

## Japan's Global Village: A View from the World of Leisure

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Japan has been introducing ideas and artifacts from the outside world for as long as there are records, and there have been periods of great interest in these alien curiosities and periods of rejection as rulers of the time sought to consolidate an internal identity. Japanese people have also traveled abroad to study, to do business, to carry elements of Japanese culture to that same outside world, and then quite often to return to live in Japan again. In the last century and a half, successive Japanese governments have made extraordinary inroads into an international community of capitalist countries, dominated first by major European states, then by the United States of America, and recently more accepting of other Asian powers. Some Japanese individuals became involved in the communist world that for a period represented its opposition, and a not insignificant part of the Japanese government still represents this alternative view. Japan may legitimately claim a strong role in the so-called global village the world has become, but how does that village look from the perspective of ordinary Japanese people living at home? And how global is the village?

In this chapter I will describe and analyze some examples of an interest in the global in contemporary Japan, not from the point of view of the professional who travels abroad, but from the perspective of ordinary people who may have little opportunity for direct experience. I will take as my focus leisure activities rather than the economic and political arenas more often chosen when global issues are discussed. I will consider first the foreign country theme parks that appeared in various parts of Japan in the late 1980s and 1990s, admire the creativity of the replicas on offer, and examine local versions of authenticity underpinning them. I will then go on to examine samples of apparently foreign restaurants that became a positive boom at the turn of the century, and will look, too, at foreign motifs in the architecture of other leisure facilities, such as love hotels and pensions. At the same time, I will cast a backward glance over some longer-standing culinary and architectural innovation.

I will then briefly review some foreign influences in sport and contemporary popular music in Japan, and the knock-on effect on the appearance of young people. I will note, too, some recent trends in tourism and foreign travel, particularly a broadening of interest in locations other than the United States and Europe for cultural content as well as for pure hedonistic frolicking. There would appear to have been a genuine opening up in the world of leisure to an interest in many parts of the world other than the United States, whose influence has dominated Japanese perceptions of "abroad" for several decades. While this may in some ways seem paradoxical, in that globalization is often thought to be synonymous with Americanization, I would like to argue that it could instead represent a genuine degree of sophistication in Japanese attitudes to the world beyond its shores. The choice of restaurants, theme parks, and holiday locations has in recent years been made in a spirit of greatly increased knowledge of the places in question, and thus can be shown to demonstrate a greater awareness of the wider world.

Within Japan, then, are these examples of foreign culture much as they are found elsewhere, in their host countries or in any number of other countries of adoption? And is their adoption thus contributing to the development of a homogenous sort of world where the same kinds of food, play, and other entertainment can be found just about anywhere? I will address this question by examining ethnographic cases for signs of global characteristics, on the one hand, or, on the other, for local interpretations. I will assess the extent to which we find what may be called "glocalization" (global + local) in our Japanese examples, and a thorough Japanization of the international influence. I will also attempt to see how changes in interest in the wider world may have affected, or otherwise, aspects of daily life, internal attitudes to global issues, and sources of Japanese identity.

#### FOREIGN VILLAGES IN JAPAN

"Foreign villages," or *gaikokumura*, belong to a category of public places that are known in Japanese as *tēma pāku*, derived from the English "theme parks," which attaches to them for a native speaker an immediate source of scorn and triviality. The terms have been used literally for parks with themes, in this case foreign country themes, but for foreign visitors, and those Japanese who have lived or studied abroad, they are associated mainly with the further English connotation of fun and playfulness, of rides and escapism. They are thus often largely ignored by the people who could best judge their accuracy, and in a study I made of the parks (Hendry 2000), I was surprised to find that many of them could boast exceedingly accurate representations of the foreign countries in question. They boast literal copies of some of the "best bits" of foreign countries, but at the same time they are highly creative and offer interesting local versions of authenticity.

The parks comprise a large number of more or less sophisticated reproductions of chosen aspects of different foreign countries – usually individual countries, though some parks combine several, perhaps on a continuing theme. One of the most famous examples is named Huis ten Bosch, after a remarkable reproduction of the palace of the queen of the Netherlands, and it forms part of an enormous complex of Dutch buildings, streets, squares, and canals in northern Kyushu. It was also said by the

constructors to be a design for future living and boasts an impressive underground network of services and facilities, including almost total recycling of wastewater on this area of reclaimed land. A tour of these backstage facilities explains that Dutch technology, or "know-how," has been combined with Japanese creativity to make for a completely new concept (cf. Robertson 1997).

Another large and popular one is Parque España, on the Ise peninsula, divided into reproductions of Spanish city, country, and seaside surroundings on regional themes that represent Madrid, Andalucía, Málaga, and Barcelona. A smaller, but remarkably accurately reproduced, park is Glücks Königreich in Hokkaido, where buildings associated with the lives of those famous purveyors of fairytales, the Grimm brothers, lived and worked. Yet another chose a Scandinavian theme that celebrated the life and work of Hans Christian Andersen.

In Hokkaido, too, one of the early parks set out to depict the Canadian houses and scenery that formed the background to the stories of a popular fictitious young lady named Anne of Green Gables. A visitor could immerse themselves for a day in sites of the activities they had read about in the stories and read about her creator's life inside the reproduced house of the title. On the shores of a beautiful lake in Tōhoku, on the other hand, visitors could imagine themselves in the Swiss meadows of another famous young character, Heidi, and gaze from her reproduced bedroom window onto a local mountain said to resemble the Matterhorn. Here they could also take classes in the woodcarving skills that occupied some of her grandfather's time. In the south of the Bōsō peninsula, only a little over two hours from Tokyo, any number of Shakespearean stories are explained and illustrated with life-size alabaster statues set out in a reproduction of New Place, home of the Bard in the latter part of his life.

Some parks provide a veritable journey of learning for the visitor to experience. A large one located in Shikoku offers an Oriental Trip that, evidently following in the boom of European parks, starts from Greece. A boat journey through a small, whitewashed village leads visitors into a giant escalator port that whisks them magically into an unspecified Middle Eastern location complete with golden domes and kasbahs. From here, a few steps lead to a "1st-century Nepalese temple," a remarkable if somewhat sanitized version of the original Swayambunath, located just outside Kathmandu. Other sections featured a 12th/13th-century Thai temple, said to epitomize the Angkor dynasty, a Thai water market, a series of Chinese restaurants, and a small Himalayan mountain to be climbed in order to reach a reproduced Bhutanese building. The last journey features "real Himalayan rocks" on the way, Hindu prayer wheels to spin on arrival, and a series of shrines inside the building where incense could be offered to a variety of Hindu deities. The view is also spectacular.

All of these parks provide gifts and souvenirs from the countries in question, food to buy on the premises or to take home, music, concerts and live shows – in short, plenty of fun, and all on the same general theme. There are often museums displaying objects from the area, craftspeople demonstrating skills that were developed there, and some of the parks even have hotels for an overnight stay. The parks also usually have rides of one sort or another. In reproduced Holland, for example, there are boat trips on the canals and bicycles for hire. In Spain, there is a whole "fiesta" area with large swings and merry-go-rounds set in Gaudí decor. In Glücks Königreich, there are children's rides themed on the Grimms' stories, and Canadian World's theme of

wide-open nature was suitably low-tech, with a pony and trap and a hanging-log xylophone. This last park, like some later ones, has not ridden successfully through the economic recession of the 1990s, but for a while it provided work in the wake of the closing of the local mining industry.

Others have emphasized a philanthropic touch, though many of these parks sought to reproduce the extraordinary success of Tokyo Disneyland, which could for a while boast a greater turnover than the two original Disney parks in the US (Awata and Takanarita 1987). It seems to have been interpreted locally as a kind of short, imaginary trip to America, however, so the other parks offered alternative destinations, unfortunately never to do even half as well. There was concern for a while about this importation of American fun to Japan, and Tokyo Disneyland became a second set of Black Ships<sup>1</sup> in the eyes of some commentators, though the year it opened – 1983 – also became known as the First Year of Leisure (*reija gannen*: Notoji 1990). Aviad Raz's anthropological study of Tokyo Disneyland came down heavily on the side of its clear modification in the Japanese context, however, and he chose his book title, *Riding the Black Ships*, to illustrate his comment that, if Disneyland is a Black Ship, then "the Japanese are riding it" (Raz 1999).

This is but one more example of an interesting aspect of Japan's acquisition of foreign culture in that it combines a high degree of skill in copying both form and technological support, but eventually produces innovative and often more successful versions of the chosen model. Examples abound in the industrial production of motor vehicles, electronic goods, and communications such as mobile telephones. A recent anthropological study by Rupert Cox (2002) on the Zen arts in Japan has examined in detail some of the reasons why copying is not only finely tuned as a mode of learning in Japan but is also still highly evaluated by its practitioners. The Japanese parks illustrate these skills again and again, and though they are all committed totally to the fun of a day out, there is undoubtedly a high level of learning taking place, even if only at a subliminal level. Foreigners may laugh at these reproductions of their homes, and postmodernists may deem them pastiche versions of reality, but some interesting local versions of authenticity may also be discerned. In the Shakespeare Park described above, the birthplace of the playwright has been reproduced, not as it stands 300 years old in Stratford-upon-Avon, but as far as possible as it was in the 16th century when the young William lived in it. It is thus described as a more authentic representation of the time than the "real" one that may be visited in England!

The developers of *gaikokumura* import foreign culture in quite an awesome abundance of architectural splendor and cultural creativity, but they also take over its presentation. In some of the parks, craftspeople from the country came over to construct, or reconstruct their buildings; in others, residents of the particular countries appear in the shows and demonstrate their native skills. They are keenly controlled by Japanese organizers, however, and the Spanish performers complained that they were allowed none of their usual spontaneity, while the Dutch cheesemakers had to throw away the vats of cheese they produced, for their methods did not meet local health regulations. In a Russian park in Niigata Prefecture it was possible, as one might expect, to eat beef Stroganoff, but it was served as a "set," with rice, soup, and pickles, and when I inquired into the nationality of the chef I was told he was Japanese, "for the food needed to be adapted to the Japanese palate."

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## EATING OUT IN A GLOBALIZED JAPAN

This is a general characteristic of foreign fare in Japanese restaurants – indeed probably of foreign fare in most countries – but some of the most popular dishes in Japan today are adaptations of food brought in from outside. *Karēraisu* (“curry-rice”), for example, is available in many types of general eating places, at a low price, with a standard, predictable flavor. Noodles, on the other hand, originally introduced from China and a staple ingredient of menus advertised as “Chinese cooking,” are available in a great variety of different Japanese versions. Some have become regional specialities, so that a visitor to Okinawa is urged not to return without having sampled a local dish of noodles, and another variety has become so characteristically Japanese that it is sold around the world in a well-known chain of Japanese “fast-food” restaurants. Even the strongly flavored Korean *kimchi* has been selling well in Japan recently.

American cooking in the shape of hamburgers and other kinds of “fast food” has been widely accepted in Japan too, although, according to Ohnuki-Tierney’s (1997) research, McDonald’s is seen as a place for “snacks” rather than for a whole meal. The problem, her informants explain, is that bread is not really a “filling” enough substitute for the usual staple of rice to form a satisfying meal (1997:164). A rival Japanese food chain known as Mos Burger introduced rice burgers, where the outer layers of the sandwich are made from “bun-shaped wedges of pressed rice” (1997:166), and these became popular among university students. In fact, bread is widely consumed in Japan for breakfast, where very thick slices of toast seem to have become acceptable standard fare to be served with coffee in hotels and cafés.

Bread was introduced to Japan in the 16th century by the Portuguese; in fact, it was a kind of soft cake known as *kasutera* (*castella*) now a speciality associated with Nagasaki and other parts of Kyushu where the Portuguese influence was greatest. The use of bread spread widely in the latter part of the 19th century, when varieties of it were introduced again, and European ideas were adopted into home cooking in the early 20th century, along with the idea of a housewife devoting herself lovingly to a new kind of nuclear family (Cwiertka 1998). Cwiertka’s examples of dishes that included European touches are heavily adapted to a Japanese palate again, however, and a new aspect of eating foreign fare in the late 20th and early 21st centuries would appear to be a drive for some of the “real thing.” The *gaikokumura* very often advertise themselves as places where *genuine* Dutch, Spanish, or German food and drink may be purchased, and Merry White has carried out fieldwork in Italy with Japanese chefs, housewives, and others who wanted to acquire “authentic” Italian culinary skills (see chapter 25 in this volume).

In early 2002 I carried out a small, personal survey in a few eating places that claimed to be French. There has been an influx of new national cuisines on offer in recent years, but the French restaurant has come to hold a cachet all its own in turn-of-the-century Japan. Actually, I tried out my first taste of Japanese–French cuisine in Huis ten Bosch some years earlier in a food hall way ahead of its time that offered individual restaurants from various countries, just as the shopping center outside called itself a World Bazaar. I had chosen the French one partly because it exuded an air of elegant calm, a welcome contrast to the noisy bustle of the theme park outside.

orbitant prices for special foods. He has thus managed to create a chain of successful eating places offering a range of international ambiances that are popular with the public and therefore well attended. It might be necessary to wait a few minutes to be seated, but the food appeals to the taste buds of the sophisticated global diner and the prices are suited to the diminishing resources of the local population.

With dining, then, as with the theme parks, concessions may be being made for the local palate – and purse – after all, the aim is as always to please the customer; but there is considerable evidence of an effort to offer a broader global experience. In the case of restaurants, the food will certainly have inspired the venture, but the foreign production is rarely limited to the culinary. French menus are also only the icing on the cake of a genuine attempt to create a little French bistro, a Southeast Asian dining hall, or whatever the model may be. The walls are almost invariably decorated with posters of local scenery, the serving staff dressed in appropriate costumes, and in many cases the whole space has been rebuilt to give the customer the effect of being “wrapped” in a foreign building as they taste the foreign fare (cf. Hendry 1993). The total effect may be far from a perfect reproduction of the country in question, but in copying the model, the creative imagination of Japanese entrepreneurs again offers a new and, almost incidentally, sometimes quite an educational experience for the diners of global Japan.

### GLOBALIZED ARCHITECTURE

In fact, there has been much influence from the wider world on the architecture of Japan over the centuries as well, and some of the buildings that are now shown off as quintessentially Japanese: for example, the Tōsho-gu complex at Nikko where the Tokugawa shoguns are memorialized shows a clear resemblance to architecture from mainland Asian countries such as China and Korea. There are even scholars who draw connections between so-called traditional Japanese housing and styles found widely in Polynesia and Micronesia. There is no doubt at all that much contemporary building in Japan has drawn on Euro-American styles and technologies in creating cities that in parts look little different from conurbations in any other part of the world, and Japanese homes have, from the outside at least, a remarkably international range of forms. In this section, however, I would like to examine again some examples of global influence in buildings and interiors that are used largely for leisure and entertainment.<sup>3</sup>

An interesting movement that took place in the 1980s, largely in rural Japan, was the building of a number of new forms of tourist accommodation known as *pensions*. These range in style from a Swiss-type chalet to a minimalist concrete structure with tall roofs somewhat reminiscent of the Shirakawa *gassho-tsukuri* houses of rural Gifu Prefecture. In direct contrast with the *tatami*-matted living of the Japanese style emphasized at the tried-and-tested but somewhat expensive *ryōkan*, and the homely family *minshuku*, however, these places provide beds for sleeping and tables and chairs for eating and drinking. They were modeled on the European idea of a cheap but comfortable form of lodging, providing separate rooms, some small enough for an individual traveler, others large enough to accommodate a whole family together.

The food I consumed was not memorable. It was tasty enough, if a little sparse, but it was served on the most beautiful plates, with chunky silver cutlery, all laid out exquisitely on white damask tablecloths. The waiters were smartly dressed and extremely polite, and the experience remains in my mind as an oasis of space in a busy day.<sup>1</sup>

Other French restaurants I tried had different atmospheres, as indeed might restaurants in France, but they invariably served the food on delicate plates, each item being arranged attractively to offset its color and texture, although the taste was not universally top quality. In one case, on a weekday night in a provincial city, two Japanese friends and I were the only customers, and our waitress seemed also to be rushing into the kitchen to arrange each pre-prepared dish before she served it to us. In another, in a respectable area of Tokyo, where the menu was written up in particularly impressive French, and the food was more than acceptable, I ventured to ask about the chef, who could be seen in the kitchen beyond the eating area and looked very Japanese. "Had he perhaps trained in France?" I tried. "Oh yes," the waitress replied enthusiastically, "he spent two years in Italy." My face must have registered some surprise at her answer, for she added quickly, "and he went to France too."

My best example, however, was an expensive place where I did not really have the time or resources to sample the food, but the building is a well-known local landmark. Part of an upmarket Tokyo shopping center that also boasts a (German-style?) "Beer Garden" and a (Prague-inspired?) Marionette Clock that has dolls march out and back on the quarter-hour, it is a reasonably impressive reproduction French *shato* (*château*). Spatially separated quite effectively from the crowded public areas, it also had a smartly uniformed concierge stationed at the entrance, so I decided to ask if this place might actually have a real French chef. He was again most polite and deferential, and he managed to make his answer seem just what one should expect if one were educated to appreciate this kind of establishment, but the substance was as follows: there were two chefs (of course), one of whom was Japanese (of course), and the other half French (at last) and half Thai (oops, silly me!).

Thai food is also popular in Japan at the start of the 21st century, as is a range of other Asian varieties of cooking, and a fashionable restaurant in a smart part of Tokyo that I visited on the same trip offered very acceptable versions of Thai, Indonesian, and Vietnamese dishes.<sup>2</sup> The decor was again designed to recreate a local feel, large potted plants offering a tropical surround, and the overhead fans a cool retreat from the heat outside. In fact, the front of the shop had used a bamboo curtain so effectively to create an attractive seating area that it was only after choosing a spot that we noticed how near we were to the passing Tokyo traffic. This restaurant is one of a series that shares an advertisement offering "Global Dining" with La Bohème Café, which I happened to visit the following day. There too the decor had been carefully designed to reflect the speciality of the title of the place, and a genuine attempt seemed again to have been made to offer a total experience reflecting the part of the world on offer.

These places of "global" entertainment have in fact been very successful in the last few years, belying the evidence elsewhere of a severe economic recession. Their creator, Hasegawa Kozo, has become well-known for his rejection of some older ideas about the length of time it takes to train a chef, and the need to charge

exorbitant prices for special foods. He has thus managed to create a chain of successful eating places offering a range of international ambiances that are popular with the public and therefore well attended. It might be necessary to wait a few minutes to be seated, but the food appeals to the taste buds of the sophisticated global diner and the prices are suited to the diminishing resources of the local population.

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Meals are usually offered too, and these are typically basic but nutritious dishes that are relatively inexpensive.

Within those overall constraints, some of the pensions sought to offer special features that aimed to draw visitors back to their particular type of atmosphere – an idea perhaps gleaned from the way that European travelers return again and again to a favorite family *pension* – but it seems that Japanese sojourners prefer novelty, and few seem to have succeeded in that aim. One example that I know was carefully designed and constructed with its creator's own hands, with only minimal professional help; and he studied European-style carpentry in order to make the furniture himself. He went into the business with a couple of friends, one an artist who took over the interior design, the other a chef with a penchant for European cookery. The owner was keen on jazz, and he offered a splendid selection of tapes and CDs for the consumption of the visitors, as well as regular live music on two or three evenings a week. Another, in Okinawa, preferred an American theme, although the owner also read avidly on local history and liked to engage his visitors in discussion. He also liked to play the piano, indulging in a broad selection of theme tunes from old films, especially favorite Westerns, many of which he also held on video to amuse his guests.

In my somewhat limited experience, the people who invested in these forms of holiday accommodation were responding to two relatively new patterns of travel: the first, youthful exploratory travel within Japan, and the second, short breaks for parents and children. However, they also sought a personal style of life that offered a fair amount of control over their surroundings, and at the same time allowed them to share their own interests with their visitors. Typically, the location was an attractive part of the country so that interesting daytime activities were assured, but evenings could be spent eating and drinking with other guests in a congenial environment offering some special feature, often of an international nature.

Another well-known global influence on the architecture of venues of entertainment is to be found in the “love hotels” that are scattered all over the country. Rooms are here available to hire for periods measured in hours as often as whole nights, and the accommodation usually comprises a large comfortable bed, bathing facilities, and a variety of cheerful, often themed, decorative accessories. Some of these buildings are quite extraordinary from the outside, perhaps depicting a huge fairytale castle, a gorgeous luxury palace, or even a giant reproduction of a brightly colored animal. According to a survey carried out by the architect Sarah Chaplin, the interiors of these buildings also often provide a selection of different themed environments, and those from different countries make a popular choice. In the lobby, a chart of the accommodation available includes photographs of the room interiors, lit up if they are free, and demonstrating a range of cultural fare.

Choose Italy, for example, and the room may devote whole walls to photographs of beautiful Italian scenery, perhaps mountains on one side, charming city streets on another, and a set of false windows to complete the impression of really being in an Italian room. The furniture will be of an Italianesque style, ornate high-backed chairs matching the headboard of the neatly prepared bed, and a table with carved legs to hold the bowls of pasta and fresh fruit available from room service. Soft, classical music – perhaps a Rossini opera – will fill the air, and a large television screen may well display costumed performers enacting the scenes, though a range of channels will probably also be available. Some such establishments will take care to provide

jasmine, mimosa, or other appropriate perfume to linger in the air as well. Choose another venue for your lovemaking, and the backdrop can quickly become a Brazilian carnival, a Mayan temple, or a scene from the Serengeti game parks of East Africa.

Bathing may have a global theme as well, and a nine-story bathhouse in Osaka offers a whole bevy of bathing environments, ancient and modern. One can happily pass hours moving from the adorned tubs of ancient Greece and Rome through to the minimalist facilities and somewhat extreme temperatures of contemporary Finland, pausing to rest and dip beside an azure Aegean, or a slightly spartan German pool, and take a coffee on a Parisian boulevard. All this was on the "European floor," available on the day of my visit for female customers, but on another level, confined that day to the men, an "Asian section" offered baths in the style of China, Islam, India, and Persia and several varieties of Japanese ones. On other levels there were massage parlors, saunas with a range of herbal fragrances, different kinds of bubbling tubs, a large pool for swimming, rest areas with television, and restaurants serving abundant meals and snacks.

### MUSIC AND SPORT IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

Areas of popular culture that seem best to cross national boundaries, such as sport and music, have also been examined by anthropologists of Japan; in this volume they are reported on by Elise Edwards and Shuhei Hosokawa, respectively (see chapters 3 and 19). However, one of the issues they address is precisely that of the extent to which the activities are localized. An early internal example of the consideration of the effects of the import of a sporting activity is a study which is well known in Japan by the anthropologist Nagashima Nobuhiro (1988) on the anthropology of horse-racing. In this case, the originally aristocratic associations of the British sport when first introduced in the 19th century were soon marred by prior negative Japanese attitudes to gambling. On the other hand, according to Yamaguchi Masao (1998:19), the success abroad of sumo wrestling, which increased its status and popularity in Japan, depended on different kinds of appeal in different foreign locations. In Spain, he reports, it was enjoyed as a fighting sport, whereas in Britain it was more the ceremonial and stylized aspects that people liked.

Japan's contribution to the global in terms of what is known as "classical music" is well known, and the names of Japanese composers, musicians, and dancers may be found on the programs of major concerts around the world. Even in Britain, one of the newest rising stars in the national ballet company is Japanese, one of the most recorded pianists is Japanese, and a young and successful Japanese violinist represents a second generation of Japanese musicianship in Europe as his family took him to Vienna for his early education. Within Japan, too, concerts of high-quality classical music may be heard regularly, and some of the productions are second to none. On New Year's Day, the Viennese Strauss concert was for many years apparently attended by more Japanese than any other nationality, and it is broadcast throughout the nation on Japanese television. Again, the essentially Japanese form of leisure known as *karaoke* has been taken up avidly around the world, very often with its own local manifestations, in Britain, for example, providing the backing for groups singing

together, an activity long associated with public houses, particularly in the north (Kelly 1998; Mitsui and Hosokawa 1998).

Popular music derived from the rest of the world may also be found in Japan, but an interesting anthropological study by Ian Condry (2000, 2001) identified again this element of Japanese adaptation in his examination of Japanese versions of the music of black American ghettos. Hip-hop music provides the focus for his research, and his argument reiterates the idea that copying an outside art form by no means precludes a subsequent creativity, not only in the music, but also in the dance and the culture that go with them. This is masked somewhat by the clothes and even dreadlocks chosen by participants, but young people in turn-of-the-century Japan sport a huge variety of hairstyles and colors, and their apparel also expresses an apparently borderless range of inspiration and influence.

Soccer hit Japan as a sport a couple of decades ago, and, as in the case of baseball, it has been possible to identify interesting local differences. An article by Italian anthropologist Simone Dalla Chiesa (2002) titled "When the Goal Is Not a Goal" is a particularly poignant example of the almost diametrically opposed attitudes to the same game of players brought up in different cultural traditions. It is precisely in the area of soccer, however, that some of the best examples of a new and more sophisticated ability to make distinctions has been manifest amongst ordinary Japanese supporters. Over the period of increasing interest in the game, fans have moved their attention from different varieties of European soccer, including the expensive problems associated with hiring a famous British practitioner and a wider interest in other aspects of Spanish culture, to the more successful recent admiration of the exciting Latin American version. In 2002 the audiences at the World Cup championship expressed this new awareness of global distinctions while cheering on the champions, who in this case happened to be Brazil (see chapter 18 in this volume).

### A MATURE GLOBAL VILLAGE?

Views of the outside world have changed through time, as have views of the place of Japan within that world, and indeed the place of different peoples within Japan. In the glare of world attention that accompanied its extraordinary economic achievement, Japanese people sought to understand themselves as the "uniquely" successful Asian nation, and an emphasis was placed on the culture and history of a people who seemed quite homogeneous relative to the melting-pot that their biggest outside neighbor claimed to be. Since the so-called "lost years" of the 1990s economic recession, Japan has actually found a place within the wider group of Asian neighbors that have also come to succeed in that world of Western capitalism, and young people, in particular, are traveling in the area. At the same time, ordinary people living in Japan have had to recognize and come to terms with an increasingly diverse population of migrant workers, not only from other parts of Asia, but from more distant countries as well.

It seems that some mutually beneficial tourism in the last few years may have begun to soften the antagonism directed toward Japan and the Japanese by Asian and Pacific peoples, absorbed, often brutally, into the Japanese empire. And there has been a positive "boom" of interest in "Asian" goods from a variety of neighboring

locations. An interest in local cultural differences would also seem to have reawakened an interest in Japan's internal diversity, and parks representing cultural features of the Ainu and the Okinawans have also enjoyed some success (see chapters 6 and 7 in this volume). In 1910, at the Great Britain–Japan Exhibition, the Ainu people were put on display by Japan, but the international mood of the time was to discourage indigenous diversity, and like the Gaelic people of the Scottish islands and Native Americans, the Ainu were expected to abandon their cultural roots and integrate with wider Japan. In even earlier centuries, when Chinese dynasties had been a predominant influence for Japan, China's view of itself as the Middle Kingdom surrounded by colorful lesser peoples who paid tribute to the center was also adopted in Japan.

Japan now leads the world in significant ways, and its contribution to the global village of fun and leisure was until recently almost unrivaled. I have even found a powerful Sony speaker booming out contemporary music in the middle of the Kizelkum desert, and this and other Japanese names dominate the electronic sections of music stores around the world, as do the advances in mobile telephone technology. Foreign restaurants are of course found in cities around the world, and architecture is often quite international, but I contend that, in the case of parks that offer the simulated experience of visiting a foreign country for a day, Japan again has a definite edge. There are some huge ones in China, for example at Shenzhen, but they combine many different influences in the same park, and have nowhere near the level of sophistication found in the Japanese parks. Visitors claim to go to the parks for fun, and that, it seems, is what they find there – just as if they were taking a mini-foreign holiday; but foreign holidays can also broaden horizons and encourage an understanding of other peoples and their ways.

At the start of the 20th century, the view many Japanese seem to have had of the “outside” world would seem to have been rather a mature one, based on a series of different perspectives that can now be represented without rancor in parks of recreation. The peoples on display are essentially on an equal footing with the visitors, and the range of cultural variety available to the visitors is quite impressive. When Japanese people travel abroad these days, they are, in my view, much better informed about the places they are going to than are some of their counterparts from many other technologically highly developed countries, and they display a willingness to learn and understand that only a generation ago was rare. At the same time, ordinary people in Japan maintain their own local versions of the culture they have taken for their own use, and they celebrate the diversity with little danger of being overwhelmed by outside influences. If powerful people in the political and economic spheres could learn from their playful counterparts, and exercise confidence in the broad view of the world they seem to have adopted, they might have an even greater contribution to make to the future of the presently somewhat threatened global village.

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## NOTES

- 1 Editor's note: “Black Ships” (*kurofune*) refers to the fleet of Commodore Matthew Perry who sailed into Uraga harbor on July 8, 1853 with a message from President Fillmore to the shogun Ieyoshi which precipitated the opening to Americans of the ports of Kanagawa and Hakodate. “Black ships” today is a metaphor for “forced Americanization” (Hendry 1999).
- 2 Editor's note: Since at least the mid-1980s, non-(mainstream) Japanese Asian cuisines, particularly the cuisine of areas formerly part of the Japanese empire, and in Okinawan and Ainu dishes – is referred to and advertised as “ethnic” (*esunikken*) and in this case, “ethnic” would seem to be a label redolent of the us-versus-them rhetoric camouflaged by the pan-Asianism of the Japanese state's Great East Asia Co-Profit Sphere rhetoric.
- 3 See Cybriwsky (chapter 14) in this volume.

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