Contact Moments

The Politics of Intercultural Desire in Japanese Male-Queer Cultures

Katsuhiko Suganuma

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Ways of Knowing Japan's Queer Culture

Cross-cultural contact often puts a person in a situation in which she or he feels insecure. In contact with another culture, all of a sudden a person's mode of being is left on shaky ground, creating the feeling of a subtle distance from the previous identity. The person may feel confused in the process of being forced to be someone who represents one culture in comparison to another. A variety of binary concepts including 'us' and 'them', 'West' and 'non-West', 'man' and 'woman', and 'heterosexual' and 'homosexual' emerge and more often than not suffocate each individual, for the individual is not necessarily congruent with the assigned category. And yet, it is also important to recognise that these binaries can be the means through which to shed light on the distance that each individual feels from the binaries; these binaries can thus be viable tools through which to express an individuality. What is at stake, then, in understanding those binaries? Do we conceive binary oppositions as restrictive or reductive in the context of cross-culturation? Or, instead, should we think that binaries continue to resurface whenever someone tries to unravel or undermine the binaries? In other words, perhaps the existence of binaries itself is not necessarily a sign of fixity, but is rather a sign of mobility and alteration? This is the question that defines this book.

This book looks at how binaries are used and employed in the context of contacts between queer[1] cultures in Japan and the West (Euro-America). I use the term 'West' throughout the book as a fictive category imagined in the context of Japan's queer culture, with the aim to shed light on what I call 'contact moments' (to be defined later) between Japanese male-queer culture and that of the West in post-Second World War Japan (1945 to the 2000s). By focusing on a range

of Japanese as well as English male-queer resources within which the interaction of the two cultures is represented, I will examine the ways in which such interaction affected the identity formation process of queer selves. I ask the question of how the cross-cultural politics between Japan and the West in the post-war era affected the constitution of Japan's queer culture; and how the discourses of gender and sexuality mediated cross-cultural conflicts. Materials to be analysed in this book include queer-oriented magazines, books, memoirs, 'zines', and cybertexts in which such interactions are articulated.

This book is as much an outcome of academic research as it is closely tied to a personal imperative. I do not pretend to present this book as a piece of writing possessing absolute objectivity. I am open to the criticism that this book is couched in a certain subjective viewpoint. Suffice it to say that the book's focus on the contact moments between Japan's male-queer culture and that of the West in the post-Second World War period has a lot to do with my personal experience and upbringing. I state this here not as a justification for the methodological concerns of this book, but because, on the contrary, the narrative of my experiences points to the key theme that this book explores. This book is not concerned with the ontological inquiry into 'what is Japan's queer culture' in relation to the West. Instead, the book is concerned with how Japan's post-war male-queer culture has been realised through a perspective of comparison with the West. In other words, I examine the ways of finding and knowing the multivalent identities of Japan's queer culture through their contact with the West. What is more, I also look at the ways in which binaries are used, reworked, and recontextualised in order to move and shift between different forms of Japan's queer identities and cultures. To concretise this point, which is central to the analysis in the following chapters, I would like to demonstrate my argument through reflection upon my personal life and experience.

Born and raised in the mid-sized city of Okayama, located in the western part of Japan's mainland, I grew up without having much exposure to any information on gay culture. Later, it turned out that popular gay magazines had always been available in local book stores, and indeed there existed a couple of what might be considered as gay bars in the city. Despite the fact that Tokyo's gay district, Shinjuku Ni-chōme, is said to accommodate more than two hundred gay bar

establishments, filled with book stores and video shops specifically catering to gay men, my childhood as well as adolescent experience in the city of Okayama had never allowed me to imagine that there could be room in Japanese society for gay people to survive, let alone a gay lifestyle. In retrospect, finding much resonance to several coming-out accounts of Japanese sexual minorities published during the 1990s (e.g. Itō 1993), it is not an exaggeration to say that I was living in an environment, though perhaps not having any consciousness of it, where homosexuals or gay men were 'naturally' rendered as perverts and deviants.

At the age of eighteen, slowly realising my own sexual attraction to other men, yet not knowing how to come to terms with my desire, I moved to a much bigger prefecture, Osaka, to attend university. This university specialised in foreign languages and cultures, and attracted many students from overseas, the majority of them from the United States, who were somehow interested in, or drawn to the idea of studying in the realm of the foreign, *Japan*. Likewise, I went to that particular university because my desire to study in foreign countries had grown ever since I realised my attraction for other boys in high school. And yet, in my imagination, this concept of 'foreign' was always couched on a fictitious idea of the 'West'. The university is also known for sending a number of Japanese students to study in foreign countries every year. In 2000, I applied for the exchange program administered by my university. After my application was accepted to the exchange programme, I spent six months on probation sitting in the same classes with exchange students studying at my university. This participation was a requirement of each Japanese candidate for the exchange programme who needed to pass all these classes with satisfactory grades in order to prove to the selection committee that they would do well in foreign institutions where the Japanese language could be of no use. All those subjects were taught in English by professors, mostly from overseas, who specialised in the field of Japanese Studies. I selected two anthropology courses on Japanese gender and society from the list of electives, and added one more course to fulfill the requirements; the rest of the course selections did not appeal to me. With no sense of joy, I picked the course on the Japanese economy, just because I was informed by senior students that the professor for the course was an easy grader.

Undoubtedly I was excited to sit in the Japanese gender and society classes but, much to my surprise, I found the economy subject just as stimulating as the other lessons. Perhaps it was not because, despite my preconception, I was a person who enjoyed analysing things economic. Rather, in retrospect I understand that I was excited to gain tools to explain and verbalise aspects of Japanese society that I once had taken for granted, those things that I had never been accustomed to explain rationally. School disciplines and the work ethics that had suffused my early life were now clearly exemplary of Japan's 'communitarian society' or 'group-oriented society' in cross-cultural comparative terms. Listening to comments made by exchange students from overseas in the classroom, and reading assigned English articles on Japanese culture, all of which situate 'Japan' as an object to be studied from a cross-cultural perspective, or at least written in such a manner that Japanese culture could become intelligible to an English speaking audience, inevitably made me conscious of the gaze: a gaze looking at 'Japan'. The concept of 'Japan' in quotation marks had not necessarily been familiar to me before, but became intelligible only after gaining the view which juxtaposes 'Japan' with other oppositional referents, such as the 'West', likewise in quotation marks. I started to be keenly aware of the fact that there is such a thing called 'Japan' after living twenty years or so in the country of that very name.

The newly acquired binary perspective of 'Japan' and the 'West' not only dominated my academic inspiration, but also affected the way in which I made sense of my sexual desire for other men. Upon having casual conversations with exchange students from New York State where I was scheduled to study in a few months time, it did not take long to give me an impression that a viable gay community and gay lifestyles are recognised in the public imagination. Casual comments made by American students that they had many gay friends back home, or even gay parents, astonished me, so as to inscribe a stark demarcation drawn between Japan and the United States (the 'West') regarding the condition of accepting gay culture in society. I was too naïve to appreciate anything that did not neatly fit the binary concept of 'Japan' and the 'West' which I had newly learned. While not knowing that there was an academic term, 'Occidentalism' to refer to this perhaps exotic image of the West, my probation period ended, and

soon after that I departed to study at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany.

SUNY had everything that was needed to further aggravate my Occidentalism. On campus, there was a queer student initiative group — something that I had never heard of before. Many faculty members in the Women's Studies department were 'out' on their sexuality and wrote about and gave lectures on queer culture. Post studies with the Women's Studies department, I fully understood the concepts of 'sexual orientation', 'heterosexuality', and 'hetero-normativity', those ideas that call into question the social norm itself, rather than attributing social problems to sexual minorities. Even in upstate New York, Albany, where the university is located, enough gay bars existed to convince me that gay people are visible in the United States. It goes without saying that my friends and I drove down to New York City on the weekend of the New York Pride Parade only to confirm my assumption that queer culture is visible in the country.

However, it did not take long before the newly-arrived, twenty-year-old Japanese student's fascination with gay visibility in the United States, which was pitted against Japan's closeted situation, precipitated my state of confusion. As I began to browse through any English writings on Japanese queer culture, a voracious appetite for knowing more about Japanese queer culture emerged. For the first couple of years at Albany, I just read texts for gender studies and queer studies written in the context of the United States. I was excited to learn about the intersections of race, gender, class, and sexuality inherent in the constitution of the country's history and society. The consumption of Hollywood cinema and American TV 'sit-coms' back in Japan had not prepared me to decipher this complexity of American society.

Over time, however, my enthusiasm for learning about gender and sexuality in the US context started to wane. In turn, I became infatuated with finding out about similar cultures in Japan. I did not know what precipitated this change. The only clear thing was that never before in my life had I been so conscious of my nationality. Now it was clear that I was going through the all-too-familiar scenario of identity transformation that many travellers and diasporic subjects experience when they cross national and cultural boundaries.

On campus, in gay clubs, and at any other social occasions in the United States where I was asked to identify myself, I felt under pressure to reply with: 'I am from Japan', 'I am Japanese', 'I am an exchange student from Japan studying Women's Studies'. When I fulfilled people's expectations in this way, their response to my self-introduction was often positive. Perhaps they found something 'cool' or 'exotic' about me coming from Japan — authentic Japanese, not Japanese-American, let alone Chinese-American. 'Japaneseness' became a new identity that I always had to embody, and one that I did not have back in Japan.

The politics of interpellation is inescapable for everyone, including myself, who ventures to other cultures[2] and this became a facet of daily life as I walked the Albany streets. Children in my neighbourhood teased me for being 'Asian', and performed martial arts gestures in front of me. When I did not bother to correct them and tell them where I was actually from, I was virtually a 'Chinaman'. The racism was so pronounced that normally I was not called on by students on campus who were petitioning for various social campaigns; they did seek 'White' students, but not 'Asian'-looking ones. Perhaps organisers assumed that Asian students, especially Asian male students, were either politically apathetic, or at best totally career-focused on money-making and life after graduating with a degree in Business or Economics. This view thus inferred that they would presumably not involve themselves in any radical social activism, let alone a gay rights campaign. In the light of what I felt to be rampant xenophobia, I felt compelled to defend my identity and show that I was not a specimen of 'Chinaman'.[3]

This heightened yearning for 'Japanese' identity in the United States came from a number of anxieties, but in particular a search for true identity and somewhere to belong.

In this way, both my desperate search for Japanese identity and my slowly developing self-identity as a gay man, inevitably made me acutely interested in the Japanese queer culture that I had once thought non-existent. My mind devoured any reference to Japanese queer culture available at the university library and mirrored my ignorance, at times to the level of shame. Contrary to my presumptions, many studies demonstrated that pre-modern Japan embraced the act of male-male homoeroticism as a code of ethics to the level that it was

considered as a social norm. At times I was stupefied to find out from English language texts that major figures in Japanese history that I had studied in school were known practitioners of *nanshoku* (literally 'male colour', Japanese terminology for male-male homoeroticism). For some time, I blamed my home school history teachers for withholding this knowledge about homoerotic references in Japan's pre-modern history. However, I quickly excused their oversight and my ignorance by realising that all references to Japan's queer culture concerned the pre-modern period. There was virtually no reference to Japan's gay culture in the present context, except a few books that pioneered the study of contemporary issues of Japanese gay culture (e.g. McLelland 2000). In the light of this discovery, my ignorance was forgiveable. *Nanshoku* was a thing of the past, and no longer existed.

The male-male homoeroticism that arguably flourished among Buddhist practitioners and samurai warriors during pre-modern periods might have kept its legacy for some time even after the pre-modern era, had not the scandalous suicide in 1970 of the popular Japanese literary figure, Mishima Yukio evaporated any interest in his work on homosexuality. This rationalisation of my ignorance brought me a certain, temporary relief. But before long, an anxiety emerged that was centered upon my concern that the only available references on Japanese queer culture were those on the pre-modern era, in the library of an academic institution in the United States, the home of library materials consumed by American students and scholars. I wondered what was at stake. How did these students forge their knowledge about Japan from those materials? Did they ever conflate the perception of present-day Japan with the pre-modern notion of a male-male homoerotic paradise, disregarding historical specificity?

With the passing of time, my naïve view of Americans' perception of things 'Japanese' is surprising even to me, especially given that I had been plunged into an abyss of my own cultural reckoning and struggled to come to terms with my Japanese identity while living in the United States. Through the gravity of ever-present racialised and ethnicised interpellation, I was forced to be conscious of the gaze that located me as 'Japanese'. Simultaneously, I also thought naively, I must be the only one who assumed that the conflation of Japanese contem-

porary queer culture and its antiquity could register on the cultural radar for students and scholars in the United States.

However, it turned out that my presumption was not too wide of the mark. In the 'Introduction to Lesbian and Gay Studies' class, an American student postulated that, in his view, gender norms and sexual identity are rigidly structured in US society such that any form of gender bending and crossing is considered deviant. To substantiate his claim, he contrasted the US culture specifically to Japanese traditional *kabuki* theatre culture in which female roles are performed by male actors, with their skills of female impersonation highly respected in society. After he expressed this viewpoint, no one in the classroom, including myself, was willing to respond to his cross-cultural commentary. I noticed that the instructor stole a glance at me, perhaps hoping that I would have something to say to facilitate further discussion. Again I was expected to 'represent' Japanese queer culture simply because I was one of only two Japanese students in the class. I was not offended by the instructor's expectation; probably I would have done the same if I had been her. Yet, I did not know how to respond. I was confused. Japanese society's tolerance of gender ambiguity, which is often attributed to the traditional theatre culture, was being contrasted to the rigid gender stratification of the United States in the present. Sadly, in my innocence, I did not pursue his line of thinking and enquire if, as a consequence, he assumed that Japan was a haven for transgenders, gays, and lesbians free from the homophobia and sexism salient in his home country. My attention went to the word 'haven' and the subsequent perverse reality that maybe I was from this haven and that my entry to and exploration of American society meant I had stepped away from my dream. Instead, I thought I had come to a haven when I came to the United States.

What is apparent in this instance is that a certain image of Japanese queer culture is constructed through the binary opposition of Japanese culture with that of the United States. What is more, in the process, the reference to Japanese antiquity is utilised commonly as the foundation of the country's character even in the present context.

During a small colloquium, I gave a well-received paper on the representation of Japanese queer culture in the recent media. One professor who is interested in this area of literature kindly shared her

thought on Mishima; the famous writer who wrote about homosexual desire, and who committed suicide in front of his allegedly male lover. Although I appreciated the professor's input, I was also confused since my paper had had nothing to do with an event that had taken place well before I was born. That said, time taught me how apposite the literature professor's point was in understanding the constitution of contemporary Japanese queer culture. However, I needed time as well as the opportunity to expose myself to more comprehensive materials and analyses in order to draw the link between Mishima and gay culture in the present era.

Certainly there is no claim that my personal experiences are representative of how Japanese gay men come to understand their own gay culture, nor do I seek to generalise about the portrayed image of Japanese gay culture in the United States. I do assert that my story is unique and particularly distinct from that of many other Japanese men. However, in the context of the cross-cultural queer experience, by which I mean the processes of realising one's own sexuality through encountering overseas cultures, my story is also made up of elements that are not necessarily specific to one person. As my narrative illustrates, the contours of Japan's queer culture or gay culture in my mind have never been static but remain motile.

These contours are differently constituted depending on the information and experiences to which I was exposed. I had cast doubt on the literature professor's comment on the intersection of Mishima and Japan's gay culture in the present when I first received it. Likewise, I had similar reservations when the American student in the class on gay and lesbian studies drew the implied link between gender-bending performances in Japanese traditional theatre culture and a supposed tolerance towards gender-variant individuals in present-day Japan. Back then the shape of my queer Japan was different from the one that I possess now. According to my present understanding, I can perhaps show more understanding of and agreement with the points raised by the professor and the student. I can do so assuredly given that my revised information and theoretical tools make the link plausible.

Having noted that link, one question arises — that of how to deal with the notion of authority when we try to think of different contours and trajectories of Japanese queer culture. What makes one specific

understanding of it any more authoritative than the other? On what do we base our assessment? This is an open question to which I do not have a clear answer. This question has haunted and frustrated me for quite some time because I could never find a satisfactory answer. Given that my understanding of Japanese queer culture has changed significantly over time, how could I even begin to judge whether the contours that I perceived before I departed to the United States were any less 'true' or less 'authentic' than the understanding that I came to have after spending years abroad? Perhaps the literature professor could make a judgment from her point of view, which says that my view on Japanese queer culture was limited to the present context. So could the American student from his point of view. Yet, when it comes to my own personal perspective, what is evident is that the paradigm that I used then was just as real to me as the one that I presently use. Both of them have spoken to me in different ways at different stages of my life. I understand that they in no way describe the 'truth' or 'facts' of Japanese queer culture. However, there is no doubt that each is a 'reality' — they are parallel realities — in my life that has mattered to me. I once thought that a viable gay lifestyle or activism was almost non-existent in Japan when I was attending university in Osaka before I went overseas. Yet, a gay parade had already occurred in Tokyo back in 1994. Gay culture was apparently not restricted to just the Shinjuku Ni-chōme district of Tokyo. Osaka had a night bar district called Dōyama where many gay bars operated. I was living in Japan, but totally blind to a certain part of the society.

This discussion leads me to adopt a key analytical tactic that runs throughout this book. In addressing Japan's post-war queer culture in the context of cross-culturation, this book is not concerned with the ontological or empiricist question of what Japan's male-queer culture was, or how it has changed over the course of a half-century. In other words, I am not interested in giving a detailed account of a cluster of things called Japan's post-war queer culture. Instead, this book investigates and focuses on an epistemological inquiry into how cross-cultural contact inflects the ways of representing the contours of Japan's queer culture. This epistemological question is central to my analysis. To this end, it is not of primary interest to provide the 'facts' or 'truth' of Japan's queer culture in the post-war period, but rather to

elucidate ways of understanding Japan's queer culture from a cross-cultural perspective.

Predicaments of Local/Global Queer Theory

Thus far I have attempted to sketch some major themes that this book explores, and also to contextualise them in the relationship between Japan and the West, through reflection on my personal experience. I now turn to a discussion of how this way of viewing Japanese queer culture from a cross-cultural perspective shares critical insights with the debate around local and global binaries in the field of queer studies. In particular, I am referring to studies that concern queer cultures outside Anglophone contexts, and which have dealt, since the inception of the field, with this predicament of the local and global binary. In this section, I review literature which discusses this predicament, especially in the context of Asian queer cultures. I also explain how this debate informs the method of analysis employed in this book.

Since the mid-1990s, we have seen the emergence of studies that are concerned with queer cultures across Asia. This area of scholarship owes much of its analytical paradigm to earlier as well as contemporaneously evolving disciplines such as postcolonial feminism, poststructuralism, and globalisation studies. Although many studies in this field have built on analytical methods developed out of queer theory in western contexts, at the same time they modify their methods so as to be sensitive to the issues of cultural imperialism, ethnocentrism, and Orientalism in understanding non-Western queer cultures. Needless to say, the critique of ethnocentrism in colonial cultural interactions between the West and non-West was introduced by some key theorists including Frantz Fanon (1967) and Edward Said ([1978] 1979). Although work by both Fanon and Said takes notice of some issues of gender and sexuality in the context of cultural imperialism and Orientalism, the complex intersections of gender and sexuality are largely left unexamined. Works by theorists including Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1984; 2003), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1987), Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989), and Uma Narayan (1997), have shed light on how the discourses of gender and sexuality play a major role in understanding the cultures of colonial and postcolonial periods. Despite the specificity of each author's

work, they collaboratively attest to the point that voices of women, especially non-Western and colonised women, are often muted and marginalised in the discussion of cross-cultural contacts between colonisers and colonised men so as to sustain the hegemony of androcentric narrative. These critical insights into who is marginalised and whose narrative dominates in the process of cross-cultural contact, especially between the West and non-West, have also been taken up and carefully considered in queer studies of the Asian region. Many studies in this area, which has emerged since the mid-1990s, have been concerned with contemporary Asian queer cultures. Thus, the critical debate on the West and non-West binary is couched not always in terms of colonialism or postcoloniality, but also in terms of globalisation. The critique of Euro-centrism in describing non-Western cultures in the context of globalisation has been most noticeable, and has been critically assessed by several pioneering English-language texts on Asian queer cultures in the last decade.

One of the main polemics in this emerging field of Asian queer studies has concerned a highly charged discourse surrounding the issue of the globalisation of queer identity. Among others, it is safe to point out that some works by Dennis Altman (1996; 1997) which embarked on analysing the globalisation of queer identity, have challenged other scholars in this field to interrogate further the validity and applicability of conceptual paradigms such as 'global/local' and the 'West/non-West' binary in understanding queer cultures in Asia. Those studies include some influential studies published in edited volumes by Peter A. Jackson and Gerard Sullivan on contemporary homosexual cultures in Thailand (1999) as well as in Asia more broadly (2001); Fran Martin's monograph on Taiwanese *tongzhi* culture (2003) (see Chapter 5); Tom Boellstorff's analysis of queer sexualities in Indonesia (2005; 2007a); and the edited anthology on queer media circulation in Asia by Chris Berry, Fran Martin, and Audrey Yue (2003a). Although not specifically about the geopolitics of Asian queer culture, several other journal editions and anthologies such as Elizabeth Povinelli and George Chauncey's edited 'Thinking Sexuality Transnationally', a special issue from *GLQ* (1999); John Hawley's edited book, *Postcolonial Queer: Theoretical Intersections* (2001); Cindy Patton and Benigno Sánchez-Eppler's edited book, *Queer Diasporas* (2000); Phillip Brian Harper, Anne McClintock, José Esteban

Muñoz and Trish Rosen's edited 'Queer Transexions of Race, Nation, and Gender', a special issue from *Social Text* (1997) as well as David L. Eng, Judith Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz's edited *Social Text* issue 'What's Queer about Queer Studies Now?' (2005a) are also concerned to some degree with the paradigm of intercultural understanding of queer identity. This cluster of works encompasses several key currents and tendencies, which are discussed below.

The term 'globalisation' is ubiquitous in our time, yet still remains a concept that requires constant redefinition and rearticulation. Drawing on influential works on globalisation (e.g. Appadurai 1990; Grewal and Kaplan 1994), Vera Mackie astutely describes globalisation as 'changing economic relationships accompanied by the circulation of commodities, people, signs and symbols' (2001, 181). In the context of queer globalisation, too, the circulation of queer 'commodities, people, signs and symbols' among different cultures has been noticeable. Altman states that 'The "macho" gay man of the 1970s, the "lipstick lesbian" of the 1990s, are a global phenomena, thanks to the ability of mass media to market particular American lifestyles and appearances' (1996, unpaginated). The diffusion of a certain model of gay identity has also been accelerated since the AIDS pandemic became a global concern. In the name of national security and social welfare, many queer people around the world, especially gay men, have been made scapegoats for allegedly spreading the HIV virus within and beyond national boundaries. In response to such social stigma, many queer activists and non-profit organisations have sought an international coalition to support each other. In that process, for better or worse, the globally circulated queer political governance and the commodity cultures become largely centred on a Euro-American paradigm. Joseph Massad has coined the term, 'the Gay International', to point to the Western hegemony of its paradigm (2002).

Similar to the critique of Euro-American centrism in the discussion of globalisation, some work has also concerned the question as to what extent the global perspective on queer culture, 'global gaze/ global gays', using Altman's term (1997), is useful in understanding queer cultures in non-Anglophone contexts. Specifically referring to the context of Asian queer cultures, for instance, Chris Berry and Fran Martin problematise the global currency of queer identity by stating

that 'the moment of cultural globalization is characterized precisely by challenges to the authority of the West from forces of cultural difference unleashed by decolonizations and ensuing complex global economic and cultural shifts' (2003, 88). Similarly, informed by his own study on queer masculinity in Singapore, Eng-Beng Lim encourages us to go beyond the unidirectional critique of the West from the viewpoint of the non-West, and reformulate the persisting dichotomous paradigm itself. Lim suggests as follows:

> . . . the terms of global queering dominated by the global English language, the Euro-American gay lens, and capitalism have to be reassessed not only as a global/local issue but also one that challenges their paradigmatic dominance. The issue is thus not how well non-Westerners adapt these superoriginary gay identities and practices in making their own queer world. Such a politics of representation tends to reinscribe classic binaries in broad strokes of difference that are ultimately cast in a narrative of sameness. (Lim 2005, 404)

In *Impossible Desires*, Gayatri Gopinath, too, sets out her own purpose of analysing South Asian diasporic queer sexualities in the West as to 'disorganiz[e] the dominant categories within the United States for sexual variance, namely "gay and lesbian"', and also to point to 'a different economy of desire that escapes legibility within both normative South Asian contexts and homonormative Euro-American contexts' (2005, 13). The manner in which both Lim's and Gopinath's commentary in the debate on global queering are structured is as complicated to discern as to employ, yet tackling the predicament of global/local binary paradigm in the context of queer studies is a major concern of this book.

It is worth detailing here what I mean by the predicament of the global/local binary paradigm in the context of queer studies. Differently put, what is at stake when one tries to decentre the Euro-American hegemony of queer studies without having recourse to the hegemony that one intends to undo? There seem to be two main sets of questions that one might encounter. One has to do with a reactionary local defence narrative set up against the global that, in effect, as Lim argues, reinscribes the binary paradigm itself instead of confounding it. Non-Anglophone queer scholarship, especially in its inception, often strives

to shed light on the distinctive subjectivity of each 'local' queer culture in order to problematise the dominance of the global narrative. Yet this pattern of argumentation runs the risk of reestablishing the binary local/global scheme. In referring to the recent surge of Asian queer studies, Akiko Shimizu warns us that 'While the Anglo-US hegemony in the academic field of queer studies needs thorough critical reflection, it is of the utmost importance that we should not misappropriate 'Asia' or its 'indigenous-ness' simply for the purpose of undermining Anglo-US hegemony' (2005, 302; also see Martin et al. 2008, 6).

This concern is not specific to the field of Asian queer studies, in that the generic concept of 'Asia', or 'Asian' itself has a history that it is always dialectically constructed in relation to its referential counterpart; the West. A scholarly discipline such as Asian-American studies in the United States has long struggled for not being able to challenge the binary opposition of 'Asian' and 'Anglo-American'; the concept of 'Asian-American' only subsists with that of 'Anglo-American', and thus does not allow the former to be understood independent of the binary paradigm. This ultimately betrays the intent of Asian-American studies, which is to overcome the dominance of Anglophone narratives of American history and society. Conversely, it only cements the binary of 'West' and 'Asia'. Suggesting the need for us to go beyond this binary opposition, Naoki Sakai argues as follows:

> . . . the insistence on the propriety and native authenticity of us *Asians* would only reinforce the discriminatory and distinctive uniqueness of the West and prevent us from dismantling the colonial relationship that underlines the identities of the West and Asia. In this specific context the putative unity of the West, the dominant and universalistic position, is sustained by the insistence on the equally putative unity of Asia, the subordinate and particularistic position. (Emphasis in original Sakai 2000, 801)

This reinvigoration of the local/global binary within the field of studies which purports to undo the binary points to the resilient effect of demarcations drawn along national and regional boundaries. One possible theoretical framework which might be called up when tackling this problem is a cluster of thought that can be categorised under the rubric of poststructuralism. The method of deconstructing and blurring the taken-for-granted boundaries and oppositions between self/

other, us/them and subject/object, and that of shedding light on hith-
erto unrecognised and ignored particularities submerged in meta-dis-
courses and narratives, can be an effective tool for undermining the
resilient nature of the local/global binary.[4] However, even a relatively
nuanced application of poststructuralist thought to the local/global
paradigm might still lend itself to the problematic reinvigoration of
that very binary. This is the second strand of the predicament of global/
local theory that I wish to emphasise.

Peter A. Jackson (2003a; 2003b) eloquently points out that there is
the possibility of mutual reinforcement between poststructuralism and
globalisation theory. Jackson contends that since poststructuralism
itself is born out of a specific socio-temporal context of Western phi-
losophy, it is of critical importance to carefully assess to what extent it
can be deployed in understanding non-Western cultures. In referring
to the application of Western poststructuralism to the Asian context,
especially in the field of Asian cultural studies, Jackson is concerned
that poststructuralism itself, despite its intention to deconstruct, might
become a universal methodology around the globe. He argues:

> Cultural studies of contemporary Asian societies are at times
> conducted as if the poststructuralist theories they are built upon
> are independent of the places they are invoked to explain. In this
> mode, theory is deployed as an invariant frame imagined as being
> capable of mapping all geographical domains. However, poststruc-
> turalism's contingent origins in a particular period and place, the
> modern West, mean that it cannot be seen as a completed project or
> a fixed frame of analysis that is capable of explaining all times and
> all places. (Jackson 2003a, 5)

According to Jackson, Western theory-informed poststructuralism
might be capable of studying '*difference within*' discourses and practises,
yet stops short of interrogating '*difference between*' separate geographi-
cal domains (2003b, 45). He states that 'in comparative and cross-
cultural research the privileging of *difference within* over *difference
between* may have the paradoxical effect of betraying poststructur-
alism's critical politics, transforming this body of thought into yet
another variety of Western intellectual hegemony' (*Ibid.*, 45).

It is debatable, of course, to what extent Jackson's assumption of
Western poststructuralism's tendency to betray its own critical scope

when deployed in cross-cultural research does justice to the richness and complexity of poststructuralist thought in general. However, in my reading, Jackson's claim does not intend to discredit the methodology of poststructuralism itself. Instead he is simply interested in pointing to the problematic consequence of the institutionalisation of the methodology in understanding a particular culture in the context of globalisation. What concerns him most is the undermining of, or in Jackson's term, 'the erasure' of 'borderlines' existing between different cultures through the institutionalisation or universalist application of poststructuralism (*Ibid*., 74). As a matter of fact, Jackson goes back to Derrida to remind us that that the poststructuralist interrogation of boundaries and binaries becomes meaningful only when it forces us to 'think of borders as shifting zones of negotiation and interchange rather than as fixed lines of ultimate differentiation … rather than destroying borderlines, Derrida shows how the domains on either side of a border relate to and define each other' (*Ibid*., 74–5). To clarify, Jackson's point is not so much a critique of poststructuralism itself; instead he registers his reservations concerning the institutionalisation of the method in area studies in the context of globalisation. In turn, Jackson attests to the need to preserve the flexible and diverse nature of poststructuralist thought that is open to modification and refinement, as Derrida instructs him, when deployed in the context of globalisation.

Like Lim and Gopinath who endeavour to go beyond the fixed binary conceptualisation of local/global, Jackson also attests to the need to grasp the constantly shifting nature of the binary paradigm itself. In this sense, Jackson agrees with Sakai's idea of how to apply Western-based theory to non-Western societies. Sakai speaks of the need for us to come up with 'a form of theorising which is attentive to the transnational connectedness and global traces within knowledge produced in geopolitically specific locations, and which explores how theories are themselves transformed in their practical effects when they are performed in other sites' (cited in *Ibid*., 73). If, as Sakai argues, theory and knowledge themselves are redefined and given new meaning in different socio-temporal contexts, then so are the implications of the local and the global. The boundaries of local and global have never been fixed, and thus are always reconfiguring themselves depending on the situations in which they are deployed. What I attempt to do in

this book is to trace the processes of reconfiguring the implications of the local/global binary found in post-war Japan's queer culture in the context of cross-cultural contact. I ask the following questions: How did the global trajectory of queer culture get created in a certain period of time in contemporary Japan? How, in turn, did the Japanese local trajectory get reconstituted in relation to the global (the West); and how did they at times conflict with, and yet define each other? This is by no means the same as reinvigorating the binary schema. Rather, it is a project of exposing the discursive limits of the binary paradigm in understanding cross-culturation. In other words, in this book I aim to assail the rigidity of the local/global or Japan/West paradigm within what Ella Shohat and Robert Stam call 'a polycentric vision'. Shohat and Stam suggest that within the polycentric vision, 'the world has many dynamic cultural locations, many possible vantage points' through which to look at any form of power dynamics and cultural hierarchies (1994, 48). My description of contact moments between Japan's male-queer culture and that of the West, then, is an attempt, through 'a polycentric vision', to address the diverse ways in which the local/global paradigm redefines and transforms itself in different historical contexts.

Contact Moments and Methods

In an attempt to articulate the complexity of subject matter that I deal with in this book, I have coined and developed several terms and notions. Among those, one term that recurs most frequently throughout the book is 'contact moment(s)'. I use the term to refer to a certain historical moment (or a series of those moments) that allows us to imagine the discursive conditions and effects enabled by cross-culturation. Mary Louise Pratt's renowned concept of 'contact zone' ([1992] 2008) in understanding the effects in the context of cross-cultural encounters must be acknowledged as being immensely instructive to this theorisation of the 'contact moment'. Although it is lengthy, as it is central to the main concept of this book, it is worthwhile recalling Pratt's definition of 'contact zone':

> . . . the term 'contact zone', which I use to refer to the space of imperial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically

and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict. I borrow the term 'contact' here from linguistics, where the term contact language refers to an improvised language that develops among speakers of different tongues who need to communicate with each other consistently, usually in the context of trade. Such languages begin as pidgins, and are called creoles when they come to have native speakers of their own . . . 'Contact zone' in my discussion is often synonymous with 'colonial frontier'. But while the latter term is grounded within a European expansionist perspective (the frontier is a frontier only with respect to Europe), 'contact zone' shifts the center of gravity and the point of view. It invokes the space and time where subjects previously separated by geography and history are co-present, the point at which their trajectories now intersect. The term 'contact' foregrounds the interactive, improvisational dimensions of imperial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by accounts of conquest and domination told from the invader's perspective. A 'contact' perspective emphasizes how subjects get constituted in and by their relations to each other. (*Ibid.*, 8)

In contradistinction to what can be identified as a master narrative on cross-cultural encounters, which is most noticeably couched in terms of Orientalism (Said [1978] 1979), Pratt's concept of 'contact zone' rescues the more complex dynamics involved in the cross-culturation. Of particular concern is the need to elucidate the evolving process of power dynamics, positionalities, and subjectivities among each participant in the cross-cultural encounter. The semiotics of 'contact', in Pratt's definition, does not denote the encountering of different cultures whose power dynamics are unidirectional. Instead, however asymmetrical the imposed power dynamics might look in their inception, the encounter is always accompanied by the modification, refinement, and rearticulation of the initial imperatives, associated with the 'dynamics of creole self-fashioning' (Pratt [1992] 2008, 8). This book draws on this dialectical theorisation of cross-cultural 'contact'.

In this book, I refer to a breadth of literature that captures the 'contact' between Japan's queer culture and the West in the post-war period. The following chapters are organised in chronological order in terms of the period during which each type of material appeared.

Those materials range from early post-war perverse magazines to gay magazines in the 1970s, a memoir of a foreign gay man's reflections on Japan's AIDS panic in the 1980s and 1990s, critical writings by gay activists and scholars in the 1990s gay liberation movement, and cyber-texts in the 2000s. However, I do not mean to suggest that these texts represent the entirety of Japan's queer cultural contact with the West in each period. Rather, these particular texts are carefully chosen as they elegantly capture the shifting and redefining mode of local/global cross-cultural contacts.

   Karen Barad astutely points out the usefulness of the notion of what she calls 'intra-actions' in understanding subject formation. In contra-distinction to the Cartesian split between self and other, subject and object, which presumes an inherent ontological distinction between the two, in effect undermining the simultaneously shifting nature of the relationship itself, Barad argues that:

> Intra-actions always entail particular exclusions, and [yet] exclu-sions foreclose any possibility of determinism, providing the condi-tion of an open future. Therefore, intra-actions are constraining but not determining. That is, intra-activity is neither a matter of strict determinism nor unconstrained freedom. The future is radically open at every turn. This open sense of futurity does not depend on the clash or collision of cultural demands; rather, it is inherent in the nature of intra-activity — even when apparatuses are primarily reinforcing, agency is not foreclosed. (Barad 2003, 826)

The binaries of local and global, West and non-West are often con-ceived as constraining and definitive. By applying Barad's understand-ing of 'intra-actions', this book focuses, however, on the intra-actions between local and global queer discourses. In other words, this meth-odology captures a new agency born out of the local/global paradigm whose 'future is radically open at every turn'. I would like to examine the ways in which binaries function as a means through which to produce and shift new identities instead of being used to confine them. To put it simply, this book discusses moments of identity shifting and transformation within the binary paradigms. It is in this sense that I use the term 'contact moment(s)' to further emphasise the temporal dimen-sions of Pratt's 'contact zone', and so as to pay focal attention to the

subsequent imperatives born out of 'intra-actions' between local and global queer culture.

   A core analytical method that this book employs is discourse analysis. What this book endeavours to accomplish, as laid out above, is to examine the effects of Japan's cross-cultural queer contacts with the West by means of analysing their discursive constructions. While there is a variety of ways of theorising discourse, it goes without saying that Michel Foucault's name is the one most often associated with the discussion of discourse in studies of sexuality, and most notably, queer studies circles.[5] Foucault's canonical text *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction* (1978) informs us that the ways in which the social apparatus gives meaning to sexuality are always historically contingent and context-specific. Karen Barad eloquently captures the point made by Foucault by stating that:

> . . . discursive practices are the local sociohistorical material conditions that enable and constrain disciplinary knowledge practices such as speaking, writing, thinking, calculating, measuring, filtering, and concentrating. (Barad 2003, 819)

In this vein, Barad, following Foucault, contends that 'Discourse is not what is said; it is that which constrains and enables what can be said' (*Ibid.*, 819). In other words, 'discourse' and 'sexuality' are not pre-existing or pre-conceivable entities that are waiting to be intertwined, but instead define each other in a constantly oscillating and shifting manner in their own making. Similarly, David Halperin registers his reservation concerning the view that Foucault's work on discourse teleologises what sexuality *is* or *is not*. According to Halperin, Foucault's interrogation of the history of sexuality is not 'an attempt to claim, theoretically, that sexuality *is* discourse, or that it is constituted discursively instead of naturally. It is rather an effort to denaturalise, dematerialise, and derealise sexuality so as to prevent it from serving as the positive grounding of a theory of sexuality' (1998, 110). In line with Barad's and Halperin's readings of Foucault, I subscribe to the idea that discourse is a condition by way of which certain disciplinary practises are enabled and disenabled. Discourse analysis is defined, at least in this book, as a method of analysing the ways in which the discursive condition is congealed and constructed in relation to a social phenomenon at issue.

To be more specific, I employ discourse analysis to look at the cross-cultural conditions in which certain forms of queer being are enabled and disenabled.

On Japan's Queer Cultures

This book could not have come into being without being informed by many fine works previously written on Japan's queer culture. Like many other non-Western countries, since the decade of the 1990s the number of scholarly works both in English and Japanese that focus on contemporary Japanese queer culture has significantly increased.[6] As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, the rise of the gay and lesbian liberation movement in Japan since the early 1990s led to many publications on contemporary Japanese queer culture written by young Japanese writers and academics who were directly involved in activism as well as by non-Japanese scholars who studied the activism and other queer matters in the decade. The surge of academic attention given to queer culture was clearly evident in the fact that there was a series of publications featuring queer topics from widely-circulated Japanese intellectual journals. Those include 'Lesbian and Gay Studies', a special issue from *Gendai shisō* [Contemporary Thought] (1997, vol. 25–6); 'Gay Psychology' (1991, vol. 2–2), 'Lesbian' (1995a, vol. 2–8), 'Gay Liberation' (1995b, vol. 6–12), and 'Sexuality' (1996, vol. 7–6) from *Imāgo* [Imago]; and 'Gay Stories' (1995, vol. 27–13) and 'Queer Reading' (1996, vol. 28–13) from *Yuriika* [Eureka]. Published throughout the 1990s, most of those volumes contained essays and translations of canonical English texts on queer studies including, but not limited to, works by Michel Foucault, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Teresa de Lauretis and Judith Butler. Also, a number of other authors' articles that appeared in what came to be known as the foundational texts of western queer theory such as *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (Abelove et al. 1993) were also translated into Japanese during this period.

While the translation of English queer studies texts facilitated a surge of queer interest in Japan, a number of works that focused specifically on the Japanese context also appeared. Many young academics who were involved in the task of translating queer texts from other languages were also instrumental in adapting Western theory into

the Japanese context. As will be closely examined in Chapter 5, *Gei sutadīzu* [Gay studies] (Vincent et al. 1997) is one of the first Japanese texts that directly embarked on theorising gay studies in the Japanese context. Also significant are many works by non-academic writers and cultural critics that account for contemporary Japanese queer culture, both that of gay men (e.g. Fushimi 1991; Hirano 1994) and lesbians (e.g. Kakefuda 1992), without heavily relying on academic, especially Western, theory. The collaboration among queer and non-queer writers with diverse backgrounds made possible the continuing increase of the numbers of publications on Japan's queer culture. The series of books and magazines such as *Queer Studies* (1996 to 1997), and *Queer Japan* which was edited by Fushimi Noriaki from 1999 to 2001, are exemplary of the development of queer analysis in Japan's context. In the 1990s, many Japanese publications on Japan's queer cultures did a great service in introducing and incorporating lesbian and gay studies and queer theory from the US or other Western countries, and yet at the same time contextualised them in Japan's conditions. The strategies and theories that had been employed by the gay liberation movement in the US since the Stonewall riots in the late 1960s needed to be modified so as to speak to the contexts of Japan in the 1990s.[7] This is not to suggest that Japan had to face a more complex situation than the US, but simply to point out that Japan took a different path in terms of developing the gay liberation movement and its theoretical framework.

This surge of Japanese publications on queer topics as well as the social attention given to the culture in general since the early 1990s was followed by the advent of English scholarly works that dealt with similar subject matter. The productive merger of queer theory and globalisation studies encouraged many English works to examine Japan's queer culture from a cross-cultural perspective. Their analytical method is often couched in a comparative view, in that it often impugns the edifice of Western queer studies that sometimes narrowly concerns Euro-American contexts. Many pioneering English works on Japan's contemporary queer culture endeavour to rescue a subtle reconstruction of gay and lesbian identity in the Japanese context in the age of globalisation which is not necessarily confined to the Euro-American paradigm. Among others, the monographs on Japanese gay male media and culture (McLelland 2000), and those on other

sexual minorities including lesbians and transgenders (Lunsing 2001; Chalmers 2002; and McLelland 2005) are instrumental in forging a dialogue between 'Western' queer cultures and those in contemporary Japanese society.

In particular, Mark McLelland's monograph *Queer Japan from the Pacific War to the Internet Age* (2005) has informed the concept of this book. Not only does McLelland identify important and previously unexamined primary sources that several chapters of this book analyse, but he also makes a compelling point about discussing queer theory in the context of globalisation. Specifically drawing on his analysis of Japan's post-war history of queer culture, McLelland argues:

> . . . sexuality was constituted through a highly complex and contested process in which traditional terminologies were continually being overwritten by new meanings and in which foreign loanwords and ways of knowing were strategically redeployed to serve local uses . . . Given this background, it should come as no surprise to discover that contemporary Japanese notions of queer identity, despite some resemblance to western models, have their own distinct histories and trajectories, resulting as they do from a social context very different from that which produced the gay, lesbian and transgender liberation movement of the West. It is not the case that Japan is simply one among many sites for the elaboration of a kind of homogenized, international queer culture; rather, Japan is home to an alternative sexual modernity, a modernity produced by hybrid globalizing processes as much as by the continuation of identities, practices and mentalities inherited from the past. (*Ibid*., 221–2)

I situate my book as part of this larger academic imperative in which the elucidation of the translational processes of queer identity at the moment of post-war Japan's contact with foreign culture, especially the West, takes place. The questions to be asked are: What does cross-cultural contact do to Japan's construction of gender and sexuality? How does the discourse of gender and sexuality mediate national politics in the context of globalisation? And how and in what ways does the binary opposition of local/global, Japan/West, and us/them, reconstitute itself through being deployed at the moment of queer cross-cultural contact?

The imperative of this book to understand the translational proc-esses of post-war Japan's queer culture in the context of cross-cultural contact has much in common with the aims of the existing first-rate studies conducted on constructions of male-male sexuality in early-modern and modern Japan. Among others, historical analyses on medico-scientific as well as popular discourses of male-male sexual-ity in Japan from the mid-seventeenth century to the early and mid-twentieth century (Furukawa 1994; Pflugfelder 1999), and on literary discourse in the Meiji period (1868–1912) (Reichert 2006) attest to the fact that Japan had never been a passive recipient of imported Western knowledge and ideas on sexuality, including homosexuality. In the mid-nineteenth century Japan embarked on modernisation and indus-trialisation following Western models. As a result, modern sexual dis-courses were brought to Japan. However, the process of adapting those foreign discourses into the Japanese context proved to be far messier than a simple overwriting of local culture by the imposition of foreign knowledge. Conversely, the foreign concepts and discourses were often reshaped into a local context, so as to serve local needs. More often than not, this imported knowledge was utilised as a benchmark against which traditional as well as modern views of Japan's identity were measured. Jim Reichert (2006), for example, compellingly argues in *In the Company of Men: Representations of Male-Male Sexuality in Meiji Literature* that during Japan's modernisation period (Meiji period), the imported Western concept of compulsory heterosexuality helped rein-vigorate the literary representations of male-male eroticism called *nan-shoku*, often discussed as a cultural shield against the Westernisation of Japanese traditions. In this sense, foreign knowledge did not always dominate the local construction of sexuality, but did quite the opposite; it consolidated the local identity.[8]

Similar to the trajectory suggested by these works, all the case studies conducted in the following chapters are concerned with this process of localising or 'glocalising' queer-male culture and identity in post-war Japan. I use the term 'glocal' here not to denote the ontologi-cal premise that neatly separates the existences of 'global' and 'local'; instead the term represents the condition in which both 'global' and 'local' mutually define and give meaning to each other. In other words, I do not wish to suggest that the 'local identity' that emerged out of

the cross-cultural interaction had always self-evidently existed, prior to or independent of its relationship to other cultures. Rather, the local response to foreign influence is always a new by-product of cross-cultural contact, constantly shifting the mutual construction of difference. As is obvious by now, the trope of the 'West' in this discussion by no means represents the everyday aspects of queer lives in Euro-America. Instead it is a fictive concept of the 'West' that only subsists with its cross-cultural referencing to the non-West.

Having noted that, it is worth clarifying again that this book does not aim to give a comprehensive account of post-war Japan's male-queer cultures, nor a detailed history. Instead, what the book is concerned with are the processes by which cross-cultural contacts between Japan's queer male culture and that of the West facilitate the reconstitution of each other's identity. In this book, I assign the intersection of gender, sexuality, and race to the epicentre of the analysis of Japan's queer culture in the context of cross-cultural contacts.

Chapter Outline

In this introductory chapter, I have addressed the framework and methodologies which ground the analysis in the rest of the book. I started this chapter with a personal narrative of a cross-cultural queer experience in order to contextualise the themes explored in this book. This means that this book focuses on how to know Japan's queer culture from a cross-cultural perspective. I have then drawn a link between the discussion of my personal narrative and broader debates about binary oppositions such as local/global, self/other, and us/them within the field of cross-cultural analysis, particularly emerging queer studies that focus on Asia. I argue that much of the literature on Asian queer cultures forces us to realise the importance of rescuing subtle modifications and rearticulations of gay and lesbian identity in Asia even though it might look as if they were imported from the West in the age of globalisation. In other words, it is crucial for us to find the discursive limits of those binary oppositions by examining the excesses that are not confined to the binary paradigm. Thereafter I move on to show how many previous works written on Japanese queer culture, especially in English, collaborate to suggest similar concerns. That is,

instead of seeing Japan as a passive recipient of foreign knowledge and culture at the time of cross-cultural contacts, those works shed light on situations in which foreign ideas are remanifested and redefined to reach local contexts. I further this project by focusing on materials that hitherto have not been examined from the cross-cultural perspective that this book employs. I finish this chapter by providing an overview of the structure of the rest of the book, as well as concise summaries of the following chapters.

Chapter 2 concerns the multiple uses of the local/global and Japan/West binary represented in the post-war Japanese popular media which came to be known as *hentai zasshi* (perverse magazines). The upheavals of the post-Second World War period in Japan coincided with a surge of sexual discourses articulated in popular media. In contradistinction to the wartime regime of the management of sexuality, immediate post-war Japan was filled with the ubiquity of things sexual.[9] Of particular interest was the attention drawn to abnormal and perverse sexual desires and customs including sex work, homoeroticism and sadomasochism. The advent of perverse magazines, as a genre of publication which encompassed an array of deviant sexual discourses, in part epitomises such a social condition. It was a common feature of the genre, just like many other sexual cultures which flourished in the same period, including strip clubs, and prostitution, that perverse magazines were disproportionately created by and catered to men. Similar to the burst of sexual discourses in popular media in early 20th century Japan, a number of sexual scientific bases and customs were introduced from the West in the name of the modernisation of Japan, and translated into the Japanese context in the early post-war period. The chapter focuses on the ways in which those perverse magazines constructed the discourse of post-war Japan's identity in relation to its referential opponent, the West, in gendered and sexualised terms. I ask the question of how the adaptation of sexual discourses from the West helped create Japan's own identity. I focus on the gendered metaphor, 'feminised' Japan versus the 'masculinised' West, which mediated the political power relations between Japan and the West (most symbolically the United States) in the immediate post-Second World War period. In other words, I highlight the significance of the

intersection of gender, ethnicity, and sexuality in the formulation of national identity.

My analysis of the gendered metaphor exposes the contradictory nature of perverse magazines, in that they first needed to rely on the notion of the West as 'advanced', 'strong', and 'liberal' in order to engender the sexual revolution in the Japanese context. And yet, the notion of the West was also discussed in negative terms, in that Japan's male subjectivity which was in need of repair after the defeat to the West, deployed the critique of the West in order to reinvigorate national pride. Therefore, I argue that post-war perverse magazines can be partly understood as a platform for expressing the Japanese male subject's homosocial anxiety toward the Western male subject. Having their masculine pride tormented by defeat, many Japanese male writers of perverse magazines attempted to restore self-esteem through ultimately rendering foreign sexuality or sexual customs as deviant and abnormal. In this context, Japanese women and men who had a bodily or intimate relationship with Western men were often discursively stigmatised and criticised as unpatriotic figures. By exposing the patriotic means of restoring national identity and its contradiction, I argue that perverse magazines in early post-war Japan illustrate the complexity and the multiple uses of the local/global and Japan/West binary paradigm in the context of cross-culturation. While Western sexual knowledge and sexual customs were initially taken up as an ideal model by Japanese perverse media to critique Japan's own wartime sexual regime, the image of the West was also utilised as a negative benchmark against which Japan's identity was favourably defined.

Chapter 3 continues to tackle the question of how the master narrative of colonial hierarchy between Japan and the West was taken up and put to work in a different context. Texts to be examined in the chapter are early volumes of *Barazoku*, the first Japanese gay magazine that has had a national circulation from 1971. Since its launch, *Barazoku* functioned as a medium for the mass circulation of Japanese gay culture for nearly four decades. While the features and characteristics of the magazine had changed over time, the early volumes, especially those published by the mid-1970s, were filled with discourses that purported to portray Japanese gay men as masculine and gender-normative. This

comes as no surprise given that the mainstream media's portrayal of Japanese gay men before the advent of *Barazoku* was heavily couched in feminised terms, and thus degraded in the patriarchal gender economy. In turn, *Barazoku*, as the first major gay magazine in Japan, in its early stages endeavoured to debunk the stereotype that gay men are feminine, and retain the pride of being gay men by self-identifying themselves as gender-normative — masculine.

However, similar to the argument made in reference to early post-war perverse magazines in Chapter 2, also in *Barazoku*, such national gender politics needed to intersect with cross-cultural politics. That is, the claim of Japanese gay men's masculinity had to come to terms with its already feminised status in relation to the masculinised West in cross-cultural contexts. In Chapter 3, I place the discussion of 'whiteness', or more specifically white masculinity at the centre of the analysis. I examine how 'whiteness' was consumed and digested in the Japanese queer context in the early 1970s featuring *Barazoku* as a case study. My argument contravenes the popular assumption that 'whiteness' is a default category against which all the other racial and ethnic categories are labelled. Differently put, my analysis of 'whiteness' in *Barazoku* attests to the need of looking at 'whiteness' from a non-white perspective. Far from remaining as a default category, thus not retaining the normative subject, the 'whiteness' represented in *Barazoku* was hybridised within Japan's local context, and in fact becomes an identifiable category of 'white'. Furthermore, white masculinity, or white gay masculinity was rendered into a realm of hyper-masculinity or animalistic masculinity — in effect abnormality — against which the normativity of Japanese gay men's masculinity was defined. The all-too-familiar colonial gender and racial hierarchy between the West versus East was reconceived, and instead of reinscribing the hegemony of 'whiteness' in Japanese queer culture, 'whiteness' was utilised so as to stabilise the normative status of Japan's gay men's subjectivity in cross-cultural terms.

In Chapter 4, I deliver an in-depth literary analysis of John Whittier Treat's critical memoir *Great Mirrors Shattered: Homosexuality, Orientalism, and Japan* (1999). As the subtitle implies, *Great Mirrors Shattered* (hereafter *Shattered*) directly tackles one of the central concerns of this book: the ways of knowing Japanese queer culture from a

cross-cultural point of view, reflecting on Treat's own experience. His memoir unfolds following his account of the transformation as well as the redefinition of his subjectivity, as a self-identified white American gay scholar, when he went back and forth between Japan and the United States at the height of the AIDS panic. I argue that Treat's memoir demonstrates one way of deconstructing the Orientalist binary oppositions of the West and East, and self and other. He does this by not propagating a reactive approach: namely *anti*-Orientalism but, rather, by attesting to the need for us to critically *embrace* Orientalism in order to undo Orientalism. From the start, Treat problematises the generic Orientalist view on queer globalisation which might argue that non-Western queer culture is getting 'queered' or emulating the Western models of gay and lesbian identity, and that therefore the methodology of Western queer studies and gay and lesbian studies can be universally applied to analyse non-Western queer cultures. And yet Treat also takes issue with the argument put forth by the opponents of such a globalist account: *anti*-Orientalists who wish to expand the paradigm of Western queer studies so as to make it more applicable to non-Western queer cultures — queer cultures that are *indigenous* and *different* from those of the West. Treat captures the reinvigoration of the binary opposition carefully in the rhetoric of *anti*-Orientalists who claim to undo the very binary. That is, Treat found it contradictory that in order for anti-Orientalists to claim that there is a need for Western queer studies to expand its paradigm for the purpose of accommodating the queer matters of non-West, they would need from the outset to replicate the generic Orientalist binary oppositions which say that the non-West is *different* from the West. In that, the rhetoric of 'different' remerges, and refuses to go away. In an attempt to theorise an alternative to the contradictory method led by *anti*-Orientalists, in my reading, Treat boldly argues that instead of relying on an abolitionist methodology, it is critical for us to *embrace* Orientalism in order to go beyond Orientalism.

Though this may sound contradictory, Treat nonetheless argues that we need to tangentially, not essentially, first embody the discourse of Orientalism in order to seek its discursive limits. Throughout his memoir, he relentlessly reminds us of the significance of interpellation in the constitution of identity. In the context of cross-cultural contact,

however flexibly people may wish to situate their own identity, identity can never be free from the force of interpellation which calls upon them, enabling subjecthood. Reflecting on his own experience of his American white gay man's identity being interpellated differently in Japan and the US, in the past and present, he suggests that our critical embodiments of those pre-existing discourses through both identification and interpellation make us conscious of the constituents of those discourses. By extension, such a critical view demarcates the limits of those discourses when they fail. This is the writing technique to which I referred when relating my personal experience of Japan's queer culture in the cross-cultural context at the start of this chapter. Without first embodying the pre-existing discourses or Orientalism in Treat's case, it is theoretically impossible for analysts to sense any discursive limits; an automatic confounding factor. Treat presents this critical theory by describing how his white American gay man's identity collapsed at times and resurfaced in the Japanese context, or cross-cultural context. His identity never remained static, and the binary rhetoric of Orientalism: self and other, was in fact fragile and incomplete through this dissolution of his identity. I argue that his critical theorisation brings our attention back to the shifting constitution of our subjecthood which itself rested in the cross-cultural context.

This writing style makes Treat's memoir readable as a critical guideline to understanding queer cultures cross-culturally in the age of globalisation. Of particular concern is perhaps not so much how we, as subjects, interpret the diverse aspects of an object: the contours of another queer culture, such as seeing it as either a 'globalised' or an 'indigenous' entity in relation to the West. Instead, it is of critical importance to ask a self-reflective question about how our way of knowing other queer cultures itself is constantly shifting through the process of knowing. In other words, this study is an epistemological inquiry which forces us to realise the shifting nature of our own subjectivity or perspective. In order to do so, it is necessary first to embody the pre-existing discourses to realise anything which is shifted from or is not confined to the original paradigms of the discourses. I elucidate Treat's dialectical method of confounding the rigidly structured Orientalist or anti-Orientalist thoughts through applying a deconstructive mode of inquiry put forth by many queer scholars,

mainly Judith Butler's renowned theorisation of gender normativity and performativity ([1991] 1993; 1993). I wish to expand Butler's theory into a more specific cross-cultural context by applying it to Treat's writing.

In the decade of the 1990s, Japan saw the surge of a gay liberation movement along with other queer activisms including those of lesbians, and transgenders. Some gay writers, scholars, and non-profit organisations were instrumental in bringing forth the issues of protecting sexual minority rights in Japan. Among others, a gay writer Fushimi Noriaki's debut work, *Puraibēto gei raifu* (Private gay life) in 1991, and his subsequent publications, played a pivotal role in theorising gay studies in the Japanese context. Also significant was the writing and political activism of the Japanese non-profit organisation, OCCUR (Japan Association for the Lesbian & Gay Movement) in the 1990s. OCCUR's activism included lobbying on the progress of the social and legal conditions facing sexual minorities, especially for homosexual individuals in Japanese society, and in 1991 OCCUR filed the first ever lawsuit in Japan in which the rights of homosexual people in the public sector were discussed. Due to the political methods employed, OCCUR's activism was often conflated with or identified as an emulation of the gay and lesbian liberation movement in the West. Furthermore, OCCUR's gay activism in Japan could at times be contrasted with Fushimi's gay liberation tactics, for the latter was often perceived by some as a more indigenous and local manifestation as opposed to OCCUR's approach.

Taking issue with such a reductionist reading of the two instances, in Chapter 5, I argue that while Fushimi and OCCUR adopted different tactics during their 1990s activism, the two in fact shared a lot in common in terms of the theorisation of gay studies and queer studies in the Japanese context. Borrowing Fran Martin's conceptualisation of the 'mask' (Martin 2003), I show that a reading of queer subject formation in the decade through a metaphor of 'masking' can shed light on the complex scenarios functioning beneath the surface of identity politics. I argue that although OCCUR might have appeared wearing a 'Western/global' mask, and Fushimi a 'Japan/local' mask, the two, however, expressed similar sentiments about gay identity in Japan. In other words, their masks did not polarise their gay identity,

but functioned as a discursive surface through which to move and shift their own subjectivities. By extension, I contend that the notion of 'masking' is useful in reading the multiple axes incorporated into queer identity formation in Japan in the context of globalisation. That is, I refute any reductive claim that queer identity in Japan represented by the two forms of gay activism in the 1990s, can be understood in terms of binary oppositions such as local/global, West/non-West, and Japan/abroad.

In Chapter 6, I extend the discussion of the redefinition and rearticulation of the local/global queer binary to the Japanese context in the Internet age. I examine ways in which Japanese male-queer culture is continuously recrafted in relation to the global influx of Western queer knowledge in cyberspace. In the past decade, the diffusion of new cyber-technologies such as the Internet might seem to suggest that pre-existing national boundaries have been compromised and other disparities reduced due to globalisation. Although one cannot deny the enormous effects brought to the constitution of queer identity by the advent of Internet technology, my case study of Japanese male-queer cyberspace, nonetheless, shows how such a reductionist account of its relation to the western globalising forces needs to be subjected to critical inquiry. My argument is built on a case study of Gay Japan News (GJN), a website which was created by the non-profit group *Kuoritī* (Quality) as an online venue for the distribution of news on matters concerning sexual minorities which occurred mainly, but not only, in foreign countries. I argue that even though a website such as GJN was created as a 'globalised' Japanese male-queer cyberspace, it also facilitated not only glocal but also intra-local association among queer users. Of particular concern is how GJN's positive referencing of Western queer culture allowed the Japanese audience to visualise Japan's queer culture in a cross-cultural context. In other words, GJN's referencing of the West did not make the site a mere replica of its Western counterpart. Rather, the image of the West operated as a sort of imaginative fantasy through which to reflect and contest the multiple realities of Japan's own queer culture. Through the imagination of the West, GJN invites the audience to verbalise their own accounts of the reality of Japan's queer cultures both past and present. It is in this sense that I argue that through GJN, the representation of the West

did not repudiate Japan's queer culture. On the contrary, it facilitated the realisation of Japan's local identity in the context of globalisation. I show how features such as hypertextuality, interactivity, and the infinite potential for audience participation and creativity inherent to new technology such as the Internet play a pivotal role in constantly shifting the surfaces of cyberspace within which the denizens' identities are also constructed through multiple tensions. By extension, binary tropes such as Japan/West are intentionality utilised, and yet at the same time they are subjected to modification by virtue of the erosion of such clear polarities within cyberspace. In light of these binary oppositions, GJN allows its users to constitute their own identity in motion rather than remaining in stasis. While my case study does not provide a definitive or comprehensive account of Japanese queer culture in the Internet age, nor does it deal with many other dimensions of cyberculture, it demonstrates, nonetheless, a subtle way in which the construction of Japanese male-queer culture takes place both in its cross-cultural and intra-local senses.

Chapters 2 to 6 each take a different contact moment as a case study through which to delve into the shifting manifestations of Japanese queer male subjectivity in the context of cross-culturation. As will be detailed in the following chapters, each case study entails different historical and material dimensions of the cross-cultural contact and relevant specificities. Nonetheless, as readers might have already gathered, all the chapters build upon each other in addressing the pattern born out of the contact moments. That is, I aim to show how the local/global binary is remodeled, rearticulated, and transformed in the cross-cultural context. In fact, the in-depth analysis of contact moments by focusing on the local/global binaries proves to be effective not in perpetuating them but in exposing their discursive limits. I wrote Chapter 7 as a conclusion with the hope of discussing the future implications as well as the challenges provoked by these research findings. One theme explored in the final chapter aims to shift analytical focus from identity to desire in the context of cross-culturation. I draw heavily on Elspeth Probyn's concept of the desire to 'belong', discussed in *Outside Belongings* (1996) to articulate this point. The initial approach to this book was to analyse how Japanese male-queer culture is affected by cross-cultural contact with the West, using the notion of identity. Yet,

as the research proceeded, it became obvious that what the project was examining was not so much an identity, which implies a singular mode of being, but rather the desire, or the longing for belonging, the aspiration towards coming to terms with personal subjectivity. In Probyn's words, it is:

> . . . the desire for some sort of attachment, be it to other people, places, or modes of being, and the ways in which individuals and groups are caught within wanting to belong, wanting to become, a process that is fueled by yearning rather than the positing of identity as a stable state. (*Ibid.*, 19)

My analyses of Japan's queer contact moments with the West shed light on precisely this kind of desire — the desire to make sense of one's being through the process of adapting, rearticulating, shifting, and redefining binary oppositions such as local/global, Asia/West, and self/other. The case studies in this book follow the footsteps of several queer beings and their desire to belong somewhere that they have yet to reach; each step being part of surface tensions through which they constitute their desires — the desires to put their lives in motion, if not their identities.

It is in this vein that I conclude that this book can be perceived as a piece of writing which demonstrates what David Eng, Judith Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz consider as a 'subjectless' critique of queer phenomena. They explain that 'subjectless' critique of queer culture is a method that 'disallows any positing of a proper subject *of* or object *for* the field by insisting that queer has no fixed political referent' (2005b, 3). As such, I hope that this book makes a contribution to the diverse ways of understanding Japan's queer culture in a cross-cultural context.

Notes

Chapter 1

1   In this book, I use the term 'queer' to refer to groups of people and cultures that can be perceived as non-normative in terms of gender and sexuality in a broad sense. Whereas such terms as 'gay' and 'lesbian' are used when I am expressly referring to a specific social group of homosexual people.

2   I use the term interpellation here drawing on Louis Althusser's discussion of the term in 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (1971).

3   For more detailed and historical discussion of the representation of 'Chinaman' in the United States, see Tchen (1999).

4   For more discussion on deconstructive methods pertinent to poststructuralism and also its relation to queer theory, see Seidman (1995).

5   Therefore, this use of discourse analysis is specific in that it draws on Foucauldian understanding of a discourse on sexuality.

6   This is not to argue that the works on Japan's queer culture were non-existent before the 1990s. For instance, although not strictly academic, informative writings and discussion on Japanese lesbians and the community were published in the special issue titled 'Onna o aisuru onna-tachi no monogatari' (Stories of women who love women) of *Bessatsu takarajima* (1987). It should also be noted that a series of feminist publications since the early 1970s, such as *Onna Eros*, did include the issues of lesbian sexuality. See Mackie (2003, 159).

7   The term Stonewall riots refers to a series of riots beginning with the protest of the queer community against the police raid and harassment in 1969 at the bar called Stonewall Inn in New York City. The incident is often referred to as the landmark of gay and lesbian revolution in the United Stated and abroad. For a more detailed history of Stonewall riots, see Carter (2004).

8   For a similar discussion of the local consumption of Western knowledge
        of sexuality during the Meiji era, see Driscoll (2005).
9   This is not to suggest that sexuality was not being managed in the post-
        war period. Instead, I mean to suggest that there was a different type of
        managing sexuality from the pre-war era.

Chapter 2

1   For a more detailed account of those post-war phenomena in Japan, refer
        to chapters 3, 4, and 7 of Dower's *Embracing Defeat* (1999).
2   Douglas Slaymaker discusses the notion of body in post-war Japanese
        literature in great detail in his *The Body in Postwar Japanese Fiction* (2004).
3   For a similar discussion of Japan's consumption of Western cultures in
        pre-war Japan, see Silverberg (1991). Also see Silverberg (2007).
4   A similar essay that claims the fundamental inferiority of women as
        opposed to men appeared in the September 1953 issue of *Amatoria*, '*shin
        danson johi ron*' (New theory of male superiority and female inferiority)
        by a medical doctor Oshikane Atsushi (1953a). The same author penned
        several others to reiterate his argument in the October issue (1953b),
        November issue (1953c) and December issue (1953d) of the same year.
5   For more detailed information on *onrī* and *batafurai*, see Dower (1999,
        132–9).
6   Christopher Gerteis discusses Japanese post-war labour movement car-
        toons which deployed the figure of the *pan pan* as a metaphor for anti-
        nationalism. See Gerteis (2007).
7   The exact year of the launch of F.K.K. is hard to know except for the fact
        that advertisements for membership started to appear from the March
        1954 issue.
8   Jonathan Mackintosh provides a different reading of this work of Ōgiya
        (2010, 109–32). And yet, I agree with Mackintosh when he states of
        Ōgiya's piece that, 'far from affirming narratives of feminization and
        masochism', it was able to 'refashion the postwar postcolonial sense of
        Japanese manliness . . . to give some Japanese men at least a vision of
        how they may be the masters of their destiny' (*Ibid.*, 132).
9   Butler's views on sovereignty draw heavily on Giorgio Agamben's
        concept of sovereignty, outlined in his *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and
        Bare Life* (1998).

Chapter 3

1   Mackintosh also points out the complicity of the readership in reject-
        ing femininity as their self-identification. See the footnote number 10 of
        Mackintosh (2006).

2   For other materials published by Daini shobō prior to *Barazoku*, see Ishida (2007, 139–41).

3   It is also possible to assume that some queers in the 1970s had already discovered and implemented this strategy of marriages of convenience for themselves without Itō's guidance.

4   See Mackintosh (2010, 111–7) for a detail analysis of this short story.

5   My way of defining the notion of physiognomy draws on Warwick Anderson's discussion of Australia's history of medico-scientific endeavours to categorise people into different racial groups in *The Cultivation of Whiteness* (2002).

6   For a detailed discussion of the representations of black men's sexuality in white society, see Mercer ([1991]1993, 352–3).

7   SCAP also exercised control over what actually appeared in the Japanese media during the occupation. See Dower (1999, 75).

Chapter 4

1   In Japanese literature, the term 'Great Mirror' instantly invokes several historical references. Among others, *The Great Mirror* (*Ōkagami*), an unauthored historical tale was written in a late Heian period (794–1185). More relevant to Treat's memoir is Ihara Saikaku's *The Great Mirror of Male Love* (*Nanshoku ōkagami*), a collection of short stories depicting a range of romantic relationships between men. For more detailed discussions of Saikaku's *The Great Mirror of Male Love*, see Schalow (1989).

2   I use these terms 'Asian', 'Caucasian', 'Western' or 'Euro-American' as a fictive concept used in popular imagination. These terms sustain themselves at the expense of reducing the diversities within those categories.

3   As will become evident in the following sections, I employ my own interpretation, modification or approximate rearticulation of Butler's notion of subject formation and its subversion which, in my view, has been an undercurrent in most of her writings. Among others, her following seminal texts have influenced my analysis of Treat's memoir. See Butler (1987; 1990; [1991] 1993; 1993; 1997; 2001; and 2005). It is worth clarifying here that due to space constraints this discussion does not attempt to give a comprehensive account, or critique aspects of, Butler's theory. Some complexities and intricacies of her conceptualisations are deliberately overlooked to serve this chapter's greater purpose. For constructive criticism of Butler's ideas, see, for instance Ng (1997), Dollimore (2001, 37–45), and Kirby (2006).

4   Although the origin of these metaphors remains unknown, the terms 'butter' and 'beef' historically invoke the images of the West in the Japanese popular imagination.

5   For more discussion of Japan's attitudes towards the AIDS pandemic, see Buckley (1997).

6   Not only the numbers of delegates who attended but also the extent of academic attention given to the 1st International Conference on Asian Queer Studies, *Sexualities, Genders, and Rights in Asia* (held in Bangkok in 2005) are indicative of the surge of such scholarly interest in the recent decade. It is simply impossible to mention the great number of works that are concerned with such topics in detail here. For an excellent bibliographical review essay of this area of study, see Boellstorff (2007b).

7   As discussed in Chapter 1, for a specific discussion of the West and Asia binary, see Sakai (2000).

Chapter 5

1   See Fushimi (2004, 336–80).

2   Examples of ostensibly queer male 'friendly' popular phenomena in Japan prior to the 1990s are the Boys Love and YAOI subcultures which gained popularity primarily among female audiences. For more detailed discussion on the Boys Love and YAOI, see Welker (2006) and Aoyama (2009).

3   I acknowledge that OCCUR also put a great deal of effort into working on issues relating to lesbians in Japan. However in this chapter, due to its specified aim of analysing queer male identities in 1990s Japan, I only focused on their activism around gay male issues.

4   *Kōjien* used to be called *Jien* before 1955. Japanese publisher, *Iwanami shoten* took over the dictionary in 1955 and has continued the publication under the title *Kōjien*. *Kōjien* used to define homosexuality as a kind of 'abnormal sexual desire' until it was criticised by OCCUR. See Vincent et al. (1997, 181–3).

5   For a detailed account of this lawsuit, see OCCUR (1993b; 1996), *Hanrei taimuzu* (1999), and Vincent et al. (1997).

6   Although Asada does not refer to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's renowned concept of the 'strategic use of essentialism'(1987, 205), his characterisation of OCCUR's politics has much in common with Spivak's strategic essentialism.

7   For more detailed discussion on Japanese indigenous terms such as '*okama*', and its political usage in the gay liberation movement in Japan, see Lunsing (2005).

Chapter 6

1   URL: http://www.gayjapannews.com/petition.htm (Site accessed 28/08/06).

2   The same source also reports, in an interview with the editor of GJN, that GJN counted more than 50,000 hits per day, which is quite a substantial number and implies the website's impact on the Japanese queer community. To provide further context, the official blog site by one of the most prominent Japanese gay critics, as discussed in Chapter 5, Fushimi Noriaki, was also recording the same number of visitors around the time the article was published.

3   URL: http://gayjapannews.com/school.htm (Site accessed 28/08/06).

4   URL: http://gayski.org/ (Site accessed 28/08/06).

5   URL: http://gayski.org/photos/flyer1_r2.jpg (Site accessed 21/11/06).

6   URL: http://gayski.org/photos/poster_web.jpg (Site accessed 21/11/06).

7   For more detailed discussion of *Ni-channeru*, see McLelland (2008).

8   URL: http://gayjapannews.com/bbs/mtbbs/mtbbs.cgi?mode=view&no=320 (Site accessed 22/11/06).

9   URL: http://gayjapannews.com/bbs/mtbbs/mtbbs.cgi?mode=view&no=240 (Site accessed 22/11/06).

10 URL: http://gayjapannews.com/bbs/mtbbs/mttbs.cgi?mode=view&no=120 (Site accessed 22/11/06).

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