

Questioning the efficacy of nation branding:

A case study of Britain through the BBC World Service in Japan

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Abstract:

This paper draws attention to the difficulty of establishing the efficacy of nation branding as it argues that factors beyond the control of the branding practice have an effect on the nation brand, especially the social, cultural and economic contexts in which the brand operates. In order to highlight this problem, this paper attempts to introduce a particular analytical framework to study nation brands and nation branding by drawing on Actor Network Theory (ANT) or more precisely, Michel Callon's notion of *agencement*. This will be demonstrated through the examination of the BBC World Service broadcast to post-war Japan in its attempt to help to create 'favourable image of Britain', which can be seen as a nation branding. While this paper maintains that it is impossible to draw any conclusion as to whether the Corporation was successful in this endeavour, it clearly establishes how complex the process of creating a certain image of a place is. In this way, it illuminates a major flaw in the argument for nation branding, which suggests that the concept - as a science - has a know-how to 'persuade large numbers of people to change their minds about things' (Anholt, 2003: 212).

Introduction

This paper argues that it is difficult to establish the efficacy of nation branding as factors beyond the control of the branding practice have an effect on the nation brand, especially the social, cultural and economic contexts in which the brand operates. In order to highlight this problem, this paper attempts to introduce relational thinking into the study of nation brands and nation branding by drawing on Actor Network Theory (ANT) or more precisely, Michel Callon's notion of *agencement*. This will be demonstrated through the examination of the BBC World Service broadcast to post-war Japan, which can be seen as attempting a nation branding of Britain, since the World Service claimed to play a major role in 'helping to create a favourable image of Britain' in Japan (2 April 1974). While this paper maintains that it is impossible to draw any conclusion as to whether the Corporation was successful in this endeavour, it clearly establishes how complex the process of creating a certain image of a place is. In this way, it illuminates a major flaw in the argument for nation branding, which suggests that the concept - as a science - has a know-how to 'persuade large numbers of people to change their minds about things' (Anholt, 2003: 212).

The concept of place/nation branding has become popular amongst local authorities, governments and other similar institutions in recent years (Moor, 2007:82-88). Moor argues that this is because it is considered that commercial design and branding techniques may help regenerate local economies by improving the image of the places and nations concerned, as a result, this will help promote tourism and improve diplomatic relations. The concept of place/nation branding is said to have been popularised by Simon Anholt who works as a place/nation branding consultant. Anholt claims that branding places is different from branding products in

terms of practice (2003:213). He argues that in the practice of place branding, substantive improvements in many areas of the place are important in achieving the expected outcome as well as the ways in which the effects or outcomes are communicated to the outside world (see Anholt, 2003:214-6). However, the important point here is that the term branding, which is about promoting things, seems interchangeable with the term marketing (Anholt, 2003:213). Thus, nation branding can be treated in the same way as branding products, thus it should be understood as the promotion of a particular nation by different means that are employed for promoting products, such as advertising (OED: 2005).

This means that the concept of nation branding may be approached in the same way as the concept of branding. Recent research suggests that in order to understand how branding works, all the relational work should be examined (du Gay, 2004), instead of focusing on the producer or the consumer or both, which has been the traditional focus of brand research (e.g. Aaker, 1998; Kapferer, 1997; Keller, 1998). Thus, this study employs a particular social scientific method that addresses the relational properties of social phenomena. Especially, this study utilises an approach that was devised to study economic action, namely, Callon's notion of *agencement*, which enables the examination of all actors and elements involved in the circulation of a nation brand: Britain.

This paper consists of two main parts with the first focusing on the analytical approach and the second on the empirical work. The first section begins by examining the concept of nation branding in order to highlight the problem with the claim that the practice of nation branding works. This leads to the introduction of the relational approach, especially its development in the study of promotional activity, followed by the examination of Callon's notion of *agencement*, which leads to the presentation of

the particular methods employed in this study. The second part of this paper turns to examine the role of the Japanese Language Service (the JLS) at the BBC's World Service in projecting an image of Britain; this part consists of three sub-sections: Propaganda and media control through the US occupation in Japan; The propaganda war and anti-Americanism, and the BBC; History, traditions and ruralism and the enduring image of Britain.

The questionable efficacy of nation branding

Nation branding practitioner Simon Anholt argues that nations have ‘always’ been brands and they have ‘always’ engaged the practice of branding (2003: 213). He does so in response to the negative reactions, which the idea of branding nations is said to provoke and here, he bases his argument on a brief study of nationalism by another practitioner Wally Olins (2004:242). Entitled, ‘Opinion Piece: Branding the nation- the historical context’, Olins attempts in this work to demonstrate that nation branding is comparable to nationalism promoted by the state since both seek to reinvent the image and identity of a nation by creating ‘self-sustaining myths’ (2002:245). Consequently, he is critical of social scientists who refuse to accept that nations have long practised branding. Furthermore, Olins views their attitude as ‘snobbery’, largely caused by their ignorance of how business works since some ‘so-called intellectuals’ consider business as a ‘contemptible’ and ‘boring’ activity.

To be sure, the concept of state nationalism and that of nation branding appear to be based on similar principles as both attempt to influence people to view a nation more positively or better still, to feel more positively about it. From this perspective, Olins’s criticism appears reasonable; however, the problem lies elsewhere as Olins offers an example of a ‘typical’ view of branding nations held by academics through reference to an article by a political scientist¹. As mentioned earlier, so far, the concept of branding has not been examined extensively within the social sciences, and it seems premature to make any conclusive remarks concerning how the concept of nation branding is viewed academically². However, Olins’s accusation that the

¹ It is not possible to comment on this matter further as I have not been able to obtain the paper authored by Prof Michel Girard to which Olins refers in his article.

² In my PhD research, I attempt a social scientific examination of the operation of branding social scientifically and have conducted literature reviews of social scientific studies of brands and branding.

typical attitude displayed by academics towards the concept is one of ‘snobbery’ and ‘ignorance’ appears to stem from his own ignorance of what academics find problematic. The examination of brand literature in business and management, and marketing by this author demonstrates that most works by business practitioners lack rigour in their arguments, which often leads to unsubstantiated claims (2006).

Olins’s historical examination of the use of nationalism by political leaders is a case in point. The field of nation and nationalism is a vast one, which has developed over a long period of time (e.g. Smith, 1998). This indicates that the concept of nationalism is a highly complex phenomenon and that the investigation into this area is ongoing. It is important to note that in this endeavour, the underlying assumption is that the social world is not fully knowable: hence, it is impossible to understand this concept fully (e.g. Bird, M. et al., 2006; de Landsheere, G., 1988). This is the basis on which social scientists conduct research as their aim is to extend knowledge of the social world in which we live and to disseminate it. This is not acceptable to business practitioners as their main goal is to make financial gains from their ideas. Because of this constraint, the practitioners must claim that these ideas work, which may or may not be the case, and frequently, they have not been substantiated through rigorous investigation. An examination of promotional materials by practitioners in branding and nation branding indicates that they operate in much the same way³.

Interestingly, in his discussion of branding products and services elsewhere, Olins concedes that no matter how much money is spent on promoting the brand or how sophisticated the methods of promoting it appear to be, it is consumers that have ‘ultimate power’ to decide the success or failure of branding (Olins, 2003:9). Olin’s

So far I have identified three sociological works that are devoted to the concept of brands and branding (see Arvidsson, 2006; Lury; 2004; Moor; 2007)

³ In my PhD research, one of the major aims is to demonstrate that it is difficult to claim that branding practice works through a study of the Japanese ‘no brand’ brand, *Muji*.

admission supports the idea that producers experience considerable difficulty in persuading consumers to do what they want. However, Olins claims that with more resources, the situation can be improved, which leads him to draw attention to state nationalism. Here, he argues that the state has infinitely more resources than private enterprise to compel people do things. Thus, he suggests that, unlike ‘Kemal Ataturk or Sadam Hussein’, business leaders cannot ‘control what people wear... or execute people’ (247).

The main problem with Olins’s suggestion is his lack of awareness concerning the difficulty of ‘manipulating’ people into doing things in general, regardless of whether it is attempted by a business leader or a political leader. In other words, the question here is about agency and how any forms of agency, which equips people or human actors to take action, can occur. This is a fundamental, yet difficult question, and there has been much research conducted in various fields to understand why and how people do things in the way they do. For instance, the examination of a state with ample resources in the form of modern China and its efforts to promote state nationalism⁴ is highly illuminating. This demonstrates that even with the Chinese state’s ability to control much of what its citizens do, including media output, its attempts to create a positive image of the country was unsuccessful after the Tiananmen incident in the early 1990s (2005). This outcome can be explained by the presence of many other factors beyond the control of the state, which is in line with the relational approach used in this paper. This leads to an important question; if the Chinese state with its enviable resources cannot influence its citizens to feel more positive about their own nation, what are its chances of influencing people from

⁴ This author has examined the concept of state nationalism, using modern China as an example (unpublished 2004).

outside China? Consequently, what is the situation for states with more limited resources? What are their chances of being successful at nation branding?

These are relevant questions in considering the efficacy of nation branding. However, they do not seem to concern branding practitioners for the simple reason that not practising nation branding is not an option for them. Instead, they focus on persuading their potential clients into taking up the practice by presenting its benefits, and by illustrating how to undertake nation branding. In this vein, they introduce various practices that are considered essential. For instance, Anholt claims that communicating ‘qualities’ and ‘aspirations’ of a place is central to nation branding, and in doing so he stresses the coherence of communication as critical in ensuring the success of the practice (Anholt, 2003: 214). There is much to be discussed regarding this suggestion; however, one of the most relevant ideas for this paper concerns Anholt’s suggestion that it is necessary to manage the way in which a nation ‘features in the world’s media’ (2003:215). As it will be demonstrated later, it is difficult to control how the media audience perceives any information, even though the media outlet attempts to ensure that the information conveyed remain coherent.

It seems possible for the media to play a role in turning a nation into a phenomenon accidentally. One of the most recent examples of this instance is of a phenomenon which came to be known as ‘Cool Britannia’ in the late 1990s. Britain from the late 1990s did offer much in terms of art and culture to the rest of the world as well as its phenomenal economic growth, fuelled by the relentless deregulation, especially within the financial industry. It is claimed that the term was coined by Stryker McGuire, an American journalist, who was writing for *Newsweek* in 1996 (The Observer, 29th March 2009). In fact, the term came from his observation of what was happening in Britain and a similar example is provided by the phenomenon of the

Japanese ‘miracle’ economy, as termed by *The Economist* in 1962. Again, then the Japanese economy was beginning to ‘take off’ and it was an observable fact.

However, this idea led the media, as well as academics both inside and outside of Japan, to focus even more on its strong economy.

These examples indicate that the world’s media play a pivotal role in communicating certain information about a nation, which inadvertently influences how people view the nation. Significantly, it appears that neither the phenomenon of ‘Cool Britannia’ or that of ‘Japan’s miracle economy’ was orchestrated by any nation branding practice when these terms were first invented⁵. This confirms the difficulty of managing how a nation is portrayed by the world’s media as it is impossible to control journalists concerning the content of their reporting. In addition to this, media reporting should not be seen as the only decisive factor in shaping a particular image of a nation; in the cases of ‘Cool Britannia’ or ‘Japan’s miracle economy’, it is important to be aware that there were many other factors that affected the making of each phenomenon. For instance, with the case of Japan’s economic miracle, the threat of Communism within the Cold War framework may or may not have played a role. Thus, these examples suggest that nation branding is extremely difficult to undertake, but it is necessary to understand how a particular image becomes attached to a nation to ensure this is the case. This is why this study employs an analytical framework that focuses on the relational work in the circulation process of a brand as this approach allows the examination of factors that lie beyond the control of the branding practice.

⁵ According to Chalmers Johnson, the reporting by the Economist and other foreign media made the Japanese aware of the phenomenal success of its economy (See Johnson, 1982). Similarly, Anholt’s claim that Japan rebranded itself in the postwar period from the producer of ‘shoddy, second rate products’ to a high tech economy is unfounded (2003: 216). Manufacturers were aware that their products had problems with quality; however, they focused on improving these problems, not paying attention to the negative image (see Partner, 1999).

Towards a relational approach in the study of nation branding

In the examination of the promotion of Britain through the JLS, this paper proposes the use of an analytical framework developed to study the promotion of consumption or branding. This is largely because these fields seem to have a much deeper understanding of what makes human actors take certain forms of action concerning the consumption of goods and services. Until recently, in various fields within the study of the promotion of consumption, including business and management, and marketing, the focus was firmly on either the producer or the consumer. For instance, in the study of brands and branding, some of the most influential works examined the techniques and practices of successful branding by producers. This was because it was believed that the producer controlled the process of branding (Aaker, 1996; Kapferer, 1997; Keller, 1998). Other works focused on the affective aspect of consumer behaviour, as understanding consumer behaviour was (seen as) the key to understanding branding (Elliot and Wattanasuwan, 1998; Fournier, 1998; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). However, some of the most recent work on 'promoting consumption' suggests that the phenomenon should be studied by examining all the 'relational work' that is involved in the circulation process (Du Gay, 2004:100). This particular approach is not widespread within social sciences and this study attempts to utilise this in the study of the consumption of the JLS.

Examining all the relational work may be difficult, but within the study of brands and branding, the focal point has always been the market. Thus, Schroeder and Salzer-Mörling suggest the necessity of examining issues outside 'the marketplace' (2006: 4-5). This means that the focus of the study has shifted from the relationship between producer and consumer to all the relationships that are involved in the

circulation of branded goods and services. In other words, this approach involves the examination of every element that has had any impact on the creation of certain forms of agency within consumers to buy or to want to buy the goods and services from certain brands. Therefore, according to this approach, no one single actor or element controls the circulation process.

Actor Network Theory and Callon's notion of *agencement*

As indicated earlier, this study employs Callon's notion of *agencement*, which has been developed to study economic phenomena utilising the basic framework of Actor Network Theory (ANT). ANT was originally devised to study socio-technical phenomena. It assumes no *a priori* notions and it studies objects by tracing associations of actors, both human and non-human, to examine how particular types of agency occur by 'following the actor' (Latour, 2005: 12). It claims that a particular form of agency is a product of such associations due to the way in which these actors are assembled. In other words, it is the interactions between the actors that shape the forms of the agency.

In examining economic phenomena, Callon draws attention to devices that he considers, play an indispensable role in creating different forms of agency. Thus, Callon, together with Fabian Muniesa and Yuval Millo, argue that in economic activities, devices 'make others act' (2007:2). This means that in studying economic activities, the relationship between human actors and devices should be treated differently. Furthermore, Muniesa et al. believe that devices should not be separated from human actors, but treated as 'compound *agencements*' (2007:2). The term *agencement* is a French word for which, according to Callon, there is no equivalent in

English (2007: 319). However, he suggests that it is similar to ‘arrangement’ or ‘assemblage’ and, therefore, an *agencement* can be described as being made up of different elements that have been ‘*carefully adjusted to each other* [emphasis added]’ (2007:319). This description conveys the idea that an *agencement* is achieved as separate elements become associated with one another to form a single ‘compound’ unit. More importantly, Callon claims that etymologically, *agencement* shares its origin with agency. Therefore, he asserts that *agencements* are ‘arrangements endowed with the capacity of acting in different ways depending on their configuration’ (2007:320).

Callon employs a more illustrative way of explaining this term through what he calls ‘distributed action’ (2008:34). He finds the term ‘action’ problematic, as this is not applicable to non-human actors. However, he introduces the concept of ‘distributed action’ to indicate that agency emerges only when different actors are assembled in certain ways. To clarify his point, he uses an airline pilot as an example. In order for the pilot to fulfil his/her professional duty, various elements, devices, and on-board staff create ‘collective’ action (2008:35). In this way, any action that takes place while the pilot is on duty does not originate through his or her sole agency, but is distributed amongst a variety of actors, both human and non-human. Therefore, it can be said that the action occurs because an *agencement* has been formed.

Returning to the examination of the consumption of the JLS, therefore, this study looks at the act of consuming the JLS as a ‘distributed’ or ‘collective’ action. Let us illustrate what can be considered part of the *agencement* here. In this case, it is easier to focus on the notion of device, although this particular study does not pay attention to non- human actors. For instance, a radio set is an important device, without which an actor could not even begin to consider becoming part of the

audience of the JLS. Importantly, the radio set has to be capable of receiving the short-wave radio frequency used to transmit programmes by the JLS. This will lead to an examination of other technical devices as non-human actors as well as human actors. Other important actors can include the producers in London, who were mostly working for the BBC on loan from various broadcasting houses in Japan. Again, this will lead to a further investigation of other actors, both human and non-human, which formed part of the *agencement* for the consumption of the JLS.

The main rationale for opting for this particular approach is because it draws attention to factors other than just the relationship between the producer and consumer. This approach can be applied to study activities involving media that concern their audience, but without limiting the focus to the producer and audience alone. Therefore, the main objective here is to demonstrate that in order to understand the popularity of a broadcasting service, it is also necessary to examine factors outside the relationship between the producer and the audience. In this way, this study illuminates how approaching the study of media can be approached by drawing attention to relational properties. In doing so, this research introduces Callon's particular approach into the study of media consumption.

Methods:

This study employs the basic approach used in ANT of 'following the actor'. Thus, it follows the JLS historically with a particular focus on its role of 'helping to create a favourable image of Britain'. Because of the limited scale of the study, it focuses on what are considered to be the relevant actors; however, they should be seen as part of the whole *agencement* that supports this particular form of agency. Therefore, it traces

relevant associations that the service has made with the persons, things and events that ‘equipped’ the service to fulfil this task. These include its audience and producers, as well as anyone and anything that is seen to have been part of this activity. Therefore, this study examines the historical background in order to understand the economic, social and political context in which the JLS was consumed.

Data were collected largely through documents found at the BBC Written Archives Centre in Caversham, Reading. Prior to the documentary research, this study consulted a historical account of the BBC Japanese Language Service published in Japan in 1983 to celebrate the service’s fortieth anniversary. This work was authored by Yuunosuke Ohkura, one of the former journalists at the service, which was informally requested by John Newman, who served as the head of the JLS from the 1970s. This is essentially a biography of the JLS from its inception in 1943, drawing attention to its activities as well as its personnel set in particular historical contexts.

Again, because of the limited scale of the research, it was not possible to conduct an extensive search for the personnel mentioned in the book for interview. However, it was possible to conduct a semi-structured interview with Ohkura, in which his personal experience was explored further; this was helpful in fleshing out some of the details in the book. The consultation of the book as well as the interview was extremely useful in determining the focus of the documentary research activity at the Archives Centre.

Projecting Britain through the BBC Japanese Service:

This section aims to examine some of the factors that may have contributed to the popularity of the JLS service. The service proved to be popular with its audience, which was demonstrated by the number of letters received from them. At its peak in the 1970s, the service even had to employ extra staff specially to deal with the task of reading and translating letters. It is beyond the scope of this study to understand fully how its popularity may have been achieved; rather the aim is to explore the relationship between the popularity of the service and its Britishness. In doing so, this study attempts to investigate the idea presented by the service that it was ‘helping to create a favourable image of Britain’. The section is loosely divided into three parts, which begins with a brief introduction of the operation of the JLS in Japan. The first part examines the historical background and the role of the United States. Without understanding the Japanese experience of the US occupation, it is impossible to fathom the extent of the appreciation that some of the audience felt for the JLS. The following part explores how other radio broadcasting networks might have affected the image of the BBC through the use of propaganda. Here, it pays particular attention to the notion of anti-Americanism, which seems to have played a significant role in shaping the image of the BBC in Japan. The final part investigates the construction of the enduring image of Britain and Britishness by exploring the idea of stereotyping.

The brief history of the BBC’s Japanese Language Service

The BBC’s Japanese Language Service (JLS) began operations in July 1943 as a wartime propaganda machine. The service survived many threats to its existence through funding cuts until its final demise on 30th March 1990, and its longevity is

remarkable, especially after Japan had been welcomed into the First World, which was not part of the list of target audiences for the World Service. In fact, it would be unimaginable to find Japan on such a list. To begin with, the country boasts the NHK (*Nihon Hoso Kyokai* or Japan Broadcasting Corporation), which is the ‘second largest’ public broadcasting corporation after the BBC (Pharr, 1996:5). Notably, the NHK was founded in 1926, having been modelled on the BBC⁶. By the 1970s, the country had become recognised as having highly ‘sophisticated’ media both in print and broadcasting (Pharr, 1996: 4). Therefore, the BBC’s decision to maintain the Japanese Language Service for as long as it did appears anomalous. There are many other aspects of the operation of the service that appear puzzling. Of particular significance is the fact that Japan had not been part of the British Empire and, therefore, the country had not enjoyed a close diplomatic relationship with Britain, unlike many other target countries for the World Service.

Accounting for the survival of the JLS is not a straightforward task as a series of unrelated events/factors seem to have created this effect conjunctively. However, from documentary evidence, it is clear that the service had constantly struggled to justify its existence. The World Service, as a government-funded body, to which the JLS belonged, could not escape close scrutiny by the Parliament. In its struggle for survival, the JLS claimed that it was playing a major role in Japan by ‘helping to create a favourable image of Britain’ (2 April 1974). In this way, the JLS could claim to be fulfilling its duty to the country by ‘broadcasting in the national interest’ or ‘bringing benefit to Britain’ (2 April 1974, BBC Archives; Sambrook, 2007). The JLS argued that by creating a favourable image of itself as the British public broadcasting

⁶ The first broadcasting stations were built at three separate sites in 1925, which were in Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya (see ‘The Present Situation of Broadcasting in Japan’ in *Radio Japan News* published by NHK in June 1980). In addition, the NHK was sending staff to the BBC as early as 1935 to learn radio broadcasting technologies (see, for instance, the letter to Mr. Pawley, dated 15th May 1937, BBC Archives).

corporation, this should reflect well on the image of Britain on the whole (Sambrook, 2007).

Propaganda and media control through the US occupation in Japan

The United States took sole responsibility for overseeing the reconstruction of Japan immediately after the Second World War through military occupation. ‘The great Japanese empire collapsed...morally, politically, and economically... the emperor-system ideology which had supported moral authority was shaken, and political authority had been usurped by the Allied Occupation’ wrote Rokurō Hidaka of the historic moment of Japan’s defeat on 15 August 1945 (Hidaka cited in Sakuta, 1978:224-5)⁷. Until then, the state had total control of the nation’s mind, body and spirit, and it was supposed to be ‘the most powerful arbiter of thought and behaviour’ (Sakuta, 1978:224-5).

Indeed, the day signified the end of the ‘dark valley’ of fascism and militarism, but at the same time, it was the dawn of what came to be recognised as the ‘democratic revolution from above’ initiated by the American occupation authorities (Dower, 1999: 65-9).⁸ Their fundamental objectives were the democratisation and demilitarisation of Japan through various reform measures, which included the dissolution of restraints on political expression, the liberalisation of the constitution, and the abolishment of the government-sponsored cult of state Shinto (Dower, 1999: 81-2). As stated in the Potsdam Proclamation of 26 July 1945, ‘freedom of speech, of

⁷ Hidaka, R. (1969) ‘Sengo Nihon ni okeru shakai to kojīn’, *Shakai no tetsugaku*, Iwanami Kōza:Tetsugaku, vol.5, Tokyo, Iwanami, p.44.

⁸ Dower describes the true nature of the Allied occupation, which was particularly dominated by American forces. In particular, the power of Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander, was unquestionable. See Dower (1999:73-74).

religion and of thought as well as respect for the fundamental human rights' were to be established⁹ (Koschmann, 1996).

Makoto Oda insightfully describes the effect of the defeat on the people of Japan as it was announced; he recounts his personal experience as 'a pervasive feeling of betrayal, a sense of having been victimised by the state' (Oda, 1978: 154). He claims that this was because of the unbridgeable gap that grew during the war between the reality and what had been portrayed by the state or between the real possibility of defeat and that of victory. Oda holds that as the people had been led to place 'irrational' faith in the infallibility of the state through the state ideology, the sense of betrayal was extremely 'intense' and 'widespread' (Oda, 1978: 155). Needless to say, the role of state propaganda in disseminating these ideas was of prime importance. Moreover, the aim of the establishment of the Japanese Language Service in 1943 was precisely to counter this effort by the Japanese government¹⁰ (Ohkura, 113-24).

The significance of the 'democratic revolution from above' was widely questioned as contradictory. For instance, John Dower emphatically criticises the nature of the occupation-led revolution, suggesting that 'never had a genuinely democratic revolution been associated with military dictatorship, to say nothing of a neo-colonial military dictatorship' (1999: 80-1). Of particular significance here is the occupation authorities' control of media and censorship in order to hammer democratic values into society. As a result, initially, NHK¹¹ was singled out as the

⁹ This is taken from Paragraph 10, which reads as follows: The Japanese Government shall remove all obstacles to the revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people. Freedom of speech, of religion, and of thought, as well as respect for the fundamental human rights shall be established.

¹⁰ One of the very few Japanese diasporas ever that worked for the JLS was said to have believed that the JLS would help the Japanese citizens who were not told the truth. See Ohkura (1983: 123).

¹¹ Dower states that NHK was used instead of its original *Nihon Hoso Kyokai* in emulation of the American broadcasting networks, such as CBS and NBC (1999: 206).

only radio broadcasting station permitted to operate. The situation lasted until commercial radio stations were given permission to join the public corporation in 1951(1999: 206). Moreover, Dower claims that radio scripts required pre-broadcast approval until August 1947 when censorship by the authorities was relaxed. However, this was not the end of media control by the authorities in Japan, as they would implement new measures with renewed vigour once the terror of the Cold War had set in¹² (1999: 432).

Before moving on to discuss the occupation authorities' media policy within the Cold War framework, some of the relevant aspects of censorship activity under the authorities need to be accounted for. Censorship was conducted through Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD) within the Counter Intelligence Section of the General Headquarters (GHQ). According to Shunya Yoshimi, censorship was aimed at all levels of communication media, including personal correspondence and phone calls. He suggests that as the scale of the censorship operation became so vast, by 1947 over 8,000 Japanese staff were employed to engage in this task (2007: 82). Here, the most relevant aspect of the operation was the idea that the CCD ensured no trace remained of the authorities' involvement in the censorship of any material (2007: 84). Yoshimi cites Jun Etoh who argues that in this way, the authorities could create the impression that Japan's defeat liberated its people and allowed them an environment in which to communicate their ideas freely¹³ (2007:85).

As the threat of communism began to sweep the world, the US government started reversing some of the democratic reforms in Japan in 1947, a strategy that came to be known as the 'reverse course' (Partner, 1999: 51). From then on, the focus

¹² According to Dower, the US state department complained that the censorship operation had 'the effect of continuing the authoritarian tradition in Japan'. See Dower (1999:432).

¹³ See Etoh, J. (1981) *Ochiba no Hakiyose*. Tokyo: Bungei Shunju; and Etoh J. (1989) *Tozasareta Gengo Kukan*. Tokyo: Bungei Shunju.

of media control was on anti-communism propaganda. Partner suggests that this policy change was the major factor in the spread of television in Japan, which was achieved within a short space of time. He claims that the idea was floated as early as 1950. In June 1950, an anti-communist US Senator, Karl Mundt¹⁴ made a proposal to begin a national television network, using a concept similar to the Voice of America, which he fittingly called the 'Vision of America' (Partner, 1999:79). This was because Mundt considered that this medium would act as a lethal weapon in winning the Cold War. As a renowned orator, he called this weapon a 'see-bomb', as he argued that television 'can put in motion chain reactions for constructive good which will rival in their magnitude the destructive consequences of the chain reactions of the A bomb' (1999:79). Mundt's words illuminate how the Cold War accelerated the extensive use of media in the attempt by the United States to win hearts and minds of would-be-communists in Japan.

The propaganda war and anti-Americanism, and the BBC

After the war, the JLS did not begin full operations until 1949 when their first expatriate staff arrived from NHK. Remarkably, it was claimed that part of the reason for this was the occupation authorities' disapproval of the idea of the NHK sending staff to the BBC. This was because they considered that the NHK should be sending their staff to the VOA and to no other organisation (Ohkura, 1983: 141). However, since Trevor Leggett had been appointed as the Head of the service in July 1946, the JLS had been preparing itself to serve the Japanese population long starved of unbiased foreign news during the war (Ohkura 1983: 134-141). One of the first letters from the audience arrived in June in the same year. While indicating that the audience

¹⁴ Previously, Mundt was one of the advocates for the Voice of America and was involved in the legislation process for establishing the national radio network (see Partner, 1999: 78).

in Japan was small due to the reception problem, the author shows much appreciation for 'unbiased news items and commentaries' from the BBC and Great Britain generally. Significantly, the author criticises the 'violent propaganda' used by Radio Moscow (BBC Archives, 7 June 1949). It is clear that propaganda was not tolerated in post-war Japan; the people had become highly sensitive to the truthfulness of news reporting.

Leggett sums up the attitudes of the Japanese towards propaganda in his report on his 'Duty Visit' to Japan in 1953 as follows.

The Japanese people are absolutely sated with propaganda, and highly suspicious of it. The pre-war and wartime propaganda has been discredited, and there is now a wide-spread disillusion about American propaganda, and to some extent about Russian propaganda among those who listened to it. They are tired of 'boasting and preaching', as they put it (BBC Archives, November 1953:2).

In the same report, Leggett also accounts for the 'anti-Americanism' that he encountered while in Japan. As a renowned Japanophile with extensive knowledge of the country, in this document, he offers his own analysis of how this negative sentiment towards the United States might have been aroused. He notes the astonishment of the Americans in receiving such 'ingratitude' from the people to whom America extended so much help in Japan's reconstruction effort. However, he suggests that the Japanese reaction is not surprising given the 'patronising' attitude of the ignorant few within the occupation force, which might have 'flayed sensitive skins' (November 1953: 4). Here, he goes on to argue that such a reaction by the Japanese was only to be expected, as many of them made a 'whole hearted' attempt to adopt 'the American Way of Life' (November 1953:4). Significantly, reactions against the majority of American ideas by the Japanese are also noted in another report published in 1959, entitled 'Broadcasting in Japanese' by the Head of Asian Services (BBC Archives, 2 December 1959).

Anti-Americanism in Japan encountered a new development as the Cold War intensified in the 1960s. Growing tension between the two opposing blocs, namely the Free World and the Communist bloc, fuelled the propaganda war amongst major countries. In this environment, stirring up anti-American sentiments through radio broadcasting became a useful tool for those in the Communist bloc. Information on the Japanese service prepared in 1960 claims that Communist China targeted Japan in its effort to 'divide' Japan through radio broadcasting both 'by plugging their revolutionary ideology' and 'by playing on the strong Anti-American feelings' (BBC Archives: 13 January 1960 D. M. Hodson). Given that the majority of the Japanese had become weary of propaganda by then, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of such measures. However, the propaganda war had some unexpected effects, which seems to have influenced the image of the JLS significantly.

It appears that the reputation of the JLS was enhanced by the use of propaganda by its major competitors, namely, the VOA, Radio Moscow and Radio Peking. Some of the 'sample' comments from Japanese listeners on news and current affairs compiled in 1961 support this suggestion as follows:

(On the JLS) News very clear and free from propaganda and political animus which one finds in Moscow and Voice of America. Yours is a reliable guide to the international situation.
E. Mikawa, Tokyo

Hitherto I've listened to VOA, Moscow, Peking, etc., but I think BBC is best because while Moscow and Peking are always attacking the free countries, VOA is running down communism so that both sides are making propaganda and the listener feels from beginning to end as if he is listening to a commercial.
M. Wake, Kyoto (BBC Archives, 1961)

It is clear that the audience viewed any form of propaganda negatively. The same seems true for anti-Americanism, as suggested by the second comment. However, away from the battle of propaganda, anti-Americanism seemed to function according to a different logic.

Here, the strong anti-American view held by a member of the staff who worked at the JLS between December 1962 and February 1966 is illuminating. Before presenting his comments, it is necessary to explain the recruitment policy of the JLS, which differed from others within the BBC World Service. The JLS mostly recruited professional journalists on loan from various Japanese media outlets. This was largely because the service endeavoured to provide a culturally authentic Japanese service¹⁵. Typically, these journalists would spend three years at the JLS and they would not be assimilated into the British way of life in such a short period of time. In this way, it was more likely that their perspective on life would not be too different from that of the JLS's audience. The former staff Yunosuke Ohkura claims that he was sent to the BBC because he requested not to be sent to the United States. According to him, within his organisation, working in the United States was reserved for elites; however, this was not an option for him.

The reason for his refusal to be sent to the United States was his strong anti-American feelings, which were expressed in a recent interview, as follows:

'I didn't like America's hypocritical attitude. The US was advocating freedom of speech, but during the war, they were censoring the media. They criticised Japan for its brutality during the war, but they were not totally innocent either... The worst of all is America's use of weapons of mass destruction, the nuclear bombs, but they did not have to account for the loss of many innocent lives' (Ohkura, May 2009).

Interestingly, the fact that Britain was on the American side during the Second World War did not trouble him very much¹⁶. Rather, Ohkura seemed to be willing to work in Britain, as he claims that he preferred Europe and he wanted to learn about different cultures. Indeed, he confirmed that he had a more favourable view of Britain than of the United States, as he suggested:

¹⁵ In particular, the service required that the staff spoke clear standard Japanese and initially, it approached news readers at NHK (Interview with Ohkura, May 2009).

¹⁶ It is well documented that Britain was very much a target of animosities held by the Japanese in similar ways as were the United States (see e.g. Dower, 1999: 65 or <http://www.cc.matsuyama-u.ac.jp/~tamura/hosigarimasen.htm>).

‘I considered Britain to be similar (to Japan), with its *long history* and *ancient tradition*’

(Ohkura, May 2009).

It is interesting to observe that Ohkura’s anti-Americanism was somehow turned into a pro-British sentiment. In fact, the Head of Asian Services, E.D. Robertson, presented this very scenario in his report published in 1959. Here, he considers the possible effect of popular American television and radio shows that were ‘cheaply’ available in Japan. While he considered that it is of ‘dubious’ advantage to the Americans in ‘long-run’ propaganda terms, he suggested that it may have been indirectly advantageous to the BBC. He pointed out that this was because they may have produced ‘a reaction against the American way’ and influenced the audience to sway towards the more ‘civilised’ British way. However, he indicated that in order for this effect to take place, enough information about the latter would have to be made available (BBC Archives, 2 December 1959).

It is not certain whether many members of the Japanese audience were persuaded to abandon the American way in favour of the ‘civilised’ British way. However, it is claimed that there were enduring warm feelings towards Britain amongst the Japanese population, which are said to have existed from the pre-war period. The description by Leggett in his Policy of Japanese broadcasts of the BBC prepared in 1952 is insightful here.

In spite of anti-British propaganda during the war, there is still in Japan a tremendous residual feeling that Britain is a sort of Big Brother of Japan; also a realisation that today the problems of the two countries are similar and that the British may have much to teach about their solution. (BBC Archives: Leggett: 17 December 1952)

Later in the decade, Robertson made a similar remark to Leggett’s concerning Japan’s cordial attitudes to Britain as its ‘elder brother’. However, notably, Robertson introduces other commonly held qualities between the two countries, presumably, having taken into account the rapid industrialisation in Japan:

Britain, like Japan, has *an ancient tradition and a Royal House*, but has also achieved great material success, brilliant scientific advances, together with prestige and an important voice in world affairs. (BBC Archives, 2 December 1959)

History, traditions and ruralism: the enduring image of Britain

It seems evident that the affinity towards Britain was widely shared amongst the population in Japan largely because of alleged commonalities between them. In particular, Britain's unique cultural traditions seem to have struck a chord with the Japanese in general. This view is in line with Ohkura's earlier remark, indicating that Britain's long history and ancient tradition were the qualities the country offers that which appealed to him most. Indeed, in the examination of Ohkura's account of the history of the JLS, it is notable that most of the memorable moments concerning the service were of British customs, cultural traditions and icons. These include The Royal Family, Sir Winston Churchill, Shakespeare and Sherlock Holmes, and related ceremonies and events (Ohkura, 1983). In particular, the Royal Family, especially the Queen, seem to have been some of the most popular subjects in the history of the service.

Queen Elizabeth II is claimed to be one of the most successful cultural icons, not only in Japan, but also on her home soil. In his examination of Britain's changing attitudes towards the monarchy since the 19th century, David Cannadine argues that the British monarchy has been reinvented since the late 19th century (1983). He suggests that as Britain's position in the world as a great power began to wane in the post-war period, the 'meaning' of royal ceremonial begin to change profoundly (1983:108). He claims that the BBC played a significant role in reviving the popularity of the monarch by broadcasting royal pageantry (1983:142 and 158-9)¹⁷. In

¹⁷ Here, Cannadine notes the vital significance of television broadcasting.

the history of the JLS, the broadcast of Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953 marked a historic occasion that confirmed the popularity of the Queen with the Japanese audience. According to the NHK, up to 20 million Japanese tuned into the programme. Robertson suggests that this was an exceptional case as, on this occasion, the programme probably had a bigger audience in Japan than had the BBC's external services in English (BBC Archives: Robertson, 2 December 1959).

Indeed, the Royal Family has been a very popular subject with the Japanese audience, together with many other British cultural traditions and icons. For instance, Ohkura's account of the history of the JLS seems to devote more space to these subjects than to others (Ohkura, 1983:149-164). In fact, he admits that there was more material on the coronation in 1953 than any on other event in the archival material given to him to work on for the publication of his work on the JLS (1983: 150). Therefore, it may have been possible for the JLS to focus on these 'light-hearted' subjects alone in order to maintain its popularity with the audience (Ohkura, 2009). However, the service seems to have been under some pressure to do otherwise. This tendency was observed even before the first sign of threats of closure emerged in 1964¹⁸. The Policy of Japanese broadcasts of the BBC prepared by Leggett in 1952 states its objectives to be to attract the audience and to promote 'good relations' (BBC Archives: 17/12/1952). Interestingly, it suggests that in order to achieve these objectives the JLS was going to 'make use of certain things with a peculiar significance for the Japanese, such as the Monarchy, British advance in science and especially Comet...' ¹⁹ (BBC Archives: 17/12/52).

¹⁸ Mansell claims that by 1964, the Plowden Report on Representational Services Overseas had begun to question Britain's capacity to continue playing a 'world role'; the policy on External Services had to be reviewed. See Mansell (1982:255).

¹⁹ In a report prepared by Leggett a few months later, the Japanese Ambassador is claimed to have mentioned in his New Year's message in 1953 that the twin symbols of the 'new' Britain were 'Queen Elizabeth' and 'the Comet'. Moreover, it is suggested that he considered these symbolic figures to

It is quite clear that the JLS was under pressure to promote scientific advances in Britain. In his report on the JLS of 1959, Robertson draws attention to the important role that the service played in the Japanese decision to purchase its first nuclear power reactor from Britain. Here, he notes the difficulties of the British side in winning this contract, especially ‘in the face of all possible pressure from the Americans, including misrepresentation of British reactor design’ (1959). The fact that the Japanese investigation teams broadcast in the JLS their favourable opinions of Britain, Robertson believes helped to ‘off-set’ US propaganda in Japan via VOA (1959). This conspicuous trend of promoting scientific advances as well as industry and technology continued into the 1970s with the establishment of a special programme entitled ‘A New Idea From Britain’, which began in 1967 (Ohkura, 1983: 218-219).

By the early 1970s, the mounting pressure exerted by the Government on the JLS to be accountable becomes more apparent. The number of press cuttings on the JLS in Japanese, which seemed to be for promotional purposes, increased dramatically in this period. This was in addition to the preparation of annual reports to parliament, although it is not clear whether this practice began earlier. The JLS began focusing on more relevant activities to promote British ‘ingenuity and enterprise’ as one of the service’s Annual Report to Parliament put it (BBC Archives: 21/2/1975). It is claimed that this change in behaviour and practice by the JLS has been largely attributable to Britain’s worsening economic situation. This, in turn, led the Government to call for a ‘fundamental and critical’ review of Britain’s representational activities overseas. In order to conduct this task, the ‘Central Policy

capture the imagination of his Japanese hearers. Perhaps, these two items were self evidently symbolic at the time; however, it does not seem to be mere coincidence that the Japanese Ambassador raised these two items.

Review Staff (CPRS), Downing Street's own 'Think Tank', was established in the early 1970s²⁰ (Mansell, 1982:257).

Even though the JLS had escaped closure, which was recommended by the CPRS, the decade of being under threat of closure did much to change its policy of political independence. The following statement found in the last report in the decade is illuminating.

More than most sections, we project Britain in many ways and often it is difficult to classify some of our programmes. We have those which are a mixture of history, science and tourism. There are those which project people of Britain and the way of life which attract much attention from our listeners. All these are an 'Ad' for Britain just as much as blatant plugs as in 'New Ideas. (Annual Report to Parliament: Exports, 7 March 1979)

The report clearly indicates that 'people of Britain and the way of life' were popular subjects with its listeners. This is after more than a decade of its audience having been exposed to various ideas about Britain's scientific and technological advances and its industry or British 'ingenuity and enterprise' as suggested earlier.

It is necessary to acknowledge that analysing the alleged popularity of any subjects in broadcasting by the JLS should be conducted with caution. This is because it is impossible to measure their popularity accurately, as no methods can ever fulfil this task. For instance, it is not possible to engage *all* the listeners in market research in a laboratory environment. However, the historical examination of the JLS, which suggests that the audience reacted positively to programmes involving cultural traditions and icons of Britain, deserves some attention. This is because these items seem to fit some of the stereotypical ideas about Britain that the Japanese hold in general. For instance, the website for *Chikyu no Arukikata* which is one of the most popular travel guides in Japan, states:

²⁰ The CPRS had been created by Edward Heath during his time as Prime Minister. Its scrutiny is seen to have become much more probing as Sir Kenneth Berrill, a senior Whitehall official with a Treasury background was appointed to head the organisation (Mansell, 1982: 257).

When we think of Britain, the images of the English Garden full of roses, the historic manor house and afternoon tea come flooding into our minds. Its countryside is blessed with unspoiled nature and meeting people who live in such an environment is a thoroughly relaxing experience. However, this is only one aspect of Britain, which boasts its exciting capital city, London. (Chikyu no Arukikata:
http://www.arukikata.co.jp/country/europe/GB_general_1.html)

This description by the Japanese travel guide clearly indicates that the predominant image of Britain that its Japanese readership is assumed to hold focuses on its ruralism, history and traditions.

These ideas seem to be some of the central themes in the representation of Britain through the JLS, which is a British organisation. In fact, it is claimed that the kind of image projected here has been encouraged and promoted by the British government. In his examination of the projection of British Industry in the 1950s and 1960s, Paddy Maguire studies various industrial fairs and exhibitions held in Britain and abroad. He points out that during this period, British manufacturers began to face a serious challenge in promoting their products, as they found themselves ‘left behind’ in the development of consumer goods. Notably, by the early to mid 1960s, Japan had become recognised as the market leader in the manufacture of consumer goods whose promotional effort would attract much attention at industrial fairs and exhibitions (1993:106). Aside from the problems in manufacturing itself, Maguire identifies a problem with promoting British goods at these occasions as ‘one of devising an appropriate identity’ to aid the promotion (1993: 109-110). Here, he points out that because of their focus on ‘traditional qualities of workmanship and quality’, the major themes of the exhibitions would centre on British traditions.

Maguire is critical of the Board of Trade, which often devised its own travelling display for British weeks and store promotions and is considered to be responsible for effectively helping to misrepresent Britain. Just to illustrate his point, some of the items used in the display at the New York Trade Fair in 1957 included:

‘Welsh and Scottish girls in their national costumes ... transparencies of Ben Nevis, the Lake District, a Northern Ireland village, and the mountains of North Wales’. He remarks, “Such rampant ruralism scarcely matched some of the main themes of British ‘inventiveness’ like aviation and atomic energy” (1993:110). Remarkably, this situation mirrors what the JLS was attempting to do through its effort in ‘projecting Britain’ through broadcasting. It is likely that both the Board of Trade and the JLS helped to reinforce the stereotypical ideas of Britain that were held abroad. In fact, there is a significant amount of documentary evidence that suggests that the JLS was heavily involved in promoting British fairs in Japan. Notably, the JLS participated in exhibitions as the BBC would normally have a stand at such events, representing Britain (BBC Archives: 15/10/65 and 1969).

The major reason why these organisations resorted to some of the symbolisms for representing Britain seems to lie in the idea of stereotyping as a signifying practice. It is suggested that stereotyping utilises the ‘simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognised’ way of representing a person, or in this case, a country in the most exaggerated and simplified manner (Hall, 1997: 258). In this particular spectacle of the ‘Other’ as Britain, there appear to be no issues with the notion of power; however, what Hall describes as the role of stereotyping is quite relevant here. He suggests that stereotyping “*reduces, essentialises, naturalises and fixes ‘difference’*”. Therefore, in the context of representing Britain abroad and to foreign audiences, the use of stereotyping can be seen as an economical and efficient way of conveying Britishness.

At least, with the JLS, some forms of the representation of Britain seemed to be effective as they were considered popular with the audience, notably, the stereotypical symbolisms such as the Royal Family and Shakespeare. It is difficult to

fathom precise reasons why some of its Japanese audience found these cultural traditions and icons attractive. However, Ohkura's account of his and his colleagues' experience of working in Britain is illuminating. Ohkura observes that most of the Japanese staff who had spent time in the United States tended to find life in Britain difficult. In his view, the reason for this phenomenon was because, materially, Britain was not as affluent or convenient as the United States. Therefore, for those with no experience of living in the United States like himself, it did not cause any discomfort or difficulties (1983:178). In fact, Ohkura's account of his own experience in living and working in Britain is very positive. For instance, he enjoyed the relaxed work atmosphere and generous annual leave, which prompted him to call his workplace 'heavenly' (1983: 204).

Ohkura worked in Britain between 1962 and 1966 and it is interesting to note his reaction upon his return to his home country. His first impression of Tokyo after having been away for three years was that it was noisy and dusty. He considered that everything looked brand new, but cheap, and that there was no variety among passers-by, who all looked the same. He missed London and wanted to return soon (1983: 214). As indicated, Japan was rapidly developing economically with much help from the United States. In particular, as the country began preparing for hosting the Olympic games in 1964, the transformation through which the country went must have appeared tremendous to Ohkura. It seems that, to Ohkura, London (Britain) offered the important qualities that Japan had lost through rapid development and adopting the American Way of Life: namely, traditions and traditional values.

As suggested earlier, during the war, the Japanese people had been led to believe in the infallibility of the state through the state ideology (Oda, 1978:155). Defeat effectively invalidated this belief/value system, which the Japanese had held

since the early 1930s (Dower, 1999: 87-120). Under the American occupation, they had no choice but to take up the American Way of Life, which was the only way available in Japan at that time. Therefore, to Ohkura and some of his Anglophile colleagues as well as to the audience of the JLS, the British way may have offered them a culturally more appealing alternative. In particular, Britain's ancient traditions were something that the American way could not offer. Here, Cannadine's description of Richard Dimbleby's view on the Americans at the time of the coronation may be helpful in understanding Ohkura and others. Having praised the Americans 'condescendingly' as 'a race of such vitality', Dimbleby criticised them as 'lacking in tradition' in that 'they must wait a thousand years before they can show the world anything so significant or so lovely' (1983:157-158)

Conclusion:

This paper set out to question the efficacy of the concept of nation branding through a study of the JLS as it claimed that the service was ‘helping to create a favourable image of Britain’, which can be seen as a ‘nation branding’ of Britain. In its struggle for survival as it faced threats of closure by the government, the JLS portrayed itself as a face of Britain and thus, it argued that its popularity equated to that of Britain. In examining its popularity with its audience; however, this study attempted to look beyond the relationship between the producer and audience. This is particularly important as it considers that in order to understand how a particular image became attached to Britain through the programmes provided by the service, all the relevant relationships, including that between the producer and audience, should be examined. Thus, it employed Callon’s analytical approach of *agencement*, which allowed the examination of potentially relevant factors/elements that are deemed to have affected the JLS’s ‘nation branding’ efforts of Britain in many ways.

The paper demonstrated that the wartime experience and the American occupation in Japan were important in making the Japanese highly sensitive towards media manipulation and propaganda. This negative attitude towards propaganda has enhanced the reputation of the JLS for providing ‘unbiased’ news. Another product of the occupation was anti-Americanism. It is difficult to claim that it affected the popularity of the JLS, but certainly, it seems to have helped the Japanese to seek an alternative way, other than the American way.

The paper also attempted to explore other associations that the JLS made that confirmed its Britishness. This led to the investigation of the role of cultural traditions and icons, which seem to have contributed to the formation of the enduring image of Britain held by the Japanese in general. In this investigation, the paper highlighted the

attempt by the JLS to promote the notions of British ingenuity and enterprise at the risk of losing its reputation for political independence. It is difficult to determine whether its audience responded to this particular form of ‘advertising’ as suggested in one of the annual reports to parliament. However, it was clear that the audience preferred art and culture to science; in particular, their penchant for British cultural traditions and icons is notable.

From the historical examination of the JLS, therefore, it is clear that many factors other than the programmes provided by the service itself affected its popularity. In order to highlight this point, the paper focused largely on those factors over which the JLS had no direct control, such as the American occupation and the historical development of the sensitivity of the Japanese towards propaganda. The JLS did promote some of the cultural traditions and icons, such as the Royal Family; however, the paper presented the idea that the Japanese love of British traditions has been influenced by many other factors. It is possible that the JLS may have promoted some of these traditions through its programmes. However, this study argues that no single factor affected the popularity of the JLS, as it is the ways in which different factors associate with each other that conjunctively had a certain effect on it.

This study has applied Callon’s analytical approach, which focuses on the relational properties of social phenomena. In this particular study of branding Britain through the JLS, it demonstrated that it is necessary to examine all the relevant relational work that was involved in the production and consumption of the JLS in order to understand its role in ‘helping to create a favourable image of Britain’. In this way, it indicated that it is difficult to determine whether it fulfilled its objective, as many other factors were affecting the creation of a certain image of Britain at any one time. From this perspective, this paper concludes that it is impossible to claim to

interfere with the creation of a particular image of a country, as it is not possible to substantiate this claim.

(End)

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Interview:

With Yuunosuke Ohkura in Tokyo took place on 18 May and 4 June 2009.