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# Japanese nationalism

A foreign view

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# Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to increase understanding of how foreign professionals within the diplomatic sector, working with foreign relations to Japan, feel, perceive and relate to Japanese nationalism. The concept of banal nationalism and semiology was used as a theoretical base for the study, as well as theories of Japanese cultural or racial uniqueness (*Nihonjinron*). A phenomenological method was used, allowing the informant's own interpretation to be discovered. Interviews were made with foreign relations professionals in Tokyo. The results showed that the informants interpreted the word 'nationalism' to represent the form of behaviour and ideas associated with right-wing groups. The informants views on Japanese society and culture (cultural nationalism) showed them viewing Japan as a hierarchical society with honest individuals; very much influenced by an "island country mentality". The informants did not see their decision-making influenced by Japanese nationalism. However, it was uncovered that to some influence were exerted over the informant's decisions via cultural nationalism.

*Key words:* Japan, nationalism, culture, banal nationalism, semiology, diplomat, foreign, relations

# Table of content

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	Purpose	5
1.2	Restrictions	5
1.3	Disposition	6
<b>2</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1	Banal Nationalism	7
2.2	Semiology	8
2.3	Research overview	10
2.4	Japanese Society, Culture and Nationalism	12
2.4.1	Nihonjinron	12
2.4.2	Sociological Approach	14
2.4.3	Psychological approach	14
2.4.4	Anthropological Approach	15
2.4.5	Institutional Approach	15
2.4.6	Linguistic Approach	15
1.1.1.1.	Tatemaie-Honne	16
1.1.1.2.	Omote-Ura	16
1.1.1.3.	Soto-Uchi	16
<b>3</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1	Case study	17
3.2	The Interview	17
3.2.1	Semi-structured interviews	18
3.2.2	Elite interviews	18
3.3	Questions Template	19
3.4	Conducting the interviews	19
3.5	The informants	20
<b>4</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1	The concepts	21
4.1.1	Nationalism	22
4.1.2	Cultural Nationalism	22
1.1.1.4.	Patriotism	22
1.1.1.5.	Culture	23
4.2	The perceived cultural nationalism of Japan	24
4.2.1	The Political side of nationalism in Japan	24
4.2.2	Views on Japanese cultural nationalism	25
1.1.1.6.	The Island Country Concept	26
1.1.1.7.	Individual Characteristics	27

1.1.1.8. Japanese	28
4.3 Japan cultural nationalism and foreigners decisions	29
<b>5 References</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>6 Appendixes</b>	<b>39</b>
6.1 Appendix A – Interview Questions Template	40
6.2 Appendix B – Informant Summary	2

# 1 Introduction

Nationalism as a belief system, ideology and political movement has had, and continues to have a great impact on the contemporary world. The word "nationalism" is usually used to describe a passionate ideology striving to achieve autonomy, cohesion and/or independence, by trying to create a nation state, or threaten the stability of existing states.

Examples of nationalism can be found within separatist- and right-wing movements, both rather rare, exotic and often violent. As a phenomenon and ideology, it constitutes an idea of how the world is divided into different communities, thus being both normative and a result of global processes (Halliday, 2006:521). And although nationalisms, and thus the nations (not states) they create tend to regard themselves as unique and primordial, this is many times just a figment of imagination in describing the imagined community that constitutes the nation (Anderson, 2003).

Japan does stand out to some extent in that the sheer amount of thought and media dedicated to Japanese "uniqueness" is quite extensive, and thus regardless of whether Japan is truly unique in the realities of sociology or psychology, the sheer volume of media arguing in favour of Japanese uniqueness is quite unique (Sugimoto, 2003:2). Especially influential is the writing of *Nihonjinron*<sup>1</sup> with the (*honno*<sup>2</sup>) goal of promoting the image of a unique and homogenous Japan (Sugimoto, 2003:32); a genre which has come to spread and influence almost every aspect of modern Japanese culture (Shepherd, 1991:187). And like other forms of cultural nationalism like Asian values appear to flourish after a significant level of economic maturity (Sugimoto, 2003:18).

Although one can also find right-wing groups in Japan, a more popular (*soto*<sup>3</sup>) image of Japanese society – amongst foreigners – is one of mega-corporations (Sugimoto, 2003:86), lifetime employment, workaholic, job dedication, company loyalty and group orientation (Sugimoto, 2003:110). This can be attributed to the individuals occupying elite positions in large companies and society, with greater mass media access, and a thus hegemonic position, setting the norms of lifestyle and values, which are reflected in studies on Japanese society and people<sup>4</sup> (Sugimoto, 2003:2).

In contemporary Japan's mainstream political life, a slight surge of nationalism could be found (Tanaka, 2007); for example visits made to the Yasakuni shrine<sup>5</sup> by high level

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<sup>1</sup> 日本人論 (n) - theories of Japanese cultural or racial uniqueness.

<sup>2</sup> 本音(n) - real intention; motive.

<sup>3</sup> 外 (n) - outside; exterior.

<sup>4</sup> The average Japanese is a woman (51%), working in a small firm with less than 300 employees (78%), non-unionised (79%) and no university background, except perhaps from junior or technical college (85%) (Sugimoto, 2003:2). Thus the average lifestyle and values of the Japanese people are more heterogeneous than might be suggested by many studies. In reality, generation, geography and socio-economic factors are influential in generating different lifestyles, housing, eating habits, language (dialects), style of thinking and many other aspects of every day life (Sugimoto:60).

<sup>5</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4348280.stm> (2008-05-24, 04:23)

officials (for instance ex-prime minister Koizumi), former prime minister Abe's vision of a Beautiful country<sup>6</sup> as well as the textbook controversy<sup>7</sup>, the new educational reform<sup>8</sup>, placing emphasis on patriotism in the classroom and the work of changing Japan's pacifist constitution<sup>9</sup>.

The question of Japanese nationalism could be viewed from different vantage points; from a Japanese, and thus more internal perspective, or from an external that is of an outsider that comes in contact with the phenomenon, either through daily and personal life in Japan or through professional contacts.

This study is focused on an external perspective and on professionals within the diplomatic sector. An interesting question would thus be how nationalism could affect the way in how these professionals (of countries and trading partners) perceive the phenomenon of Japanese nationalism, and how they feel and act in relation to it. How are professional diplomats affected by Japanese nationalism? Can nationalism effect the decision making process of foreign agents working in the diplomatic sector? Do they believe themselves to give Japanese nationalism special consideration, or do they believe they have to? Do peoples own nationalism, or view of nationalism as a phenomenon, play a role? In short, how do they relate and feel about being exposed to Japanese nationalism?

From a theoretical perspective there are a number of theories on nations and nationalism that offers possible explanations to the phenomenon as such. Theoretical schools such as primordialism, modernism, ethno-symbolism and the theory of banal nationalism are noteworthy. The first three are in comparison to the last, umbrella names for a number of theories with similar characteristics.

Primordialist theories see nations and nationalism as a naturally occurring phenomenon, or as something inherited though the generations, meanwhile the modernist school primarily focus on how nationalism and nations have come to being through the modernization of society. Ethno-symbolism is centered on the ethnic bonds and sentiment in the creation of nations (Özirimli, 2000).

In the theory of banal nationalism there is a focus on the symbols that propagate and symbolise the nation, when in fact it already has come into being. These symbols can previously have been displayed consciously, but also melded into the background environment that constitutes the homeland. These symbols represent the national identity and create the stereotypical images that separate "us" from "them", including the stereotypical image of "our" homeland (Billig, 1995:19). Words like "we" and "them" thus play a role, and the theory is therefore interesting to use in relation to how the "them" [foreigners] inside the Japanese homeland, see the "us" [Japanese].

The theoretical orientation towards stereotypes and symbols, and their importance for cultures as the carrier for national identities, can also be found within the field of communications theory. Within this area of study, one can note two major schools. On the one side there are those who see communication as the transmission of information

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6. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/5391132.stm> (2008-05-24, 04:25)

7. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4724669.stm> (2008-05-24, 04:26), (Buruman, 1995)

8. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6669061.stm> (2008-05-24, 04:27)

9. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6652809.stm> (2008-05-24, 04:27)

from a sender to a receiver, where as the other sees communication as the creation and interchange of meaning. In the later case there is a focus on how the message/text interplay with humans in order to create meaning; in other words it deals with the texts/symbols role in culture. This later field of study is called *semiology* (the knowledge of signs and meaning) (Fiske, 1990).

According to Fiske (1990) there are three main areas for semiological studies: The sign in it self, the codes and systems, and the culture in which they are active in. It is more specifically the codes and systems, as well as the cultures that are of interest and relevance in this study. When studying the codes and cultures, a certain interest is focused on the way in which codes develop/evolve in order to fit a societies/cultures requirements, alternatively to fit the channels that are available for communication. From a semiological perspective, concepts such as myth, symbol and ideology are central as the carriers of cultures content. The cultures signs thus become the form of expression for the banal nationalism.

The following research question summarizes the discussion in the introduction; how do professionals within the diplomatic sector, working with foreign relations to Japan, feel, perceive and relate to Japanese nationalism?

## 1.1 Purpose

The starting point for this paper lies in the theories of banal nationalism and semiology, with the focus on symbols as a bearer and transmitter of culture. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to increase understanding of how foreign professionals within the diplomatic sector, working with foreign relations to Japan, feel, perceive and relate to Japanese nationalism.

## 1.2 Restrictions

Since the area of study is large I will focus on personnel working at diplomatic missions, more specifically diplomats, originating from EU member states. For practical reasons a limited number of people will be interviewed. The research will study the perspective of the people interviewed.

The interviews will be restricted in time to the period of my internship in Japan (July to December 2007).

Because of the language barrier it will not be possible to undertake interviews in any other language than those I am fluent in (English and Swedish).

## 1.3 Disposition

This thesis was to be structured according to IMRAD (Introduction, Method, Result, Analysis and Discussion), developed by the American National Standard Institute. However, some modifications have been made to this; The theory chapter has been extracted from the introduction and is placed in its own chapter before the methods chapter and the Analysis chapter has been omitted since this is a descriptive study (Hansemark, 2008). In the introduction the theme of the study and its purpose has been presented. In the following chapter on theory, banal nationalism, semiology and Nihonjinron is presented as well as an research overview. The chapter on Method is structured with an introduction to the meta-scientific base of the study, followed by a presentation of the more technical details of the study. The results are then presented in its own chapter with an analysis in the subsequent chapter. The ending chapter will contain a discussion with suggestions for future research.

## 2 Theory

### 2.1 Banal Nationalism

Normally, the word "nationalism" is used by scholars to describe the passionate nationalism that manifest itself during extreme conditions, limited timeframe and in extreme forms. That the national identity of a nation, and thus the nation itself survives after its conception is often largely, if not completely, overlooked by scholars of "society"<sup>10</sup>, especially when studying nationalism (Billig, 1995:43). Billig rejects this orthodox view of nationalism and asserts that it must have its roots in people's mundane everyday life (Billig, 1995:41). But the symbols of the nation are perceived unconsciously rather than consciously (Billig, 1995:41). "*[The] image of banal nationalism is not a flag which is being consciously waved with fervent passion: it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building*" (Billig, 1995:8).

One of several national symbols that Billig brings up is the flag. The "national flag" symbolize the holy character of the nation: it is revered by loyal citizens and ritually stained by they who want to protest (Ibid.:41). It is a focal point for national sentiments (Ibid.:39). And as an (international) ideology, nationalism makes a world of nations seem completely natural, even in present day democracies. "*It is as if democracy today, knows no other home, no other grounding, except national homelands.*" (Billig, 1995:97)

When it comes to national identities, a banal, far from harmless routine is needed in order for passionate nationalism to be able to emerge. However, it is not a psychological tool, or like a cell phone, which mostly lies dormant, until a crisis occurs; "big brother"<sup>11</sup> calls; and the patriotic<sup>12</sup> identity is connected. In order for a national identity to "work", there has to be an understanding and opinion of what this identity is. Thus, stereotypes are created in order to distinguish "them" from "us", with "us" being the norm, in comparison to "their" deviations. The geographical territory is also connected to a stereotyped "homeland" (Özkirimli, 2000:200f). In the sports news<sup>13</sup>, reverberations

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<sup>10</sup> Billig also means that scholars of sociology (the knowledge and science about society) do not reflect about the fact that "society" is actually synonymous with "nation" (Billig 1995:53)

<sup>11</sup> Here symbolizing "the great leader of the nation", if it is a monarch that is elected or not varies.

<sup>12</sup> Patriotism is actually synonymous with nationalism, but is used for rhetorical purposes. It is possible for nationalism to be projected onto others, and then often described as (passionately) irrationally dangerous, superfluous and foreign. Patriotism ("our" nationalism) on the other hand is both defended and celebrated, and describes as something necessary and beneficial (Billig 1995:55)

<sup>13</sup> The author has to admit that he never read the sports pages or watches the sports news.

can be found of banal stereotypes like nation, place and race – not to mention masculinity (Özkirimli, 2000:119f).

Language also generates a banal nationalism, with "small words, rather than grandiose and memorable phrases", "we" are reminded of who "we" and "they" are. Words like "we", "this" and "here" thus get to play a very big role (Billig 1995:94), something that particularly politicians and journalists regularly use in their rhetoric, more or less consciously.

Moreover, just like a language dies because of the lack of regular users, so to a nation has to be used on a daily basis (Billig 1995:95). However, it is not through their power of political office that they generate a banal nationalism; but their influence as a representative for the nation, and the regular banalization given by their exposure in mass media (Özkirimli 2000:201). For politicians, nationalism is a standard tool/strategy when they speak for or to the "people" (Billig 1995:99f), sometimes even in a way as thou they were holding a mirror in which the nation could admire itself (Ibid., s.98).

## 2.2 Semiology

Humans are very communicative, with an inherent interest in signs. Every cultural pattern and every action of social behaviour includes communication in one way or another. Even if the verbal language is central, the meaning of artefacts and processes in human culture can also be central (Copley 2000:3). Even every conversational action can include the transmitting of messages through gestures, posture, clothing, haircut, etc., which in themselves transmit communicative signals. Even when we are quiet or spoken to, messages will be transmitted and heard through other "languages", for example laws that hinder, billboards that proclaim, smells that attract or repel, even with the "feeling" of objects communicate something meaningful to us (Hawkes 1997:124f).

Semiology (also known as semiotics) is the study of how the *sign in itself* (and variants of the sign) transmit meaning, as well as how they stand in relation to the user (Hawkes 1997:123). A sign is something that represents something for someone, in one way or another (Hawkes 1997:126). In principle, semiology is used to show what makes up a sign, and which laws that govern them (Hawkes 1997:123). The sign is something physical that can be perceived by our senses, but what the sign refers to is created as a model for meaning by its users (Fiske 1990:61f). The mental conception is however a cultural product and thus in large part common for the members within a culture that uses the same language (system of signs). Thus, it is not necessarily certain that the meaning in an original text or message, will agree completely with the meaning in a translation from one language to another. (ibid.:66f).

According to Fiske (1990:60ff) there are three main areas<sup>14</sup> for semiological studies: The *sign in itself*, *codes and systems* as well as the *cultures* in which they are active.

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<sup>14</sup> Semiology can however also be seen as a wider research area, with separate sub-areas such as zoosimilarity, where the communicative behaviour of other animals than humans are studied, proxemics (human body communication), smell-sign, aesthetic theory and rhetoric (Hawkes 1997:124).

The continued description of this theory chapter will constrain itself to codes and systems as well as culture, since the sign in itself is not of relevance for this study. Codes are systems in which signs have been organized, and occur in two categories: behavioural codes and signifying codes: *Behavioural* codes constitute codes of law and other rules for behaviour. *Signifying* codes<sup>15</sup> are constituted by sign systems. Seen from a *codes and system* perspective, signs are organised the way they are since a number of codes have develop and evolve in order to suit the demands of a society/culture, or the channels that are available for communication.

Codes can also be categorized as *developed* (expressing the abstract, the common, the absent) or *limited* (the concrete, the specific, that which is happening here and now). Pop art (low culture<sup>16</sup>) and similar users of limited codes contribute, according to Fiske (1990) in a larger extent to the creation of group cohesion and solidarity by contributing with common experiences than for instance an opera (high culture<sup>17</sup>) or similar users of developed codes does. Codes can also be seen as broad or narrow, with *broad codes* being socially oriented and tend to appeal to what people have in common and thus contribute to the group cohesion and solidarity within a society. The broad codes are the means with which the culture communicates with itself (Fiske 1990:103). These messages then return to the culture where they had their origin and give nourishment to its thought- and emotional pattern (Fiske 1990:104). *Narrow codes* on the other hand are only directed to a certain group that is often defined by the codes that it uses. The *culture* within which codes and signs are active is also object for semiological studies. If the cultures signs and codes are not used the cultures form and existence is threatened. A culture thus requires that its member participate actively with these communicative codes in order for it to be an active, dynamic and living organism. Meaning is created when text and audience cooperate, and both elements are regarded as contributing equal as much. When a text and an audience are members in a snugly consistent culture or subculture the cooperation is done smoothly and relaxed: connotations and myths that texts use overlap, if not exactly, then very well with the audience (Fiske 1990:217).

Codes and conventions make up the core of every culture experiences and make it possible for its members to orientate themselves within the culture and understand the social existence that comes with it. Through common codes membership of a culture can be experienced and expressed (Fiske 1990:114). Three concepts: symbol, myth and ideology are central in the understanding of how cultures function. A *symbol* is an object that through convention and usage has received a meaning which enables it to represent something else (Fiske 1990:125). A symbol (for example a flag) can activate a myth, or a chain of concepts that are contained within a myth (Fiske 1990:121). A *myth* is a way for a culture to explain, perceive or mentally process (put into words or comprehend) a certain aspect of reality. Myths can be divided into two groups: primitive myths (about life and death, humans and gods, good and evil) and sophisticated myths (about masculinity and femininity, family, success and science) (Fiske 1990:121). Fiske also notes that myths are a product of one group within society that has become dominant, which is reflected in the myths. Myths mystify or cloud their

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<sup>15</sup> If nothing else is said, then these kind of codes will be the kind of codes that will be discussed in this theoretical summary.

<sup>16</sup> i.e. *Manga*, television dramas and idol contests etc.

<sup>17</sup> i.e. *Ikebana* (flower arrangement), *kabuki* theatre, and *ukiyo-e* (a type of woodblock prints) etc.

origin in order to reduce, or remove, the political or social dimension they have. Thus, they try to appear as natural, and not as socially or historically conditioned (Fiske 1990:122). Common myths and signs enable cultural identification, which results in that membership can be attained by acknowledge the common myths and values that are found within the culture (Fiske 1990:226).

*Ideology* is a system of conceptions that are characteristic for a certain group or community, where illusionary conceptions – false ideas or false insights – can be compared to true or scientific knowledge (Fiske 1990:218). Codes are also dependent of an agreement between users and a common cultural background (frame of reference) when codes and culture have a dynamic and joint relation. The codes also perform an identifiable social and communicating function, which requires the codes to be able to be transferred through suitable mediums and/or channels of communication (Fiske 1990:92).

In a world where communication is central, mass media plays an important role in the creation and perception of meaning. The receiver of these messages is seen as an active reader, since reading is something we learn, and thus affected by cultural experiences as well. The significance of a text is thus also created with the help of the reader through the aid and influence of his or her attitude, emotions and previous experiences. Mass media have thus the possibility to activate the readers' awareness. They invite the reader to assume a certain identity in order to be able to decode what the message that mass media is projecting in accordance with the dominating code (or arrive at a meaning that the mass medium itself is benefiting). The receiver and message together produce the benefiting meaning, and this makes the receiver someone with a certain set of relation to the dominating value system and to the rest of society (Fiske 1990:218).

From a semiologic perspective, notions like myth, symbol and ideology are central as carriers of cultural content. The cultures signs thus become forms of expression for the banal nationalism.

## 2.3 Research overview

Tamamoto (2001) deals with a number of issues relating to Japanese nationalism, in particular the Yasakuni shrine and the Japanese constitution. It does however draw lines between nationalism and patriotism (and jingoism) as well as arguing that constitutional revision will not lead to a resurgence of patriotism. The end note is, like that title suggests, that Japan is not a country of patriots.

Matthews (2003) deals with what he labels as a rebirth of Japanese nationalism is discussed. With a short historical contextualization, it informs the reader that various bizarre nationalist positions are no longer considered as taboo in mainstream politics (i.e. nuclear weapons etc.), and that domestic and economic trends have made the Japanese population more aggressive-minded. The author also warns about foreigners overlooking real sources of contemporary Japanese nationalism. To this he also

highlights economic aspects on nationalism and how economic reform was crucial in the blossoming of Japanese nationalism in the 1920's and 30's.

Of the roughly 900 right-wing groups (uyoku dantai), with roughly 10000 members, that exists in Tokyo, more than half are fronts for organized crime (yakuza). With their political value base of anti-communist, anti-American and ultra-nationalist, a common way to get the messages across it to blare it from the speakers on their (black) vans (Economist, No8529, 2007:63).

The question of the Diet (Japanese Lower House) is in focus as it has approved the flag and anthem, with the public reaction; also noting that the Japanese government is taking steps to support the Japanese identity (Christian Science Monitor, 1999-07-23:1).

Gijerde (2001) argues that researchers of attachment have neglected cultural issues, and criticizes Rothbaum et al. and the idea that Japan is "uniquely unique" which have given rise to Nihonjinron. The core of "Japaneseness" is said to have been discussed by both Japanese and foreign scholars for decades, and various attributes (e.g. language, race, values, and personality traits and dispositions such as amae<sup>18</sup>) have been woven into a cohesive cultural ideology.

There is speculations that the rise in nationalistic sentiment in Japan and China during the 1980s and 1990s may lead to potential conflicts between the two is questioned. It identifies similar trends in campaigns by elites in both countries to raise patriotic sentiment during the period, with failing results. On the other hand "cultural nationalism" is said to have managed better, but in either case the types of nationalistic surge that have emerged is also said to have been predominantly inward-oriented responses to domestic and external changes. Thus the conclusion is that relations between China and Japan are relatively stable (Rose, 2000).

Sasada (2006) writes that there are signs of a shift from Japans traditional postwar pacifism to more hotter forms of nationalism, with opinion polls suggesting a particular increase amongst youth; Something that may change the dynamics of international [interstate?] relations in East Asia. The aims of the article is to examine several factors that is contributing to the shift, including the global context (with for instance Chinas and the two Koreas posture and national sentiment towards Japan), media and intellectuals, the decline of leftist parties (because of political blunders, increasing the trust voters have in the conservatives), increasing popularity of nationalist manga<sup>19</sup> (propagating views of conservative and right-wing intellectuals), Internet (since media is seen as biased and self-censoring), and international sporting events.

National attitudes among Japanese citizens are examined by Karasawa (2002). His study was conducted by developing a National Identity Scale and administering it to nearly a thousand Japanese people (n=971) in metropolitan Japan. One of several findings was that commitment to national heritage was linked to conservatism, whereas a internationalism was linked to liberalism, high media exposure and knowledge of international affairs.

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<sup>18</sup> 甘え(n) - depending on other's kindness

<sup>19</sup> 漫画 (n) – Japanese comic; cartoon

## 2.4 Japanese Society, Culture and Nationalism

A popular (*soto*) image of Japan – amongst foreigners - is one of mega-corporations (Sugimoto, 2003:86), lifetime employment, workaholism, job dedication, company loyalty and group orientation (Sugimoto, 2003:110). This can be attributed to the individuals occupying elite positions in large companies and society, with greater mass media access, and a thus hegemonic position, setting the norms of lifestyle and values, which are reflected in studies on Japanese society and people<sup>20</sup> (Sugimoto, 2003:2). Especially influential is the writing of *Nihonjinron* with the *honne* goal of promoting the image of a unique and homogenous Japan and its people (Sugimoto, 2003:32), and which has come to spread and influence almost every aspect of modern Japanese culture (Shepherd, 1991:187).

### 2.4.1 Nihonjinron

In the same way that German intellectuals debated "What is German?" in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, so to Japanese thinking elites today are asking and shaping the answer to the question of "What is Japanese?" (Yoshino, 1992:5). The contemporary strand of *nihonjinron* (theories/discussions on the Japanese) which strives to describe the essential qualities of Japaneseness, can be traced to have its historical roots in the propaganda of Imperial Japan during the Pacific War; also known as the Greater East Asia War (Goldstein-Gidoni, 2005:157 and 173, Slater, 2003:276 and Shepherd, 1991:187). It also forms a cohesive cultural ideology (cultural nationalism), promoted by the conservative political elite; or as Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori put it "[Japan] is a divine country with the emperor at its center" (Gjerde – Onishi, 2000:216).

With *nihonjinron* being an extremely popular genre, produced and consumed in enormous quantities (text, visual etc.) both by local Japanese, and foreigners, it can be said that its wide penetration into society enables it to function as a common frame of reference for many Japanese (Haugh, 1998:29 and Goldstein-Gidoni, 2005:157). Given this, *nihonjinron* can also be justified as being a cultural system or -model, not just a scholarly discourse (Slater, 2003:277). In addition, the ideology can arguably also be said to be driven by the professional elite<sup>21</sup> enjoying a hegemonic societal position and claims have also been raised that the purpose of this drive is to promote domestic stability and as ruse in international affairs (Hauge, 1998:30)

In giving a working definition of Nihonjinron (Nihonron, Nihonshakairon or Nihonbunkaron), it can be viewed as a discourse of cultural nationalism, concerned with propagating the view of Japanese uniqueness. It favours an anti-individualistic approach

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<sup>20</sup> The average Japanese is a woman (51%), working in a small firm with less than 300 employees (78%), non-unionised (79%) and no university background, except perhaps from junior or technical college (85%) (Sugimoto, 2003:2). Thus the average lifestyle and values of the Japanese people are more heterogeneous than might be suggested by many studies. In reality, generation, geography and socio-economic factors are influential in generating different lifestyles, housing, eating habits, language (dialects), style of thinking and many other aspects of every day life (Sugimoto:60).

<sup>21</sup> Graduates from Japanese top universities, working in the government bureaucracy or large companies.

and is hostile towards the notion of socio-historical diversity<sup>22</sup> within Japan. Some of the underlying assumptions within the discourse are that the Japanese constitute a racial entity that is culturally and socially homogeneous, and that it has remained unchanged since primordial times. In addition, the Japanese are assumed to be radically unlike everyone else in social, cultural and linguistic terms, and that Japanese "blood" is essential for understanding. Thus foreigners do not have the capacity to fully understand the culture and language<sup>23</sup> of the Japanese (Hauge, 1998:28).

There is however also an assumption that through differentiating Japan from the West, one generates a key for unlocking the understanding of Japan's political, economic and cultural actions. Differences are usually assumed to be in the moral and ethical attitudes of the two people (Pinnington, 2001:92), with there being a tendency to treat the West as a homogenous cultural unit; heterogeneous, multiracial and horizontal based on rights, guilt and individualism. Non-Western cultures like those in Africa are largely ignored (Hauge, 1998:38, Feldman, 1997:328, 330 and Buruman 1995). In regards to the distinction between shame (Japan) and guilt (West) culture, Pinnington (2001:98) write that ordinary Japanese people arguably has a strong sense of guilt, through the Buddhist teachings of karma, whilst the shame culture is described as a feature of *bushi* (samurai/warrior) culture alone (Pinnington, 2001:98, see also Buruman 1995).

Like in most nationalisms, the characteristics described by *Nihonjinron* as being primordial and timeless in Japan are recent invention, and sometimes even have their origins in other societies such as the West. Examples of central concepts that originate in the west include *amae* meanwhile the concept of *wa* (harmony) is arguably a quite recent development (Gjerde – Onishi, 2000:221f). Moreover, it is worth noting that the assumption of homogeneity goes hand in hand with the imagining of Japan as a very egalitarian and equal society (Sugimoto, 2003:4).

All this being said, criticism has been levied against the genre from methodological, empirical and ideological grounds (Sugimoto, 2003:4). To name some examples it is unrealistic to claim that the Japanese form a homogeneous group, e.g. since the linguistic diversity of the Japanese. Some also point out the flourishing subcultures and differentiated groups that constitute contemporary Japan. In addition, race biological claims (like "biological culture genes") and assumptions about cultural tendencies being inherited are just wrong, considering the current knowledge about human genetics (Hauge, 1998:30 and Sugimoto 2003). But although its many flaws in regards to methodology and concepts, the *Nihonjinron* genre still retains popularity and influence (Sugimoto, 2003:4).

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<sup>22</sup> Except for the 1,3 million foreign workers in Japan, minority groups also include Burakumin (2 million), Resident Koreans (0,6 million) and Ainu (24000), as well as others, putting the estimate portion of ethnic and pseudo-ethnic minorities to around 3-6% within Japan (Sugimoto, 2003:185 and 7).

<sup>23</sup> One can note that native Japanese words (*yamato kotoba*), make up around half the Japanese lexicon, and even less so (36%) in commonly used vocabulary (Hauge, 1998:32).

## 2.4.2 Sociological Approach

The group model represents the most explicit, coherent formulation and most influential framework for interpreting the Japanese and Japanese society. Three main lines of arguments on individual, interpersonal and inter-group level (Sugimoto, 2003:3).

The Japanese individual is portrayed at a psychological level to lack a fully developed independent self or ego, with the concept of *amae* being one of the most notable claims for this. *Amae* refers to the supposed unique inclination of Japanese to seek emotional satisfaction by influencing and depending on superiors. In addition, group loyalty is placed as a primary value, and the need of explicitly demonstrate individuality is not felt as necessary. Furthermore, special satisfaction at a psychological level is also said to be felt when giving oneself to the realization and promotion of the goals of the group (Sugimoto, 2003:3).

At interpersonal level, the Japanese are depicted as group oriented, and for instance is said to put great importance on intra-group harmony. The status within the group is dependent on membership length, and vertical loyalties are dominant, with strong ties being maintained and cultivated between superiors and inferiors. This is put in sharp contrast to the more horizontally orientated Western society. Between groups, harmony is achieved in such a way that Japan is described as a "consensus society". This makes the Japanese people easy to govern and lead, as well as mobilize for specific goals. Thus it's been said that this aspect of the Japanese have contributed to Japans economic growth after the pacific war. From a different angle one could also note that groups compete in loyalty thus making them conform to national goals as well as facilitate consensus (Sugimoto, 2003:3).

## 2.4.3 Psychological approach

There is a sea of examinations relating to the Japanese way of doing business, run politics, interact socially, think and so forth. Some researchers also put considerable time into uncovering the "hidden layers", "basic shape" or "archetypical" of Japanese society. These works tend to have four underlying assumptions. Firstly, that *all* Japanese share the trait in question, regardless of other variables (like income, education and upbringing). Secondly, that there is virtually no internal variation within the Japanese society in regards to the traits degree of manifestation within the individual (and thus society at large). The third assumption is that the traits only marginally exist in other societies (compared to the West in particular). Forth is the assumption that the traits have prevailed since (unspecified) ancient times (Sugimoto, 2003:3f). "It can be noted that psychological attributes presented in cultural identity psychology, as well as in the *Nihonjinron* literature, as uniquely Japanese (e.g., harmony, group-orientation, and empathy) are frequently outcomes of state-sponsored cultural ideologies" (Gjerde – Onishi, 2000:218).

#### 2.4.4 Anthropological Approach

Within the field of anthropology there are two concepts worth noting here: *Emic* and *Etic*. *Emic* concepts are those who are specifically culture bound and thus only meaningful to the members of a certain group. The *etic* concepts can be seen as the opposite, with concepts being applicable to people all over the world (Sugimoto, 2003:22 and Haugh, 1998:28)

With the dominance of western culture, many *emic* concepts within sociology originating in Europe or North America have become *etic*. In addition, the *nihonjinron*<sup>24</sup> discourse also lay claims to a wide range of concept perceived to be *emic* for Japan, however some studies also show that some of these concepts<sup>25</sup> are actually found in higher levels in other western societies (Sugimoto, 2003:23).

#### 2.4.5 Institutional Approach

Some scholars assert that theories on bureaucracy are culture bound. Western thought on the subject argues for its operation to be governed by universalistic law, formal criteria, and "functional specificity", and transcending particularistic interactions, affective considerations, and "functional diffuseness"<sup>26</sup>. These scholars also find that the Japanese form of bureaucracy is essentially non-western (or at least non-Weberian), arguing that the legal-rational model might not be the only one that leads to an efficient bureaucracy (Sugimoto, 2003:23f).

In Japan large bureaucratic corporations paternalistic arrangements such as company housing, leisure facilities and excursions tend to be given priority. Time series surveys also show that employees prefers supervisors who are demanding at work, but take care of their welfare and are willing to listen to their personal problems. To this, managers are assumed to pay a lot of personal attention to their subordinates (even thou this is not mentioned in contracts), including after work excursions to pubs, bars and restaurants as well as being a formal go-between at weddings and attend funerals for their grandparents etc. (Sugimoto, 2003:23f)

#### 2.4.6 Linguistic Approach

As in any language or culture there are certain concepts of indirectness, vagueness and ambiguity that are active. In Japan, there are a range of conceptual pairs that distinguish between the official ("sanitized") reality and hidden reality, and one should be vigilant in not confusing these two aspects. (Sugimoto, 2003:28)

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<sup>24</sup> Hendry (2003:19) describes this discourse as cultural nationalism seen from an anthropological viewpoint.

<sup>25</sup> Feldman (1997:331) and Gjerde – Onishi (2000:221) lists a number of these common in *nihonjinron*.

<sup>26</sup> This is one reason why this western model sees nepotism as dysfunctional in formal organizations.

#### 1.1.1.1. Tatemaie-Honne

*Tatemaie* refers to the politically correct and formally established principles; this should not be confused with these principles being accepted or practiced. In stead, the *Honne* is the true feelings and desires; but usually suppressed due to the strength of the *tatemaie*. An example could be lobbyists of Japanese rice farming with the *tatemaie* aim of securing Japanese rice production for its cultural value to Japan, but with the *honno* of increasing profits for personal gains. (Sugimoto, 2003:28, Feldman, 1997:331, Hendry, 2003:49f)

#### 1.1.1.2. Omote-Ura

*Omote* (face side) represents the face of things – openly permissible. The *Ura* (back) on the other hand connotes to what is wrong, bad and concealed – regarded as publicly unacceptable or even illegal. One (of many) aspect(s) of this can be found in the business world where *shito fumei kin* (expenses unaccounted for) accounts are permitted as long as they are included for tax, and are used for secret payoffs, kickbacks and political donations, but also to a great deal to pay for entertainment (for the guests being paid off etc.). (Sugimoto, 2003:28, Hendry, 2003:50)

#### 1.1.1.3. Soto-Uchi

The pairs of *soto* and *uchi* are used to distinguish between the in-group and the others outside. It is not uncommon for employees to refer to the company as *uchi*. Also, while a *soto* environment prohibits the discussion of sensitive subjects, an *uchi* environment can enable the break of confidentiality. For instance, an employee can show obedience towards her boss in the *soto*, but in the *uchi* harbour anger towards his arrogant behaviour (Sugimoto, 2003:28f, Feldman, 1997:331, Hendry, 2003:47ff).

## 3 Method

The purpose of this essay is to increase the understanding of how foreign professionals, working with foreign relations to Japan, feel, perceive and relate to Japanese nationalism. This chapter aims to establish the method and methodology in order to achieve this purpose. The methodological goal thus becomes how to access the thoughts of informants in the chosen population.

The first step is thus to decide what form of methodological approach one should use; quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative research includes surveys and experimental studies where one measures frequency and quantity. Qualitative research on the other hand, focuses on peoples' experiences, how they are felt and perceived (Sherman – Webb in Ely, 1993:11; Bryman, 1997:8). The approach that fits best with my purpose is thus the qualitative approach.

### 3.1 Case study

One strategy<sup>27</sup> to conduct qualitative studies is case studies, which constitute an empirical examination of a special phenomenon within the context of real life, and can focus on an individual, or include several such individual cases (Yin, 2003:1, Robson 1993:146). One or several local societies/communities, organisations or institutions can also be studied (Robson, 1993:147)

In this study, the case study will be conducted on individuals that are working within the foreign diplomatic service in Tokyo, and my primary source will be made up of interviews (Yin, 2003:89ff).

### 3.2 The Interview

To find out, discover, understand and figure out the character or nature of foreign professional's<sup>28</sup> view on Japanese nationalism; my intention is to conduct qualitative interviews (Svensson-Starrin, 1996:53). An interview can be conducted in a variation of ways, from standardized and highly structured

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<sup>27</sup> Examples of other strategies that are used within qualitative research include Grounded Theory (Hansemark, 2008) and socio-morphological method (Svensson-Starrin, 1996) , also see Yin (2003).

<sup>28</sup> Working within the foreign diplomatic community in Japan.

questioners, to unstructured conversation, with a middle road being the so called semi-structured interview, which I intend to use.

The merit of using interviews is that they can be targeted and target the topic of the case, as well as give deeper insights into the perception of the informants. This said, one can also note however that like any other method, interviews also come with drawbacks such as bias due to poorly constructed questions<sup>29</sup>, response bias, the possible inaccuracies of informants memories, and informants trying to say the “right” thing (Yin, 2003:86, 89ff)

### 3.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

In a semi-structured interview some standardized question are used in order to retrieve information regarding for example age, gender, occupation, living conditions etcetera. Qualitative information about what is being studied is investigated through open question, with the informant clarifying and developing the answers that are given. This gives the interviewer greater opportunity to deepen the answers and enter into a dialogue with the informant (May, 2001:151).

The open questions also enable the informant to answer the questions using his or her own words. The flow and depth is more important than actually answering the questions in a certain order (Aberbach – Rockman, 2002). As with all other forms of interviews the interviewer must be aware about the content in the interview as well as the interviews character and in what way the questions are being made (May, 2001:151).

### 3.2.2 Elite interviews

To interview a so called "elite" such as politicians puts special requirements on the possibility on gaining access (Werning Rivera – Kozyreva – Sarovskii, 2002), and there is an advantage in being able to leave at a moments notice and for the interview (Goldstein, 2002). One should seem professional and generally knowledgeable (but less knowledgeable than the respondent on the particular topic), and also appear friendly and curious (Leech. 2002).

Some problems can also come up in certain question when the informant can speak in a way that promotes their own cause, which can lead to exaggerations of different kind, and thus flaw the objectivity in what is being said. This mustn't necessarily be a weakness however if the interviewees view on a certain subject, or similar is in focus for what one want to gain knowledge about (Berry, 2002).

The interview can also branch out into areas one didn't predict, which can be positive, but also brings with it that the interview increases in extent (Berry, 2002)

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<sup>29</sup> Quality assessment for the questions in the questions template (See Appendix A) was made in assistance with the tutor assigned by Lund University.

### 3.3 Questions Template

The Questions Template can be found in Appendix A. The questions can be divided into three categories: Category questions, Main questions and support (i.e. bridging and follow-up) questions. The easy questions are planned to be placed in the beginning of the interview (Leech, 2002), these include taximetric questions such as Age and Gender. The support questions are type examples of follow-up questions, and bridging-questions in order to return to the main question, as well as other question that support the information gathering for the main questions.

As mentioned above the purpose of this essay is to increase understanding of how foreign professionals, working with foreign relations to Japan, feel, perceive and relate to Japanese nationalism. The later made it important to ask the informant about his or her general perception about nationalism/patriotism as a phenomenon. This is the basis of how the main question is constructed, and what they aim to shed light on. "What you know is as important as what you want to know", since prior knowledge determines both questions and how they are asked (Leech, 2002). With a number of questions specifically related to the problem area intended to follow, with an open question to the informant if he or she would like to add something.

### 3.4 Conducting the interviews

Before the interviews, all European<sup>30</sup> embassies were contacted in which the request of interviewing the ambassador or section heads was put forward<sup>31</sup>. A date was then set for the interview in coordination with the secretaries of the informants who were available during the time for the interviews<sup>32</sup>. The interviews were then conducted in the informant's office, or meeting room, at the various embassies and recorded on microcassette. The informants were informed that they would be anonymous and not quoted by name. (During the interview sometimes with tea/coffee and biscuits which were accepted by myself in order to build a cooperative mood).

The informants were free to answer the questions as they pleased and no pressure was put on them in any way to coerce them into giving any particular answer, although there were times when some informants seemed slightly weary of the microcassette recorder at first.

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<sup>30</sup> European Union states.

<sup>31</sup> In most cases a written request was also sent informing who I was; that I wanted to interview them about their views on Japanese society, and that it was part of my University thesis.

<sup>32</sup> Mid to late December 2007 in Tokyo.

### 3.5 The informants

A total of seven interviews were conducted out of which five (four men and one woman) will be analyzed. The remaining two interviews was not useful for the purpose of this study, because their work did not expose them enough to the Japanese in a professional role. The description of the five informants will be made using first person masculine, and their quotes will be subject to censorship in order to preserve their anonymity. The informants are summarized in Table 1. Further information could be found in the result section.

#	Level	Section	Time in Japan	Work Experience	Japanese <sup>33</sup>
I1	Ambassador	Chancellery	4+1.5	33	Basic
I2	Ambassador	Chancellery	4 <sup>30</sup>	<sup>30</sup>	Basic
I3	Ambassador	Chancellery	2	25	Basic
I4	Deputy Head of Mission	Chancellery	2	20	Basic
I5	Section Head	Economics	2.5	N/A	Basic

<sup>30</sup> 4 years since presenting credentials, but has been in Japan perhaps 20 times since the 1960's

*Table 1 – Informants*

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<sup>33</sup> Basic proficiency enables survival or non-fluent and limited communication (Japanese Language Proficiency Test, Level 4-3)

## 4 Result

The purpose of this study is to see how foreigners, working with foreign relations to Japan, feel, perceive and relate to Japanese nationalism. For this purpose, five informants were selected from the European embassies in Tokyo.

With the exception of informant I5 that worked as head of the economics section, the informants work at the chancellery level of the embassy. The purpose of this work is to promote its “national” interest of their home government, and to support different kind of relationship with Japan. In doing this work every informants have many different relations with their Japanese counterpart. Here, the informants are presented briefly. Information about each informant was also provided in the method chapter.

I1 is active in Japan for the second time, this time as an Ambassador and has worked as a bureaucrat for more than 30 years. He has lived a total of five and a half years in Japan (one and a half as Ambassador) reaching Basic proficiency in Japanese.

I2 presented his credentials four years ago, and is a non-professional diplomat, stating that Japan would be his “first and final posting”. He loves Kanji but only understands a little Japanese.

I3 has been in Japan for two years and likes to go head on with the Japanese. He is an Ambassador and has worked within the field of foreign services for 25 years.

I4 works as deputy head of mission and has been in Japan for two years out of a career of 20. Japanese proficiency is Basic.

I5 heads the economics section in his embassy since two and a half years back. He has basic proficiency in Japanese.

Illustrative examples from single informants are used to demonstrate the perceived experiences.

### 4.1 The concepts

The Concept of Nationalism had different meaning for the informants. A visible fault line could be noted, dividing the phenomenon into nationalism on the one hand, and culture and patriotism on the other. I have chosen to adopt the term “cultural nationalism” to symbolize the non-hot/non-right-wing/non-political part of nationalism that the informants have mainly associated with “Culture” and “Patriotism”.

### 4.1.1 Nationalism

Nationalism was characterized as a political phenomenon, usually connected with right-wing politics: “As an “ism”, yes I think it is essentially a right-wing phenomenon” (i1). One informant (I4) also finds it carrying connotations to National Socialism, which is regarded as giving nationalism a negative association. “it’s connected with National Socialism, so that’s why it has such a bad clung” (i4).

Nationalism was also characterized as a form of egoism “nationalism for me is sort of an egoism”. (i5), promoting ones own country at the expense of others “nationalism, being proud of your country, being proud of what this country stands for, what this country has achieved” (i3), as well as seeing ones own country as superior “nationalism /../ it’s an relation to other nations, and in particular you put your own country above others” (i4), or at the very least as one side of the same coin as patriotism: *Patriotic means to be a positive side of the nationalism* (i2).

### 4.1.2 Cultural Nationalism

#### 1.1.1.4. Patriotism

When seeing a countryman perform well in a sporting event as well as certain symbols, a reference to patriotism is made. As informant I4 expresses his view, this has nothing to do with political nationalism, but instead a special relation to some distinctive characters of your country, things that makes a difference, such as nature, art and folklore.

*patriotism when you see a sport event and your countrymen doing fine ... I think you can be patriotic, love your own country [it’s nature, art and folklore] without any kind of politically motivated nationalism.(i4)*

Patriotism might be considered as a positive side of nationalism, and related to loving ones country and defending it (i2).

*Patriotic means to be a positive side of the nationalism. Everybody has to love his country, or her country, and to defend it, but that don’t have to be at the expense of hurting the other people. (i2)*

Certain emphasis is also placed on behavior and social codes are said to be part of patriotism, and patriotism being part of culture. The trustworthiness of nationals compared to foreigners has possible nationalistic connections with putting ones own group on a higher pedestal than the foreign groups. (i4)

*patriotism is, /../ that I love my country because it’s different, /../ some ways of behavior that we think is really, really important/../Russians aren’t as reliable as we are. So it can get close to, almost nationalism in that sense that you put yourself ahead of other/../ In that sense the social code[and culture] is part of patriotism (i4)*

Patriotism was believed to be said out right in Abe's beautiful Japan speeches, and his policy to promote love for Japan and patriotic education in school, as well as the idea that you have to work really hard for your country. (i4)

*what was clearly regarded as somehow patriotic and I believe it was said outright in Abe's beautiful Japan speeches. He was promoting love for your own country and ././ the idea was that you have to really work for your country, and you have to educate your children, so that they learn to love their country, it's patriotic education, but there was, very very, lively debate on it, ././ how can you give a mark at school for, hehehe, patriotism? ././ I don't think it's possible. (i4)*

#### 1.1.1.5. Culture

On the deeper end of nationalism, the emic concept of "culture" and "wisdom" is used. Culture is described as all (non-genetic) information that is inherited from one generation to another (i.e. all writings, all books, all beliefs, all materials made), which is also closely related to "wisdom" which gives us tools to evaluate the results of our actions:

*culture is religion, beliefs, the beliefs are very important part of a culture because it's connected also with the behavior of the people, how they decide. ... wisdom is accumulated in beliefs, in religions [which are very basic fundamental cultures], in literature, poetry and, the wisdom is connected with the world beings of the humanity.(i2)*

Culture is also defined as activities preserving very old traditions and keeping the identity of a society and what the society stands for. Identity of a society is formed by certain building blocks within the culture that has been created/constructed over time. The building blocks are not the culture as such, but are the cultural expression of the society that is the main part of it. (i3)

*culture is the way in which your taking care of preserving your very old traditions, how really to keep the identity of a society and what the society stands for, ././ that have been created/constructed over many many years/centuries, ././ will form the identity of a society, and the identity of a society is ././ perhaps not the culture as such, but is the cultural expression of the society that is the main part of it (i3).*

Further, cultural identity and Nationalism form intricate parts when nationalism relates to being proud of ones country, what it stands for and what it have achieved. Love for ones culture is also expressed as a possibility, as is the increased meaning cultural artifacts and symbols can have for the members of the "group".

*We all love our countries, we all stick to our culture and background ././ and traditions ... but it is not the same as you want to inflict or to dominate your neighbors or trying really to tell the outside world there is only one culture that counts. (i3)*

Love for ones culture is expressed in the use of cultural artefacts and symbols for the members of the "group". The flag is described as one symbol, and to show its respect and honour is described as a natural form of behaviour (i3)

*I'm a member of the X Club, and every time I go there, and if I'm making a speech then you'll have the Japanese flag and the X flag, every time they start with singing the national anthem of Japan, showing the respect for their flag and our flag, I think it's a kind of natural behavior (i3).*

Symbols and artifacts can also be found in the arts, as well as in pop culture.

*I believe it's every part of culture, there's also art, visual art, poetry, literature, [and humor] (i4).*

## 4.2 The perceived cultural nationalism of Japan

*I think the Japanese are very patriotic, very patriotic. (i2)*

### 4.2.1 The Political side of nationalism in Japan

When looking at the political context, there has been a debate regarding if former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's position was too nationalistic or right-wing, and there were linkages made between his behavior and his focus on the North Korean abduction issue. Inspiration for this position was seen as deriving from his nationalist view that damage had been done to the soul of Japan by North Korea in their abduction of a number of Japanese citizens. (i3)

*Of course, if you look into the political context there've been a lot back and forth as to for instance Shinzo Abe-san's position was he too nationalistic or too right-ist and so forth and there was made a link between his behavior and the fact that he was really putting the only focus on solving this abduction issue with North Korea /../ inspired or promoted by his nationalistic views in the sense that North Korea inflict a kind of damage to the, to Japan, the soul of Japan by abducting a number of citizens (i3)*

The most vocal group for resurgence in militarism can be found in the right-wing people associated with the "black cars"/"sound trucks" that have declined over the years. These views are however very seldom, if at all, mirrored by the rest of the population. Further, militarism should be interpreted in the context of when it was materialized, which today is totally different from the 1930's and 40's. (i3)

*but if you mean nationalistic in the sense of a kind of revival of militaristic attitudes, then I don't think it's, I've never met that in Japan, and I've been traveling a lot in Japan, of course you can see that the right-ist and the nationalist screaming every weekend in Shibuya and so forth, but when talking with people I think it's very seldom that they'll come up with, let's say comments or statements that could be described as being nationalistic in the sense of going back to the "good ol' days" of Japan. ... Militarism, I mean what happened to, in the 30's, what the Imperial Army did, what happened during the second world war, that was the most brutal form of militarism. /../ Because it was used really to dominate the neighbouring countries in the whole region. (i3)*

In the last 20 years the phenomenon of (black) sound trucks have declined in presence quite noticeably and are now not as common, and the far-right isn't seen as much stronger in Japan, than in for instance France and Germany, with the "old guard" making a last stand. (i1)

*You used to have a sort of a column, the military word is not exaggerated, you would have a column of 'sound trucks', maybe 6, 8, 10 of them, blaring music, driving around with great 'rising sun flags', shouting "Banzai", "tennōhēka banzai"<sup>34</sup> and so forth. I haven't seen that since I came back, it was a common sight 20 years ago. ... I think the far-right elements in Japan are no*

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<sup>34</sup> 天皇(n) Emperor of Japan, 万歳(n) banzai (a celebratory cheer); hurrah; (lit. 10 000 years).  
Own translation: "long live the Emperor"

*stronger today than in France, than in Germany, just to take those two. ... Yes, I would defiantly see it like that[, the old guard making a last stand]. ./ these are yesterday's debates ... and today's people are not very interested.(i1)*

The experience of two nuclear attacks has changed the mindset of people in Japan which is by nature a very pacifistic country. (i3)

*Japan is the only country who has experience the suffering from the atomic bombs, and I think that has changed really the mindset of people in, and Japan is by nature a very pacifistic country, (i3)*

According to informant I3 a lot of people are, particularly in the media, exaggerating and trying to make Japan look really nationalistic or even militaristic as exemplified with the debate surrounding the educational reform. (i3)

*I think a lot of people are trying to describe Japan as being really nationalistic even militaristic and there was also this... part on education, there were a huge debate on patriotic part of it and I think it was exaggerated, a lot, in the media. (i3)*

The Abe administration, which used a clearly patriotic rhetoric, failed in implementing some of the reforms aimed at making Japan a prouder and more independent country. (i1)

*Abe tried to mobilize that lobby really in support of reform of the constitution, reform of the education system ... you know, a prouder and more independent Japan, he got nowhere. Why did he get nowhere? nobody's interested, it's not necessarily more international, they're just less national. (i1)*

#### 4.2.2 Views on Japanese cultural nationalism

Many Japanese from the establishment have had a high exposure to the world outside Japan, and are perceived as very internationalized, not only in regards to behavior, but also their curiosity in what goes on outside Japan and how this can benefit Japan. However, it is felt that Japan has a certain paralysis in viewing the US as it's only Ally. Also, Japan is seen as a economic superpower, but it is also seen as being quite limited in its ability to transform this economic power to political power.

*Extremely many Japanese from the establishment have kind of education background from United States mainly, Many of them are capable of speaking English and you can have a free discussion with them, they are very open minded and they are also very internationalized, not only in their behavior but also in let's say their curiosity about what's happening in the world outside of Japan, and how Japan really can benefit from the strengths that Japan has. ... On the other hand, all other countries are just described as kind of partners, and friends and so forth, and I think Japan has been to some extent paralyzed by this notion that they have only one ally [the US] ... Japan is a kind of economic superpower, but they are very bad at well transferring this economic power, ./ [into a] kind of political critical mass ./ [so] their influence on global politics is very limited. (i3)*

When looking at Japanese organizations, especially companies, the importance of hierarchy is further reinforced since they are built around a “goat”. This “goat” embodies the spiritual head of the company and its philosophy, or “wisdom”, which the company follows (i2)

*Japanese society is completely different from the societies in Europe and... In Japanese society there's a structure, top-down structure, which you see very clear in the big companies, the big*

*companies are built around a goat, [What he says, that's it.] ... this business was connected to some philosophy, some wisdom. /...they follow a philosophy, (i2)*

Informant *I1* connects this to a Confucian approach to life (Japan is supposed to be half Buddhist and half Shinto).

*their value system, although they're supposed to be half Buddhist, half Shinto, I find that their approach to life is largely Confucian; hierarchical and family based, and respect based. (i1)*

As informant *I3* points out, these general images are, to some extent, constructed by the Japanese themselves, as a means of gaining the upper hand or protection.

*to some extent [Japaneseness],it's been constructed by the Japanese themselves because they wanted to protect themselves, and really create kind of an advantage (i3)*

Historically, support has been centered in and around the family, which still is the case for most part, with loyalty centered around the company; this is however in both cases in decline according to informant *I1*.

*You know as I've said, honesty, very much family based support systems still, company based loyalty system but that's breaking down obviously with the decline in lifetime employment. (i1)*

This being said, Informant *I3* perceives the general image (stereotype) created by foreigners to characterize the Japanese – “Japaneseness” – which he was influenced by when he came to Japan, is by far not correct.

*I realized this general image is by far not really correct description of Japan (i3)*

#### 1.1.1.6. The Island Country Concept

Except the importance of hierarchy, all the informants stated that the Japanese had a sort of “island mentality”, generated by Japan being isolated as an island; thus feeling separated from the outside world. It is also noted that being on an island makes it easier to maintain ‘their own society’ and keep unwanted influences out, something that they see as important (i5).

*[A] sort of island psychology, which is also noted in European integration for example the British. It gives you a reflex, that fact you are separated from others, and enables you to maintain things separately from, border controls, you think when you're on an island are relatively safe to keep things outside, whether it's [raiders] or illegal immigrants or whatever. (i5)*

This island mentality and the relative isolation that Japan enjoys, especially when taking local initiatives into consideration, positions Japan in an angle to be seen as perhaps the best country when it comes to protecting and sustaining some very old traditions; and even in areas that are highly westernized, like Tokyo, one can find people eagerly engaged in conservation activities relating to the culture of Japan (i3).

*Japan is perhaps the only country, or perhaps the country who is best at protecting, keeping alive some very old traditions. ... and you will find a lot of activities in Tokyo in other parts of Japan where people are eagerly conserving old traditions that would be, that form the culture of Japan. (i3)*

Japan being isolated as an island referred to as “the island country concept” is also said to be connected with Japan being a very homogenous country, introvert and weary of foreigners. This is seen as a more deep-seated cultural phenomenon rather than nationalism.

*Japan is still a “Shimaguni”, it’s still an island country, very much a racially and ethnically homogenous society, still weary of foreigners and rather introverted, little bit xenophobic if you like, so there is that, not ... quite the same as nationalism, it’s more something culturally very very deep-seated in Japan. (i1)*

Also, it is thought that the Japanese are afraid of the outside world, and even though they like to go there, they are seen to be quite happy with having a uniform society with few foreigners according to I2.

*the Japanese are in some way very happy that they are very uniform society. They don’t have so many foreigners here. (i2)*

This isolation and being afraid of the outside world have implications for foreigners working in Japan. The very tough attitude towards immigration and the shortage of labor is also noted as Japan is inclined to make up for the labor shortage, caused by its aging society, with high-technology (i3).

*[They’re very tough on immigration], and instead they have developed this idea of using modern technology or high technology rather to take over some of the tasks that a society with a shrinking population will face, and to some extent they might be more nationalistic about this issue (i3)*

However, there is some disagreement regarding the level of homogeneity of Japanese society. One informant (i1) express an opinion of the Japanese as being a very uniform and homogenous group, whilst informant I3 describes this as a myth, with the Japanese society exhibiting a huge difference between people of different regions, cities and city wards all around the country.

*I think there are many many myths about Japan and Japanese, ././ that Japan is very inward looking country, Japanese do not really speak English and they are not interested in what’s going on outside of their own country, they are very, it takes years to get a decision because they have to really to attain this consensus and nobody want to lose face and so forth. (i3)*

Individualism is on the rise, and individual, personal and differing opinions have today reached a level almost unknown in the last two decades, thus Japan is becoming less homogenous (i1).

*There is far more individualism, expression of individual, personal, private opinions, expressions of differing opinions from the group and so forth, that was almost unknown 23 years ago. ... So it’s a less homogenous society, more normal society in that sense. (i1)*

#### 1.1.1.7. Individual Characteristics

The Japanese people are regarded as very polite: “*Japanese are very polite people*” (i2), even to the point where one can spend an hour or more in a meeting just saying polite words: “*They can spend an hour without saying anything just polite words and so forth*” (i3). The Japanese are perceived as being very honest: “*on the whole the Japanese are incredibly honest, this is the only country that I know where people save their seats using their handbags, and you can*” (i1), with a deep sense of duty: “*Japanese are very reliable, in the sense that they have this very deep sense of duty, if they say they will do something they will do it*” (i4). A strong trait with the Japanese is that they never exaggerate, except for perhaps modesty: “*A very strong trait in the Japanese, they are not nonchalant, they take issues seriously, and they never exaggerate for instance. “The only thing they would exaggerate is modesty” (i4).* They don’t really show their emotions easily, which makes it hard for others to know what they really think, and they do not act aggressively.

*they don't really, show their emotions very easily, they always make the you know, the opponent somehow feel comfortable, so, it may be difficult to know what they really think ... They don't, act aggressively [either]*  
(i4)

It is emphasized by informant I2 that the Japanese use the notion of “Wisdom” more than westerners, and that the Japanese people are very wise, something that is seen as *the* fundamental thing of Japanese culture (i2).

*But, one thing I like to emphasize about Japan is that they use a special notion, which is not so widely used in Europe and United States, is the notion 'Wisdom'. ... I think that Japanese, Japan is very wise, the people are very wise ... This is, this, the fundamental, this is the Japanese culture*  
(i2)

#### 1.1.1.8. Japanese

The Japanese language has some peculiarities, and using the Japanese language itself, one has to take into consideration the social standing/hierarchical order between the people conversing, which according to informant I2 makes for a very stable top-down structure.

*look to the people above them and you see even their language needs to, if you talk to somebody else you have to define who is above, who is bellow. And this makes the structure very stable because it's top-down.*  
(i2)

Further, the language is also seen as a barrier to communication because the risk of misunderstanding, which always means loss of face, and because of this things must be carefully prepared in order to avoid misunderstandings, which causes surprise, and surprise is loss of face. This language barrier is seen not only to affect interaction between foreigners and the Japanese, but also interaction amongst the Japanese as well (i1)

*Misunderstanding is a very, you know, in English or European languages, it's just a word. In Japanese culture it's a nightmare, because it happens all the time, and it always means loss of face, because things must be carefully prepared, so there must be no misunderstanding, because misunderstanding causes surprise, and surprise is loss of face. So I think the Japanese language is a huge barrier to communication by foreigners, but it is also a significant barrier to communication among Japanese themselves and for Japanese with foreigners. (i1)*

## 4.3 Japan cultural nationalism and foreigners decisions

In a more practical sense, that is, how Japanese nationalism might influence the relations with other countries, all the informants stated that it did not affect government to government decision-making and the way they conducted their business with their counterparts in Japan.

*No. No not at all, certainly not at a government to government level or interacting with ministries, not at all. (i1)*

Although the informants seemed to agree about that Japanese nationalism does not influence decision-making, they are not totally committed to the *idée*. As informant *I5* seemed to indicate, there is a *but*. The “Island concept” could influence the relations.

*you don't encounter nationalistic flows in dialogues on the surface but.. of course Japanese is very much an island, psychologically, which makes them a bit less influential to foreign incentives in policy making than we would like perhaps. (i5)*

And informant *I4* believes that there seems to be a certain, to some degree hidden, Japanese nationalistic flow running in the interactions with the Japanese. Informant *I4* also point out a difference in attitude that could be existing in international relation between Japanese and other countries as he suggest that the Japanese could have a more “patronizing” attitude towards its Asian neighbors.

*I'm sure it [nationalism] exists to some degree [when interacting with my Japanese counterparts], but it's pretty hidden. ././ I think Japanese still they respect Europeans ././ If I were Chinese, I might have a different experience, I believe so. So I guess ././ I do think the Japanese have this kind of thinking. I do think that they have a really got patronizing, attitude towards some of their Asian neighbors. But, we don't experience it because we come from Europe. (i4)*

In one way it is noticed by informant *I5* that the people diplomats meet are part of a relatively small elite with a higher degree of exposure to, or education in, the outside world, they cannot be taken as an average man or woman of the people of Japan.

*But the people that we meet as professional diplomats, ././ are not the average Japanese. So what we meet is a small, relatively small elite group that has been relatively more open, or more educated to be open to the outside world, many of them have even stayed abroad ././ And so, I cannot take the people I meet as reflection of Japan. We only scratch at the outside. (i5)*

In the practical relation with Japan here are a few things to consider. As everything has to be very clear about what has been said and what should be done, the government interaction tends to be very slow and labor intensive, in order to get a deal. But the upside is that when the deal is reached everybody involved know about it and everybody should be united and the Japanese will deliver. But as informant *I1* also point out, they will deliver to their understanding, so it is very important for the other side to be clear of the meaning of the deal.

*everything tends to be rather slow and painstaking and inch by inch, and everything has to be said ten times, and checked ten times because that's just the way Japan works, “nemawashi”<sup>35</sup>, the result of the Japanese need always to have everybody onboard before they do something... you need to prepare something very carefully and make sure that everybody is onboard before you do*

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<sup>35</sup> 根回し (n, Suru-v) - “Making necessary arrangements”; “laying the groundwork”

*it, that's the downside. The upside is that when you get a deal you got a deal, at least at the public level, I'm not sure the private sector quite the same experience, but certainly in government to government...but when you get there, the Japanese will always deliver, but they will deliver to their understanding of the letter, so if you've understood something, that the deal meant something else, then of course you may be disappointed. (i1)*

According to one informant I3, Japan is very much a networking society, and the importance of being accepted into the right networks is crucial in order to have many doors; the right doors, open up to you. At the same time, the artifacts and codes constituting Japaneseness is likened to a kind of package wrapping; something that should be put aside, especially if you want to gain influence. Then you have to focus and go to the core of things and not get distracted by the things that surrounds it.

*[Japan is] a networking society. And if you are accepted in the, the right networks, then a lot of doors will be open ... [Japaneseness.] It's kind of a wrapping,././ I'm interested in influence,././ you really really have to put aside all the wrapping,././ if you want to influence, then you really have to go, really to the core. (i3)*

As for respecting the Japanese and their ways in discussions, informant I4 underlines that social codes and local customs has to be taken into consideration when dealing with the Japanese, something that can also have practical aspects such as being ready in time (i4).

*we have to take [the social codes of a country where we are working] that into consideration, we have to respect the local customs. ././ For instance, Japanese people are always on time. They actually ././ may be half an hour earlier so this means we have to be ready at least 30 minutes before the event starts, this is a very practical kind of example, but of course you learn this kind of things very quickly, you know, for instance, the courtesy in all kind of communication ... after being here for three years then you get so used to it you don't even notice it anymore (i4)*

In sharp contrast to this another informant I3, did not feel any necessity for this, and it was expressed that the Japanese counterparts could easily be challenged, something even seen as being a moral obligation of foreigners.

*in my, let's say discussions with my Japanese counterparts, I would never really try [to] ././ respect the Japanese. (i3) ... we can easily challenge Japanese businesspeople, politicians, ordinary people if you want to, and I think it's our obligation to them. (i3)*

# 5 Discussion

## 5.1 Support for the research question

The purpose of this thesis was to describe how foreign professionals, working with foreign relations to Japan, feel, perceive and relate to Japanese [cultural] nationalism. A phenomenological method was used, which allowed the informants experiences to be discovered.

The result revealed that the informants tended to perceive the concepts in quite an orthodox way; as a political movement, mainly associated with right-wing groups, and relate to Billig (1995) description of the words definition in many other theoretical approaches. However, with the intended meaning of the word nationalism as used in the theory of banal nationalism; it is thus not misleading to use the term nationalism for the excited state that nationals sometime assume, and further use another word to describe the less excited state that nationals assume when going on with their daily lives and being exposed to the banal forms of influence that cultural nationalism use in order to survive and guarantee its existence as a big narrow code system, with passionate nationalism being a narrow code system within it (Fiske, 1990).

In one respect, the (Black) Sound trucks referred to by informants can be seen as symbols and agents for plain nationalism, in another respect, they can also be seen as a symbol of the sub-culture that nationalism can be seen as in relation to the cultural nationalism in which it is contained (Fiske, 1990). As informants noted, there had been a decrease in the amount of (Black) Sound trucks and that the current “flare” of nationalist activity could be considered as an action by the “old guard”. If these so called “old guards” have actually been exposed to imperial propaganda during their upbringing, this might be a sign that the residual effects of these information campaigns are diminishing in influence (through the reduction of agents propagating the associated meme<sup>36</sup> and thus putting pressure on the remaining carriers to intensify their efforts), one should also take into account that popular culture as a medium for plain nationalistic propagation is increasing (Sasada, 2006), which can have an affect on its propagation efficiency (Fiske 1990)

As the result indicates, “The Island Country Concept” was important in the informant’s perception of Japan and the Japanese, with the main characteristics being seen as ‘homogeneity’. In one way one can connect this to the stereotyping of geographical territory into “homelands” (Özirimli 2000:200f). The most notable is also the way in which *Nihonjinron* propagates this stereotype of Japan as being a very homogenous society. Thus, this stereotype can make people think that their own, or another, group is more separate than they really are.

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<sup>36</sup> A mental artifacts or ideas like fashion, catch-phrases and Moores law (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/evolution-cultural/> 2008-05-15).

Not all informants agree with this view of Japan as a homogenous society however, and as noted in the result individualism is perceived to be rising, which could indicate that the Japanese are exposed to ideas from societies with a high degree of individualism.

It was also said that there were many myths surrounding Japan, including the notion that Japan is isolationist. The concept of myth (Fiske, 1990) does suit the stereotypes and ideas especially if propagated by *Nihonjinron* since people from the society's elite is active in propagating them as common sense, thus influencing the behaviour of the Japanese (Hauge, 1998). However, being introvert and weary of the outside world and foreigners, as well as being quite happy with having few foreigners within the country might not necessarily be a phenomenon that is unique to Japan, even if it were to be a deep-seated cultural phenomenon<sup>37</sup>.

As put forth in the results, the behaviour associated with country flags is perceived as natural. Billig (1995) the symbol that a flag constitute is important for a nationalism, and as Fiske (1990) also notes that the flag has the ability to activate myths, and that myths are the product of dominant groups within society, and that their origins, something that is also reiterated by Haugh (1998) in reference to *Nihonjinron*.

The informants does seem to have accepted some of the tenants of *Nihonjinron*, with one exception who showed some resistance to this type of "wrapping". Amongst the other informants, there is a consensus that the Japanese are a very homogenous group, something which is quite unrealistic, especially when taking the numerous sub-cultures of both national and non-national nature into consideration (Haugh, 1998; Sugimoto, 2003).

Informant also notes, like Haugh (1998) that some of the things that can be seen as "Japaneseness", are in fact ideas spread in order to give the Japanese an upper hand. What the informant referees to specifically isn't clear, but if various aspects of *Nihonjinron* is taken as natural (or common sense), then this will play into the person exposed to adjust his actions appropriately, something that can give the Japanese (elite) an upper hand.

Reference to the emic concept of *nemawashi* that: "when you get a deal you got a deal". In one sense this can be connected to what some scholars argue regarding culture bound bureaucracy (Sugimoto, 2003). However, *nemawashi* also affects decision-making in the sense that one has to take into consideration that the things that are decided on with the Japanese can get implemented fairly quickly, even though the initial part of the process does take a considerably longer time than might be expected; when the Japanese organization is prepared for implementation of the decision.

One interesting point was bought forward in the result relating to the way in which the "others" are portrayed. The Japanese as such were divided into two categories: the population at large, comprising of people who the informants didn't have professional contacts with and the establishment, which constituted the counterparts of professional interaction.

The establishment is differentiated and said to be more or less on an equal footing with the informant's primary group and not very different since a large part of it is perceived to have an educational background in the west, whereas the population at large are more "Japanese". A possible theoretical explanation to this could be that the

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<sup>37</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4671687.stm> (2008-05-25 04:09)  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3708098.stm> (2008-05-25 04:17)  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7014960.stm> (2008-05-25 04:30)

informants and their Japanese counterparts in the establishment share a form of community as a result of shared experiences such as academic schooling and increased exposure to the outside world (Anderson, 2003), which in turn results in behavior, language and rituals that further reinforces this sense of community (Billig, 1995).

This sense of community does not seem to be present between Japanese and other Asian diplomats according to informants who points out the patronizing manner in which the Japanese behave towards their Asian neighbors, which is to some sense also noted by Rose (2000). A possibility to explain this might be the (power) symbology of Japan being the most prosperous and advanced country in the region, in which case economic factors play a role in generating a banal nationalism that elevates the Japanese over their economically inferior neighbors

Similarly, in a way, is the way in which Japan is portrayed as an above average hierarchical society, even in the Japanese language itself, by several informants which also correlates with findings of sociological approaches when studying Japan (Sugimoto, 2003).

Further references to the Japanese language are made, noting that there is much structural room for misunderstandings due to the way in which Japanese (language) is constructed. This is also highlighted by Sugimoto (2003), who points out that there are certain concepts of indirectness, vagueness and ambiguity active in any language or culture.

Noted is also that the Japanese tend to refrain from showing their emotions, something that can be associated to the different linguistic aspects described by Sugimoto (2003), Feldman (1997) and Hendry (2003).

As the results show, no informant felt that nationalism affected decision-making. It is stated however that nationalism can be lurking under the surface of things when the informants are interacting with their Japanese counterparts, but it is something that is said to be concealed to some degree.

However, cultural nationalism does seem to play a role in influencing the way decisions are made by the informants, even though the small elite which diplomats usually meet have a higher degree of international exposure.

One thing that is stated is the way in which language has to be used in such a way that misunderstandings are eliminated, something that can take considerable time since things can have to be stated very clearly, perhaps several times.

As the results show, there is a slight fault line in regards to how one should approach the Japanese when working with them. One view echoes the proverb: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do", and that one should take into consideration the cultural aspects of the society in which one is a minority, and in essence reduce friction. Another is that there is a moral obligation of foreigners to challenge the Japanese. The later of these views can in some way say to counter the efforts of elites and other propagators of *Nihonjinron* through myths and ideas relating to the Japanese. However, Japan being the networking society that it is said to be, there might be aspects of Japanese cultural nationalism that one cannot escape, even when taking active steps to counter them.

## 5.2 Limitations

The result of this study cannot be generalized since it examines how individuals experience the concept of nationalism and its implications; which could be seen as a limitation.

It is also a drawback that this study failed to give an answer to some of the initial questions raised in the introduction.

The waste of the two interviews that were conducted but not used could also be considered a limitation.

## 5.3 Recommendations for further research

A statistical study of the same phenomenon might be of interest, as to similar studies carried out in other capitals and/or with different groups not necessarily belonging to elites such as the diplomatic communities in capital cities.

Of special interest might also be to study what foreigners from neighboring countries to Japan, as well as people from other Asian or non western countries feel, perceive and relate to Japanese [cultural] nationalism.

## 5.4 Result Summary

The purpose of this paper was to increase understanding of how foreign professionals within the diplomatic sector, working with foreign relations to Japan, feel, perceive and relate to Japanese nationalism.

The most relevant finding in the result show that the informants interpreted the word 'nationalism' to represent a political ideology, usually right-wing (although left-wing was mentioned), that strived to promote ones own country at the expense of others, or at the very least seeing it as superior. The informants views on Japanese society and culture (cultural nationalism) showed them viewing Japan as a hierarchical society with honest individuals; very much influenced by an "island country mentality", with the main characteristics being seen as 'homogeneity' and 'isolationism'; though it was also argued that this might be considered myth or changing as well.

The results also showed that the informants did not see their decision-making influenced by Japanese nationalism. However, it was uncovered that some influence was excreted on the informant's decisions via cultural nationalism.

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# 7 Appendixes

The following appendixes are to be found in the pages that follow:

- Appendix A – Interview Questions Template
- Appendix B – Informant Summary

## 7.1 Appendix A – Interview Questions Template

### Things to inform about before the interview:

- Thanks for their time
- Anonymity
- Audio recording
- Possibility of reading written transcript of interview (if there is time)

### Category Questions

(Avoid direct questioning)

- Age/Sex
- Education
- Work description (question 2)
- Current work desc. (duration)
- Time in Japan (question 2)
- Japanese language skills

### Basic follow-up questions

- In what way?
- Could you give an example?
- Could you elaborate on that?

### Bridging questions

- You said before...
- Regarding what you just said..
- Previously you stated that...

### Main questions

1. Could you start with telling me a little about yourself, your education and background?
2. Could you describe your work here in Tokyo/Japan, what do you do, and how long have you been here?
3. What did you do before you came to Tokyo/Japan?
4. Could you tell me about any negotiations/dialogues with Japanese representatives, and where you participated? How did it proceed and who participated?
5. What were the results of the dialogue? Positive/negative? Why?
6. Do you regard it as having been any special nationalistic flows in the dialogue? (Japanese or "European"?)
7. Can you tell me about any other negotiation/discussion where there were specific Japanese nationalistic aspects involved in the dialogue?
8. How do you perceive Japanese nationalism/patriotism (previous and present)
9. How would you describe your concept of nationalism? (positive or negative)
10. Generally speaking, can you see situation within your field of work where nationalistic flows have an influence, not just from a Japanese point of view.
11. Is there anything you would like to add?  
(Especially regarding nationalistic influences in, or on politics.)
12. Could you give recommendations of whom (within your line of work) I should speak with that might have information on these issues?

Be prepared to explain what you are asking about, without being too theoretical. Clarifications about i.e. nationalism could surface.

## 7.2 Appendix B – Informant Summary

#	Level	Section	Time in Japan	Work Experience	Japanese <sup>38</sup>
I1	Ambassador	Chancellery	4+1.5	33	Basic
I2	Ambassador	Chancellery	4 <sup>37</sup>	<sup>37</sup>	Basic
I3	Ambassador	Chancellery	2	25	Basic
I4	Deputy Head of Mission	Chancellery	2	20	Basic
I5	Section Head	Economics	2.5	N/A	Basic

<sup>37</sup> 4 years since presenting credentials, but has been in Japan perhaps 20 times since the 1960's

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<sup>38</sup> Basic proficiency enables survival or non-fluent and limited communication (Japanese Language Proficiency Test, Level 4-3)