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The Resilience of Hegemonic Salaryman Masculinity:

A Comparison of Three Prominent Masculinities

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Abstract

It is the aim of this thesis to explore whether salaryman masculinity has lost its status as a hegemonic form of masculinity to *otaku* masculinity or herbivore masculinity. The thesis makes use of the theoretical framework of *hegemonic masculinity* as first used by R.W. Connell. In order to assess changes in masculinity, 16 semi-structured in-depth interviews have been conducted with students, both male and female, from Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan. The main findings of the research were that, other than what a great deal of literature on hegemonic masculinity in Japan suggests, the salaryman lifestyle still serves as a powerful ideal in the lives of young students, and that *otaku* and herbivore masculinity have not taken over the hegemonic status of salaryman masculinity. The fact that it has been suggested otherwise was found to be mostly due to misguided understandings of what the terms *otaku* and 'herbivore man' mean, which in turn is due to poor ethnological grounding and lack of an emic perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

Research problem

As an undergraduate student at Leiden University, I once attended an open lecture about Japanese *kawaii* (cute) culture. The lecturer argued that *kawaii* was slowly spreading through Japan, and that nowadays not only women and children could be considered cute, but also men. At the end of the lecture there was some time to ask questions, and one older Japanese teacher (close to his retirement) stood up and asked, 'Seeing this, I wonder, where are the real men in Japan nowadays?' Although I do not remember the subsequent answer and discussion, this question stuck with me.

Asking a question like 'Where are the real men in Japan nowadays?' implies a few things. First of all, there is the need to define 'a real man', which is problematic – if not impossible – because it means something different for everyone. Another interesting side to this question is the 'nowadays' which supposes that there is a development over time: the teacher who asked the question implied that from a once-pure masculinity outside of crisis, we are moving towards a type of man that does no longer fit his ideal of a 'real man'.

A better way of phrasing a similar question, but without the inference of individual values, would be 'Is there a shift in hegemonic masculinity in Japan?' The term 'hegemonic masculinity', originally coined by R.W. Connell, supposes that that there is not one type of masculinity in a certain place at a certain time. Rather, there are multiple masculinit*ies* that are organized in a hierarchical order (Connell 1987). The most ideal form in any given place or time is called 'hegemonic' where other non-ideal forms of masculinity are called 'subordinate'.

Relevance

Studying hegemonic masculinity is academically relevant because it forms a 'template' to which all men have to position themselves, either by aspiring to or resisting against this form of masculinity. In the words of Messner (1997): 'Men tend to pay heavy costs – in the form of shallow relationships, poor health, and early death – for conformity with the narrow definitions of masculinity that promise to bring them status and privilege' (p. 69). The theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity helps to explain masculinity-related phenomena in society. Violence against homosexuals, for example, could be seen as an aggressive expression of hegemonic hetero-normativity, when not adhering to the hegemonic lifestyle causes moral panic.

Furthermore, changes in hegemonic masculinity can have policy implications. In the case of Japan (and a lot of other countries for that matter), it can be said that in order to be considered 'a real man', one must spend time outside the house, for example, at work or socializing with colleagues in a bar, rather than being involved with household work and childcare. If this comes to change and men become more involved with activities inside the house, the government might have to change childcare policies and create more favourable conditions for part-time workers. Another important factor to consider is that often in order to fit inside the group of hegemonic masculinity, one needs to produce offspring. If this changes and childless relationships would become the norm, it might have serious consequences for the Japanese economy and demography (see for example *Sayonara Salaryman* in The Economist, 3 January 2008).

Context of the research

Among scholars, there is general consensus that after World War II, the Japanese salaryman – the white-collar worker, employed at a large company, married, with one or two children – became the hegemonic form of masculinity in Japan (Vogel 1963, Hidaka 2010, Sugimoto 2010, Dasgupta 2013). However, one needs to consider that this lifestyle was also allowed by the economic conditions during this period. In the 1990s, the Japanese bubble economy burst, and subsequently the salaryman saw his lifestyle threatened. In this post-bubble period other masculinities emerged such as the otaku (geeky nerd) and the soshoku-kei danshi (hereafter: herbivore men). This had its effect in the media and academic world, and the hegemonic status of salaryman masculinity came to be questioned. Some media reports could even be shared under the term 'moral panic' for their alarming tone (Pesek, 2009), and some scholars argue that the salaryman as hegemonic belongs to the past, and will be replaced by otaku or herbivore men (for example Roberson & Suzuki 2003, Frühstück & Walthall 2010a, Charlebois 2013, Chen 2012). Yet, as I will argue, these three forms of masculinity do not necessarily exclude each other – something that has been overlooked by many scholars in the field.

More recently, however, another discourse has appeared, which could be called the 'resilience of the salaryman as a hegemonic form of masculinity' (Dasgupta 2013). This discourse argues that despite the emergence of alternative masculinities, the salaryman is 'remarkably tenacious', and even that 'the socio-cultural impact (of other masculinities) gets often disproportionally magnified through media commodification' (ibid. p. 159).

The question however still remains whether recent alternative masculinities really 'dethroned' the salaryman as a hegemonic form of masculinity, or that the salaryman is more resilient than many would perhaps expect. Since I cannot focus on every sort of Japanese masculinity within the scope of this thesis, I have chosen to analyse the otaku and herbivore man as two of the most important masculinities that could come to replace the salaryman. These two were chosen for their prevalence in both popular media and academic literature.

Research questions

The overarching research question of this thesis then is 'Has salaryman masculinity lost its hegemonic status to *otaku* masculinity or herbivore masculinity?' In order to answer this research question, there are a few sub-questions that need to be answered:

- What do the words salaryman, *otaku* and herbivore man mean to the participants in the research?
- How do we determine which is hegemonic?
- How do we assess changes in this field?

Disposition

The way the chapters of this thesis are organized is supposed to give the reader a progressing understanding of the topic.

In the first chapter the research question is introduced by the research problem, its scientific and non-scientific relevance and context. In the second chapter, the methodology of the research is explained. Metatheoretical considerations are briefly discussed, as well as the research design. Moreover, I critically discuss my own role as a researcher as well as the demarcations of the research. In the third chapter, the theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity by R.W. Connell is discussed, and how it can be used to find different masculinities. In the Literature Review, which is the fourth chapter, the reader is introduced to what previous English language research has said about hegemonic masculinities in Japan, especially in order to contrast the position of this thesis to what has been written before. The Empirical Data Discussion in the fifth chapter introduces the reader to the interviewees, and shows that the way the salaryman is thought of by the participants is the same as the way it is defined by the literature. It also shows that this is not the case with the *otaku* and the herbivore man, as there are substantial differences

between academic definitions and definitions by the interviewees. Lastly, this chapter shows how components of salaryman masculinity are hegemonic, when it comes to the participants in the research. In the final chapter the thesis comes to the conclusion that salaryman masculinity has not lost its hegemonic status, especially not to *otaku* or herbivore men.

METHODOLOGY

Metatheoretical considerations

This thesis employs a constructivist (also known as constructionist) approach, which 'asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors […] social interaction, and are in a constant state of revision' (Bryman 2008, p. 19). Furthermore, it includes the acceptance that the 'researchers' own accounts of the social world are constructions'. It rejects the notion that social phenomena can be defined in a static, uniform way. This approach has been deemed most suitable for this particular thesis, because it is in line with the theoretical framework of *hegemonic masculinity* (see the chapter on Theory), which sees masculinity as a construct that is different in every time and place. Moreover, it rejects attempts to define masculinity in a static, transhistorical and transnational (thus objectivist) way.

Since the main method of gathering data in this thesis is the semi-structured interview, there is a heavy focus on how the participants in my research construct certain masculinities. In other words, the focus is on trying to find out what the lived experience of these masculinities is, rather than trying to find their 'real meaning'. As can be read further down, this approach has yielded some interesting outcomes, since the construction of these masculinities by the participants in my research differs from previous academic definitions.

Research design

A qualitative approach was deemed most useful for the type of research that was conducted. Bryman (2008) argues that as opposed to quantitative research, qualitative research starts from 'the point of view of the participants' (p. 393), and enables the researcher to obtain 'rich and deep data' and gives him the possibility to answer new questions, depending on the input of the participants (p. 437). In other words, when using quantitative data one risks being too deterministic, only answering pre-set questions and missing important factors and keywords. Therefore, it was chosen to use a qualitative approach to this research. The most important source for data was semi-structured interviews.

In conclusion, then, the study relies predominantly on primary data obtained by myself, complemented by academic literature.

Interviews

In total 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Japanese students. In order to get a full picture of their understanding of concepts surrounding masculinity, it was chosen to interview both men and women, notably six women and ten men.

I was allowed to use some of the time in the lectures by a teacher from the Centre for International Education at Waseda University to introduce myself as a master's student from Lund University, my research topic and research methods, and pass around a list on which students could sign up in order for me to contact them to set a time and place to meet for an interview. About 30 people spread over three classes enlisted, of which 16 led to interviews, 14 of which were done in the Central Library, and two in other student places in the university's buildings. This was done in order to secure a natural environment; other students were present in the same rooms at all times.

Most of the students interviewed were first or third year students, but all of them undergraduates, ranging from age 18 to 22. As such, there was some difference between them and myself as a graduate student aged 23. Still, I always emphasized my student status and asked them to use my first name (if at all needed) in order to take away as many inequalities as possible. This is necessary to ensure an informal atmosphere where the students feel they can talk honestly (Kvale & Brinkman 2009, p. 128). The students that I ended up meeting were very eager to help out and interested in answering my questions, and some even invited me to have lunch or coffee. Others offered their further assistance after the interviews: they invited me to contact them if I had any other questions about Japanese language or culture.

Most of the interviews were conducted in English when possible, and otherwise in Japanese. When the interview was conducted in English I had a Japanese electronic dictionary (*denshi jisho)* on the table at all times, so that the interviewees could look up any specific word they needed.

The interviews were semi-structured. A list of questions was compiled beforehand (see Appendix I), which served as a guideline for the interview. Some questions remained un-asked when they were not applicable, and occasionally extra questions were added, depending on the direction of the conversation and the input of the participants.

Critical approach

Since the sample was only small, no generalizations can be made about the total society. The research results do not *prove* a certain trend, but *suggest* it. Furthermore, it concerns students from a private top university, most of

whom had parents of some affluence who themselves graduated from universities. All interviewees lived in the greater metropolitan area of Tokyo, so results cannot be generalized to the Japanese population as a whole. However, only a few of the interviewees were originally born in Tokyo. Most came from the main island Honshu, with the exception of one student who was from Shikoku, and one who was from Hokkaido.

I believe that this sample is suited for the collection of data for this research, as I argue that potential changes in hegemonic salaryman masculinity should be noticeable in this group. This is because salaryman masculinity itself relies heavily on university education, and employment in urban centres such as Tokyo. Changes in such masculinity should thus be noticeable in potential future generations of salarymen. Moreover, as I will argue later, both *otaku* and herbivore men emerged from the same social background. This becomes evident from the fact that some research subjects described themselves as *otaku* or herbivore men.

Ethical Considerations

In accordance with the chapter on ethical considerations provided in the Thesis Guidelines (approved 2 October 2013), several steps have been taken to make sure the data were obtained in an ethically correct manner.

As mentioned before, already at the initial presentation it was made clear that I was a master's student from Lund University, seeking to interview students in order to obtain data for a master's thesis that I need to complete in order to graduate. In this presentation the research topic itself was presented as well.

Before beginning the individual interviews I once more explicitly asked permission to write down the answers on my computer, and potentially publish these answers as quotes. Absolute anonymity was guaranteed at all times. I explained that I would be the only one to possess the full interview answers. When the word 'anonymous' was not understood I showed it in Japanese on my electronic dictionary: '匿名、別名を使うこと' (*tokumei, betsumei o tsukau koto*) which is translated as 'anonymous, incognito, using a pseudonym'.

Lastly, no substantial gifts were promised or given. However, a small bag of candy was given to all the interviewees at the end of the interview, as a token of my gratitude for their co-operation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The theoretical framework that is employed in this thesis is the theory of hegemonic masculinity as developed by R.W. Connell and presented for the first time in his 1987 book *Gender and Power.* It is theoretically based on the Marxist theory of 'cultural hegemony' by Antonio Gramsci, which is used to explain relations between different classes (Connell 2005, p. 77).

In the field of masculinity studies the theory has 'gained wide currency' (Dasgupta 2013 p. 7), especially since if offers us a solution to the impossibility of finding static, transhistorical, international and workable one-size-fits-all definitions of what masculinity really means. Rather, it offers an alternative way of thinking, and argues that there is a wide range of masculinities that are organized in a hierarchical manner.

Starting point

The starting point for Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity begins with the argument that it is impossible to define just *one* type of masculinity, or as he calls it, 'characterize the person that is masculine' (2005, p. 68). Instead it is important to recognize that there is a plurality of masculinit*ies* rather than a single static masculinity, at any given time or place. For example, there are masculinities that are 'black as well as white, working-class as well as middle-class' (ibid. p. 76). Nonetheless he quickly adds that the picture is even more complicated than this, for there is no simple static black masculinity, or working-class masculinity for that matter. 'There are, after all, gay black men and effeminate factory hands, not to mention middle-class rapists and cross-dressing bourgeois' (ibid. p. 76). This teaches us that there are certain characteristics that we can use to find a certain type of masculinity. Some examples are class, gender, sexual orientation, occupation, marital status, skin colour, ethnicity, and so on. It is safe to assume (but maybe impossible to prove) that any mix of these characteristics exists somewhere, and forms a different type of masculinity.

As I will argue in the next part, however, there is only one kind of masculinity that can be considered hegemonic: a type of masculinity in which the characteristics that are considered most favourable are united. This supposes an unequal relation between different types of masculinities.

Hegemony: power relations between different masculinities

As the word 'hegemony' suggests, there are some masculinities that are in a more favourable position than others. This is what Connell calls 'the bitterness as well as the pleasure in gendered experiences' (ibid. p. 76). Hegemonic masculinity then, is the most ideal combination of the characteristics mentioned before.

It is important to note that the hegemonic form of masculinity is not necessarily statistically the most common form. As Connell argues, 'Normative definitions of masculinity face the problem that not many men actually meet the normative standards. This point applies to hegemonic masculinity. The number of men rigorously practising the hegemonic pattern in its entirety may be quite small' (ibid. p. 79). There is however one very big distinction between these normative descriptions of masculinity and actual hegemonic masculinity, which is the fact that the majority of all men shares in the 'patriarchal dividend' of the hegemonic group, whereas in the normative approach only a very small group can be called masculine. Some examples of this 'patriarchal dividend' are better access to higher, more powerful positions, and generally higher salaries.

Having noted that there are many different masculinities that are hierarchically organized with *hegemonic masculinity* at the top, it is important to also discuss the other forms of masculinity that exist. Connell distinguishes three groups in this: the complicit group, the subordinated group, and the marginalized group.

The complicit group is a group of men that shares in the 'patriarchal dividend' as mentioned before, but does not take part in direct domination, and could for example be a group of fathers in generally gender-equal marriages (ibid. p. 80).

The subordinated group is a group of men that is considered to be part of the hierarchy, but at the bottom of this hierarchy. Connell mentions the example of gay men, who are discriminated against on a large scale, and should be seen as a form of masculinity that is subordinated to hegemonic and complicit masculinities.

The marginalized group however does not even lie within the hierarchy mentioned before, and is in a way seen as a separate sphere of masculinity. Connell mentions black masculinities as an example (ibid. p. 81). A characteristic of this category is also that there is no positive trickle-down effect, as there would be with subordinated masculinities.

In conclusion to this section then, it can be said that there are multiplicities of masculinities that are organized hierarchically, with some being in more

favourable positions than others. It is important to remember however that these four groups are by no means definite and static, and are subject to change. It is one of the most important feats of the theory of hegemonic masculinity that these groups constantly change and shift, other than the essentialist or the positivist approaches that seek to find transhistorical explanations of what masculinity is. 'Hegemonic masculinity is not a fixed character type, always and everywhere the same. It is, rather, the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, always contestable' (ibid. p. 76).

Resistance and change

As described above, change is one of the key factors in the theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity. This not only means that current hegemonic masculinities might change, but also that these in their own turn have taken over from previous groups. As Connell & Messerschmidt argue, 'Hegemonic masculinities […] came into existence in specific circumstances and were open to historical change. More precisely, there could be a struggle for hegemony, and older forms of masculinity might be changed by new ones' (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, p. 832–3). A good example of this is the case of Japan, where historical circumstances during the Meiji-Restoration changed hegemonic masculinity from a feudal warrior-based masculinity to a capitalist, middle-class masculinity, the biggest difference being that the status of the former was violence-based, whereas the status of the latter is based on income.

Change does not always occur gradually, and hegemonic masculinity is often the object of protest or even ridicule. This however does not at all mean that this form of masculinity is no longer hegemonic; in fact, this resistance is inherent to hegemonic masculinity.

Putting the theory to work: finding hegemonic masculinities

Having put forward the theoretical framework, the question remains how we can actually distinguish hegemonic and other masculinities. Or more simply put, we have the tool, but what is the right way to use it? Without knowing this, the theory in itself would be useless.

It pays to look at how Connell himself has used it. Later in the Literature Review of this thesis, I will deal with how the same methods have been used in the case of Japan, and in the Data Discussion part how I myself have employed it during my fieldwork in Tokyo.

The main method that Connell uses for distinguishing different masculinities is 'collecting life histories'. By conducting interviews, he asks people for a 'narrative' or 'story of life'. In these life histories, the focus was on the following factors.

- Transitions between institutions.
- Practices in which relationships were constructed.
- Accounts of relationships within institutions such as families and workplaces.
- Evidence of the power structures in gender (power, labour and cathexis).
- Clues to emotional dynamics, by asking about early memories, family constellations, relationship crises and wishes for the future.
  (Adapted from Connell 2005, p. 91).

These interviews are then individually examined from three points of view:

(a) Narrative sequence of events
(b) Structural analysis, using a grid provided by the three structures of gender relations.
(c) Dynamic analysis, tracing the making and unmaking of masculinity.
(ibid. p. 91)

As a last step, then, these life histories are 'abstracted and reindexed' (Connell 2005, p. 92), so that individual stories can be searched for common factors and differences. This way, Connell attempts to creative a 'collective portrait' (ibid. p. 92) of a group of men, and distinguish different masculinities, and most importantly, the processes that shape hegemonic masculinity in a certain period and place.

One example of this is the expectation of heterosexual masculinity within the family, school or workplace, sometimes even 'enforced' with violence. If this expectation of heterosexuality is noticeable within a larger group, it can be inferred that it is a feature of hegemonic masculinity.

In short, it can be said that we find hegemonic masculinities by analysing life histories that are obtained by interviews. As such, finding a hegemonic masculinity leans heavily on qualitative methods, which explains why others (including myself) have also chosen this approach.

Critical discussion of the theory

Something that Connell fails to address, in my opinion, is answering the question whether women could ever take over hegemonic masculinity. He addresses the fact that hegemonic masculinity is a strategy, and 'an answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy' (p. 77). Somewhat later on the same page he writes, however, 'the dominance of any group of men may be challenged by women'. This is somewhat contradictory. If hegemonic masculinity is basically a strategy for maintaining a patriarchy, could women ever take over if, for example, a strategy fails? Could there be such a thing as hegemonic femininity, as a strategy to form a matriarchy? This is not sufficiently addressed.

Furthermore, it needs to be said that Connell, as the one who developed the term hegemonic masculinity, is very negative about it. This is understandable when one thinks about the way it functions in today's society. The question however remains if there is an alternative to it, or is there a way out? Can there ever be a society where all masculinities are organized equally, together with femininities? And what would that mean for the validity of the theory itself? This again, is not answered sufficiently.

Next, it can be said that the framework of the four groups is too broad and simplified, with two groups being subordinated and marginalized, and the other two sharing in the benefits of hegemonic masculinity. The reality is perhaps not this simple. This leads us to ask two questions: first, who actually produces a hegemonic masculinity, and second, who actually benefits from it? The model as provided by Connell is too simple in this, portraying hegemonic and complicit masculinities as being in a comfortable position, 'sharing in the dividend of patriarchy'. But in a lot of ways these same men are victims of the system as well, rather than the victorious producers of it, for example, because they are forced to adhere to the ideal, rather than making free life choices. Still, they are nevertheless in a more favourable position. This is a complexity that needs to be addressed more in future research.

Concluding remarks about the theory

The theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity is currently one of the most important concepts in masculinity studies, especially since it provides us with a feasible alternative to other approaches that try to define 'the person that is masculine' in a static, transhistorical and transnational way. Moreover, the realization that there is not just one masculinity but multiple masculinit*ies* – that are organized hierarchically – helps us to explain a lot of masculinity-related phenomena such as domestic violence towards women and stress-

related diseases for men. As has been noted above, however, the theory as put forward by Connell has its shortcomings, but this is partly due to the fact that the theory and its empirical application are still in an early stage. The role of this thesis then is to offer a more complex understanding of hegemonic masculinity as a theoretical framework by shedding light on its functioning in Japan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this Literature Review, I look at what the English language literature says about masculinity in Japan, and how this literature has developed from the post-war period to the current period.

Post-war period

The post-war period was an era where Japan experienced very rapid change, not least because of the American occupation that instigated many changes concerning politics, economy and even culture, all under the slogan of 'Democratize and Demilitarize' (Gordon 2009 p. 229). It is fair to say that the Japanese economy boomed after World War II. This booming and changing economy also allowed for the development of a new professional and personal lifestyle, with more and more white-collar jobs becoming available in urban centres such as Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama and Kobe. It was in this period that the modern salaryman developed, first signalled by Ezra Vogel in his 1963 book titled *Japan's new Middle Class: The salaryman and his family in a Tokyo suburb*, where he describes the lifestyle of this 'new' type of man and his family:

> […] the businessman is almost completely removed from home affairs. He often arrives home as late as eleven or twelve at night, and sometimes even spends the night in Tokyo. As a result of this full schedule he sees little of his family although he may be fond and proud of his wife and children, he is likely to know little about their daily lives.
> Vogel 1963, p. 23

Here the man is clearly described as an *absentee father*, a big difference from, for instance, pre-war rural masculinities where the father would be the head of the family working together on the family farm or in the family-owned company.

Interest for Japanese salarymen: 'Learning from Japan'

With the Japanese economy booming, the West (and especially America) was eager to learn its secrets, which resulted in a lot of studies about Japanese business models, management systems and work attitudes. Two examples are William Ouchi's 1981 book *Theory Z: How American business can meet the Japanese Challenge* and Ezra Vogel's 1979 book *Japan as Number One, Lessons*

for America (Dasgupta 2013, p. 11). Japan came to be seen as an example of how things could (or even should) be, up to the point where American businessmen started looking for inspiration in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* by Ruth Benedict (1946) and even translations of Miyamoto Mushashi's '*Book of Five Rings*', which is a strategy book written in the sixteenth century to teach swordsmen how to win battles.

In this type of materials, Japanese men are described as completely selflessly dedicated to the company they are employed at, and the dominant term of this time is *kigyô senshi,* or 'corporate warrior': a term meant to evoke the idea that even though samurai no longer exist, the loyal warrior-attitude still persists in Japanese men working for companies, as though they are samurai in Western suits.

All these sources could be shared under the term 'learning from Japan', and should be seen as an instrumental attempt to learn the secret behind the rapid economic development of Japan. Even though salarymen are featured in these works, and even seen as crucial to explaining Japan's success, they are not studied as the gendered construct that they are, but rather as a representation of the nation as a whole.

This remains more or less the same until the 1990s, when the studies of Japanese (hegemonic) masculinity – seeing men as a gendered construct – really took off.

The beginning of studying Japanese men-as-men

Karel Van Wolferen, the writer of the famous 1989 book *The Enigma of Japanese power: people and politics in a stateless nation* was quoted in a newspaper saying that in the heyday of Japanese post-war development 'both the outside world and the Japanese thought that Japanese economical growth would be endless, because of their work ethics and superior management systems. But at the end of the day the Japanese turned out to be normal people who could appreciate free time just as much as making profit' (De Volkskrant 2012). It is interesting to conclude, then, that the studies of Japanese men-as-men started around the same time when the Japanese bubble-economy burst (the 1990s), when 'The Japanese model' of managing businesses was perhaps no longer a model to study and copy. This points to the suggestion that with the bursting of the bubble economy the urgency (and perhaps even relevance) of studying Japanese businesses lessened (although it did not disappear), giving way to the study of Japanese men-as-men. Or put more simply: If Japanese men were not the 'corporate warriors' everyone

thought them to be, then what were they? A more detailed perspective was needed.

Nonetheless, it is difficult to pinpoint a causal relationship between the bubble-burst and the development of Japanese masculinity studies. It is more likely that Japanese masculinity studies started developing under the influence of *international* masculinity studies, emerging from critical women's studies in the mid 1980s (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, p. 831).

Establishing the salaryman as a hegemonic form of masculinity in Japan

As was written in the theory part above, it is important to use a qualitative approach and collect life histories in order to establish a hegemonic form of masculinity. Ironically, literature started speaking of the salaryman as hegemonic masculinity before such methods were used (for example Dasgupta 2000). Nonetheless, I believe that these statements do not necessarily have to be false or have no empirical grounding. Although not ideal, it should be possible to infer different power structures in gender from research that was conducted for other reasons. This way, it still becomes rather evident that since World War II, the salaryman forms an ideal form of masculinity that holds considerable ideological power over other masculinities and women.

For research that uses the exact methods proposed by Connell, we have to look at Hidaka (2010) and Dasgupta (2013) (both discussed further in detail below), who have conducted interviews on a large scale to investigate how men have positioned themselves in regards to what society expects a man to be and do. This way, it indeed becomes clear their interviewees have seen themselves compelled to aspire to the template that the salaryman in Japan forms. In line with the theory proposed by Connell, this brings along considerable frustrations for those who fail to comply, and 'patriarchal dividend' for those who succeed.

The study of post-bubble and millennial masculinities in Japan: assessing change

As I wrote before, most of the academic literature on Japanese masculinities was written during or after the bursting of the bubble-economy. This means that it was written in a time when the hegemonic form of masculinity – the salaryman – had been in existence (and hegemonic) for at least 40 years, as is argued by all the literature on the topic, further discussed below. Still, salarymen developed and existed by the grace of the economic boom period,

and with the economy making a downturn and the salaryman lifestyle becoming less available to many Japanese men, it is not strange that academic literature starts speaking of changes in or even the disappearance of hegemonic salaryman masculinity. In this section I will review some of the most important works written in English on the topic.

The 2003 book *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan: Dislocating the salaryman doxa,* edited by Roberson & Suzuki, is a work that seeks to shed light on alternative, subordinate masculinities. The chapters in the book largely focus on men on the margins: transgender and gay men, men in Takarazuka theatres and men who take responsibility for the household rather than choosing to work full time.

The book and its authors take a strong position regarding changes in hegemonic masculinity in Japan, arguing that:

> The bursting of Japan's economic bubble in mid 1991 has led into the now decade-long Heisei-recession. Japanese men, including hegemonic and privileged salarymen, have come to experience various gendered and sexual constraints and crises, which may be described in Jardine's terms as 'a loss of legitimation, loss of authority, loss of seduction, loss of genius'.
> Roberson & Suzuki 2003, p. 9

When we assess all the 'losses' mentioned here, it becomes clear that according to Roberson & Suzuki the salaryman can no longer be considered hegemonic (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, p. 831–2). It is also clear that they see the salaryman as the biggest loser of the bubble-burst era. They mention the great success of Carlos Ghosn, the atypical French-Lebanese-Brazilian manager who turned around the (formerly) traditional Japanese business culture at Nissan, and made it a profitable company once again. This shows that along with traditional Japanese management systems, the salaryman is something that belongs to the past.

One particular chapter in the book that is worth highlighting here is the chapter written by Gordon Mathews, titled *Can a real man live for his family?:* Ikigai *and masculinity in today's Japan.* It is interesting in that it uses the concept of *ikigai* in order to assess a value change within Japanese (salary) men. *Ikigai,* according to Mathews, is a word that means something along the lines of 'the meaning of life' or 'something (activity) or someone that gives meaning to life'. Mathews currently perceives three types of *ikigai.*

1. *Ikigai* as work (I live for my job, my job is my life)
2. *Ikigai* as family (I live for my family, my family gives meaning to my life)
3. *Ikigai* as self (I live for my own self-fulfilment).

The interesting thing here is that Mathews argues that there is a trend where '*ikigai* as work' is disappearing, whereas the other two are emerging more and more, and especially the younger generations live for their own self-fulfilment rather than a job or even a family. This is a type of discourse that has become fairly dominant over the past years both in academia and popular media, with people worrying about irresponsible youths (for example Fukusawa 2006, Pesek 2009). However, it needs to be said that from a methodological point of view there are a few limitations to Mathews' work, since he mainly interviews retired salarymen who talk about their working life in retrospective, saying that their *ikigai* was their work. The young people who say that they live for self-fulfilment have most often just started, or not even started working yet.

Another important work related to this is the 2010 book *Salaryman Masculinity: Continuity and Change in Hegemonic Masculinity in Japan,* by Hidaka Tomoko. This book compares the lives of three different 'cohorts' (generations) of hegemonic salarymen, and analyses the differences between them in order to assess changes in hegemonic masculinity. As the title suggests, however, she is slightly more careful in arguing that many things are changing. It is interesting to note that she uses the same framework as Mathews, namely *ikigai,* in order to analyse changes. She comes to a different conclusion, arguing 'Work constituted a de-facto *ikigai* for most of the participants […] many found it impossible to forge a new *ikigai* built around the wife or children, the pursuit of hobbies and community activities…' (Hidaka 2010, p. 160). This is a clear difference from Mathews, who argues that '*ikigai* as work' is something that belongs to the older generations. Hidaka, then, sees continuity in this field, rather than change. Still, she sees some changes in hegemonic masculinity as well, even though she very carefully frames it as '*challenges* to hegemonic masculinity' (p. 178).

> The life histories of the participants over a half a century evince signs of change in the hegemonic masculinity of the salaryman. Indeed, the terms 'corporate warrior' and 'company man' may be replaced by other appellations as time goes by […] possibly in

> positive terms that convey the validation of, for example, the full-time caring father or of men who are openly gay.
> Hidaka 2010, p. 181.

Thus, after having done the research, Hidaka comes to the conclusion that there are signs of change, certain developments and challenges, but that real changes have not happened *yet* (considering the book was published in 2010).

Perhaps the most radical stance towards changing hegemonic masculinity is taken in *Recreating Japanese Men* (2011) by Frühstück & Walthall. They write, 'Although in 1989 most of us would have pointed to the salaryman as Japan's masculine hegemon of this time, in 2011 this is no longer the case […] In a way, the "techno-geeks" or "database animals" have won' (p. 11–12). Besides the fact that this is phrased in a somewhat unfortunate way, it causes more questions than that it answers. What does it say about Japan as a country if *otaku* really have become the new hegemonic, most ideal form of masculinity? Unfortunately, Frühstück & Walthall do not drive this point further in the book, in particular because they focus on 'masculinities at the margins' such as working-class men, homeless men, hermaphrodites and *otaku.* (Frühstück & Walthall 2011, p. 2).

The most recent book on hegemonic masculinity in Japan that is worth highlighting here is *Re-reading the salaryman in Japan: Crafting Masculinities* (2013) by Romit Dasgupta. This book is especially interesting because it takes such a strong position *against* changes in hegemonic masculinity, and repeatedly explicitly argues against the positions of Roberson & Suzuki (2003) and Frühstück & Walthall (2011). The book argues that '[…] we need to be careful about reading too much into practices/styles of subcultural masculinities like the *otaku* or *soshoku-kei danshi,* whose socio-cultural impact gets often disproportionally magnified as a result of media commodification' (p. 159). Furthermore, Dasgupta takes the stance that even though the 'real' salaryman lifestyle may become scarcer due to economic developments, the salaryman as discourse and ideology is still hegemonic, *especially* because the rarer it becomes, the more desirable – which he established through doing a longitudinal study of students and office workers (p. 160). This intuitively makes sense, and it is in line with Connell's theory on hegemonic masculinity in that the *hegemonic* form does by no means have to be the most common form of masculinity.

Herbivore men and *otaku* as emerging masculinities

As can be read above, the literature on the topic of hegemonic masculinity in Japan is concerned with herbivore men and *otaku* as masculinities of the future, whereas the salaryman is often seen as something that belongs to the past. From this point of view, herbivore men and *otaku* could be viewed as emerging masculinities. As mentioned briefly before, in the terms of Frühstück & Walthall the 'techno geeks' (meaning *otaku*) have even already 'won' at the cost of the salaryman.

This thesis takes a very critical stance towards this argument, and in fact I even argue, based on the findings of my research, that herbivore men and *otaku* as words do not mean (at least to the participants in my research) what many academics take them to mean, and as will be explained later on, should not be seen as potentially hegemonic.

The purpose of this part then is not to give a full account of what has been written on *otaku* or herbivore men because that is outside the scope of this thesis. Rather, it is intended to highlight some works that deal with them as potentially hegemonic masculinities. Moreover, I will present a workable definition of both for the sake of readability.

Otaku

In the most common definition generally used by academics, the *otaku* is a person 'with a geeky obsession, such as cult anime, manga, computer games and military trivia' (Condry 2011, p. 263–64).

It is, in this sense, not surprising to see that many scholars predict the *otaku* will replace salaryman masculinity as the hegemonic form of masculinity, since technological skills are becoming more and more important in the twenty-first century. Furthermore, culturally speaking, anime and manga culture and art have gained some serious recognition in the form of various important cultural prices, and of course the famous *Cool Japan* campaign instigated by the Japanese government (Frühstück & Walthall 2011, p. 12).

Interestingly, however, if one considers awards and sales figures in the cultural sphere to be an indicator of the social relevance of a style or group, the argument could also be reversed if one singles out the spectacular sales of comics such as *Sarariiman Kintaro,* and the fact that business-novel writer Ikeido Jun won the famous Naoki prize in 2011 (Dasgupta 2013, p. 159). This perhaps teaches us then that whatever one wants the trend to be there are arguments to support it. One difference between Dasgupta and Condry is, however, that Dasgupta uses this argument to support the outcomes of his

interview-based methodology, whereas in Condry's case it is the whole methodology itself.

Condry argues that the

> *Otaku* as a geeky, obsessive, socially inept, technologically fluent nerd represents the polar opposite of the image of the gregarious, socializing breadwinner, the salaryman. If the salaryman is measured by his productivity, then the loner otaku […] can be viewed as a puzzle of rampant asocial consumerism.
> Condry 2011, p. 263

This dichotomy between productivity and consumerism is important to highlight here, for later on Condry speaks of 'a contemporary shift in viewing masculinity and value in terms of consumption rather than production' (ibid. p. 273).

Susan Napier (2011) instead comes up with a dichotomy that, although it does not exclude the productivity-consumerism dichotomy, focuses on being defined through either a relationship with a company (salaryman) or 'expertise with all facets of computer-era technology' (*otaku*) (Napier 2011, p. 158–9). In the chapter titled *Where have all the salarymen gone?* Napier analyses the series *Densha Otoko* (Train Man), which is set in a salarymen-less technologized future.

Although both Condry and Napier are not as explicit as Frühstück & Walthall, they seem to expect a future where the *otaku* plays a big role as a (hegemonic) form of masculinity, defined by his consumerism and technology-savvy, as opposed to the old-fashioned salaryman who was defined by his productivity and his relationship with a company.

Herbivore men

The herbivore man or *soshoku-kei danshi* (草食系男子, literally *grass-eating-type men*) in Japanese, is a term coined originally by Fukusawa Maki in 2006 (Fukusawa 2006). She argues that a sexual relationship can be described as 'a relationship in flesh', and that men nowadays who are not interested in such a relationship are thus herbivores.

It took several years for English-language academia to pick up on the term, and I would say that currently there is no balance between popular media, where the term knows wide currency, and academia, where it is a very unexplored object with so far only a handful of sources dedicated to it, the first one being from 2012 (Chen, 2012).

Chen very broadly defines herbivore men as 'Japanese men who lack ambition, engage in feminine consumption practices, and shirk relationships with the opposite sex' (Chen 2012, p. 285). Charlebois (2013) sees herbivore masculinity as 'an oppositional masculinity', as they form an exact opposite of hegemonic salaryman masculinity, as follows:

Salarymen	**Herbivore Men**
Very ambitious	Lack of ambition
Masculine, production	Feminine, consumption
Sexually aggressive to the other sex	Not interested in the other sex, only for friendships

Both Chen and Charlebois see herbivore masculinity as a direct post-bubble era rejection of traditional hegemonic salaryman masculinity. Chen, for example, sees herbivore men (and *otaku* for that matter) as 'funky youth cultures' that emerged while 'the salaryman's mode of life was questioned' (Chen 2012, p. 295). Charlebois also goes in-depth regarding the causes for the development of herbivore masculinity. He argues that

> [...] permanent employment is not always a contextually available masculine resource. From this perspective, more leisure-oriented herbivore masculinity does not represent authentic transgression per se, but simply follows broader sociocultural patterns. As a result, herbivore masculinity is constructed from alternative gender practices such as narcissistic body- management, a primacy of consumption, and the formation of intimate opposite-sex friendships.
> Charlebois 2013, p. 96

Chen even goes so far as to say that herbivore men are less dedicated to the bigger ideal and more selfish because they come from a growing generation of children from one-child marriages (Chen 2012, p. 295). Both Chen and Charlebois present the herbivore man as an emerging form of 'new man', as opposed to the out-dated salaryman.

One other very important part of herbivore masculinity as argued by Chen and Charlebois, is a high focus on aesthetics, and sporting effeminate looks,

even using makeup. According to Chen, they 'develop a feminized body that is distinguished from the salaryman. By adopting male beauty practices and gender-ambiguous fashion, they […] transgress oppressive gender norms' (Chen 2012, p. 303).

Interestingly, there is a larger body of research dedicated to beautification processes in Japanese society, before the term herbivore men existed; for example Iida 2005 and Miller 2003, suggesting that this is a real trend in current Japan.

However, Chen contradicts himself when he first states that being a herbivore man means not being interested in pursuing a sexual relationship with women, and after that states that (the effeminate look of) herbivore masculinity is created after the tastes of women, with looking like a suitable husband as the ultimate goal. To me, these two factors (herbivore masculinity and looking feminine) mutually exclude each other and as I will argue later on, looking effeminate in order to attract women is by no means considered to be *herbivore* by the participants in my research.

Neither Chen nor Charlebois has done any ethnographic research and they only use secondary materials such as academic articles and media reports. Chen even acknowledges that his work 'lacks an emic perspective' and that 'opportunities for further research abound' (p. 307). It is this gap in primary data that I hope to fill in this thesis. As I will argue later on, based on my own research, the identity of herbivore man is not constructed in the same way that Chen and Charlebois think it is.

Conclusion to the literature review

In conclusion, it could be said that the field of Japanese masculinity studies is relatively young and underdeveloped, and that much more research is needed in order to understand the full picture. This brings along the consequence that existing literature is rather limited, as well as reasonably coherent. Too many sources build their opinions on books such as Roberson & Suzuki and Frühstück & Walthall, which, as I have argued, has resulted in the fact that almost every single source ends up repeating that times are changing, with the salaryman now a thing of the past as the hegemonic form of masculinity. Nevertheless, none of the mentioned authors here drives the point further, and investigates or even speculates about a society where *otaku* or herbivore men are hegemonic forms of masculinity, and where the classical salaryman plays no role anymore. This is perhaps too unimaginable. From this

perspective, almost the entire literature discusses *signs* of change, but does not sufficiently discuss the actual change or its aftereffects.

The only real exception to this is Dasgupta (2013), who instead argues that the salaryman is 'remarkably tenacious' and that *otaku* and herbivore men don't play as big a role as many make it seem. Based on the conducted research, this thesis assumes the same position as Dasgupta, along with the argument that *otaku* and herbivore men as terms do perhaps not mean what many academics and commentators think they do.

EMPIRICAL DATA DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this Empirical Data Discussion, the empirical data obtained through interviews will be discussed. The chapter is divided into three parts. Firstly, I will introduce the interviewees themselves, in order to know what kind of sample is dealt with here. Secondly, I will discuss the meaning of the three masculinities known as salaryman, *otaku* and herbivore masculinity, based on the interviewees' perspectives. Thirdly, on this basis, I will then argue that the components of salaryman masculinity as discussed below still serve as an important ideal, both for men and women. In order to do so I will use direct quotations from the interviews. All the opinions expressed in the quotes are a representation of the opinion of the group as a whole, unless otherwise specified.

The interviewees

As was mentioned before in the introduction, the interviews were conducted under strict anonymity, which included the use of pseudonyms for names. I will only use given names. The random names chosen are taken from Japanorama's *100 most common Japanese given names* (Japanorama, 2002). Considering the size of the sample, I have chosen to provide a list of all 16 interviewees in the appendix of this thesis, rather than introducing them here individually.

Nonetheless, it makes sense to say some general words about the interviewees here. First of all, most of the interviewees are aged 19 or 20, and were in their first or second year of studies at the time of the interview. Many of the students interviewed were enrolled in SILS (School of International Liberal Studies) at Waseda University, a programme that is taught completely in English. In the second year of this programme students spend one year abroad, and the programme seeks to groom students for an international career in 'international organizations and businesses' (taken from SILS homepage).

A few of the students interviewed had already spent their year abroad, but most were simply looking forward to it. All in all, this international character suggests that these students have perhaps a more international outlook than, for example, the average student at a Japanese junior college. In practical terms this could mean that their opinions are influenced by foreign

experiences, and that the sample cannot be seen as a representation for the whole of Japanese society (even though it does not attempt to be so).

Having that said, most of the students still had limited experience abroad (mostly short holidays, some of which were a long time ago). On top of that, it is almost impossible nowadays (and it is a naïve endeavour to try) to find young Japanese people that have not been abroad at some point in their lives, especially since a three-week trip to Australia seems to be quite normal in Japanese high schools, as was the case for Hiroshi, Masao, Hiroko and Tadashi.

Meaning of salaryman, *otaku* and herbivore men

In the literature review of this thesis, I have shown how the literature on (hegemonic) masculinity in Japan often argues that in the post-bubble era the salaryman as hegemonic is disappearing, and instead is replaced by other masculinities such as herbivore men and *otaku*. Based on the results of the interviews conducted, this thesis takes a position against this argument, and in fact I argue that too much importance is attributed to these two supposedly emerging masculinities.

Salaryman

For this thesis, finding out what the salaryman really is is less important than finding out how the word is used by social actors. Therefore, in this section I deal with how the word salaryman is used and thought of by the participants in my research.

Yoko, for example, told me the following about what the salaryman meant to her:

> He is shy, lives in the city and works for a big company. He is married and has two kids, not more.

It is interesting that she mentioned shyness as a character trait. It differs from the typical view of the 'charismatic salaryman', which is often opposed to the shy *otaku* or herbivore man in the literature on the topic (for example in Condry 2011 and Chen 2012).

Yoko was not the only one who mentioned shyness. Hiroshi also referred to it, along with pride:

> The salaryman is a businessman. He is proud, and shy. They want to be stronger than women, they are very proud. They live in a

> detached house, in Saitama, because that is cheaper and safer. They usually went to university, if you want to be a businessman you have to go to university. In their spare time they bet on horse racing or they drink after work. Usually they are married and have two or three kids.

This pride and desire to 'be stronger than women' points in the direction of hegemonic masculinity, in the sense that society has a certain expectation of men (the need to be *strong*), which they have to live up to.

Furthermore, there is the housing situation, with a detached house being an ideal, something that many men aspire to and work hard for. Saitama is a city located about an hour outside of central Tokyo, which makes it both affordable and commutable by Japanese standards. Hiroshi also confirmed the link between university education and white-collar employment. One thing that he also mentioned is what Dasgupta calls 'homosociality' (Dasgupta 2013, p. 133): the need to socialize (after work) with people of the same sex. Keiko, who lives in Roppongi, the high-end bar and club area of Tokyo, gave a more detailed account of this when I asked her about salarymen:

> Well, when I get home from university, I see a lot of men who go out drinking with their friends. On Monday and Tuesday not so much, but from Wednesday on it gets busier, and I think the peak is on Fridays.

When combining the commuting and the (often obligatory) after-hours, it is not strange to think that the salaryman does not see much of his family. Akira has the same opinion about this:

> Generally, a Japanese man in his mid-life time works for a company. They are working very hard but due to the hard work they cannot see their family so often, just sleeping on Saturdays and Sundays. When they are at home, they just sleep.

This differs very little from the salaryman described by Ezra Vogel in his 1963 book, quoted before in the Literature Review. Kazuo, however, thinks this will change:

> The husband has a high position, and has a wife. He doesn't do housework at all, and they don't care about their children. I think this is typical. I think this is changing in Japan. Because some husbands are housewife, and the women work as a husband. These men want to take care of their children.

Because of Kazuo's high proficiency, the interview with him was conducted in English. It is interesting then to see that even though he foresees a change in traditional gender roles, he still uses the gender-specific words 'housewife' for the person who works at home, and 'husband' for the person who has a job, which perhaps indicates that such a change is hard to imagine.

When combining the accounts of the participants in the interviews, we arrive at a salaryman who works in a white-collar job at a company, enjoyed university education, is generally married and has about two children, lives outside Tokyo but commutes to the city centre, goes out drinking with colleagues after work, and is not very involved with what happens at home (with the side-note that this may change).

Otaku

During my interviews I asked the participants whether they were familiar with the term *otaku,* and what it meant to them. A clear pattern is visible in the answers that I got, to the extent that at some point the answers almost became predictable.

When I asked her what *otaku* meant to her, Yoko gave an answer that virtually all of the other participants gave as well:

> It is some person who is obsessed with one thing. Like manga and anime or trains, or airplanes. I have many *otaku* friends.

This definition, 'someone who is obsessed with one thing' is very important, because after conducting all the interviews, it is the only common denominator that remained.

While early studies of *otaku* see them very specifically as a clearly demarcated group of male fans of anime or manga, most of the interviewees would call anyone with a mild obsession or even a hobby an *otaku.* As such, it is no longer gender-specific.

During the interviews, I came across many different types of otaku obsessions: train (*densha*) *otaku,* history (*rekishi*) *otaku* (especially interesting:

the *chûgoku rekishi otaku,* Chinese history geek), the football *otaku,* baseball *otaku,* and so on. In my opinion, this wild variety of *otaku* obsessions makes the word almost meaningless, and it is almost impossible to see the *otaku* as an emerging masculinity. The final nail in the coffin was perhaps the story that Kaoru told me about her mother:

> I am not an otaku, but my mother is a *kenkô otaku* (健康, health). Yeah… because my father was fat, she started to care about their food, and nutrients and vegetables. Sometimes buying massage goods or body cream, but my mother cares about what we eat, balancing the nutrients. More than other people. That can be called *otaku*. So it is not just men who are *otaku.*

When we start using the term *otaku* for people that have a slightly elevated interest for something, it could perhaps be said that this makes everyone an *otaku,* which ironically means that nobody is an *otaku*, because the word itself has practically no meaning anymore.

Apart from that, I also argue that, as a man, being an *otaku* and being a salaryman are not necessarily two different categories that mutually exclude each other. In my sample I had various men that saw themselves as *otaku* in some way, but they still saw themselves finding a corporate job, getting married and having children. That these two theoretically separate masculinities can in fact unite very well was perhaps best explained by Hiroshi:

> Salaryman can be *otaku* as well, for example Idol *otaku*. At my job, my boss is a Gundam *otaku*[1]. They earn money and spend it on DVD's or concerts. Salarymen are more likely to be *otaku*, because they have money, and they need some relaxing thing.

Here it is really clear how salaryman and *otaku* are not necessarily two different categories, and in fact there seems to be an exchange at play: one needs a proper job to have money for one's hobby, and one has to have a hobby in order to relax from the job. This hobby, then, can be anything, from sports to history to anime. This is confirmed by the story of Shigeru, who told

[1] Hiroshi told me he works at UNIQLO, Japan's largest clothing store chain. Gundam is an anime series about space robots, and collecting figurines from the series is very popular.

me his father is a salaryman currently away on a job transfer. During his childhood, he said his father did not really play with him that much, but nonetheless his father had a hobby – he had train models (*tetsudo moderu*) in the house. Shigeru told me that he was influenced by that and became a *tetsudo otaku* (railway otaku) for a certain period of his life.

This example clearly shows that being an *otaku* is not limited to the current generation of young people, and it does not say anything about a relationship to work. Again, it is very difficult to actually see the *otaku* as a separate masculinity at all.

That previous research has reached different conclusions is perhaps due to a different methodology; most of the literature previously discussed has no ethnological grounding, but is predominantly based on media reports and pop culture. This way, it has arrived at very narrow and specific definitions of *otaku* that are not in line with what the word *otaku* means to the participants in my research.

Herbivore men

If, based on the interviews, the definition of *otaku* was 'somebody who is obsessed with one thing' then the average definition of herbivore men would be 'a guy who does not talk to girls'. As I described in the part about *otaku,* during the latter half of the interviews certain answers almost became expected, as patterns clearly became noticeable. The following quotes can again be seen as a representation of the whole, unless otherwise indicated.

After I asked Kiyoshi about what *otaku* meant for him, I also asked him about herbivore men, to which he responded:

> Boys who can't communicate with girls well. No wait. It is about relation to girls. I think there is a better explanation: boys who are not aggressive to girls. Not inviting girls to dinner or something like that. I think they want to, but it is very *mendokusai* (面倒くさい, troublesome, bothersome). They don't want a girlfriend because it is *mendokusai*. Or they have no confidence to go out with girls, or to date with girls.

In the context of Kiyoshi's – and the other respondents'– answers, the word 'aggressive' is used for actively pursuing women. Kiyoshi himself told me that he saw himself as a herbivore man, and he did not have a girlfriend for the two reasons he gave before: He was both too shy to talk to them, but also thought that at this point in his life it was too bothersome. This is where the

literature (both academic and popular) on herbivore men most often stops, and makes predictions about a future Japan in which men are no longer interested in women and careers. However, for Kiyoshi and the other respondents of my interviews, this is simply not true. Kiyoshi saw his current shyness as something to overcome, and even though at this point in his life he saw a girlfriend as too bothersome, he also accepted it as something natural and as a logical next step. So even though he said he currently was a herbivore man, he also explicitly expressed his desire to become a political journalist, get married, have two children, and even added that he would feel 'a bit sad' if his wife earned more money than him, because it was an issue of pride for him.

This suggests that being an herbivore man is a period in one's life rather than a solid identity, while the salaryman lifestyle remains a very powerful ideal.

Among the participants in my research, most of the men talked about herbivore men as 'they', not associating themselves with this group. Still, besides Kiyoshi and Shigeru, also Akira considered himself to be a herbivore man, even though he disapproved of the term:

> We are not so interested in love. So we don't try … we are not eager to find girlfriends. I don't think herbivore is a good term. Because the word, I think there is an idea that men should find a girlfriend and are eager to love. I don't think it makes sense; it depends on the individual. I don't like such kind of word.

Here we can clearly see that Akira is annoyed with the *normative heterosexuality* in society. But in his case again, he sees a future for himself in which he joins the ranks of a company, gets married and has children, if 'luck is on his side' he adds.

One important factor that is important to further mention here is 'looking feminine'. According to the literature mentioned (Chen 2012, Charlebois 2013), herbivore men look very feminine, because they use a lot of products for their hair and skin, and even apply makeup. However, none of the respondents in the interviews saw a connection between being herbivore and this rigorous grooming (nor did most of them know any men that did). Keiko explained for example, that sporting a feminine look (using makeup) is after all meant to attract the female sex, something that requires considerable confidence:

> I don't see many guys who use makeup, but it's always funny when I hear about men using face wash. Just leave it! Comb your hair, brush your teeth, but otherwise no one cares. I do not think herbivore and using makeup can be united. After all you use makeup to impress people. It is like going to the gym, to be confident. I have to say that men using makeup are actually carnivore!

This is important because Keiko does not know many men who use makeup, even though she told me most of her male friends were actually herbivore men, which supports my argument that looking feminine is not a part of herbivore masculinity. Another interesting part of her answer is where she mentions carnivore men (Japanese: *nikushoku-danshi*). This leads us to discuss the variety of (often hilarious) buzzwords that exist in this field.

Originally, Maki Fukusawa, the inventor of the term *herbivore men*, argued that having a sexual relationship is having a relationship in flesh, and thus men who are reluctant to have such a relationship are *herbivore men,* as opposed to meat-eating *carnivore men.*

Carnivore men are the kind of guys who flirt, approach girls, take them out to dinner, discuss cute girls with friends, and so on, whereas herbivore men are not interested in doing so.

More recently, there seems to be a trend whereby people have realized that these two terms are not enough to fully cover the spectrum of men, and this meant a compromise was needed: the *roll-cabbage-man* (ロールキャベツ、*rôru kyabetsu*), is named after a meat-filled cabbage leaf, thus denoting a man who appears to be a herbivore man, but still actively pursues women.

The opposite of this, is the *niku-maki asuparagasu-danshi*, the asparagus-wrapped-in-bacon-man, denoting a man who appears to be a carnivore man on the outside, but is secretly very shy, and reluctant to approach girls.

This need to compromise does nothing but show that dichotomizing men into herbivores and carnivores is too limited, and indicates that the landscape instead is rather complex.

Nonetheless, finding words and categories to describe and divide people is a popular pastime in Japan (though not exclusively there), where finding one's identity by belonging to a certain group seems to be extremely important. There are numerous examples of ways people are divided, for example by

blood type, Jomon vs. Yayoi[2], Heisei vs. Showa[3], the way one's eyelids fold, and so on. All of these categories are believed to say something about one's identity, and as such herbivore vs. carnivore is nothing new.

All in all, the results of the interviews suggest that herbivore men are nothing but young men that are temporarily not interested in pursuing women, either because they are too shy or just don't think it is the right time in their lives to devote a lot of energy to it. Having that said, it does not seem to be a big influence on their future lives as employees, husbands and fathers.

The salaryman lifestyle as ideal

In this part of the empirical data discussion, I look at how the different components of salaryman masculinity, as described above, play a big role in the lives of the students I interviewed.

The importance of university education

A normal career as a white-collar worker would typically start with so-called *shûshoku katsudô,* the Japanese equivalent of the English term 'job hunting'. This usually starts before graduation. While I was at Waseda University I saw various senior students in suits studying in the library before going to a training session or interview at a company. Hidaka writes that '*shûshoku katsudô* before the completion of one's education is a necessary and almost universally shared ritual. It is of course advantageous for job-seekers to have a university degree in order to obtain a position in a large company' (Hidaka 2010, p. 104). This is especially true since many companies directly recruit from the ranks of university graduates. That one's chance to be recruited by a good company heavily depends on the reputation of one's university, was explained to me by Toshio, when we talked about the education of his father:

> T: My father went to Gakushuin University, it is known as the emperor-university, because the descendants of the emperor go there. To be honest, the level of this university is not that high compared to Waseda, but I think it still has the old style, like…the dignity. It is still nice to go to this university.

[2] Jomon and Yayoi were two subsequent periods in pre-historical Japan that correspond to two different ethnic groups, and modern-day Japan is believed to be a blend between these two. Still, even today, some people wonder about which of these two groups they belong to.

[3] Showa vs. Heisei denotes the distinction of people born before or after 1989, named after the Showa Period (1926–1989) and Heisei Period (1989–). Again, many people think there are clear distinctions between the two groups.

JS: Also job-wise?
T: Yes, I think so. In Japan, Tokyo University is the top, and then next is Waseda, then Keio, and then Sophia, and then after that it is G-MACH. G is Gakushuin, M is for Meiji, A is Aogaku, and then Chuo and Hosei University. Only in Tokyo. And then I think companies recruit from the top down. The biggest chance to get into a good company is when you are from Todai (Tokyo University), but it's harder when you are from G-MACH.

I asked all of the students that I interviewed why exactly they had chosen to study at Waseda specifically. Many students had to take difficult entrance exams in order to get accepted at Waseda. Akira, for example, explained to me that it was hard work, when I asked him why he chose Waseda specifically.

A: In general, most Japanese try to enter prestigious universities. So somehow I am influenced by that atmosphere. My parents were not so influential in that, they just wanted me to go to Tokyo.

JS: Did you have to work hard to do it?

A: I had to do the entrance exam, it was so hard. I had to study hard to get into it. It was one of the hardest times of my life. Each university wants to get the best quality students. But what each university craves is different. The characteristic of each university's entrance exam is very different.

One interesting thing that Akira said is 'somehow I am influenced by that atmosphere', meaning that there is a certain expectation or ideal in society, and he feels compelled to play along with the game. In particular the word 'somehow' shows that he feels no direct, but rather indirect pressure to get into a good university (enough to make him go through 'the hardest time of his life').

Most of the other students have similar stories and took entrance exams as well. This proves the drive that students must have to get into Waseda – or universities in general. The story of Toshio shows that people get into (certain) universities in order to increase the chance of getting cherry-picked by a good company during their *shûkatsu* period.

Male employment

This leads us then to the next component that salaryman masculinity leans heavily on, which is white-collar employment. Most of the male interviewees (including *otaku* and herbivore men) show no signs of the suggested reluctance to work that some of the academic literature on masculinity talks about. Some of them are unequivocally ambitious, and others simply accept working life as the next step that they will have to take in their life. What they all share is a great sense of responsibility that stems from the logic 'If I want to have a wife and family, I need to have a job'. Furthermore, it has been noted that being employed is an important factor in male identity building in general (Dasgupta 2013, p. 81).

I asked all the interviewees how they see themselves in ten to 15 years from now. All the men, without a single exception, expressed their desire to work, and have a wife and (most often two) kids. Hideo for example says:

> After graduating university, I will get a job, a work. And now I am thinking to go into publishing, advertising, I want to work in Tokyo. I like fashion, like luxury fashion, the public advertisements, they really interest me. I want to work for a big company. LVMH (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy). […] I want to get married between 28 and 33 or so. I will get my stability in the work and mentally grow up, and if my partner wants to, I will discuss that, and finally I want to have one or two children. I have one older brother myself.

The idea that it is important to have a (stable) job in order to have a wife and family does not come out of thin air. I asked the women what kind of characteristics they found important in a man, and many of them listed employment, along with sensitivity and kindness. Hiroko said:

> He has to be smart, been to university. He has to have some special knowledge. I want him to work as well. He has to be kind; if he finds a person in need, he needs to help.

Another example is Kazuko, who said the following:

> He needs to be older than me. He should be kind, not get angry. He should have *hôyôryoku* (包容力), the ability to embrace other

> views. And, he should have a job. It doesn't matter what kind of job, as long as it is stable.

In conclusion to this section, it can be said that, even though academia and media sometimes suggest otherwise, the results of my research imply that finding stable employment and a 'good job' is still very important in the lives of young Japanese men (who go to Waseda), both because they see the need for it and because it is expected of them by the other sex.

Marriage and children

As was said before, many of the interviewees, both male and female expressed their desire to get married and have (two) children, most often by their late twenties until their mid-thirties. This is especially interesting since it concerns a sample from Waseda University, and both men and women indicated that women at Waseda are far more ambitious than women studying a two-year college course[4]. This is important since, traditionally, having children does not have serious consequences for a man's career, whereas a woman is usually expected to give up her career and stay at home with the children (Ogasawara, 1998).

As far as the men are concerned, it is interesting to see that even in these times, the nuclear family is still a powerful ideal. That the roles within and the organization of this family might change is something that I will discuss later.

When I asked Shigeru how he sees his future, he told me that he is interested in having an international career. Since he is studying Chinese, he would like to get a job where Chinese is spoken, and where not too many Japanese people work. When I asked him about building a family, he said:

> Yes, I want to get married with someone from another country. I want to have two kids. I have one older sister, so our family now is four people. Four is a good number.

Many of the other respondents gave similar reactions, and it seems that most of them want to have the kind of family that they themselves grew up in, since most of them motivate their answer by describing what their current family looks like. Another example of this is Kazuo:

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[4] In fact, I was introduced to the term *Wasejo,* an abbreviation of *Waseda Josei* (早稲田女性) which literally means Waseda Women, but is used to denote a type of ambitious strong woman, typical for the women at Waseda University.

> I hope to work outside Japan. Belong to a Japanese company, but go abroad and train. I haven't decided which country; I don't care. In that time maybe I am married. I want to have three kids in total. I think three is a lot, for Japanese standards. I have one brother and one sister.

As written before, most of the women also saw themselves having children later in their life. I talked about this with Kaoru, who wants to work in other countries, spreading Japanese culture and helping poor people. About marriage and child-rearing she had the following to say:

> Yes, I want to marry. I want to give birth to two children. And I want to go picnicking with the other family members. At the riverside. In the past I wanted to marry at 25, but I think around 30 is better, because then I am more mature. I have a friend who is married and has a child, but I think it is really hard for her, to bring up the child. It is difficult for money, she did not have any diploma or opportunity, so she has financial problems, and there are less people who have a child at the same age. You need *mamatomo* (ママ友, literally mama-friends). It is better to wait for stability.

This is interesting because it shows the degree to which Kaoru (and the other interviewees for that matter) have given their future some serious thought, which in this case has perhaps been triggered by seeing a friend struggle with motherhood.

Though not exclusively related to salaryman identity, these accounts show that future family planning is considered, which goes against the suggestion that many youths are ambiguous about starting a family. This implies that the nuclear family, an important component of salaryman identity, is still a powerful ideal.

Daikokubashira

As said before, traditionally in Japan the man works while the woman stays at home and handles the household, including its finances (Vogel, 1963). This traditional gender division is not necessarily something that most interviewees see for themselves and their partner in the future, and most of them displayed

considerable gender sensitivity, while most women were very ambitious and by no means willing to accept the traditional division of gender roles.

I asked all the participants about their notion of the concept *daikokubashira,* which is a cultural word that traditionally denotes the big black wooden pillar that supported the whole construction of a house, but is used here to symbolize the 'main breadwinner' or 'head of the family'. This was usually the man in the family, and being the *daikokubashira* implies being the person with the most money in the marriage. Toshio explains how he feels about this tradition of the man as main breadwinner:

> I think it is more a competitive thought. If I am married and the wife has a job too, I think that it is more natural to want to earn more than what she does. I don't know. I think there is some part of this that I have to earn more because I am a man. I don't know why I think in this way, but as a guy it is kind of embarrassing to have the wife, or the lady to have more money. It feels like you have been taken care of.

However, this is an opinion that is not shared by many and, for example, Masao does not think that the *daikokubashira* has to be so gender specific:

> M: Maybe most of today's students think it is old fashioned – and I think so too – but it is not a *negative* old-fashioned system. It is important because I think it means supporting the family should be respected. Without *daikokubashira* the family collapses. I want to become *daikokubashira*.
>
> JS: Do you think the man or woman should be the *daikokubashira*?
>
> M: Both can be this. Formally it is the man, but *daikokubashira*…I mean, they are the leader of the family, but the idea that the man should be *daikokubashira* doesn't make sense.

This is interesting because even though Masao thinks that both men and women can become the mainstay of the family, he still sees it as his personal goal to become one. Many others also replied that they didn't really care about who earns the most money, because they said they did not care about

money at all, or because having a working wife meant having more money to spend together.

One opinion on the *daikokubashira* that is interesting to highlight here is Shigeru's. He told me he thinks that just providing money does not make one a *daikokubashira,* which he relates to his own hardworking absentee father. Rather, he says, a *daikokubashira* is a father who is there for his family to give emotional support.

> It is like the father, but recently the *daikokubashira*, it is too strict, it is out of date. So it is not the perfect father. I think the father who plays with his children is perfect. My own father did not play with me in my childhood. So that is my dream. *Daikokubashira* means to support the family. In Japan the houses used to be made of wood, and the *daikokubashira* supports the house. *Daikokubashira* is made of wood, so it can be fragile, it can burn.

This is very important, because it shows how cultural words, such as *daikokubashira* but certainly also salaryman or *otaku* can change meaning and be adapted to their time, without disappearing. In this case we could perhaps speak of a *daikokubashira* 2.0, a man who does not support his family (only) financially, but mostly in spirit, by being there in person. Masao, whom I mentioned before, also told me that his father is usually very silent in the house, and his mother is stronger, but nonetheless he is the *daikokubashira* of the family; especially when he helped his wife (Masao's mother) through her grieving process after her father died, and when he managed to prevent Masao's little sister from dropping out of school.

Most participants thought the traditional concept of *daikokubashira* as the main breadwinner was out-dated, and in fact the majority did not care about who earns the most money. Still, most thought that there was some value to *daikokubashira,* as a person who provides stability and guidance within the household. As such, the emphasis seems to have shifted from money to attention.

CONCLUSION

It has been the aim of this thesis to find out whether salaryman masculinity has lost it hegemonic status to *otaku* masculinity or herbivore masculinity.

It has been noted that a great deal of the literature on the topic takes a strong position arguing that traditional salaryman masculinity – graduating from university, finding a white-collar job at a company, getting married to a woman, having children – is disappearing as an ideal, and instead is making place for more 'egocentric' masculinities that consume and pursue hobbies rather than being productive, sport looks that are traditionally considered feminine, and get married to videogame characters rather than real women.

Even though these things occur, I argue that they are not mainstream. Studying hegemonic masculinity is studying the mainstream, the obvious, and that is exactly why it needs to be done. As I argued in the Literature Review of this thesis, the topic of hegemonic masculinity in Japan is largely understudied, and as such we have had to derive our understanding of Japanese salaryman masculinity from information about what it was not, like studying a footprint in the sand rather than the foot itself.

This thesis takes a strong position arguing that salaryman masculinity in itself is not disappearing as a hegemonic ideal, and especially that it is not being 'challenged' by *otaku* masculinity or herbivore men specifically.

In this thesis, I have sought to first find out what the salaryman, *otaku* and herbivore man mean to the participants in my research, after which I have tried to discover which one is considered most ideal.

To start with, the salaryman is seen as a man who went to university, and then went on to join a company, working a white-collar job. He is married to a woman, has two kids, lives in a Tokyo suburb in a detached house, commutes to his job, goes out drinking after work with his colleagues and thus does not spend time with his children or do household chores. The way the salaryman is seen is largely the same as the way he is discussed in the literature on the topic, and if we use the definition as described above, there are hardly any differences with the salaryman as described by Ezra Vogel in 1963.

This similarity in meaning between academic literature and the lived experience of the interviewees does not occur when it comes to the *otaku* or the herbivore man.

Based on the outcomes of my interviews it is impossible to see the Japanese *otaku* in the same way Ian Condry does when he writes about the 'techno geeks and database animals' that 'have won' at the cost of the salaryman (Condry 2011, p. 11–12). Even though *otaku* may have started out as a very

distinct subculture with specific characteristics, it is almost impossible nowadays to see them in the same way. This particularly concerns the fact that being an *otaku* does not exclude one from the stereotypical salaryman lifestyle. Furthermore, I argue that the term *otaku* in itself is diluted, and as a term it has come to be used so widely that almost anyone would qualify as one. If even a mother caring about her family's nutrition is an *otaku*, then it is certainly not a type of masculinity capable of replacing the salaryman as a hegemonic form of masculinity.

Secondly, herbivore men do not seem to be a type of masculinity that is capable of replacing salarymen masculinity either. Even though there may be an anti-culture in Japan of young men who refuse to live the typical salaryman lifestyle of pursuing a university degree before starting to work, getting married and having children, 'herbivore men' are not exactly that. According to the participants in my research, the term denotes a young adolescent who is temporarily reluctant to invest time and energy in pursuing a relationship. Still, many academics and writers alike use it as a term to pin down everything that they see to be wrong with Japanese men, for example, the use of makeup, even though this (at least according to my interviewees) has nothing to do with the term at all. I argue that this is mostly due to a lack of ethnological perspectives. Instead, the scarce literature on the topic can often be traced back to the person that coined the term: Fukusawa Maki, who might have misunderstood trends in Japanese society altogether.

What remains of the herbivore man, then, is perhaps that the state of being an awkward teenager who is sexually insecure continues into adolescence in Japan, which in itself can have various explanations. One of those could be that current generations emotionally mature slower than their predecessors because they are the first generation after World War II that has completely grown up during the so-called 'Lost Decade' (post-bubble stagnant economy), which makes the future insecure and adult life something to postpone. However, this is just speculation and further research is needed on this. What is important however, is that in the end an adult lifestyle is unavoidable, something that can be seen with the interviewees who all imagine themselves getting married and finding a job within ten to 15 years from now. It would certainly be interesting to do a follow-up study in that time.

Based on the question of how the participants see their own future, I argue that salaryman masculinity remains a powerful ideal, to which most male participants aspire, even including the men who called themselves *otaku* or herbivore men.

At the same time, most women in my research were ambitious, but saw themselves getting married and having children in the next ten to 15 years, forming a nuclear family with a man with a stable income. One could perhaps say that the salaryman is the man the men want to be, and the women want to be with.

What this thesis is not trying to prove, however, is that nothing changes at all. First of all, most of the male interviewees expressed considerable gender sensitivity, at least to the extent that they said they would be supportive if their futures wives wanted to pursue a career. It is a sad fact however that the Japanese government does very little to give men the possibility to work less to take at least a part of the responsibility of parenting on their shoulders, so that the women can continue to pursue a career. Whether things will really change for the better for this generation remains to be seen, but at least the desire is there.

Another factor that is likely to change is lifetime employment. Most of the men I interviewed thought it was old fashioned to work at just one company for their whole life, and said they were not willing to accept exploitation at work. But again, whether this attitude will lead to a democratization of labour remains to be seen.

All in all, it seems that the salaryman has not lost its status as a hegemonic form of masculinity, and especially not to the *otaku* or the herbivore man. For that, this lifestyle is too strong as an ideal. Moreover, the word *otaku* is so broad that it is hard to see it as an emerging masculinity at all. The word *herbivore man* on the other hand, is much narrower than the academic literature suggests. One could even wonder whether they should be seen as separate masculinities at all, although that is a theoretical discussion outside the scope of this thesis.

In conclusion, it looks like the salarymen are here to stay (hegemonic), at least for the immediate future. Still, it will be interesting to see whether and how things will change in the field of Japanese masculinities. But if it were up to the men and women at Waseda University to decide, it might just be so that future salarymen will have to define themselves vis-à-vis emerging femininities, rather than emerging masculinities.

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APPENDIX

Appendix I: Interview questions

Start with anonymity: name will not appear in research.
Beginning (men and women)
How old are you?
What are you studying? Why?
Did your parents expect you to go to Waseda?
Did you have to work hard to do it?
Where are you originally from?
Have you ever been abroad?

Introduce research topic.
So let's talk about the typical Japanese man
Can you describe a typical Japanese man, what does it mean to you?
Where does he live?
What does he do for a living?
Is he gay or straight? 同性愛の人、異性愛者
What is his educational background?
What does he do in his spare time?
What is his family situation?

Let's jump forward in time, like ten years.
Do you think you will ever live like this?
How do you see your own future?
Do you feel pressure to get a job? (Support a family = kazoku o yashinau) daikokubashira ni naru?

Do you think you will work?
Did you feel pressure from your parents to get into university?
Do you feel pressured by them to get a job?
Do you think you will have this job for life?
Will you have kids?

Questions to women:
What are your ambitions after work?

Do you want to get married or work?
If so, what kind of man would you like to have?
If so, by what age do you want to get married?

Personal, pressure from parents (men and women)
What does your father do for a living?
Did he graduate from a university?
What does your mother do?
Did she graduate from a university?
What do you think about this?
Did your parents expect you to go to Waseda?
Did you feel pressure from your parents to get into university?
Why do you think that is?
Do you feel pressured by them to get a job?
Do you think they want you to lead the same life?
How would you feel if you had not got into university, what would you have done?
What if you fail to graduate?
What if you cannot find a job afterwards?
Is there a difference in this for men and women?
Who earns the most money? Why?
How would you feel if you earned less/more than your partner?

Future
Do you think, in general, this will change in Japan?
What do you think about today's generation?
What do you think about the future?
Will Japanese men become different, or still be salarymen?
What do you think about otaku?
Do you know any?
What about soshoku-kei danshi?
Do you know any?

Appendix II: List of interviewees

Note: when parents have received university-level education, their current occupation is underlined.

Name	Gender	Age	Program	Experience Abroad	Occupation		Born in
					Father	Mother	
Keiko	F	19	SILS	Lived in England and Hong Kong	Finance	Self-employed	Unknown
Yoko	F	20	Cultural Studies	Holidays in Thailand and England	Works in a hospital	Housewife	Hokkaido
Hiroshi	M	19	SILS	Holidays in Australia and Singapore	Car salesman	Housewife	Saitama
Hideo	M	20	Cultural Studies	Holidays in France, Italy, China, Hawaii and New Guinea	Works at NHK	Language teacher at a university	Tokyo
Yoshiko	F	19	SILS	Lived in Guam	Tourism	Housewife	Tokyo
Akira	M	18	SILS	None	Teacher in Engineering	Teacher in Japanese	Fukushima
Masao	M	19	Political Science & Economics	Holidays in Hawaii, USA and Australia	Elementary school teacher	Elementary school teacher	Matsuyama City
Kazuko	F	19	SILS	None	Something in an office	Housewife	Yokohama
Kazuo	M	22	Human Infor-mation	Holidays in Brazil and USA	IT salesman	Day-care	Saitama
Kiyoshi	M	20	Political Science	Holidays in Scotland, France Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam	Elementary school teacher	Elementary school teacher	Shizuoka
Hiroko	F	19	School of Social Science	Holiday in Australia	Office worker	Unknown	Iga City
Yoshio	M	19	Commerce	None	Doctor	Doctor	Aomori

Shigeru	M	19	Chinese and Literature	Holiday in Australia	Salaryman on job transfer	Housewife	Tokyo
Kaoru	F	19	Culture, Media and Society	Lived in Hong Kong and Hawaii	Self-employed	Elementary school teacher	Aichi Prefecture
Toshio	M	19	SILS	Lived in Brazil	Shipping company	Part-time housewife, part-time retail	Tokyo
Tadashi	M	19	SILS	Holiday in Australia	Stock company	Part-time worker in a city office	Yokohama