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Globalization, Digitalization, and Renationalization: Some Reflections from Japanese Cases

Koichi Iwabuchi
(Monash University)

Abstract

Across the world, globalization processes have been significantly activating cross-border flows and promoting the interpenetration of capital, people, and media communication. The development of digital communication technologies and social media with their affect-driven capacities reinforce these tendencies. Globalization apparently disregards national borders and undermines exclusionary national identities by generating cultural mixing, hybridized identifications, transnational dialogue, and cosmopolitan consciousness. Digital communication technologies have further intensified mediated collectivities beyond and across the nation, but these developments do not necessarily bring about the weakening of national imaginations and nation-centered frameworks. In many parts of the world, we have been observing the resilience of national identity and the resurgence of nationalism. Globalization and digitalization have promoted various modes of cross-border connection, exchange, and confrontation while at the same time newly highlighting the relevance of national borders. This paper will discuss how renationalization accompanies the progression of globalization and digitalization and considers the role of digital media and traditional mass media in the reproduction of the nation, referring to Japanese cases in which a growing concern with the promotion of national dignity and national interests has been engendering hate-driven jingoism and commercialized nationalism.

Keywords: post-imagined communities, cyber-driven jingoism, commercial nationalism, national dignity, national interests

Introduction

All across the world, globalization processes have been significantly activating cross-border flows and interpenetration of capital, people, and media communication, which amplifies various kinds of connection, exchange, sharedness, and rivalry. The development of digital communication technologies, social media, and their affect-driven capacities further reinforce these tendencies. One key question for media and cultural studies is how these developments intersect with and impact the reproduction of the nation, one of the most widespread and influential cultural forms in the modern world. Globalization apparently disregards national borders and undermines exclusionary national identities by generating cultural mixing, hybridized identification, transnational dialogue, and cosmopolitan consciousness.[1] Digital communication technologies have further intensified mediated collectivities beyond and across the nation. While fundamentally questioning the mass media-driven construction of national imagined communities, these developments do not, however, necessarily bring about the weakening of national imaginations and nation-centered frameworks. Today, in many parts of the world, we observe the resilience of national identities and the resurgence of nationalism. Globalization and digitalization have engendered the interplay of centrifugal and centripetal forces in promoting various modes of cross-border connection, translation, exchange, and dialogue, while at the same time newly highlighting the relevance of national borders. This paper will discuss how the progression of globalization and digitalization accompanies renationalization, referring in particular to Japanese cases. The flows of money, people, and media communication have become treacherous even as they interpenetrate each other. As the autonomy of the nation-state has been challenged by escalating cross-border mobility and connectivity globalized market forces serve to intensify the people's sense of socio-economic distress. In this socio-historical context, how digital media and traditional mass media play a role in the reproduction of the nation will be considered. The landscape of the post–imagined community, it will be suggested, provokes the resurgence of nationalism in the form of growing concerns for the defense of national dignity and

the advancement of national interests, which in turn promote hate-driven jingoism and commercialized nationalism.

The Landscape of the Post-Imagined Community

It is commonly argued that the study of nationalism entered a new stage in the mid-1980s and 1990s with a shift in the focus of study from questions relating to "what and when" to those having to do with the "how."[2] This shift was driven by the "cultural turn," which is concerned with "the ways nations are discursively narrated and reproduced" rather than "the political, economic and social conditions which allowed for the emergence of the nation-state."[3] It deals with both the representation of the nation in the dominant discourse and people's mundane practice of identification with and reproduction of the nation. Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities" and Michael Billig's "banal nationalism" are considered two seminal works behind this shift in scholarship.[4] Anderson's work in particular has influenced many works that explore the discursive (re)construction of the nation through representation. Memories of war and disaster, celebrations of past glories, iconic landscapes, and nationally renowned figures are at the core of the representation of the nation. It should be noted however that this discursive shift in the study of nationalism is not only concerned with the mediated representation of the nation as a form of ideology. The nation comes into being as a cultural entity through the reception and identification of a people with the images and ideas of the nation that they encounter by reading newspapers, watching TV news and films, and by watching or participating in national events. Billig's work further highlights the significance of the unreflective nature of a people's performance in mundanely reproducing the experience of nationhood.

The investigation of the mediated construction of the nation has recently turned attention to the ways that the development of digital communication technologies has changed global socio-cultural environments. The technological breakthrough of the Internet and social media has drastically changed the media landscape in the last two decades and presented a serious challenge to the traditional mass

media. With the coming of the cultural turn in the 1990s, what is called "the circuit of culture" has become a widely influential approach in media and cultural studies.[5] This approach underlies the analysis of interactive connections between the five investigative fields of production, representation, consumption, regulation, and identity for critical studies of media culture in everyday life. While such approach is still relevant, the rise of alternative media such as foreign media channels, the Internet, and social media and the diversification of media platforms in the form of PCs, tablets, smartphones, as well as TV monitors, where people consume information and images, call for fresher perspectives. Furthermore, digital communication substantially blurs the boundary between producer and consumer and widens people's active access to and participation in the media. Anyone can be a media producer, commentator, journalist, artist, or activist. Diverse and competing facts, truths, views, ideas, images, and values are circulated and shared across borders to challenge socially dominant and politically mainstream representations. These developments attest to the decentering of the traditional mass media system and the relative waning of the significance and influence of the mass media. A growing interest in how digital communication boosts the power of affect over that of representation also poses fundamental questions about the efficacy of the communication model of representation and reception or consumption.[6] This does not mean the vanishing of dominant ideologies and discourses but the relative diminution of the central role of traditional mass media in disseminating them across society as various kinds of media compete with each other to gain visibility in public space. Expansive uses of various media platforms enable people to get access to and transmit diverse information, images, and ideas actively—in ways that transform, challenge, or legitimate structures of power—and to cultivate new forms of awareness, exchange, and solidarity within and across national borders.

The development of digital communication and the intensification of cross-border connections have seriously put in question key features of the paradigm of the imagined community. The concept of the imagined community emphasizes the centrality of mass media representation and

the narrative of the nation in instilling a sense of historical continuity based on comradeship and shared identity, serving to produce a national public through the collective practice of consuming mediated representations. This is not to say that the nation does not matter any longer. We have been observing the continued resilience and even strengthening of national identifications and nationalistic sentiments. In the age of globalization and digitalization, the nation is still firmly instituted and conceived, socially and personally as the most significant unit of identification and belonging, as "a pervasive way of imagining the world—a sort of grammar and syntax that allows people to speak about and act in the world."[7] While advancing the construction of mediated connectivity and collectivity beyond and within the nation, the Internet also amplifies the occasions of media contact that encourage people to talk about the nation via diverse platforms in their national language.[8] This border-transgressing feature enables migrants and overseas diaspora communities to maintain contact with the nation of their origin, retaining their cultural ties,[9] while the governments are keen to regulate the Internet and social media for its own nationalistic purposes.[10]

Recent studies on how the nation is imagined and reproduced under the communicative landscape of globalization and digitalization also turn attention to the issue of human agency. The study of the mediated construction of the nation tended to assume that people identify with or reproduce the idea of a single dominant nationhood, but this assumption has been questioned as digital communication enhances the capacity of people to act on the media and makes possible their access to and production and (re)distribution of a more diverse array of nationalistic images and ideas. Hitherto underexplored questions of whether, how, and under what conditions people identify with the narrative of the nation have been put forward. The recent development of the study of "everyday nationalism" or "everyday nationhood" in the work of Michael Billig, Michael Skey, and Marco Antonsich attends to such questions by revisiting the concept of banal nationalism.[11] An increased focus on human agency in the access to digital media underscores the reproduction of the national more as a bottom-up process rather than one that is driven by the state and imposed from

the top down.[12] This situation demands a close examination of how people challenge, negotiate, and embrace nationhood in everyday life in a digitalized communication landscape in which they are able to pursue diverse ways of narrating and identifying with the nation as well as challenging the representations of the nation in the traditional mass media. Problematizing the communicative model of an audience receiving media representation, the affective turn of the digital age accords greater attention to pre-cognitive bodily sensations and affects. This type of scholarly approach is also taken seriously in the study of everyday nationhood.[13] The renewed focus on human agency also compels us to take the question of "who" more seriously in the exploration of nationalism and national identity, as in the critique of banal nationalism—and imagined communities too— by scholars such as Michael Skey for tending to assume that a national population is uniform and homogeneous.[14] As Stuart Hall points out, the representation of the nation "stitches up differences into one identity," but whether and how representation is actually capable of "stitch[ing] up differences" is a disputable point, one which has become even less convincing with the ever-intensifying mobility and diversity.[15] It is necessary to take more seriously the diversification of populations by engaging with hitherto neglected questions raised by "the impact of an increasing ethno-culturally diverse population on the meanings, materiality, and performance of the nation."[16]

Another approach to consider how the nation works as a pervasive syntax for imagining the world is to reflect on how the idea of nationhood has acquired a new significance in a globally (over) connected world. This is to reconsider the international nature of imagined communities, which institutes "a globally intelligible grammar of nationhood."[17] The interplay of the national and international has long been a significant part of the discursive and imaginative construction and reproduction of the nation. The nation as a discursive construction has relied on a clearly demarcated boundary between "us" and "them," making it the most significant local unit of composition in the world.[18] As flows of money, people, and information have become freer and more frequent, the demarcation of the internal and the external has become

unsettled. The autonomy of the nation-state has become subordinated to cross-border mobility and connectivity that globalized market forces intensify. This creates a situation in which, as Samanth Subramanian points out, "a nation's identity, for the first time, had to pull the rest of the world in," which has awakened the impulse "to regain or construct a more distinctive version of a country's self."[19] This impulse takes the reactive shape of an exclusionary nationalism—jingoism and populism—joined with a growing antipathy toward migration, multiculturalism, and globalism. It takes less aggressive and more commercialized shapes as well, driven by marketing involved in selling and branding the nation, both to the world and to its own population. While exclusionary nationalism flourishes in hot, divisive and protective forms, driven by social media with an anti-mass media posture, the process of branding is banal, encompassing, promotional, and embraces established cultural industries, including traditional mass media. Subramanian argues that the two are "mirror images of a sort,"[20] which signals a growing apprehension about national identity in a globalized world. I would further suggest that a driving force behind the effort to bolster nationalism in both cases is the defense of national dignity and the promotion of national interests, rather than the endeavor to foster the comradeship within the nation. In the following, I will consider how the two forces take shape in tandem across digital communications and within the traditional mass media in the context of Japan.

The Spawning of Cyber-Driven Jingoism

In Euro-American contexts, the increasing mobility of populations and the worsening divide between rich and poor induced by the globalized market economy have evoked a sense of insecurity and even antipathy to cultural diversity within the nation. Immigration and multiculturalism have come under strong attack, especially after the attacks of September 11, 2001, as they are considered divisive to national unity and harmful to national security. Governments have accordingly reinforced national border controls while stressing national integration. More recently we are observing the rise of anti-globalism in the form of isolationist

nationalism and populist movements that seek to defend national economies, prevent "unwanted" migrants from crossing national borders, and protect national interests, as exemplified by the UK's vote to exit the EU and the "America First" slogan of the Trump administration in the US. The rhetoric of nationalist populism taps into the uneasiness of the middle and working class toward the forces of the global market and the challenges of mass migration as well as into the frustration they feel toward elites they regard as transnationally-minded.[21] Moreover, digital communications and social media play an active role in facilitating national populism. Affect-driven story-telling can mobilize people into an engaged public.[22] Whether and how the formation of an "affective public" leads to the reassertion of nationalism is an intriguing question that calls for further examination. For my purposes here, what has become noticeable is how digitalization amplifies, if not causes outright, reactive nationalism and jingoism. Rather than serving to promote a sense of unity and solidarity within a nation, digitalization appears to intensify animosity toward immigrants and antipathy toward globalism. Political figures and parties subtly take advantage of such trends by stoking populist sentiment through affective and sensory appeals, as shown by the cases in the US and Europe.[23] Billig argues that banal nationalism "operate[s] mindlessly, rather than mindfully,"[24] but such unreflective reproduction of and identification with imagined communities in everyday life can easily give way to "reflective" nationalisms that make the nation "explicit" and "fortify" its "foundations."[25] Such a transition usually takes place in times of war or geopolitical crisis, when "hot," rather than "banal," nationalism becomes the rule.

Though populist politics and anti-migration movements are not yet a central feature in Japan as an immigration policy has not yet been instituted, the rise of nationalism, jingoism, and the recent spawning of Japanese hate speech movements have revealed some features typical of nationalist populism: antipathy against leftist intellectuals and the mass media, hostility toward foreigners, and a sense of socio-economic deprivation. Historical revisionism in the 1990s that condemned the "self-torturing" historical view of Japan's colonialism in East Asia, which leftist intellectuals and mass media are blamed for promoting, was

quite influential in the rise of such movements in Japan. The launch of the Internet forum *Ni-Channerru* (2 Channel) in 1999 gave further momentum to the upsurge of those who are known as *netto uyoku* (cyber right-wingers). The rise of cyber nationalism in Japan shows how digitalized communication affectively encourages people to change from the role of passive consumers to that of active subjects. Their access to the Internet urged them to open up their eyes to the hidden "historical truth" regarding Japan's colonial history, whereby Japan did not do anything wrong to the lands it colonized and the exploitation of "comfort women" is a fabrication. Cyber right-wingers lay claim to the mission of serving as the alternative media to debunk the falsehoods imposed by the "self-tormenting" historical discourse fabricated by mass media and leftist intellectuals.[26] They disseminate actively what Brian Massumi has called "affective facts,"[27] which they have found on the Internet, and aggressively and anonymously engage in trolling those who express views or ideas with which they do not agree. The actual number of cyber right-wingers is small. Several surveys show that it consists of 1 to 1.7% of the population.[28] However, their energetic activities online make their views quite visible as they provide 20% of all comments on political and social issues.[29] The number of those who have sympathies for right-wing views also seem to be gradually increasing while cyber right-wingers have shifted their emphasis from historical revisionism to jingoism and hate speech. Tsuji points out that 5.3% of the population are sympathetic to the comments of cyber right-wingers.[30] Another 3% make up what are called "online jingoists," who actively make extremist comments while not taking any particular political stance.[31]

Nagayoshi's study also shows that 21.5% of all respondents show jingoistic tendencies, especially against China, Korea, and resident Koreans. The activities of cyber-right wingers and hate speech movements have been driven by hostility toward China and Korea, which are perceived as overbearing and disingenuous in pressing their demands that Japan atone for colonial rule and make compensation for the atrocities it committed. The growing international political tensions and economic rivalry with China and South Korea have further energized cyber-right wingers to claim the mantle of defending national dignity.

The post–Cold War era has generated the expansion of the global market across many parts of Asia, but Japan's experience during this time has been marked by the stagnation inflicted by the economic crisis of the early 1990s. In addition, Japan must also face the challenge of an aging and shrinking population that will lead to a substantial reduction of the work force in the coming decades. Such developments have given rise to all kinds of anxieties and fears. The gap has widened between the haves and the have-nots and there is a mounting sense of insecurity regarding the availability of full-time employment. Prospects appear gloomy for the maintenance of public pension plans and the social welfare system.

Moreover, the growing economic and cultural power of China and South Korea in recent years has aroused aggressively nationalistic sentiments in Japan. While it had long enjoyed special status among non-Western countries for its prosperity and technological advancement, the expansion of global capitalism in the post–Cold War world has led to the ascent of rival economies in Asia, exemplified most strikingly by China. And whereas Japanese media culture has been received favorably across the globe, it has been overshadowed by the popularity of South Korean popular culture. In addition to outpourings in China and South Korea of anti-Japanese sentiment over unresolved historical issues, tensions have been further exacerbated by territorial disputes over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands with China and over Dokdo/Takeshima with South Korea. Public opinion surveys conducted by the government every year have shown sharp declines in feelings of friendliness and sympathy among Japanese people towards China and South Korea.[32] It is in this worsening political climate that the above-mentioned hate speech movements have begun to target the Korean residents of Japan. Starting in 2009, cyber right-wingers made their presence known in street demonstrations against the Korean minority.[33] They accused the Koreans residing in Japan of being disloyal and of enjoying special privileges from the government, in the form of social welfare benefits. Such privileges do not really exist, and the accusations were based on false information circulating on the Internet.[34] But the belief that Koreans receive preferential treatment from the state became a key motive behind the hate speech movement against them.[35]

Jingoists (*haigai shugisha*) in Japan, who include both cyber right-wingers and hate speech activists, seek to reclaim what they regard as national dignity and to protect national interests. But they show little concern in building up a sense of collective national solidarity, integration, and comradeship. Unlike the historical revisionists of the 1990s, the current jingoistic movements do not pay much attention to any historically embedded national narrative. Their primary goal appears to be exposing the "traitors to Japan" (*han-nichi*), whose ranks include resident Koreans, members of the establishment media, and leftist intellectuals, all of whom, they allege, serve to harm Japan's national dignity and undermine its interests. The sense of outrage among jingoists that resident Koreans are receiving special privileges from the government extends to target members of other socially vulnerable groups, such as LGBTQI+, the handicapped, the Ainu, Okinawans, and welfare recipients.[36]

It can be argued that the feelings of anger and victimization arising from socio-economic marginalization is an important factor in the rise of cyber-jingoism and hate movements in Japan. Those who participate in hate movements are assumed to be men who are suffering from economic hardship and social marginalization: they have low income, part-time jobs, and are without spouses. But many studies show that increasing numbers of women of varying age groups are joining the public demonstrations,[37] and members of the middle class, including well-to-do professionals and even those in the ranks of the elites, are also among the supporters of such movements.[38] These patterns are reflective of a modernized symbolic racism that is the consequence of globalized capitalism, which uproots and threatens members of majority groups so that they come to demand the support and protection previously given only to minorities. In the case of Japan, such demands for help from the state have been less prominent than attacks on the socially vulnerable on the grounds that they abuse the welfare system. What is unforgivable for the cyber-jingoist and hate movements is that resident Koreans and other socially vulnerable people are benefiting from the social programs at a time of hardship for the Japanese public as a whole. A sense of rage and suffocation with life simmers in Japan, even while market-driven

globalization has continued to expand. The perception of the country's relative decline, especially after the earthquake and tsunami of March 11, 2011, has contributed to widespread feelings of powerlessness and despair. Digital media has been instrumental in gathering and amplifying the negative national mood to scapegoat minorities for undermining the image and interests of the nation.

Selling the Nation: Commercial Nationalism

The growing frequency of cross-cultural encounters and communications has served to strengthen the market as a force within the discursive and performative framework of the nation. Since the early 1990s, cultural internationalism has gained further momentum, as the number of cultural festivals and exhibitions with international participants, including sporting events, beauty pageants, and so on, has steadily increased. Satellite and cable broadcasting mean that media spectacles are no longer confined to a single country or a distinct region. The key players in this process include well-known international organizations such as the IOC and UNESCO, but they also include the media and cultural industries that both transnationally and locally work with them.[39] Reciprocated international gazes accordingly have come to play a key role in reemphasizing the nation as the most meaningful cultural entity of collective identification. A plethora of international events and spectacles facilitates mundane occasions that make people more mindful of the particular nation with which they identity. The act of participating, whether in actual or virtual terms, in global and international events nevertheless imparts to people the sense that the meeting of cultures is something that takes place between cultures which remain nonetheless distinct and exclusive. Accordingly, states have grown keen to take advantage of this double consciousness by joining forces with media and culture industries. States now utilize marketing techniques to enhance nation branding in an increasingly competitive global marketplace, often through activities and policies that are "strategically planned, holistic, and coherent."[40]

States have recognized the importance of improving the power

of their brands across the various platforms of the digital media environment, an objective that can enhance national interests to enhance economic performance and geopolitical benefits. Soft power, nation-branding, the creative industries, and cultural diplomacy are instruments with which a nation engages in competition with its rivals on the terrain of media culture. The "Cool Japan" policy, for example, was developed as a strategy to brand the nation, and was supported by a substantial budget with the aim of promoting Japanese culture overseas.[41] While there is still no single ministry that plans and implements a coherent cultural diplomacy policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has been active in promoting Japanese media culture overseas as part of its public diplomacy program. Indeed, in 2006, the Ministry adopted a policy of pop-culture diplomacy, the aim of which was to further understanding and increase trust in Japan by highlighting its popular culture. The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) has also played a role in implementing the Cool Japan policy, establishing its own promotion office in 2010. Finally, in 2013, the Cabinet Secretariat set up its own branch for Cool Japan. Fifty billion yen were allocated to the promotion of Japanese content overseas to improve Japan's profile internationally in such areas as food, fashion, tourism, and traditional crafts.

Nation-branding is not an easy business. Its success can be difficult to measure, and its pursuit can result in incoherent and contradictory actions undertaken by such different actors as states, public relations consultants, the corporate media, and the culture industries. Nevertheless, nation-branding matters not only because of heavy fiscal investments from the state but also because it projects the nation's image internationally *and* domestically. Nation branding is not just externally oriented but, quite crucially, internally projected towards the national citizens. For nation-branding seeks to mobilize citizens into "nationalistic consumers,"[42] as they are encouraged to take an active role in promoting the nation as "representatives, stakeholders, and customers of the brand" across multiple digital platforms as well as participants in international events.[43] As Melissa Aroncyk observes, the "mundane practices of nation branding" reinforce the national imaginary for the reason that

"they perpetuate a conversation about what the nation is for in a global context."[44] Indeed, the development and implementation of such a policy propagates the idea among the population that the promotion of the national brand is a serious concern, with prestige and vital national interests at stake. Such thinking is readily evident in Japan. Although critics have raised questions about the overall efficacy of Cool Japan in improving working conditions in the creative industries and thereby enhancing their creativity, especially considering the substantial amounts of money that have gone into the endeavor,[45] the population as a whole appears to approve of the strategy of using culture as an instrument for promoting national interests. According to a 2014 survey by Tokyo Polytechnic University, 60% of respondents indicated that they were aware of Cool Japan, doubling the number who knew about the initiative in 2010. The respondents ranked *anime, manga,* and Japanese cuisine (*washoku*) above traditional Japanese culture as the products that ought to be promoted abroad. More than 90% of respondents stated that they approved of Cool Japan as a policy, while 65% believed that industries related to Cool Japan will be vital to the future health of the Japanese economy.[46]

Nation-branding regards the nation as a form to be filled by its distinctive cultural assets so that the nation will perform well in international competition, thereby garnering prestige and advancing its interests. As Sue Curry Jansen puts it, "[b]randing not only explains nations to the world but also reinterprets national identity in market terms and provides new narratives for domestic consumption."[47] However, the representation of the nation in market terms tends to be highly image-driven, superficial and ahistorical, lacking depth, complexity, and coherence. An exclusionary conception of the nation as a cultural entity is reproduced and a "core" national culture is delimited, while marginalizing or even suppressing altogether the markers of socio-cultural diversity.[48] In the context of Japan, there remains a striking gap between the rapid development of Cool Japan and the lack of engagement within the country on issues of immigration and multicultural diversity.[49] One policy maker associated with the Japan-branding project declares that a reassessment of "Japan's distinctive

cultural DNA" is needed so that it can better promote the creation and marketing of Japanese products and services. [50] According to a report on Japan by the EU, Cool Japan aims to "enhance awareness of the 'uniqueness' of Japan" by taking "an approach which is based on Japan's portrayal of itself as ethnically and linguistically homogeneous and culturally unique."[51]

Furthermore, the fact that nation-branding works in tandem with the mobilization of nationalistic sentiments leaves a significant role for the traditional mass media. Zala Volcic and Mark Andrejevic conceptualize "commercial nationalism" as the reproduction of nationalism in market terms through a dual form of advancement that includes "the ways in which states come increasingly to rely on commercial techniques for self-promotion, diplomacy, and internal national mobilization on the one hand and, on the other, the ways in which new, emerging, and legacy forms of commercial media rely on the mobilization of nationalism for the purpose of selling, ratings, and profit."[52] As Graeme Turner points out, the development of commercial nationalism enables mass media to "be uncomplicatedly dedicated to prosecuting its own commercial interests without being bothered about such old-fashioned regulatory issues as 'the public good'" as long as the content serves to enhance the national brand.[53] International sports events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games are significant occasions for selling the host nation to the world. Such events are a lifeline for the traditional mass media and Japanese TV networks are eager to broadcast such events in ways that stir up feelings of national pride. The upcoming Tokyo Olympics promises to be a tremendous opportunity to promote the national brand, strengthening Japan's international standing, enhancing national dignity and generating economic benefits. For traditional mass media to survive in the digital era, "generating, or embedding already existing, performances of nationalism within its entertainment formats" is vital.[54] This strategy is even more clearly evident in the recent rise of "Japan is Great" (*Nihon Sugoi*) genre of TV programs and publications that publicize Japanese culture as distinctive and superior with a focus on the praise given to Japan by foreigners.

The popularity of such media text surged around 2012-14, a period

that corresponds with the further activation of Cool Japan policy and thus appears to reveal the impact made by Cool Japan on the Japanese public.[55] Yet, it should also be noted that "Japan is Great" TV programs and publications became a trend during the same period when antipathy toward China and South Korea became more noticeable. The programs and publications that emphasize the outstanding cultural achievements of Japan also compare them in a favorable light to those of China and South Korea. Thus, it could be said that the genre that glorifies Japan overlaps with what are known as "hate-books" (*heitobon*) that attack China, South Korea, and the Koreans residing in Japan. With the rise of cyber-right movements and anti-sentiments against China and South Korea, publishing houses have taken note of the rise in nationalist sentiment and sought to profit from it. Books attacking China and Korea can be seen in conspicuous areas of major bookshops and are advertised in train stations and in newspapers. More than two hundred hate-books were published in 2013-14, the years when Cool Japan took off as a major policy initiative. Sales of these books have declined somewhat since then, partly due to public criticism of them, but the "Japan is Great" genre nevertheless maintains certain commonalities in tone with these works. Some editors of hate-books admitted that they published them primarily to make money off the discontent and depression felt by many Japanese.[56] Apparently, it is easy for works with jingoistic content to attract attention and gain a following through the Internet.[57] The commercialized nationalism in the mass media is closely linked not just to the Cool Japan policy but also to the marketing of hate-driven jingoism to capitalize on the niche market of exclusionary nationalism.

Nation Matters

"The television era was about globalism, international cooperation, and the open society," observes Douglas Rushkoff, but "the transition to a digital media environment is making people a whole lot less tolerant of this dissolution of boundaries."[58] While this observation sounds astute, we should not assume that such a shift can be wholly attributed to the technological changes brought about by digital media. The landscape

of the post–imagined community is shaped through a complicated interaction of emerging media environments and socio-historical factors specific to the twenty-first century. The world in which digital media has gained currency is much less enthused about globalism and more open to reactionary and nationalist forces. While the paradigm of the mass-media driven imagined community has lost its force, the idea of nationhood in many parts of the world asserts itself to bolster national dignity and protect national interests in response to uncontrolled flows of people, capital, and media. The range of digital media appear to lend itself to nationalistic and even jingoistic purposes, while older forms of mass media have been given a new lease on life by selling nationalistic messages to the public. Nevertheless, we should remain mindful that a digital media environment can also work to the benefit of progressive actions and awareness campaigns that draw attention to marginalized groups and promote international solidarity and cosmopolitan consciousness. To achieve such purposes, innovative media pedagogies are crucial. These media pedagogies should aim not only to improve literacy in digital media but also facilitate the cultivation of communication skills in society to nurture self-reflective dialogue and encourage the confrontation with the conditions of inequality in relationships between the self and other. It is also crucial to promote dialogue with others who hold different values and offer challenging perspectives. Here, Craig Calhoun's point is well taken that "[t]he nation is reproduced as a common reference point in debates over what the nation should be, how it should be defended, or its interests advanced."[59] Digital communication, while making people more active in gaining access to the media, also generates polarization, leading them to form groups based on shared opinions, so that dialogue with people with differing worldviews becomes less frequent.[60] Unfortunately, the narrowness of most Internet communities is true not only of reactionary groups but also of those who seek to counter exclusionary identities. In the digital age, building a common forum where individuals with diverse opinions may engage in dialogue over local and global issues remains a critical matter that has yet to be tackled.

Towards this end, a comprehensive understanding of why so many

people are attracted to exclusionary or populist nationalism is needed. Rather than dismissing such people as bigots or racists, an understanding of the reasons for their beliefs and opinions is indispensable to foster a collective imagination that can make the nation more inclusive and egalitarian against the disruptive effects of market-driven globalism. Calhoun argues that the nation still functions as the most important unit of collective organization, and plays an indispensable role in facilitating democracy and social solidarity through which the populace may deal with the challenges presented by globalization.[61] Drawing attention to the international character of nationalism, Calhoun further states that "a very significant part of how nationalism is reproduced is through its embedding in collective projects of national improvement" through international comparison.[62] However, the current situation shows that the potential for democratic egalitarianism and multicultural solidarity remains held in check by the divisive forces unleashed by the global market, which promote exclusionary and closed-minded ways of emphasizing nationhood. The nation does matter, but what is most urgently needed are ways to revive its democratic potential in the age of globalization and digitalization.

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Notes

[1] Works dealing with these questions include Stuart Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity," in *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*, eds. Stuart Hall et al. (London: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 595-634; Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange* (London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003); Ulrich Beck, *Cosmopolitan Vision*, trans. Ciaran Cronin (Cambridge: Polity, 2006); Koichi Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Koichi Iwabuchi, "De-Westernization, Inter-Asian Referencing

and Beyond," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 17, no. 1 (2014): 44-57.

[2] Marco Antonsich, "The 'Everyday' of Banal Nationalism–Ordinary People's Views on Italy and Italian," *Political Geography* 54 (2016): 33-34.

[3] Marco Antonsich and Michael Skey, "Introduction: The Persistence of Banal Nationalism," in *Everyday Nationhood: Theorising Culture, Identity and Belonging after Banal Nationalism*, eds. Michael Skey and Marco Antonsich (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 1.

[4] See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983) and Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995).

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[11] See Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

[12] Antonsich, "The 'Everyday' of Banal Nationalism," 36.

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[16] Marco Antonsich, "Nations and Nationalism," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Geography*, eds. John A. Agnew et al. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 305.

[17] Mihelj, *Media Nations*, 28.

[18] Koichi Iwabuchi, *Resilient Borders and Cultural Diversity: Internationalism, Brand Nationalism and Multiculturalism in Japan* (Lanham: Lexington, 2015), 13.

[19] Samanth Subramanian, "How to Sell a Country: The Booming Business of Nation Branding," *Guardian*, November 7, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/nov/07/nation-branding-industry-how-to-sell-a-country.

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[21] See Roger Eatwell and Matthew Goodwin, *National Populism: The Revolt against*

Liberal Democracy (London: Penguin Press, 2018).

[22] Zizi Papacharissi, *Affective Publics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 19-20.

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[24] Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 38.

[25] John E. Fox, "The Edges of the Nation: A Research Agenda for Uncovering the Taken-for-Granted Foundations of Everyday Nationhood," *Nations and Nationalism* 23, no.1 (2017): 38.

[26] See Daisuke Tsuji, "A Report and Summary on an Empirical Study on Right-Wing Tendencies in the Internet" [インターネットにおける"右傾化"現象に関する実証的研究調査結果概要報告], (2008), http://www.d-tsuji.com/paper/r04/report04.pdf. See also Masaaki Ito, "What is Cyber Right-Winger?" [ネット右翼とは何か] in *Strange Nationalism: Against Jingoism* [奇妙なナショナリズム—排外主義に抗して], ed. N. Yamazaki (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2015), 29-68 and Rumi Sakamoto, "'Koreans, Go Home!' Internet Nationalism in Contemporary Japan as a Digitally Mediated Subculture," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 10, no. 2 (2011), https://apjjf.org/2011/9/10/Rumi-SAKAMOTO/3497/article.html.

[27] Brian Massumi, "The Future Birth of the Affective Fact: The Political Ontology of Threat," in *The Affect Theory Reader*, eds. Gregory Seigworth and Melissa Gregg (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 52-70.

[28] According to Tsuji, the cyber right-winger is one who displays the following traits: 1) takes a political stance that is hostile to South Korea and China, 2) supports politicians who pay their respects to the wartime dead at the Yasukuni Shrine, 3) advocates revision of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, and patriotism education in Japanese schools, and 4) participates actively in online discussions about political and social issues. See Tsuji, "A Report and Summary on an Empirical Study on Right-Wing Tendencies in the Internet."

[29] Tadamasa Kimura, "The Reason Why Conservative Voices Prevail in Public Opinion on the Internet" [ネット世論で捕手に叩かれる理由], *Chuo Koron* 132, no. 1 (January 2017): 134-41.

[30] Daisuke Tsuji, "The Actual Situation of Cyber-Right Wingers" [ネット右翼ーイメージと異なる実態], *Asahi Shimbun,* November 4, 2018.

[31] "A Survey of 80,000 Turns the Image of the Internet Upside Down" [ネトウヨ像覆す８万人調査　浮かぶオンライン排外主義者], *Asahi Digital Newspaper*, October 7, 2018, https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASLB37DGLLB3UCVL01V.html. The research was conducted by Kikuko Nagayoshi.

[32] "Public opinion survey on foreign policy" [外交に関する世論調査], Cabinet Office of Japan, https://survey.gov-online.go.jp/index-gai.html. The percentage of respondents who feel positively toward South Korea declined from 62% to 39% between 2011 and 2012. The number of Japanese who feel positively toward China also underwent a sharp decline between 2004 and 2010 due to anti-Japan movements and the heating-up of

the territorial dispute over Senkaku Island. According to the latest survey, which was conducted in January 2016, only 14% of respondents felt positively toward China and 33% toward South Korea.

[33] It should be noted that the first large demonstration against ethnic Koreans in 2009 targeted the family of an illegal migrant who had overstayed his residency permit.

[34] See Mitsunari Oizumi et al., *Good-bye Hate-Books! Debunking the Boom of Hate-Korea and Anti-China Publications* [さらばヘイト本！嫌韓反中本ブームの裏側] (Tokyo: Korokara, 2015).

[35] The established media in Japan, such as major newspapers and TV stations, tended to ignore the rising hate movement against resident Koreans, mainly because they regarded it as an ephemeral phenomenon and assumed that giving coverage of it would result in increasing its influence and popularity. Yet this decision not to cover increasing instances of racism and hate speech had the consequence of strengthening the extremist movement. See Kei Sato, "Investigating the Actual Situation of Racial Discrimination to Overcome It" [差別の実態を浮かび上がらせ、差別を乗り越えていく], *Journalism* 282 (2014): 74-80.

[36] See Koichi Yasuda, *The Internet and Patriotism: Exploring the Dark Side of Zaitokukai* [ネットと愛国―在特会の闇を追いかけて] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2012).

[37] See Minori Kitahara and Paku Suni, *The Lady of the House is a Patriot* [奥様は愛国] (Tokyo: Kawadeshoboushinsha, 2014).

[38] See Naoto Higuchi, *The Japanese Style of Jingoism: Zaitokukai, Foreigners' Voting Right, East Asian Geopolitics* [日本型排外主義―在特会、外国人参政権、東アジア地政学] (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shupankyoku, 2014) and Tsunhira Furuya, *The Counterattack of the Cyber Right* [ネット右翼の逆襲] (Tokyo: Souwasha, 2013).

[39] See Atsuko Ichijo, "Banal Nationalism and UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List: Cases of Washoku and the Gastronomic Meal of the French," in *Everyday Nationhood*, 266-67.

[40] Gyorgy Szondi, "Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences," in *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy* (The Hague: Clingendael Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2008), 4, http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/20081022_pap_in_dip_nation_branding.pdf.

[41] Koichi Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange'," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 4 (2015): 422.

[42] Zala Volcic and Mark Andrejevic, "Introduction," in *Commercial Nationalism: Selling the Nation and Nationalizing the Sell* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 6.

[43] Somogy Varga, "The Politics of Nation Branding: Collective Identity and Public Sphere in the Neoliberal State," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 39, no. 8 (2013): 836.

[44] Melissa Aroncyk, *Branding the Nation: The Global Business of National Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2013), 176.

[45] See Koichi Iwabuchi, "Creative Industries and Cool Japan," in *Global Fame*

Industries and Cultural Policy, ed. Anthony Fung (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 33-52.

[46] See "Survey of Cool Japan (2014)" [クールジャパンに関する調査 (2014)], https://www.t-kougei.ac.jp/static/file/cool-japan.pdf.

[47] Sue Curry Jansen, "Designer Nations: Neo-liberal Nation Branding–Brand Estonia," *Social Identities* 14, no. 1 (2008): 122.

[48] Nadia Kaneva, "Nation Branding: Toward an Agenda for Critical Research," *International Journal of Communication* 5 (2011): 132.

[49] See Iwabuchi, *Resilient Borders and Cultural Diversity*.

[50] Comment made by Keisuke Murakami. See "What is Cool Japan?" [クールジャパンって、なに？], accessed February 10, 2019, http://blogs.yahoo.co.jp/hiromi_ito2002jp/57705983.html.

[51] Rod Fisher, *Japan Country Report: Preparatory Action-Culture in EU External Relations* (Brussels: European Commission, 2014), 3-4.

[52] Volcic and Andrejevic, "Introduction," 4.

[53] Graeme Turner, "Setting the Scene for Commercial Nationalism: The Nation, the Market, and the Media," in *Commercial Nationalism*, 24.

[54] Ibid., 25.

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[60] See Cass Sunstein, *Infotopia: How Many Minds Produce Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[61] Craig Calhoun, *Nations Matter*: *Citizenship, Solidarity, and the Cosmopolitan Dream* (London: Routledge, 2007), 27-28.

[62] Ibid., 26.