]. In light of this, we can say that the representational link that the JFCs establish with a vindicated European origin enables them to reverse the derogatory depiction that they suffer, subverting and overcoming negative stereotyping by making use of the symbolic resources available.

Takako's reference to the tinted contact lenses is also interesting. In this case, what kind of identity was she trying to claim? It could be an identity not focused on her *Firipin* origin but on her *hāfu* identity. Changing the color of her eyes could be an effective tool for adjusting her appearance to the ideal image of a *hāfu* which socially is assumed to have physical traits somehow different to those of the Japanese ethnic majority. It is an indisputable fact that Takako was born to a mixed Japanese-Filipino couple and, in a way, this is what she reinforces by wearing contact lenses. Ironically, the blue eyes created by her contact lenses have very little to do with the physical appearance of people from Spain, the ancient colonial power in the Philippines, but they are consistent with the archetypal image of a Western *hāfu*.
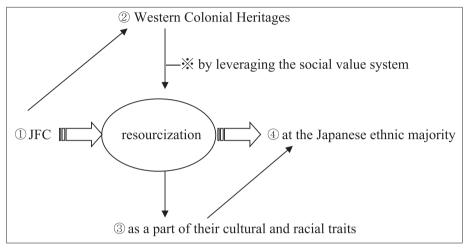
Piecing together these three informants' narratives, we can say that the feelings of inferiority and superiority based on race, ethnicity or nationality reflect the unbalanced international power relationship that ranks Japan as a less powerful nation than Western countries—commencing with the USA—but more powerful than the Philippines. This is also borne out by the statistics on international mar-

riages in Japan (Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare 2007). In 2005, and taking international marriage between Japanese and Americans into consideration, the number between American men and Japanese women was 1,551. Meanwhile, the number of marriages between Japanese men and American women was only 177. Symmetrically, looking at international marriages between Japanese and Filipino, the number between Filipino men and Japanese women was 187, while the number of marriages between Japanese men and Filipino women was an amazing 10,242. Interestingly, we can see that the international power relations correspond to gender relations in international marriage. As Yamashita (2008: 109) notes, international marriage is, in a way, based on this national and racial hierarchy, and it is not difficult to understand that this kind of hierarchy has a considerable influence upon JFC when they are in the process of forging their identity.

This structure does not always work against JFC. In conversation, it is not unusual for them to emphasize the Spanish origin of their kinship such as in Hiroki's case, and the professional advantages of being fluent in English, like Takako. This social strength stems from the colonial heritages of Spain's and the United States' presence in the Philippines. With regard to Spanish roots, these can be traced during more than 300 years of colonial empire, from the sixteenth century until the end of the nineteenth century. Their English language skills are the result of the expansion of public education under U.S. rule, in the first half of the twentieth century. However, those "colonial heritages" only attain their full meaning when they are registered in the racial and ethnic hierarchies of the value system prevalent in today's Japan, rather than in a historical colonial past. Therefore, the question that we should ask ourselves is what are the structural factors that lead them to articulate those images? We should look for the answer in the combination of the deep-rooted prejudice against Filipinos—responsible for teasing and bullying experiences during their childhood, as exposed above—and the prestigious image of Caucasian Western people, popularly known as "white worship". Ultimately, we could say that the cultural and racial proximity to the West take a free ride on the dominant value system in contemporary Japanese society.

We are witnessing the pervasive effects of the Orientalism discourse as "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1978: 3), and its deep rootedness, still prevalent today, in Japan. According to Harumi Befu (2001) the expansion of Orientalism in Japan took place especially in the Meiji era and in the aftermath of World War II. At that time, and mainly among Japanese intellectuals, the Orientalist representation of Japan in its comparison with the West was unquestionably accepted and internalized in a sort of self-denigration that Befu (2001: 127) characterizes as a psychologically masochistic process of *auto-Orientalism*. This social soil laid the basis for the derogatory representation of Filipino culture and language, and thus for the negative stereotyping of the JFC, placing them in an inferior position with respect to the Western features that

currently configure Japanese society. I would like to illustrate this mechanism as below:

The quadruple JFC self-representational mechanism[9)]

We can observe this mechanism in the personal narratives of the JFC, composed of utterances such as "my mom (or I) can speak English," or "my mom (and I) are Spanish-blooded." Images that, far from simply illustrating an alleged kinship tie or the mastery of English, operate as statements that place the vindicated colonial heritage out of its historical context, enabling its mobilization as an intangible symbolic resource in their interaction with the Japanese ethnic majority.

It is not my intention to verify whether children born from Japanese-Filipino couples are or imagine themselves to be placed in a lower position in Japanese society in terms of race and ethnicity, nor is it my intention to affirm whether all of them make use of a symbolically vindicated Western colonial heritage—especially since each JFC has a slightly different take on the Philippines, usually involving both negative and positive opinions and feelings. On the contrary, my analysis tries to underscore the limitations of a dualistic view that only considers Japan and the Philippines in the comprehension of the self-representational mechanisms implicated in the processes of identity formation. In most of the previous studies, the JFCs' ethnicity is recognized as 50 percent Japanese and 50 percent Filipino, something that is succinctly expressed in the following terms: *daburu no kodomo* (Tabuchi 1996; Kobayashi 2002; Kim 2012) which means "double kids" (Satake 2004), and "double (dual) identity" (Iijima and Ono 2010). Generally speaking, along with the broader social use of the notion of *hāfu* (half), the term double (*daburu*) has often been used to refer to people of mixed ethnicity, in line with the current discourse of political correctness. However, the epistemic dichotomy common to both terms

is still too static to be able to explain JFC's self-awareness when we consider their micro-politics of identity, in which their real and alleged multiple racial, cultural and historical backgrounds come into play.

6　Conclusion: Reversing the Negative Stereotype

The ethnographic data collected during fieldwork reveals that the JFC make use of the Philippines' Western features as part of their identity representation, in order to cope with the prevailing prejudice against Filipinos in Japanese society. JFC seem to have learnt by experience the need to develop specific mechanisms for addressing the stereotyped images underlying their derogatory depiction as a way of neutralizing and subverting them. With this aim, they proudly exhibit the European origin of their family names and their command of English—deriving from the Spanish and American colonial periods of the Philippines, respectively—in an attempt to imagine and create a different and favorable impression by symbolically applying their multiple inherited cultural backgrounds.

In this process of self-representation, the Philippines' Western legacy is taken out of its specific historical context of domination and used as an intangible resource when interacting with the Japanese ethnic majority, as a means of empowering their individual and collective identity, reversing negative stereotypes. In so doing, JFC build their identities against the backdrop of transnational dynamics where their vindicated colonial heritages attain their full meaning in relation to the racial and ethnic hierarchies prevalent in contemporary Japan, rather than to a historical colonial past.

From this perspective, my research exposes that the complexity of the self-representational mechanisms implicated in the JFC's identity formation cannot be captured solely by considering the bilateral relations between Japan and the Philippines in the second half of the twentieth century. On the contrary, a more complicated approach has to be applied in order to consider their multiple—real and imaginary—racial, cultural, and historical backgrounds, within a project that, ultimately, aims to overcome the limitations of a dualistic approach in understanding the JFCs' identity experience.

Notes

2) The notion of "circulation" was the main topic of the 109th Annual Meeting of AAA, where this paper was originally presented to. "Circulation" it is an important notion to consider here since my work focuses on the transnational circulation of Western colonial heritages from the Philippines to Japan, whose imaginings of Europe and the USA are used by the JFC as a symbolic resource to reverse derogatory depictions and subvert negative stereotypes of them, empowering their individual and collective identity in social interaction. My approach to the idea of "circulation" is in accordance with the AAA proposal of its definition, as a useful conceptual tool for "thinking across boundaries" and "turning our attention to zones of encounter, conjunction and liminal passages" (Heller 2009: 16), and it follows the theoretical development proposed by Guarné and Yamashita in the introduction to this volume.

3) For more precise information on the fieldwork, see Section 4 in this paper.

4) At the height of its prosperity, hundreds of Filipino entertainers worked in pubs and clubs located in this area (PHW Ltd. 2006: 109).

5) He is a Japanese newspaper journalist, married to a Filipino woman, with experience of living in Manila for his work. I conducted the interview with him in Tokyo, 26th December 2008.

6) It goes without saying that it does not necessarily mean that all *Amerika tono hāfu* (also known as *Amerasian*) are fully accepted in Japanese society. As Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu (2002) notes, they also have to face a distressing struggle in their relationship with the Japanese ethnic majority.

7) Actually, among Filipino women, the poor grasp of English by the Japanese crops up as a bit of a joke in gossip (Kawahara 2004: 189).

8) In this sense, Morris-Suzuki (1998: 198) argues that: "it is not simply that immigration is turning Japan (and other nation-states) into a 'multicultural society,' but that the emergence of a global system has created a growing complexity in the cultural resources which shape the identity of every individual—members of the 'majority' or 'mainstream' just as much as members of 'minorities'. In other words, it has created a 'multiculturalism within'." On these questions, see also the introduction to this special issue by Guarné and Yamashita.

9) This figure is based on the model for the quadruple mechanism of cultural resourcization proposed by Takumi Moriyama (2007: 85).

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